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Ukraine: Investigate police violations despite demonstrator pardon

Human rights violations against peaceful participants in the demonstrations that have rocked the Ukraine in the past month must be thoroughly investigated, said Amnesty International in a report published today. The organization is concerned that the blanket pardon of protestors arrested in the demonstrations is not used to detract from the abuses carried out by the police.

“While those accused of criminal and administrative offences during the protests have been pardoned, it does not absolve the Ukrainian authorities from their responsibility for human rights violations that have taken place over the last month,” said Heather McGill, Amnesty International’s researcher on Ukraine.

“Successive Ukrainian governments have failed to address deeply rooted systemic flaws in policing and the criminal justice system. It is of the utmost importance that the perpetrators of human rights violations must still be held to account.”

“EuroMaydan”: *Human rights violations during protests in Ukraine*, examines human rights violations committed in the government’s efforts to curb the right to freedom of assembly over the last month. It catalogues the excessive use of force by law enforcement officers, unfair trials and harassment of those who have complained about their brutal treatment.

Hundreds of thousands of people have been mainly peacefully protesting in Kyiv and other Ukrainian cities since 21 November when the government announced that it was stopping preparations for an Association Agreement with the EU days before it was due to be signed.

Dozens of protesters have been charged with criminal or administrative offences; at least a dozen have spent several days in detention following court proceedings that failed to uphold their rights and Ukrainian law.

Amnesty International has been monitoring compliance with human rights standards by the authorities since the beginning of the protests and has interviewed over twenty victims of human rights violations, their families and lawyers.

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