

# Presidential Bulletin

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## AZERBAIJAN

### **Presidents of Azerbaijan, Turkey discuss ways to enhance economic cooperation**

Baku is interested in strong Turkey, Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev said at a briefing joint with his Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan in Baku on September 3.

"Today our unity is a global level factor. To the extent that Turkey is strong, we will feel as strong. We are very happy about Turkey's successes and I am certain that relations will develop increasingly in future," Aliyev said.

As to the Trans-Anatolian gas pipeline (TANAP) project, "this is our joint creation, which attracts the whole world," the Azerbaijani president said.

"I am sure that this project will be implemented in time. The TANAP project requires even more international cooperation as many countries and companies participate in it," Aliyev said.

The investment issue was discussed during the talks with Erdogan as well, Aliyev said.

"We have discussed the issue of mutual investment. In the recent years both parties have made considerable investments. The volume of Azerbaijani investment into the Turkish economy will grow in the coming five to six years. They amount to approximately \$17-20 billion. I am glad that the Turkish party is increasing its share in our energy projects," the Azerbaijani president said.

The TANAP project is important and it is a global pipeline, Erdogan said.

This is an important project from the viewpoint of Azerbaijan, showing its potential and the ceremony of laying a TANAP "pipe" will be held on September 20, the Turkish president said. Turkey supports the development of Azerbaijan as a brother becoming stronger and increasing hope for the future, he said.

We have certain goals we intend to reach and one of them is to bring trade turnover volume to \$15 billion and both parties have the will, Erdogan said.

Erdogan, who has recently been elected Turkish president, went to Azerbaijan on September 2-3. The Turkish president went from Baku to Wales, where he will attend NATO summit.

## BELARUS

### **Value of Belarus as transit country increased in light of crisis in Ukraine - Lukashenko**

Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko has demanded that officials give as much attention as possible to the construction and repair of the republic's transit motorways, reiterating that the importance of Belarus as a transit country has increased in the light of events in Ukraine.

"The president said the importance of Belarus as a transport corridor connecting the West and the East has increased even more due to the events happening in Ukraine," the press service said, referring to a statement made by Lukashenko during a visit to a construction site on the second ring motorway around Minsk on Wednesday.

"If we offer good roads in 3 or 4 directions, we will be fighting off customers and we will get good money for transit. All our investment will pay off. The sooner we do it, the better," Lukashenko said.

Lukashenko recalled that he once set a similar task in the agro-industrial sector to provide food to the people of Belarus and to be able to export considerable amounts of food. As a result, that decision justified itself, bearing in mind the current situation in the region, and there is a lot of demand for Belarusian agricultural products. Lukashenko said he is confident that demand for food would only increase in the world.

The Belarusian president was told about the plans to build and repair the republic's roads in 2015-2019. According to the information provided, the total length of these roads will exceed 400 km.

## GEORGIA

### **Georgia's president secures EBRD promise to support country's economic development**

President Giorgi Margvelashvili, who is in the United Kingdom to attend the NATO summit, has met with the President of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), Suma Chakrabarti.

"Georgia is a leading reformer in the EBRD region," the bank's president said at a meeting with the Georgian leader in London on Wednesday, according to a statement on the EBRD's website.

The presidents discussed the status and prospects for further development and deepening of the cooperation between the EBRD and Georgia, the statement said. They also discussed issues relating to the forthcoming annual meeting of the EBRD Board of Governors which will be held in Tbilisi for the first time on May 14-15, 2015.

"The Annual Meeting of the EBRD Board of Governors is always accompanied by a business forum, which will provide an opportunity for Georgia to showcase itself as a destination for business investment and to review its success as a leading economic reformer in the region," the statement said.

"The Bank is eager to support Georgia's further economic development and to reinforce the country's strong growth outlook for the long term," said the EBRD president.

"The signing and ratification of the Association Agreement with the EU and the creation of the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas will enhance further the potential of the country," he said.

"We will cooperate closely with the authorities as they work towards a stable economic future," Chakrabarti said.

Since the beginning of their cooperation, the Bank has invested over 2 billion euro in Georgia in 171 projects in sectors such as energy, transport, agriculture, industry and banking.

"2014 is expected to be a record year for the EBRD in Georgia, with investments totalling an estimated €250 million, twice the amount invested in 2013," the statement said.

### **Georgian parliament asks NATO for speedy accession**

The Georgian parliament on Wednesday passed a resolution on Ukraine, a provision of which calls on NATO to accelerate the process of admitting Georgia into the alliance.

