

## PROFESSION IN PERSPECTIVE 2009

### “Political Neutrality in the Civil Service: From Theory to Reality”

September 3-5, 2009, Kyiv, Ukraine

What follows is a brief narrative overview of the Profession in Perspective gathering in Kyiv, Ukraine from Thursday, September 3, 2009 to Saturday, September 5, 2009.

#### IN ATTENDANCE

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- Dr. Timofiy Motrenko  
Head, Main Department of Civil Service of Ukraine

##### Keynote Speaker:

- Dr. Pierre-Gerlier Forest  
President, Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation, Canada

##### Participants:

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## OPENING

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Chair Timofiy Motrenko opened the meeting by welcoming participants to Kyiv, Ukraine and to the Club of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine.

The Main Department of Civil Service of Ukraine (MDCSU) was very pleased to have the honour of hosting *Profession in Perspective 2009*. Dr. Motrenko noted that the Ukrainian civil service is in a nascent stage of development as a professional and competent corps. In recent years, the MDCSU has been leading efforts to develop a contemporary legal framework for the civil service, including a formal separation of administrative and political function in the Ukrainian government. It was hoped that the fall gathering would stimulate lively discussion and exchange among senior public service colleagues around the topic of political neutrality in the civil service – ranging from the key competencies required by senior bureaucrats in the 21<sup>st</sup> century nation-state to drivers and trends impacting upon the balance between bureaucratic neutrality and political responsiveness in civil services to the administrative-political interface and its implications for the accountability of senior bureaucrats.

Several special guests provided words of welcome to participants on behalf of the key branches of the Ukrainian government, including the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, the Presidential Administration and the *Verkhovna Rada* (Parliament) of Ukraine.

## KEYNOTE ADDRESS

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Dr. Pierre-Gerlier Forest, the gathering's moderator, introduced the topic of political neutrality in the civil service by delivering the keynote address "*Political Neutrality of the Civil Service. A 'Rorschach Test' for Democratic Maturity*" (a complete copy of the keynote address is available on the Profession in Perspective website at <http://www.profession-in-perspective.org.ua>).

Dr. Forest began his presentation by noting that the importance of the conference theme – moving from theory toward an effective reality of a politically neutral public service could hardly be overstated. What are the new skills required by today's public service? How do we balance the professionalism and responsibilities of the civil service with the platforms and ambitions of the governing party or coalition of parties? The answers may differ slightly in our particular contexts, but these are questions which concern us all. There are plenty of countries where you can find democratically elected officials, a vigorous civil society comprised of a dense web of social groupings, and an able body of dedicated public servants – however we would be hard-pressed to identify a jurisdiction where these three entities are not overlapping, or where the reality resembles this ideal of independent and cooperating 'spheres'.

Dr. Forest acknowledged that democracies are not static. They can have difficult births, evolve at different rates, develop different systems and solutions, and in the end, can look quite different from the other. He suggested that perhaps a better image than the three spheres would be to envision three partially blended ink blots on a paper – a sort of Rorschach test of democratic maturity. In the case of the Rorschach test, a patient is presented with a standard series of inkblot designs and the psychologist interprets the patient's reactions. This test has been employed to detect underlying thought disorders, especially in cases where patients are reluctant to describe their thinking processes openly. Dr. Forest encouraged participants to consider the ink blots as a test of democratic maturity. As long as we are able to distinguish three darker 'spots' on the notional paper, we might surmise that some democratic balance has been achieved. Two spots might indicate total confusion between a political party and the administration, or between interest groups and government, which would not be very healthy. One spot

would negate the very principle on which liberal democracy is founded, and which presupposes distinction between a public, government sphere and a private, societal sphere. Furthermore, what if, instead of three big 'spots', there were actually four, with the judiciary exerting its own independent influence and control over the three other players?

Dr. Forest suggested the potential use of two sets of conceptual tools which he felt might prove useful in the gathering's discussions. The first set revolved around the notion of 'competency'. He noted that since the 19<sup>th</sup> century we have been constantly looking for ways to improve the competencies of public servants. The major argument behind the merit system – by which governments recruit and promote bureaucrats based on their credentials and performance, rather than their social or political connections – is that a merit system fosters competency. Ultimately, what counts within civil service systems is a sustainable capacity to attract and retain able, trustworthy, knowledgeable and dedicated public servants.

