

<p>EU-UKRAINE CIVIL SOCIETY PLATFORM</p>		<p>ПЛАТФОРМА ГРОМАДЯНСЬКОГО СУСПІЛЬСТВА УКРАЇНА-ЄС</p>
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6th meeting, Brussels, 12 April 2018

JOINT DECLARATION

The EU-Ukraine Civil Society Platform (CSP) is one of the bodies set up within the framework of the Association Agreement between the European Union and Ukraine.

The CSP enables civil society organisations from both sides to monitor the implementation process from the point of view of civil society, and prepare their recommendations for the relevant authorities.

The CSP is made up of thirty members, fifteen from each side, representing the EESC and Ukrainian civil society. The 6th meeting of the CSP was co-chaired by **Alfredas Jonuška**, member of the EESC and Director General of the Šiauliai Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Craft, and **Pavlo Tsyruł**, President of the Ukrainian Federation of Employers in the Sphere of Tourism.

The CSP members discussed the progress in the implementation of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement, as well as considered and adopted reports on the role of salary in poverty reduction and its impact on labour migration and on the climate change in the context of the commitments under the Paris Agreement. They also discussed future work of the Platform.

1. With regard to the implementation of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement the CSP members:

- 1.1 renew their call upon the European Union and the Government of Ukraine to ensure complete and timely implementation of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement, including the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area;
- 1.2 welcome the adoption by the Government of Ukraine and entering into force of the new Action Plan of the Association Agreement implementation, as well as endorsement by the Government and the Parliament of Ukraine of the Roadmap of legislative support for Association Agreement implementation for 2018-2019. The CSP members anticipate that these instruments would enhance the implementation process in hand with expected introduction of the online monitoring system of the implementation of the Association Agreement, publicly announced by the Ukrainian Government; ;
- 1.3 call for determined and consistent implementation of reforms under the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement, in particular in the sectors of energy and energy-efficiency, food safety, healthcare, education, decentralisation, public administration, social and labour relations as well as in other sectors;

- 1.4 urge the Parliament and the President of Ukraine to withdraw the provisions of the Anti-Corruption Law, introduced in March 2017, that requires that anti-corruption activists submit asset declarations ;
- 1.5 condemn the persistent use of gas supplies as a political leverage by the Russian Federation and express concern that the Nord Stream 2 pipeline project could bring negative security, economic and environmental implications for the EU and Ukraine, while being non-compatible with the principles of the Energy Community;
- 1.6 express satisfaction about the steady growth trend in EU-Ukraine bilateral trade as a result of the DCFTA implementation and welcome the fact that Ukraine has joined the Regional Convention on pan-Euro-Mediterranean preferential rules of origin (PEM Convention). The CSP members renew their call upon both sides to pursue the signing of the Agreement on Conformity Assessment and Acceptance of Industrial Products to promote further economic integration of Ukraine to the EU market;
- 1.7 welcome the adoption by the European Commission of a proposal on the fourth Macro-Financial Assistance programme of 1 billion euro to support economic stabilisation and structural reforms, subject to the approval by the European Parliament and of the Council of the EU, and renew their support to the initiative to elaborate the "New European Plan for Ukraine for 2017-2020" (so-called "Marshall Plan for Ukraine");
- 1.8 urge the Government of Ukraine to exert all efforts in making good use of the existing EU assistance instruments and mechanisms to boost the reforms under the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement, while improving the standards of living and opening new opportunities for the citizens of Ukraine;
- 1.9 express concerns that despite the strong recommendations by the EU-Ukraine Civil Society Platform, laid down in the Joint Declarations of its 4th and 5th meeting, the establishment of the Domestic Advisory Group (DAG) on trade and sustainable development, as provided for in Article 299, Chapter 13, of the Association Agreement has been failing so far and call upon the Government of Ukraine to facilitate this establishment while making sure the DAG is an independent civil society body;
- 1.10 reiterate their unequivocal support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders and condemn the Russian aggression, which resulted in the illegal annexation of Crimea, the City of Sevastopol and the partial occupation of Donetsk and Luhansk regions and led to multiple deaths, as also express deep concern regarding the ongoing grave human rights violations in Crimea, in particular concerning Crimean Tatars, and occupied territories in the East of Ukraine. The CSP members also renew their call for the immediate liberation of all Ukrainian political prisoners illegally detained in Russia and hostages of Russian proxies in the occupied territories;
- 1.11 call for the strengthening of the EU sanctions against the Russian Federation and individual restrictive measures in view of the illegally-held elections in Crimea in March 2018. The CSP members call on the EU Member States to push, with all necessary political and economic

means, for the restoration of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, establishing peace and solving the humanitarian problems of the residents of these and adjoining territories.

