

This is a press release from the European Commission  
Ceci est un communiqué de presse de la Commission Européenne

IP/03/390

Brussels, 17 March 2003

## **EU and Ukraine conclude bilateral package for Ukraine's accession to the WTO**

*Today in Brussels, the EU and Ukraine have concluded bilateral market access negotiations for Ukraine's accession to the WTO. The EU supports Ukraine's accession to the World Trade Organisation as soon as is feasible on commercially viable terms and in full respect of WTO rules. EU Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy said: "With today's move Ukraine is a step closer to becoming member of the WTO. Ukraine's commitments for non-agricultural and agricultural goods, as well as for trade in services, are balanced and in line with its economic capacities. Ukraine has demonstrated good co-operation and flexibility throughout the negotiation process, which has made today's step possible. I am confident that Ukraine's future accession to the WTO will help Ukraine reap the benefits of the multilateral trade system while facilitating the consolidation of the trade reforms already undertaken by this country in the framework of the Partnership and Co-operation Agreement with the EU." He also noted that "this accession process is a clear sign that another country has chosen the path of trade and development to satisfy the demands of its citizens. We hope that progress made in the negotiations to date will be an encouraging example for all other countries that are currently at the beginning of the WTO accession process, in which we will support them as much as possible."*

The EU-Ukraine bilateral market access package was signed by Mr. Khoroshkovskiy, Ukrainian Minister for the Economy and by EU Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy.

By concluding bilateral market access negotiations with Ukraine today, the EU reiterates its support to the accession of Ukraine to the WTO as soon as is feasible on commercially viable terms and in full respect of WTO rules.

### **Background**

Ukraine applied for accession to the WTO in 1994. Since then, Ukraine has negotiated market access concessions bilaterally with interested WTO members. Ukraine has now completed bilateral negotiations with a total of 10 WTO members. In parallel, multilateral negotiations in the form of a Working Party are taking place in Geneva. In these meetings, WTO members and Ukraine discuss how Ukraine will incorporate the body of WTO legislation and rules in its national legislative system and how Ukraine will implement the obligations stemming from WTO membership upon its accession to the organisation. In order to finalise the accession negotiation

process, Ukraine will have to conclude its bilateral market access negotiations with all members that request them. In addition, the Working Party will have to finalise a Working Party Report, which will contain all the commitments Ukraine will make with regard to the respect of WTO rules. The WTO General Council will then be asked to accept the complete accession package; Ukraine will become a member following ratification procedures.

The EU supports the accession of Ukraine to the WTO as soon as is feasible on commercially viable terms and in full respect of WTO rules, and continues to provide substantial amounts of technical assistance in this field. Ukraine has embarked on a broad programme of economic and structural reforms to modernise and diversify its economy and improve the business and investment climate. WTO accession would consolidate these reforms in a stable and predictable legal framework, contribute to the integration of Ukraine into the international economy and make Ukraine a more attractive market for European companies to invest in and do business.

For more information:

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/trade/bilateral/ukr.htm>

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/external\\_relations/ukraine/intro/index.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/ukraine/intro/index.htm)

Contact:

Aranca González 02 296 15 53

Catherine Ray 02 295 47 21