

Evelin Ilves, patron of the Estonian Agrenska Foundation, an advisory and development centre that assists children with disabilities and their parents, met yesterday in Stockholm with Queen Silvia, the patron of the Swedish Ågrenska Family Centre.

Evelin Ilves and Queen Silvia discussed the future of the Ågrenska Foundation and its Estonian subsidiary fund, which celebrates 10 years in operation this year. At present, additional funding needs to be found for a large-scale project implemented by the Estonian foundation, in order to complete the construction works required to re-design Tammistu Manor near Tartu into an advisory and rehabilitation centre for Estonian children with disabilities and rare diseases and their families. Queen Silvia placed the cornerstone of the centre in 2007.

"We also recalled the day when we visited Tammistu with Queen Silvia back in 2007 and placed the cornerstone for the main building. The sky was grey and totally overcast, it rained cats and dogs and the earth was covered with mud, but all the people present – children and their parents, friends, doctors and supporters – were smiling. It was a wonderful, memorable day," told Evelin Ilves.

In 2009, the President, Toomas Hendrik Ilves, also took a closer look at the work done by the Estonian Agrenska Foundation in Tammistu Manor and the progress achieved with the restoration of the manor. The presidential couple paid a visit in September 2007 to the Ågrenska Foundation near Göteborg. In October of the same year, Evelin Ilves accepted the invitation of the Estonian Agrenska Foundation and became a patron of the foundation.

Evelin Ilves and Queen Silvia admitted that the Swedish Ågrenska Foundation and its Estonian subsidiary foundation are involved in mutual educational co-operation and both parties will only gain from sharing the experiences of the two countries. "Most certainly, Estonia could use a systemic approach to creating jobs for disabled people and their successful implementation in the labour market, using Sweden as an example," Evelin Ilves added.

A reception dedicated to the 10th anniversary of the Estonian Agrenska Foundation also took place yesterday in the Estonian Embassy in Stockholm; at the event, Evelin Ilves thanked all the current and future co-operation partners. Next year, the Swedish Ågrenska Foundation will celebrate its 100th anniversary.

The Estonian Agrenska Foundation is a subsidiary of the Swedish Ågrenska Foundation, which is a modern advisory and development centre for children with disabilities and rare diseases and their families. The main support services offered involve family counselling, advice on coping and work, helping children with special needs to develop and childcare or temporary respite services for families with children with special needs. The website of the Estonian Agrenska Foundation is available at: www.agrenska.ee

Office of the President
Public Relations Department
Phone +372 631 6229