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**Deputy Foreign Minister of Ukraine B. I. Tarasiuk,
'Report on the Results of the Ukrainian-American
Political Consultations'**

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Summary:

The Deputy Foreign Minister of Ukraine reports on the success of talks held in Washington between the United States and Ukraine, outlining the areas of discussion and future cooperation.

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REPORT

On the results of the Ukrainian-American political consultations
(January 6-8, 1993, Washington)

Another round of Ukrainian-American political consultations, which have become a continuation of bilateral consultation that began in April 1992 in Kyiv, took place at the initiative of the State Department of the United States.

The Ukrainian delegation attending consultations consisted of the Head of the National Committee on Disarmament, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Borys I. Tarasiuk (head of the delegation), Deputy Minister of Defense V. I. Bizhan, Chief Consultant of the President of Ukraine's on international relations issues Y.F. Mal'k and Head of the Department for the United States and Canada of the MFA Y.B. Bohayevsky.

The consultations, which were held at the State Department, National Security Council, and Department of Defense, were also attended by the Ambassador of Ukraine to the United States O.H. Bilous, Counselor Minister of the Embassy V.P. Kuchynsky, and the Embassy's defense attaché I.P. Smeshko.

This was a fruitful and, on the whole, a constructive discussion of a wide range of political and military-political issues, in particular those connected to the reduction of strategic offensive nuclear arms, preliminary conclusions were made about the development of bilateral cooperation after the establishment of diplomatic relations between our countries, and continued prospects of political dialogue at all levels.

The issues of Soviet Union's external debt payments, Ukraine's participation in the CIS, our attitude to the START-II treaty signed between the United States and the Russian Federation, possible use of military force by the United States in order to ensure compliance with sanctions by the UNSC against the FRY [Federal Republic of Yugoslavia], problems of European cooperation, the role of the CSCE and other European institution in the creation of a collective security system were raised at practically all meetings without exception. The status and prospects of the development of Ukrainian-Russian relations and our assessment of developments in CIS member-states commanded a particularly elevated attention of the Americans.

On January 8, the head of the delegation together with Deputy Defense Minister I.V. Bizhan and Ambassador of Ukraine O.G. Bilous were received by the President of the United States G. Bush at the White House, where they delivered a personal letter from President of Ukraine L.M. Kravchuk - a response to the letter of the President of the United States of December 4, 1992.

During a 20-minute conversation, during which the American side was represented by the Chief of Staff of the White House, former Secretary of State James Baker, National Security Adviser General B. Scowcroft, Secretary of State L. Eagleburger, G. Bush, having noted the "high standing of Ukraine in the American society," stressed that the development of relations with Ukraine had to remain "one of the main priorities in the foreign policy of the United States." He assured our delegation that he would do everything in his power for the development of democratic partnership between our countries to be preserved and continued by the new U.S. Administration.

In this regard, the last official meeting with the current President of the United States became a substantive outcome of the consultations.

Contents and results of the consultations

The delegation had to conduct negotiations under conditions of political, as well as informational pressure from leading U.S. press, which was amplified by an overtly anti-Ukrainian campaign inspired by the Russian press. In particular, "Izvestiya" newspaper even forecasted a "failure" of the Ukrainian delegation's mission.

Such atmosphere, to some extent, influenced the course of the consultations, which became especially apparent during the negotiations at the State Department with the U.S. delegation, led by Under Secretary of State for International Policy Frank Wisner.

The discussion was centered primarily on the prospects of ratification by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START), the Lisbon Protocol and the accession of Ukraine to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

The goal of our delegation was to obtain from the United States clear written guarantees of the national security of Ukraine connected with Ukraine's attainment of the non-nuclear status.

The discussion of these issues was rather principled, sometimes of sharp character. This was caused by the position of the American side, particularly its head, who proceeded to exert direct pressure on our delegation by stating that "delays" with ratification of the START-1 by Ukraine could lead to "grave consequences" in bilateral relations.

