

The President, Toomas Hendrik Ilves, who arrived in Tokyo on a visit at the invitation of the Japanese Prime Minister, today made a presentation at the Japan Association of New Economy, gave a lecture at Waseda University, met with local and foreign media at Tokyo National Press Club and paid a visit to the headquarters of Microsoft Japan, where Estonian and Japanese start-up companies were introduced to investors.

Japan is the leading manufacturer of state-of-art technology at global level, while Estonia can be a model for Japan in testing e-governance services developed in Japan, both in the public and private sectors, told President Ilves.

"For example, by introducing the opportunities for using the personal ID code, which is currently unavailable in Japan, in Estonia, we are presenting something to the people of Japan that we couldn't imagine living without, seeing as the majority of e-services require the use of it," he explained.

It would be possible to create novel solutions that are applicable all over the world by combining the top-level products of Japanese technological companies and information systems that are already used in Estonia. One such example could be the use of biometric solutions, developed by Hitachi, for the purpose of the identification of individuals in combination with the Estonian e-election system and e-health solutions.

"Japanese companies have a global reach while Estonia has practical experience with building up and using e-services," told President Ilves, who gave a denominated Estonian ID-card and test copies of mobile ID to Hiroshi Mikitani, who is the founder of Japan Association of New Economy, a large-scale shareholder in the gigantic Rakuten company and a highly influential businessman who supports the development of state-level e-services. Last year, Forbes magazine listed Rakuten among the ten most innovative companies in the world. The client base of the company that started as an online department store, comparable to Amazon, is currently around 500 million people.

"I am quite sure that small Estonia and large Japan are on the same page in terms of e-future goals," confirmed the Estonian Head of State.

Although the large scale data gathering by NSA, which became public last summer, has undermined the credibility of the Internet at a global level, we have no way back to yesterday and the security awareness of people and supervision over special services needs to be enhanced to restore credibility, President Ilves told.

"We could only achieve absolute cyber security by stopping the use of mobile phones and computers in general. However, this is not possible. Therefore, the Snowden case should not put us off using e-solutions," emphasised the Estonian Head of State. "On the contrary, we must become bolder and more inventive to enhance both the technical capabilities and security awareness of our people."

According to President Ilves, electronic administration means excellent transparency, as a trace will be left by each logging operation or inquiry that can help to avoid misuse and violations.

On Friday, President Ilves and Evelin Ilves will meet with Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko. The Estonian Head of State will have a political and economical discussion with the Prime Minister of Japan, Shinzō Abe. President Ilves, accompanied by a significant business delegation, will also meet with Minister Ichita Yamamoto, who is responsible for information technology policies, and the Chairman of the foreign trade organisation, JETRO, Hiroyuki Ishige.

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