



**YOUR FULL NAME:**

Brian Bonner

**YOUR JOB TITLE:**

Executive Director/Chief Editor

**YOUR COMPANY:**

Kyiv Post

**YOUR BRIEF BIOGRAPHY (250-300 words):**

I am an American citizen who has served as the leader of the Kyiv Post, Ukraine's English-language newspaper, since 2008. The newspaper celebrates its 25th year of service in 2020. We have made a major commitment to this nation as a community newspaper, giving voice to many business leaders and their concerns over the years. Moreover, we are Ukraine's Global Voice in the English language – the source of news that many people who live abroad turn to for a factual and fair presentation of events in the country. We have, additionally, served as a training ground for hundreds of young journalists by instilling the highest professional, business and ethical values. We are long-time members of the Chamber and many other business organizations. I have recently completed a two-year term as an elected member of the European Business Association. I understand very well what needs to happen for Ukraine to become a high-growth economy, something that will benefit all of us.

### ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

Why do you think membership in the American Chamber of Commerce is important for business operating in Ukraine?

All of us running businesses in Ukraine face common opportunities and challenges. Only by uniting, with other associations and other interested parties, can we solve some of the problems that are holding back Ukraine from developing its full potential as a nation. We all know what's wrong and, in many cases, we know the solutions. ACC is a respected voice that commands the attention of powerful government and business interests in this nation. But attention is not enough. Decisionmakers need to act on matters around which there has long been a consensus. We all have narrow issues involving our industry, sector or specific company, but what we need is a true breakthrough at the national level for Ukraine -- on rule of law, demonopolization and the entire set of issues we know so well -- for the nation to truly flourish.

What motivates you to be a Chamber Board Member?

First of all, the Chamber is a great organization that has gotten even better and more responsive in recent years. I am an American, so I know very well how important local chambers are in every community. The same is true for Kyiv and Ukraine. I believe that someone like myself, an experienced media professional who knows the community well, would add greater diversity and offer different --- and hopefully valuable - - insights to the board and the organization. While journalists prefer on-the-record discussions, what we talk about frankly among ourselves and Ukraine's leaders off the record often leads to greater mutual understanding and can be the impetus for positive change.

Why do you feel you are qualified to serve on the Chamber Board? What skills would you bring to the Board?

I've worked hard to understand the issues facing Ukraine's economy and business community, through countless interviews with ministers, CEOs, MPs and others. I've led the Kyiv Post under five of Ukraine's six presidents, so I know the history. I served respectably for two years as a board member of the European Business Association and take part in other civic groups, such as the Kyiv Lions Club. I decided not to seek re-election to the EBA board this year and, instead, opted to run for election to the ACC board. I will bring my analytical and communication skills, as well as extensive contacts, in hopefully helping the Chamber achieve its aims.

How have you been active in the Chamber over the course of the last two years?

Through my work, I know many of the leaders and members of the Chamber. We have taken a strong role as a newspaper in covering the Chamber, its aims and in promoting its events. I have not been as active as I would like to be. Becoming more active is why I am running for a Board seat.

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What activity or Committee would you participate in and be responsible for?

I would be open to any area where the need is greatest. But for me, the media business is close to my heart and top among my interests. Ukraine's media environment suffers from many problems -- oligarchic ownership, recurring attempts to curtail free speech or threaten journalists, and a weak advertising/subscription climate (a direct consequence of an underperforming economy). It's often been said that the state of democracy is strongly correlated with the state of the media in any given country. I believe this is true. Ukraine's news media still has a long way to go to become commercially and editorially independent, and I believe the Chamber can help advance this worthy goal.

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