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New Ukraine Leader Heralds 'Death of Russian Imperialism,' Accused of Plagiarism

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Volodymyr Zelenskiy **president.gov.ua**

Ukraine's new president has predicted the end of "Russia's imperial project" if Kiev joins the European Union, drawing allegations that he had plagiarized his predecessor's words.

Volodymyr Zelenskiy's administration quoted him as saying "Ukraine in the EU would be the death of the Russian imperial project" during talks with top European official Donald Tusk.

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"Moreover, it [would be] a powerful blow to Russian authoritarianism and the way to democratic changes in Russia and throughout the post-Soviet space," Zelenskiy said in Brussels on Wednesday.

Shortly after, Zelenskiy was accused of plagiarizing "an entire paragraph" of his

predecessor's recent speech. Petro Poroshenko, whom Zelenskiy defeated in the country's presidential elections this spring, used the same phrase in an address to his party members last Friday.

"It's nice that Volodymyr is listening to Petro Poroshenko. But, in addition to an editor, you should hire a speechwriter," Poroshenko's spokesman Svyatoslav Tsegolko wrote on Facebook Wednesday.

Zelenskiy's administration has launched an investigation into the mishap, accusing Ukrainian foreign ministry staffers who worked on parts of the speech of making a "diversion" and of "continuing to work for Poroshenko."

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