

President Toomas Hendrik Ilves sent his congratulations to Mr. Herman Van Rompuy, who was elected President of the European Council.

"I wish you every success in your new functions as you lead the European Union during these decisive times," wrote the Estonian Head of State.

When commenting on yesterday's decision of the European Council, President Ilves said that Mr. Herman Van Rompuy and Ms. Catherine Ashton, who was elected to the position of High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, are now facing the challenge and opportunity of making the European Union stronger, more efficient and closer to its citizens:

"All of us - the 27 equal members of the European Union - need a union, which is both transparent and trustworthy for our citizens. An economically and politically strong European Union. A European Union that safeguards its own future and the wellbeing of its neighbours. A European Union that encourages reform among its neighbours and has the courage to take responsibility for its actions. A European Union that understands the importance of trans-Atlantic relations."

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