**LABOUR’S ULTIMATUM**

**of trade unions to the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine**

After the overthrow of the corrupt regime civil society, working people of Ukraine expected rapid positive changes in all spheres of life and advancement of the country on European integration course. One and a half year passed, but no improvement occurred. On the contrary, old and new problems have been spanning more people into poverty and misery distancing Ukraine from civilised development.

Unprecedented economic downturn, depreciation of the national currency, total cost and, at the same time, falling of living standards of people twice caused extremely negative reaction of workers, pensioners, almost every Ukrainian family.

Wages, pensions and social benefits, scholarships lost half of their value and fell to level of the poorest countries.

Over one million jobs were lost, and, generally, half of 20 million Ukrainians do not have official jobs protected by law. Despite loud statements of authorities, youth and graduates of professional schools did not see real employment prospects and motivation in their country.

The policy of ‘tightening of belts’ affected only ordinary people. Multibillion corruption and criminal financial flows continue to circulate in Ukraine and beyond freely. Those earned by the Ukrainian people have been shamelessly stolen and exported.

Instead, the working people who create national product, fill the state budget, labour veterans have to count every penny, because they have not enough even for food, the wear previously bought clothes and can go to the pharmacy as to a museum only to look at the essential medications.

Instead of protective indexing wages and pensions, with 172-percent inflation the Government once again picked citizens’ pocket by cutting public sector workers’ wages, imposing taxes on pensions, abolishing health improvement of children and workers.

Cheap Ukrainian gas, electricity, utilities have been hastily transferred into world prices despite rapidly impoverishing population will be unable to pay them. The programme of subsidies does not protect from poverty.

All this is a direct result of anti-social policies that were not even in the most difficult times of Ukrainian statehood.

The Cabinet of Ministers, that allegedly confesses European values, does not react on constructive proposals of trade unions, other public associations and therefore does not consider necessary to reckon with the opinion of civil society.

The social partners have repeatedly asked the Government to identify, through negotiations and social dialogue, available resources of the economy and direct them to the social protection of people, support of the sectors that will ensure job creation and competitiveness of Ukraine. To take out from shadow 200 billion hryvnias of wages, so that will give so needed 30 billion hryvnias of additional annual revenue and 70 billion hryvnias to the Pension Fund of Ukraine.

The State Treasury has already accumulated in its accounts tens of billions of hryvnias saved on wages, pensions, social payments that allows to adjust citizens’ income immediately.

However, this is obviously not in the plans of the Government. It seems that they want to use public resources for political purposes on the eve of local elections.

Even after declared by the President of Ukraine need to adjust wages and pensions, statements about the unacceptability of such a step were immediately made.

**Ukraine national trade union associations of Ukraine warn**: patience of the people is on the verge of social explosion. Mass strikes are possible.

**On behalf of its 8 million trade union members and taxpayers impose this ultimatum to the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and demand:**

• To stop anti-popular legislative initiatives that led economy into a deep stagnation, and the people to poverty;

• To reduce by half the price of gas for households, and direct on the needs of households only cheap Ukrainian gas;

• To adopt and made public a real programme on job creation by sectors providing jobs for unemployed and first jobs for young people;

• To use immediately accumulated in the State Treasury funds for full adjustment of 2014-2015 public sector workers’ wages, scholarships and pensions to veterans of labour;

• To conduct social dialogue and to define an annual plan of gradual approximation of basic social standards of Ukraine (living wage, minimum wage, minimum pension, etc.) to the level of European countries within the framework of preparation for integration with the European Union.

**Trade unions propose the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine immediately:**

- To abolish tax and pension restrictions to working pensioners and others passing the draft law No. 2698;

- To adopt a law on adjustment of wages, pensions and other income (draft law No. 2883);

- To legislate objective setting of a fair living wage as a basic social standard by passing the draft law No. 2238;

- To restore funding at the expense of social insurance programmes of summer health improvement of children, sanatorium-and-spa treatment of workers, support or sanatoria enterprises and institutions by passing the draft law No. 2245;

- To cancel rental fee for gas for households (draft law No. 2835);

- To adopt a law on mandatory direction of gas extracted in Ukraine to households and heat and energy utilities.

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**On behalf of the national representative trade union associations of Ukraine:**

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