The concept of competency remains relatively vague – a common label, which is open to much latitude in definition. In following good specialists of public administration such as Chris Dunn and Gerald Bierling, Dr. Forest urged participants to consider competency as a three-faceted reality. The first aspect concerns the ability to master law and economics. The archetypal senior bureaucrat is tasked with the application of existing legislation or, if required by his or her political masters, with the development of new legislation. S/he is also a prudent financial administrator, adverse to risk and most punctilious in the management of public monies. The second archetypal competent bureaucrat is a senior executive manager – versed in the techniques of human resources management, long-term planning, performance evaluation and the like. The third archetypal competent bureaucrat is one who is political – not partisan, but political. Political meaning possessing actual human capacity to engage with social actors. Political meaning possessing a real understanding of social currents and an inclination to shape them, if only by being an efficient communicator. Overall, political implies an aptitude to lead, within the civil service as a matter of course, but in other spheres as well, from parliament to the business world, without neglecting or dismissing public forums. Dr. Forest stated that he believes the concept of competency can be very helpful to capture what we expect first and foremost from a senior bureaucrat – when it is defined as a combination of three distinct roles: an expert, a manager and a leader.

There are many trends which are influencing all civil service administrations, regardless of the country or the form that democracy takes – globalization, economic pressures, communication technologies, etc. All senior bureaucrats are being faced with the challenge of balancing political pressures with administrative responsibilities towards the people government programs and interventions are meant to serve. As senior public servants, we must all consider how we might attract experts, managers and leaders to aspire to become bureaucrats and invest themselves completely in these critical roles.

The second conceptual tool presented by Dr. Forest to assist in the discussions regarding skills required by senior bureaucrats within this next century was that of the three-dimensional framework envisioned by British political scientists Martin Lodge – a framework including competency which is considered in the context of what he calls recognition and loyalty. Dr. Forest asks: how do we foster the deep and complex feeling of loyalty that a public servant must necessarily experience to be true to his role? How do we make sure that loyalty is not limited to a man, or a party, or even a given government, but rather to the wide spectrum of civil institutions, including the nation's constitution? He notes that in an era where productive partisanship is difficult to achieve, it is often easy to forget the more important idea of loyalty to overarching democratic principles and ideals.

Loyalty is not an abstract idea. Countries can benefit when their citizens have sufficient loyalty to inspire civil participation, to collaborate for the common good. Real politicians can benefit greatly from the civil servant's attachment and dedication. Citizens must trust that senior bureaucrats will never betray their superior interest, as it is enshrined in public institutions. Recognizing that the world is shifting as a result of globalization, transnational corporations, 'hypermobility' and instant communication, Dr. Forest suggested that loyalty must necessarily evolve to mean something different than it did in the previous century.

In closing, Dr. Forest encouraged participants to think broadly about the notion of loyalty and the many aspects of loyalty that are required of senior bureaucrats – those of loyalty to civil society, to the idea of leadership provided by an experienced and competent public servant, to political leaders that are elected, and to the broader democratic institutions that bind countries together in common purpose. He ended his presentation by sharing a quote

from the Right Honourable Raymond Hnatyshyn, former Governor General of Canada, on the eve of the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Canadian confederation which he felt applied to the current Profession in Perspective gathering: *“Let each of us do what we can to ensure that all our brothers, all our sisters, our young and our old, our people of all colours, our people of different languages and religions and cultures, feel that they belong.”*

## DISCUSSIONS

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On the basis of Dr. Forest’s keynote presentation, discussion at the gathering was structured on the basis of the following sub-themes:

- ❖ The new competencies required in public administrations of the 21<sup>st</sup> century;
- ❖ Trends affecting the relative value placed upon bureaucratic neutrality and political responsiveness in civil services; and
- ❖ The administrative-political interface and its implications for the accountability of senior bureaucrats.

### **New Competencies Required In Public Administrations of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

#### Presentations to the Plenary

- ❖ Maria Barrados, President of the Public Service Commission of Canada

Maria Barrados, President of the Public Service Commission of Canada, provided a short presentation to the plenary. She began by noting that Canada, its citizens and its various governments are very strongly committed to a public service of excellence – a professional public service, a merit-based public service and a nonpartisan public service. We recognize that this is a clear economic advantage for Canada as a country.

