

1. Ukraine President Defends National Hero (AP)
2. Yushchenko calls for closer ties with Israel (New Europe)
3. Smuggling scandal, true assessment of Shukhevich's role in life of Jews and embarrassment at Knesset: Outcomes of "successful" Yushchenko's visit to Israel (REGNUM)
4. Nazi collaborator to be deported (Agence France-Presse)
5. Yushchenko holds meeting on anti-Semitism (JTA)
6. Migrants head to Ukraine to plot EU entry (Telegraph.co.uk)
7. Ukraine linked to CIA torture: EU lawmaker (Russia Today)
8. In Ukraine, Condemning Communist Crimes Worldwide (Epoch Times)
9. MEPs ratify visa, readmission, discuss trade (New Europe)
10. Kuchma advises Yushchenko to make reasonable decision (ForUm)
11. Lutsenko Started Open War With Baloha (Interfax-Ukraine/Ukrayinska Pravda)
12. Ukraine and Russia clashing over Kosovo precedent; Transdnistria (Tiraspol Times)
13. Ukraine clears hurdle to WTO entry (AP/Kyiv Post)
14. SEB buys second bank in Ukraine (Financial Times)
15. Foreign Minister urges Spanish entrepreneurs to raise investment into Ukraine's economy (Interfax-Ukraine)
16. Iran eager to expand trade ties with Ukraine (MehrNews)
17. Russia, Ukraine sign agreement on shipping in Kerch Strait (Itar-Tass)
18. Russia Is Not Going to Pay Ukraine for Black Oil (Ukrayinska Pravda)
19. A.Miller and Y.Boyko coordinated gas price for intermediate term prospect (AK&M)
20. Russian Fleet Must Leave Ukraine By 2017: Deputy Premier (AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE)
21. Great Hotels Organisation stages first event in the Ukraine (Forimmediaterelease.net)
22. At least 33 dead in Ukrainian mine blast (Reuters)

1. Ukraine President Defends National Hero AP, 17 November 2007

JERUSALEM — Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko on Thursday defended his country's award of a top honor to a man accused of murdering thousands of Jews during World War II.

Controversy over the award cast a shadow over a visit that otherwise was devoted to improving relations between Ukraine and Israel. Yushchenko spoke out against anti-Semitism several times, especially during a speech in parliament.

At a foreign policy forum in Jerusalem, Yushchenko said Ukrainian nationalist leader Roman Shukhevych was posthumously named a Hero of Ukraine last month for his role in fighting for Ukraine's independence.

Holocaust researchers and Jewish groups have charged that a force under the command of Shukhevych took part in pogroms in 1941 in which 4,000 Jews were killed.

Yushchenko had this reply: "I have materials, documents, saying that in the course of grander context of Ukrainian rebellion, Shukhevych signed a petition that prohibited massive persecutions (of civilians)." He said no Ukrainian nationalist movement targeted Jews.

During his three-day visit, Yushchenko repeatedly said he regretted the massacre of 1.4 million Jews in Nazi-occupied Ukraine and that he would work to preserve their memory.

Six million Jews were killed by the Nazis during World War II.

On Wednesday, Yushchenko presented Israeli President Shimon Peres with documents from Soviet KGB archives detailing the locations of mass graves from the Holocaust in Ukraine — many of them unknown up to now, Israeli officials said.

And on a visit to Israel's Holocaust memorial, Yad Vashem, Yushchenko donated soil and a rock from the site of the Babi Yar massacre, where 33,711 Jews were rounded up and executed at the edge of a ravine in Kiev in 1941.

Despite the gestures of goodwill and a promise to memorialize Ukrainian Holocaust sites and preserve Jewish cultural sites, Yushchenko was dogged during his visit by criticism of Shukhevych.

At Yad Vashem, a museum official confronted Yushchenko, saying he has documents implicating Shukhevych as the leader of squads who massacred thousands of Jews.

"Sometimes you can be both a hero of Ukrainians and a murderer of Jews," said Joseph Lapid, a former Israeli justice minister and a Holocaust survivor from the former Yugoslavia.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:

<http://ap.google.com/article/ALeqM5iFI9EcCtqrEL7fDSx3WwPBunRlwD8SUBIP00>

2. Yushchenko calls for closer ties with Israel New Europe- Issue : 756, 17 November 2007

Visiting Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko said November 14 that his country sought closer ties with Israel, since "we have a common bond, we are like family." "We had a common enemy - evil, but even in the darkest days, your people gave us an example how to withstand the worst atrocities. You believed in liberty and your state and have overcome everything," he said in a special address to the Knesset (parliament).

"In the Ukraine there is support for Israel. We have kept in our hearts the pain and sorrow of those victims of the Holocaust. We reject anti-Semitism and xenophobia and will fight this evil that poisons every good thing," he said. "I am happy that we have begun a true dialogue," DeutschePresse-Agentur (dpa) reported.

Prior to his address to the Knesset, Yushchenko met Israeli President Shimon Peres, to whom he handed a package containing hitherto undiscovered documents on the fate of Ukrainian Jewish community leaders and resistance commanders during the Holocaust.

"In this box I am giving you there are papers with information on mass graves of Jews and underground operatives which have remained secret to this day. There are also documents about the interrogation of Jews during this terrible period," he said. Peres for his part said that "we should not forget the events of the past, even if they are difficult events." On the other hand, he said Israeli-Ukrainian relations did have a future.

