

President Toomas Hendrik Ilves thanked and acknowledged, at Estonia's anniversary of the Restoration of Independence, the journalism at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s.

When addressing the people invited to the reception that took place in the Rose Garden of the Office of the President, the Head of State said that Estonian journalists 22 years ago gave our people faith and hope, they inspired and united people, and their voice and words assured those who were afraid and in doubt that Estonia was not taken from us even during the most tragic days.

President Ilves gave a piece of the boulder that protected Toompea back in 1991 to the journalist of Eesti Raadio (Radio Estonia), Riina Eentalu, and her former colleague, Erki Berends, hoping that it will find a worthy place in the newly renovated building of Eesti Raadio.

"This time, the stone of gratitude belongs to Estonian journalism in the years when Estonia restored its independence. Journalism that became free during the years in which Estonia regained its freedom. This passionate journalism cared for Estonia and is what we so often miss in today's media," told the Head of State.

Riina Eentalu interrupted her vacation in August 1991, during the August Coup, and hurried to Radio House, Tallinn, where hundreds of people had gathered to defend it against possible attack by Pskov paratroopers.

"Back then, in Estonia before online and click media, radio was the fastest communication channel and provider of explanations both here and for those far away," President Ilves recalled. "Riina Eentalu was probably the only woman among the radio journalists who refused to leave the Radio House before the possible attack and her voice was confirmation for all of us: they have not taken Estonia."

"I am grateful to Estonian journalism in the years when Estonia restored its independence.

In previous years, President Ilves has presented the rock of gratitude for restoring Estonia's independence to Heinz Valk who coined the phrase that united Estonia, "One day, no matter what, we will win!", freedom fighter Lagle Parek, defenders of Tallinn TV Tower in August 1991, Peeter Milli, Jaanus Kokk, Uno Kaseväli and Jüri Joost, authors of patriotic songs, Jüri Leesment and Alo Mattiisen (posthumously), those who voted for restoring Estonia's independence at the Supreme Council on 20 August 1991 and the heritage conservation movement of Estonia.

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