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By Petro Poroshenko

A Year Later, a New Ukraine

With a new, pro-Europe Parliament in place, we are moving quickly to deliver on needed reforms.

За рік Україна оновилася

З новим, проєвропейським парламентом, ми швидко зробимо необхідні реформи.

"Вперше з 1991 року, Україна стала незалежною, у неї з'явився шанс на перетворення в справжню європейську демократичну країну", - починає свою статтю Президент України Петро Порошенко. Парламент і уряд налаштовані на реформи і проєвропейськи, а Україна здобула сили для здійснення перманентних змін, яких давно чекають український народ і міжнародна спільнота, йдеться в статті. На погляд Порошенка, зараз головне завдання уряду - боротьба з корупцією, невдоволення якою стало головним поштовхом до протестів на Майдані. "Загроза, що виходить з Москви, тільки зміцнила в українцях віру у встановлення засадничих цінностей - гідності, свободи, безпеки та справедливості. З метаннями між Сходом і Заходом, які тривали останні 23 роки, покінчено: абсолютна більшість наших громадян хоче, щоб Україна була європейською і залишилася єдиною. І все ж державне управління буде децентралізовано, щоб прискорити зростання регіонів і наділити повноваженнями локальні громади. Це також стане відповіддю на тиск ззовні - спроби розколоти країну через федералізацію, ідея якої Україна чужа", - йдеться в статті.

<http://online.wsj.com/articles/petro-poroshenko-a-year-later-a-new-ukraine-1417738446>



FOREIGN AID: Three ministerial portfolios have been assigned to foreigners, including Natalie Jaresko (center), the new minister of finance. Agence France-Presse/Getty Images

For the first time since Ukraine's independence in 1991, the nation has the opportunity to evolve into a true European democracy, thanks to the recent election of a pro-European constitutional majority to Parliament. A pro-reform and pro-European Parliament and government are now in place, and a politically reset Ukraine has been empowered to make permanent changes that have been long awaited by the Ukrainian people and by the international community.

A year has passed since protests began on the Maidan, or Independence Square, in Ukraine's capital, protests that soon spread across the country and became known as Euromaidan, and then the Revolution of Dignity. Ukrainians were opting for freedom, not fear, choosing democracy, not dictatorship, and believing in the future, not the past. The idea of a new Ukraine was born. We had the courage to fight for it. Now we have the institutional powers to implement it.

Amid the current security crisis and economic recession, we need to ensure that the best government practices are in place so that we can act decisively to deliver on reforms and restore market confidence.

To that end, a new technocratic government has been formed, and it includes this innovation: Three ministerial portfolios have been assigned to foreigners. Natalie Jaresko, a former U.S. citizen and co-founder and CEO of a private-equity fund, is at the helm of the Ministry of Finance. Aivaras Abromavicius, a partner in a Swedish emerging-market asset-management company, who is originally Lithuanian, has been appointed as minister of Economic Development and Trade. And Aleksandre Kvitashvili, a former Georgian minister of health, is taking over a similar position in Ukraine.

They will be working alongside a team of young Ukrainian professionals and tasked with delivering on the comprehensive-reform agenda embedded in the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the European Union signed in March.

The new approach of hiring foreign professionals will be practiced throughout the government. We are welcoming representatives of other nations, from the private and public sectors, who are experienced with enacting reforms in their own countries and are ready to accept Ukrainian citizenship. Transparent recruiting will ensure that the new government meets the professional and ethical criteria that are needed in these times of major changes.

The government's most important task right now is to wage a fierce battle against corruption. We have already taken legislative steps on this front and have empowered the National Anti-Corruption Bureau to lead the fight. Corruption is a tumor that for too long has exhausted Ukraine's economy; Ukrainians' fury over corruption, more than anything else, is what sparked the Maidan protests a year ago.

It is crucial that every Ukrainian official and member of Parliament—from a regional clerk to the president—feels responsible for those who sacrificed their lives for a better Ukraine. As we start each working day, we must remember those who died, whether a few blocks away from the government offices or hundreds of miles away in the east of Ukraine defending the country from Russian aggression.

After decades of countless tragedies and instability, Ukraine is finally ready to build a robust state. The threat from Moscow has only helped secure Ukrainians' belief in establishing fundamental values of dignity, freedom, security and justice for the nation. The vacillation in the past 23 years between East and West has come to an end: An absolute majority of our people want Ukraine to be European—and to remain united. Yet state governance will be decentralized to boost regional growth and empower local communities. It will also be the answer to outside pressure to break up the country with federalization, an idea alien to Ukraine.

On the external front, we are united in fighting for our freedom and for our future as an independent nation—a fight that has implications for all of Europe and global security. Domestically, the new government's attack on inefficiency and corruption will further bind Ukrainians together. The Gospel teaches us that a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand. We won't give this chance to the enemy. Day by day, Ukrainians are unifying as citizens, as governors and as Europeans.

Mr. Poroshenko is the president of Ukraine.