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1. Iran, Ukraine review expansion of mutual ties The Tehran Times , 27 October 2007

MOSCOW (IRNA) -- Iran's Ambassador to Kiev Musa Kazemi conferred on Thursday with Ukraine's Deputy Foreign Minister Yuriy Kostenko on issues of mutual interests.

According to Iran's embassy in Kiev, at the meeting, the two sides reviewed issues concerning expansion of mutual economic and commercial cooperation as well as designation of Iran as the observer at the organization of Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC).

In the meeting, the Iranian ambassador also submitted to the Ukrainian deputy foreign minister a written message from his Iranian counterpart Manuchehr Mottaki for his Ukrainian counterpart Arseniy Yatsenyuk.

The organization of Black Sea Economic Cooperation was established in 1992 with the aim of expanding mutual and multilateral economic cooperation among member states.

Georgia, Russia, Ukraine, Turkey, Greece, Bulgaria, Azerbaijan, Albania, Armenia, Serbia, Moldova, and Romania are members of the BSEC.

2. Kyrgyzstan Lifted an Obstacle on the Way of Ukraine to WTO Ukrayinska Prawda, 26 October 2007

Ukraine achieved a breakthrough in the negotiations with Kyrgyzstan in the framework of joining the World Trade Organization.

At the unofficial meeting of the working group on Ukraine's accession to WTO on Thursday in Geneva the Ukrainian delegation with deputy Minister of Economics Valeriy Pyatnitsky at its head used the tactics of public demonstration of unjustified claims of Kyrgyzstan towards Ukraine, which tactics had been announced the day before, reports Kommersant-Ukraine.

According to one of the participants of the negotiations, the Kyrgyz side publicly recognized the ungrounded nature of Bishkek's demands to Kyiv to cancel custom duties on agricultural products, for example sugar and meat, these demands being put forward in the framework of signing bilateral protocol on access to the markets of products and services.

"In the course of the session it turned out that there is some misunderstanding from the side of Kyrgyzstan concerning the duties which can be changed by Ukraine. If this country demands lowering duties for all countries, then these are not bilateral but multilateral negotiations they weren't authorized for," informed the source.

In exchange the Ukrainian side promised to keep the current zero regime of bilateral trade with Kyrgyzstan.

"The Kyrgyz delegation agreed to review our new proposal, pronounced by deputy Minister of Economy Valeriy Pyatnitsky on the guarantees of keeping free trade regime after Ukraine's accession to WTO. It will be really difficult for them not to accept these conditions," said the interlocutor.

Therefore, Bishkek actually rejected its only trade demand towards Ukraine which hindered the signing of the last bilateral protocol without which Ukraine cannot approve tariff additions to the report of the working group and complete its accession to WTO. The other two conditions of Bishkek were not discussed on Thursday, reported the source.

According to previous reports, earlier the issue of signing a memorandum of allocating 27 million US dollars for technical assistance in the context of settling the USSR debt and the consent of Ukraine not to extend the anti-dumping customs duty for electrical lamps expiring on January 1, 2008 were placed beyond the framework of WTO negotiations.

Apart from successful negotiations with Kyrgyzstan representatives, Ukraine managed to achieve the working group's approval of final report on full compliance of Ukrainian legislation with WTO standards and norms.

"We achieved progress in clearing the report. Out of 20 uncleared provisions only three were left after the session, which can be solved by the interested parties within a month," informed the source of the publication. For example, the session settled the issue of marking children's food containing GMOs.

In the end of November at the official session of the working group Ukraine will be able to approve the report and send it to WTO secretariat even before clearing tariff addendum, which is a precedent for the organization.

However, the experts fear that political crisis in Kyrgyzstan can again delay the signing of the protocol and conclusion of negotiations in the WTO framework.

**3. Ukraine suggests EU creating solidary pension system for legal immigrants from Ukraine
NRCU, 26 October 2007**

"We suggest creating a solidary system taking into consideration the employment periods in Ukraine and in the EU", minister of Labor and Social Policy Mykhailo Papiyev said.

The Pension Fund of Ukraine will pay for the employment period in Ukraine, while the employment in the EU will be covered by the pension fund of a respective country, " Mr. Papiyev noted. The minister also said that the Social and Economic Council of Ukraine and the EU's Economic and Social Committee have agreed on creation of a group to discuss these proposals.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://www.nrcu.gov.ua/index.php?id=148&listid=54117>

**4. Ukraine to join European resolution on access to justice by migrants and children
ForUm, 26 October 2007**

Ukraine intends to join the European resolution on access to justice by migrants, vagabondas, children and young criminals. The document will be signed within the framework of the 28th conference of the justice ministers of the EU states and Council of Europe states, the Justice Ministry's press service told.

The two-day forum runs in Lansarote, Spain.

The conference will result in a resolution on access to justice by migrants and vagabondage and a resolution on indulgence to children. The states to support this will admit to judicial aid, legal protection to theses people in courts.

Justice Minister Oleksandr Lavrynovych noted that within the framework of the conference of justice ministers a new European convention on protection of children of sexual exploitation and abuse will be discussed, according to Cabinet press office.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://en.for-ua.com/news/2007/10/26/144039.html>

**5. Russian Ambassador to Ukraine Viktor Chernomyrdin does not see any grounds for Ukraine's accession to NATO
NRCU, 26 October 2007**

He says if such a decision is approved by the Ukrainian leadership, the bilateral relations of the neighbouring countries are likely to change. This was disclosed by the Russian Ambassador during a hot telephone line with the readers of "Komsomolskaya pravda in Ukraine".

