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Remembering Georgiy Gongadze

21 years later, top suspect Leonid Kuchma still escapes charges in journalist's murder

Oligarchs cling to power at YES conference



Opinion

Sergii Leshchenko
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The Yalta European Strategy (YES) conference that took place in Kyiv on Sept. 10–12 has become a parade of forces on the eve of a big battle: the battle for deoligarchization.

This battle will have consequences both in Ukraine and outside. If the deoligarchization plan works in Ukraine, this way of curbing the influence of the richest people on politics can be "exported" to other countries. According to Justice Minister Denys Maliuska, Ukraine's draft legislation on oligarchs is unlike anything that exists in the world today.

Deoligarchization at YES

Deoligarchization got a separate panel at YES, and it proved to be the most interesting discussion on domestic politics.

Consider the venue – a conference thrown by Victor Pinchuk, a billionaire oligarch who wants to escape an official register of oligarchs that the new legislation seeks to establish. Naturally, the participants were picked in a way to ensure criticism of President Volodymyr Zelensky's deoligarchization plan.

This was a game being played on the opponent's field, using his rules. People who raised their hands to attack the project were eagerly given the word.

Opponents of the deoligarchization project insisted that it violates the Constitution by limiting the rights of the richest. Defending the bill were two people: Maliuska, the justice minister, and Oleksiy Danilov, the secretary of the National Security and Defense Council.

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Sevhil Musayeva (L), the chief editor of Ukrainska Pravda, and lawyer Valentyna Telychenko (R) hold portraits of murdered journalist Georgiy Gongadze at a commemoration event on Sept. 16, 2021. Four perpetrators of the 2000 murder of Gongadze, including top police official Oleksiy Pukach, have been convicted and imprisoned. Pukach claimed Leonid Kuchma was implicated in the murder, and the ex-president was even charged with organizing the crime in 2011. However, Ukraine's corrupt and impotent law enforcers dropped the charges. To this day, despite recordings implicating Kuchma and his top aides, none of them face any criminal charges. Kuchma has always denied any involvement. The Gongadze murder symbolizes the nation's lack of rule of law today and the impunity with which powerful suspects evade justice.

See story on page 2



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Journalists, lawyers and other people hold portraits of murdered journalist Georgiy Gongadze at a commemoration event on Sept. 16, 2021. They criticized the authorities for failing to deliver justice in the case and punish the organizers.

Gongadze's widow says the investigation of her husband's 2000 murder 'has fallen silent'

By Oleg Sukhov
sukhov@kyivpost.com

The investigation into the 2000 murder of journalist Georgiy Gongadze has made no progress under President Volodymyr Zelensky, the journalist's widow, Myroslava Gongadze, said at a news conference on Sept. 16.

"In this case, everyone has fallen silent," she said. "We don't know what's going on in the investigation. If the previous administration (of ex-President Petro Poroshenko) did at least something or pretended to do something, over the past two years we have not had any information about the investigation."

Gongadze was kidnapped on Sept. 16, 2000 and murdered later.

Four perpetrators of Gongadze's

murder – ex-police officials Oleksiy Pukach, Valery Kostenko, Mykola Protasov and Oleksandr Popovych – have been jailed. The Supreme Court upheld the 2013 life sentence for Pukach, the highest-ranking among them, in July 2021.

Evidence, including recordings made by ex-Security Service of Ukraine official Mykola Melnychenko, points to former President Leonid Kuchma as the possible organizer of the murder, which he denies. Whoever ordered the murder remains unpunished 21 years later.

Another alleged accomplice, ex-Interior Minister Yuriy Kravchenko, was found dead of two gunshot wounds – suspiciously ruled suicide – in 2005.

In 2005 Myroslava Gongadze won a case against Ukrainian authorities

at the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR). The court ruled that the case had not been properly investigated and that Ukraine should reform its law enforcement to achieve progress in protecting journalists' rights.

So far, the ECHR decision has not been implemented by Ukraine, Valentyna Telychenko, a lawyer for Myroslava Gongadze, said at a commemoration event for Georgiy Gongadze's death on Sept. 16.

"Ukraine has not implemented any substantial reform in order to make journalists' work safe," Telychenko said. "One example of Ukraine's failure to implement substantial reform and disastrous problems in this sphere is the investigation of the murder of (Belarusian-born journalist Pavel) Sheremet."

Sheremet was blown up in his car in central Kyiv on July 20, 2016.

The police failed to produce suspects until 2019, when they charged three people. No hard evidence has been presented against them and all three have since been released from detention.

"Today the Ukrainian authorities don't understand the essence of the problem and what justice and the rule of law are," Telychenko continued.

Myroslava Borchuk, a journalist at the UA:Pershy TV channel, also spoke at the commemoration event. She received the Georgiy Gongadze

award for exceptional journalism in May.

"As the media community and as a society, we have not managed to have the organizer punished. We allowed the situation when the organizer of the murder is called a patriarch of Ukrainian politics today," she said in a veiled reference to Kuchma.

In 2011, prosecutors charged Kuchma with complicity in Gongadze's murder. He denied the accusations.

The charges were partially based on the Melnychenko recordings, which were published in November 2000.

The tapes featured a man with a voice similar to that of Kuchma ordering his allies to "deal with" Gongadze, one of his prominent critics. One of the men receiving the orders was Kravchenko.

Later in 2011, the Constitutional Court blocked the case against Kuchma by ruling that the Melnychenko tapes cannot be recognized as admissible evidence. Subsequently, Kyiv's infamous Pechersk Court closed the Kuchma case.

Pukach claimed that he had received orders to kill Gongadze from Kravchenko and that Kuchma and ex-Verkhovna Rada speaker Volodymyr Lytvyn were also implicated in the murder. Lytvyn denied the accusations. **67**

Sergii Leshchenko: Oleksiy Danilov rebukes his host over scandalous 2004 privatization

page 1 →

Danilov used the opportunity to rebuke Pinchuk for privatizing the Kryvorizhstal steel plant in 2004 for just Hr 4.2 billion, about \$800 million back then, many times below its real market value. Pinchuk privatized the factory together with Rinat Akhmetov in the last year of rule of President Leonid Kuchma, Pinchuk's father-in-law. When Kuchma was succeeded by his opponent Viktor Yushchenko, the privatization was canceled and a new auction saw the factory sold to ArcelorMittal for Hr 24 billion – six times the price that Pinchuk and Akhmetov paid Hr 24 billion – or \$4.8 billion back then.

It was the first time Pinchuk was rebuked for that transaction at one of his YES conferences. The oligarch has said in the past that he regrets participating in the initial privatization of Kryvorizhstal.

This discussion was disappointing. Most participating foreigners didn't understand the proposed project well and, consciously or not, were broadcasting misconceptions.

Stephen Sackur, the host of the BBC HARDtalk, surprisingly compared Ukraine's sanctions against Kremlin agent Viktor Medvedchuk to Vladimir Putin's persecution of Mikhail Khodorkovsky in Russia. Sackur called commentators who are linked to Pinchuk's foundation "independent-minded observers" and welcomed their opinions.

I also disagree with economist Anders Aslund's definition that "an oligarch is a person who is strong enough to be able to defend even a big enterprise as his property against the predatory state."

In my opinion, an oligarch is a person who has taken over the state and has officials serve his interests.

Similarly, I disagree with Stephane Fouks, a member of the YES board, who protested the creation of a register of oligarchs in Ukraine. Fouks made a ridiculous comparison, saying that the last time France "made a register of a certain category of population, it was 1941 when we collaborated with Nazis."

Such an argument attempts to substitute a rational discussion with emotions. French businesses use political influence to promote their interests, too – like when they make Ukraine order French-made Alstom locomotives, hinting that the deal can influence the support that Ukraine gets from France within the Normandy Format, a peace-talking initiative.

I also think that another participant of the panel, Daron Acemoglu, a co-author of "Why Nations Fail," was wrong to compare Ukrainian oligarchs to the owners of Google. They have little in common.

Natalia Jaresko, a former finance minister and a long-time partner of YES conferences, also criticized the deoligarchization bill. And Aleksander Kwasniewski, former president of Poland and chair of the board at YES, openly mocked the project.

Foreign commentators don't only misunderstand the Ukrainian context, they also can't or don't want to study the proposed deoligarchization bill itself.

For example, they are convinced

that the bill seeks to strip oligarchs of their TV channels and essentially will redistribute the media resources, benefiting the government. But in fact, the bill doesn't seek to seize the oligarchs' property. It won't cause

oligarchs any material damage, only a reputational one – they will be legally identified as oligarchs. Each of them will have a choice: They can choose to get rid of their media assets or political influence and be

out of the register.

The bill defines an oligarch as an individual that has a monopoly in a certain area of business, owns

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Across Europe & Beyond

EDITORIALS

Misplaced aggression

Sept. 16 is a tragic date in Ukraine's history.

On this day in 2000, top Interior Ministry officers murdered journalist Georgiy Gongadze because he was independent and critical of the government, and especially then-President Leonid Kuchma. No justice has been served — only the direct perpetrators have been convicted.

Every year, this day reminds us of the price that journalists pay when they dare to be critical of the people in power. It also reminds us how dangerous it can be for someone in power to target journalists with criticism. Gongadze's family believes that he was murdered because Kuchma told his associates to get rid of the journalist — and his words were recorded. Whether the murder was performed as a favor to Kuchma or to set him up is another matter, but the official obstruction and cover-up suggests Kuchma's complicity, which he denies.

Ukrainian presidents haven't learned from this tragic episode. Viktor Yushchenko shed his mask as a calm intellectual and lashed out at journalists who investigated the luxurious lifestyle of his son. Viktor Yanukovich censored the media and famously told one journalist the threatening "I don't envy you" in response to a tough question. Petro Poroshenko attacked journalists in online harassment campaigns, fueled by bot farms. Volodymyr Zelensky could have been different. Sadly, he's not.

After two years in power, it is obvious that Zelensky has very thin skin when it comes to criticism and doesn't understand the value of journalism.

