

**Joint Statement of the President of Ukraine Petro Poroshenko and  
the President of the Republic of Latvia Raimonds Vējonis  
on the occasion of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic  
relations between Ukraine and the Republic of Latvia**

On 12 February 2017, Ukraine and Latvia marked the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of their diplomatic relations. The friendly relations between our countries are based on the solid ground of common historic traditions, as well as commitment to European values and the rule of international law. Today the Ukrainian–Latvian relations continue to develop fruitfully in the atmosphere of mutual respect, trust and support. Our efforts are directed not only towards deepening of mutually beneficial bilateral cooperation in many spheres of common interests, but also towards strengthening European security and overcoming of present-day challenges on the international agenda.

Our countries resolutely condemn the aggression of Russia against Ukraine, which has resulted in the illegal temporary occupation of a part of the Ukrainian territory – the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol. Ukraine highly values political support and practical assistance from Latvia in countering Russian aggression and the restoration of sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within the internationally recognized borders.

While remaining adherent to the political and diplomatic settlement of the situation in Donbas caused by the Russian aggression against Ukraine, both countries assert the necessity of unconditional fulfillment by the Russian Federation of its commitments under international law and restoration of respect for the universally recognized principles thereof. In this regard Ukraine and Latvia call on the international community to further solidarity with Ukraine, as well as underlining that sanctions imposed on Russia due to its aggression against Ukraine should be preserved till the full implementation of the Minsk agreements and restoration of sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, or even strengthened in case of escalation of aggressive actions and tensions on the part of Russia.

Latvia welcomes and continues to actively support the course of Ukraine towards European and Euro-Atlantic integration. Ensuring successful implementation of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU is a major common task. Ukraine shows success in this process and is determined to continue the implementation of reforms. At the same time the country needs further assistance from the international community, European community in particular, in undertaking internal transformations. Ukraine is deeply grateful to Latvia for the important support and practical assistance in undertaking reforms.

We positively note the efficiency of the implementation of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the European Union, which offers considerable advantages both to Ukraine and the EU. The Agreement serves also as a good basis for developing a more favorable business climate in Ukraine for attracting foreign investment. Therefore, we hope for smooth completion of its ratification process. Latvia also supports the necessity to take swift decisions on granting Ukrainian citizens visa-free travel to the Schengen countries.

Ukraine and Latvia will further exert active efforts to realize the vast potential of bilateral cooperation in the economic, scientific and technological, educational, cultural and humanitarian and many other spheres of mutual interest, to strengthen links between cities and regions, to develop people-to-people contacts, and to secure the interests of the Ukrainian community in Latvia and the Latvian community in Ukraine.