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**Eidgenössisches Departement für
auswärtige Angelegenheiten**

Rede - Opening of the Ukraine Recovery Conference (URC2022)

Lugano, 04.07.2022 - Speech by Ignazio Cassis, President of the Swiss Confederation and Head of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA - Check against delivery

Presidents

Prime Ministers

Ministers

Excellencies

Ladies and gentlemen

It is an honour to welcome you here in Lugano!

Switzerland and Ukraine have worked together to set up this conference. I would like to thank President Volodymyr Zelenskyy for his intensive cooperation during the preparations. We understand only too well why you are following the conference from Kyiv. So it is all the more important that Ukraine is represented in person by Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal along with a sizable delegation. For that I am particularly grateful.

What binds all of us in this room together is the desire - in this time of horror, wanton destruction and grief – to provide the people of Ukraine with the prospect of a return to a life of self-determination, peace and a bright future. That road is long, but it is never too early to prepare for the time when the weapons fall silent.

Until recently, the prospect of war on this scale on European soil against a sovereign country, against fundamental civil liberties and against humanity seemed almost impossible. Our attention was focused on other pressing matters facing the international community and the planet. But Russia's act of aggression against Ukraine has forced us to unite and face up to this war with all the determination that we can muster, and to commit

ourselves to supporting the sorely tried Ukrainian people on the long road to sustainable recovery.

- In concrete terms, in a first step we want to draft a framework for a long-term reconstruction process in the shape of a final document, the Lugano Declaration.

Excellencies

Ladies and gentlemen

Today and tomorrow is about laying the groundwork for an effective and transparent political process.

- A process that is inseparable from the path of reform.
- A process with regulated governance principles.
- A process with clearly defined criteria for handling assistance and for sharing roles between Ukraine, the states, the international community, the Bretton Woods institutions and others, civil society and private partners.
- And lastly, it is about 'What comes next?'. For after this, we are in for the long haul. Naturally, these are not questions that we can answer conclusively within the space of two days. But it allows us to get a clearer picture, set the framework and commit to the process and to our participation underlined by the principles that we want to adopt tomorrow within the framework of the declaration.

These Lugano Principles set an important first milestone.

A prerequisite for success is that the original plan for the conference (focusing on institutional reforms) and the current plan (focusing on reconstruction) form a whole! The original programme of annual Ukraine Reform Conferences was well on track. I share the assessment that Ukraine's resilience is due in no small part to the reforms that have been implemented. It is crucial that these efforts continue unwaveringly, especially in the fight against corruption, improving transparency and the independence of the judiciary, and that they are not stalled by the war. The two pillars are not in competition with each other - they strengthen each other!

Reconstruction should give rise to recovery. The sustainable restructuring of the economy should be guided by the principle of building back better, and create the conditions for prosperity and intact livelihoods. These issues too will be discussed here in Lugano (with a view to Ukraine). The three 'Rs' - reform, resilience and recovery - thus form a continuum.

Excellencies

Ladies and gentlemen

I would like to thank all of you for taking part in this conference today and tomorrow, whether in person or by video link. Many of you have taken the time to travel to Lugano in person.

The Nobel Prize winner Hermann Hesse wrote "Where friendly paths meet, the whole

THE NOBEL PRIZE WINNER HERMANN HESSE WROTE "WHERE FRIENDLY PATHS MEET, THE WHOLE world looks like home for a time". In fact he used to live near here with his wife Ninon, who had Ukrainian roots.

So let us evoke the spirit of Lugano for a successful conference. So that Ukraine can once again be a lasting home offering a bright future for all, including those who have fled or been displaced. Grazie!

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