

President Toomas Hendrik Ilves began his working visit to the west coast of the United States of America at the research and state-of-art technology centre of Silicon Valley. President Toomas Hendrik Ilves today began his working visit to the west coast of the United States of America at the research and state-of-art technology centre of Silicon Valley.

The President met with Mr. John W. Thompson, the head of Symantec, the world's largest information security solutions company, who together with the other CEOs of the company gave an overview of the activities and priorities of Symantec in the protection of IT infrastructure at the individual user, corporate and national levels.

At the meeting, it was admitted that the cyber attacks launched against Estonia in 2007 have been an eye-opener in many states around the world. It was also stressed that efficient international co-operation between the private and public sectors is required in order to anticipate such threats and to eradicate their consequences, especially in the field of legislation.

"Estonia is one of the European Union's voices in the field of cyber defence," President Ilves noted. "This is the reason why we are very much interested in any form of co-operation, which is aimed at decreasing cyber space vulnerability."

The President's "Chautauqua" in March was recalled at the meeting with Mr. Josh Silverman, the President of Skype. The developments and unhindered availability of Skype and communication technologies in general all around the world was also discussed. According to Mr. Silverman, Skype greatly appreciates the supportive attitude of the Government of Estonia.

President Ilves stated that Estonia is proud to be Skype's country of origin and continued by saying, "I am sincerely happy of the fact that even today a large share of the innovative updates introduced by Skype are developed in Estonia."

The role of cyber security and information and communication technologies for ensuring the efficiency and transparency of government agencies were the most important topics discussed at the meeting in Apple, where an overview of the company's activities in the field of innovation was given by Mr. Jeff Williams, the Vice-President of Apple, and Investor Relations Director, Ms. Joan Hoover.

A business delegation consisting of nine Estonian enterprises accompanied the President on his visits to Symantec, eBay/Skype and Apple.

The final meeting of the first day of the visit was with the Mayor of San Francisco, Mr. Gavin Newman. The touching points of several regions and Estonia for the provision of e-services and opportunities from learning from each others' experiences were discussed at the meeting.

On Thursday, President Ilves will meet with the management of Cisco, a company that provides data communication solutions, and the President will also give a presentation at the Plug&Play Tech Center.

The Head of State will also meet Mr. John L. Hennessy, the Rector of Stanford University, visit

the university's research laboratories, and the archives of the Hoover Institution.

Mrs Evelin Ilves will meet with the Shape Up San Francisco team on Thursday and visit Stanford Medical School and the Children's Hospital at Stanford.

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