

URGENT ACTION

ILL-TREATMENT OF CAPTIVES AMIDST CIVIL UNREST

Video footage shows two men held captive and being ill-treated by armed people in south-eastern Ukraine. They are seen being interrogated by a man who is evidently not a law enforcement official. This incident occurs amidst spiralling civil unrest and concerns over breakdown of the rule of law.

On 7 May 2014 the website of Oleg Lyashko, a controversial politician, member of the Ukrainian parliament and presidential candidate, published a report and video footage of the interrogation and ill-treatment of two individuals inside a car, reportedly at an airfield near Mariupol. The two male captives are seen with their hands tied behind their backs. They initially appear with their heads wrapped in some kind of cloth until the interrogator, evidently the politician himself, orders their faces to be uncovered and the cloths are cut off by someone with a knife. One of the men introduces himself as **Igor Khakmizyanov**, former minister of defence of the self-styled People's Republic of Donetsk. He is sat almost totally naked, with two distinct bleeding cuts on his body. The other man is fully dressed.

From what the men say during their interrogation it transpires that Igor Khakmizyanov was captured the previous day, possibly in a skirmish involving firearms. The other man was captured near a police station, while noting number plates of passing vehicles. It is clear that the interrogator is in control, as he gives orders to others – at least eight men seen outside the car, wearing unidentifiable black uniforms. Four of them are wearing facemasks and holding Kalashnikov assault rifles. The interrogator threatens Igor Khakmizyanov with life-long imprisonment. At the end of the footage Igor Khakmizyanov is blindfolded again, and he and the other captive are transferred to a helicopter. It is unclear who the helicopter belongs to or where they are being taken. The interrogator announces that he has established their responsibility for organizing an attack on Ukrainian military personnel.

Please write immediately in Ukrainian, Russian or your own language to the Ukrainian authorities:

- Calling for an immediate investigation into the circumstances of the men being held captive, stressing that under international law arrest or detention may only be carried out strictly in accordance with law, by competent officials or persons authorized to exercise those powers;
- Urging them to establish the whereabouts of the two captives, and ensure that they have immediate access to a lawyer, are informed promptly of any charges against them, and are brought promptly before a judge;
- Urging them also to ensure that they are not subjected to ill-treatment, and that anyone responsible for, or complicit in, their ill-treatment or other violations is identified and brought to justice.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 19 JUNE 2014 TO:

Acting General Prosecutor of Ukraine
Oleg Makhnitskiy
Vul. Riznytska 13/15
01601, Kyiv
Ukraine
Fax: +380 44 280 2603
Email: press-service@gp.gov.ua

Minister of Internal Affairs
Arsen Avakov
10 Bohomoltsya Street, Kyiv, Ukraine,
01601
Fax: +380 44 256 1633
Email: vidkrytist@mvs.gov.ua

And copies to:

Valeria Lutkovska Chair of the Ukrainian
Parliament Commission for Human
Rights
Institutska Str. 21/8, 01008 Kyiv
Ukraine
Tel: +380 44 253 2091
Fax: +380 44 226 3427
Email: lutkovska@ombudsman.gov.ua
hotline@ombudsman.gov.ua

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation
Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Mariupol is a city in south-eastern Ukraine and the site of recent military clashes between government forces and armed groups associated with the self-proclaimed People's Republic of Donetsk.

After three months of protests in the Ukrainian capital Kyiv ("EuroMaydan") ended with the ousting of President Viktor Yanukovich, the parliament appointed a new speaker as the acting head of state and the interim government. However, in several towns across eastern and south-eastern Ukraine protesters who refused to recognize the legitimacy of the interim authorities in Kyiv captured buildings belonging to local administrations and law enforcement agencies. Some have put up armed resistance to Kyiv's attempts to reinstate control of their region and the response of the police and the military has resulting in shootouts and casualties on both. In Donetsk, the biggest city in the east, the "People's Republic of Donetsk" was announced by Kyiv's opponents. They also scheduled a "referendum" to take place on 11 May on the possible secession from Ukraine, similar to that on 16 March in Crimea, which preceded the region's annexation by Russia.

The situation in the east and south-east of Ukraine has been become increasingly violent, which has given rise to concerns about a breakdown of the rule of law throughout the country.

Amnesty International has expressed concern over abuses by armed groups in eastern Ukraine, including incidents of unlawful deprivation of liberty and ill-treatment of captives.

There is a longstanding problem of human rights violations by police and other law enforcement agencies in Ukraine, with the perpetrators enjoying near-total impunity. Any failure to effectively and impartially investigate all allegations of human rights violations, including those against the political opponents of the interim government in Kyiv, and failure to identify and prosecute individuals responsible for unlawful deprivation of liberty or ill-treatment of captives will only serve to contribute further to concerns about impunity for human rights violations in Ukraine and the breakdown of the rule of law.

Name: Igor Khakmizyanov

Gender m/f: m

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