

At their meeting today, President Toomas Hendrik Ilves and Latvian Prime Minister Valdis Dombrovskis, who arrived in Estonia on a working visit, acknowledged that our economies are in deeper crisis than feared. In their discussions, they focused on the possibilities for overcoming the economic crisis and also spoke about energy security in the Baltic region, the European Neighborhood Policy and Baltic Sea Strategy.

"The worst thing that can happen in the current economic situation is that pessimism deepens, and develops into depression, and that faith is lost in the government's ability to stabilize the situation and ease the impact of the setbacks," President Ilves said. "The actions of our governments in the current situation should be foremost characterized by professionalism and a sense of responsibility."

According to the Estonian Head of State, we expect our government, which is faced with this economic crisis, to behave honestly and not to minimize the seriousness of the situation.

The government's decisions must be reasoned and adequate.

"At a time when the public expects resolve and responsible action from the government, the authorities cannot leave the impression that the government is not capable of controlling the situation, and that recovery from the crisis depends exclusively on improvements in the global situation," stressed President Ilves.

"Our actions as the state authority must be systematic, with a self-critical attitude that is inherent to crisis behavior. It must also be pragmatic and free of any day-to-day political temptations. Otherwise, we will be fooling ourselves and our people," noted President Ilves.

The Estonian Head of State and Prime Minister Dombrovskis confirmed that both countries are faced with the task of finding operative solutions that can maintain the trustworthiness of the countries' fiscal policies, keep budgetary deficits under control, stimulate the economy, and provide the unemployed with retraining and social guarantees.

President Ilves reiterated Estonia's wish to accede to the Euro zone at the first opportunity, and stressed, "Estonia wishes to join the Euro zone based on the existing criteria and procedures - we do not want to change the Maastricht criteria, but to fulfill them. Therefore, it is positive that the last Council of the European Union reaffirmed the need for budgetary discipline, and the necessity of quickly returning to it."

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