

President Toomas Hendrik Ilves, who spoke last evening as one of the heads of state of the European Union Member States at a cyber security session at the Annual Meeting of the Trilateral Commission that unites the most influential opinion-formers from Europe, North-America and Asia, called on much closer cooperation between the European Union and NATO as well as within both organisations.

“Cyber crime, be it political or criminal, does not usually occur within the borders of one country, which is why our resistance to such activity can only be international as a joint effort of democratic states,” said the Estonian head of state.

He reminded those present that technical solutions for controlling or alleviating cyber attacks are not insurmountably complicated – what is complicated is to achieve a day-to-day, coordinated and trusting cooperation within and between states.

“We all have to understand that cyber strikes may be even more dangerous than military attacks and that cyber security is an integral part of overall security in the 21st century,” said President Ilves. “We have already seen how state-supported cyber attacks do not target some country’s military infrastructure but their target is to paralyse civil networks.”

The Estonian head of state regarded the Council of Europe’s Convention on Cybercrime as being important but he expressed regret that to date only 26 states have ratified the convention and Russia and China are absent among these states.

President Ilves, who stressed the need for countrywide and international close coordination to achieve cyber security, provided the cyber defence league established in Estonia as an example. This is an experience in which several countries are already showing strong interest.

“The state-supported cyber defence league, which relies on the wish of citizens who truly care about their country to make it secure and more protected, shows how it is possible to reach good results by uniting the aspirations of public authority and civil society,” said the Estonian head of state. “This could be one of our weapons in combating enemies who tolerate cybercrime and use it to steal business secrets or, even more, instigate politically motivated

attacks against other countries by using cybercriminals for this purpose.”

Among the partners of President Ilves who participated at the cyber security session of the Annual Meeting of the Trilateral Commission were General Keith B. Alexander, the Director of the US National Security Agency, NSA, and the Commander of the US Cyber Command, CYBERCOM; Admiral Dennis C. Blair, the former US Director of National Intelligence; Ian Dudgeon, President of Australian Institute of International Affairs, and David DeWalt, CEO for one of the leading international companies involved in McAfee, the software security firm.

President Ilves will return to Estonia this evening.

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