



Main Achievements in Ukrainian-Latvian Relations During 20 Years of Ukraine's Independence



Latvia was among the first countries to recognize the state independence of Ukraine on 4 December 1991. Since the establishment of diplomatic relations between Ukraine and Latvia on 12 February 1992 the development of bilateral relations has been ascending and reached a new level. Strengthening and expanding mutually beneficial relations with Latvia - member of EU and NATO - is one of the elements of Ukraine's course towards European integration, deepening political and economic cooperation with the Baltic and Nordic countries.

By joining their efforts the parties managed to create a solid legal basis, which currently comprises 7 interstate, 23 intergovernmental, 3 inter-parliamentary and 45 interagency documents.

An active dialogue at the level of leaders of both states was established. Latvian President Valdis Zatlers was among the Heads of State - EU members, who attended the inauguration of the President of Ukraine Viktor Yanukovich on 25 February 2010. There was an exchange of visits - the President of Latvia V.Zatlers was in Ukraine on an official visit (25-27 June 2008), the President of Ukraine Viktor Yanukovich paid an official visit to Latvia (15 December 2010). Among the main results of the latest visit was an agreement to intensify trade and economic components of the Ukrainian-Latvian relations, to approve priority areas of cooperation in order to substantially increase bilateral trade and investments, to further the consistent support by Latvia of the EU integration course of my country. The signed during the visit Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine and Latvia on Cooperation in the Field of European Integration encourages these activities. Latvia also

provides assistance to Ukraine in encompassing European integration experience within the framework of various projects in the field of governance, development of democratic institutions etc.

Inter-parliamentary cooperation significantly complements the versatile development of the Ukrainian-Latvian political dialogue. Traditionally successful are the activities of the Group for inter-parliamentary relations with Ukraine in the Latvian Saeima and the Group on inter-parliamentary relations with Latvia in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine V. Lytvyn is invited to pay an official visit to Latvia.

Political dialogue between the two countries develops at the level of heads of governments and foreign offices of Ukraine and Latvia. Official visit of Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine K. Gryshchenko to Latvia (4-6 October 2004), Prime Minister of Latvia A. Kalvitis (28 November - 1 December 2005) and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Latvia G.V.Kristovskis (19 April 2011) to Ukraine were very important for the development of Ukraine's cooperation with Latvia in political, economic, humanitarian and other spheres. Prime Minister of Ukraine M. Azarov is invited to pay an official visit to Latvia.

There are all necessary preconditions to further the success of economic partnership between Ukraine and Latvia: territorial proximity, developed bilateral legal base, transport communications, mutual presence of the financial sector. All these factors laid an enduring basis for the development and strengthening of economic relations, implementation of mutually beneficial cooperation projects. The Ukraine-Latvia Intergovernmental Commission on Economic, Industrial, Scientific and Techni-

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