

President Toomas Hendrik Ilves met in Kadriorg today with Mr. Anders Fogh Rasmussen, the Secretary General of NATO, who arrived in Estonia to participate in the meeting of NATO's Foreign Ministers. President Toomas Hendrik Ilves met in Kadriorg today with Mr. Anders Fogh Rasmussen, the Secretary General of NATO, who arrived in Estonia to participate in the meeting of NATO's Foreign Ministers.

When speaking about the development of NATO's new strategic concept, President Ilves emphasised that NATO's core function – collective deterring, collective defence, and ensuring security in the Euro-Atlantic region – must be stressed and conveyed unanimously.

NATO's nuclear deterrence strategy is, regardless of the long-term vision of a world free of nuclear weapons that we all share, one of the measures to ensure the accomplishment of these goals. "This includes both locating the nuclear missiles of the United States of America in Europe and the presence of the United States in Europe in the most general meaning," added the Estonian Head of State.

According to President Ilves, Afghanistan will remain Estonia's priority as a target country regarding both the military contribution and civilian co-operation.

The Estonian Head of State and Secretary General of NATO acknowledged the first positive signs that have become visible in Afghanistan after the considerable increase in the number of the United States troops deployed.

When speaking about NATO-Russian relations, President Ilves said the following: "As a consequence of the reset-politics pursued by Mr. Barack Obama, the President of the United States of America, and the nuclear arrangement between USA and Russia, we have noticed certain changes in Russia's rhetoric. This is good and we do hope this will also put an end to any rumours concerning the placing of ballistic warheads immediately next to NATO's borders."

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