



Human Rights situation in Ukraine

Brief monitoring update prepared by the Center for Civil Liberties and the volunteer initiative Euromaidan SOS

Rights for life, liberty and security of the persons are the fundamental human rights. That includes the right of no one be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. However since the beginning of Euromaidan movement such violation of human right by the Ukrainian authorities has become more intense and visible.

From 30th of November 2013 the civil initiative Euromaidan SOS has provided legal assistance for over 400 of protesters which were arrested and detained in Kiev and regions and a significant amount of the arrested protesters were dismissed without being charged since lawyers and opposition deputies had managed to prove the absence of corpus delicti. In the most of cases there were reported exceeding of the power by the police forces. These cases can be separated in the following categories:

- Arrested protesters were beaten, tortured or humiliated by the police forces previously to the checking into local police stations;
- Arrested protesters were provided neither with the legal help nor with the possibility to contact their relatives;
- Arrested protesters were not provided with the necessary medical assistance and were present in court in no condition for being fully aware of the proceeding.

The first cases of forced disappearance of the protesters appeared in January. Abducted people were severely beaten and tortured, physically and morally, and later on left to die in the woods (in total 3 bodies were discovered with the explicit signs of torture, 4 persons managed to survive and spent significant amount of time in hospital rehabilitation).

There are still 134 missing people on the list of Euromaidan SOS. At least 121 people have been killed during the protests or died as a result of it (including 17 law enforcement officers) and a thousand more were injured.

During the clashes on 21st of January water-cans were used to disperse the protesters. Due to the fact that the temperature of the air was -11°C, such actions of the police forces are to be classified as mass-torture. By the estimation of Euromaidan SOS three persons have died after the complication of pneumonia.

However, the exceeding of the power from the Yanukovich régime was not only applied to the peaceful protesters, the privates and minor officers were subjected for inhuman treatment. According to OZON, a civil monitoring initiative, the guards of police forces have spent a lot of overdue time outside with the freezing air temperature (-15°C -20°C) with no appropriate clothing, spent their leisure period in the non-heated cars and received no hot meals. As a result 120 cases of heavy frostbites were registered.

Since the occupation of Crimea 35 persons were forcibly disappeared, 2 killed, 5 are still missing. All the released people reported about physical or moral tortures. However, 2 persons were discovered being forcibly disappeared only after their release, thus the real number of people might differ.

Our initiatives are issuing constant inquiries to the Ministry of Interior Affairs and to the Minister Arsen Avakov about the investigation process since we are not satisfied with its process and the preliminary results reported. We are looking for fair and transparent investigation with the engagement of foreign observers and press, especially with the Crimean cases. We do believe that transparency and efficiency of such a process will prevent the repetition of the tortures and violation of human rights.

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