

President Toomas Hendrik Ilves, on a working visit in London, gave the opening speech at the conference "Power and Commerce in the Internet Age" at Chatham House.*

In his speech, President Ilves focused on the challenges of cyber space, noting that it entails both great opportunities as well as great threats.

"This, in turn, highlights the issue of personal privacy and challenges to national security. It is important to find a balance between security and freedom, privacy and transparency," the Estonian Head of State said.

President Ilves stressed that people operating in cyber space must be clearly identifiable.

"There is a technological solution to this, like the ID-card in Estonia," he said. "A state that wants to keep up with the development of technology must deal with that issue. Identification is not only a question of privacy or security; it is also a question of the development of technology. Identification is a prerequisite for new successful e-solutions for the public and private sector."

In this, the Estonian solution can set an example for the world, many participants of the conference admitted.

Among the audience of President Ilves were businessmen, experts of the IT field, academics, politicians, and journalists from the United Kingdom, USA and other countries.

This afternoon, the Head of State will meet with the British Minister for Digital Affairs, Francis Maude. Tomorrow, the Head of State will give a presentation entitled "The Role of Information and Communications Technology in Promoting Business and Innovation" at the Legatum Institute.

The President will return to Estonia tomorrow evening.

* President Ilves spoke under the Chatham House rule. Quoted by the speaker's consent as expressed after the session.

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