

# Ukraine in Brief

## SPECIAL EDITION

Volume VI, Issue 7

February 17, 2011



Ukrainian Foreign Minister Kostyantyn Hryshchenko and U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton at the signing ceremony

*(Photo: Kyiv Post)*

### U.S.-Ukraine Strategic Partnership Meeting

On Feb. 15 Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Ukrainian Foreign Minister Kostyantyn Hryshchenko met in Washington, DC for the third session of the United States-Ukraine Strategic Partnership Commission. At the close of their meeting the two countries signed a cooperative agreement detailing the next steps in their bilateral relationship.

At the press conference following the signing of the agreement, both parties spoke highly of their progress and they look forward to meeting again soon. Minister Hryshchenko began by saying, "Now, the strategic partnership with the United States has become a very important part of our foreign policy, and we do rely on this strategic partnership to help us guide the shape of our statehood."

A video of the press conference during the signing of the agreements can be found on the State Department's website, or by going to <http://www.state.gov/secretary-/rm/2011/02/156606.htm>. Some of the highlights of their meeting include: nuclear

safety, agriculture, democracy and rule of law, and human trafficking.

In order to continue working toward a safer and more secure nuclear future for Ukraine, Minister Hryshchenko reaffirmed that by the 2012 Nuclear Security Summit, Ukraine will have eliminated its remaining highly enriched uranium. Last year President Yanukovich removed a significant portion of their highly enriched uranium as part of an agreement with President Obama. The continued work for nuclear security and non-proliferation is an important issue in the U.S.-Ukraine relationship.

The U.S. places such importance on this issue that they are willing to assist Ukraine in their efforts, and at this meeting pledged \$50 million by 2012. The U.S. also highlighted the importance of the upcoming conferences about the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Chornobyl, to be held in April 2011.

Ukraine will also be receiving another \$20 million from the United States over the next five years to help improve Ukraine's agricultural sector. Having always been known as the "bread basket of Europe" the U.S. hopes that these funds will help Ukraine secure a place in the global agricultural realm.

The U.S. is also committed to making Ukraine more investment friendly, both for foreign and domestic companies. Secretary Clinton said, "We also are hoping to see the investment climate improve and business open up. We want to see Ukraine prosper and think that there is an enormous opportunity for that." To reach that goal, the U.S. and the Minister of Energy and Coal from Ukraine agreed to allow a U.S. geological survey that will explore opportunities for unconventional

gas. The two countries hope this will be a cooperative energy venture.

The two groups also discussed democracy and the freedoms associated with it at the session. They want to continue holding meetings of their Political Dialogue and Rule of Law Working Group. This organization gives Ukraine a chance to hear views on democratic, legal and political reforms, and the development of a civil society. In a statement Secretary Clinton reminded Ukraine "to continue the commitments that President Yanukovich has made to transparent government, strong rule of law, protection of freedom of speech and media, comprehensive judicial reform."

Secretary Clinton and Minister Hryshchenko also signed an agreement to increase efforts to combat human trafficking. The two countries have worked together in the past to fight this "tragic worldwide blight" including the transfer of a trafficker from Ukraine to the U.S.

The day prior to the meeting, representatives of both U.S. and Ukrainian civil societies met to discuss goals and issues facing the two sides. That meeting gave both countries a means to share ideas and suggestions to make Ukrainian civil society a more prominent part of the country. The U.S. said they hope there will be continued meetings between NGO's of the two countries.

Secretary Clinton ended her statements by saying, "Ukraine is on a remarkable journey. The United States wants to assist on that journey." The two countries both look forward to future meetings between them, including sessions on democracy, nuclear safety, and economic development in the coming year.