

The National Defence Council will hold an extraordinary meeting today, summoned by the President, Toomas Hendrik Ilves, to discuss the continued increase in military tensions initiated by Russia in Ukraine.

The National Defence Council will be given an overview of the situation in Ukraine and the activities of the Russian military forces in the area.

The Estonian leaders will also discuss co-ordinated counter steps by NATO and the European Union that would protect Ukraine's independence and integrity and the possible effects of a crisis breaking out so close to us on the Baltic Sea region.

Also, in a telephone conversation that took place last night, President Ilves and the Head of State of Poland, Bronisław Komorowski, focused on possible effective steps to be taken by NATO and the European Union in order to help maintain the territorial integrity of Ukraine and avoid a military escalation of the situation.

The National Defence Council is the advisory body of the President of the Republic. The Speaker of the Riigikogu, Prime Minister, Chairman of the National Defence Committee of the Riigikogu, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Riigikogu, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Defence, Minister of Finance, Minister of Internal Affairs, Minister of Justice and Commander of the Defence Forces all sit on the Council.

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