The documents will be handed over to the museum at the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial Centre in Jerusalem, where they will be studied to see if they contain new information about the fate of Ukrainian Jewry during the Holocaust.

Nazi Germany invaded the Ukraine on June 22, 1941, when it launched Barbarossa, the attack on the Soviet Union. Many Ukrainians subsequently joined Nazi auxiliary units, or the SS, and some served as guards at Nazi extermination camps in Poland. An estimated 1.4 million of Ukraine's pre-war Jewish population of 2.4 million were killed during the Holocaust.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:

<http://www.neurope.eu/articles/79927.php>

3. Smuggling scandal, true assessment of Shukhevich's role in life of Jews and embarrassment at Knesset: Outcomes of "successful" Yushchenko's visit to Israel REGNUM, 16 November 2007

Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko assesses as successful his state visit to Israel that took place on November 13-15. He made the statement in Jerusalem after a meeting with Israeli political and academic elite, a REGNUM correspondent informs citing press office of the Ukrainian president. "I believe the visit laid the basis for our relations, new dynamics. I saw many friends of Ukraine in Israel," the president said.

Meanwhile, the media report several incidents occurred during the visit of the Ukrainian president to Israel. According to Maariv newspaper (Israel), the aircraft belonging to Aerosvit Airlines that was chartered for the official delegation carried, apart from the president and his spouse, three smuggled puppets of a rare breed. According to Ben Gurion Airport customs agency head Rafi Gabai, cost of each puppet exceeds \$1,500. The dogs were found during a private check of stewards carried out by the customs officers. "The Ukrainians admitted the violation and pointed out the customer, who was expecting them at the arrival. She was supposed to pay to them for the illegal transfer of animals," Gabai added.

Besides, when Yushchenko was on visit to the Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum, one of the museum officials, Joseph Lapid, mentioned Roman Shukhevych, commander of the UPA, Ukrainian insurgent army. Lapid, a former prisoner of Nazi camps, later Israeli minister, deputy prime minister and leader of a major political party, asked whether the Ukrainian president knew that Shukhevych, in first days of the Great Patriotic War led the Lvov pogrom that killed 4,000 people. The veteran wanted Yushchenko to know that a person like Shukhevych was given the title of the Ukrainian national hero.

Finally, embarrassment took place while Viktor Yushchenko was speaking at the Knesset. "We are concerned about public manifestations of anti-Semitism, nationalist extremism and neo-Nazism in Ukraine. We know how this can end," Speaker of the Israeli parliament Dalia Itzik announced, calling "shocking" the fact that an officially registered Ukrainian institute, the International Human Resources Management Academy, is involved in disseminating anti-Semitism. Besides, Yushchenko got it at the Knesset regarding the title of the national hero awarded to Shukhevych. "We are concerned as well by commemorating those engaged in killing of Jews and we ask you to be considerate in paying honor to those who were engaged in killing our people," the Israeli speaker said.

Permanent news address: www.regnum.ru/english/916406.html

4. Nazi collaborator to be deported Agence France-Presse, 16 November 2007

A FORMER Ukrainian Nazi collaborator who assisted in the annihilation of more than 100,000 Jews in Poland has been stripped of his US citizenship and ordered deported to Ukraine.

Osyp Firishchak, 88, migrated to the United States in 1949 and became a citizen five years later, lying about his war-time activities, the US justice department said.

He was identified decades later by a special branch of the justice department which has identified 107 Nazis or Nazi collaborators living in the United States since the branch was founded in 1979.

Mr Firishchak denied his involvement in the slaughter of over 100,000 Jews in Nazi-occupied L'viv, Poland and appealed against a 2005 ruling stripping him of his citizenship.

A Chicago immigration judge upheld that ruling which found that Mr Firishchak "was a participant in an organisation that perpetrated some of the most horrific acts against human decency ever known in history," rejected Mr Firishchak's "completely unbelievable" testimony, and said that his "shameless attempt to excuse himself from an inexcusable act is cowardly".

Born in Trebuszany in present-day Ukraine, Mr Firishchak began working for the Nazi-operated Ukrainian Auxiliary Police as a private on October 25, 1941, a judge found in the 2005 ruling.

He participated in forcing the Jews of L'viv into a ghetto, seizing their valuables and taking the ill, weak and old to a nearby forest to be shot.

He also participated in hunting for Jews who attempted to flee the ghetto and then helping the Nazis clear the ghetto and send its inhabitants to concentration camps.

Mr Firishchak has until December 10 to appeal against the latest ruling. He would then be deported to Ukraine, the Chicago judge ruled.

Should Ukraine be unwilling to accept him, he is ordered removed to either Germany, Poland or "any country that will accept the respondent".

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://www.news.com.au/story/0,23599,22768467-1702,00.html>

5. Yuschenko holds meeting on anti-Semitism JTA, 18 November 2007

Ukraine President Viktor Yuschenko discussed anti-Semitism in his country with the state prosecutor general.

In their meeting Friday, Yuschenko and Oleksandr Medvedko spoke about investigations of anti-Semitic offenses.

Yuschenko emphasized that he wanted to present "a clear position of the Ukrainian state regarding offenses concerned with manifestations of anti-Semitism."