One hundred years ago, Canadian political leaders were determined to remove public patronage and influence from public service appointments. The old system of spoils was replaced by a new merit system through the creation of a civil service commission which reported to Parliament. At present, all appointments to the core public service are made independent of Ministers with the exception of a small number of governor-in-council appointments. The vision of a merit-based non-partisan public service was enshrined in legislation in 2003 as part of the modernization of human resources management at the federal level through The Public Service Modernization Act. These principles are protected by the independent Public Service Commission which is headed by Mrs. Barrados.

Canada now has a well established tradition of non-partisan conduct by the public service. Public servants loyally serve the government of the day and stay to serve the next government of the day even if it is from a different political party – this brings important continuity and stability through transitions. We have consistent and strong leadership through transitions in government administration.

In recent years in Canada, much energy has been spent in modernizing human resources management in the public service, including values-based staffing, delegated staffing authority to deputy heads, and an emphasis upon key leadership competency profiles. Key leadership competency profiles set out the skills and competencies required for Canadian civil service leaders for today and into the future. The identified competencies are linked to expected behaviours. Canada has defined four main areas of competency: values and ethics, strategic thinking, innovating and taking analysis and ideas forward, engagement and management excellence. The values and ethics component is the base of the profile which speaks to serving with integrity and respect. This competency is directly related to ensuring political neutrality within the public service. In serving Canadians, public service leaders ensure integrity in personal and organizational practices, respect people and public service principles, including democratic, professional, ethical and people values, build respectful, bilingual, diverse and inclusive workplaces where decisions and transactions are transparent and fair, and hold themselves, their employees and organizations accountable for their actions. Each competency is described as a set of leadership skills, abilities and associated behaviours, with profiles tailored to each level of the public service.

In closing, Maria Barrados noted that the Public Service Commission of Canada has evolved over the years, however its mandate has remained the same. Generations of public servants have been inspired by the values of merit and non-partisanship and she believes that those same values, together with strong leadership, will continue to guide dedicated and talented Canadians in a public service committed to excellence.

❖ Timofiy Motrenko, Head of the Main Department of Civil Service of Ukraine

Timofiy Motrenko, Head of the Main Department of Civil Service of Ukraine and host of Profession in Perspective 2009, provided a short presentation to the plenary on recent Ukrainian experience in civil service management. He began by noting that a politically-neutral civil service is key to maintaining predictable and sustainable public administration and to preserving the institutional memory of the civil service. He hoped that all participants would have valuable information and insight to share in helping Ukraine think through and prepare for the process of transformation in its civil service.

Ukraine is a young democracy, and yet, despite its nascent form, it has a history rich with public administration tradition, including the formal separation of administrative and political functions in government, which dates back to 1918. During this period, positions of state secretaries were established as part of the approach to public administration at the time.

In 2001, following Independence, there was an attempt to establish state secretaries in the Ukrainian civil service. This attempt failed in large part because of the fact that state secretaries were to take upon themselves part of the political functions previously being performed by Deputy Ministers, and in some cases, even some of the political functions of Ministers. As a result of how these positions were created, essentially there existed two poles of political influence within a given Ministry. This situation was further exacerbated by the fact that the state secretary wound up wielding almost more power than Ministers themselves because of the fact that s/he was to lead the administration of the Ministry. This institution was in place for a period of two years, following which the position of state secretaries was abolished. This experience served to expedite the process of politicization

within the Ukrainian civil service. In 2005, following the Presidential elections, there was a wave of dismissals/firings from the civil service for political reasons. Nearly 9,800 civil servants –from the senior ranks – were fired. Overall, there was a turnover of nearly 50,000 civil servants – equivalent to 20% of the total civil service. Following the election, almost all senior civil servants were replaced in the civil service. At the senior level, in recent years, there has been a turnover rate of approximately 20 per cent in the civil service on an annual basis. The level of turnover is even more significant following elections.

The MDCS has been working on a new draft law on the civil service since 2004. The primary objective of this proposed new legal framework is that of separating administrative and political positions in government. How do we operationalize this objective? This is a serious challenge. We would like to see state secretaries positions established as the senior most administrative positions within government. Further, we would like to see individuals appointed to these positions for a fixed term on the basis of a competitive selection process. We hope to see fundamental changes in other human resources areas such as compensation which will help to introduce greater transparency within the system. In addition to legislative drafting, among other reform initiatives, the MDCS has spent considerable effort recently in putting together a state registry of public functions across executive government to help to provide greater clarity in terms of roles and responsibilities within the system.

