



15 May/mai 2002

COMMUNIQUE  
PR/CP (2001)

**NUC MINISTERIAL MEETING  
REYKJAVIK - 15 MAY 2002**

**Opening Statement by the Secretary General**

Welcome, Anatoliy, to this meeting of the NATO-Ukraine Commission at the level of Foreign Ministers. This meeting takes place at a dynamic and crucial moment in the development of the Euro-Atlantic security environment which finds this Alliance at centre stage. NATO faces new challenges, it will have to continue its own process of transformation, it will enlarge further and we have, yesterday, together with Russia, forwarded a document creating a new NATO-Russia Council to HOSG of NATO member states and Russia for a Summit in Rome.

A sovereign Ukraine is a strategic player in forming Europe's security landscape. And the NATO-Ukraine distinctive partnership and its further development is a key building block in the construction of the new Europe, characterised by ever closer partnership and integration.

Since signing the NATO-Ukraine Charter on a Distinctive Partnership, almost five years ago, Allies and Ukraine have established a very impressive record in filling our relationship with life - with political, military and non-military substance. Let us be judged by this substance - be it in the wide scope of joint activities under the PfP programme, in our joint efforts in civil emergency planning or in the high-level political dialogue on pressing issues of regional security, such as - but not exclusively - in the Balkans.

Our partnership rests on two very basic premises, both intimately linked to one another:

- = First : the process of building indivisible security in Europe cannot be complete without the full inclusion and participation of Ukraine;
- = Second : a strong commitment to joint values, the values of the Euro-Atlantic community and a strong commitment to defend these values when they are challenged.

Ukraine is committed to the course of Euro-Atlantic partnership and integration. We welcome that commitment. Ukraine has already made important contributions to our common security. Let me just mention two critical areas:

☎ +32 (0)2 707 50 41  
☎ +32 (0)2 707 50 57

**B-1110 BRUSSELS/BRUXELLES**

Ⓜ <http://www.otan.nato.int>  
✉ [press@hq.nato.int](mailto:press@hq.nato.int)

✉ [otandoc@hq.nato.int](mailto:otandoc@hq.nato.int)  
✉ [natodoc@hq.nato.int](mailto:natodoc@hq.nato.int)

- = Through its participation in the fight against international terrorism, by opening its skies to the military aircraft of Allies, and the active involvement of Ukraine's military transport aviation for the deployment of troops of Allied countries in Afghanistan.
- = In the Balkans, the deployment of the joint Polish-Ukraine battalion remains a key element of the international community's efforts to secure peace and stability in the region.

The substantial progress achieved so far in implementing our distinctive partnership would not have been possible without Ukraine seriously tackling some significant reforms. Our joint goal of taking our partnership forward requires continued resolve of the Ukrainian leadership to take the whole spectrum of reforms forward.

In particular, as you know, defence reform remains a high priority to make our forces ever more interoperable. Much progress has already been made. The goals that Ukraine has set itself for this year are ambitious and Allies are willing to provide substantial assistance to help Ukraine meet its objectives.

What holds true for defence reform, holds also true for the overall process of transformation and reform in Ukraine. NATO cannot and will not define Ukraine's objectives. But your objectives and their implementation must correlate in the end with NATO's and Ukraine's joint desire to broaden and deepen our relationship, taking into account Ukraine's stated goal of Euro-Atlantic integration.

In recognition of the mutual desires and aspirations of both NATO and Ukraine for closer cooperation, and a qualitatively new and deepened relationship, Allies look forward to a meeting of the NATO-Ukraine Commission, at the level of Heads of State and Government, at the Prague Summit. Moreover, yesterday NATO Ministers tasked the North Atlantic Council in Permanent Session to start work on defining the parameters and modalities of a deepened NATO-Ukraine relationship. I hope that Allied Ministers and you, Anatoliy, will be able to agree on a corresponding tasking today to Ambassadors in the NATO-Ukraine Commission. The final results of this work will be presented to Heads of State and Government in Prague.