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CANADA HOSTING G-7 CONFERENCE ON ECONOMIC REFORM IN UKRAINE

The July 8-9, 1994 Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Group of Seven leading industrialized countries (G-7) in Naples resulted in the adoption of two significant initiatives aimed at promoting economic reform and growth in Ukraine. The concerted approach to assist Ukraine, which was adopted by the world's major industrial powers, is due in large part to Canadian efforts in the months leading up to the Summit.

"Ukraine is an important foreign policy priority for Canada and is an important player in the international community," said Foreign Affairs Minister Andre Ouellet. "Both Prime Minister Jean Chrétien and I have repeatedly raised the issue with interested Canadians as well as with our foreign counterparts. We are committed to ensuring both Canada and the international community follow through in helping Ukraine in the coming years."

G-7 Decisions

Canada succeeded in having Ukraine's problems highlighted in the discussions amongst the G-7 leaders. As a result, two specific and important initiatives concerning Ukraine were adopted at the Naples Summit.

The Summit participants agreed to establish a new \$US 200-million fund to assist Ukraine in ensuring the safety of its nuclear reactors. Canada volunteered to contribute up to \$24-million to the multi-year program. This amounts to about 12 percent of the total, three times higher than Canada would normally provide for such an effort. It reflects the Canadian government's commitment to nuclear safety and its recognition that this is a vital issue for the health of

Ukrainians and for the economic growth of their country.

The G-7 also accepted Canada's proposal to host a conference on economic reform in Ukraine in October. The Conference on Partnership for Economic Transformation in Ukraine is intended to bring together the world's leading economies and financial institutions to assist in the reform and strengthening of Ukraine's economy.

As Prime Minister Chretien has noted, Canada, with its million-strong community of highly qualified Ukrainian-Canadians, is well placed to help Ukraine. In preparation for the conference, Mr. Ouellet will be in touch

with interested Canadians in the fall to seek their views on how best to assist Ukraine. He described the G-7 adoption of the Canadian initiatives as an achievement for government representatives. "In particular, the Prime Minister's personal Summit representative, Reid Morden, was persistent in persuading our G-7 colleagues to put Ukraine high on the agenda."

Canada-Ukraine Relations

Canada has been a strong supporter of Ukraine since well before the Naples Summit. The two countries have forged a close relationship, embodied in the Declaration of Special Partnership between Canada and Ukraine, signed by Minister Ouellet in March.

In December 1991, Canada was the first Western country to recognize Ukraine's independence following the break-up of the Soviet Union and in October 1992, Governor General Ramon Hnatyshyn was the first Head of State to visit the newly independent country.

Canada has consistently supported Ukraine's integration into the



Prime Minister Jean Chrétien (l) and Foreign Minister André Ouellet (r) at the G-7 Meetings in Naples where Canada's initiative on a conference on aid to Ukraine was approved. (Photo credit: Office of the Prime Minister)