The Sept. 10–12 Yalta European Strategy conference served us the latest example. Pressured by BBC's Stephen Sackur to talk about Western partners losing faith in his record, Zelensky went into attack mode. He first made a sarcastic remark about Sackur's tone, then mocked journalists who are "fixated" on reforms and corruption. "They all want to know, when reforms will be done and when corruption will end? They throw in judicial reform to look smart," said Zelensky. To his credit, Sackur cut him there, saying that it wasn't journalists who were losing faith in Zelensky but Western governments.

During his presidential campaign in 2019, Zelensky rebuked a journalist who approached him with a question about his business in Russia. "I don't owe you anything!" he famously said. In 2020, at his annual press conference, Zelensky got angry at a journalist who wasn't even present — and said that the journalist's parents "didn't do a good job" raising him.

And during the YES conference, Zelensky rebuked a journalist who approached him with a question between panels. "It just so happens that I'm highly professional in the field you're working in," Zelensky said. Is he? Zelensky spent two years as the top manager of Inter, an oligarch-owned TV channel that is far from independent.

Zelensky has forgotten that he is a president elected to do the job. Journalists are society's watchdogs and messengers. When he's mocking journalists for doing their jobs, he's really mocking society, which has the same questions. Mr. President, are you tired of us asking when reforms will be done? Then do them.

Is Zelensky finished?

Billionaire oligarch Victor Pinchuk's Yalta European Strategy conference was once again packed with high-profile guests and paid speakers. Their assessment, however, was correct: Ukraine still has no rule of law and, consequently, the economy will suffer. Ukrainian-American Natalie Jaresko, Ukraine's former finance minister, said: "It's about the same anti-monopoly rules, antitrust rules, about the same access to courts. Rule of law, corruption is rampant here."

The same assessment came from one of Ukraine's best friends, Estonian President Kersti Kaljulaid. "Unfortunately, in five years, I didn't see Ukraine's move towards the fulfillment of the Copenhagen criteria," said Kaljulaid.

President Volodymyr Zelensky has only himself to blame. There are signs that corruption is flourishing behind closed doors. Perhaps the most public example is the \$4.5 billion "Big Construction" road program, spent with no transparent bidding, an invitation for kickbacks. Let us not forget that the powers of the KGB successor agency — the Security Service of Ukraine — have not been reduced — meaning its agents can presumably continue to shake down corporations for profit.

Prosecutor General Iryna Venediktova is unwilling or unable to bring charges in any big cases and obstructing others. This invites suspicion of continuing corruption. In her 18 months in office, zero big fish were charged despite an abundance of evidence.

But Ukraine has moved in the wrong direction in other areas as well.

Some of the country's most important goals — picking a new chief of the Special Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office, reforming the judicial governing body, liquidating the country's dirtiest court and repairing the Constitutional Court — have been sabotaged by lawmakers, the President's Office, members of the judiciary or all at once.

Meanwhile, Zelensky's discredited deputy chief of staff Oleh Tatarov threw a birthday party attended by a dozen law enforcement officials, confirming speculation that Tatarov controls law enforcement agencies. A top prosecutor who helped destroy the graft case against Tatarov was among the attendees.

Ukraine's deoligarchization went hand-in-hand with the oligarch-sponsored YES conference. The head of Zelensky's ruling Servant of the People faction in parliament, David Arakhamia, was spotted chatting with billionaire oligarch Ihor Kolomoisky — suspected of looting \$5.5 billion from PrivatBank and other crimes (for which he's not charged despite the evidence.)

Either Zelensky doesn't get it or he's in on the act.

"Laws are passed, and laws have been passed for 30 years, yet it's the execution and implementation of those laws that entrepreneurs fear are not the case," said Jaresko during the YES Conference.

Ukrainians give presidents time before public opinion turns decisively against them — Leonid Kuchma in 2002, Viktor Yushchenko in 2008, Viktor Yanukovich in 2013 and Petro Poroshenko in 2017. Is 2021 the year that Ukrainians decide they've had enough of Zelensky?

NEWS ITEM:

The Council of Judges, the main professional association of Ukrainian judges, on Sept. 13 blocked Ukraine's judicial reform. The judges' association failed to get enough votes to elect representatives to a body crucial for cleansing Ukraine's judiciary, missing the deadline to do so. President Volodymyr Zelensky reproached the Council of Judges for sabotaging the reform.



This one is morbidly corrupt



NEWS ITEM:

Ukrainian researcher Pavlo Blavatsky, a lecturer at the School of Business in Montpellier, received the satirical award Ig-Nobel prize for economics on Sept. 9. His 2020 research paper entitled "Obesity of Politicians and Corruption in Post-Soviet Countries" linked body mass index and political corruption among the political elite.



NEWS ITEM:

Oleksiy Danilov, head of Ukraine's National Security and Defense Council, told journalists that Ukraine should discard its Cyrillic script and switch to the Latin alphabet. The idea was criticized by both pro-Russian and pro-Western politicians. Ukraine is one of the few European states that still uses the Cyrillic script created by the followers of Christian missionaries Cyril and Methodius, who are venerated as Christian saints.



NEWS ITEM:

In late August, the prosecution has charged a top Security Service official with robbery, racketeering and abuse of office. According to media reports, the official led the agency's cybersecurity department and together with other Security Service officials abducted a businessman in downtown Kyiv in October 2020 and demanded ransom. They tortured the man until the victim agreed to transfer seven bitcoins to his abusers which was an equivalent of \$80,000 at the time.

See these features online at Kyivpost.com

Ukraine's Friend & Foe Of The Week



Friend

Michael Carpenter, U.S. diplomat

During his appearance before the U.S. Senate Committee hearing of his nomination as the U.S. Representative to the OSCE, the senior diplomat and foreign policy advisor stressed the importance of building resilience for Ukraine's energy security because of the threat posed by Nord Stream 2.



Foe

Ella Pamfilova, head of Russia's Central Election Commission

Pamfilova is overseeing Russia's parliamentary elections on Sept. 19. These elections flagrantly violate international law by allowing and even pressuring inhabitants of Russian-occupied areas of Ukraine to participate.

Feel strongly about an issue? Agree or disagree with editorial positions in this newspaper?

The Kyiv Post welcomes letters to the editors and opinion pieces, usually 800 to 1,000 words in length. Please email all correspondence to chief editor Brian Bonner, at bonner@kyivpost.com. All correspondence must include an email address and contact phone number for verification.



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Editor's Note: World in Ukraine takes a look at Ukraine's bilateral relations with different nations. All articles are written independently from advertisers.

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Pakistan ambassador ramps up bilateral ties

By Brian Bonner
bonner@kyivpost.com

With their respective capitals separated by 5,000 kilometers and possibly only hundreds of residents in each other's countries, Pakistan and Ukraine have a hard time forging close relationships and boosting trade to meaningful amounts for both struggling economies. There's no free trade agreement between the nations and there's never been a summit at the presidential or prime minister level.

It's even hard to generate tourism. Visas are required on both sides (although Pakistan's rules are friendlier). There are no direct flights — only those going through Doha, the capital of Qatar, or Istanbul.

But Pakistan's Ambassador to Ukraine Noel Israel Khokhar, on the job for less than a year, has reenergized the relationship with high-level trade delegations, visits, cultural events and tourist promotion. Recently, the foreign ministers of both nations talked by phone.

"The aim is to bring people together, engage them, let them meet each other, talk to each other and develop confidence and understanding," the ambassador explained.

In generating momentum for a closer relationship, the retired lieutenant general — who served 36 years in Pakistan's armed forces — is tapping his friends in high places, including for help in putting on a squash tournament between players of both nations this weekend in Kyiv.

Oleg Petrasluk



Ambassador of Pakistan to Ukraine Noel I. Khokhar speaks with the Kyiv Post on Sept. 15, 2021.

While annual bilateral trade is less than \$500 million between the two nations, it "could reach \$1 billion," Khokhar said, if the right steps are taken. He sees particular hope in boosting Pakistani exports to Ukraine of sports apparel and surgical instruments. Pakistan, meanwhile, is trying to entice investment from abroad through the creation of special economic zones.

To those ends, the ambassador has organized regular visits by trade delegations. He's dusted off a long-dormant Pakistani-Ukrainian joint trade commission, which languished for

nine years after its launch. He's supported trips by journalists to Pakistan by Ukrainian journalists, including 1+1 presenter Dmitry Komarov's "The World Inside Out" program and another tourism program called "Heads & Tails." He wants to translate some of the episodes into Urdu and English to attract more viewers. He also wants to bring Pakistani journalists to Ukraine.

The ambassador engineered the highest-level visit to date when Pakistani Chief of the Army Staff Qamar Javed Bajwa visited Kyiv on May 18, 2021. Forbes ranked Bajwa

as the 68th most powerful person in the world and de facto the most powerful person in Pakistan, a major customer of Ukrainian-made tanks. The event was hosted by ex-Kyiv Post publisher Mohammad Zahoor, the most prominent Pakistani businessperson in Ukraine, with entertainment provided by his wife, singer-actress Kamaliya.

Ukraine, for its part, will have to overlook some key aspects of Pakistan's "peace within and piece without" foreign policy to have better relations. Islamabad, with a history of armed conflicts and territorial disputes with neighboring India, keeps a policy of strict neutrality with respect to Russia's war against Ukraine since 2014 — refusing even to declare that Kremlin-occupied Crimea, taken in a military invasion, rightfully belongs to Ukraine. Consequently, he said, Pakistan does not apply sanctions against the Kremlin.

"We are not in a position to impose sanctions on anyone," the ambassador said. "Even if we were in such a position, we will not go that route."

The relationship in one key area — Pakistani purchases of Ukrainian-made military hardware — is flourishing again, the ambassador said. He credits Oleg Urusky, the deputy prime minister in charge of strategic industry, and Ukroboronprom CEO Yuriy Husiev. "With the new team,

our engagement is much stronger, positive and better. They are focused on living by the agreements signed and expanding scope of defense relationships," Khokhar said.

Khokhar has not forgotten to emphasize cultural ties. The 121st birth anniversary on July 2, 2021, of Muhammad Asad — born as Leopold Weiss in Lviv, Ukraine — was celebrated. Works of the journalist, traveler, writer, linguist, political theorist, diplomat, Islamic scholar and worker of the Pakistan Movement were translated into Ukrainian and promoted at a book fair in Kyiv and at an event in Lviv.

