



**Delegation of Ukraine
to the OSCE**

Statement by Ukraine
in response to H.E. Mr. Karel Schwarzenberg,
Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic

As delivered by Mr. Oleh Herasymenko, Deputy Permanent Representative of Ukraine,
to the Permanent Council
29 January 2009

Madam Chairperson,

Ukraine joins others in welcoming Minister Schwarzenberg to the Permanent Council. Our view on co-operation with the Czech EU presidency was reflected in the statement on behalf of the GUAM Presidency. At the same time, allow me to react briefly to the reference to the gas dispute between Russia and Ukraine made during today's meeting, including by Minister Schwarzenberg.

Since the very beginning of this dispute Ukraine has continuously informed the European Union representatives, at the highest levels, about its causes, its development and the efforts Ukraine undertook, first, to avoid it and, then, to resolve it. At his most recent meeting with the president of the European Commission Jose Manuel Barroso on Tuesday, President of Ukraine Victor Yushchenko underlined that "Ukraine conducts an open policy, and strives that the EU regards Ukraine as a reliable partner in energy issues". He also stressed that Ukraine always fulfilled its obligations concerning the transit of natural gas, and will continue to do so. On his part, president Barroso demonstrated his clear understanding that the gas crisis "happened not because of any intention of Ukraine against Europe".

Ukraine welcomed the role played by the EU during the gas dispute. We support the intention of the Czech presidency to make the European energy security a priority in its activities, and we would welcome the same approach by the subsequent presidencies.

It should also be stressed that our Organization, the OSCE, could be instrumental in this matter. Here I would like to refer to Ministerial Council Decision No. 12/06, adopted in Brussels, on the energy security dialogue in the OSCE. The need to move forward with its implementation was largely neglected during the last two years, and Ukraine, being one of its co-sponsors, would welcome any initiatives to hold an open dialogue on energy security involving producing, transit and consuming countries, as the decision provides for.

In this regard I would also like to reiterate Ukraine's determination to further strengthen our cooperation in energy security sphere within the OSCE framework in line with the provisions of the OSCE Strategy Document for the Economic and Environmental Dimension adopted in 2003 in Maastricht.

And finally, since Minister Schwarzenberg mentioned in his statement the importance of the new EU initiative of Eastern Partnership, let me say that Ukraine is looking forward to the launch of this promising endeavour. In our view, this initiative can contribute significantly to strengthening multilateral cooperation, in particular in the field of energy.

In conclusion, Madam Chairperson, allow me to wish Minister Schwarzenberg every success in carrying out his important responsibilities during the EU presidency.

I thank you, Madam Chairperson.