In closing, Dr. Motrenko noted that Ukraine is moving in the direction of strengthening political neutrality within its civil service system. The move to formally separate administrative and political functions within government is slower going. We presently lack the presence of a singular focal point within the governmental system tasked with protecting the principle of political neutrality within the civil service system. We must necessarily move in this direction. We have an obligation to respond to the growing needs and expectations of our citizenry for a professional and competent civil service. We further have an obligation to move Ukraine forward in meeting its foreign policy objectives of integration with the European Union and broader international community.

In the context of this gathering, Ukraine has a desire to explore certain key topics related to the theme of political neutrality in the civil service– those of the separation of political and administrative positions, de-politicization of the civil service (including understanding appropriate limitations on individuals' participation in political activities outside of the scope of their work responsibilities), and methods/means for ensuring responsiveness to stakeholder interests in government decision-making without crossing the political line into subjective and self-interested activity. To this end, I bid each of you well and very much look forward to benefitting from dialogue and discussion with each of you on this timely topic for Ukraine.

#### Discussion of Sub-Theme One: New Competencies Required In Public Administrations of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

Dr. Forest provided a brief introduction to the first sub-theme of the gathering – inviting the group to enter into a common conversation about the key competencies required for senior bureaucrats in the 21<sup>st</sup> century nation-state. In thinking about political neutrality in the civil service and moving from the theoretical to the practical – he posed several questions to the plenary. First, what problem are we trying to solve within our systems? Is it a problem of politicization? Corruption? Competency? Second, what type of reform is appropriate? Small? Incremental? Or, a big bang approach? Third, what will be the mark of a genuine, successful reform? He challenged the group to think beyond depoliticization as an end in and of itself – rather to think more broadly about working towards the goal of bettering services being provided to citizens and/or bettering the relationship between politicians and citizens.

Following a brief introduction to the sub-theme by Dr. Forest, participants broke into three working groups to consider the new competencies required in public administrations of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Highlights of the discussion were as follows:

- ❖ There was agreement across respective civil service systems - that it consistently proves challenging to recruit highly competent and capable leaders and administrators. As civil service systems change and adapt within their local context and environment, so do the roles of senior civil servants within those systems. New roles for senior administrators result in new requirements for requisite skills sets and competencies. The sole constant in this equation is that roles and associated skill sets within civil service systems will continue to change/adapt. Given this constant of change, it is critical for individual systems to have a set of defined competencies relevant for assessing and developing senior civil service leaders within a given context;
- ❖ There is no one size fits all approach to political neutrality within civil service systems. In career-based systems, politicians tend to see their 'career' civil servants as sufficiently loyal to implement policies and governmental decisions. In position-based systems, politicians tend to change their senior administrative cadre with each election to ensure maximum responsiveness of the bureaucracy. One approach is not superior to the other. Rather, a given system is largely reflect of the traditions and experiences within a specific state. In exploring the types of civil service models, it was acknowledged that there are tensions that exist between position-based and career-based systems – each bearing unique advantages and disadvantages and placing unique requirements and demands upon the civil servants. Some participants suggested that it was far less complicated to address principles of neutrality and non-partisanship within a career-based system as there is an internal traditional that civil servants are exposed to over the course of their civil service career. These civil servants seek stability and often exhibit more 'loyalty' to the state over the course of a long service career;
- ❖ In many systems, the topic of ethics is being introduced/re-introduced explicitly through training as senior administrators can not simply rely upon the past, often unspoken, tradition of neutrality and non-partisanship within the civil service. In instances where civil servants are new to the system and their experiences may have differed significantly in a former sector (i.e. private industry), senior

administrators are being obliged to introduce these entrants to ethics and the notion of appropriate ethical behaviour within the civil service;

