

STATEMENT of the Steering Committee of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum on the formation of the civil society platform in Ukraine

10 April, 2015

1. While the Association Agreement (AA) between Ukraine and the EU fails to determine the composition of the Ukrainian delegation to the EU-Ukraine Civil Society Platform (EU-CSP), the Steering Committee of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum (SC) declares that the size and composition of the Ukrainian delegation in the EU-CSP remains the sovereign right of the Ukrainian side.
2. The SC fully supports the Ukrainian side when it states that the Ukrainian delegates to the EU-CSP including the non governmental organisations (NGOs) as well as those of the employers and the trade unions must be chosen in an open, transparent and democratic way.
3. Consultations between the social partners in Ukraine have established that until November 2015 the Ukrainian side should be represented in the EU-CSP by 26 people including the National Coordinator of the EaP CSF National Platform.
4. This number which includes 14 NGO representatives reflects the special role which NGOs have played and continue to play in the struggle for reform in Ukraine. NGOs working together with pro reform business associations and trade unions are the guarantors of the reform programme which underpins the AA.
5. The SC notes that the goal of the EU-CSP is to monitor the implementation of the AA. The AA is a blue print for wide ranging reforms to which are committed both the Ukrainian Government and the EU member states as well as the European Union institutions including the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC).
6. The SC looks to the EESC, Ukraine's partner in the EU-CSP, to recognise the danger which oligarchic interests in Ukraine pose for the reforms envisaged by the AA and to support the efforts of the Ukrainian side to ensure that the selection of the Ukrainian side of the EU-CSP be open, transparent and democratic.