

Ukraine President Poroshenko's Inauguration Speech: No Compromise with Donesk and Lugansk

Introductory Note by Michel Chossudovsky

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GR Editor's Note

Below is the full transcript of president Poroshenko's inauguration speech which suggests no compromise or even dialogue with the federalists in Eastern Ukraine, who are considered as "terrorists".

It also confirms that Poroshenko will sign the agreement with the EU, with a view to eventually becoming a full member state of the European Union.

At this stage, these are rhetorical yet significant statements. Poroshenko is negotiating behind closed doors not only with Obama, Merkel, Hollande, Cameron but also with Vladimir Putin. An undisclosed agreement has been reached according to reports between Poroshenko and Putin in the context of the D-Day Commemoration in Normandy.

At a press-conference on June 6, Vladimir Putin "told journalists that he welcomes Poroshenko's "positive thinking" on resolving the Ukrainian crisis and his position that the



bloodshed "should be immediately stopped."

The speech, however, does not suggest an end to the bloodshed. Poroshenko is committed to a military crackdown on the federalist insurgency.

Meanwhile, the Kiev government no longer controls a large part of its South Eastern Ukrainian border with Russia (Donesk and Lugansk), nor does it control the entry to the Sea of Azov from the Black Sea through the Kerch straits and the functioning of its main port cities in the sea of Azov.

Federalist insurgents took control of border check points with Russia “forcing Ukraine border guards to abandon a 130-kilometer stretch of its border with Russia”. At the same time there are reports that, following the takeover of the checkpoints, Kiev is intent upon “reformatting” -i.e. militarizing “with motor-maneuverable groups”- its entire border with Russia , which would inevitably lead to a bloody confrontation with the insurgents.

In his speech Poroshenko refers to the important 19th Century legacy of Ivan Franko and Mykhailo Drahomanov. He does not mention Stepan Bandera but he acknowledges Symon Petliura, who was a brutal nazi collaborator.

To what extent does Poroshenko exercise real political power in Ukraine?

What changes are to be expected in the interim government, the composition of which was in large part determined by Washington.

Will the Neo-Nazi parties retain their control over the National Defense and Security Commission?

After his meeting with Putin at the D-Day event in France, Poroshenko confirmed on Ukrainian TV that a Russian representative would be traveling to Kiev on June 8 for followup discussions.

Michel Chossudovsky, June 8, 2014

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Full Transcript of Speech

English translation from Ukrainian [emphasis added]

Dear compatriots from Lviv to Donetsk, from Chernihiv to Sevastopol!

We, Ukrainians, “are a living spark in the family of European nations and active members of European civilizational work”. These are the words of **Ivan Franko**.

“To stand with one’s feet and heart in Ukraine and one’s head in Europe,” **Mykhailo Drahomanov** commanded.

The return of Ukraine to its natural, European state has been long-awaited by many generations.

Dictatorship that ruled Ukraine in recent years sought to deprive us of this prospect – people rebelled.

Victorious Revolution of dignity has not only changed the government.

The country has changed. People have changed.

The time of inevitable positive changes has come.

To implement them, we need first of all peace, security and unity.

A real war, planned and unleashed in the Ukrainian Donbas, became an obstacle for enormous opportunities that opened for the European modernization of Ukraine after the fall of tyranny.

Until now, many people thought that we got independence without any difficulty.

It is not true! Entire generations of Ukrainian patriots struggled for our independence.

Heroes of Nebesna Sotnya died for it.

Warriors and civilians of Ukraine die for it.

Let us honor the memory of those who died for freedom and independence of Ukraine with a moment of silence.

[Moment of silence]

I become a President to preserve and strengthen the unity of Ukraine.

To ensure lasting peace and guarantee reliable security.

I know: peace is the main thing aspired by the people of Ukraine today.

The Head of State has a wide choice of various instruments to ensure territorial integrity of Ukraine and peaceful life of citizens.

I will have enough powers and determination. I do not want war. I do not want revenge. Even though there are great sacrifices of the people of Ukraine before my eyes.

I want peace and I will secure the unity of Ukraine. **Thus, I begin my work offering a peaceful plan.**

I strongly urge everyone who illegally took weapons in their hands to lay them down.

In response, I first of all guarantee the exemption from criminal responsibility for those who do not have blood of Ukrainian soldiers and civilians on their hands. And those who are not involved in funding terrorism.

Second, a controlled corridor for Russian mercenaries who would like to return home.

Third, peaceful dialogue.

Certainly, not with “strielky”, “abvery”, “bisy” and other criminals.

I am speaking of the dialogue with peaceful citizens of Ukraine.

