



**Delegation of Ukraine
to the OSCE**

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Ukraine Celebrated 17th Anniversary of its Independence

On 24 August 1991 the Parliament of the then Ukrainian SSR solemnly declared Independence of Ukraine. On 1 December 1991, this decision was confirmed by the people of Ukraine at the national referendum. The people's will was unequivocal – 90,92 % of those who participated in the referendum cast their votes in favour of Independence.

Indeed, the Declaration of Independence was only the first step on a challenging yet irreversible path towards free and prosperous Ukraine. A lot has been achieved on the way to consolidating democracy, ensuring efficient protection of human rights and freedoms, upholding the rule of law, reviving historical memory of the Ukrainians and cultural, social and economic development. Needless to say, however, that many issues are still pending.

Celebration of the 17th Anniversary of Independence was marked by a number of events, including prayer for Ukraine, parade of the Ukrainian army, conferences, round-tables, concerts and other cultural endeavours. Addressing the people of Ukraine on 24 August, President of Ukraine Victor Yushchenko emphasized that independent Ukraine consistently participated in the geopolitical processes of the United Europe with full understanding of the regional and global challenges we are facing.