



*For the Record:*

## STATEMENT by His Excellency HENNADI Y. UDOVENKO

Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine

during the  
General Debate of the 49th Session  
of the UN General Assembly

Mr. President,  
Mr. Secretary-General,  
Distinguished delegates,

The year that elapsed, since the previous session of the General Assembly, has witnessed important international developments many of which were given impetus and attended by the United Nations. Among them - historical change to peace in the Middle East, elimination of apartheid system in South Africa. Positive developments are expected in Ulster and other "hot" spots of the planet. At last, the completed withdrawal of Russian troops from Germany and Baltic States rounded off the European history of the World War II. In this context the leaders of the Russian Federation should be given their due for displaying political courage and foresight.

Radical changes have also taken place in the political, social and economic life of Ukraine, which recently celebrated the third anniversary of its independence. The Ukrainian people, of their own free will, in a truly democratic way, elected Leonid Kuchma as the new President, elected the Parliament of the country. New leaders have come to executive power. Naturally, all of these developments generate broad interest in, and closer attention to, Ukraine.

In this connection different, sometimes random projections have been made as to the options of our domestic and foreign policies and as to its eventual reorientation. A lot of radical and even diametrically opposed opinions have been heard such as: whether the political pendulum in Ukraine will swing to the West or East, or whether Ukraine will remain an independent State and preserve its political sovereignty.

Availing myself of the opportunity to speak

from this UN rostrum, I would like to make these important issues clear.

First, the State policy of Ukraine will be consistently based on that authority which was established by the Ukrainian people when it almost unanimously confirmed its choice of independent development during the national referendum held in December 1991. This reality is predominant and rumours that Ukraine will eventually lose its sovereignty are absolutely unfounded. We will continue to follow the path of building an independent State and a return to the situation that prevailed in the former USSR is impossible.

Second, it also seems to be an oversimplification of where will Ukraine be - in the East or in the West and where will it move to? I think that just in this hall, which assembles representatives of all continents and regions of the world, the fictitious division into East-West-North and South is especially strongly felt. Today, the world is becoming more integrated, and political marks of geographical affiliation of countries disappear step-by-step. Ukraine, like any other State, cannot just simply "go" East or West. It is there, where it has been for ages and where it will stay forever. Its main task as an historically old but politically young State consists of integrating gradually in the European and world political, economic, humanitarian and other processes as a reliable link in a new global system of international relations.

Of course, our policy will be corrected. The world has considerably changed by now, even in comparison with that period of time when Ukraine emerged on the political map as an independent State. All of us, including Ukraine, have to take into account new realities

and respond to them accordingly. Particularly, it is a matter of intensifying mutually beneficial and equitable cooperation with the Russian Federation and other CIS countries. But these relations will not be promoted by reducing our contacts with other partners. Likewise, Ukraine is concerned with strengthening relations with the USA, Germany, Canada, countries of Central and Eastern Europe, State of Asia, first of all, China, Japan, as well as other countries of Asian-Pacific region, Africa and Latin America. That is to say that the sphere of our interests is very large. I would like to emphasize that on the international level, Ukraine will protect its national interests, including economic ones, with increasing dynamism and pragmatism. Those are the corrections that will be made in the foreign policy of Ukraine which in spite of domestic political changes, remains, as President Leonid Kuchma stated, predictable, consistent and weighted. There should be no doubts whatsoever in this respect: Ukraine was committed and will continue to be committed to its international obligations, consistently and in good faith. This is a solid foundation of our foreign policy.

Mr. President

The wave of political romanticism gave way to severe hardships in the political, social and economic lives of the newly independent States which emerged out of the former Soviet Union. Referring to two well-known novels, the general trend in social feelings in the post-communist world may be qualified as "great expectations gone with the wind".