

Today (Friday) Toomas Hendrik Ilves, the President of the Republic of Estonia, met his Hungarian colleague Pál Schmitt in order to, besides the bilateral relations between Estonia and Hungary, discuss cooperation in the European Union and NATO.

President Ilves commended Hungary's decision to join NATO's Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre based in Tallinn - being the eighth state to do so - and thus contribute to the collective fight against contemporary security risks.

"Sharing responsibility with Hungary on NATO's mission in Afghanistan, we also jointly perceive the broader dimension of security and the fact that in these days people's lives can be threatened by cyber attacks aimed against hospitals, power plants and other infrastructure. Facing such threats collectively is the only option," assured President Ilves.

The central issue in today's discussion was Hungary's priorities during its Presidency of the European Union in the first half of the next year. These included the adoption of the Danube Strategy, establishing closer cooperation of the states situated at the banks of the River Danube under the aegis of the European Union.

The Danube Strategy serves as an example for the Baltic Sea Strategy. President Toomas Hendrik Ilves was one of the authors of the idea of the Baltic Sea Strategy five years ago while serving as a Member of the European Parliament.

"The Treaty on European Union and the legislation in force create multiple opportunities for closer regional cooperation and, along with that, we can develop our economy, resolve, for instance, environmental problems and, among other things, reduce bureaucracy," said the Estonian head of state.

Presidents Ilves and Schmitt also discussed the issues of cultural relations and kinship between Estonia and Hungary, because in 2012 the Sixth Finno-Ugric World Congress will be held in Budapest and the Estonian head of state is expected to participate.

President Ilves Meets Hungarian President

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Hungarian President Pál Schmitt took office a month and a half ago, on 6 August 2010. “This was my first meeting with the Hungarian President and I hope that today’s discussion created a solid basis for our future work relationships,” said President Ilves.

In the evening the President of the Republic will address the UN General Assembly and afterwards give a reception at the Permanent Representation of Estonia to the UN.

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