



\*\*\* Newly-elected leader promises reform \*\*\*

# PRESIDENT LEONID KUCHMA VISITS CANADA

## LEONID DANYLOWYCH KUCHMA

was elected Ukraine's second president on July 10, 1994, crowning a distinguished career in private industry and public service, which includes an appointment as Prime Minister of Ukraine.

Mr. Kuchma was born in 1938 in the village of Chaikino, located in the Chernihiv province of northern Ukraine. His father died in the siege of Leningrad. His mother worked on a collective farm, while his sisters and elder brother toiled as miners.

Mr. Kuchma graduated in 1960 from Dnipropetrovsk University. He joined the design bureau of the largest aerospace enterprise in the former Soviet Union - "Pivdenmash" where, in 1967, at the age of 28, he was appointed technical director of rocket testing at the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan. In 1982, he rose to the post of First Deputy to the Director General. From 1986 to 1992, Mr. Kuchma served as the Director General of Pivdenmash.

Appointed Prime Minister of Ukraine in October 1992, he served until September 1993. He has been a Deputy to the Parliament of Ukraine for its last two sessions.

In December 1993, Mr. Kuchma was elected President of the Ukrainian Association of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs.

In the course of his career, Mr. Kuchma was the recipient of the highest state prizes of the former USSR and Ukraine. He is a past professor at Dnipropetrovsk University and holds the title of Academician of the Engineering Academy of Ukraine.

Mr. Kuchma is married and has one daughter.

## BREAKING NEWS:

### OCTOBER STATE VISIT

*Ottawa (October 11, 1994)...* Prime Minister Jean Chrétien today announced that President Leonid Kuchma of Ukraine will visit Canada, October 23-27, 1994. President Kuchma will be accompanied by six senior Cabinet Ministers and a delegation of business leaders. This will be his first official visit to a G-7 country since being elected.

"I am very pleased that President

Kuchma has chosen Canada for his first official visit to a Western country. Canada values greatly its special relationship with Ukraine. President Kuchma's visit offers a unique opportunity to broaden our relations and to further our political, cultural, scientific and economic ties", said Mr. Chrétien.

President Kuchma will visit Ottawa, Toronto, Edmonton, Saskatoon and Winnipeg. In his meetings with Prime Minister Chretien and other Cabinet Ministers, President Kuchma will discuss Ukraine's economic situation, the strengthening of our bilateral trade relations, as well as international

## KUCHMA WINS JULY ELECTIONS

- Leonid Kuchma convincingly beat incumbent Leonid Kravchuk in the Presidential elections held last July 10. He campaigned on economic reforms and to improve economic ties with Russia which were sundered after the collapse of the Soviet Union. His victory was guaranteed by solid backing in the densely populated industrial east and south regions with large Russian minorities.
- Kuchma takes the helm of a country the size of France, with 52 million people, an economy in crisis, and a growing fault-line between the pro-Russian east and the nationalist west.
- In his inauguration speech, the new president repeated his claim that Ukraine's rocky post-Soviet divorce from Russia had hastened its catastrophic economic decline. To critics who fear Ukraine will gravitate back into Moscow's orbit

and neglect Western ties it formed under Kravchuk's leadership, Kuchma retorted that Kyiv must be "honestly open to cooperation with all countries of the world.

- Reforms should have been carried out long ago, he told lawmakers, diplomats and regional leaders gathered for the swearing-in ceremony in Ukraine's Parliament. The political will was simply lacking to implement them. Kuchma promised to use his powers to push through reforms which he considered as the only way to save Ukraine from economic collapse.
- Kuchma also said Ukraine would carry out its international obligations with the United States and Russia in which Kyiv pledged to get rid of the nuclear arsenal it inherited upon the Soviet Union's breakup.