

Respected employers, good enterprising people,

Moderation and prudence have become the chorus of our everyday song. As we look at the economic indicators of Estonian companies and the economic environment in general, it seems, however, that we have climbed back to the pre-crisis level – turnover, profit and equity values have grown. However, it is not uncommon for the terms 'restoring' and 'ongoing crisis' to be mentioned in the same sentence.

During the crisis, the Republic of Estonia also adopted and introduced a number of cost saving and efficiency increasing measures that we characteristically see in companies. We hear the Government using expressions like "group account" and "liquidity". However, our teachers are on strike today!

Has anyone left something unsaid or undone? Could we have done better?

We must do better. Otherwise, the Republic of Estonia does not make any sense. Being the best and most efficient cannot become goals in themselves. I am sure that all of you know how important it is to keep your books and accounts in good order. Yet, book-keeping is not the essence and idea of being. I really do wish for an Estonia in which social dialogue would not start and end with arguments on solvency. Our viability is much more important.

People who have achieved economic success often stand out due to their path to achievement, resourcefulness and creativity. I would like to see you, today's enterprising people, spread your enterprising mind, so that the officials and those who shape our policies would not simply adopt your vocabulary and financial and technological ways of thinking, but also your enterprising attitude – the desire to stand out and get something done. This is something one can only learn through personal experience. If you are smart, responsible and caring, the other segments of society can hardly do something different. Setting an example for generations to come should be an example in itself.

My ladies and gentlemen,

I have heard a saying that if you are not part of the solution, you are part of the problem. As I listen to the opinions expressed about today's burning issues that pop up in the discourse between the state and entrepreneurs, it is not that one or other party holds a key to all solutions. Instead, the key is your intent and skill to agree upon important issues and have a reasoned discussion. Your task is not simply to be there, but also to participate and represent your opinion without feeling jaded. Only then will a dialogue become more than a monologue, which ultimately fades into silence.

The last panel of today's conference, called "Developments of Tomorrow", and its participants represent, quite probably, the future hopes and expectations of the organisers and entrepreneurs.

The more effective organisation of education and international financial markets are seen as tomorrow's opportunities, as well as today's obstacles. I generally agree with this view. It would be especially good to see them as a fusion and indicator of our development. On the day that we begin to provide education in the sphere of financial management that is competitive on an international level, we will have reached the same level as our competitors. The precision of entrepreneurs together with their contribution are essential for the successful organisation of professional training.

Good friends,

Far too often, the word "investor" is interpreted in Estonia as meaning "foreign investor", someone who will come here to create new jobs. It is now twenty years since we restored our independence and market economy, and I expect this audience to see themselves as reliable investors in Estonian society: not merely as taxpayers and financial investors who expect to achieve a particular level of profitability but as substantial contributors to issues that are important for business and society as a whole, whether the contribution is comprised of knowledge, entrepreneurship or perhaps patience, which all of us so badly need from time to time.