Valentyn Nalyvaichenko, acting chief of the Security Service of Ukraine, and Ihor Pukshyn, Yuschenko's deputy chief of staff, also participated in the meeting.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://www.jta.org/cgi-bin/iowa/breaking/105372.html>

6. Migrants head to Ukraine to plot EU entry By Harry de Quetteville in Chop, Ukraine Telegraph.co.uk, 19 November 2007

Ukraine has become the latest battleground for illegal migrants desperate to get to Britain as the European Union expands its borders ever eastward.

A military barracks in the town of Chop has become home to Lebanese, Iraqis, Moldovans, Russians and others desperate to cross the frontier into the EU.

For them, the promised land is agonisingly close.

The border with Hungary, and with it the EU, is just a few hundred yards to the south. To the west, the EU frontier between Ukraine and Slovakia is no more than a couple of miles away. Only a couple of dozen miles north, Ukraine borders Poland.

However, according to the authorities in Ukraine, the unwilling residents in Chop aren't aiming for Hungary, Slovakia or Poland as their final destination.

"They all want to get to Western Europe. Many want to go to England," said a senior officer at the camp, who requested anonymity because of military rules.

For the moment, that trip to Western Europe is a fraught journey across well guarded borders. On Dec 21 however, Hungary, Slovakia and Poland are all set to join the EU's borderless Schengen zone. Within its frontiers, border controls will be abolished.

The prospect has already caused uproar in Austria, where the interior minister, Guenther Platter, has suggested setting up internal military checkpoints to compensate.

David Davis, the shadow home secretary, said last night: "The Government must work with EU partners to prevent a surge in illegal immigration when internal border controls are abolished in this country."

Britain is facing increasing pressure from immigration. There were 591,000 new arrivals last year alone and the Office for National Statistics has predicted there will be 191,000 added to the population through direct immigration every year until 2031.

While frontier posts are being torn down within the new Schengen zone, controls are being dramatically enhanced at its eastern edge.

On the EU side are the re-inforced border police forces of countries such as Slovakia. In the town of Sobrance, nine miles from the border with Ukraine, a high-tech frontier surveillance centre has been built where officers scrutinise plasma screens displaying pictures relayed from thermal imaging cameras.

"The surveillance of this border is crucial," said Jan Bucek, Slovakia's deputy interior minister. "The EU fears that here's where all the immigrants and terrorists could get in. But we'll stop them."

Those efforts have been replicated along the outer border of the Schengen zone - in effect creating a new Iron Curtain.

This, however, is not a Soviet barrier to keep out the West, but a European wall against influxes from the east.

But a few hundred metres across the border in Chop, there is little sign of the sophisticated equipment being deployed in the new Schengen zone.

Down a potholed road, beyond a police patrol that locals warn is out only to collect bribes, soldiers in fatigues stream in and out of an iron-gated camp. This is Ukraine's holding centre for illegal immigrants.

"We give them healthcare and nutrition," said the officer. "Mostly it's young men, but there are some women from Moldova - the majority are smuggled across the border."

From next month, all illegal migrants detected by surveillance centres such as Sobrance will be returned to their point of entry into the EU usually Ukraine, which already feels overwhelmed by migrants.

"It's a real problem," said the officer. "We're going to get more and more people."

At the moment, thousands pass through the camp at Chop every year.

It holds about 100 people at a time, who are held there for a few days before being sent to a similar camp nearby.

Unlike many countries in the EU, Ukraine only approves a tiny fraction of asylum cases, so almost all the camp's residents are ultimately deported.

"It's expensive for us to send them home," said the officer. "All those plane tickets. But they will keep coming."

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2007/11/19/nmigrants319.xml>

7. Ukraine linked to CIA torture: EU lawmaker Russia Today, 19 November 2007

There is new evidence of CIA covert detention centres and rendition flights in Ukraine, according to a member of the European Parliament, Giulietto Chiesa. During a visit to Moscow, he said an investigation into the CIA's activities in Europe will be re-opened.

Chiesa, the Italian journalist and politician, says it's a very serious issue.

"The Parliament has already voted and the majority of its members have condemned the governments of several European states which supported the illegal actions of the United States on European territory. It's a very serious matter. What if there are other European States who participated? Is there a law in Ukraine that allows the construction of secret prisons in the country? Even if there is, it would be against the laws of the European Union," he said.

EU investigators have previously accused the CIA of running secret prisons in Poland and Romania to interrogate key terror suspects.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:

<http://www.russiatoday.ru/features/news/17178>

8. In Ukraine, Condemning Communist Crimes Worldwide By Vadimir Borodin Epoch Times, 18 November 2007

With the 75th anniversary of "The Great Famine" coming up, Ukrainians are becoming more and more aware about the crimes committed by the Communist Party, and not only about the bygone Soviet party, but also about the existing Chinese Communist Party.

On November 14, David Matas, international human rights lawyer, made a speech at the conference "Legal mechanisms of international influence on totalitarian communist regimes in order to stop their evil deeds," which took place in Kiev.

In his speech, David Matas emphasized that communism affects every country and every nation. "Crimes that are being committed against Falun Gong are not only China's problem, just as "The Great Famine" is not only the Ukraine's concern. The persecution of people is an essence of communism," said Matas.

