

"Experience shows that if we fail to act responsibly, we will, in the end, be forced to do so," told the President, Toomas Hendrik Ilves, at the 67th session of the United Nations General Assembly yesterday afternoon, where he spoke on behalf of the Republic of Estonia.

In his speech this year, President Ilves focused on the responsibility of countries that have been pushed by the economic instability suffered over the last couple of years. "Recent years of economic and financial turbulence have demonstrated a strong correlation between economic prudence and responsibility in fiscal matters. It is essential for the world to focus on sustainability. This is why I am going to focus on the three broad topics I shall address today: human rights, good governance, and development," told President Ilves as the opening words of his speech.

"True development can be nothing other than sustainable. Yet we have seen un-sustainability masked as development, despite the contradiction in term," said President Ilves. "Consider the global financial crisis. Burdening our children and grandchildren with mountains of debt is immoral, as is living at the expense of others. Growth without responsibility is illusory. We have learned this the hard way. Let's not make the same mistake again."

The Estonian Head of State emphasised the need to pay more attention to the violation of human rights at global level. "This includes paying attention to human rights' violations in places torn by conflict, as well as doing more to stop and prevent violation of rights of women and the child. It also means making the most of new technologies in the service of fundamental rights and freedoms. The need to take responsibility and to do more is also why Estonia looks forward to become a member of the Human Rights Council," President Ilves told.

He also referred to the situation in Syria in his address: "We have witnessed the complete breakdown of any semblance of the rule of law. We continue to see extensive human rights and international humanitarian law abuses. We cannot look on and wait for the violence to spread even more widely."

The Estonia Head of State emphasised the importance of Internet freedom at global level. "Freedom of expression is a human right whether in the city square, the press or in cyber space. For the third year in a row, Freedom House ranks Estonia first in Internet freedom," said President Ilves and mentioned that in addition, Estonia looks forward to discuss actively matters

relating to Internet freedom in the Human Rights Council.

According to President Ilves, internationally, there are worrisome developments related to the Internet governance. "Too many countries speak about the dangers of a free Internet from a security perspective. The truth is that cyber security is needed to prevent oppressive governments and criminals wreaking havoc. It is not to prevent peaceful individuals from speaking their minds or gathering information and exchanging ideas. Despite having experienced extensive cyber attacks – the so-called Web War One – five years ago, Estonia does not support more rigid regulation and censorship in cyber-space," President Ilves said.

The Estonian Head of State continued his address by saying that globally, there is a deficit of good and responsible governance and to a considerable extent, and that its lack is the root cause of countless other ills. When referring to Estonia's experiences, President Ilves said: "E-health system, e-governance, e-Tax Board, e-elections and many other solutions help to enhance efficiency and cut down expenses. Most importantly, however, they have increased the possibility to exercise fundamental rights and freedoms and improve inclusive and responsible governance. Therefore, Estonia wishes to share its E-governance skills and to continue to facilitate exchanges with partners worldwide."

President Ilves also recalled the late US Ambassador, who was killed in Libya, emphasizing that diplomacy is to prevent war. "When diplomats are attacked we are all less secure," stated President Ilves.

Read the full speech [here](#) .

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