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## Several investigations launched in multiple shelling of Donbass by Ukrainian army



As the Russian Foreign Ministry has reported before, the Ukrainian side prevented Russian observer officers from the Donbass Joint Ceasefire Control and Coordination Center from doing their job. They had limited access to the contact line, to checking operation of joint observation points, were banned from talking to local people, experienced disrespect from Ukrainian military servants. The Russian officers had to leave the said center owing to intolerable working conditions.

In such a situation, the Ukrainian army apparently felt that their hands are free, as there is no other explanation to a recent rise in shelling civilians in Donbass. The conflict is being escalated.

Investigators have data about a number of bombardments conducted by Ukrainian side in September-November in Donetsk and nearby settlements which damaged over 50 houses, destroyed power lines, a gas main and other elements of infrastructure.

On 17 December 2017, following orders of senior officials of the Ukraine's Defense Ministry, the

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Ukraine Army and National Guard fired heavy artillery weapons at civilian infrastructure in the town of Gorlovka. The towns of Stakhanov and Pervomaisk came under fire on 18 December. 4 civilians were wounded and one woman was killed.

However, the most powerful shelling happened on 19 and 20 December 2017. This time, the aims of the Ukrainian army were several blocks in Donetsk and the town of Yasinovataya. One local citizen was killed, another four were taken to hospitals with wounds. 7 houses were damaged.

The Russian Investigative Committee has opened 5 investigations in the use of prohibited means and ways of warfare under Article 356 of the RF Criminal Code.

At present, investigative and search operations are underway to find out all the circumstances surrounding the crimes and to identify the officials involved in them.

Spokesperson for the Investigative Committee Svetlana Petrenko

*21 December 2017*

*Page address:* <https://en.sledcom.ru/news/item/1192681>