The lack of recognition of some Ukrainian university degrees by Pakistan is an obstacle to greater numbers of students studying in Ukraine. So is the Ukrainian practice of requiring agents to conduct admissions, rather than universities directly. He remains bothered by Ukraine's bureaucratic and unfriendly visa regime for Pakistani travelers, some of whom have been denied entry upon arrival despite holding valid visas. The problem eased, he said, with the help of ex-Interior Minister Arsen Avakov.

By contrast, he said, Ukrainians can apply for a cheap tourist visa to Pakistan online, making travel there much easier. "Ukrainians should reciprocate by easing their visa regime," he

said.

Before becoming ambassador, he had visited Ukraine one time, in 2009, he said. The married father of three adult children is a sports enthusiast. He loves golfing, a game for which Ukraine offers limited options. "I miss my golf," he said. But he engages in other "great opportunities to meet people," including art and cultural events such as ballet and operas. "Ukraine has a rich history," he said.

Khokhar is Pakistan's ninth ambassador to Ukraine. All except the first had military careers, a reflection of the priorities and the importance of the military as an institution in Pakistan.

He is looking forward to the Sept. 18–19 Pakistan-Ukraine Squash Friendship Cup at the 5th Element Club in Kyiv. Prizes will be awarded on the evening of Sept. 19. Besides emphasizing the benefits of sport, he said: "We are also doing this to mark 30 years of our friendship with Ukraine." 🇺🇦



This picture taken on Aug. 15, 2019, shows a view of snow-capped mountains and glaciers from the Concordia camping site in the Karakoram range of Pakistan's northern Gilgit region. Northern Pakistan is home to some of the tallest mountains in the world, including K2, the world's second highest peak. Mountaineers have long been drawn to the area by the challenging climbs.

Pakistan hunger for Ukraine's grain boosted sales in 2020

By Natalia Datskevych
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Pakistan, the fifth most populous country in the world with more than 200 million people, has never been a major trade partner for Ukraine.

But over the past two years, Ukrainian grain exports to the Asian country have skyrocketed from \$468,000 in 2018 to \$258 million last year, accounting for nearly 60% of all bilateral trade.

Sadly, this surge might be temporary.

Pakistan suffered from a poor wheat harvest during this period and its government sought grain from abroad, according to Iftikhar Ahmad Khattak, chairman of the Ukrainian-Pakistani Society of Friendship and Business Cooperation.

"There were so many purchase deals because the country needed a lot of wheat to make flour," Khattak told the Kyiv Post. "This year there was not such a demand as in the previous one."

Pakistan bought some 400,000 tons of wheat last year from two Ukrainian agricultural companies, according to Nikolay Gorbachov, head of the Ukrainian Grain Association.

But Pakistan also bought three times that amount from Russia, which disappointed Khattak.

"I was upset that it was not bought from Ukraine, because the country can fully satisfy the demand of the state of Pakistan," he said.

According to Gorbachov, this year Ukraine can easily export 24–26 million tons of wheat.

"We will compete with everyone



Farmers use a threshing machine to refine wheat during harvesting in a field in Pakistan's southern Sindh province on March 26, 2021. Last year, Ukraine sold some 400,000 tons of wheat to Pakistan as the country suffered from a poor harvest.

in the Black Sea region," he said.

Currently, Ukraine has an advantage over many other exporters. This includes Russia, which has a fluctuating weekly custom duty on its grains based on imprecise predictions of world prices. Ukraine has no such barriers.

"Ukraine took a very wise position," said Gorbachov. "Currently, the Russian market is very risky."

He hopes Pakistan will remain a regular trade partner but "everything will depend on the prices that the world market will set."

Strategic cooperation

If trade can expand beyond grain, both countries have much to offer one another.

Ukraine can also supply peas, oats and soybeans to Pakistan. It could also become a logistic hub for Pakistan's textiles, fruits and vegetables, in Khattak's opinion. These products can be resold to the European Union after arriving in Ukraine.

"Ukraine and Pakistan can trade a lot of products with each other," he said.

Some seasonal Pakistan fruits, like mangoes or tangerines, can be found on the shelves of Ukrainian supermarkets.

For instance, last year, around 16,000 tons of Pakistani tanger-

ines — 400 containers with 40 tons of fruits in each — were delivered by cargo ships to Odesa seaport and Pivdennyi seaport.

Pakistani textiles are another attractive option. For example, they can be used for curtains and bed linen. So far, Khattak has received several requests from Ukrainian entrepreneurs who asked specifically about Pakistani fabric, and not Chinese, Korean or Japanese.

"Pakistan makes really good cotton," he noted.

One of Khattak's biggest dreams is to sell Pakistani threads to make fabric in Ukraine.

"It would create jobs and revenue for the state budget," he said.

But to boost bilateral trade,

Ukraine and Pakistan have to solve one major problem — weak dialogue at the top official levels.

Although there have been some shifts in recent years, Khattak considers that "not much has changed over the past decade."

"There are no meetings at the governmental level, nor official meetings among MPs," he said. "You have to promote yourself, and I don't see enough of that in Ukraine."

Meanwhile, Gorbachov thinks Pakistan first needs to deal with its own internal problems. The Taliban takeover of Afghanistan caused a flood of refugees into Pakistan.

"There is now such political instability that it is very difficult to predict what will happen next," he said. ☹️



Pakistan at a glance

Government type: **parliamentary federal republic**



President:
Arif Alvi



Prime Minister:
Imran Khan



GDP, PPP (2020):
\$262.8 billion

GDP per capita, PPP (2020):
\$1,260



Total area:
881,913 square kilometers



Population:
226.2 million people

World Bank's Doing Business
Ranking: 108

Credit ratings:
S&P — B- (stable), Fitch — B- (stable),
Moody's — B3 (stable)

Main economic sectors:

Agriculture, textiles, steel production, metallurgy, mining, chemicals, food processing



Trade: \$415.7 million
(including services)



Exports from Ukraine to Pakistan:
Grains, vegetables and cereals, ferrous metals, machinery, wood and wooden products to Pakistan.
\$331.09 million.

Imports to Ukraine from Pakistan:
Textiles, clothing, rice, fruits, nuts, and cotton.
\$81.27 billion.

Sources: World Bank, International Monetary Fund, State Statistics Service, Embassy of Ukraine to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

ON THE MOVE

Advertisement

CMS STRENGTHENS CORPORATE M&A OFFERING WITH KEY APPOINTMENT IN UKRAINE



Leonid Petrov

International law firm CMS Cameron McKenna Nabarro Olswang in Ukraine is pleased to announce the appointment of Leonid Petrov as a counsel in its Corporate M&A team in Kyiv. Leonid joins the firm from DLA Piper.

Leonid Petrov is an English-qualified solicitor with significant experience advising both Russian and multinational public and private companies on a wide range of corporate transactions, including mergers and acquisitions, joint ventures, corporate reorganisations and restructurings. His practice covers a wide range of sectors, including entertainment, financial services, manufacturing, mining, oil and gas, real estate, retail and telecommunication.

Graham Conlon, Managing Partner of the Kyiv office of CMS Cameron McKenna Nabarro Olswang, comments: "We are pleased to welcome Leonid to the firm. Leonid is a seasoned transactions lawyer who has worked on some impressive corporate transactions across globe. His international skillset combined with his deep sector knowledge will prove extremely

beneficial to our clients and enhance the capabilities of our growing transactions offering, both in Ukraine, across Central and Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union and beyond."

Leonid Petrov, comments: "I'm thrilled to be joining CMS and working with colleagues across the firm. The region, and in particular Ukraine, continues to offer excellent opportunities for investors. CMS has a broad offering, which is consistent with my practice, and I look forward to using this platform to support clients on their key transactions."

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Ukraine-Pakistan arms trade is decent but can be better

By Illia Ponomarenko
ponomarenko@kyivpost.com

Ukraine's relations with Pakistan are almost completely about weapons.

Over the past few decades, Islamabad has been among the most enthusiastic clients of Ukraine's arms industry, which offered much more attractive prices compared to Russia.

Pakistan is still a loyal customer in 2021 but business between the two countries is not even close to what it once was. From purchasing armadas of battle tanks, Pakistan has gradually shifted to more modest contracts to maintain and modernize its military hardware. It's even paying more attention to Ukraine's competitors.

Islamabad and Kyiv maintain pragmatic business relations in the defense sector and shower each other with compliments. And Ukraine offers a lot of its more advanced and sophisticated weapons that could be of great interest to Pakistan.

Nonetheless, this flirting between the two nations' military industries doesn't seem to be blossoming into a deeper relationship. Still, experts say Ukraine still has chances to win more major Pakistani contracts over China and Russia.



Pakistani army's Ukrainian-produced tanks T-80UDs drive through streets during a military parade in Islamabad on March 23, 2015.

Sweet salvation

According to Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) databases, since becoming independent in 1991, Ukraine by 2020 completed arms contracts with Pakistan with a total value of nearly \$1.6 billion.

This made Islamabad one of Ukraine's biggest customers ever, right next to Russia, China, India, and Thailand.

In the late 1990s, Islamabad literally rescued the Kharkiv Malyshev Tank Factory from bankruptcy with a \$650 million contract to produce 320

T-80UD tanks, which still form a large part of the Pakistani armored fleet.

Moreover, according to the media at the time, the Ukrainian manufacturer managed to offer a price nearly 40% lower than Russia's.

And up to this very day, this old transfer keeps giving much-sought work to the struggling Ukrainian arms industry.

In 2021 alone, Pakistan signed an \$85.6 million contract to repair its T-80UD fleet in Ukraine. For the Malyshev Factory, this was again a gulp of fresh air—the once-grand enterprise, as of early 2021, was struggling with its Hr 1.8 billion (\$67 million) debt.

Over the years, Ukraine has also produced scores of 6TD-1 (used for T-80s) and 6TD-2 diesel engines, used extensively for the Chinese-Pakistani MBT-2000 tank, more commonly known as Al-Khalid.