At the same time Russian Ambassador to Ukraine Viktor Chernomyrdin noted that Ukraine is a sovereign state and it can take any political decision. Yet in case its accedence to the NATO is realized, Russia will sure make adequate conclusions.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://www.nrcu.gov.ua/index.php?id=148&listid=54121>

6. Russia is against Ukraine's accession to NATO ForUm, 26 October 2007

Russian Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Ukraine Viktor Chernomyrdin stated that if Ukraine joins NATO, relations between Russia and Ukraine will be changed. He said that today during telephone-conference with Komsomolska Pravda newspaper.

"Our relations cannot but change if Ukraine joins NATO. It is natural. We are strongly integrated," he said.

Chernomyrdin has stressed once more that Russia is against Ukraine's accession to NATO. "Does somebody threaten Ukraine, does somebody attack Ukraine? What is behind that?" he asked.

According to Chernomyrdin, in case Ukraine wants to cooperate with terrorism and drug traffic, such cooperation is possible to be carried out on Intergovernmental level. At that he noted that NATO is military bloc, equipped by nuclear weapon.

"What is behind it? Does anybody explain Ukrainians what NATO is and why Ukraine needs it? he noted.

"If somebody threatens Ukraine, Russia will defend Ukraine," he added.

At the same time, Chernomyrdin stated that issue on accession to NATO is inner business of Ukraine.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://en.for-ua.com/news/2007/10/26/161026.html>

7. Yushchenko Postponed Referendum Regarding NATO for Many Years Interfax-Ukraine/ Ukrayinska Pravda, 27 October 2007

President Yushchenko states that the issue of Ukraine's membership in NATO will not be decided at the referendum in the near future.

He has stated it in his speech at the ceremony of laying flowers to the monument of an Unknown Soldier dedicated to the 63rd anniversary of liberating Ukraine from fascist invaders.

"Speaking about formal membership or non-membership, the nation will decide this issue in many years when Ukraine will be ready to answer this question," underlined Mr. Yushchenko.

The president has also mentioned three models of participation in systems of collective defense for Ukraine.

According to him, the first model implies bipolar world "which harms any country", the second one results in off-bloc status, although the president claims that no country is able to protect itself alone. The third variant is the European model of collective European defense, which the president considers the most suitable for Ukraine.

As known, the president has repeatedly stated that the issue of NATO membership will be decided at the all national referendum.

As previously reported, the Party of Regions has collected signatures to hold the referendum, one of its questions reading as follows: "Do you agree that Ukraine does not participate in any military blocs?"

Permanent Link: <http://www.pravda.com.ua/en/news/2007/10/27/9262.htm>

7. Ukraine delays NATO membership **Press TV, 27 October 2007**

Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko has said the issue of the country's membership in NATO will not be decided in the near future.

He said the question of joining NATO western military alliance will be decided in a national referendum adding, "But it will not be in one year, or two years, but a few years when Ukraine will be ready to answer this question."

He made the remarks on Saturday at a wreath-laying ceremony to the monument of an Unknown Soldier in Kiev.

The pro-Western government of Yushchenko supports the country's membership in NATO considering 'the European model of collective defense' the most suitable for Ukraine. However, most Ukrainians are against their country's joining the alliance. AKM/DT

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:

<http://www.presstv.ir/detail.aspx?id=28866§ionid=351020606>

8. US Advises New Government to Exclude 'Big Money' From Politics **Ukrayinska Prawda, 26 October 2007**

Excluding big business from politics is the main task for the future government, believes former US ambassador to Ukraine William Miller.

At the US Congress hearing on Thursday organized by US Helsinki Group and dedicated to Ukrainian elections Mr. Miller noted that corruption in the higher echelons of power stays a central problem in Ukraine.

American participants of the hearing recognized that elections in Ukraine took place in compliance with all democratic norms but noted problematic areas, which if not reformed can prevent Ukraine from being a fully democratic country, reports Radio Svoboda.

In the opinion of Mr. Miller who was in Ukraine during the last elections as a member of international observation group, the political reputation of Orange Revolution leaders will depend on their ability to curtail corruption in power and withdraw the oligarchs from ruling the country.

All political conflicts in Ukraine, in his opinion, are centered on the right to control economic assets and financial resources. And all political elite, according to observations of the ambassadors, found itself under influence of big money.

Mr. Miller reminded that the Orange Revolution leaders spoke out in Maydan for clearing politics from money but some of them became involved in corrupt practices later. As for the others, they have a doubtful oligarch past, for example BYuT leader Yulia Tymoshenko, noted the ambassador.

At the same time, President Viktor Yushchenko, according to the observations of former US ambassador, prefers words to actions in struggle against corruption.

Another participant of hearing Steven Nicks named the absence of independent legal procedure and the imperfection of the Constitution as the most burning issues of Ukraine.

"Constitutional controversy between President and Prime Minister associated with the problem of distribution of authority in the field of executive power hindered the construction of democratic institutions in Ukraine such as independent court, working parliament and further economic reforms," he noted.

"Constitutional crisis also didn't allow Ukraine to further remain an example of democratization in Eurasian region. It is extremely important for Ukraine to start playing a role of democracy exporter yet again," stressed Mr. Nicks.

At the same time, Mr. Nicks emphasized that the new variant of the Constitution must be approved in a democratic way as a result of compromise of all political forces.

American participants also noted the slowing down of bilateral relations between Ukraine and the USA which is due to continual election cycles as explained by the ambassador.

According to Mr. Nicks, the quicker Ukraine forms its new government, the earlier direct contacts on the highest level will be renewed.

