

**Speech by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Denmark, Anders Samuelsen, at the
International Ukraine Reform High-Level Meeting in Kiyv on 20 February 2018**

Prime Minister, Ministers, Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is a great pleasure to be here today together with Prime Minister Groyzman and to welcome you to this Ukraine Reform High-level Meeting.

Let me thank the Prime Minister for hosting this meeting. Thank you for your presentation of the reform results for 2017 and plans for 2018. I have just had an excellent meeting with Prime Minister Groysman. He briefed me about the Government's results and future plans. I took note of the important reforms adopted last autumn within healthcare, education and pension. Each of these reforms would not be easy to get through our own Parliament.

Your presentation today confirms the Government's continued commitment to further reforms, which we will follow closely and look forward to witness becoming reality in the coming months and years. Ukraine has taken important steps in its transformation towards a modern and European-oriented society. The "New Ukraine" is emerging. Those claiming that nothing has changed in Ukraine are wrong.

But for the “New Ukraine” to succeed more needs to be done. It is critical to sustain the momentum for reforms and avoid backsliding.

Now, some are saying that the Government will not be able to take further steps before the elections in 2019. Mr. Prime Minister, you and your government should prove that they are wrong.

The most important area for reform is the fight against corruption. It exemplifies the struggle between the New and the Old Ukraine. If corruption is not dealt with, Ukraine will continue to struggle to attract

foreign investments, to create growth and jobs, to create trust between the citizens and the State.

The establishment of an independent High Anti-corruption Court is key. It will complete the anti-corruption chain and ensure that all anti-corruption institutions can jointly deliver tangible and visible results in the fight against corruption.

Change has to come from within. Ukraine is not reforming for *our* sake – to make the international community happy: No, you will continue

your way forward because you want to create a better future for the people of Ukraine. But as long as you are in the driver's seat, we will be there to support and assist you.

Denmark implements the large EU-anti-corruption program. Denmark is supporting you in areas such as energy and decentralization. And Denmark supports reforms in Ukraine with 65 million Euro under our new 5-year Neighbourhood Programme.

I personally look forward to meeting again on June 27th in Copenhagen for the Ukraine Reform Conference. The Conference is an opportunity for the Government of Ukraine to showcase its results. Good governance, including the fight against corruption, and economic development and growth will be the main topics.

Today, the Government has presented its plans for 2018 and now it is time to keep your eyes on the prize and deliver tangible and visible results. I strongly encourage the Government to use the time from now

until Copenhagen as a *driver for change* – to pursue ambitious reforms in critical areas, such as anti-corruption and privatization.

Bring yourself in a position so that when we meet in Copenhagen, you can rightfully expect the international community to commend your efforts. In my view, these should include the adoption of the law on an independent High Anti-corruption Court fully in line with the recommendations of the Venice Commission and substantial progress towards making the new Court operational.

Today is a particularly good day to remember what is at stake. It is exactly four years since the bloodiest day of the anti-government protests on Maidan, where more than a hundred people lost their lives for “the New Ukraine” in the most brutal manner.

Every nation has the sovereign right to choose its own future. Denmark stands firm in its support to Ukraine’s European aspirations.

Thank you.