

Remarks by Denmark's ambassador, Mr. Ole Egberg Mikkelsen at the inauguration of a new production line of Carlsberg Ukraine, 19 June 2023

I am deeply honoured to be invited to the inauguration of the new production line today.

It is a landmark event. It is a one of largest foreign investments in Ukraine in 2023. The production line will optimize operations, it will help to meet consumer demand for canned products, and it will increase the brewery's capacity by 80 percent.

As Denmark's ambassador I am proud to be present on this occasion. Because the event today has a symbolic importance that goes far beyond the beverage industry in Ukraine. It is a sign that an important global player and industry leader, Carlsberg has faith in Ukraine and is ready to invest in Ukraine at a time, when Ukraine's epic struggle against the Russian aggression is still ongoing.

This fits very well into the close Danish-Ukrainian partnership at the political level. Denmark is one of Ukraine's closest partners. We have been that from day one and before the full scale Russian attack. The reason is very simple: Your freedom is also our freedom and your struggle is therefore also our struggle.

What is Denmark providing? The bulk of Denmark's support is defense equipment like Harpoon missiles and Ceasar self-propelled howitzers.

There is however also an important civilian component of our support. It is primarily focused on reconstruction and early recovery. We are supporting through the UN and the EU system. An important part of our support is bilateral support for the city and the oblast of Mykolaiv.

Why Mykolaiv? President Zelensky spoke to our parliament in march 2022 and suggested that Denmark should assume the patronage for the rebuilding of Mykolaiv. Our prime minister came to Kyiv one month later and sealed the partnership. First step winterization. Enormous quantities of plywood for boarding off windows were purchased and about 60 emergency water stations were established. Now we have moved to the next phase, rebuilding infrastructure and supporting the private sector so enterprises can get back in business. This is not just words. The first credits under the private sector window of the new Danish Fund for Ukraine have just been approved for two projects in the food and agriculture sector. We hope that operations will be resumed already this summer. This will create jobs and the employees will start paying taxes, thus generating resources for the local communities.

This reflects our basic approach to reconstruction in Ukraine: We are frontloading our efforts, literally speaking. We can't wait for peace to come. Nor can we wait for a big plan. We need to start now and we need to create concrete and tangible results. We want to create jobs and revenue instead of reports and conferences.

This is exactly what Carlsberg is doing here. You could have postponed your investment, saying that first we need peace. But you continued your investment project, thus demonstrating your unwavering faith in Ukraine's resilience and final victory.

What you are doing demonstrates that the struggle for Ukraine's freedom is not only being fought on the battlefield. It is also being fought on the factory floor in the offices and in the fields. Keeping the economic wheels turning is crucial for Ukraine's resilience.

Let me also take this opportunity to salute the Carlsberg staff who has been working tirelessly during the full scale Russian aggression under difficult conditions. I salute both those of you who kept the operations going and those who have been mobilized and who are now at the frontlines. You are both supporting Ukraine's victory.

I also wish to salute Carlsberg's management. By this investment you are setting an example for other foreign investors, including potential Danish investors. I hope that they will heed your example. The embassy is ready to assist.

Finally, I wish to thank the Carlsberg management for your efforts to support Ukraine's resilience through humanitarian aid donation of DKK 75 million (EUR 10 million) for your measures to protect your employees and to ensure their safety and for your reintegration program for veterans and support for mobilized colleagues.

Carlsberg is an icon in Denmark's industrial development. From the very Carlsberg has been known for its corporate social responsibility, long before that notion was invented. You have always been caring for your employees and for the communities and the countries where you are operating. What you are doing in Ukraine is yet another example of this proud legacy.

I wish the entire Carlsberg team good luck with the new production line. May it contribute to Ukraine's resilience.