

At today's meeting, Estonian President Toomas Hendrik Ilves, who arrived on a state visit in Romania, and the Romanian Head of State Traian Băsescu focused on the continuing advancement of Ukraine, Moldova and Georgia of the Eastern Partners towards the EU.

"Our meeting confirmed that Estonia and Romania are good allies to the Eastern Partners of the EU," President Ilves said, before flying for a working visit to the Moldovian capital, Chisinau, tomorrow.

He stated that the economic and political pressure currently experienced by Ukraine and Moldova, who have tied their future with the European Union, is unsuitable to the European politics of the 21st century. "They wish to belong to Europe; they see their future linked to the European Union. It is their free choice and we support it as strongly as we oppose attempts to force a different future on them through intimidation and sanctions," President Ilves emphasised.

The free trade and association agreement will probably be signed with Ukraine and initialled with Moldova and Georgia at the European Union Eastern Partnership summit in Vilnius in November.

At his meeting with President Băsescu, Ilves reiterated Estonia's support to Romania joining the Schengen visa area.

Both the Estonian and Romanian heads of state noted that bilateral relations are good. Our countries engage in daily and pragmatic co-operation at the European Union and NATO, where the views of Estonia and Romania overlap on all important issues. Additionally, three years ago, the national clean-up action "Teeme ära!" reached Romania, creating a connection between the civil societies of the two countries.

The Estonian Head of State will meet with the head of the Parliament Senate, Crin Antonescu; Prime Minister Victor Ponta; Minister of Foreign Affairs Titus Corlăţean; and Communications Minister Dan Nica; he will also attend a working lunch at the Romanian Chamber of Commerce, where he will encourage the entrepreneurs to co-operate more closely, especially in the field of

IT.

Tomorrow morning, President Ilves will meet the representatives of the civic initiative "Let's Do It, Romania!" in Bucharest, who were inspired by the Estonian campaign "Teeme ära!". Last weekend, more than 165,000 volunteers took part in the Romanian cleanup day.

This morning, President Ilves and Evelin Ilves laid a wreath on the grave of the unknown soldier at the Carol I Park in Bucharest. The Estonian Head of State also visited the Memorial of Rebirth and commemorated the more than one thousand Romanians who lost their lives in the Revolution of 1989, and laid a wreath at the monument of Corneliu Coposu, referred to as the conscience of Romania.

Evelin Ilves will accompanied Maria Bănescu, wife of the President of Romania, to the Cotroceni National Museum and the kindergarten for hearing-impaired children. Evelin Ilves also visited the National Village Museum in Bucharest and the historically and culturally significant Sinaia Monastery and Peleş Castle.

This evening, President Traian Bănescu and Maria Bănescu will hold a formal state dinner at the Cotroceni Palace in honour of President Ilves and Evelin Ilves.

The official delegation of President Ilves includes the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Defence Mikk Marran, the chairman of the board of the Estonian Chamber of Commerce and Industry Toomas Luman and the representative of "Teeme ära!" Meelika Hirmo.

The business delegation includes Allan Aru (Featherie Invest OÜ/Ecometal AS), Mihail Beregoi and Tiit Vapper (Real Systems AS), Alar Salum (Krimelte AS), Hannes Plinte (Girf OÜ/GOSwift), Kaido Saar.

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