2. On the Role of Salary in Poverty Reduction and its Impact on Labour Migration, the CSP members:

- 2.1 note that, despite obligations under the Association Agreement providing for decent work, improvement of the quality of human life, and reducing poverty, the remuneration level has worsened and negative tendencies towards lowering level of income do not allow to improve the real welfare of Ukrainian workers;
- 2.2 emphasize that the lack of a comprehensive policy for solving the issue of low level of income provokes a further decline in the living standards of the working population, a reduction of the middle class, a shortage of decent jobs, an increase of informal and undeclared employment and labor migration of skilled workers abroad;
- 2.3 note the positive steps aiming at raising the minimum wage twice in the last 15 months and welcome announced plans for its further nominal growth by a total of 150 percent, which led to an increase in nominal average wages in the country by 116.5% to UAH 7,104 (EUR 237), which, however, does not exceed the minimum wage in the EU countries (in Bulgaria - 235 euros);
- 2.4 emphasize the need for a social dialogue between the government, employers and trade unions on a fundamentally new social contract and for additional systemic changes in the economic, social, tax, education and other areas to overcome the problem of low incomes;
- 2.5 recommend focusing on the priority tasks of wage reform in Ukraine in terms of determining the real living wage and minimum wage, reducing illegal employment, overcoming the problem of wage payment delays, which is a sign of forced labour, solving the issue of remuneration of workers in the public sector, overcoming huge salary gap between managers and ordinary workers and ensure fundamental right of association, collective bargaining and collective action, as well as the right of workers to information and consultation;
- 2.6 note that the trade unions and employers perceive the significant gap in wages between Ukraine and abroad as the main reason for the increase of flows of labor migration from Ukraine, mainly to the EU countries. It increased further in the last four years as a result of the military conflict in eastern Ukraine and of the total fall in GDP of more than 16%;
- 2.7 call for solving of the problem of illegal migration and of preventing illegal employment of migrants, which is a direct condition for the European perspective of Ukraine; note that this issue has only been solved in Poland thanks to the intensive policy on labor migrants from Ukraine, while in other EU countries this problem is persisting, despite significant programs of legalization of Ukrainian migrants in the past years;
- 2.8 note the need to introduce programmes for informing Ukrainian citizens about their rights and obligations, about minimum legislative and collective bargaining guarantees on the labor

markets in Ukraine and in the EU, as well as about mechanisms for protection against trafficking schemes, illegal employment or contracts without remuneration provisions;

2.9 suggest to continue work with the EU Member States on concluding bilateral and multilateral international agreements, and on regulating employment and social protection of Ukrainian citizens when they leave for work abroad;

3. **On the climate change in the context of the commitments under the Paris Agreement, the CSP members:**

3.1 acknowledge that international climate agreements, including the climate component of the Association Agreement, not only impose obligations on Ukraine to combat climate change, but also open a number of opportunities, in particular for investments in renewable energy and energy efficiency;

3.2 note some progress in development of Ukraine's climate policy. The inclusion of climate change issues into the Ukrainian political agenda and the active position of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Ukraine in this regard may become the beginning of practical implementation of undertaken commitments, while strengthening Ukraine's role in global and European climatic processes;

3.3 bring attention to the fact that part of the climate commitments under the Association Agreement are not relevant today, neither compatible with current EU legislation and need to be updated. This is due to the fact that the Association Agreement was concluded before the adoption of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change;

3.4 emphasize the importance for Ukraine to choose the path of low carbon development, qualitatively changing the model of economic activity and relations with the ecosystem, which will lead to mitigation of anthropogenic pressure on the climate system. Legislative goals for limiting greenhouse gas emissions should be the basis for further development of climate change policies;

3.5 bring attention to the need to increase institutional capacity for the development and implementation of climate change policy, to improve the coordination role of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Ukraine, as well as to establish close interaction between the relevant ministries and institutions;

3.6 emphasize the importance of communicating national targets to the local level and involving local governments in coordinated action on adaptation and emission reductions;

3.7 recommend that the cross-cutting and integrated nature of climate policy should be implemented by taking climate change into account in all strategic documents as well as in the application of the Strategic Environmental Assessment and Environmental Impact Assessment instruments;

- 3.8 note that particular attention should be paid to adaptation to the climate change effects. In this aspect, the linkage between water resources management and climate change is of particular relevance for Ukraine;
- 3.9 emphasize, in the context of EU-Ukraine cooperation on climate change, the need for the Integrated Climate Partnership and cooperation with the Climate and Energy Committee of the Energy Community to ensure the integration of climate and energy policies, also in Ukraine.
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