The parliament "is calling on NATO and the European Union to adopt effective measures to guarantee the security of both Georgia and Moldova as well as Ukraine and with this purpose, accelerating their integration into the alliance," the document says.

The resolution on Ukraine says that "Russia is violating the principles and norms of international law." "There is an apparent prospect of further escalation of tension and large-scale armed

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confrontation between two states which poses an apparent threat to regional as well as international peace and stability," the document says.

Proceeding from this, the Georgian parliament "expresses solidarity with the government and people of Ukraine and confirms clear support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine," the document says.

The parliament "condemns aggression against sovereign Ukraine, which not only contradicts the norms and principles of international law, but makes the escalation of hostilities irreversible, which will have disastrous consequences for all-European security."

In addition, the Georgian parliament "calls on the Russian Federation to give up attempts to resolve any political differences by force, and supports the efforts of the international community as well as the leadership of Ukraine aimed at settling the crisis through talks."

The draft resolution was prepared by the parliamentary majority and 81 deputies voted for it, while the minority abstained from voting. The minority had compiled its own draft resolution but the majority refused to discuss it.

## KAZAKHSTAN

### **Nazarbayev calls on North-Kazakhstan farmers to adopt new technologies**

President Nursultan Nazarbayev advised farmers in the North-Kazakhstan region to be more proactive in applying advanced agricultural technologies in order to increase productivity.

"Nursultan Nazarbayev urged farmers to actively apply advanced technologies and modern approaches, saying that in the similar climate condition, Canada harvests 20-25 quintals of grain per hectare, while Kazakhstan's average yield does not exceed 15 quintals," according to the present's press office.

"We have started processing wheat into flour, but we need to go further and produce pasta to increase the added value of our products. Within the Customs Union, Kazakhstan producers may enjoy huge opportunities. Soon new export ways through Iran to the Persian Gulf will be opened for domestic production. Therefore, we should produce more export-oriented products," said Nursultan Nazarbayev as quoted in a press release.

"It is easier to sow and harvest, but we have to remember that production of one tonne of meat is five times more efficient than production of a tonne of grain. This affects employment and income growth of the rural worker and keeps frames engaged all year round," said the president.

The head of state urged the managers of agribusinesses to do everything necessary to ensure that villagers have the same high social status, as urban residents.

This year, the crops area in one of the major grain-producing regions of the country, was 4.3 million hectares, while subsidies for agribusiness industry reached 17 billion tenge (182 / \$ 1).

### **Kazakh parliament ratifies agreement with UK in support of cargo transit operations**

The upper chamber of the Kazakh parliament, the Senate, approved Tuesday the ratification of the agreement with the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in support of cargo transit operations through the territory of Kazakhstan in connection with the involvement of the UK's armed forces in the international efforts to stabilize and rebuild Afghanistan.

The document is now sent to the Kazakh president for signature.

The agreement was signed in Astana on April 15, 2014.

## RUSSIA

### Putin's plan on Ukraine posted on Kremlin website

"[Russian President Vladimir] Putin's Plan" for a peaceful resolution of the situation in Ukraine has been posted on the official website of the Russian president, kremlin.ru, the Kremlin press office said on Wednesday.

### Peskov: Putin's plan for Ukraine amounts to proposals on pressing measures

Putin's plan for a settlement in Ukraine proposed by the Russian president on Wednesday amounts only to proposals on pressing measures, presidential press secretary Dmitry Peskov has said.

"This is not an exhaustive plan. This is a proposal of pressing measures while all the rest is the subject of further talks," Peskov said to Interfax, answering a question about the absence of questions relating to the status of territories in south-eastern Ukraine from the plan.

He stressed that the main purpose of the measures proposed by the Russian president is to stop the bloodshed and stabilize the situation in southeastern Ukraine.

"This is not a dogma which someone is insisting on and which is being imposed on someone. It can be used as a basis in full or in part. The main thing is that the sides in the conflict stop the fighting as soon as possible and get down to talks," Peskov said.

The press secretary said that Putin's plan was announced and a response to it should follow. "It was announced to the whole world," Peskov said, remarking that now the Kremlin is waiting for a response.

### Protection of journalists important issue for all Russian agencies - Peskov

The state is permanently working to protect Russian journalists, including those who work in war zones, the Kremlin said.

