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Meeting between Minister of Foreign Affairs Karel De Gucht and his Ukrainian counterpart

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Meeting between Minister of Foreign Affairs Karel De Gucht and his Ukrainian counterpart Volodymyr Oryzko Brussels, March 3rd 2008 Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs Karel De Gucht and his Ukrainian counterpart Volodymyr Oryzko had a fruitful meeting in Kiev on march 03, following their recent contact in Brussels on January 18 and the invitation extended by Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko on January 29 to share valuable Belgian expertise in light of the Ukrainian preparations of the 2012 UEFA Championship. Minister De Gucht congratulated his counterpart for securing the organisation of Euro 2012. He expressed the willingness of the Belgian government, the Belgian football federation and Belgian companies to share expertise and experience acquired not only during the Euro 2000 UEFA Championship in Belgium and the Netherlands but also during other recent major sports events. Minister Oryzko welcomed the presence of a substantial number of Belgian companies, accompanying Minister De Gucht, as well as the exchange of expertise during an interactive workshop organised in close cooperation with the European Business Association, the Ukrainian football federation and the National Agency Euro 2012. The visit also marked the official handing-over of the Ukrainian proposal for a Road Map for bilateral relations between Ukraine and Belgium. This ambitious document should become the future driving force for Belgo-Ukrainian relations, Minister De Gucht said. With regard to Ukraine's EU aspirations, Minister De Gucht stressed the importance of the European Neighbourhood Policy and the Action Plan. He assured his counterpart that Belgium is fully committed to actively assist Ukraine in fulfilling the important remaining objectives of this Plan. He expressed the hope to successfully conclude the negotiations on an ambitious enhanced agreement between the EU and Ukraine. Minister De Gucht also welcomed the reaffirmation of Ukraine's strategic Euro-Atlantic course, aimed at achieving full membership of NATO.

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