Representatives from more than 25 organizations from different countries gathered to condemn crimes of communism, those committed in the past as well as those taking place right now. The participants agreed on the necessity of condemning the communist ideology in Ukraine.

"This visit to Ukraine is very important to us because similar events happened here in the past. In the 1930s, during "The Great Famine," millions of people were exterminated here. At that time, communists insisted that it had never happened, just like now the Chinese Communist Party denies harvesting organs from live Falun Gong practitioners," said David Matas.

According to Matas, governments of many countries they have visited have begun to bring up this problem with China's leadership. Physicians do not recommend their patients go there for organ transplantation, and some countries issued laws forbidding their citizens from going to China for this purpose.

"The most important thing is that recently the Communist Party has changed the law banning the sale of organs in China," a former member of Canada's parliament, and a former Canadian secretary of state for the Asian-Pacific region, David Kilgour remarked. "We need to follow it up and watch if they really do it."

After releasing their investigation report titled "Bloody Harvest: Revised Report into Allegations of Organ Harvesting of Falun Gong Practitioners in China," Kilgour and Matas have been traveling to more than 40 countries in a global mission to raise awareness of the practice, which they conclude to be "a form of evil yet to be seen on this planet."

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://en.epochtimes.com/news/7-11-18/62079.html>

9. MEPs ratify visa, readmission, discuss trade **By Kostis Geropoulos** **New Europe - Issue : 756, 17 November 2007**

Ukraine was in the European Parliament limelight last week as MEPs, during the plenary session in Strasbourg, ratified two agreements on readmission and a simplified visa regime with Ukraine and adopted a report by Polish MEP Zbigniew Zaleski (EPP-ED) on trade and economic relations with the former Soviet republic.

The agreement on visa changes approved on November 13 (539 in favour, 36 against, 12 abstentions) will allow a fixed price for visas at 35 Euro, and additionally, will waive the visa charge for students, journalists and close relatives. Under the new regulations, the consul must explain to citizens the reasons if their visa request is denied. The agreement will not apply to citizens of Denmark, Ireland and Great Britain.

The readmission agreement also approved on November 13 identifies concrete criteria on when and how to repatriate persons illegally residing in EU member-countries and Ukraine. These new policies concern Ukrainian citizens and EU member-countries, as well as stateless citizens. The readmission regulations will be enforced after a two-year period of transition and will not apply to Denmark. Ukraine is very sensitive on the visa issue, especially after several incidents where its citizens were denied visas even though they had received formal invitations from institutions in EU member states. The ambassador of Ukraine to the EU, Roman Shpek, hailed the approval of the agreements, saying it "indicates a gradual carrying out by the EU of the internal procedures bringing the agreements into force. The Council's approval of the documents will be the next and final measures from the European side, on the way to taking effect. "

At the same time, the Ukrainian side has doubts as to the EU capacity to fulfil certain provisions of the agreement on visa facilitation and declarations that constitute its inalienable part. In particular, the ambassador said it concerns the Commission Declaration on the motivation of the decision to refuse a visa and the European Community Declaration on the access of the visa applicants and harmonisation of information on procedures for issuing short-stay visas and documents to be submitted when applying for short-stay visas. According to the Portuguese Presidency, the EU has to pass necessary legislation to implement these declarations.

"Ukraine calls upon the European Union to take necessary steps in order to fully fulfil all the provisions of the agreement on visa facilitation soon. Ukraine is grateful for the EU assistance granted for the implementation of the agreement on readmission and hopes this support will become more efficient and active," Shpek said in a statement, released to New Europe.

The recent elections in Ukraine, the forthcoming expansion of the Schengen area as well as calls for a three-way dialogue between Ukraine, Russia and the EU on several issues and especially energy, make a good opportunity to launch a discussion upon a future role of Ukraine in the EU. On November 15, the European Parliament adopted the Zaleski report on trade and economic relations with Ukraine. The report reviews the areas on which MEPs believe work needs to be done, including Ukraine's accession to the World Trade Organization, the creation of a free trade area with the EU (and Ukraine's long-term prospects for integration with the EU), energy supplies and relations with Russia.

MEPs noted that they want Ukraine to speed up its accession to the WTO by removing all residual legislative and technical obstacles. They look forward to the creation of an EU-Ukraine Free Trade Area. However, Ukraine must introduce EU-compatible customs legislation and improve the functioning of its customs service.

The report calls on Ukraine to develop its economic relations with Russia in a way which would not hamper closer integration into the community's single market. A three-way dialogue between Ukraine, Russia and the EU should be promoted by the Commission, to foster a climate of security and peace in the region. MEPs also hailed the opening of negotiations between Ukraine and EU with a view to concluding a new Partnership and Cooperation Agreement.

On the crucial issue of energy supplies, the report called for full implementation of the EU-Ukraine Memorandum of Understanding on Energy Cooperation and stressed the need for a safe, transparent and reliable system of energy transit between Ukraine and the EU.

During the debate of the Zaleski report in Strasbourg the night before, MEPs discussed the need for Ukraine to liberalise its energy market, investing in upgrading its pipelines and nuclear safety. They also mentioned key energy transport projects to the EU like the Odessa-Brody-Plock pipeline. The MEPs also acknowledged the risk of being drawn in to a bilateral dispute between Ukraine and Russia.

MEPs debated the report into the late hours of November 14, stating that the EU considers Ukraine to be a valuable and strategic partner – however, not valuable enough to have a better time slot for the discussion.

