

At the meeting on January 23th, Estonian and Polish Presidents Toomas Hendrik Ilves and Lech Kaczyński focused on the future of Europe.

“The financial and economic crisis that has gripped many countries requires rapid action and compilation of crisis plans that require politicians to look beyond their election promises as well as personal or partisan popularity,” President Ilves stressed. “Many countries—Estonia and Poland among them—are faced with difficult choices, and passively waiting will actually mean defeat.”

According to the Estonian Head of State, the countries that will recover faster and more easily from the crisis are the ones with governments that demonstrate sufficient decisiveness and judgment to make unpopular decisions in the name of the future; decisions directed at reducing government spending and strengthening enterprise.

“Encouraging entrepreneurship in difficult times is one of the most complicated, and yet most important challenges,” President Ilves said. “Successful enterprise means jobs, a reduction of taxes, as well as a sense of security for people and the country.”

The Estonian and Polish Heads of State spoke at length about energy security, emphasizing the principle that energy supplies not be used for political purposes and stressing that Europe’s security of supply depends on alternative energy suppliers.

Presidents Ilves and Kaczyński recognized that a monopoly can threaten energy security, as the recent past has repeatedly demonstrated, and discussed the large Baltic Sea projects such as the establishment of the new Lithuanian nuclear power plant and the energy connections between the Nordic and Baltic countries. The Heads of State expressed support for the Nabucco gas pipeline project that would securely bring gas from the Caucasus and Central Asia to Europe.

Presidents Ilves and Kaczyński considered it important that Europe dare to speak honestly about its history.

“This means that we should speak freely about 1939 and the division of spheres of influence between Stalin’s Soviet Union and Hitler’s Germany, which robbed many countries of their independence; this means that we should speak about all the crimes that were committed, without differentiating between the regimes that committed them,” President Ilves said.

At the meeting, ideas were exchanged on the topic of the European Commission’s Eastern Partnership initiative, which they saw as an opportunity for political and economic convergence between the European Union and the Community’s eastern neighbors.

Presidents Ilves and Kaczyński also spoke about the relations between the European Union and the United States, emphasizing the importance of strengthening these relations.

“We are united by our mutually comprehensible wish that the world include more democracy, more security, and more wellbeing,” President Ilves said. “We are also united by the responsibility of reaching out a hand to those who need or desire our help”.

Office of the President
Public Relations Department
Phone +372 631 6229