Having highlighted that he personally and "no one in the current U.S. Administration" doubted Ukrainian Government's commitment to the ratification of the START and NPT, F. Wisner at the same time, speaking somewhat in the form of an ultimatum, stated that in terms of providing such guarantees the American side had done "everything that could be done" and therefore, without being certain about fate of these treaties, "did not wish" to continue down the road that "led to a dead end." He assessed our arguments that the provision with necessary security guarantees to Ukraine before the ratification could stimulate a positive outcome of this issue as "endless demands," which the American side "did wish to receive any more." F. Wisner refused to provide us with a draft of the future statement by the U.S. Administration regarding the guarantees, assuring only that such statement would contain everything that Ukraine expected.

In this situation the Ukrainian delegation was forced to take a more principled stance, declaring that it did not accept the pressure that was being levied. Evidently not expecting such a turn, the head of the U.S. delegation asked to interrupt consultations until the next day.

The continuation of the consultations was complicated by a publication in the Washington Post entitled "Administration Rejects Ukraine's Request Connected to the Ratification of START-1," referring to unnamed official representative of the State Department, who, according to the author of the article, stated that the U.S. Administration was not going to "bargain for the ratification" in exchange for guarantees. In relation to this the delegation of Ukraine expressed its resolute protest and declared that full responsibility for the distortion of the goal of its visit to the United States and de facto break-up of important consultations rested fully with the American side. At the same time, we underscored that if the American delegation did not refute the statement, then our delegation reserved the right to make an appropriate statement for the press.

Such position undoubtedly made an impact on the head of the U.S. delegation, who finally assured that the "Washington Post" message would be refuted, which was done the same day by the Press Secretary of the State Department.

Regardless of this, F. Wisner stated that, as soon as the Verkhovna Rada ratified START-1 and approved accession to NPT, the United States would "quickly and officially" publish a statement on guarantees that we expected. Our delegation continued to insist for such statement to be made before ratification. A critical situation developed, which, however, forced F. Wisner to back away from his tough stance and, after a tête-à-tête conversation between the heads of delegations, which he had initiated, consultations resumed in a more constructive manner. Later, he passed an official letter to the head of the Ukrainian delegation, outlining the main contents of the future statement by the United States.

The main goal of the conversations at the Department of Defense of the United States, in particular with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General C. Powell, his Deputy General R. McCaffrey, Deputy Defense Secretary P. Wolfowitz, General Burns, Director of National Intelligence General J. Clapper, with whom I.V. Bizhan met separately, was the issue of practical implementation of the nuclear disarmament process in Ukraine. Concrete forms of technical and expert assistance by the United States were discussed. In a separate conversation with us, General Burns, in particular, underscored that the United States "will be prepared" to provide such assistance as soon as "political barriers" were overcome, meaning the prompt ratification of the mentioned treaties. It was agreed that the sides will closely discuss all these issues during his [Burns's] next visit to Kyiv.

Our interlocutors gave a positive assessment to the Statement by the President of Ukraine with regard to the signing of the START-2 between the RF and USA, participation by Ukraine in the UN peacekeeping force deployed in former Yugoslavia.

The main argument, which they advanced in insisting on acceleration of ratification by Ukraine of START-1 and accession to the NPT, consisted in that the "primary guarantee" of the national security of Ukraine was not possession of nuclear weapons, but creation of effective armed forces equipped with modern weapons, ensuring successful democratic reforms, and transition to market economy.

The consultations at the White House were rather substantive and constructive, with participation by the Director of Policy Planning at the State Department D. Ross, Deputy Assistant of the Defense Minister Libby, Assistant Defense Minister on National Security Hadley, Deputy Chairman of the National Security Council Burns and Director for Eastern Europe and Newly Independent States (NIS) L. Napper.

The discussion of conceptual aspects of democratic partnership in Ukrainian-American relations received considerable attention. The discussion on this issue, broached by the Ukrainian delegation, allowed to probe how our partners understand this concept, and achieved a mutual agreement to the effect that, despite some differences in interests and national priorities, the parties must continue and strengthen the course, determined at the highest level in Washington in May 1992, aimed at the development of equal, democratic partnership between our states.

The American side had to acknowledge that they made a mistake by looking at Ukrainian-American relations through the lens of their relations with Russia, forgetting that Ukraine had its own interests.

