

EPP SECRETARY GENERAL INVITES YUSHCHENKO TO THE NEXT SUMMIT

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European People's Party Secretary General, Antonio López-Istúriz, met in Kiev with the President of Ukraine, Mr. Viktor Yushchenko and with other leaders of the new Ukrainian Government, in order to reinforce EPP cooperation with the political platform *Our Ukraine*, which became an observer of the EPP last January.

Mr. Yushchenko explained to the Secretary General his plans for Ukraine's European future and asked for EPP's support. *Ukraine's new President has a very realistic project to bring his country closer to the EU and clearly shares European principles and values. The European People's Party will offer all its support to Mr. Yushchenko and his Government, in order to shape Ukraine's European future*, López-Istúriz said.

On behalf of EPP President Wilfried Martens, the Secretary General invited President Yushchenko to the upcoming EPP Summit, which will be held on the 22nd of March, prior to the EU Council. *Our Summit will provide a unique opportunity for President Yushchenko to become acquainted with our Prime Ministers and opposition leaders and to explain to them the priorities of his new Government*, he added.

Yushchenko once again expressed his appreciation for EPP's support in the turbulent electoral campaign of last year and reaffirmed his commitment for active participation in EPP activities and meetings, following the EPP Political Bureau decision of January 28th to accept him and his *Our Ukraine* platform as an observer.

Finally, during his visit to Kiev on the 14th and 15th of February, the EPP Secretary General also met with members of the new Government, such as Deputy Prime Minister, Roman Bezsmertny, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Boris Tarasyuk, Minister of Family and Youth Yury Pavlenko, and others.

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