

Brussels, 9 September 2008

## Leaders look forward to a new phase in EU- Ukraine relations

***On 9 September, the President of the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso will travel to Paris for the 12<sup>th</sup> annual EU-Ukraine Summit. He will be accompanied by the Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy, Benita Ferrero-Waldner and by the Commissioner for External Trade, Peter Mandelson. Ukraine will be represented by President Viktor Yushchenko accompanied by Foreign Minister Volodymyr Ogrzyzko. Just a day prior to the summit the EU and Ukraine had reached an important understanding on the title of the new agreement, which will now be called an "Association Agreement". The summit will be an opportunity to mark the considerable progress made in the course of the year in negotiations on this agreement. Furthermore, the summit will see the launching of a visa dialogue with the long term perspective of establishing a mutual visa-free regime between the EU and Ukraine. The leaders look forward to a renewed and strengthened relationship with Ukraine.***

Prior to the Summit, President Barroso said:

*"At the present time, the EU and Ukraine must deliver on their very strong and shared commitment to deepen their relations and to strengthen their ties by finalizing an Association Agreement. This agreement, which will require serious efforts from both sides, will bring real benefits for all our citizens."*

Benita Ferrero-Waldner, Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy added:

*"A year ago we could not have expected negotiations on the new agreement to have come so far. We have provisionally closed chapters on political dialogue, foreign and security policy, justice, freedom and security and a vast majority of issues on economic cooperation. The launching of a visa dialogue with the long term perspective of establishing a mutual visa-free regime between the EU and Ukraine is another clear sign of our genuine and practical commitment to furthering our relationship with Ukraine. Yet, for this deepened cooperation to fully succeed and to be of maximum benefit to the citizen political stability in the Ukraine is paramount."*

Peter Mandelson, Commissioner for External Trade commented: *"A deep and comprehensive free trade agreement is at the heart of the accord that the EU and Ukraine are striving for. This is not just about accelerating our trade and investment flows. It is a mark of Ukraine's continuing political and economic integration into the global economy, and deep partnership with the EU."*

The leaders of the European Union will take the opportunity to highlight their continuing support for Ukraine's on-going processes of political and economic reform. Furthermore, they will also review progress in the past year across a wide range of issues on which the EU and Ukraine already enjoy close cooperation including energy, trade and commerce and justice, freedom and security.

Naturally, international issues will also feature highly on the Summit's agenda in the light of the conflict in Georgia and the visit to Moscow and Tbilisi of President Sarkozy, President Barroso and the High Representative on behalf of the European Union on the 8<sup>th</sup> of September.

For more information on the current state of play on the negotiations on the agreement and further details about the current EU-Ukraine relationship, see

**[MEMO 556](#)**.

More information: [http://ec.europa.eu/external\\_relations/ukraine/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/ukraine/index_en.htm)

<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat>