

President Ilves: I will participate in the event in Moscow on 9th May to celebrate the anniversary of the end of World War II in Europe and to commemorate with other European countries all the victims of this war. BNS: What have you decided about your possible trip to Moscow on 9th May?

President Toomas Hendrik Ilves: "I will participate in the event in Moscow on 9th May to celebrate the anniversary of the end of World War II in Europe and to commemorate with other European countries all the victims of this war. My decision was preceded by a personal invitation from President Dmitri Medvedev, which was handed over by the Russian Ambassador in Estonia."

Background information:

President Ilves in his interview to Eesti Päevaleht, 14/01/2010:

How important would the presence of Estonia's representative in Moscow be and would this be for foreign policy reasons or for other reasons?

World War II represented a fight against one form of evil for many countries. Every European country and nation had to face its fate in this war. I think it would be wrong, even peculiar, to blame any of them for their victories. We are proud of our victory in the War of Independence, while the Russians take pride in their victory in World War II.

The time that has lapsed since the end of the war should be sufficient to identify a shared part of memories, cognition and knowledge. As it is said in the European Union: our history is your history and your history is our history. And the last big war meant big sacrifices for all of us and we could remember these sacrifices, together.

How should Estonians view the passing of 65 years since the end of World War II?

The end of one of the most horrible wars in Europe meant relief for millions of Europeans. The evil was defeated. Here, in Estonia – and a large part of Eastern and Central Europe in general – we cannot, however, forget that for us World War II really ended only half a century later. Nor can we forget the victims, even though such an approach will not be pleasing to everyone's ears.

Office of the President
Public Relations Department
Phone +372 631 6229