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Press office of President

## Speech of the President at the ceremony of signing the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the European Union

**Dear Presidents! Dear Prime Ministers! Distinguished guests!**

What a great day! Maybe, the most important day for my country after the Independence Day. A moment of both historical and future importance. It shows how dramatically things can change in a short time.

I will sign up the Association Agreement by the pen which mentions: "EU-Ukraine Association Agreement. Vilnius, 29 November". It didn't happen then. But the pen is the same demonstrating historic events are unavoidable.

The document that we will sign today is not just political and economic. It is a symbol of fate and unbreakable will. It is a tribute to people who gave their lives and health to make this moment happen. And it is the strongest reminder that today's Europe is and must be about people's determination to live in a better and fairer world.

It took Ukraine 7 long years to walk the terrible, thorny road towards the political association and economic integration with the EU. This road saw its ups and downs, but today, we are finally here. All Ukraine, including Crimea, is starting to be a member of the Association Agreement with the EU.

**Dear friends!**

United Europe is the interest of all nations. Yet, this doesn't mean that it has no opponents. There have been many efforts to undermine the European unification project. Like they did in Ukraine throughout last months.

Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova are the countries that demonstrate new economic goals. But first and foremost it is freedom and democracy in the post-Soviet space that will depend on the ability of these three countries to implement necessary reforms stipulated by the Agreement.

Of course, all of us would have wished to sign up the Agreement under different, more comfortable circumstances. On the other hand, the external aggression faced by Ukraine gives another strong reason for this crucial step.

By signing this Agreement, Ukraine takes enormous commitment in terms of reforms. But it is also a document of joint responsibility.

So, in the spirit of the political association, we also expect that the EU will make everything to support our sovereign choice and protect Ukraine's independence and territorial integrity.

A lot will depend on the European solidarity with these three countries that paid a high price to be in Europe and with Europe. Will Europe be free or partly free? Will it have to worry about more wars and annexation? Or will it be confident in future? These aren't idle questions. And the answer will depend on success or failure of the documents that we will sign today.

Ukraine is determined to make it work. Our three countries embark on the way of painful but long overdue reforms. Economic integration and political association with the EU is our understanding of successful development. To make it work, we are ready to proceed with ratification as soon as possible. We do hope ratification in the EU capitals will be ensured promptly.

Over the last months, Ukraine paid the highest possible price to make its European dreams come true. It must be worth something. For instance, to finally consider a simple statement on the part of the EU. Once Ukraine will be ready it will be in.

A statement that could cost you nothing but would mean the world of my country. Therefore, in the context of today's signing, I would like to make a unilateral declaration: By signing the agreement with the EU, Ukraine, as a European state, sharing common values of democracy and the rule of law, is underlining its sovereign choice in favor of future membership in the EU in accordance with article 49 of the EU Treaty. The Association Agreement is considered by Ukraine as an instrument of comprehensive preparation to the achievement of this goal. The EU is more than just an exclusive club of rich nations, the EU is an idea, the right answer for Europe. And today, we all, EU and non-EU, make an important step to turn this idea to the reality.

I express gratitude to all of you, dear Presidents. Dear Heads of the Government. Dear President of the Commission. Dear President of the Council. Dear Commissioners.

It is the result of our joint efforts. And it is very important for the people of Ukraine and the people of the European Union.

Glory to the European Union! Glory to Ukraine!

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