

**2018 Honor of the Profession –  
Welcoming Remarks by  
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Вітаю пане Посол, шановні гості!

Я хотіла би щиро подякувати організаторам, Незалежній асоціації телерадіомовників, за надану мені можливість зазначити, що Інтерньюз завжди пишався тим, що підтримував цю подію, починаючи з дві тисячі десятого року. І сьогодні для мене велика честь бути присутній в цій залі та відкривати дев'яту церемонію нагородження конкурсу «Честь професії».

1. I've been told that Honor of the Profession is often called the **Ukrainian Pulitzer** because of its commitment to professional standards and very specific criteria for evaluating the work of participants, looking for extraordinary quality in terms of reporting. Honor of the Profession has always recognized the **most distinguished examples of public service by a media company**, and so it ranks among **the most prestigious awards** in Ukraine for the media to win.
2. I don't think that journalism **has ever been an easy job**, but these days it feels like the **very notion of journalism as an honorable profession is under threat**.

There is zero benefit of the doubt if you make an honest mistake anymore – you are instantly accused of spreading 'fake news'.

In the meantime real 'fake news' is proliferating around the world, aided by social media behemoths like Facebook and Twitter. Misinformation is being created by people who are **completely untethered to the idea of fact-based reporting** because clicks equal revenue.

I have to ask myself, **why do these people even pretend to be real journalists?** It must be because they think that people are more likely to believe and trust them. So they are abusing the trust of citizens at the same time as they are undermining the value of the media.

And I don't mean in some kind of ethereal 'philosophical' sense either – I mean that **that there is clear moral and commercial damage being done to the media industry**, causing it to hire fewer journalists and also often pay them less than a working wage.

At the same time, **Ukraine is at the frontline of an orchestrated disinformation attack** that paints this country in all kinds of negative ways designed to turn citizens against each other and sow cynicism and doubt.

Ukrainian journalists are **literally covering a frontline of military action**, and at the same time trying to make sure that tackling corruption gets to the top and stays at the top of the government's to-do list.

3. I feel like I'm coming up with a long list of why it's incredibly hard to be a journalist, and I need to say something about **why it's a noble and honorable profession** and also an incredibly important one.
4. The bottom line is, in spite of all the attacks and challenges, **decent, hard-working journalists are needed more than ever**. You are needed to make sense of the confusion, to dig through the dirt, to dry out wet papers in Yanukovych's sauna and figure out where Ukrainian tax payers' money went, to expose corruption and to continue to speak truth to power.
5. Tonight we are here to acknowledge that in these difficult times, it is not easy to maintain your honor as a professional journalist. There are a lot of obstacles in the way. But with nearly 600 entries in tonight's competition, that's **an incredibly positive sign that good Ukrainian journalists are growing in strength and numbers**. I congratulate you, I thank you, and I wish you a fantastic evening.