STATEMENT

We, Ukrainian journalists and representatives of the public, believe that the decision of the Parliament Secretariat and Members of Parliament not to make income declarations public is disrespectful of the principles of transparency and accountability of the authorities to the public. We would like to remind the authorities that these principles are the first signs of a democratic state. Moreover, in our opinion, this decision directly contradicts the Law "On Access to Public Information", which was approved by the Ukrainian Parliament.

We remind MPs that they are elected by Ukrainian people and employed at the expense of taxpayers. Thus, their profits and wealth is a subject of public interest. People have the right to access information about the financial status of their representatives whom they elect to represent their own interests.

The refusal to provide income declarations, we can interpret only as an illegal attempt to hide important information from the public. This situation clearly demonstrates the real attitude of the authorities towards the interests of Ukrainian society. The refusal to make income declarations public implies either a misunderstanding of the principles of a democratic state by the MPs, or a conscious disregard for these principles.

This decision also reflects the desire of many governmental officials to continue the course of closure and separation of authorities from the society and directly contradicts the political statements of the President of Ukraine concerning the fight against corruption.

As representatives of public organizations, we believe that part of our mission is to oversee the implementation of the laws of Ukraine and society's right to information. We express our intention to appeal the Secretariat's decision to the European Court of Human Rights in order to ensure Ukrainian society's right to information.