

**P R E S S   R E L E A S E**

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**Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union**  
**on developments in Ukraine**

The European Union is following with close attention the recent developments in Ukraine. It is seriously concerned that the fall of the Yushchenko government may set back the process of economic and political reform, given the considerable achievements that his government has made over the past year.

In the opinion of the European Union, Mr Yushchenko's devoted work to introduce real economic and structural reforms in Ukraine has proven to be a very difficult task in which he, given the circumstances, has nevertheless achieved notable successes. For the first time in many years, positive tendencies were seen in the Ukrainian economy, while social priorities were also observed.

The European Union reiterates its opinion that the sort of economic and structural reforms implemented by Mr Yushchenko in Ukraine are inevitable and essential, as in all transition countries. Without such comprehensive reforms there can be no sustainable positive development in the country. Continued progress in this respect is also a pre-requisite for a deeper relationship with the EU.

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8082/1/01 REV 1 (Presse 164 - G)

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The European Union believes that the priority for Ukraine today should be to consolidate the political and economic reform process, in order to build a stable and prosperous society based on shared values of democracy, a strong civil society and market economy principles. This is crucial for Ukraine, but also very important for maintaining the confidence of the outside world. The European Union urges the President, Government and Parliament of Ukraine to engage in an intensified and constructive dialogue, in the interests of all parties, including the Ukrainian people.

The European Union reiterates that it supports a strong, stable, and democratic Ukraine oriented towards Europe.

The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union, the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, and the EFTA countries, members of the European Economic Area align themselves with this declaration.

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