The American side showed great interest toward the concept of our military doctrine, the development of our own Armed Forces, and the economic situation in Ukraine. In this respect, our interlocutors commended the activity of the new composition of the Government of Ukraine. They noted that the new Prime Minister of Ukraine [Leonid Kuchma] "was making a more systematic effort at implementing reforms," that "Prime Minister Kuchma made a great start," but that Ukraine was "rather slowly opening itself to investments." We were assured that the United States would continue providing humanitarian and technical assistance to Ukraine, the necessary

medication, and alleviating the consequences of the Chernobyl accident, but they would like to know more specifically about our economic needs. The Americans pointed out that one of the areas, where the United States could provide Ukraine with necessary technical assistance was the conversion of the Military-Industrial Complex enterprises, but they would need to have a list of our priorities.

In the opinion of our partners, Ukraine has a decent foundation for investment in general, but we should not expect considerable support from the governments of the United States and other G-7 member states, without achieving agreements with the IMF. We should primarily count on attracting private investments. They highlighted that American businessmen are not convinced that Ukraine has an appropriate legal foundation to guarantee the security of their investments.

From our side we emphasized primarily the exceptional importance of establishing elements of mutual trust and acknowledgement of each other's interests in the bilateral relations. In this regard, we mentioned that we considered unfair the decision of the UN General Assembly concerning the size of Ukraine's contribution to the budget of this organization and expressed our dissatisfaction with the position of the United States in this matter of principle for us. We drew attention to the fact that there were instances when American representatives ignored Ukraine's justified interests and positions in the institutions of the CSCE. Acknowledging that a "certain misunderstanding" had occurred and that the United States had already tried to have the decision of the UN General Assembly reviewed, D. Ross admitted that an "error was made" on their part, and ensured that the United States supported Ukraine's position.

Other issues concerning the development of bilateral relations were raised as well. The representatives of the White House spoke in favor of arranging a visit by the Prime Minister of Ukraine to the United States as soon as possible. We reached an agreement on the expediency of holding bilateral consultations twice a year, alternating between Kyiv and Washington. In connection with this, the American side confirmed its proposal to conduct in early February, with participation by representatives of the new U.S. Administration, substantive consultations in Washington for the purpose of drawing conclusions in the development of bilateral relations since the establishment of diplomatic relations between our countries, analyzing practical implementation of the agreements and intergovernmental treaties, which had been signed during the official visit by the President of Ukraine L. M. Kravchuk to the United States in May 1992, determining priority areas in the development of these relations in the short-term.

The American side confirmed its interest in developing a more active communication on the military track.

During a meeting in the U.S. Congress with the head of the House Foreign Affairs Committee Lee Hamilton, our interlocutors were primarily interested in the current situation in Ukraine, the progress of economic reforms, prospects of ratification by the Verkhovna Rada of START-1 and the NPT, Ukraine's attitude toward the CIS and its draft Statute, fate of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, and other issues.

Stressing the "great interest" in the Congress to developing US relations with Ukraine and that the United States considers Ukraine as a "very important country," Lee Hamilton noted that such consultations should stimulate positive development of bilateral relations.

In a conversation with us, Senator R. Lugar emphasized the importance and timeliness of conducting bilateral political consultations. He informed that the United States Senate was working toward "accelerating the process of strengthening relations between our countries." Having expressed personal "concern" for the fate of

Ukraine's ratification of START-1 (he was particularly interested in the layout of forces in Verkhovna Rada on this issue), R. Lugar at the same time supported our position on such issues as receiving security guarantees, compensation for the tactical nuclear warhead transferred to Russia, other nuclear warheads and strategic offensive arms. The Senator emphasized that the issue of "nuclear weapons safety" was the "most important one." He assured that the United States was ready to consider how to help Ukraine.

At this meeting, which was attended also by the representatives of Senator Nunn and the newly appointed by the new administration Secretary of Defense Les Aspen, our delegation once again emphasized the importance of receiving appropriate security guarantees from the United States to Ukraine before the Verkhovna Rada begins considering START-1. In this regard, we expressed hope that R. Lugar would personally facilitate this matter. From his side, R. Lugar suggested that we raise this issue at a meeting with the President of the United States.

