

EU Ministers Urge Ukraine to Stop Bluffing on Tymoshenko

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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KIEV — Two European Union ministers urged Ukraine on Tuesday to stop "bluffing" and reach a deal on the release of jailed former Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko.

"The time for bluffing is over on both sides now. It is time for action," Polish Foreign Minister Radoslaw Sikorski said after he and Sweden's Carl Bildt met Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich.

A deal to release Tymoshenko, who the EU says was the victim of a political trial, is vital for the signing of landmark agreements between Ukraine and the bloc at a summit in Vilnius, Lithuania, on Nov. 28. EU foreign ministers will also hold a decisive, pre-summit meeting to discuss Ukraine on Nov. 18.

The agreements would mark a historic shift toward the West and away from Russia for Ukraine.

Yanukovich has offered to sign a law releasing his arch-foe from a seven-year sentence to allow her to go for temporary medical treatment for back trouble in EU member Germany, if such a law is passed by parliament.

But he has balked at a call by European mediators to pardon her and wipe out altogether her sentence — something that opposition supporters of Tymoshenko are still asking for.

Some in the EU say the offer from Yanukovich does not meet the call for an end to "selective justice" in Ukraine — one of the EU's criteria for signing agreements in Vilnius on association and free trade.

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