

## **PRESS STATEMENT BY PRESIDENT DONALD TUSK AFTER MEETING WITH PRESIDENT OF UKRAINE, PETRO POROSHENKO**

Good afternoon. Let me begin by saying how pleased I am to have my first meeting of the autumn political season today with President Petro Poroshenko. Thank you, Petro, for your presence here. This for sure shows that EU-Ukraine relations take no holidays.

I am especially glad to see President Poroshenko on a day that started with good news for Ukraine: I very much welcome the deal that was reached between Ukraine and its creditors. In addition, the Contact Group for Ukraine has reached an agreement on a new ceasefire to start on 1 September. Both of these pieces of news are cause for optimism.

During our talks today we discussed three main topics.

First, President Poroshenko briefed me on the recent increases in violations of the Minsk ceasefire. I am especially worried about the targeting of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission and call on all parties to make sure this does not happen again. Thank you for your information, Petro. After our meeting I am absolutely sure about your determination to help the Special Monitoring Mission in their duty. We are rapidly approaching the deadline for the complete implementation of Minsk so it is critical that everyone does their utmost to make it succeed. I hope that the new ceasefire agreed yesterday is a first step.

Second, we talked about the domestic situation in Ukraine, including the economic outlook, upcoming local elections and constitutional reforms. I welcome progress on amending the constitution to allow for greater decentralisation and encourage Ukraine to move more quickly on judicial reform.

Third, we discussed how Ukraine is implementing the Association Agreement, in particular those parts on visa liberalisation. We want to see free travel between Ukraine and Europe sooner rather than later. That is why I encouraged President Poroshenko to move quickly on this issue. As you know we are here in Brussels, both Jean-Claude Juncker and me, very engaged and supportive for this project. I am really satisfied when it comes to progress on your side.

I would also like to touch upon one more issue. Two days ago Oleg Sentsov was sentenced to twenty years in a labour camp in Russia. Sentsov protested against the annexation of Crimea, where he lived with his two children. Sentsov, Kolchenko, Savchenko and all other Ukrainians held illegally in Russia as well as EU citizens such as Eston Kohver are blatant acts of injustice. They are also symbolic of the cynicism that dominates Russian politics. As long as Oleg Sentsov and others stay in prison, all honest and decent people will not remain indifferent to their fate.

President Poroshenko and I agreed to be in contact early and often over these vital coming months. Thank you very much again, Petro.

[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2015/08/27-tusk-statement-meeting-poroshenko/?utm\\_source=dsms-auto&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Press+statement+by+President+Donald+Tusk+after+meeting+with+President+of+Ukraine%2c+Petro+Poroshenko](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2015/08/27-tusk-statement-meeting-poroshenko/?utm_source=dsms-auto&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Press+statement+by+President+Donald+Tusk+after+meeting+with+President+of+Ukraine%2c+Petro+Poroshenko)