

## **Declaration**

### **in support of the pro-European option of the Ukrainian people**

The PEN centers from Central-East Europe and the Balkan countries ó members of the global writersø association PEN INTERNATIONAL ó express their solidarity with the Ukrainian people who are demonstrating these days in Kiev and in other cities in favor of the pro-European integration of their country. Among those demonstrating in the öEuro wastelandö in Kiev are many writers, journalists, and creative people whose values of liberty and democracy we share. The place of Ukraine is undoubtedly in the European family, where it already belongs by virtue of its culture and age-old traditions.

On November 29, 2013, at the summit of the Eastern Partnership in Vilnius, the Republic of Moldavia and Georgia signed a covenant of association and free trade with the European Union. The Ukraine, which had previously initiated these negotiations, should have signed its own agreement of association with the EU at the same time. Unfortunately, it appears that the chances of a European integration of Ukraine have been hijacked by the interests of its leaders, as well as by pressures from Russia, which appears is ready to use any means, be they political, economic or military sanctions, in order to maintain the ex-Soviet republics in her sphere of influence.

The PEN centers from Central-East Europe and the Balkan countries are supporting the peaceful protest of the people gathered on the öEuro waste landö in Kiev as well as the right of Ukrainians to choose freely and democratically their way of development. The victory of the pro-European option in Ukraine will also facilitate the process of integration into the European Union of other countries of the Eastern Partnership ó the republics of Moldova, Georgia, Armenia, Belarus and Azerbaijan ó and will accelerate the reforms and the modernization of these societies as they seek to be rid of the remnants of their Soviet past. Opportunities thus will be created for solving the separatist conflicts inherited from the Soviet period and continued by the Russian Federation in places such as Abkhazia and South Osetia in Georgia, Transnistria in the Republic of Moldova, and Nagorno-Karabakh between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

The PEN centers from Central-East Europe and the Balkan countries condemn the use of force by the police and the security forces in Kiev against peaceful protesting people, among whom are Ukrainian and foreign journalists. We also condemn the campaign of persecution in schools and universities against young people who are participating in the protests. We are against any form of violence. A real dialogue is needed between protesters and authorities that will allow the best political solutions for placing Ukraine on the way to European integration.

We call upon the governments of the EU countries and of the candidate states to manifest their support for the European aspirations of Ukraine. We call upon the political parties, the civil society, the media organizations and the unions of artists from the countries that are members of the Eastern Partnership, but we also call upon the civil society and the independent press of the Russian Federation to join the Ukrainian people in its wish to belong again to the family of free and democratic nations ó a situation which concerns also other people from the ex-Soviet Union that are wishing to break free from the totalitarian past.

We call upon the writers and the PEN centers from all over the world to support the aspirations of freedom and Europeanism of our fellow writers in Ukraine.

P.E.N. Moldova (Vitalie Ciobanu president)

P.E.N. Romania (Magda Carneci president)