

"The traditional understanding that invading the territory of a country or destroying its army is sufficient to disable a country may not always hold true today," told the President, Toomas Hendrik Ilves, yesterday, when addressing the audience at a hall lecture at the reputable National Defense University of the USA. "Today, enemies may ignore the army altogether; complicated cyber attacks can take down any country's economy and critical infrastructure – temporarily, at least."

The Estonian Head of State, who addressed more than 600 students, most of them high-ranking military officials, focused on security in the 21st century and, above all, on cyber defence.

"We must fit military defence into the cyber defence framework – armies do play a role in cyber security; however, this is not necessarily a decisive aspect," told President Ilves, in describing the closer involvement of the private sector into ensuring cyber defence as essential.

When speaking about the current status of trans-Atlantic relations, the Estonian Head of State told: "I am not only concerned about the defense expenditures of Europe that are somewhat low as well as limited defence will, but also about the isolation sentiments that are spreading in the United States. Luckily, this has not become a mainstream attitude – yet; however, certain withdrawal and fatigue in the sphere of foreign policy has become notable among both left and right forces."

Europe and the remaining free world need the strong contribution and commitment of the United States of America to stand for our common values, as no other country would be capable or willing to take such a role in today's world," assured President Ilves.

Today, he will participate in a Baltic-US summit in Washington; the President of the United States of America, Barack Obama, and the presidents of the Republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, Toomas Hendrik Ilves, Andris Bērziņš and Dalia Grybauskaitė, will meet in the White House. The leaders of the Baltic states will also meet with the Vice President of the USA, Joe Biden.

President Ilves: cyber attacks may bring countries to their knees, at least temporarily

Friday, 30 August 2013 07:08

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