

Dear members of the Riigikogu and members of the Government,
Dear policemen and -women, and your families.

The credibility of our police is around 80 per cent. What are we to deduce from this figure? To put it simply, this is a recognition of our police's professionalism and good work.

But we can see a deeper meaning in that figure – law-abiding people are not afraid of the police, they see the police as an ally and a good companion on the path to a safer Estonia.

And this is what they are, for instance the two policemen, Toomas Lehter and Roland Meritee, who were conducting a speed check at Maardu, and used their patrol car to drive a woman whose labour had just started and whose husband turned to the police for help, safely to a hospital.

This kind of caring for fellow humans should be part of our everyday life.

Likewise, we expect policemen to be committed, resolute, inventive. To act like Chief Superintendent Sergei Futkin, who solved the crisis in Viru prison in early October, when two youths were holding a social pedagogue hostage.

Dear friends,

We were all happy to see that this year, the number of traffic accidents and traffic deaths was on decline. We are all happy when criminality decreases. Yet in the past few months, the number of people killed or injured on Estonian roads and streets has increased once more. There may be other backlashes, in other areas of life.

Here we must understand and emphasise very clearly that the police is not an election team, arranging a campaign of several months or perhaps years. The police must always look far into the future and simultaneously grasp the current developments in the society.

A complicated economic situation, growing unemployment, and simply growing uncertainty – these are the challenges our society is facing today, and no doubt they are also affecting the work of the police. They are not making your work easier, quite to the contrary.

But I am sure you can manage.

Dear policemen and -women,

Estonia's interests do not end at Estonia's border. Neither do Estonia's concerns.

Our police have several times proved its international capacity and considerable aptness for efficient international co-operation.

Not long ago, the Estonian-Finnish joint investigation group revealed, within a matter of days, an individual who had blackmailed a Finnish businessman of two million Euro, threatening to kill

his family. On that occasion, our central criminal police demonstrated master class skills.

I am glad to see that the Estonian police are with increasing efficiency rounding up cyber offenders emptying people's bank accounts, and other computer frauds. More often than not, such crimes are committed across national borders. International crime must be met with international police co-operation.

How else would it have been possible to apprehend the man who sat at his computer in Estonia and stole 90,000 Euro from a doctor's bank account in Austria, which he transferred via Latvia to Russia, to the account of an offshore company in China and thence to Ukraine, where the money was transferred to credit cards, which were sent to Estonia by bus? In the solution of this crime, Estonian central criminal police was assisted by foreign partners from the police institutions of several countries.

Computer crooks are already warning each other in Internet forums to avoid Estonia, where the police can catch you. This is a big credit to you.

I am certain that you will also concentrate all your ingenuity and resources to apprehend even the dangerous abusers stalking the Internet.

Finally,

I know that there are great principal changes awaiting the police as an organisation in connection with the formation of a joint agency. The recipe for mastering this situation is very simple: mutual trust between the senior and junior officials, and flow of information. Yet despite reforms, it is your everyday work that matters. The work that protects Estonia internally and gives our people a feeling of safety.

I wish you success, dear policemen and -women! To your families, I wish deep understanding and patience.

Thank you.