

“Estonia wishes to thank those who have done much to make our country secure; to make Estonian science, culture, and its economy known at home as well as abroad; to make Estonia successful yet mindful of its people,” said the Head of State. President Toomas Hendrik Ilves signed a decree today to award 97 people from both Estonia and abroad with state awards to recognise the service they have rendered to the Republic of Estonia.

“Estonia wishes to thank and acknowledge those, who have done much to make our country secure – on both a domestic and international level; to make Estonian science, culture, and its economy known at home as well as abroad; to make Estonia successful yet mindful of its people,” said the Head of State.

The Order of the National Coat of Arms, class I, will be awarded to the Grand Old Man of Estonian music, composer Veljo Tormis. The state award serves to express gratitude for and recognition of his life work as a choir music composer, who was brought new life to the traditions of the Estonian, Baltic Sea, and Finnish nations, their ancient folk songs, and who has emphasised that understanding and recognising yourself is key for maintaining balance and vitality.

Estonia thanks and acknowledges its soldiers, who have fought bravely in the NATO operation in Afghanistan. Order of the Cross of the Eagle with Swords will be conferred to Captain Ain Tiidrus, Commander of the company; Sergeant Herman Kilk, who repeatedly assisted the wounded under enemy fire; Senior Warrant Officer Toomas Leet and Warrant Officer Olavi Tonska, who expressed their innovativeness and courage in a number of battles, and Warrant Officers Toomas Mikk, Marek Piirimägi and Aare Viirmaa, who were seriously wounded in Afghanistan.

State awards will also be conferred to a long-time youth police officer, Senior Commissar Marina Paddar; a trainer of the police strike forces and one of the commanders in rapid response situations, Police Lieutenant Marek Unt; Commander of Punamäe Border Guard, Border Guard Captain Tarmo Uusorg; rescue board official, Mr. Mikhail Kozõrev, who has participated in resolving a number of radiation and chemical emergencies; Head of Viru District Prosecutor’s Office, Ms Dilaila Nahkur-Tammiksaar; Judge Toomas Lillsaar of Viljandi Court House, and the Estonian Ambassador in Georgia, Mr. Toomas Lukk.

Estonia wishes to thank its scientists, whose commitment and consistency have won attention and recognition not just in Estonia, but throughout the world. Therefore, state awards will be conferred to Mr. Priit Kulu, a materials scientist and Professor at Tallinn University of Technology; Ms Margit Langemets, one of the individuals who prepared a six-volume “Explanatory Dictionary of Estonian Language”; Mr. Tiit Paaver, genome and fisheries scientist, Professor at the Estonian University of Life Sciences; Mr. Tõnis Timmusk, one of the most frequently cited biology and medical scientists in Estonia, Professor at Tallinn University of Technology; Ms Margit Sutrop, Head of the Centre of Ethics of Tartu University, Professor of Practical Philosophy at Tartu University; Mr. Aleksei Turovski, parasitologist, ethologist, and zoological semiotic; Mr. Tõnu-Andrus Tannberg, researcher of Estonia’s recent history; Ms Eevi Astel, long-term employee of the Estonian National Museum; Ms. Eve Int, Medical Doctor and teacher at the Cardiology Clinic of Tartu University; Ms Karin Orgulas, developer of children’s

oncology and haematology in Estonia and one of the founders of children's oncology and haematology department of Tallinn Children's Hospital; Mr. Toomas Väli, liver transplant specialist and one of the introducers of liver transplantations to Estonia.

The Republic of Estonia will also recognise those, whose creative activities have enriched Estonia's cultural life; state awards will be conferred to Mr. Jaan Rannap, author of children's books; Mr. Andres Tolts, artist; Mr. Andres Tali, artist, who has illustrated approximately one thousand books; Mr. Toomas Väljataga, publisher of magazines and books, which maintain and enhance the value of Estonian language and culture; Mr. Jaak Joala, singer and singing teacher; Mr. Sven Grünberg, composer; Mr. Jaak Johanson, promoter of traditional music; Mr. Tõnis Mägi, one of the symbols of Estonia's "Singing Revolution" and the individual who cast our national ideas into music; Ms Elena Poznjak-Kõlar, long-term prima ballerina of Vanemuine theatre; Ms Eve-Mall Peets, keeper of Estonia's cultural inheritance and former treasurer of the Museum of Estonian History.