Permanent Link: <http://www.pravda.com.ua/en/news/2007/10/26/9258.htm>

9. The EU wants Ukraine to cut visa regime for Bulgaria, Romania FOCUS News, 28 October 2007

Brussels. The European Union insists that Ukraine cut visa regime for Bulgarian and Romanian citizens, Markus Kornaro, Head of the European Commission's Directorate in charge of the financial aid for Ukraine, cited by Russian and Ukrainian online newspapers. He explained that before ratifying the readmission agreement between the EU and Ukraine the newly acceded EU member states, Bulgaria and Romania should be treated equally as the citizens of the other EU member states when traveling to Ukraine, Express daily writes.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://www.focus-fen.net/index.php?id=n125464>

10. Ukraine publishes official election results Reuters, 27 October 2007

Ukraine's Central Election Commission published the official results of the September 30 election on Saturday, paving the way for parliament's first session and the formation of a government.

The announcement was held up by a case at the supreme administrative court, which on Friday rejected charges by some parties that the commission had made procedural mistakes during the counting of the votes.

Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich's Regions party received 34.37 percent of the vote, ex-prime minister Yulia Tymoshenko's bloc received 30.71 percent and the pro-presidential Our Ukraine party together with the Self-Defence party, 14.15 percent.

The Communists received 5.39 percent and the party of centrist politician Volodymyr Lytvyn 3.96 percent, the only other parties to gain enough votes to enter parliament.

Tymoshenko, the fiery ally of President Viktor Yushchenko during the 2004 Orange Revolution, is poised to form a government after the votes their parties scored translated into a slim majority in parliament over Yanukovich and his Communist allies.

Under the constitution, the first session of the new parliament has to sit within 30 days of the publication of the results and a government must be formed within 30 days of the chamber's first sitting.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://www.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idUSL2768094820071027?sp=true>

11. Official parliamentary election results published in Ukraine AP/ The International Herald Tribune, 27 October 2007

The official results of Ukraine's snap parliamentary elections were published in government media Saturday, the final formality before a new legislature can convene.

According to the results, the pro-West Orange Revolution parties of President Viktor Yushchenko and the charismatic Yulia Tymoshenko together mustered a slim majority of 228 seats in the 450-member Verkhovna Rada.

The two parties have pledged to form a government with Tymoshenko returning as prime minister.

The rival Party of Regions, led by the more Moscow-friendly Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich, finished first in the Sept. 30 ballot and will control 175 seats.

Publication of the results became possible after the High Administrative Court on Thursday threw out a suit filed by five parties seeking to contest the results based on alleged violations.

The legislature now has about a month to convene after the official publication of the election results, though no date has yet been set for the first Rada session.

In an interview with the Weekly Mirror newspaper published Saturday, Yanukovich called for forming a broad coalition that would encompass three parties and bridge the divide in Ukrainian society.

"I want everyone to understand that, irrespective of distribution of forces in Verkhovna Rada, not a single important decision as for domestic and foreign policy will be taken without considering the Party of Regions," Yanukovich said.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://www.iht.com/articles/ap/2007/10/27/europe/EU-POL-Ukraine-Politics.php>

12. Russian statue sparks clashes in Ukraine Russia Today, 28 October 2007

Ukrainian nationalists and police clash in the city of Odessa at the unveiling of a monument to the city's founder - Russian Empress Catherine the Great.

Hundreds of supporters of patriotic groups across Ukraine descended on the city to protest against the re-erection of a statue that was removed eighty years ago.

The nationalists describe themselves as heirs of Cossacks. They accuse Catherine the Great of colonising Ukraine, and say her monument is an affront and a threat to Ukrainian independence.

Nationalist leader Igor Vardanets says "*honouring a woman who enslaved Ukrainian people*" isn't right.

"She made our country a minor part of Russia, and turned Ukrainians into serfs," he said.

Many residents of Odessa, however, have welcomed the statue as a step towards reviving the city's historic past.

Lieutenant General Sergey Elistratov, the leader of another group describing itself as Cossack, described the protests as hooliganism.

"They broke fences, washed their shoes in the fountain at the Pushkin monument. They are vandals," he said.

"Today we are here to defend law and order, to defend our city."

Odessa was officially founded in 1794 as a Russian naval fortress.

The first monument to Catherine was removed from the city by Soviet authorities in the 1920s.

As part of a project to revamp the city centre, Odessa Council returned the statue of the Russian Empress back to the square that bears her name.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://www.russiatoday.ru/news/news/16106>

13. Ukraine reburies Stalin's victims BBC News, 27 October 2007

Ukrainian authorities have reburied near the capital, Kiev, the bodies of some 2,000 people killed by the Soviet secret police more than 60 years ago.

Relatives of the victims watched as red coffins were lowered into graves and blessed by a priest at the ceremony.

The bodies, including 474 Poles, were dug up this year in Bykovnya, where tens of thousands are thought to have been dumped during the 1930s and 1940s.

Under Communist rule, the existence of the mass graves in Ukraine was denied.

It was only in the 1990s, after the fall of the Soviet Union, that the mass graves were acknowledged and memorials built.

Memories

About 100 people including relatives of the victims attended the sombre ceremony in a forest outside of Kiev on Saturday.

One of those attending, Maria Marzhetska, said her father had been seized in 1937. She only discovered his fate 60 years later.

"I was eight years old. There were just three of us - father, mother and me - and they took him," Ms Marzhetska told the Reuters news agency.

"Every morning, every evening we were at the police station," she said.

Andrzej Przewoznik, the general secretary of Poland's Council for the Protection of Monuments to Struggle and Martyrdom, said the site was a very important place for Poles.

"This is a place where we would like the Polish [Catholic] cross and Polish memories of those people resting in the Bykovnya forest to be," he said.

Those buried on Saturday were tortured and later killed by the much-feared Soviet secret police, the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs or NKVD.

According to various estimates, more than 100,000 people were killed by the NKVD between 1936 and 1941 during Joseph Stalin's rule.

