

U.S.-UKRAINE POLICY DIALOGUE

A Discourse Among Partners



Partners in Ukraine



Razumkov Centre for Ukrainian
Economic & Political Studies

U.S. Partners



The Elliott School of
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Politics & Governance Task Force: Action Plan

Overall, the Politics and Governance Task Force positively assesses the efforts of the new Ukrainian government to fight corruption and to increase openness and transparency. These efforts are important for Ukrainian society and for Ukraine's relations with its foreign partners.

We wish to emphasize the role of the President of Ukraine as the guarantor of the Ukrainian Constitution and of the rights and freedoms of Ukrainian citizens. The president must abide by the Constitution and laws of Ukraine and ensure adherence to them by his government's officials and employees. The Task Force underlines that adherence to laws includes the prohibition against holding a post in the executive branch while serving as a deputy to the Verkhovna Rada.

We consider it especially important that all members of the new government observe high moral and ethical standards, in accordance with the obligations undertaken by President Viktor Yushchenko during the elections and in accordance with people's expectations during the Orange Revolution.

We recognize that administrative reform is the most important task for Ukraine today. In particular, the adoption of laws on the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and on other executive bodies, as well as other key legislative acts.

Based on the results of the dialogue, the Politics & Governance Task Force makes the following recommendations:

1. To eliminate the spread of corruption within Ukraine's state administrations and local governments:

- Introduce strict mechanisms to monitor the declaration of assets, incomes, and expenditures by Rada deputies, deputies of local legislatures, members of the Cabinet of Ministers, heads of central and local bodies of the executive branch, civil servants, local government officials, law enforcement officials, and family members of state officials. Ensure public and media access to the declarations. Draw on the relevant experience of the United States;
- Create a centralized system to monitor adherence to ethical standards by civil servants at all levels. Designate the Chief Administration of the Civil Service of Ukraine as the central body of power in this system, thus raising the status of this agency and making it independent from other governmental bodies;
- Develop and implement a program of public administration reform. Ensure salary increases for civil servants at all levels, while simultaneously increasing their responsibility for the diligent and high-quality execution of their duties;
- Draft a law on lobbying activities, on procedures and limitations, and on ways to report procedures to the public. Submit the draft to the Verkhovna Rada for consideration;

2. To protect the rights of political parties and to encourage the development of their effectiveness, transparency and public accountability. To adhere to human rights and freedoms, and abide by the rule of law:

- Draft and adopt the law “On Political Opposition in Ukraine: Its Rights and the Guarantee of its Activities,” which ensures the rights of political parties and coalitions in the Verkhovna Rada, local governments, and the non-parliamentary opposition;

3. To strengthen the influence of civil society on the development and implementation of state policies:

- Adopt permanent ways to involve civil society (non-governmental) organizations in the formation of state policies in different spheres and at various levels of government. Create a proper legal base for the involvement of civil society in policymaking;
- Create favorable conditions for the development of independent public initiatives through the:
 - 1) adoption of rules for the non-discriminatory registration of civil society organizations, and
 - 2) adoption of tax codes for these organizations that would enhance their financial strength and institutional capacities;

4. To develop democracy, rule of law, and accountability of government before society in Ukraine through the effective utilization of U.S. assistance:

- Organizational, technical and other necessary aid for civil service reform, including programs to retrain civil servants;
- Reform law enforcement agencies in Ukraine by transferring major sections of the Interior Ministry from Soviet-era militarized departments to civilian control (e.g. the penitentiary system, citizen register service, passport control, etc.), thus transforming these agencies into guarantors of civil rights and freedoms. Provide training and retraining of Interior Ministry employees in areas such as ethics, relations and responsibilities to the citizenry, and cooperation with public and local communities. In addition, provide programs that reduce the number of the Interior Ministry’s special forces units; clearly identify these forces’ duties; and define their boundaries in relation to the citizenry.
- Strengthen and support non-governmental organizations and research centers that promote transparency and government accountability through monitoring and anti-corruption activities.

The participants of the dialogue believe that the implementation of these tasks will help accelerate the processes of democratic development in Ukraine and strengthen the partnership between Ukraine and the United States.

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