Evidently, R. Lugar played a role in having George Bush pass to us a draft of the future US declaration on guarantees.

The meeting with J. Walker, who leads a group on Eastern Europe in the transitional team of the new US Secretary of State W. Christopher, was also useful.^[1] In the conversation, she stated that relations with independent states, republics of the former Soviet Union, would be on the list of "essential priorities" in the area of new leadership of the State Department.

In reply to our question about the position of the new Administration toward Ukraine, Walker underlined that they were interested in Ukraine's economic and political success, and this interest was "closely tied" with the national interests of Ukraine. "Ukraine is important for us because it is Ukraine," she said. She explained this statement by adding that Ukraine had an "exceptionally important" geographic location.

Having emphasized the necessity of the fastest possible ratification of START-1 and accession to the NPT, she noted that the Clinton Administration would be "carefully watching" how Ukraine carried out its commitments. They "share" our concern about security matters and put forth "no conditions," but until this happens (the ratification), "some problems could emerge" in relations with the new Administration. We passed through her a personal letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs to W. Christopher with the invitation to conduct an official working visit to Ukraine. We underscored that the Ukrainian side was ready to develop contacts with the new U.S. Administration at all levels.

Informational and explanatory work

The agenda in Washington included the visit of our delegation to the Carnegie Center for International Peace and the Atlantic Council, where the head of the delegation and Deputy Foreign Minister of Ukraine spoke to the participants, answering numerous questions. The head of the delegation also had a meeting with leading US journalists, speaking to the BBC TV program "Night Line," gave an interview to the Ostankino correspondent, and organized a press conference. On January 6, the delegation met with a group of representatives of local Ukrainian community. The visit by the delegation was widely discussed in different mass media.

Conclusions

1. In all meetings and conversations, our interlocutors emphasized the importance and mutual benefit of such consultations, expressing support for their continuation on regular basis. The fact that they were held when the outgoing U.S. Administration is in the process of active transition of power to the new Administration, reinforces their political significance.

2. The visit of the Ukrainian delegation provided an exceptional opportunity to once again, at all levels, present our principled position on nuclear policy, and lay out our arguments on a wide range of related issues. At the same time, the delegation received an opportunity to substantively determine the attitudes and specific positions of our interlocutors, general approach to Ukraine, and possible development of bilateral relations in the short term.

3. Taking into account all these important aspects, there is every reason to consider that this visit was fully justified and that the delegation implemented its assigned tasks.

Proposals

In order to uphold the positive aspects highlighted in the consultations, it would be expedient to take the following measures:

1. Insist on continuing to work on the draft US statement on guarantees to Ukraine that would include a number of items important to us.

2. Receive a delegation of technical experts led by General Burns in Kyiv in February of this year for the purpose of a well-rounded discussion of practical issues of US assistance for Ukraine's nuclear disarmament.

3. Based on the proposal of the American side, prepare a possible working visit to the United States of Prime Minister of Ukraine L.D. Kuchma in late February or early March of this year, or at a different acceptable time for the American side, to discuss a wide range of issues in trade and economic, financial, scientific and technical corporation.

4. Work toward organizing a visit to Ukraine in 1993 of the new president of the United States Clinton and Secretary of State Christopher.

5. Work with the American side on the possibility to arrange, in the second half of this year, an official visit of the President of Ukraine to the United States.

6. Accelerate the work on expanding the treaty and legal basis for the bilateral relations at relevant ministries and agencies. It is necessary to focus on the preparation of a new package of intergovernmental treaties on the following issues: avoiding double taxation, mutual protection of investments, cooperation in the fields of air communication, operational security at civilian nuclear institutions of Ukraine, as well as in the field of culture and information.

The Head of the Delegation

Deputy Foreign Minister of Ukraine □□□□B. I. Tarasiuk

[1] Jenonne Walker was the head of NSC European Affairs office from 1993 until July 1994. <https://clinton.presidentiallibraries.us/whstaff> [ed.]