



CIVIC SECTOR OF EUROMAIDAN GRASSROOTS MOVEMENT

EuroMaidan Newsletter # 4

President Yanukovich legalizes dictatorship in Ukraine The international community is outraged

NEWSLETTER #4. 13-20 January 2014



The full infographic is available at <http://goo.gl/jiAu29>

January 16, 2014 – violating all parliamentary procedures, the pro-government majority, by a show of hands voted for a set of laws, which de facto legalized dictatorship in Ukraine. It was announced that 235 MPs supported the decision; however, the photos show only 120 hands raised. See <http://goo.gl/7gPP4M>

Among other measures, these laws criminalize freedom to criticize (slander and libel), introduce the vaguely defined crime of "extremism", and label NGOs which receive foreign grants as "foreign agents". The new laws allow authorities to institute a myriad of repressive measures clearly aimed at criminalizing and crushing the peaceful protests that spread around the country over the last two months. More information can be found at

<http://goo.gl/AyPTc1> and <http://goo.gl/TjaI4o>

A more detailed legal commentary on the newly adopted laws can be found (in English) at <http://goo.gl/8bti8D>. In public statement, the Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights characterized the laws as "flagrantly violating fundamental rights of conscience and views; of speech; information; peaceful assembly; association; movement; property rights and right to privacy." Read the full text at <http://goo.gl/sqDbRI>. Reporters Without Borders are appalled with the hastily adopted laws, which restrict freedoms of expression and assembly in Ukraine. "Designed to halt the wave of opposition protests that began in early December, (they) increase abusive restrictions on freedom of information and other fundamental freedoms." Read more at <http://goo.gl/LYknAv>

The Maidan Viche creates new institutions, alternatives to the state authority

Violent clashes in central Kyiv. Police use water cannons, tear gas and rubber bullets againsts protestors

January 19, 2014 – Despite below zero temperatures, approximately 200,000 people gathered for the Maidan Viche (general meeting), during which, it was announced that the "dictatorship laws" "voted" for by the Ukrainian parliament would not be recognized by the people. The Maidan leaders have initiated the creation of a People's Rada (parliament) tasked with forming a parallel Government led by the people and a Constitutional Assembly to begin preparations for preliminary presidential elections. During the general meeting, the three main political opposition parties failed to name a single leader for the national resistance.

Many were upset by this failure to find consensus. A group of radical right wing protesters moved from Maidan towards the Verkhovna Rada (national parliament) building on Hrushevskogo Street to demand the government rescind the dictatorial laws. Violent clashes erupted between this group and riot police, who used water cannons, tear gas, flash grenades and rubber bullets to try to disburse them. See more details with photos and videos here <http://goo.gl/DCmbFV> and here <http://goo.gl/3kUJgH>

Over the course of the night, citizens remained diligent on the central square at Maidan, ready to protect against a possible police attack. Most people agree that violence clearly is not a way out, especially when there is no goal, no leader and no plan beyond violence in and of itself. Who instigated the clashes on Hrushevskogo – whether radicalized protesters or government provocateurs – is still unclear. One hypothesis is that state authorities provoked the violence. They stand as the only party to benefit from conflicts in Kyiv in the long term. Such conflicts "justify" the laws illegally adopted on Jan.16 and give the "right" to stop such protests.

Say NO to dictatorship in Ukraine!

The civil society calls for a national mobilization

On January 17 2014, enraged by the adoption of “dictatorship laws,” activists from the EuroMaidan Civic Sector rallied near the President’s Administration in Kyiv and protested against the government’s attempts to turn Ukraine into a police state.

The protesters chanted “bandits out!” while carrying placards with the words “Dictatorship” and “They Made it Legal”. They also displayed photographs of activists beaten during demonstrations over the course of the past eight weeks.

Oles Shevchenko, former political prisoner of the USSR, who was present at the event said: *“We have seen that the Verkhovna Rada is an enemy of the*

Ukrainian people. They made us all criminals according to the new law. They say we are outlawed, but I need to remind you that Ukraine became independent because we did NOT follow the Soviet Constitution”.

See photos and videos from the flashmob here <http://goo.gl/qy4DNy>

The Civic Sector of EuroMaidan and a number of other civic groups active on Maidan called for national mobilization in order to prevent the rise of dictatorship in the country.

Read more at <http://goo.gl/bxPPGr>

Say NO
to
Dictators
hip
flashmob
in Kyiv.
Jan 17,
2014 .



More than 10 people arrested, 15 journalists injured and detained during the clashes on January 19, 2014

The Institute of Mass Information reports that 15 national and international journalists were injured by flash grenades and rubber bullets used by the riot police units during the January 19 clashes on Hrushevskogo str. (Kyiv).

