

According to President Toomas Hendrik Ilves energy cooperation, preparations for the NATO summit, and discussion of the economic situation were the most important topics at today's working meeting attended by the Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian Heads of State.

"It is extremely important to find consensus and joint solutions regarding the plans for energy connections between the Baltic Sea countries," stressed President Ilves.

Speaking about developments in NATO, the Estonian Head of State considered it important that, in addition to the primary task of protecting its territory, the alliance would tackle new challenges.

"It is also important that NATO would exploit the wish of its partner states to accede to the alliance to strengthen the democratic processes in those countries. This would also fortify their preparedness for achieving full NATO membership," President Ilves said.

Speaking of the global economic crisis, the Presidents of the Baltic countries recognized that we are all affected by this crisis, and therefore, the actions of all of us may also impact our neighbors.

"Realistic approaches toward cost savings and balanced budgetary policies, as well as the avoidance of withdrawal and protectionism – these are some of the key moves that will help us cope with this crisis," said President Ilves.

The Presidents of the Baltic states, Toomas Hendrik Ilves, Valdis Zatlers and Valdas Adamkus, met in Šiauliai today at the invitation of the Lithuanian Head of State to mark the fifth anniversary of the Baltic accession to NATO. At the Lithuanian Air Force base in Šiauliai, the Presidents were also briefed on the NATO Baltic air policing mission and NATO Quick Reaction Alert program. They will also participate in a flower-laying ceremony at the memorial to Lithuanian freedom fighters in the village of Menaiciai.

The Estonian Head of State met with his Latvian and Lithuanian colleagues

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