

Euromaidan spreads nationally as Yanukovich makes government changes **Ukraine**

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KYIV, Jan 27, 2014 (UBO) - Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich proposed a compromise to opposition leaders on Jan. 25, offering the prime ministership to Fatherland Parliamentary Faction Chair Arseniy Yatsenyuk and a vice prime ministership to Vitali Klitschko, Concorde Capital told its client as part of an online advisory today. Yanukovich also said he would support an amendment to the Jan. 16 so-called dictatorship laws. In response to the offer, Yatsenyuk said no compromise would be reached unless minimum conditions were met: the release of all arrested EuroMaidan protesters and dropping of all criminal charges, amnesty for all EuroMaidan participants, the cancelation of the Jan. 16 dictatorship laws and a return to the 2004 constitution establishing a presidential-parliamentary republic. It's the lack of a secure parliamentary majority that has prompted the Presidential Administration to offer a compromise to the opposition, said Lesia Orobets, a Fatherland MP. On Jan. 24, the second Party of Regions MP left the faction and a key economic adviser, Iryna Akimova, left the Presidential Administration. On Jan. 25, 78 Party of Regions MPs didn't attend a meeting called by Yanukovich at the Presidential Administration, Orobets reported. "They can't quite get a majority, perhaps hence the tales about 'reformatting' (the government)," she said. "Tales from the same mold as the Berkut's 'we'd have chased them all away in seconds, but we're good people'." Yanukovich appointed a close and longtime ally, fellow Donetsk Oblast native Andriy Klyuyev, as the Presidential Administration chair. He had been serving as national security and defense council secretary. Klyuyev is most known for having led Yanukovich's shadow campaign headquarters, during which the 2004 presidential vote was falsified. His wealth was estimated at USD 130 mln in 2013 by Kyiv's *Korrespondent* magazine and he was alleged by the Ukayinska Pravda news site to own numerous businesses registered in Austria. Opposition forces spent the weekend expanding the territory under the EuroMaidan's control, both in the capital and throughout the country. The activist organization Common Cause took control of the ministries of energy, agriculture and justice, all of which are within walking distance of Independence Square, the center of the EuroMaidan. Activists have secured control of 11 state oblast administrations (including the city of Kyiv), which are the Presidential Administration's representative offices in Ukraine's regions. People's Councils were formed in some of the oblasts, such as Poltava, in response to the opposition's plan of action announced on Jan. 17. Attempts to seize state administrations have spread to the southeastern oblasts, where the Party of Regions enjoys the most support. Street battles erupted between activists and local police and state-sponsored thugs in Dnipropetrovsk and Zaporizhia amidst failed attempts to capture the administrations. About 100 were arrested in a failed takeover

attempt in Cherkasy, where two Polish journalists were injured, as well as a Ukrainian television reporter and an unconfirmed number of activists, one of which was in critical condition. Police were reported this morning to be kidnapping activists from their hospital beds. Reports of state-sponsored terror continued through the weekend. A 22-year-old medical volunteer was arrested on Jan. 23 at a Kyiv train station when being noticed wearing a EuroMaidan badge. She was driven to a suburban forest, beaten and left to freeze, deprived of her asthma medication and documents. Meanwhile, the leader of the AutoMaidan protest, Dmytro Bulatov, has been missing for five days. Ukraine's Internal Affairs Ministry was criticized by Ukrainian Jewish organizations for allowing anti-Jewish materials to be published on the Facebook page of the Berkut special forces, as well as calls to violence against various minority ethnic and political groups. Concorde analyst Zenon Zawada added: "It would be foolish for the opposition to accept positions in the government when Yanukovych has the authority to undermine their work and dismiss them. The proposal was a public relations maneuver aimed at making it appear as though he's the peacemaker trying to solve the crisis, while the opposition is interested in extending it. The EuroMaidan movement won't be satisfied with anything less than the resignation or ouster of the Presidential Administration and Cabinet of Ministers. "In our view, the weekend's biggest development was the increasing discord within the Party of Regions, which we expect will only grow as the crisis worsens (we see no reason to think the violence will stop soon). We are surprised that it's taking so long for Party of Regions MPs to see the light, but 78 MPs not attending a Saturday meeting with the president is a strong omen that these out-of-touch politicians are slowly beginning to grasp reality. Ukraine's future as a unitary, democratic state depends on these defections and perhaps these politicians will realize they can still rescue the party, even if their leader's political prospects have been ruined. "The EuroMaidan has gained significant momentum this weekend, despite the frigid temperatures and the terror campaign being waged by police and state-sponsored thugs. It's up to the opposition leadership to keep the positive momentum going and not lose the ground that it's gained in Ukraine's regions. The uprisings in the Party of Regions stronghold oblasts are particularly impressive, indicating that Yanukovych is losing his popularity. The authorization for police to kill and torture protesters is likely to have fueled the opposition to his government in the southeastern regions. "The irony in the weekend's events is that the Yanukovych administration has typically used the 'fascism' card to demonize the pro-Western opposition and mobilize its voters against them. Yet in its attacks on activists in the central and southeastern regions of Ukraine, where the fascism card typically works, the local citizenry is beginning to see the true face of fascism. Among the last times a government in Europe employed street thugs and criminals to attack their own citizens was under Spanish dictator Francisco Franco in the 1940s. "It's particularly disturbing to see extremist materials — encouraging the beatings of ethnic minorities — on the Berkut website at a time when the government is accusing the pro-Western, diverse, opposition coalition of extremism. In its behavior, it's the government that has demonstrated true extremism, such as refusing to dismiss the internal affairs minister. Since such demands, the government has instead authorized the use of murder and a campaign of torture against private citizens (with Prime Minister Mykola Azarov even justifying such actions)."

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Accompany photo by UBO photographer Jack Davis depicts EuroMaidan memorial to those killed during the action