

To begin, I would like to welcome President Obama to Estonia. It is a pleasure and honor to receive you right before the NATO Summit. Your visit sends a strong message. We are grateful to the United States and to you personally for your leadership, commitment and support.

We are appalled by the latest news from Iraq. We condemn these barbaric acts. We see ISIS as a serious threat to all of us and stand together with the United States and Allies in this.

The main issue on our agenda today is security. The question on everyone's mind is the situation in Ukraine and its wider impact on European security.

I have just heard about the ceasefire agreed between presidents Poroshenko and Putin. I hope that it lasts.

We need to be clear and consistent in the language that we use to describe the situation in Ukraine. As the EU underlined last weekend, this is Russian aggression. The EU and US are ready to take further restrictive measures in response to Russia's behavior. Russia must admit that it is a party to the conflict and take real steps that will lead to a de-escalation of the conflict. We must also continue to support Ukraine by providing them assistance that they need.

When it comes to the security of our region, the United States' engagement here runs deep. Estonia is a close and reliable ally to the US. We take our NATO commitments seriously. We have not sat back and waited for others to take care of our security. Since joining the Alliance, Estonian soldiers have consistently defended the freedom of others – in Afghanistan, in Iraq and most recently, in the Central African Republic. We dedicate sufficient resources to defense and are consistently increasing our national defense capacity.

We are grateful to the US for sending troops here and for actively participating in the Baltic air policing mission. Your presence underlines the credibility of NATO's Article Five. Without a doubt, your bilateral contributions have helped set an example for other NATO allies. A robust and visible Allied presence here in Estonia is the best way of discouraging any possible aggressors. We look forward to the NATO Summit tomorrow confirming this.

We face a completely new security situation in Europe and we are pleased that this is reflected in many of the Summit's documents. We expect the NATO Summit in Wales to adopt the Readiness Action Plan that will guide Allied nations for years to come through a set of practical steps and measures of reassurance and deterrence.

In addition to our close defense cooperation, I am also pleased that our bilateral relations are strong in many other areas such as cyber and energy security. Globally, we are working together to promote our common values – democracy, human rights, and rule of law. Estonia is a world leader in internet freedom and e-governance. We have a liberal economy offering many exciting opportunities for increased trade, cooperation and investment.

Let me once again welcome President Obama to Estonia, to Northern Europe, one of Europe's most prosperous and successful regions. Our countries share common values and interests and I am certain that together we can contribute to the vision of a Europe whole, free and at peace.