Story from BBC NEWS:

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/europe/7065913.stm>

14. Ukraine reburies 2,000 victims of Stalin's rule Reuters, 27 October 2007

Ukraine on Saturday reburied some 2,000 people killed by the Soviet secret police before World War Two and dumped in mass graves near the capital.

The 1,998 bodies, 474 of which were Poles, were dug up earlier this year in Bykovnya, a wooded area outside Kiev where Ukrainian officials believe some 30,000 people could have been buried during the 1930s and early 1940s.

The mass graves were filled with people who were tortured and shot by the dreaded NKVD, a precursor to the KGB, during Stalin's rule in the run up to the war between the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany.

Others estimate up to 100,000 people were killed.

"I was 8 years old. It was just three of us, father, mother and me. And they took him," Maria Marzhetska said of her father, who was seized by the NKVD in 1937.

"Every morning, every evening we were at the police station," she said. She only found out his fate 60 years later.

In a sombre ceremony attended by some 100 people, simple red coffins, some draped with flags, were lowered one by one into graves and blessed by a priest. Relatives and officials prayed by their side.

Under Communist rule, the existence of mass graves filled with the victims of Stalin's rule was denied. It was only in the 1990s that it was acknowledged and a memorial was built.

Polish historians and officials believe that several thousand Polish soldiers and officers who were captured as the Soviet Union encroached Polish lands to defeat the Nazis were buried there, including an estimated 15,000 massacred near the Katyn woods.

"This is a very important place for Poles because it is ... linked with Katyn," said Andrzej Przewoznik, general secretary of Poland's Council for the Protection of Monuments to Struggle and Martyrdom.

"This is a place where we would like the Polish (Catholic) cross and Polish memories of those people resting in the Bykovnya forest to be."

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:

<http://www.reuters.com/article/latestCrisis/idUSL27507377>

15. Ukraine reburies Soviet victims Al Jazeera, 27 October 2007

Ukraine has reburied the bodies of nearly 2,000 people shot dead by the secret police before the second world war, as the country paid its respects to victims of the Soviet era purges.

Organisers announced on Sunday the bodies had been moved from the mass grave where the police had dumped them, in Ukraine's biggest post-Soviet reburial.

The remains of 1,998 victims from the era of repression under Josef Stalin, the Soviet leader, were laid to rest on Saturday, said Vitaly Kozakevych, secretary of a government commission for commemorating victims of political repression.

The victims were believed to include 474 ethnic Poles, as well as 29 Red Army soldiers.

The mass executions were carried out between 1937 and 1941 by the NKVD, Stalin's secret police force and the precursor to the KGB, in the small village of Bykivnya on the outskirts of Kiev.

"I was eight-years old. It was just three of us, father, mother and me. And they took him," Maria Marzhetska said of her father, who was seized by the NKVD in 1937.

"Every morning, every evening we were at the police station," she said. She found out what had happened 60 years later.

In a sombre ceremony attended by 100 people, red coffins, some draped with flags, were lowered one by one into graves and blessed by a priest.

'Enemies of the people'

In total, up to 30,000 people, most branded "enemies of the people" by Stalin, are believed to have been killed and hidden in mass graves there.

However, historians and rights activists have been able to locate and rebury only 10,000 victims.

The Soviet authorities are believed to have destroyed the remains of the rest, Kozakevych said.

On Saturday, high-ranking Polish officials paid tribute to Poles who fell victim to Stalin's purges.

Some are believed to have been ethnic Poles living in Ukraine and executed in 1937-38, along with Ukrainians and others, for alleged anti-Soviet activity.

Others are thought to be victims of the so-called Katyn massacre, the execution by Soviet authorities of more than 21,700 Polish military officers, intellectuals and priests in the Katyn forest in western Russia and elsewhere.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:

<http://english.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/82F08EC3-2E5F-4C05-94B8-D9EA0F141F28.htm>

16. Ukraine President orders return of 700 confiscated Torah scrolls **By Anshel Pfeffer** **Haaretz, 28 October 2007**

Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko signed last week a presidential order to return an estimated 700 Torah scrolls confiscated from Jewish communities during the Soviet Union's Communist rule. The decision is seen as an attempt to mollify Jewish and Israeli opinion in advance of a visit to Israel by Yushchenko next week.

The issue of state-held Torah scrolls has touched many nerves over the last year. The Jewish communities in Kiev and Zhitomir have been using scrolls on loan from the government, but, a few months ago, the state archive in Kiev demanded the return of the scrolls, citing misuse.

Ukrainian Chief Rabbi Moshe Asman, who has connections in the President's office, intervened, and the local synagogues were allowed to continue using the scrolls. Simultaneously, efforts were made to recover all the estimated 700 scrolls confiscated by the Communist authorities in Ukraine, culminating in Yushchenko's order on Wednesday.

Yushchenko incurred the anger of Jewish activists two weeks ago after honoring a Ukrainian nationalist who was also a virulent anti-Semite, and his latest step is seen as an attempt to improve relations before his visit to Israel next month.

The countries of the Soviet Union, especially Russia and Ukraine, still hold considerable cultural and religious treasures - both those confiscated by the Communists and those that were pillaged by the Nazis during World War Two and captured later on by the Red Army.

Israeli attorney Mordechai Tzivin, who is active in cases of restitution of Jewish cultural property, said that "we should praise President Yushchenko for taking the feelings of the Jewish people in consideration, this was a brave move by him. We hope that other nations of the former Soviet bloc will take the same attitude and return the Jewish treasures they are still holding."

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/917483.html>

17. Ukraine to seek Israeli recognition for 1930s genocide

By Anshel Pfeffer

Haaretz, 29 October 2007

Ukrainian President Victor Yushchenko is expected to ask Israel to recognize the genocide of the Ukrainian people in the 1930s by their communist government when he visits here in about two weeks, sources said. Israel is not expected to accede to the request, which has won the support of Jewish community leaders in Ukraine, so as not to damage its relationship with Vladimir Putin's government at a sensitive time.

