

“The European Union has to stop wasting time. Every day we lose will only serve to deepen distrust and aggravate our problems. We need to achieve some agreements in order to make progress, and those that are capable of exercising some statesmanship will keep moving while the others will lag behind,” said the President, Toomas Hendrik Ilves, who today met with the President of Austria, Heinz Fischer, upon his arrival in Austria. The Estonian President will also participate in an important global policies conference.

The Estonian Head of State regarded the compromise that was achieved at the Council of the European Union last night in Brussels – the conclusion of an agreement between the governments of 17 euro zone countries and six more European Union Member States (it is quite likely that Sweden and the Czech Republic will also join the agreement) on imposing even stricter budget rules – as a highly important achievement.

“Any agreement that will serve to impose rules observed by all parties should be regarded as positive,” he told. “Now it is time to stick to the rules and comply with them; it is also time to take collective responsibility for the mistakes made by a number of Member States; this is the only way to emerge from this current credit and financial crisis.”

President Ilves described the attitude of the President of Central Bank of Europe, Mario Draghi, who stated that the economic policies of the euro zone require stronger discipline, as “inevitable”.

“No more exceptions; none of our allies can live on loans much longer; no one can go on ignoring the situation,” assured the Estonian Head of State. “Europe can only be saved by taking responsibility – the shared responsibility of both politicians and people. This requires politicians telling their people the decisions that are inevitable for achieving our goals.”