Statement by the Ukrainian PEN Centre:

'On the Mass Violation of Human Rights, and the Repression of and Unpunished Attacks on Civic Activists, Journalists, and Writers in Kiev by the Government of Ukraine'

7 December 2013

We do not now expect that this statement will stop the current Ukrainian government from attacking the democratic rights of citizens, in particular, civic activists and journalists. The government, which, through the mouth of the president promised õto listen to everyone,ö is deaf to the protests of millions of Ukrainians throughout the country.

So this is why above all we expect the world community to hear our voice ó this includes our colleagues from PEN International ó and actively start mobilizing all people of good will to defend human rights and fundamental freedoms in Ukraine.

As a consequence of the clear overstepping of the governmentom authority and the brutal attack by the police special forces on defenseless peaceful protesters on the Euromaidan [the square where the pro-EU demonstrators have gathered] on the night of 30 November, and then the clashes on Bankova Street near the Presidential Administration on 1 December, hundreds of civic activists have suffered, including more than 40 Ukrainian and foreign journalists. They were severely beaten as they were carrying out their professional obligations. Their identification and cameras did not stop their attackers; on the contrary, their aggressors became even more angry as a result.

Police officers were no less cruel with writers and accidental bystanders who tried to take refuge in the building of the Writers Union of Ukraine, in the vicinity of the government block. As of today the names of those who suffered are known, their stories recorded, the majority of them have received medical treatment; the degree of cruelty of the Berkut special fighting squad continues to defy the imagination. Also greatly disturbing is the fact that a group of civic activists in Ukraine have reportedly disappeared without a trace. This is like the practice of the cruelest totalitarian regimes, so-called õenforced disappearances.ö

The goal of these punitive actions was not only to frighten demonstrators and journalists. They were also an attempt to convince the world community that it is not appropriate to accept Ukraine with its barbaric practices into the European Union.

Instead of any kind of steps in the direction of regulating the situation and punishing the guilty, President Yanukovychøs government has have continued to persecute journalists. Now at least two, Andrii Dzyndzia, a journalist of the information resource *Dorozhnyi Kontrol* (Road Control), and Dnipropetrovsk journalist Valerii Harahuts have been unjustly imprisoned for two months according to an absurd statute which threatens to imprison them ultimately for 5 to 8 years.

The current government refuses to listen to the demands of the demonstrators and blocks any legitimate efforts to defend their rights and call the guilty to account. The rumored agreement between Russian President Vladimir Putin and Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovych, regarding Ukraine joining the Trade Union in exchange for financial support from Russia, goes against the will of the people and leads Ukrainian society into the obvious dead-end.

We call upon the world community to take seriously the threats that today come from the repressive governments in Ukraine and Russia. It will be impossible to achieve security in the world if dictators and their henchmen trample our rights and values. Effective responses to these threats are, among others, diplomatic and moral pressure on the regimes of Presidents Putin and Yanukovych, the support of targeted sanctions against the violators of human rights in Ukraine, and solidarity with civil society in our peaceful protests.

Myroslav Marynovych, President of the Ukrainian PEN-center

http://pen-ua.com/Our_position/Zvernennya_7_12_2013.htm - link to Ukrainian PEN's original statement http://www.airpano.ru/files/Ukraine-EuroMaidan/2-2- great panoramic view of the Euromaidan