Estonia also thanks the creators of the contemporary banking system, Mr. Hannes Tamjärv and Mr. Heldur Meerits; state awards will be also conferred to a number of entrepreneurs, who have promoted Estonian business – the manager of AS Schenker, Mr. Meelis Arumeel, Chairman of the Executive Board of AS Värskas Vesi, Mr. Urmas Jõgeva; the owner of AS Wendre, Mr. Peter-Kalev Hunt; major shareholder in AS ABB, Mr. Bo Roger Wilhelm Henriksson, who has been awarded foreign investor of the year three times; long-term agricultural entrepreneur and manager of OÜ Voore Farm, Mr. Indrek Klammer; Chairman of the Executive Board of OÜ Riitsinus and vegetable grower, Mr. Väino Villers.

State awards will also be conferred to the initiator of voluntary and charity work and an organiser of the self-help movement for the elderly, Ms Evi Viirsalu; promoter of the rehabilitation treatment for the wounded members of the Defence Forces and the Head of Rehabilitation Centre of East-Tallinn Central Hospital, Ms Heidi Gil; member of the Support Fond of Pelgulinna Obstetrics Hospital and a committed charity worker, Ms Sirje Ruutsoo; a citizen of Japan who organised assistance to victims of radiation, Mr. Yoshikio Yoshida; organiser of patriotic education, Mr. Meelis Kivi in Valga county; promoter of village life in Läänemaa, Ms Larissa Mandel; creator of the Estonian Jewish Museum, Mr. Mark Rõbak; folk dance teacher from Viljandi county, Ms Vaike Rajaste; establisher of the economic history museum, Mr. Leonid Gordejev.

We also recognise the mediators of cultural contacts, Ms Tamara Luuk and Ms Reet Weidebaum, and long-term teachers, Ms Katrin Ohakas from Mammaste Kindergarten-Elementary School; Ms Hella Mõttus, currently employed by the Examination and Qualification Centre; Mr. Toomas Kruusimägi from Tallinn English College; Mr. Gunnar Polma from Tallinn School of Real Sciences.

State awards will also be conferred on the Head of the Certification Sector of the Certification Centre, Mr. Tarvi Martens, who managed the establishment of Estonia's e-election system, which has been used for four consecutive elections; Mr. Ago Jaani, who organised the investigation and protection of Lake Peipus on a long-term basis; one of the creators and developers of the Skype internet phone, Mr. Toivo Annus.

The state also thanks, by conferring them with state awards, the acknowledged sports teacher, Mr. Rein Haljandi; Mr. Aadu Krevald, team member of the Olympic hero Mr. Gerd Kanter; Mr. Mart Poom, who was elected Estonia's best footballer six times; footballer, Mr. Gert Kullamäe, who has had a long athletic career.

Estonia also recognises journalists, who have broadcasted the word to the mind of us all. State awards will be conferred on Ms Mary Velvet, Editor in Chief of Radio 4; Research Editor of the Horisont magazine, Mr. Rein Veskimäe; and columnist and translator, Mr. Erkki Bahovski.

State awards will be awarded to Ms Maja Simukova, Mr. Rein Tõnisme, and Mr. Vilbert Saavel, who have donated blood more than 100 times.

The Order of the Cross of Terra Mariana will also be conferred on the former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Germany, Mr. Joseph Martin (Joschka) Fischer for contributing to Estonia's trans-Atlantic integration; the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, Mr. Per Stig Møller, who was committed to supporting the NATO and European Union accession policies of Estonia and the other Baltic states; former Minister of Defence of Sweden, former President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the European Council, and former deputy speaker of the Swedish Parliament, Mr. Anders Björck, who has significantly contributed to the creation of the Estonian Defence Forces since independence was restored and the development of Estonian-Swedish relations; to the Finnish writer, Ms Sofi Oksanen, for books that reflect our recent history; to Mr. Dietrich von Kyaw, who contributed to Estonia's trans-Atlantic integration while being in office as Germany's permanent representative at the European Union; former judge of the European Court of Justice and former Chairman of the Supreme Court of Finland, Mr. Leif Sevón, for his contribution to both the intellectual and organisational modernisation of the Estonian court system; Latokartano school director, Mr. Satu Honkala, for attaching value to the Estonian language in Finland; Mr. Claus Byrith from Denmark, who restored and reconditioned the musical recordings of Estonia; developer of Estonian and Latvian cultural co-operation, Ms Venta Kocere; Finnish entrepreneur, Mr. Ilkka Heikki Herlin, a major shareholder and Chairman of the Supervisory Board of Cargotec Corporation, who established the Baltic Sea Action Group Foundation.

President Ilves will bestow the state awards on February 23rd.

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