Moreover, although trade issues were discussed, Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson was not present and was instead represented by Fisheries and Maritime Affairs Commissioner Joe Borg – something that drew the attention of the Parliament. As an MEP pointedly told *New Europe* the following day, "It was like talking about herring."

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://www.neurope.eu/articles/79929.php>

10. Kuchma advises Yushchenko to make reasonable decision ForUm, 16 November 2007

Ex President of Ukraine Leonid Kuchma considers that chairman of the VRU must be a representative of "Our Ukraine". He said today in an interview.

"I considers that VRU chairman must be from "Our Ukraine", Kuchma said.

According to him, usually those people become VRU chairmen who have extensive experience and respect of not only one political force but of the whole country. There are many such people in the new parliament, including "Our Ukraine", Kuchma said. At the same time, Kuchma did not call any name.

According to Kuchma, Volodymyr Lytvyn, the former VRU chairman is not likely to be a VRU chairman again.

He noted that he would not like to advise anything to President Viktor Yushchenko and political forces. He said that west and east of Ukraine have not reached understanding for the recent time. Kuchma added that main responsibility is on the President. "I wish the President to make reasonable decision," he added.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://en.for-ua.com/news/2007/11/16/175557.html>

11. Lutsenko Started Open War With Baloha Interfax-Ukraine/Ukrayinska Pravda, 17 November 2007

Our Ukraine – People’s Self-Defense bloc leader Yuriy Lutsenko hopes that next week the President of the country will express his clear opinion on the obligation of NU-NS to create a coalition with BYuT.

"I am convinced that next week he [Viktor Yushchenko] will enter this political game and will say his word... President has already said: all elected NU-NS MPs must sign an obligation of creating a democratic coalition," he said on air of 5 Kanal on Friday night.

Mr. Lutsenko noted that the gist of the issue does not lie in that fact that NU-NS members Ihor Kril, Vasyl Petyovka and National Security and Defense Council secretary Ivan Plushch did not sign the document about coalition with BYuT.

"They are not at fault. The names may be totally different but there are some players who arrange different models, fight for or against certain figures and forget about the national interest and ultimately about the responsibility for promises given to voters," he said.

When asked by show host who can be named as a "player" Mr. Lutsenko replied: "The principal player is Mr. Baloha [head of President’s Secretariat Viktor Baloha] on whom a certain portion of hesitant MPs depends and voices their doubts about the reasonability of such alliance [with BYuT]."

"I am almost convinced that these are only intrigues to increase one’s gain in the course of negotiations. But it has become indecently... long and it is indecent to put common result [the creation of coalition with BYuT] in the shadow of a doubt," added NU-NS leader.

Mr. Lutsenko also informed that in a couple of days he intends to have a meeting with Mr. Baloha.

He also added that his stand is no news for the head of President’s Secretariat but he has never voiced it in public before hoping for regulating the issue within the bloc. However, according to Mr. Lutsenko, NU-NS representatives who haven’t signed the documents will discredit all bloc members.

Mr. Lutsenko also stressed that he does not aspire for becoming a leader of a united party based on NU-NS bloc.

Permanent Link: <http://www.pravda.com.ua/en/news/2007/11/17/9446.htm>

12. Ukraine and Russia clashing over Kosovo precedent; Transdnistria Tiraspol Times, 16 November 2007

What happens in Kosovo, stays in Kosovo. Ukrainian Foreign Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk believes that Kosovo independence can not set a precedent for any place else, much less for Transdnistria. But an influential MP from Russia’s Foreign Affairs Committee tells Yatsenyuk to look up the definition of the word "precedent" in the dictionary...

Ukraine will only support sovereignty of Kosovo in case the UN passes an appropriate resolution on it, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk announced at a news conference in Kiev, the capital of Ukraine.

" - If the UN passes a resolution on it, we shall support Kosovo as a sovereign state," he said, adding that this was not his personal opinion but that "it is Ukraine's official position."

The Ukrainian foreign minister also claimed that the situation in Kosovo is unique and therefore, according to his opinion, it should not be applied to other "troubled regions like Transdnistria, South Ossetia, or Nagorno Karabakh."

The statement was made at a forum in Kiev called "Settlement of frozen conflicts in the context of security and stability in Black Sea area." As is the norm with international forums that attempt to settle the future status of Pridnestrovie (Transdnistria), no official representatives from Pridnestrovie were invited to speak, and recent reforms in human rights and democracy-building were not taken into account.

Russian reaction: Open a dictionary, Yatsenyuk...

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk's statement on Kosovo can be connected with the fact that Ukraine aspires to NATO and European Union membership, and therefore wants to mimic the West in its positions. This was the response which Andrei Klimov, a member of the Russian State Duma Committee for Foreign Affairs, gave to Yatsenyuk's statements.

" - Open a dictionary. The word *precedent* is defined as an occasion or an event that took place in the past and can serve as an example or ground for analogous action in the present. A unitary state can disintegrate without approval of the UN Security Council grounding on an opinion of only one of the parties. It is a precedent, which is quite dangerous for Ukraine," Klimov believes.

" - If there is such an initiative regarding Crimea and it is supported by some countries, not necessarily by Russia, Ukraine will have a lot of problems," the MP cited the analogy.

