



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CANADA

Democracy on Trial in Ukraine

Mr. Speaker,

Twenty years ago today the people of Ukraine held a referendum, overwhelmingly choosing democracy and independence.

Their choice was affirmed during the 2004 Orange Revolution, where from Independence Square came a wonderful message of a nation's people peacefully demanding and getting democratic reform.

But that democratic light is now fading, as the newly elected regime slips backward towards totalitarianism, abusing the very courts and laws intended to protect citizens' democratic and civil rights.

The arrest, show trial, conviction and jailing of former Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko is politically motivated, intended to prevent her candidacy in upcoming elections.

All free nations, along with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, must remain vigilant, must continue to speak out against this abuse of rights and democracy.

The president of Ukraine must be told that it is not just Tymoshenko he has put on trial, but democracy itself.



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