"The protection of journalists is an important area in the work of all Russian agencies. The protection of all citizens, especially journalists, this work is being done on a permanent basis," Russian presidential press officer Dmitry Peskov told Russian News Service, responding to a question as to whether new measures will be taken to protect journalists working in war zones, especially in Ukraine.

It was reported on Wednesday morning that Andrei Stenin, a photojournalist with Russia Today, had been killed in Ukraine. Russian President Vladimir Putin has extended his condolences to the journalist's relatives and loved ones and expressed his sympathy to Russia Today staff.

## **Putin invites president of Mongolia to celebrations of 70th anniversary of Victory in Great Patriotic War**

During a visit to Mongolia, Russian President Vladimir Putin congratulated his Mongolian counterpart Tsakhia Elbegdorj on the 75th anniversary of the victory in the battle on the Khalkin Gol River and invited him to visit Moscow to attend the celebrations of the 70th anniversary of Victory in the Great Patriotic War in May 2015.

"We are now marking the 75th anniversary of one of the central events of our history, our joint victory in the battle on the Khalkin Gol River. The heroism and bravery of the soldiers who defended the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Mongolia became symbols of our friendship. Russia remembers and values the help provided to us in the years of the Great Patriotic War. We are looking forward to seeing you in Moscow at the celebrations of the 70th anniversary of the Victory in May 2015," Putin said.

"Our relations are developing in the military sphere, humanitarian sphere and, of course, in economics. I am very happy to be able to discuss the entire range of our bilateral relations," Putin said.

Elbegdorj, for his part, said: "I congratulate you, Vladimir Vladimirovich, on Victory Day. Our friendship, which was solidified in the battle on the Khalkin Gol River, grew even stronger in the years of WWII. We have always been proud to remember the heroism of Soviet soldiers who fought for the freedom and happiness of the people of Mongolia," he said.

"We are proud that the people of our countries have always worked side by side in times of war and peace. We have a long history of working together on the battlefield, on land, and in space. I am confident that your visit will turn a new page in the history of our relations. Mongolia wants to develop relations with the Russian Federation in all spheres," the Mongolian president said.

## **Russia mills more than 77 mln tonnes of grain so far this year - Medvedev**

So far this year Russia has milled 14 million tonnes more grain than it did last year, Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev said at a governmental meeting Thursday.

"Based on data from yesterday, more than 77 million tonnes of grain has been milled, which is 14 million tonnes more than the same time last year," he said.

## **Moscow insists on Ukraine paying gas debts, setting average annual price at \$385**

Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev has expressed Russia's readiness to discuss ways of resuming cooperation with Ukraine in the gas sector as a debtor country but on certain conditions.

"Proposals appeared today to use seasonal prices in Russian gas deliveries to Ukraine. We are already to discuss ways of resuming our cooperation with Ukraine in the gas sector as a debtor country. But on two conditions," he said commenting on a statement by his Ukrainian counterpart for the press.

The first condition is "the payment of existing debts that have reached an astronomical figure," Medvedev said.

The second condition is that "even if seasonal prices are used, the average price for the year should be \$385 for 1,000 cubic meters given the discussed cancellation of the existing Russian customs duty which our partners are well aware of," Medvedev said.

"If they don't need discounts, we are already to return to the price of \$485 for 1,000. This price quite suits us," he said.

## **Medvedev hopes those responsible for Stenin's death will be punished**

Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev said those who committed crimes against Russian photojournalist Andrei Stenin, who was killed in Ukraine, should be punished.

"I hope those who committed this grave crime will be punished," Medvedev said on Facebook.

"It's very sad when a talented young man, full of energy, is killed in a war. In a war in which he did not fight. In a war whose horrors and injustices he was trying to communicate to us by his photos," Medvedev said on Facebook.

"It's probably the highest manifestation of love for people: to put your life at risk to show that there should be no wars on the Earth. Andrei has been to many war zones. His photos and reports will remain as a memory of him for ever," Medvedev said.

## **Medvedev orders targeted assistance to Ukrainian refugees**

Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev has ordered targeted financial support to Ukrainian citizens granted the status of refugees or temporary asylum in Russia and their families staying at residences owned by Russian citizens, says a report posted on the Russian government website on Thursday.

"The volume of inter-budget transfers will amount to 99.648 million rubles," the report said.