Klimov also noted that, according to expert estimations, if a precedent is established, within next 15-20 years 50-60 more countries will appear on the global map, and they would not be consignatory parties to any international treaties.

Ethnically based state considered "dead-end"

" - Attempts to establish states on ethnic or language grounds is a dangerous way that can bring to a dead-end," said Andrei Klimov in an apparent reference to the Republic of Moldova.

In 1991 Moldova declared independence after having passed a language-law which the OSCE described as discriminatory against the Slavic minority of mostly Russian-speakers. Prior to independence, Moldovans had led a campaign aimed at forcing Russian speakers to leave so Moldova could be an "ethnically pure country", in the words of a leading Moldovan Popular Front spokesman. The campaign was carried out with slogans such as "*Suitcase-Trainstation-Russia*" and included widespread violence against ethnic Russians.

As a result of the hate campaign against Russian speakers, the number of ethnic Russians in Moldova fell from 13% of the population in 1989 to just 5.8% in 2004.

Partly in order to safeguard the human rights of ethnic minorities, Pridnestrovie (Transdnistria) broke from Moldova in 1990, one year before Moldova became independent. Although functioning as a 'de facto' separate state, Pridnestrovie's independence has not yet been recognized internationally.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://www.tiraspoltimes.com/node/1431>

13. Ukraine clears hurdle to WTO entry AP/Kyiv Post, 16 November 2006

Ukraine cleared its last significant hurdle to entering the World Trade Organization on Wednesday by signing a long-sought trade agreement with Kyrgyzstan, according to Ukrainian and Kyrgyz officials.

Ukraine has made joining the world's biggest trading club a priority, as it needs foreign investment to boost its economy.

Foreign Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk said that, by signing the agreement, Ukraine had overcome the last major hurdle to acquiring WTO membership.

"The final protocol, which was extremely important to finishing the negotiations process, has been signed," he said in remarks broadcast on Channel 5 television.

Kyrgyz Ambassador to Ukraine Erkin Mamkulov confirmed the deal had been signed.

Ukraine now has to complete a number of formalities to actually join the WTO, which Yatsenyuk said could take place this year. Experts were skeptical, however, and predicted Ukraine would join in early 2008.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://www.kyivpost.com/top/27814/>

14. SEB buys second bank in Ukraine| By Roman Olearchyk Financial Times, 16 November 2006

Stockholm-based SEB banking group on Friday inked its second purchase in Ukraine, offering some \$120m for a controlling stake in Factorial Bank.

In acquiring Factorial, a medium-sized Ukrainian bank, SEB further strengthens its presence in eastern Europe and in particular Ukraine, an emerging market with a population of 46m which is expected to offer strong opportunities for growth in coming years.

There have been a flurry of acquisitions in the country by European banking groups since the Orange Revolution in 2004. Since then, foreign groups have tripled their presence in Ukraine and now control 30 per cent of the market in terms of net assets.

Analysts in Kiev said two leading Greek banks - Piraeus Bank and National Bank of Greece - are currently bidding for a larger Ukrainian bank, Kreditprombank, which is expected to sell for more than \$500m. In September, Piraeus agreed to pay \$75m for a controlling stake in a small Ukrainian bank, International Commercial Bank.

While most of Ukraine's largest banks have been sold in a number of billion-dollar deals shortly after the Orange Revolution, analysts predict that European banks will in coming years continue their buying spree with a focus on small regional banks, which if combined, can offer a strong nation-wide presence. While about 20 large banks control much of the market, Ukraine boasts more than 150 banks. Most of them have served domestic business groups but are currently being offered for sale.

SEB said its acquisition of Factorial was in line with the group's overall strategy to expand in eastern Europe through organic growth and add-on acquisitions. It was the first Nordic bank to enter Ukraine in 2004 through the acquisition of Bank Agio, another small bank.

"We have a long-term commitment to offer universal banking services in Ukraine. Through the acquisition of Factorial Bank we will serve more than 110,000 customers in Ukraine," said SEB president and chief executive officer Annika Falkengren.

"The ongoing consolidation within one of the fastest-growing banking markets in Europe offers SEB continued opportunities for growth in the region," he added.

With its 53 branches, Factorial strengthens SEB's presence in the eastern part of Ukraine, where most of the country live. Following the acquisition, SEB will have about 13,000 corporate customers and 100,000 private clients in Ukraine. Total assets will amount to \$452m as of September 30, 2007. Regulatory approval for the acquisition is expected within months.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/21833018/>

15. Foreign Minister urges Spanish entrepreneurs to raise investment into Ukraine's economy Interfax-Ukraine, 16 November 2007

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Arseniy Yatseniuk has called on Spanish entrepreneurs to develop more active contacts with Ukrainian partners and to raise investment into the Ukrainian economy.

He was speaking at a meeting of the Ukrainian-Spanish business forum in Madrid, the Foreign Ministry's press service reported.

The forum participants agreed it was necessary to improve the legal basis to develop bilateral trade and economic cooperation. They noted the poor level of contacts and called for stepping up interaction, the establishment of direct ties and boosting of investment into the Ukrainian economy, particularly in view of Ukraine's hosting the Euro 2012 football championship finals.

Yatseniuk briefed his Spanish hosts on the current situation in Ukraine, in particular the completion of negotiations on the World Trade Organization membership, talks with the European Union on signing a new agreement and negotiations on a free trade zone with the EU, as well as Ukraine's building the basis for improving its investment climate.

