

Evelin Ilves, the patron of the Estonian Agrenska Foundation, an advisory and development centre for disabled children and their families, attended a reception at the Estonian embassy in Stockholm today dedicated to the 10th anniversary of the foundation. Partners past, present and future were invited to attend the event.

In addressing her fellow attendees Mrs Ilves thanked all of the people and organisations that had donated time and money to assist disabled children, children suffering from rare diseases and their families.

"As its patron I wish the Estonian Agrenska Foundation every success and the determination and drive they need to keep helping these kids and their families," she said. "The contributions that organisations like this make are invaluable."

At the reception, which marked 10 years of the foundation, Anders Bengtsson, a representative of Stenströms Skjortfabrik, presented a donation of €50,000, while Lars-Eric Boreström, a representative of Vätterledens Invest AB and Estonia's honorary consul in Gothenburg, donated a selection of his company's lights.

Evelin Ilves accepted the foundation's offer to become its patron in 2007 after she and President Ilves had visited the Ågrenska Foundation outside of Gothenburg.

"As a doctor I was aware of the medical aspects of rare illnesses and diseases, but it's only as the foundation's patron that I've come to realise how important systematic support services are to these children and their families, and how vital contact is between families whose children have been given the same diagnosis," she said. "Sometimes it can prove even more important to them than medical treatment."

As part of her trip to Stockholm Mrs Ilves also met with Queen Silvia, the patron of the Ågrenska Family Centre in Sweden.

The Estonian Agrenska Foundation is an offshoot of the Swedish Ågrenska Foundation and aims to be a cutting edge advisory and development centre for disabled children, children suffering from rare illnesses and diseases and their families in Estonia. The main support services it provides are family counselling, training to enable the families to work and cope with everyday life, assistance designed to ensure that children with special needs grow up to become mature adults and a temporary child care service for the families of these children.

The major project the foundation is currently involved in is finding the additional funding needed to complete construction work at Tammistu Manor outside of Tartu, which is being redeveloped as an advisory and rehabilitation centre for disabled children, children with rare diseases and their families. The cornerstone of the centre was laid by Queen Silvia of Sweden in 2007.

The website of the Estonian Agrenska Foundation can be found at www.agrenska.ee

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