See the list (in Ukrainian) at <http://goo.gl/aZvOsl>

Radio Svoboda (Radio Liberty) journalist who was shot by a rubber bullet during the street fight managed to film a police sniper pointing a gun directly at him. See the video at <http://goo.gl/HUibUU>

According to the Ministry of Interior, 10 protesters have been arrested for participation in street fights in central Kyiv. The police reiterated that mass unrest is punishable by up to 15 years in prison. Read more details about the night of protests at <http://goo.gl/RrjKcY>

See the photos from the protest site taken during the morning after the clash here <http://goo.gl/1B6oWR>

Violence ensues as a result of Europe's inaction Activists request sanctions from the EU

January 20, 2014 civic activists arrived at the Embassy of the EU in Kyiv to demand European officials impose sanctions against Yanukovich and top state officials who are directly responsible for the recent violent clashes in Kyiv.

So far Europe has failed to step forward and demonstrate its disapproval with anti-democratic measures adopted by the Ukrainian government. Ukrainians are losing faith in the effectiveness of peaceful protest and some are increasingly resorting to violence, such as that seen on January 19, in the face of what appears to be EU indifference.

Activists marched with banners with such poignant phrases as "Remember Munich 1938", "Blood money kills democracy", and "Inactivity of Europe provokes violence".

Civic Sector activists Olga Halabala and Kateryna Maksym met Deputy Head of EU Delegation Maria Jurikova and presented a letter requesting EU sanctions against those responsible

(<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=657359654302971&set=a.635760243129579.1073741827.634929216546015&type=1&theater>). The EU needs to prove its support of democracy and human rights. According to FATF standards, the EU can indeed put

pressure on EU financial institutions to block the accounts of V. Yanukovich, his family members, and his allies. EU financial institutions must stop working with a corrupt regime.

The activists stated: *"We believe that the authoritarian regime of President Viktor Yanukovich has been fueled by proceeds of corruption laundered via the international financial system through a network of shell-companies and professional intermediaries."*

"We consider it unacceptable to use the international financial system to support the Yanukovich regime, which violently disperses peaceful demonstrations, organizes bloody beatings of unarmed people, and holds kangaroo courts that throw innocent people in jail."

On Tuesday, January 21, singer and activist Ruslana Lyzhychko will take part in an EU advisory board committee on economic and social policy in Brussels. (https://www.facebook.com/ruslana.lyzhychko.5/posts/638764706185743?stream_ref=10) Ruslana will voice Ukrainians' requests for sanctions. In support, Ukrainians in Brussels will demonstrate at 12:00 in front of the European Parliament (Luxembourg Square)

Start
sanctions
– stop
violence!
Action in
Kyiv. Jan
20, 2014



New Ukrainian laws: Welcome to Little Russia? Western diplomats make statements, don't take actions

On January 17, 2014, the U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry commented on the adoption of the new legislation in Ukraine and called it "anti-democratic and wrong, taking from the people of Ukraine their choice and their opportunity for the future". Read more at <http://goo.gl/YuCKIZ>

On January 16, 2014, the European Union canceled a traditional dinner with President Vladimir Putin at the EU-Russia Summit in Brussels. Tensions arose late last year after the EU accused Russia of putting undue pressure on Ukraine to reject closer ties with Brussels. Read more at <http://goo.gl/Nx8SWt>

KyivPost journalist Katia Gorchinska compares recent changes in the Ukrainian legislature with the current legal norms in Russia: "The new law - approved with many procedural violations and no public debate or committee hearings – will turn millions of people into criminals overnight if they fall out of favor with those in power. All activists, demonstrators, volunteer investigators, journalists and their lawyers will become outlawed at once. Welcome to the new police state. We call it "Little Russia".

Read the article at <http://goo.gl/CzsgSt>

The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church faces criticism from the State for Maidan services

The Ministry of Culture criticized the leadership of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC) for conducting regular prayers at EuroMaidan. State officials warned clergy about their participation in the protests and threatened to “commence legal action for effect the termination of its activity”.

Read more at <http://goo.gl/iE5x5O>

Svyatoslav, the Archbishop of UGCC announced

the following in response to the Ministry's threats

“Today, at a time when dialogue between the government and the citizen is wanting, those who believe in God feel a special need to pray for peace and tranquillity in our country, and for an end to the violence that has violated the dignity and the constitutional rights of the citizens of Ukraine.”

Read the complete UGCC statement at

<http://goo.gl/M6ToIB>

EuroMaidan: Protest or Resistance?

Civic activist Evhen Zolotariov argues that the Maidan has to move from a peaceful and symbolic protest to a non-violent resistance: *“When 300,000 protestors chant ‘Yanukovych –Get Out!’ – this is a protest, but when they elect People’s Government, alternative City Council – this is resistance.”*

Read more (in Ukrainian) at <http://goo.gl/d3KdTI>

Political expert Oleg Soskin states that having “voted” for these laws *“the Verkhovna Rada is no longer legitimate and has betrayed national interests. Therefore, following the 5th article of the Constitution, the people have to take back the power. The opposition has to take control over the Parliament and vote for the systemic changes in Ukraine”*.

Read more (in Russian) at <http://goo.gl/SIIrbu>

Maidan uses humour to resist the dictatorship. Leaflet: “Don’t Follow Me, I’m the 5th Car!” Women wearing pots instead of banned crash helmets

НЕ ЕДЬ ЗА МНОЙ,
Я ПЯТЫЙ




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