

“The thoughts of the Estonian people are with the Japanese people who have suffered immensely as a consequence of the earthquake and tsunami, and, like many other countries, we are willing to reach out a supporting and helping hand to assist you as much as we can,” said the President, Mr. Toomas Hendrik Ilves, at his meeting today with Mr. Hideaki Hoshi, the Japanese Ambassador.

The extensive natural disaster in which thousands perished has been followed by a deepening humanitarian crisis: approximately half a million people have been evacuated from the worst-hit areas; many regions are trying to cope with a lack of food, drinking water, medicine and electricity.

The Estonian Head of State admitted that coping with the humanitarian crisis is the most difficult task that the Japanese government is facing.

“The consequences of such a catastrophe will be felt for a long time, as we are also dealing with providing long-term emotional support to many people who have lost their homes and next of kin,” said President Ilves, adding that an opportunity to send children from the affected area to Estonia for the summer could be considered.

Ambassador Hoshi thanked President Ilves for a donation granted by Estonia as humanitarian assistance, adding that on days like these the greatness or smallness of a country is of no importance; solidarity and support are what counts.

President Ilves and Ambassador Hoshi discussed the problems with the Japanese nuclear power stations, which followed the earthquake and tsunami.

“The Japanese experience in handling such situations is highly important for a number of countries that use nuclear power, as it will teach us how to avoid even more devastating consequences both during and after natural disasters,” President Ilves said.

*Donations for the victims of the earthquake in Japan can be made to the accounts of the Estonian Red Cross, no. 1180001436 in Swedbank and no. 10220039608010 in SEB. Please state "Earthquake in Japan" in the payment details.*

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