



REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA  
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

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### **ICDS Project on Baltic-US Relations**

Dear Ilze,

The ICDS has asked me to provide a letter of support for their application for funding for a project to study the Baltic states' approach to sustaining productive transatlantic relations as the US pursues a profound strategic reorientation.

As the Chair of their Supervisory Board, I am very familiar with the work of the ICDS. The centre has a strong track record of producing timely and constructive analysis and recommendations that support our decision making in the Estonian Ministry of Defence and in government more broadly. It is a small organisation, but it can and does draw on an extensive network within and beyond the Nordic-Baltic region to bring a range of perspectives to its work. Its research products, which often also incorporate the views and experiences of direct stakeholders and other interested parties, are thus always rich and policy-relevant.

The proposed study is especially pertinent. Policymakers across Europe and sympathetic partners in the US have been taken aback by the speed and extent of the changes in the transatlantic relationship. Naturally, they wish to preserve the mutually beneficial aspects of this relationship, but the approach to take when US and European positions sometimes differ starkly is not obvious. A review of Baltic efforts in this direction, and how these have been viewed in the US, should provide more clarity and offer valuable lessons for the future.

In this turbulent period, it is essential to have objective, deeply-researched, and independent perspectives of the type that the ICDS provides. I am certain that a report on this key topic will prove useful not only to us in the Baltic region, but to all European allies and to interested parties in the US too. I have no hesitation in commending the proposed project to you and hope that I can look forward to seeing its results in the coming months.

Yours sincerely,

Kaimo Kuusk  
Permanent Secretary