



**EUROPEAN COUNCIL
THE PRESIDENT**



Brussels, 19 February 2014
EUCO 41/14

PRESSE 82
PR PCE 34

**Statement on behalf of the European Council
on the situation in Ukraine
The President of the European Council**

Leaders of the European Union are alarmed over the violent escalation of the political crisis in Ukraine. The European Union strongly deplores the human rights situation, including violence, cases of missing persons, torture and intimidation and the deaths and injuries sustained on all sides. We express our deepest condolences to the families of those who died. We condemn the unjustified use of excessive force by the Ukrainian authorities. We call on all sides to refrain from violence. It is important to de-escalate and improve the security situation. The authorities must ensure that those responsible for the excessive use of violence are held accountable and that fundamental rights are respected and protected. We expect the Council of Europe International Advisory Panel to start working without delay.

As President of the European Council I call on the authorities to make sure that a genuine dialogue with the political opposition and civil society takes place. An inclusive process, which responds to the democratic aspirations of the Ukrainian people, is the only sustainable democratic way out of this crisis. In this context it is important that discussions on a constitutional reform, an inclusive government and conditions for free and fair elections advance. The European Union has offered expert support in all areas judged useful and encourages Ukraine also to draw on the expertise of international organisations.

P R E S S

Dirk De Backer - Spokesperson of the President - ☎ +32 (0)2 281 9768 - +32 (0)497 59 99 19
Preben Aamann - Deputy Spokesperson of the President - ☎ +32 (0)2 281 2060 - +32 (0)476 85 05 43
press.president@consilium.europa.eu <http://www.european-council.europa.eu/the-president>

EUCO 41/14

1
EN

The European Union is willing to continue supporting Ukraine in its efforts to reform and modernise the country in order to strengthen democracy and economic welfare. The European Union has reiterated its commitment to sign and implement the Association Agreement - initialled by the Ukrainian government more than a year ago - provided the authorities demonstrate their adherence to a free, united and democratic Ukraine and to the values on which the Association Agreement is based.

The European Union will respond to the deterioration on the ground including via targeted measures. Our Ministers in the Foreign Affairs Council will at their meeting tomorrow examine targeted measures, such as financial sanctions and visa restrictions against those responsible for violence and use of excessive force.
