

President Toomas Hendrik Ilves met with Alexandr Vondra, Deputy Prime Minister of the Czech Republic – which currently holds the EU Presidency. Mr. Vondra is participating in the Lennart Meri Conference on Foreign and Security Policy in Tallinn.

At the meeting, during which President Ilves acknowledged the Czech Republic for its successful EU Presidency, the main topics included developments in the European Union and the Community`s neighborhood.

“The Eastern Partnership initiative started by the European Commission is important, because it encourages and prompts our many neighbors to intensify reforms related to democracy and market economy,” President Ilves said. “Our – that is, the European Union`s – assignment is to give this eastern partnership content that will convince the Community's neighbors to take it seriously and believe in it.”

Speaking about the general economic situation in the Europe and the world generally, President Ilves and Deputy Prime Minister Vondra affirmed that a precondition for future recovery is frugality on the part of all countries today and extremely conservative budgetary policies, which are not influenced by election campaigns or overly optimistic promises based on day-to-day politics.

Speaking of the Lisbon Treaty, Deputy Prime Minister Vondra expressed the opinion that it will soon be ratified by the Czech Republic and that the new Irish referendum will hopefully succeed.

The NATO summit meeting, where one of the main topics will be Afghanistan, was also discussed.

“Afghanistan is the most important operation of NATO, and therefore the most important operation of all of the alliance`s 26 member states. It is necessary for all of us to commit ourselves and contribute to its success. No one can stand back,” stressed President Ilves. “It is also clear that the European Union must also play a significant role, because along with military measures we increasingly need civil projects that can help build Afghanistan as a nation.”

President Ilves met with the Czech Deputy Prime Minister

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President Ilves and Deputy Prime Minister Vondra also affirmed their support to the so-called “open-door” policy of NATO, which gives assurances to countries, which have done the necessary work for joining, that NATO is prepared to accept them as members.

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