The inter-budget transfers were calculated and distributed consistent with the actual number of Ukrainian citizens and their families entitled to targeted financial support and staying at residences owned by Russian citizens in relevant constituent territories of the federation as of July 31, 2014 [territory bodies of the Russian Federal Migration Service estimated their number at 33,216], as well as the period of these persons staying at residences of Russian citizens in the period from July 15 to August 15 and the sum of targeted financial assistance, which daily stands at 100 rubles per person.

The assistance will be rendered within the total federal budget allocations of 360 million rubles granted by the Finance Ministry to the Federal Migration Service to support the fulfillment of government resolution No693 dated July 22, 2014.

## Action for Yaregskoye field to take place in 2014 - gov't order

The auction for exploration and production rights at Komi Republic's Yaregskoye titanium and rare earth element field, including the Titanovy 1 section, will take place in 2014.

Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev signed the corresponding government order on September 2. It was published on [pravo.gov.ru](http://pravo.gov.ru).

The starting bid for subsoil usage rights is 87.683 million rubles.

The action includes an area covering 0.497 square kilometers. According to the state balance sheet of mineral resources as of January 1, 2014, titanium order reserves (A+B+C1) total 7.661 million tonnes, titanium dioxide (A+B+C1) - 717,400 tonnes, rare earth elements (C1+C2) - 3,964 tonnes, tantalum pentoxide (C2) - 42.5 tonnes, and niobium pentoxide (C2) - 920.1 tonnes. In addition, the section includes unbooked reserves of C1 titanium dioxide totaling 30,800 tonnes and of titanium ore - 768,200 tonnes.

According to the section's usage rights, the engineering plan for industrial production must be finished no later than 24 months after the license is registered. In addition, the construction of infrastructure necessary for the field's development must begin no later than 30 months after the license is registered; the enterprise must be commissioned no later than 48 months after and full capacity must be reached no later than 64 months after.

## UKRAINE

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### **Poroshenko ready to give ceasefire order if Contact Group agrees peace plan**

Ukraine's President Petro Poroshenko has not ruled out that the Contact Group could reach a decision over a bilateral ceasefire in eastern Ukraine as a result of its talks in Minsk this Friday.

"Tomorrow, at 2 p.m., if this is confirmed, if the meeting takes place, I will give instructions to senior members of the General Staff about a bilateral ceasefire, and we hope that the implementation of the peace plan will begin tomorrow," Poroshenko said at the NATO summit in Newport, Wales, on Thursday.

Ukraine wants peace, he reiterated. "Ukraine has never wanted a war, it is tired of the war and will do all it can to bring peace to its land," he said.

The first step towards peace is a ceasefire, as well as decisive action that will facilitate disarmament, nationwide dialogue and the making of relevant legislation aimed at bringing stability to the Luhansk and Donetsk regions, Poroshenko added.

### **Poroshenko hopes document on implementing peace plan to be signed at contact group meeting on Sept 5**

It is expected that a document on the start of implementation of the peace plan to resolve the situation in eastern Ukraine will be signed during a trilateral contact group meeting in Minsk on September 5, Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko told reporters in Newport, Wales in the framework of the NATO summit.

"I have informed our partners about the talks held with Russian President Vladimir Putin and about the plans, which should occur tomorrow, where, according to preliminary information, a document foreseeing the stages of implementing the peace plan in Ukraine should be signed," Poroshenko said.

A ceasefire is a key element of this plan, the Ukrainian president said.

### **Poroshenko meeting Obama, Merkel, Hollande, Cameron, Renzi in Newport**

Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko is meeting with U.S. President Barack Obama, French President Francois Hollande, British Prime Minister David Cameron, Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi, and German Chancellor Angela Merkel in Newport, Wales, on Thursday, Ukrainian presidential press secretary Svyatoslav Tseholko said.

"Unique 5+1 format at NATO summit," Tseholko said on Twitter, attaching a picture of the multilateral meeting.

"The U.S., the UK, Germany, France, and Italy support Ukraine's territorial integrity," Tseholko said.

The NATO summit will take place in Newport on September 4-5. Poroshenko will take part in some of its events.

\*\*\*Ukrainian and U.S. Presidents Petro Poroshenko and Barack Obama have discussed the situation in Ukraine as part of the NATO summit in Newport, Wales.

"I discussed aggression against Ukraine with Barack Obama," Poroshenko wrote on his Twitter page.

Poroshenko also posted a photo of him talking to the U.S. president.

## **Poroshenko tells Merkel he hopes for peace plan fulfillment**

Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko has welcomed the Russian readiness to implement the peace plan for eastern Ukraine and hopes the plan will lay the foundation of September 5 consultations of the Trilateral Contact Group.