Tanks are Ukraine's biggest money makers with Pakistan. According to UkrSpetsEksport, the Ukrainian foreign arms trade agency, Kyiv is currently working on 12 contracts valued at over \$150 million.

In the same manner, Pakistan has recently enlivened Ukraine's aircraft repairs industry, which is also hungry for work, by concluding two new contracts to repair its Ilyushin Il-78 refueling tankers.

The Ukrainian authorities have not disclosed the contract price. The deal currently envisages repairing two Il-78s, although the Ukrainian industry hopes to repair all four aircraft of this type operated by the Pakistani Air Force. For the Mykolaiv Aircraft Repairs Plant, this is also a chance to ease its own financial difficulties.

Islamabad has become a stable contract provider. Officials of UkrOboronProm, the Ukrainian state-run defense production giant, do not hesitate to call Pakistan "a strategic client" with which the country has a "traditionally high level of trust and mutual understanding."

A lot to offer

For their part, Pakistani officials also

send positive signals to Ukraine's arms industry — teasing it with potential multimillion contacts involving things far more advanced (and profitable) than tank repairs.

In May, the Ukrainian defense community was encouraged by the official visit of General Qamar Javed Bajwa, the Pakistani Army's Chief of Staff.

Given the dominant role of the military in the South Asian country, the arrival of one of Pakistan's top officials coming to check out the Ukrainian arms market raised expectations.

And the Ukrainian officials did their very best. At military training grounds near Kharkiv, the Pakistani general was shown some of the best weapons Ukraine has to offer: from BTR-4E armored personnel carriers to Korsar and Skif anti-tank guided missiles.

According to UkrOboronProm officials, the Pakistani general was most interested in the Oplot main battle tanks and the Skif missiles. This again fueled new speculation about Pakistani readiness to buy advanced Ukrainian tanks. But the visit ended without any new contracts being signed.

Instead, the Pakistani military is known to have recently purchased nearly a 100 Chinese-made VT-4 tanks that are frequently mentioned as very strong competitors of Ukrainian Oplots in the global market.

This might effectively mean an end to Ukrainian hopes of winning a major contract in Pakistan.

But according to experts with Defense Express, the Kyiv-based think tank agency, not all is lost yet.

They believe that the Pakistan land forces currently operate nearly 2,000 tanks. But only some 700 of them are modern designs like the Ukrainian T-80s, or the Chinese Type 85s.

So in the near future, Pakistan might still need to replace some 1,300 vehicles. And according to the experts, Ukrainian Oplots might still be its tank of choice. ☉

TOP 10 KYIV POST exclusives online this week

Editor's Note: Most of the Kyiv Post's journalism is published online. Subscribe today at the low rate of \$45 annually for access to all articles, photos, videos, the PDF editions of the weekly printed newspaper and our complete archives dating to 1995.



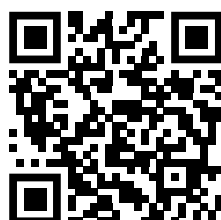
1. Zelensky wants more talks to get Russia out of Ukraine
2. Report: Judge Vovk, Yanukovich ally, Zelensky official engineered Constitutional Court coup
3. OCCRP: Beirut explosion caused by chemicals owned by Ukrainian businessman's company
4. Donbas veteran gives decent burial to fallen WWII soldiers
5. Ukrainian judge involved in Sheremet case found dead near Kyiv
6. Car explosion kills two in Dnipro, police suspect terrorism
7. Gazprom plans to launch Nord Stream 2 on Oct. 1, Bloomberg says
8. Brian Bonner: Ukraine's Friend & Foe of the Week
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Revived economic cooperation council may help boost Kyiv's trade with Asia nations

By Max Hunder
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Pakistan can become Ukraine's gateway to the Southern and Central Asian markets, believes Volodymyr Reznichenko, the Ukrainian Minister of Foreign Affairs diplomat responsible for Ukraine's relations with Pakistan.

While the two countries have always enjoyed cordial relations, trade has been meager and foreign direct investment nonexistent.

The Ukrainian and Pakistani foreign ministries have developed a plan to change this.

In a phone call on Aug. 10, Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba and his Pakistani counterpart Shah Mahmood Qureshi agreed to revive a long-dormant joint Ukrainian-Pakistani Economic Cooperation Council, the first meeting of which is planned in the coming months.

Oleg Urusky, the minister for strategic industries, will head the Ukrainian team.

Turning east

In the past year, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has dramatically increased its promotion of diplomat-

ic and economic cooperation with Asian nations. Pakistan is one of the priorities.

Although the initial plans for such a commission were signed in 2012, they lay dormant until 2018, when the first steps were taken to revive them.

Progress was delayed by the Kerch Strait incident in November 2018, when Russia illegally seized three Ukrainian patrol boats and kidnapped their crews off the coast of Crimea, but the Ministry pushed on with the project regardless.

"In 2019, objective realities forced us to diversify our positions in the world," says Reznichenko.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic extended the delay, the commission's first meeting is finally coming up. Reznichenko expects it to be held in the final months of this year or the beginning of the next one.

This spring, the Ukrainian Embassy in Pakistan hosted a delegation of over 20 Ukrainian businesspeople, who wanted to explore investment opportunities in the world's fifth most populous country. In October, representatives from Pakistani chambers of commerce



Pakistani laborers pour molten metal into a cast at an iron factory in Karachi on April 30, 2019. Pakistani business could benefit from Ukrainian metallurgical expertise if the new joint economic cooperation commission between the two countries succeeds in its goals.

AFP

will come to Ukraine for a reciprocal visit.

According to Reznichenko, the Ukrainian delegation was made up mostly of textile and clothing manufacturers: textiles and fabrics made up over 60% of Ukraine's imports from Pakistan in 2020.

Diversifying trade links

Trade between Ukraine and Pakistan has typically been dominated by the military-industrial sector –roughly \$1.6 billion since 1996.

Pakistan has held military exercises with Russia since 2016, but this has not stopped them from signing two contracts for tank and aircraft maintenance with Ukrainian companies in 2021.

While Ukraine's foreign minister is eager to maintain and expand

this profitable line of business, Reznichenko says that diversification is important too.

Ukraine's exports to Pakistan shot up in 2020, driven almost entirely by sales of Ukrainian grain. This unusual spike in trade was caused by a combination of a bad harvest in Pakistan and pandemic-related global supply line failures.

Ukraine covered 75% of Pakistan's grain deficit in 2020, which Reznichenko says made Ukraine the "guarantor of Pakistan's food security."

However, he insists that there are also plenty of other sectors ripe for growth: Ukrainian engineering expertise in railways, mining, water grids, and power stations is very attractive to Pakistani investors.

"It could be construction, engi-

neering services, sales of building materials and machinery, or consultations from our experts," he said.

"Increased cooperation in these fields could be a pre-condition for our relations with Pakistan reaching a whole new level."

Moreover, Pakistan wants wider input from Ukrainian agriculture than simply buying crops: the populous Asian nation could benefit greatly from purchases of Ukrainian fertilizer and grain elevators to modernise its own farms, which need to feed a population of 225 million.

Ultimately for Reznikov, the upside of deepening cooperation with Pakistan is that there are no significant geopolitical issues dividing the two countries.

"We don't have any problematic areas with Pakistan." ❖

Advertisement



17 September 2021

President of Ukraine
V. O. Zelensky

Dear Mr. President,

My name is Tamaz Somkhishvili. As a British citizen and a long-term investor in Ukraine, I would like to express my deepest regard and appeal to you, as the Guarantor of the Constitution of Ukraine and the rule of law in this country, to help protect my legal rights as a foreign investor.

I am one of those foreign investors in Ukraine that you personally make active, consistent efforts to attract to your country. I currently have investments in manufacturing, construction and international trade. Over the many years I've been doing business in Ukraine, my investments, and the taxes paid, have amounted to tens of millions of dollars.

The situation I find myself in is a prime example of the kind that worries many foreign investors in Ukraine and jeopardizes your ongoing efforts to attract international investment.

In 2007, a Ukrainian enterprise of which I am the beneficial owner, Kyiv-Terminal LLC, won a competition under the Kyiv City State Administration (KCSA) to reconstruct Kharkiv Square. An investment agreement was signed, within the framework of which the investor fulfilled the ensuing obligations and transferred US \$13.5 million to the KCSA account.

Immediately after the agreement was signed, Kyiv-Terminal began active implementation. However, the project required city authorities to provide a parcel of land as part of their obligations under the investment agreement. Since the Kyiv City Council kept delaying this transfer, the investor was forced to go to court. As a result, several years were spent in the courts just to conclude a land lease agreement.

In 2013, the Kyiv City authorities decided to terminate the land lease agreement and withdrew the land parcels previously transferred to Kyiv-Terminal for public needs. This decision also led to the termination of the investment agreement, which meant compensation for losses of Kyiv-Terminal, in accordance with an additional agreement concluded by the parties.

However, the KCSA failed to uphold its obligations and refused to compensate for the losses incurred. For nearly two years, Kyiv-Terminal and I, personally, as the investor, negotiated with Kyiv authorities and with the Government of Ukraine to peacefully settle this dispute. All the government agencies involved agreed that the damages to Kyiv-Terminal should be compensated, but insisted that the actual amount be determined by a court.

In 2018, Kyiv-Terminal applied to the Municipal Commercial Court of Kyiv to protect its rights. In 2019, the court made a decision that partly satisfied the company's claim, and ordered the city authorities to pay Kyiv-Terminal US \$24,460,997 as damages. Unfortunately, the court decision has not been enforced.

Nevertheless, the Department of Economics of the Kyiv City State Administration filed an appeal, which was satisfied by the Northern Commercial Court of Appeal on May 27, 2021, once again completely violating the legal rights of a foreign investor to fair compensation for losses.

Our last chance to protect our rights under Ukrainian law is a fair and objective review of the case by the Supreme Court of Ukraine, scheduled for September 22, 2021. I am confident in the legal position of my enterprise, However, even now the company has faced unscrupulous actions by the Kyiv City State Administration, the Department of Economics and the Kyiv City Prosecutor's Office, which deliberately sent their legal responses to the wrong address so that the company would not receive them. I hope that my public appeal to you will contribute to an impartial consideration of the case by the Supreme Court, based on the principle of the rule of law.

