

The Estonian Head of State Toomas Hendrik Ilves arrived on a working visit to Moldova and, speaking at a formal dinner, he highlighted the understanding that Moldova has chosen a European future, which makes us co-travellers, even though our pace is still somewhat different.

"Europe awaits Moldova because we know that Moldova belongs in Europe. The entire soul, past and future of your nation lie in Europe," the Estonian Head of State stressed.

He noted that there are also those who dislike it; they make threats and try to force a different future on Moldova.

"Just as the entire European Union, Estonia will never accept that kind of blackmail; European values rule out intimidation in international relations," President Ilves assured.

"The European Union is based on shared values, the rule of law, democracy, freedom of speech, and transparency in politics and economic decisions. The European Union also relies on mutual responsibility to uphold shared values and abide by the rules that have been agreed upon together. This is also the right way to advance towards the European Union – the way of upholding our values and abiding by agreements," the Estonian Head of State said.

"To an outsider, Europe seems very demanding of its partners. I know this from my own experience due to the long process of negotiations. In reality, it is the desire to make our union strong and successful. The desire that the homework of European partners would improve them and add to the strength of the European Union," President Ilves said.

At the official dinner hosted by President Nicolae Timofti, he reiterated what he has said at many previous meetings: Estonia is a reliable ally and partner for Moldova, which has chosen the European path. In our co-operation so far, we have focused on the modernisation of the public sector, health care, environmental and education systems, and laying the foundations for the e-state.

"Presumably, our shared success with these projects constitutes a part of the contribution towards congratulating Moldova for signing the free trade and association agreement at the European Union Eastern Partnership summit in Vilnius in November," the Estonian Head of State said. "However, these are just the first common oar strokes. We still have a long way to row. The Vilnius summit is not a stopover but a new start. We will still need wisdom and persistence, strength and stamina as well as the support from our own people and other countries. We will manage it."

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