"President Poroshenko told the German Chancellor he hoped the joint action plan could be the foundation of consultations of the Trilateral Contact Group, which would convene in Minsk on September 5," the Ukrainian president's press service said following his telephone consultations with German Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel.

Poroshenko added he expected all sides would implement the proposals concerning the ceasefire regime in the east.

"President Poroshenko believes that the action plan should contain mutual commitments regarding the bilateral ceasefire regime, its monitoring and verification by the OSCE, the pullout of all foreign forces from the Ukrainian territory, the creation of a buffer border zone and the release of all hostages," the press service said.

In addition, Poroshenko and Merkel coordinated their positions in view of the NATO summit in Newport, Wales, on September 4-5.

## **Priority of state is to protect every citizen wherever he is - Poroshenko**

President of Ukraine Petro Poroshenko said he is confident that the remaining four Ukrainians held captive in Libya will soon be freed, adding that the state will protect the rights of its citizens in any country.

"The key task for us was to change the attitude of the Ukrainian state to each Ukrainian, as well as Ukrainians abroad. The protection of their rights, life and health must be a top-priority for the state. We were obliged to ensure the effective protection of your life. Everyone must know that if somebody gets into trouble, the state will do everything to save them and provide help. For this is the main purpose of the state. Ukraine will struggle for its citizens everywhere," the president said in the course of the meeting with liberated in Libya Ukrainians, the president's press service reported.

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Poroshenko said that the process of liberation was pretty difficult and many executives of the Arab states had been involved in it.

However, he said that it was too early to celebrate victory, as another four Ukrainians are still in captivity. The head of state expressed confidence that they would soon be liberated, for all accusations against them were unfounded.

"All accusations against them are unfounded. The civilized world knows that," the president said.

Volodymyr Bratchenko, one of the men freed, expressed gratitude on behalf of everyone to the president, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, officials of the Embassy of Ukraine and doctors for constant support and efforts for their liberation.

"The embassy was always beside us, we always felt that," he said.

As reported, the Libyan insurgent brigade Al Qa'qaa had captured Russian, Ukrainian and Belarusian citizens on August 27, 2011. All of them were accused of restoring military hardware the Muammar Gaddafi regime used "to exterminate the Libyan people."

In June 2012, the Tripoli military court had sentenced 19 Ukrainians to 10 years in prison for aiding and abetting the Gaddafi regime on June 4, 2012. One Russian also received a life sentence, and another Russian and 3 Belarusians were sentenced to 10 years in prison each.

In August 2013, Supreme Military Court of Libya cancelled a verdict issued to 19 Ukrainians.

In July 2014, one of the Ukrainian died at the local hospital.

In late August 2014, 18 Ukrainians came back home.

Four Ukrainians are still in captivity of Misrata militants: father and son Volodymyr and Vadym Chyhyriov, Yuriy Sanin and Anatoliy Ruban. Their comrades conveyed a letter from wives of the captives to the President with a request to facilitate their liberation.

## Yatsenyuk regards Putin's plan as move to freeze conflict in East Ukraine

Ukrainian Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk has called the plan of settling the situation in East Ukraine proposed by President Vladimir Putin a move to freeze the contact, the department of information and PR relations of the Ukrainian government secretariat announced on Wednesday.

"The plan is an attempt of eyewashing the international community ahead of the NATO summit and an attempt to escape unavoidable EU resolutions on a new wave of sanctions against Russia," the department quotes Yatsenyuk as saying.

"All previous understandings reached with Russia - in Geneva, Normandy, Berlin, Minsk - were either simply ignored or violated by the Russian regime," he said.

Yatsenyuk said that in his opinion the best plan for Eastern Ukraine would have one plank providing for the withdrawal of Russian troops and militia from there. "And then there would be peace in Ukraine," he said.

Yatsenyuk accused Moscow of attempts to destroy Ukraine and restore the USSR and added: "We are looking forward to the decisions of NATO and the EU open stopping the aggressor."

On Wednesday in Ulan-Bator President Vladimir Putin announced a seven-plank plan of stopping the bloodshed and stabilizing the situation in southeast Ukraine.

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Putin thinks that final understandings between the government in Kyiv and representatives of southeast Ukraine could be reached and recorded during the meeting of the contact group slated for September 5.

Yatsenyuk's comments were the first official reaction of Kyiv to Putin's plan.

**Compiled by** Andrei Petrovsky

Galina Seregina

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