

URGENT ACTION

JOURNALISTS KIDNAPPED BY SEPARATISTS IN UKRAINE

Amnesty International is concerned for the welfare of a Ukrainian journalist and her cameraman who were kidnapped by armed separatists in Luhansk, east Ukraine. They are believed to be at risk of ill-treatment.

Ukrainian journalist, **Anastasia Stanko**, and her cameraman, **Ilya Bezkorovaini**, were captured on the evening of 30 June by armed men representing the so-called separatist group "Luhansk People's Republic". On 1 July, the leader of the self-proclaimed "Luhansk People's Republic", Valeriy Bolotov, announced that they have been charged with "spying for the Ukrainian army".

Both Anastasia Stanko and Ilya Bezkorovaini work for the Ukrainian television channel Hromadske TV and were in the east of Ukraine reporting on events there.

Amnesty International has spoken with the acting editor of the television station who confirmed that they were taken to the centre of the city and, it is believed, are being held in a cellar of a building occupied by the separatist group. They are reportedly being held in the dark, with no toilet facilities and poor ventilation.

Amnesty International is calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Anastasia Stanko and Ilya Bezkorovaini.

Please send the attached text (if possible by using the Russian text below) or your own message to the email address we have located on the "official website" of the "People's Republic of Luhansk" (<http://lugansk-online.info/>):

English: I am writing to express my concern for the safety of Anastasia Stanko and Ilya Bezkorovaini who are currently being held captive in Luhansk. I insist on an immediate and unconditional release of them and all captives. Wherever they are, their freedom as well as their mental and physical well-being must be assured.

Russian: Я хочу выразить озабоченность по поводу безопасности Анастасии Станко и Ильи Безкороваино, которые в настоящее время содержатся в неволе в Луганске. Я настаиваю на немедленном освобождении их и всех захваченных лиц, без каких-либо условий. Где бы они ни находились, их свобода и их психическое и физическое благополучие должны быть полностью обеспечены.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 13 AUGUST 2014 TO:

Email address located on the official website of the Luhansk People's Republic:
Email: info@lugansk-online.info

And copies to:
Chair of the Ukrainian Parliament Commission for Human Rights
Valeria Lutkovska
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

Following the ousting of President Viktor Yanukovich in February 2014, many people in eastern (predominantly Russian-speaking) regions of Ukraine refused to recognize the legitimacy of the interim authorities in Kyiv. Protests in the east swiftly turned violent, and armed opponents of the new government in Kyiv seized control of local administrations, including in the towns of Luhansk, Donetsk, Slavyansk and Kramatorsk. In Luhansk, on 27 April, the so-called Luhansk People's Republic was proclaimed.

The authorities in Kyiv have used police and military forces in an attempt to regain control of towns and cities in eastern Ukraine from the armed separatist groups. An "anti-terror operation" led by the Ukrainian authorities has been stepped up since the newly elected President Poroshenko was sworn in on 7 June. A recent ten-day ceasefire called by the President has now been officially suspended and fighting has resumed on both sides. Six journalists have been killed in Ukraine since the start of 2014.

Amnesty International has documented cases of abductions and ill-treatment of captives both by armed groups resisting the authorities in Kyiv and by groups loyal to them, excessive use of force by Ukrainian law enforcement officers, and inadequate policing leading to violations of the right to life. The organization has appealed to the interim authorities in Kyiv over incidents of unlawful deprivation of liberty and ill-treatment of captives by armed individuals who are evidently associated with the pro-Kyiv forces but are not competent officials or persons authorized to exercise those powers (<http://amnesty.org/en/library/info/EUR50/020/2014/en>).

Amnesty International has expressed concern about the impact of the current conflict in eastern Ukraine on the civilian population. Information gathered from official sources indicate that from 15 April to 20 June, 423 people, including servicemen and civilians, have been killed. There may have been violations of international humanitarian law by both sides, including the use of civilian buildings (particularly schools and hospitals) from which to fire at aircraft by the anti-Kyiv forces, the allegedly indiscriminate targeting of those buildings by the Ukrainian armed forces, and the possible indiscriminate attack on civilians.

Name: Anastasia Stanko (f), Ilya Bezkorovaini (m)
Gender m/f: both

UA: 168/14 Index: EUR 50/031/2014 Issue Date: 2 July 2014