If, despite everything, I am unable to defend my rights in a Ukrainian court, I will file suit against the State of Ukraine on the basis of the Agreement on the Mutual Protection of Investments between Ukraine and the UK.

Does Ukraine need an international legal case that will not only bring to international attention the kind of dishonesty foreign investors might face with Ukrainian authorities, but also the fact that it is impossible to protect their rights in Ukrainian courts?

Mr. President, I understand that it is difficult to pay attention to every investment dispute, especially given their growing number lately. But the rapid growth of such cases is indisputable evidence that every individual complaint from a foreign investor is part of a single huge problem that requires an immediate comprehensive solution and your, Mr. President, personal control.

After all, if you, the Guarantor of the Constitution and the rule of law, cannot guarantee that foreign investors will be able to defend their rights in fair courts, Ukraine will never realize its investment potential.

Yours sincerely,
Tamaz Somkhishvili

Mohammad Zahoor is 'not complaining' about his life

Editor's Note: The following is a Q&A with Mohammad Zahoor, owner of the ISTIL Group of companies and publisher of the Kyiv Post from 2009-2018. He is a British citizen who is a native of Pakistan. He is married to singer-actress Kamaliya and has four children, including twin eight-year-old daughters. Zahoor spoke to Kyiv Post chief editor Brian Bonner on Sept. 15, 2021, in his Kyiv office.

Kyiv Post: How do you spend your time?

Mohammad Zahoor: I'm semi-retired and just come to the office to have some meetings. I'm mostly looking after my two kids, who just turned eight. I'm enjoying happy family life. During this period of 1.5 years (during the coronavirus pandemic), the business was not flourishing, of course, so at least we've found some harmony at home.

KP: When was the last time you were in Pakistan?

MZ: I was in Pakistan in February after the death of my sister-in-law, my brother's wife, who died of COVID-19.

KP: What's the potential for growth in Ukraine-Pakistan trade?

MZ: Ukraine has a lot to deliver to Pakistan, including agricultural products, besides the defense industry stuff. There's a lot of potential for Ukraine to import, the textile, the leather goods, the surgery instruments, the sports goods and the fruits, mangoes, especially...from the Pakistani side, I don't think it will go into billions.

KP: When can I check into your unopened hotel on Zoloti Vorota?

MZ: I'm still looking for a partner



The Embassy of Pakistan in Ukraine organized a combined celebration of Pakistan Day and Defense Day on Sept. 10, 2021, in Hilton Hotel in Kyiv. Pakistan's Ambassador to Ukraine Noel Israel Khokhar is third from left, next to singer-actress Kamaliya (in yellow dress) and her husband, Mohammad Zahoor, Ukraine's most prominent Pakistani businessman and the former publisher of the Kyiv Post. Pakistan celebrated its 75th Independence Day as a nation this year, despite "hearts profoundly grieved by the suffering of our brothers and sisters in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir," the ambassador said. Pakistan Day usually is celebrated on March 23 and Defense Day on Sept. 6.

to invest with me in the hotel and a casino.

KP: What are the prospects for the newly legalized gambling in Ukraine?

MZ: Ukraine doesn't have these high rollers (big gamblers).

KP: Why don't you just spend down your net worth to get the hotel finished?

MZ: I don't want any more headaches.

KP: What's happening with the Kinopanorama building in the center of Kyiv?

MZ: The day before yesterday, we got this new 'present' that the Kinopanorama is a 'cultural heritage' so we cannot reconstruct it. So we have to keep it in the same way, which is miserable, this is a 1958 building, which is the Communist era. Now, there's a cinema that is closed. It's empty. We wanted to make it a place for people because the city has a shortage of event halls. We ourselves, when we want to do an event, all the places are gone.

KP: So, you own two of the best properties in town that are empty?

MZ: Yes.

KP: Did you get any compensation for your stolen assets in the Kremlin-occupied Donbas?

MZ: No.

KP: Do you expect any?

MZ: No.

KP: YUNA, the annual music awards program you sponsor, got back on track this year after a year off from the coronavirus. All good?

MZ: What we expected this year,

when we were allowed to bring only 50% of the people to the venue, the government would give us a 50% discount on the rent of the Palace of Ukraine. We were never compensated.

KP: Did you buy any businesses or property in the last year?

MZ: No.

KP: Did you sell anything?

MZ: No.

KP: Are you still optimistic about President Volodymyr Zelensky?

MZ: I have seen that the International Monetary Fund isn't lending the money. I see the debt is increasing. Basically, I think we are still stuck with the legal system, the corruption in the legal system...Instead of having all these G7 meetings, etc., the government and parliament should pay more attention to passing laws – not the slippery laws – to fool the West that we are doing something. The cold shoulder that Zelensky was given during the American visit is a sign that not everybody is buying what they're being told. The rhetoric has changed. If you look at the words of Zelensky, he's not happy. Before, he was pro-West. Now he's complaining. Now it's "we have to do it ourselves. The West is not going to help us." If you do good things, they will help you. But just because you're being haunted by the Russians, you expect everyone

to do everything for you, but you are not going to do anything else except play "a victimized country."

KP: Not good?

MZ: I still think he is for the good of this country. In countries like Ukraine, where the system is not in place, one person can damage a lot. And one person cannot build everything. I think while Zelensky's intentions are good, he's the only one in the whole lot. Most of the people around him, we don't see what they are doing, we don't see anything moving. They are "ministers of satisfaction" who will not oppose you. I would rather have people stand up and tell me "this is wrong." One has to have the appetite to listen to criticism and do the right things.


KP: Kamaliya is pro-Zelensky?

MZ: She is totally pro-Zelensky. We are all pro-Zelensky. I haven't seen anything negative about Zelensky. It's similar to Pakistan. There's nothing wrong about Prime Minister Imran Khan. He's a very clean person, very genuine and very sincere. But the team there is one of the worst ones. Neither here nor there can one sincere person change the system.

KP: Last year, where did you spend your time?

MZ: 40% in Ukraine. Almost none in Pakistan. London and Dubai – 30% and 30%.

KP: It's a good life.

MZ: I'm not complaining. 

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September 24
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World in Ukraine

October 8 – Germany
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Sergii Leshchenko: Victor Pinchuk stacks deck to trash Kyiv's deoligarchization drive

page 3 →

media outlets, and is linked to politics. An individual who matches all three criteria will be recognized as an oligarch. To get rid of this label, an oligarch doesn't have to get rid of his media — he can get rid of his representatives in the parliament or end his monopoly.

Price of oligarchy

The key argument against the draft law from the chorus of critics is that we need institutional constraints, such as the Anti-Monopoly Committee, rather than a register of oligarchs.

I'd like to comment on that since I assess my personal experience on the topic of deoligarchization as extensive. I have known Pinchuk for 20 years, since his Workers Party convention in Myrhorod in 2001.

So, the oligarchy is such a powerful all-grasping monster that it can only be defeated with a combination of efforts. We shouldn't contrapose the Anti-Monopoly Committee to the deoligarchization law, rather combine the two.

I will explain why simply having the Anti-Monopoly Committee will not be enough.

A lot of oligarchic activity has nothing to do with monopolies. They can, for example, seek subsidies from the budget, as did Yuri Kosiuk, the owner of a private yacht fleet, for his chicken business MHP.

Kosiuk's oligarchic influence allowed him to lift the subsidy limits which allowed Kosiuk to receive Hr 1 billion (\$37 million) from the state in 2018. The parliament initially planned to limit the subsidy amount to Hr 50 million (\$1.85 million) per company.

A year earlier, Kosiuk's business received Hr 1.4 billion (\$52 million) in agrarian subsidies which accounts for a third of all budget allocations for the assistance of small and medium-size businesses. And the Anti-Monopoly Committee wouldn't be able to prevent that.

Another example is oligarch Rinat Akhmetov, who recently bought the former palace of Belgian King Leopold II on the French Riviera for 200 million euros.

According to Ukrainian law, Akhmetov doesn't control a monopoly in the energy sector, since his coal plants — which constitute 80 percent of all coal plants in Ukraine — are diluted by state-owned nuclear power plants.

Yet, Akhmetov's coal plants are key, since they not only produce electricity but also balance the energy market during peak hours. This gives the oligarch extensive power over the country — he can threaten it with power shortages.

Under my watch as a lawmaker in the previous parliament convocation, oligarch Dmytro Firtash was ruled to be recognized as a monopolist in the nitrogen fertilizers market.

Moreover, Firtash bought his chemical plants with loans from Arkady Rotenberg, a Russian oligarch — and now his company's shares are pledged to Russian state-owned funds. But what happened next? Firtash won the appeal, canceling fines imposed on him for



President Volodymyr Zelensky delivers a speech at the Yalta European Strategy conference sponsored by billionaire oligarch Victor Pinchuk in Kyiv on Sept. 10, 2021.

abusing the monopoly position in the fertilizer market.

Therefore, the misapprehensions of people who are against the deoligarchization law are easily shattered by Ukrainian realities.

Today, the biggest battering ram against the deoligarchization is ombudsman Lyudmyla Denisova.

Other government representatives, who are already corrupted by oligarchs, are simply trying to avoid this topic to avoid public criticism. But Denisova voiced her opposition to the idea of deoligarchization — she not only demanded an expert examination of the bill by the Venice Commission but also came and criticized the bill at the YES conference.

Based on Denisova's letter, Speaker Dmytro Razumkov sent the draft law to the Venice Commission for evaluation.

At the same time, it was important for Razumkov to get support for his line not only from the Opposition Platform — For Life faction led by oligarchs Medvedchuk, Serhiy Lyovochkin and Vadym Stolar, or the European Solidarity faction led by oligarch Petro Poroshenko, or the Batkivshchyna faction where there are lawmakers connected to Akhmetov, Medvedchuk, or even ex-Ecology Minister Mykola Zlochevsky.

Razumkov needed the support of the liberal Voice (Golos) faction to show the wide backing of his decision to appeal to the Venice Commission — and he received it.