- ❖ A significant portion of the discussion focused upon the characteristics of a high quality leader. Participants acknowledged that finding the balance between professionalism and fresh 'wit' is challenging. Mobility within the civil service system is seen as a positive feature, however, it does pose challenges in terms of maintaining corporate memory and depth of experience in given organizations. It is important to ensure that expert content knowledge is in place within a given organization regardless of the mobility of individual civil servants as the organization cannot merely rely upon a cadre of 'general managers';
- ❖ Participants strongly supported the idea that capacity for self-reflection on the part of civil service leaders is critical;
- ❖ The old adage that senior administrators exist to provide 'fearless advice and loyal implementation' to their political masters continues to be relevant;
- ❖ In transition contexts such as that of the republics of the former Soviet Union, systems are in search of new types of senior administrators. The emergence of political neutrality civil service systems in such contexts largely hinges upon the presence of political will to formalize the separation of administrative and political functions in government;
- ❖ Senior civil servants have a key leadership role to play within the system serving as custodians of fair treatment for all concerned;
- ❖ Across civil service systems, there are varying degrees to which civil servants enjoy latitude in expressing their diverse views (as potentially different from that of the government of the day) publicly. In Finland, for instance, civil servants are able to openly express diverse viewpoints without fear of retribution or severe consequences in terms of their employment. In other jurisdictions, it is not possible to openly challenge or criticize one's government/employer;

- ❖ One of the discussion group's formulated their input from the standpoint of providing Ukraine with their advice in the area of competency. From their perspective there was a wide array of competencies required for senior civil service managers, including:
  - Political sensitivity – a senior bureaucrat, although politically neutrality, must be politically sensitive and capable of providing sound advice to his/her Minister. Further, this individual must be capable of working right across the political divide;
  - Networking skills – a senior bureaucrat must be able to network with others to get things done and to tap into stakeholder views through consultation;
  - Professional integrity – a senior bureaucrat must have a professional take on what will work and what will not work in a given context. Others within the system must recognize the individual as providing sound advice;
  - Trustworthiness – there must be trust present between a senior civil servant and his/her Minister;
  - Serving as a role model – a senior civil servant must set the tone for ethics within the public sector. S/he sets an example for the civil service cadre on appropriate behaviour and activity;
  - Managerial skills – a senior civil servant must be capable of leading an organization and of implementing the result expectations of the government.
- ❖ Recruitment is vital to integrity within a politically-neutrality civil service system – there must be trust within the system. At the senior most level, state secretaries should be appointed through an open, competitive process where both internal and external candidates are able to apply.

## **Trends affecting the relative value placed upon bureaucratic neutrality and political responsiveness in civil services**

### Discussion of Sub-Theme Two: Trends affecting the relative value placed upon bureaucratic neutrality and political responsiveness in civil services

Following a brief introduction to the sub-theme by Dr. Forest, participants broke into three working groups to consider the trends affecting the relative value placed upon bureaucratic neutrality and political responsiveness in civil services.

Highlights of the discussion were as follows:

- ❖ There are many significant drivers for change within and external to civil service systems, including the following major groupings:
  - Changing public expectations are an important driver of change – regardless of whether these expectations are most often conveyed through the media. Civil service leaders should pay particular attention to how they interact with the media in communicating out from the civil service;
  - The emergence of new technologies which have an impact upon how civil servants interact with their environment. New technologies have the potential to increase the complexity of the work environment in a very significant way (i.e. social networking, blogging, etc.). Civil servants can passively react to these new technologies, or they may choose to try to master them and use them as an instrument for positive change within their respective civil service systems; and
  - “Soft” factors which have to do with individuals - the attitudes of politicians towards change/reform (it may be possible to transform the attitudes of politicians through training), increasing and improving the level of communication between the senior level of the bureaucracy and the political leadership;

- ❖ Civil servants must serve as agents of change within the system and must consistently anticipate and be prepared to serve as those agents of change;
- ❖ The civil service system, itself, needs to be prepared to serve as/become an agent of change and transformation. The fear of failure and retribution on the part of individual civil servants often serves as an obstacle to change and transformation within the civil service;
- ❖ Knowledge, evidence and best practices should be used to induce change and successful transformation within civil service systems. There are many examples of successful transformations that have been induced through the presentation of solid research and evidence. It is, in fact, possible to change the mind of politicians or the public – there are documented cases where this shift and transformation has taken place largely as a result of the use of knowledge and evidence;
- ❖ Reflections about the implementation of reforms were shared which focused upon the possibility of using relevant and effective tools to support implementation of a change or reform within the civil service including training, new attitudes towards recruitment, audits and other forms of direct intervention within administrations, etc;
- ❖ It is important for there to be ongoing internal and external benchmarking of civil service systems and their progress/development. Further, greater attention should be paid to measuring productivity overall within the public sector;
- ❖ When Ukraine is looking at where it should go and what it should do – choice is important – there is no one size fits all – there are many different models. Ukraine must necessarily take into account its starting point in planning for change and transformation. The element of choice is a good thing. Senior civil service leaders need to be able to paint some kind of vision of what reform is going to look like before they begin. They will require a coalition of people (politicians, middle managers, others) who will sell the vision of reform more broadly. Reform efforts will only be successful if this support is in place. This process is going to take time. Patience in this process is critical to success.