Millions of Ukrainians died of hunger from 1931 to 1932 following the collectivization of farming in the Soviet Union by Joseph Stalin. Famine was particularly severe in Ukraine, which was a regional breadbasket and was strongly opposed to the move. At the same time the communist government attempted to wipe out Ukrainian intelligentsia and nationalists, with estimations of the number of victims ranging from a million and a half to 10 million.

A number of countries, including the United States, have recognized these acts as genocide, however, Russia vigorously rejects this definition, preferring to use the term "tragedy."

Members of the Jewish community in Ukraine say Yushchenko also intends to present a proposal in the parliament in Kiev to recognize the suffering of the Jewish people in the Holocaust and the suffering of the Ukrainian people.

The chairman of the General Council of Jewish organizations, Joseph Zisels, who met with Yushchenko last Monday, said yesterday: "Israelis understand more than anyone what genocide is and Yushchenko therefore expects that Israelis will also recognize the Ukrainian genocide. We don't think it is the same as the Holocaust, but it is also a terrible tragedy with seven or eight million murdered."

Last week Yushchenko signed a presidential order to return to the Jewish community 700 Torah scrolls that were confiscated from the community by the communists. The move is believed to be an attempt to soften up Jewish and Israeli public opinion ahead of his visit. He is expected to bring some of the scrolls to the Presidential Residence in Jerusalem during his visit.

An attempt to organize a visit by Yushchenko to Israel was made about six months ago by Rabbi Moshe Azman, Ukraine's Chabad rabbi, and Mordechai Tzivin, an Israeli attorney active in

international Jewish causes. But Israeli government officials postponed the visit, among other reasons because Yushchenko wanted to be in Israel on Holocaust Day and to participate in a ceremony at the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://www.haaretz.com/hasen/spages/917798.html>

18. Ukraine leader says \$150-160 optimal price for gas Reuters, 28 October 2007

Ukraine's President Viktor Yushchenko said on Sunday the most rational price for Russian gas imports next year should be \$150 to \$160 per 1,000 cubic metres, in keeping with a government assumption in the 2008 budget.

Ex-Soviet Ukraine pays \$130 for Russian gas at the moment, still much below the price paid by European Union countries, closer to \$250 per 1,000 cubic metres, but considerably higher than the \$95 it paid last year.

Yushchenko said politics had played too great a role in determining gas prices -- and cited circumstances in early 2006, when the flow of Russian gas was cut off briefly as the two sides were unable for a time to agree terms.

"Let me just say what I said in 2005 when a price of \$235 was proposed -- there will be no price of that sort," he told Inter Television channel in an interview.

"It is not that such a price is unacceptable or too high for us -- the fact is that there is no basis for such a price.

"Given the trends on energy markets, the optimal, rational price for gas at the Russia-Ukraine border, the price which would be viewed with some understanding by most of the market, is about 150-160 dollars per 1,000 cubic metres."

President Vladimir Putin said this month that Russia wanted a gradual transition to market prices for Ukraine.

Ukraine and Russia have had several disputes over gas prices. The brief cutoff in January 2006 led to reductions in supplies that affected some EU countries.

The EU gets the majority of a quarter of its gas needs from Russia via Ukraine. The rest goes through Belarus, which also has had gas disputes with Moscow, the last in July when Minsk fell behind in debt payments.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://uk.reuters.com/article/oilRpt/idUKL285068320071028?sp=tru>

19. Yushchenko, Tymoshenko and Yanukovych: History of Betrayal. Part I By Serhiy Leshchenko Ukrayinska Prawda, 29 October 2007

Viktor Yushchenko appeared in a very difficult situation having made promises to the two opposing political forces of Ukrainian politics. Several days before the election, in the pink hall of the President's Secretariat, he publicly promised to Yulia Tymoshenko that he accepted no coalition other than the democratic.

In the same hall, he reassured Mr. Yanukovych that they would together form a coalition after the early election.

“Tymoshenko is Yushchenko’s problem. He must figure out how to get rid of her. We accepted early election and legalized his illegitimate decrees having been promised to form a coalition after the election,” one of the Party of Regions leaders said to the author of this article.

Viktor Yushchenko’s best choice would be formation of a coalition of his rivals where they would destroy one another. However, Ukrainian politicians are not ready to participate in such a weird union. That is why Mr. Yushchenko must choose only one partner.

President Yushchenko equally opposes both Yanukovych and Tymoshenko. Last summer when the president nominated the Party of Regions leader for the PM he used to say in private: “I cannot turn Yulia into Ukrainian but I will try to do it with Yanukovych!”

A year of co-existence with Yanukovych must have destroyed all illusions of the president. Mr. Yushchenko knows both politicians, their interests and real intentions well enough. These three politicians have one thing in common: both Yushchenko, Tymoshenko and Yanukovych want power.

Yushchenko-Tymoshenko: relationship history

When the president sacked Yulia Tymoshenko in 2005 some of her key allies, Mykhailo Brodsky and Nestor Shufrych, stated that Mr. Yushchenko had betrayed Yulia Tymoshenko for the third time.

The history of relations between Yushchenko and Tymoshenko is complicated, interesting and cynical. It began with Yulia Tymoshenko’s appointment Vice PM.

This is the starting point of Mrs. Tymoshenko’s way up in politics. Without access to administrative levers in the executive power she would have every chance of remaining independent politician that failed to live up to people’s expectations. Hundreds of such stars shine and then die out in the Verkhovna Rada.

In 2001, after Yulia Tymoshenko got out of prison and Viktor Yushchenko went to the opposition *Ukrayinska Pravda* correspondent managed to have interview with both politicians.

