

The President, Toomas Hendrik Ilves, who yesterday participated in a round table convened to discuss strategic cyber issues at the US Department of State, emphasized: the NATO summit in Chicago must convey a clear and straightforward message to all 28 members of the alliance – it's high time for all of us to start ensuring cyber security, both at the domestic level and within the framework of international cooperation, as further procrastination will endanger the safety of our countries and our people.

"NATO is a political and military organisation, whose main function is the defence of its allies. Well-aimed and powerfully organised cyber attacks may cause more destruction in the 21st century than would a regular rocket launch," warned the Estonian Head of State. "A successful cyber attack launched against any infrastructure sensitive to national security could develop into a serious crisis."

The round table, summoned by Chris Painter, Coordinator for Cyber Issues of the US Department of State, and joining top cyber security specialists of the most important government agencies of the United States – from the White House to cyber military command – discussed the possible urgent efforts to be made separately in each and every country and also within NATO, to ensure security today.

"Cyber security must catch up with NATO's traditional military capabilities and the alliance's capacity for deterrence," President Ilves stated.

What cyber security stands for is national support to fend off attacks against military and civil infrastructures, the solving of and protection against cyber crimes, and the protection of intellectual property – a successful break-in may, in this sphere, result within minutes in the profitable theft of thousands and millions euros and dollars worth of technology.

"We are in need of the contribution of every country, of close international cooperation – including between NATO and the European Union – and of efficient partnership between the public and private sector to achieve all these objectives," the Estonian Head of State confirmed.

He called to mind that in Boston – only an hour away by plane from Washington – there is a

startup company, GrabCAD, established by two young Estonians that is combining efforts to achieve something good and useful for more than 150,000 mechanical engineers all over the world.

"The shapers of today's cyber security need such a cooperation network, beneficial for all participants," President Ilves said, providing Estonia's Cyber Defence League, which brings together volunteers from the information technology sector for the purpose of national defence, as an example.

Representatives of the Estonian Information System's Authority, led by Jaan Priisalu, Director General of the Authority, were also present at the round table which was organised by the US Department of State.

Yesterday President Ilves met in Washington with Howard Schmidt, Cybersecurity Coordinator at the White House, the President of Freedom House, David Kramer, and Alec Ross, Senior Advisor for Innovation to the Secretary of State and gave a presentation in a forum that took place at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS).

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