Even with those who have different opinion on the future of Ukraine. Today, I would like to

address compatriots from Donetsk and Luhansk regions.

Dear our brothers and sisters, compatriots!

Many of you have already felt the “pleasures” of the rule of terrorists.

In addition to pillage and abuse of civilians, they led the economy of the region, which has already been in crisis conditions, to the brink of total disaster.

But under no circumstances will we leave you in the lurch.

Nationwide presidential elections has put a bold cross on the myth of allegedly illegitimate Kyiv authorities.

This myth has been created by Russian propaganda and clan of Yanukovych who betrayed the Donbas and robbed it even more than the whole country.

He has been inseparably ruling Donetsk region for 17 years. And now, he is funding terrorists.

It is he who shall be totally responsible for political and socio-economic situation of the region.

For unemployment, for poverty and for refugees.

For killed citizens and for mothers' tears.

As President, with what will I come to you in the nearest time?

With peace.

With project of government decentralization.

With guarantee of free usage of Russian language in your region.

With strong intention not to divide people into right and wrong Ukrainians.

With respect for the specifics of regions. For the right of local communities to their peculiarities in the issues of historic memory, pantheon of heroes, religious traditions.

With project on creation of jobs in the East of Ukraine elaborated jointly with our partners from the EU before the elections.

With the prospect of investment, with draft program for the economic reconstruction of the Donbas.

Today, we need a legitimate partner for the dialogue. We will not speak to bandits. Acting local deputies do not represent anyone there already. We are ready to declare early local elections in the Donbas.

This is my peaceful plan for the Donbas and the whole country.

The issue on territorial integrity of Ukraine is not subject to discussion.

I have just sworn “with all my undertakings to protect the sovereignty and independence of Ukraine” and I will always be faithful to this sacred promise.

The number of people with whom I was honored to communicate in the course of the election campaign has exceeded one million.

Ukraine is diverse, but it is strong and single in spirit!

Striving for peace and unity of our state prevails in all regions of Ukraine.

I am deeply impressed with patriotism of citizens in southern and eastern regions, from Odessa to Kharkiv.

Peace has not come yet, but today we can confidently say that hard challenges united Ukrainian family.

They strengthened us as Ukrainian political nation which is confident in its European choice.

Our people has never been so strong.

But freedom is not given once and forever. One must always struggle for it.

Peace that we hope to achieve in the nearest time will not last long unless we strengthen our security properly.

For peace to become lasting, we must get used to living in constant combat readiness.

We have to keep the gunpowder dry.

Army and its re-equipment by means of national military-industrial complex is our top priority.

Moreover, state orders for military-industrial enterprises will give a boost to reindustrialization of the economy.

Those who grudge money for the armed forces feed foreign army.

Our army must become a true elite of the Ukrainian community.

The word “general” must be associated with the word “hero”, not with the word “corruption”.

We must do ourselves everything to ensure lasting peace and security of Ukraine.

Our most reliable allies and the best guarantors of peace are our army, fleet, the National Guard and professional special forces!

Nobody will protect us until we learn to defend ourselves.

I will use my diplomatic experience to ensure the signature of an international agreement that would replace the Budapest Memorandum.

Such agreement must provide direct and reliable guarantees of peace and security – up to

military support in case of threat to territorial integrity.

Any aggressor on the border of Ukraine must remember the saying from the Gospel: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.

Citizens of Ukraine will never enjoy the beauty of peace unless we settle down our relations with Russia.

Russia occupied Crimea, which was, is, and will be Ukrainian soil.

Yesterday, in the course of the meeting in Normandy, I told this to President Putin - Crimea is Ukrainian soil. Period!

There can be no compromise in the issues on Crimea, European choice and state structure.

Anything else shall be discussed and negotiated.

Any attempts of external and internal enslavement of Ukrainians meet and will meet the most determined resistance.

We want to be free.

To live in a new way means to live freely under a political system that guarantees rights and freedoms of person and nation.

I would like to emphasize my commitment to parliamentary-presidential republic.

No usurpation of power!

European democracy for me is the best form of government invented by mankind.

It is the European choice which tells us that significant part of powers must be immediately delegated from the center to local governments.

Reform on decentralization will begin this year with amendments to the Constitution.

Newly elected local councils will receive new powers.

Still, Ukraine was, is and will be a unitary state.

Dreams of federation have no grounds in Ukraine.

Early parliamentary elections are an important part of public request for a full reset of government.

Let us be honest!

Current composition of this distinguished assembly does not match the mood of society. For it has changed significantly in 2012. A new way to live does not mean to ignore the will of the people.

To live freely means to freely use mother tongue.

