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One of the greatest achievements in the field of justice was adoption of amendments to the Constitution in the field of justice and the Law of Ukraine "On the Judiciary and Status of Judges".

The above amendments should have provided new principles for the functioning of the higher authorities of the judiciary, greater responsibility of judges and new transparent procedures for the appointment, re-certification and dismissal of judges.

Throughout the year, the High Qualifications Commission of Judges held a competition for judges to a newly reformed Supreme Court of Ukraine.

Out of the 120 selected candidates, 30 have the negative opinion of the Public Council of Integrity established and acting in the order to assist the High Qualifications Commission of Judges of Ukraine in evaluating professional ethics and integrity of the candidates. Thus, every fourth forthcoming judge of the Supreme Court used to violate human rights (for example, limitation of the right to peaceful assembly by Oleksandr Zolotnikov, Iryna Saprykina and Svitalna Pasichnyk), has made politically motivated decisions (for example, conviction of Lutsenko), or can not explain his or her own assets.

In addition, the pace of reform of the judiciary considered to be too slow, as the re-certification of judges in local and courts of appeal has not yet begun. Therefore, the level of public trust in the courts remains low, namely, only 14% of citizens.

Another important issue is ensuring of independence of judiciary in Ukraine. This refers first of all to independence of judges. According to official statistics, the share of acquittals in 2016 amounted to 1.1% (in comparison, this number is from 15% to 30% in the Western Europe). Out of these, about one-third were cancelled by the courts of appeal exclusively on formal grounds as result of prosecutors' appeal. There are occasions when the prosecution initiates criminal cases against judges who gave acquittal charging them for knowingly unlawful decisions which is quite serious challenge to independence of judges and to some extent explains such a low percentage of acquittals.

Second of all, we underline the importance of ensuring of independence of professional lawyers that provide free legal aid. One of the major steps forward was establishing of the Regional centers for the provision of free legal aid in 2013 that provide free lawyers to the persons arrested under administrative and criminal procedure when they unable to invite a defender themselves.

However, today law enforcing agencies and courts have developed the mechanism of elimination of the lawyer chosen by defendant through appointment and imposing a lawyer from Regional centre against his will, especially for exercising separate procedural actions. A lawyer from the Centre is, in fact, familiar with the case to the very limited extent and may not be aware of important facts due to limited timing, however he participates in hearings of such important issues as reasonability for

extending of arrest. Such cases are not rare, which makes participation of defender in such hearings formal.

Thus, despite the fact of taking some positive steps towards judiciary reform and implementation of good practices in the field of justice, yet the major principles of work of judiciary have not changed which results in such low percentage of public trust.

Therefore, we recommend and urge the Ukrainian government:

- 1.To ensure qualitative implementation of judiciary reform within reasonable time with obligatory consideration of conclusion of the Public Counsel of Integrity.
2. to ensure independence of judges from prosecution for giving acquittals
- 3 To provide guarantees of the independence of the system of free legal aid from the influence of any state authorities.