

“Poland as an influential country in the Baltic Sea region and Europe in general is Estonia’s good and reliable partner in spheres that are of importance for both of us in the European Union and NATO;” told the President, Mr. Toomas Hendrik Ilves, at his meeting with the Polish Head of State, Mr. Bronislaw Komorowski, who arrived in Estonia today for a two-day working visit.

Presidents Ilves and Komorowski assured that the relations between Estonia and Poland are those of two good friends.

“There is one large country in Europe that understands when we speak of democracy and understands our security issues – and, as we saw in the case of NATO’s defence plans – it is ready to fight for them. Poland is that country,” President Ilves said.

According to Mr. Komorowski, the Polish Head of State, Estonia enjoys the reputation of a bold country in Poland, a country, “which did not only gain its freedom, but also had the skills to use this freedom wisely”.

The Estonian Head of State thanked Poland for its active approach to launching the Baltic Sea Strategy, its repeated contribution to the NATO-led air security operation of the Baltic states and its participation in the activities of the Baltic Defence College and the NATO Centre of Excellence for Co-operative Cyber Defence in Tallinn.

“It is necessary for Poland to visibly participate in shaping the future of the transport corridors of the Baltic Sea region and energy security,” President Ilves emphasised. “Railway and road projects that connect the Baltic states and Poland to the rest of Europe are important for all of us, in the same way that the establishment of links and connections required for ensuring energy security are of utmost importance for our region.”

Presidents Ilves and Komorowski discussed the priorities of Poland when it holds the next Presidency of the European Union, the Eastern Partnership being one of them.

“While Ukraine and Moldova only need some friendly encouragement from the European Union to continue with their reforms, the recent developments in Belarus, which strongly deviate from the concept of a state based on the rule of law, concern us,” President Ilves admitted. “The European Union is interested in being surrounded by democratic countries.”

The two heads of state also discussed the recent events in North-Africa and the region in general.

“Once again, these events prove that the European Union urgently needs a common foreign and security policy,” President Ilves said. “This is our moral obligation.”

When speaking about the economic relations between Estonia and Poland, President Ilves characterised Poland as a country that is also an attractive foreign market for Estonia, due to its size, closeness and purchase power, which has suffered less than other countries from the credit crunch.

“Both of us have coped relatively well with the global crisis,” admitted the Estonian Head of State, who also said that a well-functioning EU domestic market is now among the priority issues to be handled and both Estonia and Poland can do a lot in this sphere, together.

“There is one more sphere to consider – regional macro-economic strategies. I am glad that the Baltic Sea Strategy was successfully launched back in 2009, as regional competition issues often have a cross-border nature,” President Ilves said. “We stand a good chance of making the Baltic Sea region the most rapidly developing and flourishing area in the European Union.”

Today, Presidents Ilves and Komorowski opened the Estonian-Polish business forum at the Chamber of Commerce and Industry; they will be visiting the Estonian War Museum (the General Laidoner Museum) in the afternoon and in the evening, the Estonian Head of State will host his Polish counterpart in his home farm of Ärna. Tomorrow, President Komorowski will give a speech in the hall of Tartu University.

The First Lady of Poland, Mrs. Anna Komorowska, and Mrs. Evelin Ilves visited the Centre for

Children's Literature, where a book "Väike Chopin" (Little Chopin) was presented and they had an excursion in the Old City of Tallinn.

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