

Brussels, 31 March 2004

EU-Ukraine: Partnership and Co-operation Agreement (PCA) extended to the enlarged EU, 30 March 2004.

The Protocol providing for the new Member States of the European Union to become Parties to the Partnership and Co-operation Agreement was officially initialled yesterday by Mr Michael Leigh, Deputy Director General DG External Relations, and Ambassador Roman Shpek, Representative of Ukraine to the European Union (EU). The initialling launches the procedure for formal signature by Ukraine and the EU of the Protocol, which will ensure provisional application of the PCA to all 25 EU Member States as of 1 May, pending ratification by both sides.

The PCA concluded between the European Communities and their Member States and Ukraine was signed in June 1994 and entered into force on 1 March 1998. The Protocol that was initialled yesterday confirms that as from 1 May the ten new EU Member States will become Parties to the Agreement and benefit from its wide-ranging provisions on political and economic co-operation with Ukraine.

Signature of the Protocol is due to take place in April once each side has completed their internal legal procedures. For the EU, the Commission has launched the procedure for a formal Council decision to sign the Protocol. The signed Protocol will apply provisionally as from 1 May pending the assent of the European Parliament and approval by Ukraine's Verkhovna Rada. Ratification from EU Member States is not necessary.

Mr Michael Leigh, chief negotiator for the EU, welcomed the constructive approach taken by Ukraine that has allowed early agreement on the PCA 'enlargement' protocol, as a positive signal of Ukraine's commitment to working closely with the European Union.

Ukraine will become a direct neighbour of the European Union after enlargement and the EU is committed to ensuring the continuity of close relations between Ukraine and the enlarged European Union, none the least in the framework of the EU Neighbourhood Policy. The EU and Ukraine will continue to discuss practical solutions to short-term issues arising from the accession of the ten new Member States to the European Union.

For further information on EU-Ukraine relations:

[The EU's relations with Ukraine - Overview](#)

Diego de Ojeda, Tel:02/295 6686