The minister noted positive trends in Ukraine's financial and banking sector, as well as its construction and agriculture industries.

The Ukrainian-Spanish business forum is organized by the Spanish confederation of business organizations and represents government and private enterprises, along with 2,000 entrepreneurial associations in Spain.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://www.interfax.com.ua/en/news/main-news/83846/>

16. Iran eager to expand trade ties with Ukraine MehrNews, 18 November 2007

TEHRAN, Nov. 18 (MNA) – The Minister of Commerce Mas'ud Mirkazemi underlined here on Sunday the enforcement of Iran-Ukraine trade relations.

He made the statement in a meet with Ukrainian Deputy Economic Affairs Minister Oksana Slusarenko.

He referred to banking, customs, and transportation ties as the main infrastructures the two sides could increase bilateral trade volume.

The official put emphasis on getting familiar with each other's commercial opportunities, adding, "To this end, we could create joint chamber of commerce, hold exhibitions, and dispatch trade delegations."

Referring to diligent presence of private sector in Iran, the minister announced that the obstacles have to be removed to prepare the ground for traders' activities.

Ukraine, one of the supervisors of World Trade Organization (WTO), is a country with 46 million populations in a 603,000 square km land.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://www.mehrnews.ir/en/NewsDetail.aspx?NewsID=588928>

17. Russia, Ukraine sign agreement on shipping in Kerch Strait Itar-Tass, 18 November 2007

MOSCOW - The Russian and Ukrainian marine administrations signed temporary regulations on passage of ships through the Kerch Strait, Itar-Tass learnt at the press service of the Russian Transport Ministry.

"The regulations determine conditions for passage of ships. All ships, sailing into the Kerch Strait from the Black Sea into the Azov and vice versa, go there after requesting a permission from the Central Radio-Forwarding Service Kerch, Ukraine," the press service noted.

The press service specially stressed that "priority in passing of transit ships in the strait is given to tankers and ships with dangerous cargoes, waiting for unloading at a given time at their anchorage. All these ships follow the Kerch-Yenikalsky channel route".

As for ships without cargoes, according to agreement between the Kerch (Ukraine) and Kavkaz (Russia) forwarding services, they can follow channels Nos.50 and 52, the regulations say.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://www.itar-tass.com/eng/level2.html?NewsID=12083105&PageNum=0>

18. Russia Is Not Going to Pay Ukraine for Black Oil Ukrayinska Prawda, 18 November 2007

Ukraine will have problems in collecting compensation of damages from Russia as a result of emergency in the Kerch strait, believes deputy head of Russian Nature Control Oleg Mitvol.

He said it to RIA Novosti when commenting on the message that Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs brings up the issue of Russia paying compensation for damages from environmental disaster in the strait.

"As a lawyer I can say that even if there were no questions to the administration of Kerch shipping canal it would be rather difficult to file a claim because the mechanism of collection is not really understandable," noted Mr. Mitvol.

On Sunday November 11 during the storm in the Kerch strait four ships sank. More than two thousand tons of black oil spilled from the tanker which fell apart.

According to Mr. Mitvol, the administration of Kerch canal prohibited Russian ships to wait until the storm is over.

Permanent Link: <http://www.pravda.com.ua/en/news/2007/11/17/9448.htm>

19. A.Miller and Y.Boyko coordinated gas price for intermediate term prospect AK&M, 16 November 2007

The Chairman of the Board of the Open Society "Gazprom" Alexey Miller and the minister of fuel and power of Ukraine Jury Boyko have coordinated principles of formation of the gas price for intermediate term prospect. It is spoken about in the report of the company. Managing subjects have started preparation of corresponding commercial contracts.

Gazprom is the world's largest gas company. On the results of 2006 the group "Gazprom" has extracted 556mlrd cube m. of gas, 11.4mln ton of gas condensate and 34mln ton of oil. In 2006 due to prospecting works the stocks of gas on category C1 have increased up to 587.5mlrd cube m., stocks on categories ABC1 - up 719.9mlrd cube m., as a result their total size for January, 1st, 2007 has reached 29.85trln cube m.

The authorized capital of Gazprom makes 118.367mlrdrbl. 23673512900 ordinary shares by face value of 5 rbl are let out.

The largest shareholders of Gazprom for December, 31st, 2006 are: Rosimushchestvo (38.37315035%), the Open Society "Rosneftegas" (10.73985095%). The net profit of Gazprom on ISFA in 2006 has grown in 2 times up to 636.461mlrd rbl. from 315.931mlrd rbl. Gazprom wins the first place in the " Leading enterprise of Russia "rating on the results of 2006, presented by the rating agency AK&M in October, 2007.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://www.akm.ru/eng/news/2007/november/19/ns2143125.htm>

20. Russian Fleet Must Leave Ukraine By 2017: Deputy Premier AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, 16 November 2007

Russia's Black Sea fleet, which is based in southern Ukraine, must leave the country by the end of 2017, Ukraine's deputy prime minister said here Nov. 16.

Olexander Kuzmuk's announcement seemed to invalidate an earlier statement by pro-Moscow Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich, who said last year he believed the Russian fleet could stay after a present agreement expires in 2017.

