

The National Defence Council, which gathered today in Kadriorg at the invitation of the President of the Republic, discussed cyber defence in Estonia with the aim of reaching a common understanding of who will do what and how at the critical moment.

"The dependence of Estonian society on e-services is great. This is like an ecosystem that encompasses everything and everybody. Inevitably, this makes us vulnerable to cyber threats," said President Toomas Hendrik Ilves.

"Cyber warfare around Estonia and against our allies has been waged for several years now. We do not know where and in which moment the situation will become critical but we have to be ready for it," said the head of state. "This calls for immediate deliberation regarding competence in strategic-level decision making. It must be clear who decides how high or low we will delegate, how quickly we have to respond, how long we can plan in advance."

In the opinion of the President, coordination of cyber defence in the country, including cooperation between the private sector and the state during a crisis, must be clarified.

"Efficient management of cyber defences must be the priority of key ministries. To whose authority are individuals accountable in a time of peace and during a crisis? Who does what and how at a critical moment?" President Ilves asked the members of the National Defence Council. Internal cyber defence is governed and coordinated by the Minister of Economic Affairs, and we can be successful only if every action is taken in complete cooperation with different ministries and state authorities," stressed the head of state.

The National Defence Council also heard the assessments regarding the current situation of cyber defence in Estonia made by Juhan Parts, the Minister of Economic Affairs and Communications, and Marika Priske, Secretary General of the Ministry, a review of the role of the Estonian Information System's Authority during a crisis made by Jaan Priisalu, Director General of the Estonian Information System's Authority, and a vision of the duties of the Defence Forces in the country's cyber defence made by Major General Riho Terras, the Commander of the Defence Forces.

The National Defence Council is an advisory body to the President of the Republic. The members of the council are the president of the Riigikogu, the Prime Minister, the chairman of the Riigikogu national defence committee, the chairman of the Riigikogu foreign affairs committee, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Defence, the Minister of Finance, the Minister of the Interior, the Minister of Justice and the Commander of the Defence Forces.

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