



## 2014 G7 Summit in Ukraine

In the wake of the Russian Federation's clear violation of multiple international agreements infringing on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, the heads of states for the Group of Seven (G7) nations have strongly condemned this aggression and encouraged a diplomatically peaceful resolution of the crisis in Ukraine. Although appropriate, we believe that a stronger international response – one that goes beyond rhetoric – is required.

Canada is a very effective leader in the international community, having hosted the G8 Summit on five previous occasions. Canada also has a special relationship with Ukraine, having historically provided support in various forms. Most recently, Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper concluded a successful visit to Ukraine, where he expressed his support for the interim government: *"Canada strongly supports the Ukrainian people who have spoken out courageously in calling for a free and democratic Ukraine. Restoring political and economic stability to the country is a priority for Canada and our allies"*. Given this context, we believe Canada should further demonstrate its position as an international leader by encouraging the G7 nations to hold their Summit this June in Ukraine, an initiative that would significantly demonstrate direct support for Ukraine.

Hosting a G7 Summit in Ukraine would address several objectives:

- Highlight the international community's support for Ukraine's aspirations towards democratic values, the right to self-determination, the rule of law, and protection of human rights;
- Reinforce the greater global community's commitment to the notion of global security by recognising the territorial, political, and economic sovereignty and integrity of Ukraine;
- Emphasize Russia's missed opportunity to participate as an equal partner, with valid and legitimate vested interests, in the democratic and economic development of Ukraine's future.

In addition, Ukraine would experience a wide range of benefits in hosting the G7 Summit, including:

- Strong signals of solidarity among the international community for the democratic and legitimate interim Ukrainian government, which respects democratic values, the rule of law, and the upholding of human rights;
- Improvements in local and regional public infrastructure;



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- Opportunities for the G7 nations to coordinate and provide technical expertise and training to Ukraine's security forces and first responders to prevent and respond to mass emergency events;
- Increased domestic and global media coverage of Ukraine, which will confirm and enhance Ukraine's image as a stable, democratic country;
- Economic benefits, including the creation of temporary jobs, new contracts and sales for local businesses, and increased public expenditure, particularly in the short-term; as well as long-term benefits, such as increased tourism and foreign investment.

Although the task at hand may seem improbable, this should not discourage the international community to turn the improbable into the possible. In this case, it is entirely possible and arguably financially prudent for the G7 nations to cooperate in dividing the costs of hosting a Summit in Ukraine among the seven wealthiest nations in the world. While Ukraine stands to clearly benefit by hosting a G7 Summit in June 2014, the benefit to the international community by demonstrating and delivering such continued support to Ukraine would be all the much greater. The impact of such an initiative will be strong and far-reaching: assisting Ukraine in a time of dire need by bringing much needed financial investment to a country in desperate need of economic stability, and signalling to President Vladimir Putin and the Russian Federation that its aggressive actions infringing on the sovereignty of another nation, which it has previously recognised and affirmed, threatens global security and is completely unacceptable.

There have been many instances in the past where the international community has given assurances to Ukrainian sovereignty, with the most palpable example being the 1994 Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances. Another such opportunity presently awaits the international community, and it should not be passed – not only to honour historical security assurances, but to facilitate Ukraine in establishing and asserting itself in the international democratic community. As the U.S. Secretary of State, John Kerry, stated at Winfield House in London after talks with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, *“All of us would like to see actions – not words”*.

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