

## EUROPEAN EXTERNAL ACTION SERVICE



THE DIRECTOR

DIRECTORATE Russia, Eastern Partnership, Central Asia,  
Regional Cooperation & OSCE

**24. 07. 2013**

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Mr. Eugene Czolij Esq  
President, Ukrainian World Congress  
145 Evans Avenue, Suite 207  
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[congress@look.ca](mailto:congress@look.ca)

Dear Mr Czolij,

Thank you for your letter of 28 June 2013, to the President of the European Commission, Mr. José Manuel Barosso in which you refer to the recent Lough Erne Communiqué of the G8 Leaders of 18 June. I have been asked to reply.

While this is not an EU statement, let me nevertheless confirm the EU's position as follows:

The EU welcomes in principle regional economic integration schemes. They must, however, be based on WTO-rules and WTO membership of all its participating states and should lead to positive trade effects and more predictability. They should not lead to deterioration of trade and investment conditions for economic operators.

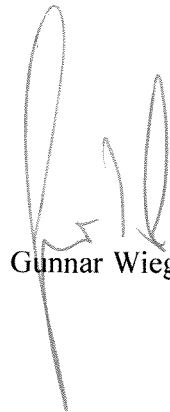
Regional economic integration schemes such as the developing Eurasian Economic Union must be based upon respect for the sovereignty and the autonomy of countries to decide on their participation and should not have detrimental effects on the EU's relations with the countries concerned.

It is in this connection that we have expressed our clear wish to be consulted by the Ukrainian authorities prior to agreements being made between Ukraine and the Eurasian Economic Commission and that we have sought confirmation that Ukraine's recent observer status does not in any way restrict its sovereign right to determine foreign, economic, and political relations with other partners, including the EU.

Let me moreover emphasise that through the Eastern Partnership, the EU remains firmly committed to the objective of political association and economic integration of its Eastern partners with the EU. Signing the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement, including its Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area – to date the most comprehensive agreement that the EU has negotiated with a non-Member State – would be a very significant step in this direction. The EU is unanimously committed to signing the AA/DCFTA as set out in the December 2012 Foreign Affairs Council conclusions, but only progress in Ukraine on the agreed benchmarks can enable us to reach this common objective.

Yours sincerely,

*and with kind regards,*

A handwritten signature in dark ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'G' followed by a series of loops and a long vertical stroke at the end.

Gunnar Wiegand