

Statement - Real judicial reform is impossible without high-quality restart of the High Council of Justice

13.05.2020

NGOs insist the need for the judicial reform and call upon the reboot of the High Council of Justice, which is the major obstacle to cleansing and renewal of the judiciary

In recently released [film](#) about the first year of his presidency, Volodymyr Zelenskyi stated that the judicial system in Ukraine needs a complete restart; despite the fact that there are many honest and professional judges in the country, the system works unfairly.

Previous attempts of the President to reform the judiciary have failed. Last October, the Parliament supported the Presidential draft law on complete reboot the High Qualification Commission of Judges (HQCJ) and clearing of the High Council of Justice (HCJ) from unworthy members. However, the implementation of the law was blocked by the High Council of Justice.

At present, the High Council of Justice is the body that supports the mutual cover-ups and is the source of injustice in the judiciary. Instead of punishing dishonest judges, the HCJ covers up their misdeeds and promotes their careers, while honest and independent judges are constantly harassed by the HCJ. Society has many questions regarding integrity of members the HCJ.

Therefore, changes in the judiciary will take place only after positions of members of the HCJ are taken by honest professionals who have positive reputation in society. We are convinced that only relaunched High Council of Justice will be able to bring order to the judiciary by dismissing unworthy judges and initiating the appointment of honest lawyers to their positions.

In order to finally fulfill his election promises and guarantee fair trial for Ukrainians, **as soon as possible the President must submit to the Parliament the draft law on:**

1. termination of the authority of unworthy HCJ members upon the results of the check conducted with the participation of civil society and international experts;
2. involvement of international experts and civil society representatives in the procedure of selection new members of the HCJ;
3. launch of the competition to the HQCJ, which will be conducted by independent commission with international experts and civil society representatives in its composition.

We call on the President not to waste time and not to repeat previous mistakes, because without relaunch of the High Council of Justice other initiatives to reform the judiciary are doomed to failure. Without this it is impossible to achieve the goal of the judicial reform, to truly rid the judiciary of corruption and arbitrary decisions, and to ensure public confidence in it.

Automaidan

Transparency International Ukraine

DEJURE Foundation

Centre for political and legal reforms