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## ARTICLE 19

For immediate release – 7 April 2009

### Ukraine: ARTICLE 19 Calls on the Ukrainian Parliament to Adopt Progressive Law on Access to Information

**ARTICLE 19 today releases its analyses of the draft Law of Ukraine on Access to Public Information. The Draft Law was prepared by several non-governmental organisations, based on the original draft produced by ARTICLE 19, and is tabled for reading by the Ukrainian Parliament in 2009.**

ARTICLE 19 commends the decision of the Ukrainian Government to introduce a comprehensive law on access to information and considers the proposed draft in compliance with the international standards. The positive features of the Law include:

- Right of access to information is granted to every person
- Access to information does not depend on the legal interest of the requester
- A broad list of information providers is adopted
- The restricted information should be disclosed when public interest outweighs the grounds for restricting the access
- Public bodies have a duty to publish key information proactively
- Registers of documents in the possession of information providers are created
- Information is provided free of charge
- Information providers are obliged to provide reasons for denying access to information.

Despite positive features, ARTICLE 19 believes that certain provisions of the Draft Law can still be improved. In particular, ARTICLE 19's Note includes specific recommendations on how the legislators can improve the regime of exceptions, the definition of the public interest override and an overall legal framework of access to information in Ukraine as such.

Dr Agnes Callamard, ARTICLE 19 Executive Director, adds: *“We welcome the efforts of the Ukrainian Government to introduce this important piece of legislation and urge the Parliament to adopt the Law and make the right to information a reality for all in Ukraine.”*

#### **NOTES TO EDITORS:**

- For more information: please contact Boyko Boev, Legal Officer, [boyko@article19.org](mailto:boyko@article19.org), +442073789292
- The analysis is available in English at: <http://www.article19.org/pdfs/analysis/comment-on-the-draft-law-of-ukraine-on-access-to-public-information-.pdf> and in Ukrainian at: <http://www.article19.org/pdfs/analysis/ukraine-comment-information.pdf>

- An English translation of the Draft **Law of Ukraine on Access to Public Information** Press Law is available at: <http://www.article19.org/pdfs/laws/ukraine-the-law-on-access-to-public-information.pdf>
- 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.
- The legal analysis of the draft Law and the translations have been carried out within the framework of the “Ukraine – media policy and advocacy” project funded by International Media Support – Denmark.