

Poroshenko Sets 2020 as EU Target Date

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Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko proclaimed reforms on Thursday spanning all aspects of life to make strife-torn Ukraine fit for European Union membership, warning his people that without reform they would face a future "alone with Russia."

Poroshenko sought on Thursday to fix his people's attention on joining the European mainstream despite fierce Russian opposition. He laid out an ambitious reform package to enable Ukraine to apply in 2020 for accession to the 28-member EU.

Russia also steadfastly opposes Ukraine, a nation of some 46 million people, ever joining NATO. Both the EU and NATO have said they have no plans to offer membership to Kiev.

The proposed reform package, Poroshenko said, would touch all walks of life and particularly aim to root out the endemic corruption that has warped Ukrainian public life since independence in 1991 and peaked under Poroshenko's ousted predecessor, the Moscow-backed Viktor Yanukovich.

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