One of the questions posed to the two politicians was how it happened that Yushchenko employed Yulia Tymoshenko in his Cabinet.

According to Mrs. Tymoshenko, she first met Viktor Yushchenko in 1998. Having been elected to parliament as the head of shadow government in Hromada Party (she did have such a status) she took control over the budget committee on Pavlo Lazarenko’s quota.

Mrs. Tymoshenko claims that she understood that Yushchenko was her destiny six years before the Orange Revolution. She recalled that then-head of the National Bank Viktor Yushchenko was intensively working together with her on the budget-1999. The Budget was adopted by the Verkhovna Rada several hours before the New Year.

“We understood that we are a team,” said Mrs. Tymoshenko.

“When Mr. Yushchenko was appointed the PM and was forming the Cabinet he held consultations with all parliamentary factions. We had a meeting and eventually I agreed to head energy sector of the government,” recalled Yulia Tymoshenko.

According to Mrs. Tymoshenko, having appointed her Vice PM, Leonid Kuchma wanted to get her out of the budget committee and deprive her of immunity from the law. Also, energy sector is traditionally considered the most difficult. As a result she was kicked away from the Cabinet in April 2000.

This is Yulia Tymoshenko's interpretation.

Mr. Yushchenko's version sounds different. He does not remember the first months of relations with Yulia Tymoshenko at all. According to him, they met each other a year later than the BYuT leader claims it.

"I can honestly say that I did not know Yulia Tymoshenko before my premiership," said Mr. Yushchenko in an interview with *Ukrayinska Pravda*.

According to Mr. President, he held consultations with the faction leaders before his appointment the PM. "After the meeting very few people left. There were three or four men and Yulia Tymoshenko. When it came to candidates for positions in the energy sector of the government she said: "Should we maybe consider new candidates?" That is how she became Vice PM," said Mr. Yushchenko.

Then, according to Mr. Yushchenko, he invited Mrs. Tymoshenko to government talks. "She has clearly said that she would not mind heading energy sector of the Cabinet," he noted.

Viktor Yushchenko said how he proposed three or four nominations for the PM in Energy Issues.

"I was talking to the president and when it came to Mrs. Tymoshenko's nomination Mr. Kuchma's eyes lit up. He was very optimistic about her nomination. He said: "Ok, Let's give her a try!" Believe me, we were both sincere in our decisions," he added.

Volodymyr Lytvyn who chaired the President's Administration said in an interview with *Ukrayinska Pravda* that Mrs. Tymoshenko underwent an interview with President Kuchma before her appointment:

"Tymoshenko had a lengthy conversation with the president. Then Mr. Kuchma gave me a call and required to prepare documents for Mrs. Tymoshenko's appointment the Vice PM."

According to Mr. Lytvyn, Leonid Kuchma thought that Tymoshenko would channel her energy in the right direction. "I think that Kuchma liked Tymoshenko who was a born fighter. Mrs. Tymoshenko was assigned a specific role in government. She was to clean the Augean Stables to certain extent," he said.

That is how Yulia Tymoshenko started her political career. Obviously, this government position enabled her to enter a big-time politics.

The history of Yushchenko's betrayals consists of three stages.

Betrayal #1

The first betrayal is Mrs. Tymoshenko's discharge from the position of the Vice PM that made her future arrest possible.

As a matter of fact, Mrs. Tymoshenko's team reproached Yushchenko of his signing the decree to discharge the BYuT leader. At the same time, Mr. Yushchenko repeatedly refuted this information.

It will be possible to learn the truth when the relevant documents are de-classified. At the same time Volodymyr Lytvyn claims that Mr. Yushchenko signed this document. "All decrees issued by President Kuchma were formalized according to the legislation," he said.

Once, when Mr. Yushchenko has just become the PM, Mr. Lytvyn asked him to sign decrees that had already come into force. "Mr. Yushchenko signed them saying: "I am asking you not to submit such documents. I find it humiliating to sign them." I understood my indelicacy and after that all documents were forwarded to the Cabinet of Ministers. They were signed, and thus, formality was observed," added Mr. Lytvyn.

“Even if there was not signature on the document discharging Mrs. Tymoshenko there must have been Yushchenko’s verbal agreement,” stated Mr. Lytvyn.

Betrayal #2

The second betrayal is the Statement of the Three at the height of protest action “Ukraine Without Kuchma.” Opposition, run by Yuriy Lutsenko and financed by Yulia Tymoshenko, was compared with fascists in the joint statement of Kuchma, Yushchenko and Plyushch:

“Attempts to excite the public and use of clearly provocative methods aimed at splitting the county and inciting the government for forceful resolution of the conflict jeopardize national security of the country. Let’s not forget lessons of the world history. Let’s recall the rise of fascism.”

After discharge from the position of the PM Mr. Yushchenko joined the opposition. He swore that there was no word ‘fascism’ in the statement he had signed. This word appeared after the President’s Administration had introduced its editorial remarks.

In his book “After Maidan” Leonid Kuchma says that they signed the document together. “The word ‘fascism’ aroused protests of those who called themselves democrats. Yushchenko could not stand such pressure. He could not deny he had not signed the statement because we signed it together – Plyushch, Yushchenko and myself. But according to Mr. Yushchenko, it turns out that he was either forced to sign it or he had not properly read the statement,” says the book.

Betrayal #3

The third betrayal is Mrs. Tymoshenko’s discharge from the position of the PM at the height of the corruption scandal. Events of autumn 2005 caused a two year political crisis in Ukraine.

Lengthy talks held in the President’s Secretariat after Oleksandr Zinchenko’s statement on corruption in the president’s entourage ended in Mr. Yushchenko’s consent to keep Yulia Tymoshenko’s office in the event she agrees to discharge Oleksandr Turchynov. Viktor Yushchenko is his turn promised to discharge Poroshenko and Tretyakov.

