



BUSINESS & INDUSTRY

FIBER-OPTIC NETWORK CONSTRUCTION UNDERWAY

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Ukraine is going to greatly improve the quality of its communications system in the near future with a multimillion dollar grant from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Communications Ministry officials say.

The bank is loaning Ukraine US\$ 53.1 million to help finance a fiber optic network connecting Ukraine, Italy, Turkey and Russia. The European bank credit will finance the part of the network actually in Ukraine, as well as digital equipment to utilize the network's capabilities.

The ministry also plans to lay fiber optic cable from Lviv to Krakow, Poland, giving western Ukraine access to the high-tech network.

Communications Minister Oleh Prozhyvalskiy said it will cost US\$ 1.5 million to lay cable from Lviv to Ukraine's border with Poland. Although the ministry has enough money to begin construction, they expect a credit from a bank in the Netherlands, Prozhyvalskiy said.

Ministry officials said Ukraine is negotiating with the World Bank for a US\$21 million credit to develop the network in western Ukraine. However the ministry is also seeking other sources of money.

A digital switch to handle international phone calls is already installed in Lviv.

UPDATE ON LISBON-KYIV TRANS-EUROPEAN SUPERHIGHWAY

In October 1993 Spea of Italy and Rendel of the UK won a tender to conduct a feasibility study for the construction of the Lisbon-Kyiv TransEuropean highway. The study was commissioned by the European Bank for

CANADA-UKRAINE PARLIAMENTARY FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION

With a visit to Canada by Ukrainian President Leonid Kuchma and a G-7 economic conference on Ukraine to be held in Winnipeg the formation of the Canadian-Ukraine Parliamentary Friendship Group couldn't have been more timely.

The group, formed in June, consists of 42 Canadian Members of Parliament and the Senate who are either of Ukrainian descent or who represent ridings that comprise a significant Ukrainian Canadian population. "On the third anniversary of an independent Ukraine, and [given] the fact that 1 million Canadians, or 5 percent of the Canadian population, is of Ukrainian descent, we felt it was time to get together," said Walt Lastewka, Liberal MP for St.Catharines, Ontario, who was elected president of the association.

The Canada-Ukraine Parliamentary Friendship group is will facilitate dialogue and exchange visits with counterparts in Ukrainian. Mr. Lastewka, who was elected to parliament last fall, said that his organization is also committed to educating Ukrainian parliamentarians about Western democracy and helping to improve Ukraine's economic and social situation.

Reconstruction and Development. To this end EBRD contributed ECU 680,000 and TACIS an additional ECU 160,000. The construction of the highway involves an international consortium. Passage along the highway will be paid for, which will make it possible to refund its construction costs within 10 to 15 years.

The first stage of the work on the feasibility study has been completed, after which a tender for the construction of the Lisbon-Kyiv stretch of the highway will be announced in October this year. Mitsubishi of Japan, Enka of Turkey, as well as companies from Italy, Canada and other countries are interested in the project. The Lisbon-Trieste section of the highway has already been built. An estimated US \$7 billion will have to be spent on its 735-kilometer stretch running through Ukraine from Trieste via Hungary.

technology. The aim is to strengthen the scientific and technological capabilities in the two countries, promote cooperation between both scientific communities and organizations, and take advantage of the increasing opportunities for collaboration on scientific and technological projects of mutual interest, contacts and cooperation between government agencies, universities, research centres, institutions and private firms in the two countries.

Discussions are underway to have an agreement signed later within the framework of an economic cooperation agreement. It would be another concrete demonstration of the Special Partnership between Ukraine and Canada signed on March 31, 1994.

(See also story on Science and Technology on page 43.)

CANADA-UKRAINE DISCUSS SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COOPERATION

Canadian and Ukrainian government officials are working closely to finalize provision for cooperation in science and

FORMER MINISTER TO BOOST UKRAINIAN DEMOCRACY

St. John's, NFLD, August 1994... A former federal fisheries minister who was defeated in the 1993 election is returning to the grassroots levels of politics - in Ukraine. Ross Reid has accepted a one-year job in Kyiv with the