

Estonia continues to be Georgia's friend and will go on supporting the reforms that are taking place there. Estonia continues to be Georgia's friend and will go on supporting the reforms that are taking place there, assured President Toomas Hendrik Ilves, at his meeting with the Georgian Head of State, Mr. Mikheil Saakashvili.

"Since the Rose Revolution, Georgia has gone through an amazing process of development with regard to economic reforms as well as the development both of democracy and the rule of law, and – of particular importance – in fighting corruption," said President Ilves.

The European Union supports Georgia's territorial integrity and is never going to recognise the independence of Abkhazia and Southern Ossetia, asserted the Estonian Head of State, while also admitting that Georgia's territorial integrity will not be restored in the near future.

"Therefore, Georgia needs strategic patience and commitment to the successful construction of its country. It would not be fruitful to waste energy on problems that cannot be resolved in the near future," President Ilves said. "Many countries, including Georgia's allies, know that injustice can prevail for some time; however, history has windows of opportunity, which shall open once and then close – and we need to stay alert to wait for them to open and then be wise enough to seize the moment."

The Estonian Head of State also highlighted NATO's unprecedented and unambiguous statement that one day both Georgia and the Ukraine will become members of the alliance, adding, "the events that took place a year and a half ago have somewhat delayed Georgia's western integration; however, the speed of progress that Georgia makes on its way towards the European Union and NATO will still largely depend on its own actions and development in the sphere of democracy, human rights, and freedom of media, as well as economic reforms."

According to President Ilves, continued democratic and economic reforms represent the direction in which Georgia, its government, and all its political parties, who are concerned about the future of the country, should be focused. "This is the key to your success," emphasised the Estonian Head of State.

He confirmed that Estonia is still willing to provide Georgia with any form of assistance, such as, for the conduct of public administration reforms or the creation of e-governance, and as a member of the European Union and NATO by supporting them in their decision making process.

"Georgia would benefit from making the most of the opportunities that are offered by the Eastern Partnership for approaching the European Union," said President Ilves, "Estonia plans to establish the European Union Eastern Partnership training centre, based on the Estonian School of Diplomacy, and our Georgian friends will be welcome here."

President Saakashvili bestowed the Order of Saint George on the Estonian Head of State.

Office of the President

President Ilves meets Georgian counterpart

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