

"The world needs a UN that is influential and necessary," said President Toomas Hendrik Ilves, who, with Evelin Ilves, welcomed the Secretary General of the UN Ban Ki-moon and his wife Ban Soon-taek today to Kadriorg.

"The world needs an UN whose resolutions have weight in the world and whose activities truly help to make the world a better and more peaceful place, including in hotspots like the Middle East," the Estonian Head of State said. "This means that the UN must be dynamic and should not let the world leave it behind."

According to President Ilves, the influence of the UN also means that the governing bodies of the UN, including the Security Council, must include more influential states of the 21st century. This would improve the geographical balance in the organisation.

"I am convinced that the UN must reflect the changes that have taken place in the world in the past 70 years, since the creation of the UN," the Estonian Head of State asserted. "I wish the Secretary-General and all other member states the wisdom and strength essential in making changes."

President Ilves stressed that Estonia considers the spread of democracy important and is leading the way in terms of successfully implementing e-solutions in governing and introducing it to partners: "The e-solutions in state governing, and the free and safe use of the Internet increase the transparency of governance, the involvement of society in the running of the state and supports the development and growth of the economy."

As a world-wide organisation, the UN must make sure that the development of the Internet continues in the future with the participation of all parties, as was agreed in Tunis in 2005, i.e. the Internet must remain safe and free at the same time, the Estonian Head of State said. According to him, the freedom of expression as well as other basic rights must be ensured both offline as well as online, and as a founding state of the Freedom Online Coalition, Estonia firmly supports Internet freedom.

President Ilves reminded that various regions of the world take an active interest in Estonian

e-solutions, which is why we wish for the UN to be a partner in introducing ideas and solutions.

Speaking about expanding the zone of democratic states in close proximity of the European Union, the Estonian Head of State assured: we need the signing of the association and free trade agreement with Ukraine and initialling with Georgia and Moldova at the Eastern Partnership summit in Vilnius, because the time is ripe.

"The political and economic pressure coming from the sidelines to hinder the integration of neighbouring states with the EU is regrettable," he added.

Estonia wishes that in addition to hotspots, the UN would continue to pay attention to frozen conflicts like Transnistria in Moldova, Abkhazia and South Ossetia in Georgia and Nagorno-Karabakh.

"However, in doing that, the arduous solutions of these conflicts and the development of the states involved should not be tied together, including their integration with successful international organisations, such as the European Union," President Ilves stressed.

He confirmed that Estonia wishes to expand its role in the UN peacekeeping missions according to its capabilities.

Evelin Ilves and Ban Soon-taek will visit the Ukrainian cultural centre in Tallinn and the Estonian Children's Literature Centre.

President Ilves will host an official dinner in honour of the Secretary General of the UN and his wife.

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