Later, Yulia Tymoshenko held a meeting with her closest allies. President Yushchenko was irritated by the fact that Yulia Tymoshenko called the US Ambassador to Ukraine with the request to persuade President Yushchenko to preserve unity gained on Maidan.

Yulia Tymoshenko came to the President’s Secretariat on the next day to say that she refused from such a bargain. In several hours spent in empty talks President Yushchenko sacked the government and his entourage.

To be continued...

Permanent Link: <http://www.pravda.com.ua/en/news/2007/10/29/9272.htm>

20. Ukraine has no language problem – Yushchenko Itar-Tass, 29 October 2007

Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko has opposed speculations surrounding the language issue.

“There is no language problem between average citizens. It is hard to find a language policy model more tolerant than the one Ukraine is applying to any national minority,” he said.

Ukraine has never oppressed other languages, first and foremost, Russian, Yushchenko said.

“Half of the Ukrainian budget allocations for languages fall on Russian. Tell me which other state is assigning so much budgetary funds for the language policy. I’d rather not call them a national minority, but call them people who respect the Russian language,” he said. “This is an absolutely transparent policy, which guarantees every resident of Ukraine the right to free communication in the language of his or her choice.”

“Ukraine will respect the language of any national minority. There must be no language speculations, although I, as the president, will have to listen to such claims and make corrections,” he said. “One should be ashamed to live in Ukraine and fail to understand the Ukrainian language, and one should be ashamed not to speak several languages in a few years.”

Meanwhile, the Party of Regions led by Viktor Yanukovich reminded the authorities on Friday that it is working on a referendum concerning the Russian language status, Ukraine’s neutrality, and municipal elections.

Five million people signed up in support of the referendum, and their signatures were presented to the Central Elections Commission on September, three days before the early parliament elections, the party said.

“The politicians must rely on the opinion of people,” said the Party of Regions, which defines itself as “a responsible political force supported by millions of citizens.”

“We will be protecting their interests in every lawful way possible,” the party said.

Party representatives said recently that they might abandon the referendum idea if the nation would benefit from that.

“The new status of the Russian language is a demand of our voters, and we will not let them down. We won’t bargain our principles,” said party co-leader Raisa Bogatyryova.

In the words of Director of the Sociology Institute of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences Nikolai Shulga, the number of ethnic Ukrainians, who say that Russian is their native tongue, has grown by one million people to 5.5 million.

In his opinion, that is because of the Ukrainian urbanization – the majority of Ukrainian cities speak Russian. “The Russian community is still here. They are trying to hush it down or marginalize, but it exists and even grows,” he said.

The Ukrainian constitution gives the state status to the Ukrainian language. It also guarantees the free development, use and protection of Russian and other languages of national minorities in Ukraine. Yet the constitution does not have a notion of the official language.

It takes no less than 300 votes in the Verkhovna Rada to amend the constitution.

Over half of Ukrainian citizens insist that the status of the Russian language in Ukraine must be changed, the Social Monitoring Center said in comments on a July poll.

Nearly 27% of 2,014 respondents throughout Ukraine, including the Crimea, Kiev and Sevastopol, supported the state status of the Russian language alongside Ukrainian. Another 25% said that the Russian language must be legalized in areas of compact residence of Russians.

One-third of the respondents said that nothing should change, and about 12% said that the Russian language should be banned in official communication.

The Ukrainian constitution and laws attribute the state status only to the Ukrainian language, while Russian, which is the native tongue of over half of Ukraine’s residence, is defined as the language of a national minority.

The Russian language was legalized by local councils in the Donetsk, Zaporozhye, Lugansk, Nikolayev and Kharkov regions, as well as in Donetsk, Dnepropetrovsk, Krivoi Rog, Lugansk, Nikolayev, Sevastopol, Kharkov, Yalta and some other cities in the southern and eastern areas of Ukraine in May-June 2006. Local prosecutors and courts have been challenging these decisions since then.

Nearly half of Ukrainian citizens think that the status of the Russian language in Ukraine must be changed, says a report entitled "Socio- Political Preferences and Electoral Feelings of Ukrainian Citizens."

The Ukrainian Sociological Service based the report on results of a poll, which was held nationwide on July 16-25.

Nearly 24% of 26,000 respondents said that the Russian language should acquire the state status in Ukraine, while another 23% said that the Russian language should receive the official status in areas compactly populated by ethnic Russians.

Nearly 46% of the respondents bluntly said no to any changes in the language policy of the Ukrainian state.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://www.itar-tass.com/eng/level2.html?NewsID=12014553&PageNum=0>

21. Stadium for Euro 2012 Planned to Be Built in Expocentre Ukraine Ukrayinska Prawda, 26 October 2007

Football federation decided that the territory of Expocentre Ukraine is the most suitable place for building a stadium for the European championship, but the Expocentre staff is against it.

According to the president of Ukrainian Football Federation (UFF) Hrihoriy Surkis, the Expocentre Ukraine option is the only one, reports Delo newspaper.

The territory of Expocentre is on the balance sheet of State Administration of Affairs which needs to give its consent to city administration about using the land for stadium construction.

However, the opposing staff of the centre can disrupt the construction on the territory of Expocentre Ukraine. Moreover, the stadium construction contradicts the complex program of Expocentre Ukraine development approved by the Cabinet of Ministers in 2004.

According to the information of Expocentre Ukraine investment projects and construction organization department head Nina Kalibanska, Ukrainian State Institute of City Planning (USCP) never received an order on the revision of construction on the territory of Expocentre.

Moreover, USCP denies the opportunity of building a sport facility in the abovementioned place. "Just as with the Olimpiysky National Sport Complex (NSC), the access to the stadium will be limited," cites Ms. Kalibanska the institute specialists.

