



EASTERN PARTNERSHIP  
**Civil Society Forum**

**Herman Van Rompuy**

President of the European Council

**Jose Manuel Barroso**

President of the European Commission

**Martin Schulz**

President of the European Parliament

**Catherine Ashton**

High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

**THE ASSOCIATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE EU AND UKRAINE MUST  
BE SIGNED**

**Appeal of the Ukrainian National Platform of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society  
Forum**

Ukraine has never been so close and yet simultaneously so far from a major breakthrough on its path to European integration. Following the completion of a long and difficult negotiating process Ukraine is within touching distance of signing an Association Agreement with the European Union. The demand for change and a pro-European choice is growing within Ukrainian society. However, the signing of the Association Agreement has become the subject of serious debate because the dialogue between official Kyiv and Brussels at the highest levels has been affected by a deep crisis of trust.

Ukraine finds itself in a difficult domestic and external political situation. But nothing can impact more negatively the country's political stability, economic prosperity, and European aspirations than the postponement of the signing of the Association Agreement with the EU. As citizens of Ukraine, we unreservedly condemn the regression in democratic standards and weakening of the rule of law in the country and welcome the EU's principled position as a reliable and open partner committed to value-based policies.

We share completely the EU's concerns, especially those expressed in the Council's Conclusions on Ukraine adopted on December 10, 2012. Clearly, the termination of politically motivated selective justice, the correction of mistakes that affected the outcome of the 2012 parliamentary elections, and the implementation of genuine reforms based on the Association Agenda remain key issues demanding immediate attention. At the same time, we are fully aware that Ukraine's European prospects are under threat.

At this difficult moment, it is extremely important to understand that the risks of not signing the Agreement are much more serious than the consequences of its signing and progressive implementation. Today, the opponents of the Agreement both in Ukraine and beyond would like to undermine the Agreement through the actions of the EU itself so that they will then have the opportunity to manipulate the facts and blame the EU for not wishing to reach out to Ukraine. The Association Agreement is needed much more by the people of Ukraine than its ruling circles.

At this crucial juncture, we urge the European Union and its member-states to display solidarity with the citizens of Ukraine and to reveal their support by demonstrating clear-sighted, long term thinking in offering Ukraine the prospect of a European future. We urge the EU and its member-states to sign the Agreement on Association in 2013 thereby creating an additional instrument for preventing any reversal of Ukraine's pro-European choice. As representatives of Civil Society and the expert community we, in turn, are prepared to initiate, develop and participate in projects facilitating the Agreement's realisation, including, in particular, civic monitoring of its implementation, and hence contribute to the development of a democratic, European Ukraine.