



Mandate

The Advisory Council on Alberta-Ukraine Relations provides advice regarding opportunities for partnership between Alberta and Ukraine. It serves as an information resource for Alberta's Ukrainian community, and it helps strengthen ties between the two governments. Recommendations are provided by the ACAUR to the Minister of Alberta International and Intergovernmental Relations.

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Ukraine Appoints New Ambassador to Canada

Ukraine's new Ambassador, His Excellency Mykola Maimeskul, took up his post at the Embassy in Ottawa on April 10th, 2004. His Excellency was previously Director of the Consular Service Department in Ukraine's Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 2002. Ambassador Maimeskul is also recognized for his accomplishments as Ukraine's Permanent Representative at the UN and other international organizations in Geneva from 1996 to 2000, in particular as the head of the Disarmament Conference. Ambassador Maimeskul has indicated that a visit to Alberta will be one of his first priorities, most likely in early fall.



His Excellency Mykola Maimeskul

National Roundtable discusses Political Climate in Ukraine

Ottawa, May 12 – Foreign Affairs Canada (FAC), with assistance from the University of Alberta's Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, held a roundtable in Ottawa on *Ukraine: On the eve of the Presidential election of October 31, 2004*. Guest speakers included the Canadian Ambassador in Ukraine, Mr. Andrew Robinson, Mr. Marten Ehnberg, Elections Officer in Kyiv for the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), academics from the University of Western Ontario, the University of Ottawa, and a visiting scholar from Ukraine, Mr. Mykola Ryabchuk. Over 30 individuals attended the one-day session to better understand the domestic landscape prior to the Presidential election, democratic development in Ukraine, Ukraine's foreign policy orientation, and Canada's support for democracy in Ukraine.

Ukrainian Presidential Elections: Monitoring Initiatives

The international community, including Canada, is gradually gearing up to monitor Ukraine's Presidential elections in October. Canada will be sending an official contingent of 20-30 elections observers through the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and its Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). The Ukrainian Canadian Congress is committed to having many more observers participate, and are looking at various options, such as potential cooperation with the OSCE.

The Alberta Provincial Council is actively recruiting interested Albertans who are willing to proceed with the accreditation procedure, and will be available for the timeframe required for training as well as during the elections. Applicants will be required to share in the cost of their participation. A brochure and application form is available through the UCC-APC office or by calling 414-1624.

Building the Future Conference

Edmontonians were provided with an excellent opportunity to meet one of Canada's leading investigative journalists, Mr. Victor Malarek, and internationally prominent advocate of freedom of the press from Ukraine, Ms. Myroslava Gongadze during the "Building the Future" Conference organized by the Ukrainian Canadian Congress – Alberta Provincial Council (UCC-APC), April 24, 2004.



Ms. Myroslava
Gongadze

The Conference, which attracted more than 200 people, focused on democracy in Ukraine, particularly as it relates to infringements on freedom of the press. Speakers called on Canada to reaffirm its special relationship with Ukraine and continue to support those programs that develop and foster the principles of a democratic society. Ms. Gongadze also

noted the need for the international community to establish a mechanism to ensure the safety of journalists around the world, and especially in Ukraine. She added: "journalists in Ukraine are not only intimidated into censorship, but are often assaulted and even murdered."

A variety of other topics were also featured during the conference, including immigration, board development, political participation, business in Ukraine, women's issues, and the global sex trade.

Canada Ukraine Research Team (CURT)

In February 2004, the Director of the Institute of Special Pedagogy (ISP) in Kyiv was in Alberta to visit various Alberta programs for the disabled and sign a cooperation agreement with the Canada Ukraine Research Team (CURT), a collaborative group formed by the University of Alberta and Grant MacEwan College. CURT aims to undertake joint research projects over the next five years with researchers and policy staff at the ISP, a national institution that oversees research and makes policy recommendations to the Ministry of Education of Ukraine. The Alberta participants of CURT organized a mission to Ukraine in May 2004 to establish working relations between the research teams, and to hold a symposium on inclusive education and sign language.



From left to right: R. Petryshyn (CURT), T. McClellan (Alberta Learning), M. McCallum (ACAUR Sec.), MLA Dave Broda (ACAUR Chair), S. Thompson (Children's Services), Bob Barraclough (Premier's Council on the Status of Persons with Disabilities), Prof. Bondar (ISP), and I. Kobel (CURT).

Radio Canada International Reverses Decision

Members of the ACAUR were pleased to learn that Radio Canada International (RCI), reversed its decision to eliminate its radio broadcasts to Ukraine. The original decision, based on the station's repositioning towards countries such as Brazil and India, was highly criticized by the Ukrainian community across Canada as abandoning Ukraine at a critical time. The ACAUR's view is that Ukraine is at a crossroads in its democratic development, and it is vital that organizations such as the RCI provide access to fair and objective programming. By sharing the Canadian experience of community involvement in "civil society", RCI can help strengthen the tenets of democracy.

Community pressure from Ukrainian Canadians, organizations such as the Ukraine Canadian Congress, and the intervention by Foreign Affairs Minister Graham have been instrumental in having RCI reconsider. Full programming will continue in Ukraine until after the Presidential election in the fall. The ACAUR has written to the RCI, expressing support for continued programming in Ukraine, underlying the need for such programming to continue beyond 2004.

New Ukrainian Publication

The Alberta Ukrainian Heritage Foundation will be publishing a new book, written by Mr. Stanislav Lazebnyk and Mrs. Olha Havura. Both of these individuals, who last visited Alberta in February 2004, examine the Canada-Ukraine relationship through observations they have compiled from various meetings and associations with Canadians over the last 20 years. Many of the stories relate to Albertans and include for example: the ACAUR, UCC-APC, Ukrainian Foundation, CIUS, plus numerous individuals. Initially, the book will be published only in Ukrainian, and will be distributed in Ukraine to coincide with Alberta's Centennial in 2005.

Summer Programs for Seniors

The Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village (UCHV) is calling all seniors to come out and explore the past at the award-winning provincial historical site showcasing Ukrainian settlement in Alberta (1892-1930). The UCHV has developed programs tailored to meet the needs of seniors groups, including on-site driving tours. For more information on seniors' programs, group discounts, and the 2004 events guide, please consult the UCHV website at www.cd.gov.ab.ca/uchv or call (780) 662-3273.

Upcoming Events

- Aug-Sept, 2004: Khay/Fedynskyj Ukrainian Folk Music American-Canadian Tour.
- The 21st Triennial Congress of Ukrainian Canadians will be held in Winnipeg, October 1-3, 2004.