

## Україна відкриває нові можливості для бізнесу

У Києві 8 жовтня відбувся круглий стіл «Нові перспективи для бізнесу в розрізі підписання Угоди про асоціацію України з ЄС та Зони вільної торгівлі у Вільнюсі». У заході взяли участь Міністр закордонних справ України Леонід Кожара, а також керівники українських та американських компаній-членів USUBC.

У своєму виступі міністр основну увагу приділив питанням європейської інтеграції України, передусім, у контексті підготовки до підписання Угоди про асоціацію з Європейським Союзом на саміті «Східного партнерства» у Вільнюсі. Наголосивши на важливості угоди як для України, так і для ЄС, Леонід Кожара поінформував про переваги та нові потенційні можливості, що відкриються перед представниками іноземного, у тому числі американського, бізнесу після її укладання і створення поглибленої та всеохоплюючої зони вільної торгівлі з Євросоюзом.

Окремо глава зовнішньополітичного відомства України зупинився на питаннях розвитку українсько-американської торговельно-економічної співпраці, відзначивши її поступальний характер і широкі перспективи поглиблення взаємодії в таких сферах, як енергетика, сільське господарство, транспорт тощо.

**Leonid Kozhara:** I see today's meeting as a good continuation of our dialogue



started in Washington last May. It is also an excellent opportunity to exchange ideas on how to capitalize on Ukraine's trade and investment possibilities.

Let me start from the most important issue which is of course, the European integration.

On 18 September, the Government of Ukraine approved the Association Agreement draft. This brings us to the final stage of a long way towards the conclusion of the Agreement.

We hope that in less than a month, on 21 of October in Luxembourg, the EU Council will take a positive decision on signing and the provisional application of the Association Agreement.

The Agreement itself will be the most powerful incentive for strengthening common European values in Ukraine. We see it also as the best systemic mechanism of resolving all pressing issues on Ukraine-EU agenda both of political and economic nature.

A possibility of provisional application is perhaps the most attractive feature of

this Agreement.

Ukraine and the European Union may provisionally apply the free trade articles of the Agreement, its rules of the economic and sectoral cooperation, as well as the section on political dialogue – after the signature and the completion by the EU institutions of respective internal procedures. There would be no need to wait for the Agreement's ratification by the national parliaments of all EU Member States to apply those provisions.

And this means both business community and consumers will reap the fruits of the Agreement relatively soon.

The Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) will not only lead to mutual market opening but will also bring business and investment environment in Ukraine in accordance with the European standards.

DCFTA means approximation of Ukrainian legislation with the EU standards, in particular in such important sectors as services,

energy, environmental protection, transport, nuclear power, financial sector and information society.

Free trade area with the EU will speed up the internal reforms, will improve Ukraine's investment attractiveness and increase competitiveness of the national products. Most visible changes we expect to see in agriculture and food industry, in metallurgy, chemicals, light industry, and in services, including transport.

The benefits of the DCFTA are obvious to the Ukrainian business community and to the foreign investors, as it opens significant medium- and long-term opportunities for the international investments in the Ukrainian economy.

The Association Agreement will give a boost to Ukraine's trade not only with the EU, but also with the United States. Big businesses in the U.S. show particular interest in signing this document as it will be a signal to expand investments in our country.

We believe business can also do its part to encourage the EU institutions and the Member States to take a positive decision in Vilnius. In particular, USUBC member companies that have offices in Europe, could persuade businesses and governments in the EU countries to support it.

We were pleased to know that BusinessEurope, the main horizontal business organisation at EU level, together with the Federation of employers of Ukraine

intend to issue a declaration of support for the Ukraine-EU DCFTA in the run up to Vilnius.

We would much appreciate if the members of the USUBC, represented in BusinessEurope, would join this initiative.

The improvement of the business climate in Ukraine is certainly a very pressing issue to be resolved now, without waiting for the DCFTA to come into force.

To counter this challenge we launched the Informal Business Climate Dialogue at the Ukraine-EU Summit in February this year. Officials from both sides had their first meeting in the framework of the Dialogue in Kyiv in July. These efforts are supported by the activities of the Anti-Raider Commission headed by the First Vice Prime Minister Serhii Arbutov.

As we approach Vilnius, of particular importance are Ukraine's relations with Russia which remains our largest trading partner.

I am confident that there is no alternative to frank and constructive dialogue with the Russian partners about benefits and challenges of the EU-Ukraine free trade area.

I think it would be also a good idea to hold trilateral EU-Ukraine-Russia expert consultations on implications of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement for the Russian economy and business.

We hope this proposal will find support from the Russian side.

The United States is one of the key Ukraine's partners in the sphere of trade and investments.

We are witnessing a significant progress in the energy sphere where Ukraine-

U.S. cooperation is the most intense.

Last month in New York I was present at the signing of the Treaty on the Hydrocarbon Sharing Agreement within Skifska field. The Treaty was signed in the presence of Mr. Viktor Yanukovich, the President of Ukraine, by Mr. Eduard Stavvytskyi, Minister of Energy and Coal Industry, and the representatives of Exxon Mobil Exploration and Production of Ukraine, of Shell Exploration and Production, and of OMV Petrom SA.

You may be also aware of the renewed cooperation with Vanco Company under offshore production sharing agreement (PSA) in 2013. We also hope that Halliburton will be able to expand its activities in Ukraine in the near future.

I am sure the American-Ukrainian Business Council will continue supporting bilateral projects in this area, as well as projects in agriculture and aviation.

The latter remains a promising sector of cooperation. The State Aviation Administration of Ukraine supported by the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration, received an upgrade of Ukraine's safety rating to Category One. This allows

us to increase the number of flights between our countries.

Last April, the Antares rocket, an expendable launch system developed by Orbital Sciences Corporation together with Ukrainian Pivdenmash and Pivdenne Design Bureau, made its maiden flight, being the largest rocket operated by Orbital Sciences so far.

There are also some issues to be resolved in the Ukraine – U.S. trade relations.

Ukraine was designated Priority Foreign Country in the 2013 Special 301 Report by the Office of the United States Trade Representative. This decision significantly hampers investments in our economy and we cannot agree with it.

Ukraine will continue addressing the issue of protection of international property rights. We are doing everything possible to be excluded from that category. The Cabinet of Ministers approved a resolution to start the process of software legalization in public institutions. The regulation also includes measures to improve the collection and distribution of royalties, substantial measures to combat counterfeit audio and video products, as well as other measures to fight

piracy.

We greatly appreciate the US-Ukraine Business Council's consistent commitment to improving business and investment relations between Ukraine and the U.S., as well as in disseminating knowledge about Ukraine worldwide.

I welcome the USUBC initiative to organize an annual business forum gathering representatives of the Ukrainian Government and the leaders of Ukraine-oriented business associations from around the world.

I believe such a forum will be a great chance for fresh insights and new ideas, contributing to strengthening the dialogue between the Government and private business sector.

We praise active participation of the USUBC in the Council of Exporters and Investors under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Ministry and the Council plan to continue presentations of trade and investment potential of the Ukrainian regions and of leading exporters. In November we will organize the Sumy region presentation and we invite USUBC members to participate in this event.

Paul Samuelson, an economics guru of the past century, used to say that "investing should be more like watching paint dry or watching grass grow".

We all need patience and sobriety in these extremely important months. When Ukraine's association with the European Union becomes a fact, everybody will be rewarded, including many sitting here in this conference hall.

Let us work together to make our dreams a reality, in the interest of all.

