

Next Thursday will be the day when the European Council will adopt a resolution that is important for the future of both Iceland and the EU – the decision to begin accession negotiations with your country,” said the President to the PM of Iceland. “Finally, next Thursday will be the day when the European Council will adopt a resolution that is important for the future of both Iceland and the EU – the decision to begin accession negotiations with your country,” said President Toomas Hendrik Ilves last night, at his meeting with the Prime Minister of Iceland, Mrs. Jóhanna Sigurðardóttir.

“In this matter, Estonia is a strong and solid supporter of Iceland and should you wish it, we are also willing to share the experiences that we have gained during our own accession negotiations with the European Union,” President Ilves added. “We are willing to transfer everything to Iceland that helped us gain access to the European Union. This is the duty of us as committed Europeans and our debt of honour to Iceland, who was the first to recognise the Republic of Estonia back in August of 1991.”

President Ilves, who is currently on state visit to Iceland, emphasised the fact that a small European country has no way of influencing the decisions of the EU in any way unless it is part of the European Union.

“This is a strong argument, which should serve to dissipate the hesitations that many Icelanders have regarding the European Union,” said the Estonian Head of State.

President Ilves and the Prime Minister, Mrs. Sigurðardóttir, also discussed the effects of the most difficult economic and financial crisis in recent history.

“Both of us, Estonia and Iceland, can see the first signs of economic recovery; however, conservative budget policies remain important, and reducing unemployment is the most essential issue to be resolved,” said the Estonian Head of State.

President Ilves gave the Prime Minister of Iceland an overview of Estonia’s path to joining the European common currency, the euro; Estonia hopes to reach its destination on 1st January of next year.

The Estonian Head of State also spoke about the plan to organise a Day of Iceland in Tallinn on 21st August 2011, which will be a part of the events organised to celebrate the 20th anniversary of Estonia regaining its independence and a special day to say ‘thank you’ to Iceland for supporting the independence of the Baltic states.

The Prime Minister of Iceland, Mrs. Jóhanna Sigurðardóttir, gave a dinner in her summer residence in honour of President Ilves and Mrs. Evelin Ilves; the President of Iceland, Mr. Olafur Ragnar Grimsson, and his wife, Mrs. Dorrit Moussaieff, were also present.

The Estonian Head of State will return from the state visit to Iceland this evening.

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