

“Estonia and Romania as both European Union and NATO member states fully realise how the close co-operation of an influential organisation that joins two democratic countries, allows all to avoid or successfully settle international crises,” said the President, Mr. Toomas Hendrik Ilves, to the Romanian Head of State, Mr. Traian Băsescu, who today arrived in Estonia with his wife, Mrs. Maria Băsescu, for a two-day state visit.

Deepening political dialogue and closely interlinked activities – these should be the principles that characterise the co-operation between the European Union and NATO, emphasised the Estonian Head of State.

President Ilves, who described the relations between two countries as “good and free of any problems”, thanked Romania for their participation in patrolling the airspace of the Baltic countries and their current contribution to the Baldefcol activities.

“I do hope that I can soon welcome Romanian experts who will come and work in the NATO Centre of Excellence for Cyber Co-operation that has been opened in Tallinn,” the Estonian Head of State added, using, as an example, the participation of Estonia and Romania in South Afghanistan as part of the NATO-led international security forces. “We share a common understanding of global security and deterring threats.”

Presidents Ilves and Băsescu discussed the European Union’s eastern partnership, describing as important the support of the EU for our neighbouring countries that wish to continue and introduce political and economic reforms.

“Eastern partnership and regional policies in general will help to make not just Europe, but a much larger area more democratic, successful and safer,” stated the Estonian Head of State.

“The term “enlargement fatigue” is wrong and inappropriate, as it contains unjustified hopelessness. We cannot surrender to fatigue, as our friends who helped Estonia, Romania and many other countries on their way to the European Union never did,” said President Ilves. “It is inevitable that Serbia, as one of the leading countries in the region and important for the security of the whole of Europe, would become a member of the European Union and Moldova

would be covered by the enlargement wave rolling over the Western Balkans.“

President Ilves also reminded that Estonia opened an Eastern Partnerships Centre in Tallinn, which is now focusing on enhancing the administrative capacities of the public sector of Eastern partners and on sharing reform experiences.

When speaking about the economy, both President Ilves and Băsescu emphasised that the encouraging signs of the crisis coming to an end can be noticed in both Estonia and Romania.

“Conservative budget policies and reducing expenses still remain important,” the Estonian Head of State assured. “I do hope that as the situation advances, trading and economic relations between our two countries will become even closer.“

The visit of President Traian Băsescu is the first ever state visit of a Romanian Head of State to Estonia. In Tallinn, he will meet with the Speaker of the Riigikogu, Ms Ene Ergma, and Mr. Andrus Ansip, the Prime Minister, and he will visit a demo centre at Ülemiste. Tonight, the Estonian Head of State will host a dinner in honour of the Romanian Head of State and his wife.

Mrs. Evelin Ilves and the wife of the Romanian President, Mrs. Maria Băsescu, will visit KUMU Art Museum and Stenbock House, which is the seat of the Government of the Republic and the State Chancellery. They will also visit an Estonian family to see the everyday life of Estonian people.

The Estonian Head of State and Mrs. Evelin Ilves will present Mr. Băsescu with a glass piece of art entitled “Summer Light” by artist Mr. Ivo Lill and a knitted Haapsalu scarf and a brooch, made by jewel artist Mrs. Ene Valter, to his wife, Mrs. Maria Băsescu. In addition, a basketful of Estonian food products will be given to the presidential couple upon their departure.

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