

Bulgaria:

Centre for Environmental
Information and Education
(CEIE)

Za Zemiata, For the Earth

Croatia:

Green Action

Czech Republic:

Centrum pro dopravu a
energetiku (CDE)

Hnutí DUHA

Estonia:

Estonian Green Movement–FoE

Georgia:

Green Alternative

Hungary:

National Society of
Conservationists – Friends of
the Earth Hungary (MTVSZ)

Latvia:

Latvian Green Movement

Lithuania:

Atgaja

Macedonia:

Eko–svest

Poland:

Polish Green Network (PGN)

Russia:

Sakhalin Environmental Watch

Serbia:

Center for Ecology and
Sustainable Development
(CEKOR)

Slovakia:

Friends of the Earth – Center
for Environmental Public
Advocacy (FoE–CEPA)

Ukraine:

National Ecological Centre of
Ukraine (NECU)

CEE Bankwatch Network's
mission is to prevent
environmentally and socially
harmful impacts of
international development
finance, and to promote
alternative solutions and public
participation.

TO:

President Suma Chakrabarti
European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

**Appeal to the EBRD to freeze Ukrainian projects until government allows
for a peaceful resolution of the current crisis in the country**

February 20, 2014

Dear President Chakrabarti,

In light of the recent developments in Ukraine, I would like to ask you make sure the EBRD, the largest foreign investor in Ukraine, refrains from any further cooperation both on new and current projects until the government takes decisive and peaceful steps to end the escalation of the current crisis, ends human rights violations committed by government forces, shows clear commitment to settling the political crisis in a peaceful way and addresses the key concerns of the protests.

We acknowledge yesterday's statement from the EBRD to limit current cooperation with Ukraine to the private sector. However, there is no way to separate the government and the private sector in today's Ukraine. Yanukovich's clique controls various sectors of the economy in Ukraine, most strikingly the coal business.

During the first two months of massive peaceful protests in Kiev, the government took no steps to address the concerns of the people. Instead, the violent oppression of protests that began in November 2013 with the attack by riot police Berkut on peaceful protests¹ is continuing with increased intensity since the protests have turned violent in the end of January and is in blatant violation of the Geneva Conventions' provisions.

While the recent escalation of clashes is the most violent episode since protests began, the government has been attempting to silence protests also before with abductions and killings of protesters and journalists being reported.²

Furthermore, on January 16, 2014 the government adopted new laws that significantly restrict basic democratic freedoms that are guaranteed by

¹ For a timeline of the events until December 17, see for example <http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/12/17/us-ukraine-timeline-idUSBRE9BG10N20131217>

² See for example <http://www.rferl.org/content/abducted-euromaidan-supporter-dead-ukraine/25240225.html> and <http://www.hrw.org/news/2014/01/23/ukraine-police-beatings-kidnappings-kiev>

the Constitution of Ukraine.³ The laws are not only aimed against the Maidan protests, but against non-governmental organisations and independent media in general.⁴

Yet, the actions of Berkut, paid thugs and provocators on the streets create an atmosphere of fear not only for those critical towards the government and its surrounding. With the death toll reaching more than 40 in two days, rising sharply, and with snipers shooting at unarmed protesters⁵ Kiev has become a dangerous place for anyone.

A government that has motivated massive and ongoing protests in Ukraine, that limits basic human rights and that turns on its own people in the way Yanukovich's regime has done loses its legitimacy and should not benefit from any kind of financial support from the international community, including from the EBRD.

I therefore ask you as the President of the EBRD to take any measures in your power to freeze all new and current projects in Ukraine until the government:

- has permanently stopped the violence towards protesters from the side of law enforcement officers and has released all unlawfully detained persons;
- genuinely engages with protesters and the parliamentary opposition on reviewing the balances of power in the country and limiting the current authoritarian position of the Party of Regions by returning to the Constitution of 2004.

Last but not least, the EBRD is well aware of corruption problems in Ukraine that have prevented the 'trickling down' of economic benefits to the whole society, but have instead concentrated economic power in the hands of a small political and business elite. Ukraine is a rich country that has been ruined by corrupt and selfish leaders. This corruption and its devastating effects on Ukraine's economy are among the root causes of the current protests.

Yanukovich's government has dodged the EBRD's attempts to put in place mechanisms for prevention of corrupt practices that impoverish the country and enrich a few. It is another reason why it should be sanctioned to avoid more resources being misused in a country sliding into lawlessness.

Sincerely,

Mark Fodor



3 "When adopting the laws the Parliament violated a number of its own procedural rules.", see Transparency International: <http://ti-ukraine.org/news/4269.html>

4 <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jan/17/ukrainian-president-anti-protest-laws>

5 <http://www.radiosvoboda.mobi/a/25270710.html>