Ukraine Appoints New Prime Minister and Cabinet

By [Matthew Bodner](#)

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The Ukrainian parliament on Thursday confirmed the country's new interim government, with one of the key players in the street protest movement, Arseny Yatsenyuk, appointed prime minister.

Following his appointment, Yatsenyuk, a leader of the Fatherland party and an ally of former Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko, vowed to sign an association agreement with the European Union, but said that he still wants a "partnership" with Russia, Radio Liberty reported.

Yatsenyuk was nominated for the position earlier Thursday after the parliament formed a 250 member coalition. He previously served as economic minister, foreign minister, and parliament speaker before Tymoshenko's government lost to now-deposed President Viktor Yanukovych in 2010.

Yatsenyuk earlier assured the parliament that he would not accept the secession of Crimea, saying that the region "has been and will be a part of Ukraine."

Crimea has become a hotbed of tension between pro-Russia residents and those who support the new government. Early on Thursday, armed men [seized the region's parliament building](#) in Simferopol and raised a Russian flag above it.

The new first deputy deputy prime minister, Vitaly Yarema, said that the most important task facing the new government "is to prevent bloodshed and, under no circumstances, respond to provocations by those who seized [the Crimean] parliament. This is important because it seems to me that they are just waiting for it so that they can organize mass riots," Interfax reported.

The new government will resume talks with the International Monetary Fund, or IMF, Yatsenyuk said, adding that they will have to make tough decisions to remedy Ukraine's current economic plight.

In response, IMF chief Christine Legarde said in a statement that her organization will send a fact-finding team to Kiev in the coming days to speak with the authorities. The IMF are also discussing ways to provide economic assistance to Ukraine with "all international partners."

Shortly after selecting its prime minister, 331 deputies from the 450-seat parliament voted to approve the new Cabinet appointments.

Fatherland party members in the Cabinet include Arsen Avakov, the new interior minister, Boris Tarasyuk, who is the deputy prime minister for european integration, and Pavlo Petrenko, who was given the role of justice minister.

The new sports minister is Dmitry Bulatov, a protester who was kidnapped by unknown assailants before being found days later in a forest bearing signs of torture.

CNN reported that Yatsenyuk described his new cabinet as "a team of people with a suicide wish — welcome to hell," in reference to the difficult situation the country is in at present.

He said that he does not intend to run for president in the May elections, RIA Novosti reported.

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49