



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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**EU-UKRAINE COOPERATION COUNCIL
TWELFTH MEETING, BRUSSELS, 11 MARCH 2008**

EU Press release

At the twelfth EU-Ukraine Cooperation Council today, the EU welcomed the progress made in EU-Ukraine relations over the last year and called on the Ukrainian leadership to stabilise the country's political situation and continue on the path of ambitious political and economic reforms. The EU reiterated its commitment to support Ukraine's reform efforts.

The EU commended the conduct of the parliamentary elections of 30 September 2007, characterised by a lively campaign and genuine political competition, and the establishment of a new government in the end of 2007. The EU recalled the key importance of constitutional reform, establishing a viable system of proper checks and balances between the main state organs and an independent Constitutional Court, as a necessary basis for political stability. Ukraine was encouraged to make use of the advice of the Venice Commission in its efforts to obtain a sustainable and well balanced Constitution.

P R E S S

The Cooperation Council confirmed the extension of the Action Plan for a period of maximum one year as a key tool for Ukraine's reform process, and took note of the joint evaluation report on the implementation of the EU – Ukraine Action Plan, including additional specific actions for 2008.

The Cooperation Council welcomed the substantive progress achieved in the first six rounds of negotiations on a new Enhanced Agreement and reconfirmed the strong commitment of both parties to the negotiations. The Cooperation Council also welcomed the start of negotiations on a deep and comprehensive Free Trade Area as a core element of the New Enhanced Agreement on 18 February. The EU congratulated Ukraine on the finalisation of the WTO accession process in Geneva and encouraged it to complete the internal ratification process quickly.

The Cooperation Council highlighted the importance of further strengthening of EU - Ukraine relations through concrete co-operation, focusing on key sectors including energy, transport, environment and health. The Cooperation Council welcomed the entry into force of the EC-Ukraine Visa Facilitation and Readmission Agreements and emphasised the importance of their full implementation.

The Cooperation Council welcomed strengthened cooperation in the area of foreign and security policy, in particular in the regional context. The EU expressed its appreciation for Ukraine's cooperation on the Transnistria settlement, including through the EUBAM, and for the fact that Ukraine continues to align itself with most EU declarations. The Cooperation Council welcomed the recent ratification of the EU-Ukraine Agreement on the Participation of Ukraine in EU-led crisis management operations by the Ukrainian Parliament.

The EU was represented by Mr Rupel, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Slovenia, High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy Javier Solana, Mr Mingarelli, Deputy Director General for the European Neighbourhood Policy and relations with Eastern Europe, and Mr Sellal, Permanent Representative of France to the EU. Prime Minister Tymoshenko led the Ukrainian delegation.