But the Voice faction has been internally divided for months. The majority of the Voice's 20 lawmakers demand the resignation of faction leader Yaroslav Zheleznyak, yet he's not resigning.

That's why the letter from Zheleznyak to Razumkov, where he claims that the deoligarchization bill "violates human rights and fundamental freedoms" can't be perceived as the opinion of the whole faction.

Thus, the behind-the-scenes attempts to topple the deoligarchization bill are becoming increasingly clear. From my own experience, I can say that even the proposal of the bill has had good results. The oligarchs are losing influence,

and this is evident in the example of state-owned Ukrzaliznytsia railway company. (Editor's Note: Sergii Leshchenko is a member of the supervisory board of Ukrzaliznytsia).

Despite opposition, we managed to raise Ukrzaliznytsia's tariffs on the shipping of iron ore produced by oligarchs, which will generate \$500 million of additional income for the company. A year ago, this initiative was blocked by oligarch-friendly officials.

The deoligarchization effort went too far to be stopped. The stakes are too high now. Either Zelensky will make the final push for deoligarchization or the oligarchic system will regroup and destroy him as an independent president.

Sergii Leshchenko is an investigative journalist and was a member of Ukraine's parliament from 2014–2019. He became a columnist for the Kyiv Post in October 2019.

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Latexfauna, the sexy indie pop band with big heart

By Artur Kornienko
kornienko@kyivpost.com

At Latexfauna's very first gig in Kyiv, the audience already knew their lyrics by heart.

It was 2016, about a year after the four guys started composing vivid and groovy ballads. Done with a husky voice, guitar, bass and synthesizer and in a room too small to fit a drum kit. So they used a drum machine — like a true indie pop band.

"Imagine that, the first show and everyone is singing along! We were impressed," says Illya Sluchanko. He was at that show in Kyiv's Mezzanine club and later joined the band as a new guitarist.

Beside him stood Max Greben, who was also inspired to join as a drummer. Luckily, he had an electronic drum pad that didn't take up much space.

"I had never heard something like this in Ukraine and in Ukrainian. I was hooked," he told the Kyiv Post.

Subsequently, Latexfauna released an album with Ukraine's leading Moon Records alternative label and, before COVID-19 hit, toured all over the country. This summer, the Kyiv-based band was back on the road with shows every week.

But most importantly, Latexfauna has a solid fanbase that few groups in the country can match: people sing along at every show, quote the lyrics in conversations and social media, and even tattoo or engrave them on wedding rings.

"We wanted to be a band whose tracks are like family members, a big part of people's lives," Dima Zezyulin, the frontman and songwriter, says. "And we really are that band now."

Tribe

Another key person at that fateful show was Bohdan Utsekha, who would become Latexfauna's managing director. A promoter who supervised shows for Ukraine's iconic Ocean Elzy and TNMK in the 2000s, he transformed Latexfauna from indie nobodies to a thriving touring band.



Ukrainian new wave band Latexfauna performs at the BezViz Festival in Dnipro, Ukraine on Aug. 15, 2021. With groovy rhythms, summer vibes and vivid lyrics, the Kyiv band has built a solid fanbase a few musical acts in Ukraine can match. (Tania Horbatiuk)

He started with things as trivial as cool new sneakers for the stage.

"Back then, we looked like suckers, you know. So he got us all New Balance sneakers at a 50% discount!" Zezyulin remembers. "Basically, he started the band's economics."

"Without him, we didn't realize how much we were worth. We asked for ridiculous fees, like Hr 1,500 (\$55) a show," says Les Dyman, who plays bass.

The band's members say that Utsekha saw Latexfauna as "the band of his life." And it became his legacy after he died in 2018 at just 44 after passing the management to his friend Borys Ginzuk.

"Utsekha was our shaman," says Sasha Mylnikov, who plays the keyboards.

For Mylnikov the band is a tribe and it's a recurring theme in Latexfauna's music. "Ajahuaska," their first song ever with a mellow chillwave feel, is a trippy tale of a native tribe fighting the invading

"cowboys." Their authenticity helps the tribe prevail.

Latexfauna is that tribe in Ukrainian music. While not an indie band in the sense of being self-published, they view themselves as "stand-alone" in relation to Ukraine's music industry. They don't frequent any of its parties, awards and album presentations, preferring their rehearsal room.

But the industry wants a piece of Latexfauna. They did a joint single with the popular Alina Pash, Sergey Babkin and others in support of LGBTQ rights in 2020. And most recently, Ukraine's pop diva Tina Karol invited them to sing their sexy tune "Bounty" together on her new record featuring the young blood of the Ukrainian music scene.

Latexfauna also doesn't have time for the glitz and glam of the industry because most members still have day jobs. The five guys in their thirties have long been planning to quit their offices to live off their music, but "natural greed" for extra profit still prevails, says Zezyulin.

Except for bass player Dyman, who was the first to quit his day job.

"Latexfauna is my job," he says. "It's my life's color."

Coloring lives

Dyman says he realized the extent of Latexfauna's success when he saw how other people add color to their lives with their music: as a soundtrack to photos and videos from their journeys, vacations and dance parties. The band's Instagram reposts such content daily.

Latexfauna may also be one of the most quotable Ukrainian bands. Their lyrical hooks have become memes, spotted everywhere: social media, clothes, street art and tattoos.

Their charm often comes from an unexpected source — surzhyk, a mix of Ukrainian and Russian spoken in provinces. Although surzhyk figures in only a few of Latexfauna's songs, language purists like to rebuke the band.

But Zezyulin says he uses it naturally, as a way to add texture and sincerity. When in a song called "Lime" his character says "I'm fine with you" in surzhyk, he's not pretending to be someone more cultured. He's vulnerable and the phrase might be somewhat closer in meaning to a real "I love you."

"It brings more sincerity than any artsy swagger," Zezyulin says. So people have engraved that very phrase on their wedding rings, he adds.

Latexfauna's music also resonates sexual energy through hints, some subtle and some less so, like the band's name itself. But this sexuality is never blatant as in much of pop music. Instead, people in Zezyulin's lyrics simply "open up," "throw their hair back" and "like" each other a lot.

The men in Latexfauna's songs are also sexy and confident, which is unusual for Ukrainian music, where they mostly cry and suffer for their love. But this oomph is subtle: Zezyulin's male characters are simply "being kissed first," or "have many, but love just one."

"You're not saying 'I'm a sexy male,

love me!' You're simply describing a situation in which a man is seen as cool and sexy," Zezyulin says.

Latexfauna also does not shy away from singing about psychedelic drugs. The title track on their debut album "Ajahuaska" refers to a psychoactive plant, and a hook to a song called "Delfinam" vocalizes "MDMA," a drug better known as ecstasy. It's no surprise that some critics call them "junkies."

But Zezyulin talks publicly about the therapeutical use of some psychedelics, practices strictly illegal and demonized in Ukraine. This discourse is part of the band's sincerity, and he hopes it will help "decriminalize things."

"The less you hide, the more invulnerable you are. So I try not to hide anything," Zezyulin says.

Punks not dead

Latexfauna is connected to punk music roots through its somewhat misfit themes. And even stylistically, the band likes to think of themselves as representatives of the new wave music, like The Cure, that came out of punk rock in the late 1970s as a more accessible counterpart to post-punk.

"I call it punk because there is a lot of primitivism in our music," Zezyulin says. "It may be simple and naive, but it's beautiful when put together."

Critics often claim that Latexfauna seem to "play the same song over and over," though sometimes acknowledging that they do it "like virtuosos." The band strongly disagrees, saying that, like other famous groups it has developed its distinctive sound.

"You hear the sound, the vibe, the pleasant summer bliss — and it seems to sound the same," Zezyulin says. "But devoted fans know it's different."

Latexfauna is currently working on their second album, planning to release it next year. After cancellation because of the COVID-19 pandemic, they are also hoping for their first international gig in the Netherlands next spring. Their dream is to play in Chicago, Toronto and London.

Other than that, they have no doubts about what their future holds.

"We'll write new songs and release them," guitarist Sluchanko says. "We just love music and can't stop making it."

Hear and see Latexfauna at the Ulichnaya eda festival. Sept. 18, 6 p.m. Platforma Art Factory (1 Bilomorska St.) Hr 150



From left: Latexfauna's drummer Max Greben, keyboardist Sasha Mylnikov, frontman and songwriter Dima Zezyulin, bassist Les Dyman and guitarist Illya Sluchanko in Kyiv on Sept. 9, 2021.



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Experts say that state needs to privatize successful companies

Editor's Note: Host your events in the Kyiv Post studio on 68 Zhylianska St. in the KADORR building. Contact us at events@kyivpost.com and 044-591-7788.

By Alexander Query
query@kyivpost.com

State ownership of energy companies is a necessary evil in Ukraine, according to Andriy Boytsun, editor of Ukrainian State-Owned Enterprise Weekly.

Large-scale privatization could be the key, but most state-owned enterprises are not ready for such a change because there is no market nor government regulation strong enough to limit the powers of a private monopoly, according to Boytsun.

"The state is the second-best solution Ukraine has today," Boytsun said during an online webinar titled "Does the state run energy companies smartly?" organized by the Kyiv Post on Sept. 10.

But state ownership is not a deliberate policy, according to Edward Chow, a member of the DTEK Advisory Council, attributing more to "the legacy of the Soviet Union," one in which "Ukrainian politicians have found it convenient to hold on to control of these companies," Chow said.

Political pressure

Ukrainian gas production is about 20 billion cubic meters a year. And even when prices change, the production doesn't change, which is a sign of a market failure, Chow said. Consequently, Ukraine needs to import 10 billion cubic meters of gas or more to satisfy domestic consumption.

Five of Ukraine's 15 largest state-owned firms are in the energy sector, but the state doesn't manage them properly.

State oil-and-gas giant Naftogaz has been unable to boost oil and gas production in Ukraine.

Low electricity prices don't bring enough funds to the electricity transmission system, Ukrenergo, to rehabilitate its archaic grid.

And Energoatom's nuclear power plants, which provide about 50% of Ukraine's electricity supply, are outdated.