On Thursday a German company Hochtief presented its project on reconstruction of Olimpiysky NSC. According to the project, the capacity of main sport arena of the country will increase up to 87 thousand people: 73 thousand seats for spectators and 14 thousand more for the stadium personnel.

The project also envisages covering Olimpiysky with a huge glass dome. According to the Minister of Family, Youth and Sport Affairs Viktor Korzh, Hochtief company reconstructed stadiums in Berlin and Köln before the world football championship.

At the same time, the threat of reconstructed Olimpiysky not hosting the final match of Euro 2012 remains. The reason lies in construction of a mall in front of the stadium. The UEFA specialists stipulated that such neighborhood contradicts the football arena safety requirements.

At the session of coordination council on preparation and holding final part of Euro 2012 the proposal of Mr. Surkis on disassembling the unfinished construction was supported by the president. He addressed Kyiv mayor with a demand to solve this disassembling issue.

At the same time, Leonyd Chernovetsky claimed that UFF representatives didn't discuss the destiny of Olimpiysky with him: "UFF is somewhat nervous about it [construction] but I didn't have the honor to meet its representatives for discussing this issue. Otherwise I would have made a decision long ago."

According to the information of the publication, another construction except mall is also planned near the stadium. When told about it Mr. Chernovetsky replied that he doesn't track every object in the city.

However, he noted that there are some "unclear issues" around the stadium. "I was told that there are some interests. But I can't say anything in detail," stated the mayor.

Permanent Link: <http://www.pravda.com.ua/en/news/2007/10/26/9259.htm>

22. Ministry of Agrarian Policy initiates prolonging of agrarians VAT taxation special regime until 2009 **Agro Perspektiva, 25 October 2007**

Ministry of Agrarian Policy has elaborated draft Law "About Bringing Changes to Some Laws of Ukraine in Part of Taxation of Agricultural Goods Producers with Value-Added Tax" stipulating prolonging of country agricultural goods producers VAT taxation special regime until 2009, reported news agency Ukrainian News.

As to draft Law, currently efficient agricultural goods producers VAT taxation special regimes should be prolonged until Jan 1, 2009; besides, VAT zero rate should be spread upon operations with similar imported products.

Draft Law stipulates agriculture, forestry and fish farming spheres activities VAT taxation special regimes cancellation as inconsistent with Ukraine WTO joining conditions.

It is to be admitted, 2006 State indirect support (provided through abovementioned VAT taxation introduction) of agricultural goods producers totaled UAH4.1 milliard. Thus, draft Law will make it possible to retain necessary indirect State support of agricultural goods producers under condition of lack of sufficient State budget costs to assure direct support and, besides, to evade inadequate VAT taxation of operations performed by agricultural goods producers and those executed by agricultural goods importers.

Currently efficient Ukrainian VAT costs accumulation doesn't contradict to Ukraine WTO joining conditions due to domestic agricultural goods (as well as similar imported goods) VAT rate is 20% and therefore no importers discrimination in VAT costs accumulation is to be expected.

Reportedly, Verkhovna Rada prolonged agricultural producers preferential taxation regime until 2008.

As to Rada Law, all categories agricultural producers live weight meat and milk shipments (directed to processors) VAT zero rate should be prolonged until 2008, while introduction of special taxation regime of agriculture, forestry and fish farming spheres activities taxation should be postponed until 2008 beginning. (Agro_News)

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://www.agroperspectiva.com/en/news/28337>

23. Ukraine: the market of feed maize observes the tendency of price reduction Agrimarket Consulting, 26 October 2007

According to the experts of IA "APK-Inform", the Ukrainian market of feed maize observes the tendency of price reduction. So, at the moment, prices in the offers for purchase of feed maize are at the level of 198-222 USD/t (EXW).

We notice that price reduction is caused by saturation of the market - offer for maize exceeds demand.

Besides, single export-oriented companies purchasing feed maize in ports for the further export, also reduced prices and declared them at the level of 207-217 USD/t (CPT-port). According to the representatives of the companies, the offers of grain were enough and there were no difficulties with accumulation.

According to the market participants, the prices for feed maize in Ukraine would continue reduction.

You may find detailed information about the current state of Ukrainian market of oilseeds and derived products in our periodical "Agrimarket Weekly Report".

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://www.agrimarket.info/showart.php?id=51580>

24. Ukraine: as for October 25 farmers harvested about 29.5 mln tonnes of grain Agrimarket Consulting, 26 October 2007

According to Minister of Agrarian Policy of Ukraine Yuriy Melnik, as for October 25, the Ukrainian farmers harvested about 29.5 mln tonnes of grain (in originally harvested weight).

According to him, the farms harvested maize from 75% of areas and threshed over 6.2 mln tonnes of grain. The gross yield of maize in the current year is forecasted to be about 7 mln tonnes.

In addition, the harvesting campaign of sunflower seeds is almost finished - as for the reported date the farmers harvested 4.2 mln tonnes of sunseeds. According to the Minister, this volume would allow to satisfy needs of sun oil production for the domestic as well as for export markets.

As for the sowing campaign of winter crops, the farmers have already sowed 7.5 mln ha under winter crops for 2008 crop, including 6.2 mln ha under wheat, 470.000 ha under rye, 730.000 ha under barley. The sowings of winter rapeseeds are at 1.370 mln ha, up 700.000 ha as for the analogous date last year.

As it was stated before, this year the grain yield in Ukraine is expected at the level of 29-30 mln tonnes (in clean weight) against 34.3 mln tonnes last year.

The needs of Ukraine in grain are estimated at 27 mln tonnes per year.

Text available on World Wide Web, URL:
<http://www.agrimarket.info/showart.php?id=51548>