## **The administrative-political interface and its implications for the accountability of senior bureaucrats**

### Discussion of Sub-Theme Three: The administrative-political interface and its implications for the accountability of senior bureaucrats

Following a brief introduction to the sub-theme by Dr. Forest, participants broke into three working groups to consider the administrative-political interface and its implications for the accountability of senior bureaucrats.

Highlights of the discussion were as follows:

- ❖ Civil servants possess knowledge, skills and attitudes. In Ukraine, given the present challenges associated with the politicization of the civil service - perhaps the focus should be placed upon developing the skills sets of civil servants. Skills such as financial management skills, communication skills, briefing skills – these are the skills that civil servants have and are respected for. It largely comes down to the competencies that civil servants have and are required to demonstrate;
- ❖ Eighty to ninety percent of the product of the public service is not defined or not directed at politicians. For instance, if you work for customs or provide direct services to citizens – the quality of your service delivery, and by consequence the quality of the civil service, is of primary importance. These day to day processes often happen outside of the control of politicians. The relationship between politicians and senior administrators is not the sole consideration. Equally important is the way in which service delivery is managed and provided to citizens – with a primary focus on quality. High quality service delivery helps in building civil society's trust towards government;
- ❖ There may be a need in some systems to better define political and administrative spheres. This is largely dependent upon the specific context within a given country;
- ❖ The notion of boundary – between politics and administration – not solely in terms of clarity as to where the boundary stands, but also how to protect it, is an issue that requires more reflection. There needs to be a mechanism in place to make sure

that the line is not crossed too often. One means of doing this is through recruitment – as a key tool. We can maintain the ethos of the public service through our recruitment. Through these processes we are able to inculcate appropriate boundaries within the public service;

- ❖ Training has an important role to play in establishing and protecting the boundary. There needs to be training at senior levels;
- ❖ There is a need for knowledge development and dissemination in order to shed more light on how our respective systems are working and what we can learn and draw from each others experiences. We can also do better in terms of understanding administrative reform in our respective countries;
- ❖ The role of the judiciary – it is the elephant in the room. All of our systems are evolving with a more and more important presence of the judiciary. The courts are playing a role in defining the independence of the public service. They are playing an important role in deciding what is right and what is wrong in terms of the political involvement of public servants. We cannot try to develop and impose our way without taking into account that the courts are an actor in the political system and that they have their own particular way of operating and their own logic. In the future, the courts could serve as an important instrument.

## WRAP UP

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Pierre-Gerlier Forest wrapped up the gathering's discussion by summarizing the key points of the discussion.

Mrs. Maria Barrados, President of the Public Service Commission of Canada, offered a warm thank you to Dr. Forest the conference moderator, Mr. Motrenko and the Main Department of Civil Service, this year's conference hosts, along with the Canadian Bureau for International Education for their support in organizing this year's gathering. She described this event as one filled with enriching dialogue and discussion among colleagues – dialogue which provided new ideas and fresh perspectives. Mrs. Barrados equally hoped that the gathering's discussion was helpful to Ukraine as it moves forward with its reform agenda. She thanked all delegates for travelling to take part in the meeting in Kyiv and for being open in their dialogue.

Mr. Bryan Andrews, Head of the Public Appointments Service with the Government of Ireland extended an invitation to all participants to travel to Ireland in 2010 to take part in the next Profession in Perspective gathering in Dublin. He further welcomed individual participants to pass along their suggestions related to the future gathering theme and desired topics of interest/concern for discussion.

In closing, Timofiy Motrenko officially wrapped up the 2009 Profession in Perspective gathering by thanking participants for their open and sincere contributions to the lively discussion over the course of the two days. He confirmed that he and his Ukrainian colleagues had benefitted immensely from the exchange of ideas and experiences and indicated that he looked forward to continued dialogue among colleagues in the year to come as Ukraine and the MDCS continued to move forward with its reform efforts.