All but three of Ukraine's reactors began operations in the 1980s, putting most of them close to the end of their engineered lifespans of 40 years. 12 of Ukraine's 15 reactors were slated to retire this year, but recent inspections gave them 5 to 10 more years.

When the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991, Ukraine inherited not only the embers of Chernobyl, but also four other nuclear power plants, including the largest nuclear plant in Europe, the Zaporizhia plant.

On Aug. 31, Energoatom and U.S.-based Westinghouse agreed to build reactor units for Khmelnytskyi nuclear plant for up to \$30 billion, a day prior to President Volodymyr Zelensky's long-awaited meeting



Brian Bonner, executive director/chief editor at the Kyiv Post (L), moderates the online webinar "Does the state run energy companies smartly?" held on Sept. 10, 2021 in the Kyiv Post studio. Andriy Boytsun, a specialist on corporate governance of state-owned enterprises (C) and Edward Chow (R), an energy expert and member of the DTEK Advisory Council, took part in the discussion. Valentyn Gvozdiy, managing partner at GOLAW firm, participated remotely. The event was co-sponsored by DTEK AND GOLAW.

with U.S. President Joseph Biden in Washington, D.C. on Sept. 1.

Ukrainian politics have harmed state-owned enterprises, according to Boytsun, making them more vulnerable to corruption, meddling, and populist management and pricing pressures. For instance, it's more difficult to lay off unneeded workers in a state-owned firm than in a private one. The same holds true for pricing.

"It's easier for the state to decree that a company should sell electricity or gas at an administratively set price, low enough to keep the voters happy but inefficient for the company," he said.



Overall, politicians suffer from short-term thinking, while successful management of a company requires a long-term approach, he said.

Valentyn Gvozdiy, member of the supervisory board of hydropower company Ukrhydroenergo — one of the country's only profitable state-owned energy companies — agreed with Boytsun on political meddling.

He said that the management of Ukrhydroenergo had been pressured to "do illegal things" under Ukraine's previous government led by former Prime Minister Oleksiy Honcharuk. Still, Gvozdiy said the company reported the pressure, which has stopped under the government of Prime Minister Denys Shymhal.

The government needs more public offerings for the sales of state-owned companies to tap market efficiencies, according to Chow. A public offering is when a firm offers securities such as bonds or equity shares to investors in the open market. Such a structure would ensure independent operations, according to him.

"It would also take away the temptation of some future government to interfere in the operations of the company," Chow said.

Privatizing success

According to Chow, Ukraine's current way of managing state-owned enterprises is not sustainable for a functioning market economy. Overall, Ukraine needs to modernize its energy sector to have access to the European market.

Privatization could improve management, according to Gvozdiy. "Privatization is a good way of getting rid of something unprofitable to make it profitable in good hands."

Boytsun also sees profitability as an argument for privatization, contrary to the prevailing Ukrainian political thinking today. "I'd rather start with a profitable one than with the junk that nobody's willing to buy," he said.

Ukrhydroenergo is an exception in state-owned companies because it's profitable, compared to Ukraine's top five energy companies.

This state company administers major hydropower plants along Dnipro and Dniester rivers.

Ukrhydroenergo produces up to 10% of the market's electricity demand, but in 2020, the company produced almost 7 billion kilowatts per hour. It also "balances the market," which means it can inject the right amount of energy for the

grid's demand almost immediately — one of the key reasons behind the company's success, according to Gvozdiy.

Ukrhydroenergo boasts a \$300 million profit since 2021, making it a good candidate for potential privatization, Gvozdiy said.

However, national security can be an obstacle to such privatization. If a dam breaks, the state must take care of potential risky outcomes of massive flooding, he said.

"Yes, we're ready for an initial offering, but I don't know if our country will benefit from it," Gvozdiy added.

Good governance

Good corporate governance helped Ukrhydroenergo attract \$211 million investment from the World Bank for its projects, which shows that a proper corporate governance policy can make a company successful.

Gvozdiy praised the virtue of corporate governance reforms to prepare companies to meet free and competitive energy market standards, a vision shared by Chow and Boytsun.

Boytsun also said that good governance principles could be a game-changer for Ukraine's state-owned energy sector's transition towards privatization.

"Since the state has chosen to own these companies, then we talk about good corporate governance," he said.

Ultimately, however, Boytsun said the state should divest. "The more privately-owned enterprises we have, the more the state can focus on its role," Boytsun said.

And long-term vision is essential, especially in the energy sector, Chow said, something that is lacking today in Ukraine. ☺

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Ukraine needs to reform, but NATO's resolve also necessary

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By Illia Ponomarenko
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On its long way to NATO's membership, Ukraine still truly needs to go on with its painful reforms.

But also, the country's future in the 30-nation alliance in many ways demands political decisions of all member states, as guests of Kyiv Post webinar "NATO-Ukraine relations: The way forward" concluded on Sept. 14.

Ukraine has been in touch with the alliance since its very inception as an independent state, and it has already spent years trying to keep up with its benchmarks.

However, as Vineta Kleine, director of the NATO Information and Documentation Centre in Ukraine asserted, Kyiv still has a long to-do list in terms of civilian democratic oversight, judicial reform, and anti-corruption.

"There are still several areas where Ukraine could go forward," the official told during the discussion when asked by Brian Bonner, the Kyiv Post chief editor.

"The current system of democratic control and oversight of the security and defense system needs to be modified in order to align with NATO principles and standards. Another thing where should go forward is the prioritization and clear articulation of strategic goals across the defense sector."

Moreover, according to Glen Grant, the retired British Army officer and authoritative expert on Ukraine's defense sector, in many ways, Kyiv and NATO end up being on different pages when it comes to what should be the reform's result.

"NATO talks one language and senior Ukrainian people talk another language, in the military and the defense system," Grant said.

"They are still talking and still living



Andriy Zagorodnyuk, ex-minister of defense in Ukraine, speaks during the Kyiv Post webinar "Ukraine-NATO relations: The way forward" on Sep. 14, 2021.

to a large degree in the post-Communist way of thinking. The (Ukrainian) Ministry of Defense... was never designed as a ministry of defense, and it is still isn't a ministry of defense... It was never built as a managing management system.

"A large amount of the things that are failures in reform and simply failures in management. Either because people don't know how to do it, or in many cases, they are simply don't know what they are talking about, or they are contradictory-thinking."

For instance, it is common for Ukraine's defense community to demand that the Ministry of Defense be headed by a military general, in the logic of Soviet tra-

dition. However, such demands are inconsistent with modern, Western principles of civilian control of the military. And complications of this kind often hog-tie the Ukrainian reform, according to Grant.

Besides, as experts admitted, not all provisions clearly depend on how successful Ukraine is. The issue of Ukraine's membership in NATO also depends a lot on decisions within the very alliance, according to Kurt Volker, former United States special representative on Ukraine.

"Ukraine has done a lot and it needs to do more," Volker told during the discussion.

"But that's not really the point... But the real issue here is politics.

NATO makes decisions by consensus. That is to say: all of the member states need to agree in order to take a decision... But we know there are a number of European countries — I won't name names — that worry that this would be provocative for Russia. They are worried that it could be taking the alliance into an ongoing conflict, such as we have in Donbas.

"They are worried that Ukraine is not sufficiently reformed, there's too much corruption, that it would be damaging to NATO to bring Ukraine in. So we have a problem in NATO in reaching consensus to invite Ukraine."

But nonetheless, admitting Ukraine would be of strategic importance to both Europe and the U.S., as Volker added.

Andriy Zahorodnyuk, Ukraine's defense minister in 2019–2020, noted that with time some NATO nations tend to get softer towards Kyiv. This was clearly seen following NATO's 2021 summit and the alliance communique on encouraging Ukraine to move on with its aspirations towards membership.

"Because from my personal experience, I spoke to a few leaders of states and ministries of defense," Zahorodnyuk said. "And some countries were not seeing Ukraine among (potential members), a couple of years ago, even a year ago. The fact that they all issued and signed this communique (was a good sign), even though there was no timeline (of Ukraine joining NATO)."

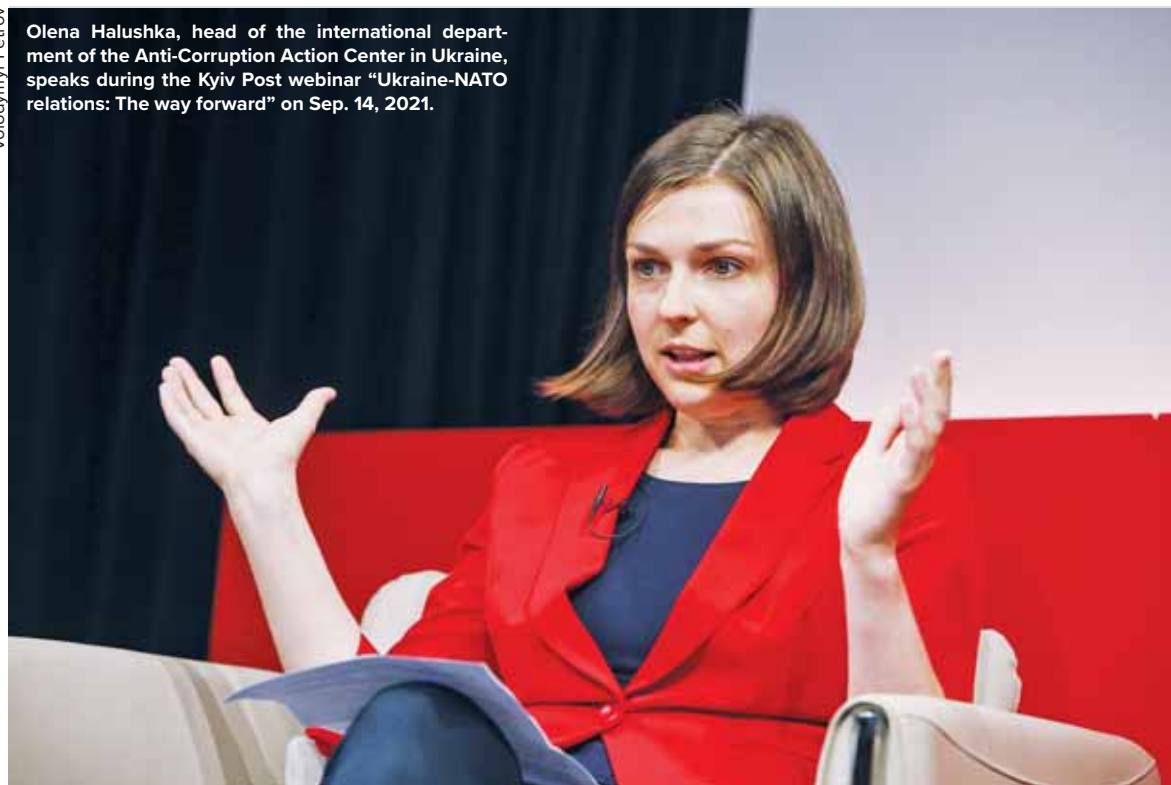
Moreover, NATO still has very powerful leverage for helping Kyiv boost its reforms — and it is similar to the one used very effectively in terms of Ukraine's movement to the

visa-free regime with the European Union, according to Olena Halushka, a member of the Anti-Corruption Action Center in Ukraine.

