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PRESS RELEASE

Ukraine: Access to Information Law Adopted

London, 14.01.11: The Ukrainian parliament has yesterday adopted an Access to Information Law following a campaign by ARTICLE 19 and partners over the past two years. ARTICLE 19 welcomes the new law, adopted by a large parliamentary majority, and will continue to check that it is properly implemented to improve transparency and the free flow of information in the country.

“We are delighted that after a sustained campaign Ukraine has adopted a law to realise the people’s right to information. Once properly implemented, the Access to Information Law will increase transparency, good governance, efficiency and participation in public affairs,” says Dr Agnès Callamard, ARTICLE 19 Executive Director.

“The new law contains several progressive provisions supported by ARTICLE 19, including a broad definition of public information, and a legal responsibility of holders of information who fail to publish,” Callamard continued.

The new law also requires public bodies to promote open government and publish certain types of information without any individual request. The regime of limitations adequately limits non-disclosure only to situations in which the revelation of such information risks more harm than benefit to the public. Disclosure of information on wrongdoings or information concerning a serious threat to people’s health and safety or to the environment are protected too.

The law will go into effect after being signed by the President Yanukovich who has already expressed his intention to give assent.

ARTICLE 19 campaigned with IMS and the Media Law Institute for the adoption an access to information law. We will continue to work for its implementation.

NOTES TO EDITORS:

- For more information please contact: Boyko Boev, Legal Officer, at boyko@article19.org or at +44 20 7324 2500
- ARTICLE 19 is an independent human rights organisation that works around the world to protect and promote the right to freedom of expression. It takes its name from Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which guarantees free speech.