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Denmark Grants Asylum to Ally of Tymoshenko, Source Says

By The Moscow Times

February 18, 2013

COPENHAGEN — Denmark has granted political asylum to a former acting defense minister for Ukraine who served under jailed ex-prime minister Yulia Tymoshenko, a Danish government source said Monday.

Valery Ivashchenko, who served in Tymoshenko's second cabinet in 2009 and 2010, is the latest of her allies to flee Ukraine since President Viktor Yanukovych came to power three years ago.

The Danish official, who requested anonymity, said Ivashchenko was granted a residence permit to stay in Denmark.

Ivashchenko was jailed in April 2012 for five years after being found guilty of abusing his powers in privatizing a Black Sea repair facility — a charge he said at the time was politically motivated. He was released in August of that year when the jail term was converted into a

conditional sentence.

Tymoshenko was sentenced to seven years in prison in October 2011 on abuse-of-office charges. She denies any wrongdoing and says she is being persecuted by Yanukovych.

Her conviction and jailing has damaged relations between Ukraine and the West.
The European Union has supported Tymoshenko, calling her case an example of selective justice, and shelved agreements on free trade and political association with Ukraine over the issue.

After her rival Yanukovych became president in 2010, Tymoshenko and a number of her allies in the opposition faced corruption-related charges in what she has described as a campaign of repression.

One of her former interior ministers, Yuri Lutsenko, was sentenced two years ago to four years in prison on charges of embezzlement and abuse of office.

Tymoshenko's husband Olexander and another ally, former Economy Minister Bohdan Danylyshin, have both fled to the Czech Republic where they have been granted asylum.

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