"Obviously, a Membership Action Plan will be a very helpful and good tool of to serve this goal," the activist said. "But since not all NATO allies are ready to provide us with such an instrument...we need to think about another solution that could break the vicious circle, in which NATO-Ukraine political relation are stuck in."

So the Ukrainian anti-corruption community has come to a proposition to create a form of NATO reforms map.

Olena Halushka, head of the international department of the Anti-Corruption Action Center in Ukraine, speaks during the Kyiv Post webinar "Ukraine-NATO relations: The way forward" on Sep. 14, 2021.



"This should be a very ambitious, a very clear and prioritized list of the reforms that meet the most resistance among political elites and that fall under the criteria of reforms of rule of law in Ukraine. Such as a real judicial reform, the real SBU (Security Service of Ukraine) reform," Halushka said.

"Such a plan would not contain NATO commitments to any clear timelines with regards to when it will have to move to the next integration phase But its implementation should prepare Ukraine to join NATO when a window of opportunity will be open." ☺



POSITION ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chemonics International Inc., an international development consulting firm, seeks the highly-qualified Ukrainian professionals for the following short-term positions for the USAID Nove Pravosuddya Justice Sector Reform Program in Ukraine (New Justice):

PERSONAL LEGAL ASSISTANT

Duties and Responsibilities:

- Provide with day-to-day legal, administrative, and technical support in matters arising in the process of the High Qualifications Commission of Judges of Ukraine (HQCJ) candidates' selection process.
- Work with integrity (background) checks related materials, including but not limited to the analysis of asset declarations, relevant open-source data and information provided by third parties.
- Facilitate as needed communication within the team.
- Consult on various legal matters arising in the process of the new HQCJ candidates' selection process.
- Draft legal instruments as requested.
- Review and proofread translated legal texts, if necessary.

Job Qualifications:

- Law degree is required.
- Minimum of 3 years of demonstrated professional experience in legal drafting, analysis or research.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills as well as ability to communicate complex ideas effectively in Ukrainian and in English equally.
- Interest in and capacity to interpret political and policy developments.
- Excellent interpersonal and communication and team coordination skills; ability to work constructively with several internal and external stakeholders. Confident in any surrounding and at working at all levels when dealing with different stakeholders.
- Excellent legal writing, strong technical drafting and editing skills with attention to detail including when under pressure.
- Ability to work with a high degree of accuracy and attention to detail and quality in a busy environment.
- Advanced knowledge of the Microsoft Office Suite.
- Proven ability to see through tasks set and deliver results.
- Ability to work under pressure with tight deadlines, flexibility.
- Keen sense of ethics, integrity, credibility, and commitment to the project's goals.

LEGAL ANALYST ASSISTANT

Duties and Responsibilities:

- Advise on various legal matters arising in the process of the High Qualifications Commission of Judges of Ukraine candidates' selection process.
- Analyze the rules and regulations related to the work of the Selection Commission, including the ones governing the protection of personal data.
- Review and contribute to the drafting of legal instruments.
- Conduct legal analysis, research, and draft memoranda on relevant legal issues.
- Carry out integrity (background) checks including but not limited to the analysis of asset declarations, relevant open-source data and information provided by third parties.
- Draft individual integrity questionnaires.
- Produce minutes of the meetings.
- Monitor motions and complaints filed to administrative and other courts, produce relevant memos and carry out risk assessment.
- Provide comprehensive analysis of relevant legislation as well as monitor potential legislative amendments.
- Review and proofread translated legal texts, if necessary.

Job Qualifications:

- Graduate degree in Law is required.
- Minimum of five (5) years of broad, progressively responsible professional experience in rule of law, anti-corruption, criminal justice reform, with a focus on integrity and professional competence checks.
- Demonstrated experience in working with government bodies or international organizations engaged in justice sector reform in Ukraine is required.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills as well as ability to communicate complex ideas effectively in Ukrainian and in English equally.
- Solid understanding and knowledge of the political system, government bodies and international organizations, and the justice and rule of law sector in Ukraine.
- Interest in and capacity to interpret political and policy developments.
- Excellent interpersonal and communication and team coordination skills; ability to work constructively with several internal and external stakeholders. Confident in any surrounding and in working at all levels when dealing with different stakeholders.
- Excellent legal writing, strong technical drafting and editing skills with attention to detail including when under pressure.
- Ability to work with a high degree of accuracy and attention to quality and detail in a busy and complex environment.
- Ability to provide training and guidance to colleagues, advising them on procedures and following-up on the relevant national legislation.
- Sound organizational and planning skills; good team player, positive attitude, flexible.
- Keen sense of ethics, integrity and commitment to program's goals.

COMMUNICATIONS ASSISTANT

Duties and Responsibilities:

- Assist in designing, maintaining and updating the website and social media account(s) on a regular basis related to the process of the High Qualifications Commission of Judges of Ukraine candidates' selection process.
- Provide support in developing and implementing a well-balanced media and communications strategy.
- Assist the team of experts with strategic communications and tailored external messaging.
- Support the IT expert while developing and launching the official webpage.

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- Ensuring systematic communication with the Kyiv-based, regional and specialized media outlets to ensure required stakeholder reach.
- Producing and writing media products (press-releases, social media posts, public comments).
- Organizing awareness raising events.
- Participate in the orientation sessions.

Job Qualifications:

- Degree in public relations, journalism or other relevant discipline from a Ukrainian university.
- Three years of experience in public relations or communications, including maintaining websites and social media accounts, media relations, preparation of public outreach materials.
- Excellent writing and speaking skills in English and Ukrainian.
- Advanced MS Office user.
- Previous USAID or other international donor experience preferred.
- Knowledge of the Ukrainian legal and judicial system preferred.

IT ASSISTANT

Duties and Responsibilities:

- Assist in installing relevant software and configuring the hardware.
- Analyze digital tools and develop recommendations and solutions for their improvement.
- Develop recommendations and practical solutions to ensure a smooth and secure process of collecting, managing, and storing relevant data.
- Develop recommendations and digital solutions on efficient workflow and electronic management system while ensuring their conformity with the existing requirements and standards.
- Develop recommendations on security measures, standards and solutions in the context of the workflow and electronic case management system.
- Ensure the secure storage of digital files containing sensitive and/or restricted information, including personal data.
- Together with the Communication Assistant and Legal Analyst Assistants, develop the Terms of Reference (ToRs) for the official webpage and supervise subcontractor's work on developing and launching the webpage.
- Install, configure, and test new operating systems, standard and non-standard application software and software upgrades and updates.
- Perform on-demand security scans and cleaning of potentially infected systems.

Job Qualifications:

- University degree in relevant field is required.
- Minimum of 3 years of relevant experience in analyzing digital systems, developing and applying digital solutions, including document management systems and platforms.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills in Ukrainian. Strong proficiency in English is an advantage.
- Advanced understanding of document management platforms and systems.
- Advanced understanding of security issues and practical solutions in the context of workflow and document management.
- Excellent analytical and quantitative problem-solving skills.
- Client focus, service orientation, able to work in complex situations.
- Good team player, positive attitude, flexible.
- Sound organizational and planning skills.

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Duties and Responsibilities:

- Assist in carrying out day-to-day duties and tasks in matters arising in the process of the High Qualifications Commission of Judges of Ukraine (HQCJ) candidates' selection process.
- Assist in resolving technical, logistical, and administrative issues that may arise.
- Provide support to the staff in meeting administrative and office needs.
- Organize and schedule meetings and appointments.
- Carry out administrative duties such as filing, typing, copying, binding, scanning.
- Organize travel and accommodation arrangements in close coordination with New Justice and other donors.
- Collect, store, and manage receipts, invoices and other documents associated with the travel, accommodation, and work.
- Ensure proper storage of files containing sensitive and/or restricted information, including personal data, in coordination with other team members.
- Provide general support to experts and visitors.
- Provide information by responding requests.
- Maintain and order the necessary office supplies.
- Answer and forward phone calls.
- Maintain communication and cooperation with Ukrainian counterparts.
- Perform other administrative duties as assigned.

Job Qualifications:

- Bachelors or equivalent degree in logistics, accounting, finance, business, economics or other relevant discipline from a Ukrainian university required.
- Up to one year of experience in administrative assistant, accountant, logistics support, events preparation or similar position required.
- Knowledge of basic bookkeeping; excellent computer skills; excellent written and verbal communication skills.
- Ability to multitask, prioritize, and manage time efficiently, to pay strict attention to detail.
- Ability to speak and write clearly in English and Ukrainian required.
- Availability to travel (including overnight stays for up to several days) required.
- Previous USAID or other international donor experience preferred.



ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Location: Pakistan Embassy Kyiv, Ukraine
Application Deadline: October 04, 2021
(1 400 hours EET)

Type of Contract: Contract

Language Required: Fluent in both Ukrainian and English

Salary: UAH 20,500 / -

Expected Duration of Assignment: 12 month with possible extension

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