

The President, Toomas Hendrik Ilves, today flew out to Washington where tomorrow he will be presented with the annual democracy award by NDI (National Democratic Institute), an institute that supports democratic development at international level. This year, the awards were given to promoters of civil society and innovation. President Ilves will get the award for promoting e-governance and digital civil society.

NDI is a non-profit, nonpartisan organisation that works to support and strengthen democratic institutions worldwide through citizen participation, openness and accountability to government. NDI will celebrate its 30th anniversary in December and has worked with partners from 130 countries (see more at <http://ndi30.tumblr.com/>). This year's awards for promoting democracy will be handed over at an official seminar, dedicated to the 30th anniversary of NDI.

The Estonian Head of State will meet the former US Minister of Foreign Affairs, Madeleine Albright, in Washington and will participate with her in a video address to greet the participants of the annual human rights conference that is organised by the Estonian Institute of Human Rights to celebrate UN human rights day. The Estonian Head of State will also meet with David Kramer, President of Freedom House, a think tank promoting civil rights and freedoms and Christopher Painter, US State Department Co-ordinator for Cyber Issues.

In Washington, President Ilves will hand over the Order of the Cross of Eagle, Class I, which he gave in 2010, on the eve of Independence Day, to retired US General Bantz John Craddock, Commander of NATO's European Allied Forces in 2006-2009.

On Wednesday, the Head of State will fly to London to participate in the meeting of a body of experts summoned by ICANN (Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers), an organisation to watch over the international administration of the Internet. President Ilves was asked to chair the assembly of experts. The general goal is to analyse current challenges related to management of the Internet and the protection of free Internet in situations where freedom of expression is, among other things, experiencing increasing pressure by authoritarian countries, requiring more regulations and restriction. The body of experts, including high level experts that represent states, civil societies and enterprises from all over the world, plans to submit a report next spring on the current situation with Internet administration and future trends in this sphere.

See also: <http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/high-level-panel-organizes-to-address-future-of-internet-governance-232274461.html>

President Ilves will return home late Saturday night.

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