

**Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's Press Statement following his
discussions with Ukrainian Prime Minister Mykola Yanovych**

Azarov

28 March 2013, Budapest

Good Morning Ladies and Gentlemen!

Please allow me to greet you all with great respect. This is a special day, because Hungary's largest neighbour has visited us in the form of a Prime Ministerial delegation. We are all aware of the importance of Ukraine, whether with regard to politics, economic policy or trade. Ukraine is a determinative state within Europe and we are lucky enough to be its neighbour, which in turn creates an opportunity for Hungary. It creates an opportunity to develop intensive and deep relations with this huge country in the spirit of good neighbourliness. In addition, we know each other extremely well, our history is very similar. If I say Tatar, Turk, Habsburg or Soviet, then we all know roughly what I mean. This is a common historical background that forms the foundations for a friendship which is the basis of all deep-rooted economic cooperation, in the view of the Hungarians. For this reason, the subject of today's meeting, for which we are grateful to the Prime Minister, was how we may reinforce and deepen the cooperation between our two countries, and expand it to include further areas. The recent events in Cyprus make it clear to Hungary that the one-sided trade that characterises Hungary today also represents a limitation. Some 75-78% of Hungarian exports are directed towards Europe, meaning Western Europe, while it neglects and does not effectively utilise the opportunities provided by countries that lie to the east of us, such as Ukraine. Our goal at today's discussions was to enable the exploitation of these opportunities. Hungary sees strong prospects in Ukraine; we are not deceived by last year's figures and economic indices. Last year was a difficult one everywhere, not just in Ukraine; in Hungary and Western Europe too. The true potential of the Ukrainian economy is not described by the 2012 figures, but by those from previous years. Accordingly, it may be stated that Ukraine will remain a country that is capable of rapid economic growth in the years to come. We Hungarians at least understand Ukraine to be such a country, this is how we see it, and we too would like

to take part in this development, and also hope that increasingly strengthening Ukrainian capital will make its way into Hungary to a greater extent than at present. In view of the fact that Central Europe also rests on stable footing, and that Hungary is part of this region and we are expecting economic growth in Hungarian performance this year, it would seem that potentially, Hungary has the strength to exploit the opportunities provided by economic cooperation with Ukraine.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

I would now like to list some of the topics that we discussed today. We touched on the issue of energy dependency and opportunities in energy cooperation between the two countries, including the issues of gas and electricity. We touched on cultural issues, and at the proposal of the Ukrainian Prime Minister we agreed to organise cultural days in both Hungary and Ukraine. The possibility of a Ukrainian-Hungarian student scholarship system also arose, on which we will work in the upcoming weeks. I asked for the Prime Minister's patience and understanding regarding the implementation of the Language Act adopted in Ukraine last December, which is important to the Hungarian minority living there. This is a community that is loyal, but that wishes to retain its national identity and culture; this is how I described the Hungarians living there to the Prime Minister. Related to this topic was the issue which is perhaps most important to us, and that is opportunities for increasing cross-border traffic, the possibility of opening new border crossing points, the modernisation of existing ones and the expansion of the logistics and infrastructure opportunities of cross-border trade. In summary, I must say that the way we conducted our discussions is worthy of strategic partners. Thank you for the respect that the Prime Minister expressed towards Hungary. I also assured him that Hungary is developing its relations with Ukraine in the spirit and culture of respect, and following our discussions I have high hopes that Ukrainian-Hungarian cultural and trade cooperation will undoubtedly become more intensive and much stronger.

Mr. Prime Minister, thank you for visiting us.