

My dear mothers and grandmothers!

I speak to you on this Mother's Day in a more personal role – as son and father – not so much in my official capacity as president.

The reason for this is no doubt the personal nature of Mother's Day and the feelings that are nigh-well impossible to express officially, let alone fully, or to somehow sanction on the government level.

It is the fact that you, the mothers of our country, nurture and protect our family of families, our country and people.

Thank you, for this day and all of the other bright days in our lives.

Thank you for the sense of security that each mother creates solely by her existence and forever instils in us.

But I also want to take this opportunity to convey more than just my sincere gratitude.

I want to encourage everyone, especially mothers and grandmothers, to be more demanding regarding things that are within our power to change, making life better and caring about our family and loved ones.

Dear mothers and grandmothers of Estonia!

Good health is the foundation of our lifestyle and quality of life.

As free and responsible citizens of an independent state, we know fairly well that doctors, hospitals and our entire health care system are just one part of our health, albeit a very important part.

That is the element of the system that deals in large part with consequences.

We make our contributions to the other, much larger part every day ourselves, by exercising, through what we eat and drink.

The human body was designed to move around. Regarding this facility, it can be said: "Use it or lose it."

Let's not lose it. Let's make a point to go outside, take our families with us. And be active. Starting today.

I understand that the topic of food is painfully tied with the state of the economy and the amount of time that we have.

The burden on most mothers and many fathers and the inevitable weariness that results forces people to favour cheaper, easier and more convenient choices.

But I know that price and time do not always have to be a factor when making a healthful choice.

Often it is enough to make small changes in lifestyle and diet – changes that come at no additional cost.

Too much sugar, salt and fat, to say nothing of synthetic preservatives and artificial colours, take a major toll on our health and the health of our children, just like water that drips onto rock day in and day out will eventually wear it away.

Let us set high demands and thus help Estonian food producers do what they are capable of doing, and doing well at that: offering an increasingly wide selection of healthful foods.

Good nutrition is a habit that starts in the home. Estonian mothers have never been short on resourcefulness.

Ladies and gentlemen, dear friends.

It is impossible to be too demanding when it comes to education and learning. That includes being critical and cross when the situation calls for it.

Mothers in particular are responsible for shaping the cultural building block that comes before formal education, and without it, education cannot exist.

It could be said that our mother's language – the idiom of a person's upbringing – tunes a person's soul to the key in which it will resound for the rest of their life.

We all have the right to expect those to whom we have entrusted our affairs to speak to us in our own language. Clearly and comprehensibly.

In one sense, I mean that the language of public administration and government must indeed be clear and precise. Laws are not for lawyers; they are for us all.

A living language does not mean that it spontaneously arises somewhere; it means that the language is created.

But more to the point, I consider unacceptable the kind of language used to address children starting school in the autumn and their parents the way in which children starting school in the autumn and their parents have been addressed.

What is impermissible is the confusion that government, locals and others have sown, especially here in Tallinn.

It would be more correct to say: they have not spoken to the children and their parents, because any kind of speech entails a striving toward greater clarity.

The goal here has been something else, and it is unacceptable. It has brought lack of clarity into homes, and has caused grief for mothers and fear for children. The fear of going to school and lack of confidence in one's abilities.

Our mothers, children and homes deserve better. We must not restrict ourselves to only pretty words on Mother's Day.

Paying due to our mothers, and thereby showing we care about our people, our society and our future, is an inseparable part of our everyday lives.

Let us think about this when we give our mothers flowers and express our gratitude. Our mothers, the women of our country, our grandmothers and daughters – they are all unbelievably good at what they do, smart and beautiful. They deserve our recognition and gratitude both as flowers and words, but above all, what they deserve is our thanks in the form of our everyday deeds.

I wish you all a wonderful Mother's Day!

