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THE CREDO OF HIS LIFE

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under the authors' editorship.*

This article is dedicated to the memory of Hennadiy Udovenko, a prominent Ukrainian diplomat, who was also a well-known political and public figure.

His premature death on 12 February, 2013 was a great and irreparable loss not only for the Ukrainian diplomacy but for all Ukraine, and it will be still perceptible for more years.

We are grateful to the destiny which joined, many years ago, our professional ways with such extraordinary personality. It is pleasant to recall the decades of our common work in the field of Ukrainian diplomacy long before the historic August of 1991 and during the years of the restored independence of Ukraine.

At all posts entrusted to him Hennadiy Udovenko performed his duties with exceptional responsibility and high professionalism, always demonstrating that he was a diplomat of the highest rank. As a manager at respective posts he recorded the abilities and the potential of every staff-member of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and without hesitation or any doubts knew who could be entrusted with a certain matter. His justified requirements were aimed exclusively at achieving the positive result. At the same time, he stimulated his staff-members to fulfil their duties in a scrupulous manner and always “to be in good form” and “never lag behind”, analysing also everybody's actions and deeds and evaluating their abilities and diplomatic perspectives.

As the Minister for Foreign Affairs during 1994–1998, Hennadiy Udovenko adhered to the same principles. At his initiative a substantial number of specific ideas were realized to strengthen the authority of the Ministry. He reacted very emotionally to any attempt, in particular from the Administration of Ukraine's President of that time, to depreciate the role and the importance of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the life of independent Ukraine. Referring to the evident illiteracy in foreign policy of many officials of various levels, he emphasized that the country must have only one foreign policy organ and that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs “must display itself in a way that everyone engaged in foreign policy activities has

to be guided by the obligation to coordinate with it their actions". As the Minister, Hennadiy Udoenko was also convinced that "the prestige of the Ministry cannot be enhanced by the laws or by the directives" because the Ministry of Foreign Affairs "is a visiting card of our state". He was confident that the foreign policy of independent Ukraine was not only a reflection of its domestic policy but was also its continuation.

These completely reasonable conclusions made by Hennadiy Udoenko are still noteworthy nowadays in such difficult times for Ukraine's existence, but rather for its survival.

His name will remain forever in the annals not only of the Ukrainian but also of the global diplomacy as the President of the 52nd session of the United Nations General Assembly during 1997–1998. He became the first and most probably the only representative of Ukraine who had such honour.

The decision to elect Hennadiy Udoenko to that position of universal level was taken by the UN member states as a recognition of his great personal authority in the international community, exemplary capacity of work and his professionalism of high standard. This extraordinary responsible mission he fulfilled with dignity. In some respect that was the peculiar star period in his diplomatic biography.

Such honour and recognition never extended to the representatives of the former USSR and to anyone in present Russia.

The presidency of Ukraine's representative at the 52nd session of the United Nations General Assembly was evaluated as an exceptional, by its meaning, event in the history of this universal international organization because under his management the United Nations approached in its activities very closely to the introduction of a number of serious reforms. However, after him everything returned to the routine.

One more evidence of Hennadiy Udoenko's substantial contribution to the formation of the diplomatic service of our independent state was a decision, initiated by a group of the MFA veterans, to name the Diplomatic Academy after him.

In our memories, Hennadiy Udoenko will always remain as an unusual personality whose inalienable features during all his life were based on 3 "Ps", which meant professionalism, patriotism and probity. He was also a man with typical for him exclusively important human virtues, namely openness, benevolence and tolerance. All these features characterized the credo of his life, very rich in content.

Therefore, the present generation of Ukrainian diplomats, regardless of their posts, should follow such important qualities and always be guided by them if they are really devoted to the chosen profession and by their concrete actions are concerned not only with the authority of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs but also the international image of Ukraine as an independent state for already 30 years.