

“The resolutions have been passed by NATO’s summit in Lisbon; the alliance has properly balanced its main functions – collective defence, crisis management, and co-operation with partners – in its new strategic concept and now the main focus must be on the implementation of the Lisbon resolutions,” said the President, Mr. Toomas Hendrik Ilves, at his meeting with Mr. Anders Fogh Rasmussen, the NATO Secretary General.

One of these is the establishment of the alliance’s cyber strategy, in which Estonia wants to participate actively and the NATO Centre of Excellence for Co-operative Cyber Defence can be used, powerfully, for the development of new solutions. Many members of the alliance have already joined the centre, said the Estonian Head of State.

“Cyber defence should be treated as one of the common military capabilities for which clear objectives need to be set,” said President Ilves. “NATO’s cyber strategy should not merely concern devising defence for the so-called large system of the alliance, but it should also defend the important infrastructure of Member States.”

The Estonian Head of State emphasised the importance of the visibility, credibility, and internal solidarity of NATO, saying that both the organisation of exercises in the Member States of the alliance and, for example, the continuance of the air security mission in the Baltic states play an important role to this end.

“We want this mission to be continued until 2018 and beyond,” said President Ilves. “The contribution of the alliance and many of its members in keeping the airspace of the Baltic states clean has been successful, and this has been proven by a considerably reduction in the number of border violations.”

According to President Ilves, Estonia is willing to increase the expenditures of host countries, which demonstrates our intent to participate, more and more, in defending NATO’s air space.

The NATO Secretary General thanked Estonia for its strong contribution in Afghanistan, where more than five hundred and fifty Estonian defence force members are serving in one of the most dangerous areas, the southern province; additionally, Estonia co-ordinates the rebuilding of

health care system in the Helmand province.

The gradual transfer of security responsibility to the Afghan authorities, training programmes for the local security forces in Afghanistan, and the civil contribution of NATO and partner countries to building a safe Afghanistan were discussed at the meeting.

“According to NATO’s plans, transferring the security responsibilities should be completed in Afghanistan by 2014; however, it’s quite obvious that in view of the current situation the west will not repeat its mistake and will not leave Afghanistan on its own after the cessation of current military activities,” President Ilves emphasised.

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