I will be guided by Article 10 of the Constitution.

It defines the Ukrainian language as single state language, but guarantees free development of Russian and other languages.

The words “work”, “peace”, “salary”, “pension”, “scholarship” sound alike both in Russian and Ukrainian languages.

Availability of work is what enables a person to live comfortably.

So far, I got the greatest professional satisfaction from the creation of new jobs.

What can console a man more than work and decent salary for it?

Entrepreneurs must create new jobs. And the matter of President is to ensure conditions for nobody and nothing to interfere with work.

The state will appreciate the contribution of the employer and taxpayer in the economy and social sphere.

Providing people with work and decent salary is the first guarantee of internal peace and national security.

While economic management falls within the competence of free market or the Government, President as a guarantor of the Constitution is obliged to provide conditions for innovative economy and social justice.

Fair distribution of national wealth is an urgent demand of time.

But we must increase the national wealth before distributing it.

Ukraine has everything to ensure the European prosperity for people.

We can and want to live by our own labor; we are able to be creative and innovative.

We even learn not to be jealous of the success of our neighbor or colleague.

But we are still taking a backseat.

Why?

Because unlike us, European countries have built the economy of free competition. The economy of new ideas, business initiative, hard work, constant self-improvement.

It will be the same in Ukraine.

But we must eliminate corruption for this end.

We need a national anti-corruption pact between the government and the people.

It is simple: officials do not take and people do not give.

We won't be able to change the country unless we change ourselves, our attitude to our life

and the life of the country.

Each of us shares the responsibility for the fact that Ukraine has come to a crisis state.

Someone considered it normal not to pay taxes.

Someone lived high at the cost of the state budget.

Someone voted and held rallies for money.

Someone received undeserved benefits and awards.

Together we destroyed the foundation of public trust, principles of law and social organization.

European choice of Ukraine – is the heart of our national ideal.

It is a choice made by our ancestors and prophets.

And what exactly do we have to do to live freely, to live comfortably, to live in peace and security?

It is written in the agreement on political association and free trade area with the EU.

Together we have contributed to this document. Now I dream to make it real, and for this end we need to sign the economic part of the agreement as soon as possible.

My pen is in my hands and as soon as the EU approves the respective decision, the signature of the President of Ukraine will appear in this fateful document.

We have no right to delay the signing of the economic part of the deal.

The same goes for the speedy introduction of visa-free regime with the EU for Ukraine. We have completed the first stage and we will manage to finish the second stage very quickly for Ukrainians to be able to travel without visas starting from January 2015.

As for the Association Agreement, we consider it as the first step towards full membership in the EU.

Nobody has the right to veto the European choice of Ukraine.

To recognize this means to pursue a policy of peace and tranquility in Ukraine.

But such policy failed in the thirties of the last century.

To implement our ambitious plans, we need not only peace and unity of the country, but also consolidation of all patriotic, pro-Ukrainian and pro-European forces.

We must always keep in mind the harsh lessons of the national liberation struggle of the seventeenth-twenties of the last century.

At that time, our politicians were not able to unite and resist aggression jointly.

Volodymyr Vynnychenko fought against Mykhailo Hrushevskiy, Symon Petliura fought against Pavlo Skoropadskiy. And Nestor Makhno fought against all.

Constant quarrels and conflicts among the prominent Ukrainians resulted in the loss of our independence.

Conclusions should be done not only with old archives, but also with recent events.

We must not repeat old mistakes and have to ensure coordinated work of the President, the Parliament and the Cabinet.

It's time to build a new big country. Modern, high-tech, tenable, competitive country.

Let us consider the experience of countries that have emerged on the political map only a few decades ago, but become leaders by choosing the development of intellect and modern technologies.

For the most valuable thing is not money, factories or companies, but "human capital" of Ukraine.

I have no doubt that we will overcome all difficulties, defend the territorial integrity of our country and provide peace and tranquility.

Nobody will turn us into slaves of criminals and bureaucracy, servants of the colonial power.

The whole world supports us. Over the past three days I was able to verify that.

The whole Ukraine and all Ukrainians worldwide united around the idea of independence, freedom, dignity, rule of law, European integration.

People has already had its say. In the course of the revolution. In the course of the resistance to the aggression. In the course of the elections. Now it is our turn, the turn of the government.

I extend hand of peace to those who voted for me and those who did not vote.

To everyone who will help establish peace, order and tranquility in Ukraine.

To everyone who believe in the European future of Ukraine.

We, the people that was isolated from its great European Homeland, are coming home.

Once and for all.

Peace be with us!

May God bless us!

Glory to Ukraine!

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