



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

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Statement on the killing of Ukrainian activist Kateryna Handziuk

As delivered by Ambassador Ihor Prokopchuk,
Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna,
to the 1200th meeting of the Permanent Council,
8 November 2018

Mr. Chairperson,

I take the floor to inform the Permanent Council that this week Ukraine has been shocked and saddened by the death on Sunday, 4 November, of a 33-year-old Ukrainian anticorruption and human rights activist Kateryna Handziuk. Her death is now qualified by the Ukrainian law enforcement as a murder committed with extreme cruelty by a group of people.

Kateryna Handziuk, who was an advisor to the Mayor of Kherson and acting manager of Kherson City Council's executive committee, sustained severe burns to more than a third of her body when she was attacked with sulphuric acid on 31 July this year. She was taking intensive treatment at a hospital in Kyiv, where she underwent over 10 operations.

The President of Ukraine Petro Poroshenko expressed his deep condolences to Kateryna Handziuk's family and emphasized that Ukraine's authorities "are determined to bring the perpetrators and murderers to justice, no matter who they are". He called on law enforcement agencies to ensure that the investigation is effective, fair, transparent, speedy and credible for the society.

On Tuesday the heads of the law enforcement agencies presented their reports to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine on the progress of investigation. An interim investigation commission was established by the Verkhovna Rada to exercise parliamentary oversight of the investigations of the attacks on Kateryna Handziuk and other public activists.

At this stage five suspects, including the organizer, have been identified by the investigators. Two of the suspects are in custody whereas others, who fully cooperate with the investigation, have been placed by Court decisions under the house arrest. The suspects have admitted that they had been hired to commit the crime for a financial reward.

The principal and very essential task for the law enforcement remains to find the masterminds of this crime. To fulfill this task further investigation of the case has been transferred to the Security Service of Ukraine.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.