"The Russian Black Sea Fleet must leave by the end of 2017, in line with the agreement" on its base at Sevastopol in Krimea, Kuzmuk, who is considered pro-Russian, told Interfax news agency.

Under a 1997 deal the Russian fleet can continue to use its base at Sevastopol until 2017. What happens after that is a source of tension.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://www.defensenews.com/story.php?F=3191006&C=europe>

**21. Great Hotels Organisation stages first event in the Ukraine
Forimmediaterelease.net, 18 November 2007**

Luxury hotel alliance Great Hotels Organisation (GHO; www.ghorg.com) is delighted to announce it is holding its first major sales and marketing event in the Ukraine.

The Great Hotels Meeting Forum for German buyers 2007, dedicated to the meetings and incentive (MICE) industry, will be held on 19th and 20th November at member hotel the 5* Premier Palace Hotel in Kiev, one of the leading properties in the city.

Richard Barnes, Chief Operating Officer, Great Hotels Organisation commented: "We have identified a growing demand for venues in Kiev from European MICE buyers, which has led to the decision to host our first forum in the city. GHO and the Premier Palace Hotel are delighted to be able to showcase this up-and-coming destination by bringing the best buyers from Germany, one of the biggest MICE markets in Europe, to experience it".

The Great Hotels Meeting Forums are a series of annual events that take a VIP group of hosted MICE buyers to one of the Great Hotels of the World members in a fabulous destination. The buyers not only experience and learn about the host hotel and destination but also have the opportunity to meet with up to 50 other Great Hotels of the World (www.ghotw.com) and Special Hotels of the World (www.shotw.com) member hotels who also attend the Meeting Forum.

The Meeting Forum will see the attending member hotels have a minimum of 28 guaranteed meetings across two days with quality pre-qualified German corporate and MICE buyers. The 20-minute one-on-one meetings are requested by the buyers in advance, meaning their interest in the individual luxury property is both genuine and guaranteed. Meanwhile, coffee breaks, the cocktail reception, gala dinner and historic city tour offer further networking opportunities and the chance for quality and lasting relationships to be built in a relaxed environment.

The forums consistently attract some of Europe's best MICE and corporate buyers due to their reputation for offering a successful and efficient format for everyone involved. The event at the Premier Palace Hotel, Kiev, is no different and has attracted some of the best German buyers, including Wella, Shiseido and Victoria Versicherung, as well as agencies HRG and Helmsbrisco, whose clients include Deutsche Bank, Merck Pharma, Allianz Versicherungen, Volkswagen, BMW and Coca Cola.

For further information on Great Hotels Organisation, membership and the successful calendar of meeting forums and events, please visit www.ghorg.com or mis@ghorg.com

For further press information, please contact: Zoë Martin The Big PR Agency Tel: +44 (0)20 7380 8580 Email: zmartin@bigpragency.com

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://www.forimmediaterelease.net/pm/852.html>

**22. At least 33 dead in Ukrainian mine blast
By Lina Kushch
Reuters, 18 November 2006**

DONETSK, Ukraine (Reuters) - A methane explosion ripped through a colliery in Ukraine's Donbass coalfield on Sunday, killing at least 33 miners and leaving 67 missing in underground shafts engulfed by fire and smoke.

Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich announced the latest toll after flying to Donetsk, his native region, to assess the latest of a string of accidents in Donbass's outdated mines.

He said a fire burned unchecked more than 1,000 meters (3,300 feet) underground at the city's Zasyadko pit.

"So far it has been established that 33 miners have died. There are 67 more still underground. Their fate is unknown," Yanukovich told reporters after attending a meeting of a commission of inquiry into the accident.

"There is a blockage at the accident site formed by a cave-in, airshafts and water channels. This is being cleared. Fire and smoke remain in section 14. The fire is still burning."

It was unclear how many of those missing had been close to the explosion when it occurred at 3 a.m.. Officials said 27 miners were in hospital, one in a serious condition.

The figures put the accident among the worst since Ukraine secured independence from the Soviet Union in 1991.

Trade unionists said seven of the dead had been identified.

"There is thick smoke in the shafts and for the moment rescue teams are unable to go where they are needed," a trade union official at the mine, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said by telephone.

Weeping relatives waited for news outside the mine headquarters. Fifth Channel television showed survivors of the explosion in a hospital isolation ward.

"The temperature rose sharply -- so sharply you couldn't see anything," miner Vitaly Kvitkovsky told a television crew. "I put on my breathing equipment and found my way out by feeling the pipes and the rail lines."

Official statements said 457 miners were underground at the time of the accident. Dozens of rescue teams had brought more than 350 miners to the surface.

The Emergencies Ministry also reported one miner had died in a cave-in at a coal mine in Horlivka, north of Donetsk.

Accidents are common in Ukraine's coal mines, many of which date from the mid-19th century, and Zasyadko has experienced several in recent years.

Official statistics put the death toll in mining accidents in Ukraine this year at 80, though independent trade unions say the figure is higher. Last year, 170 miners died.

Post-Soviet Ukraine's most deadly mining accident was in March 2000, when 80 miners were killed in a coal dust explosion at a colliery near the eastern town of Luhansk.

(Reporting by Lina Kushch and by Pavel Polityuk in Kiev; Editing by Catherine Evans)

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:

<http://www.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idUSL1840409320071118>