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## **Criminal Case Initiated on Discovery of Mass Graves of Civilians in Donbass**



Disregarding international agreements and acts, since April 2014, representatives of the Ukrainian military forces have been constantly shelling settlements in Donbass, using lethal weapons of indiscriminate action designed to eliminate people and infrastructure as effectively as possible. As a result, not only residential buildings and essential facilities have been destroyed, but thousands of civilians of Russian-speaking groups that do not participate in the military conflict have been killed or injured.

The intent to eliminate Donbass residents is obvious – Russian investigators recorded hundreds of incidents qualified as the use of prohibited means and methods of warfare. During the investigation of these crimes, the investigators obtained information about spontaneous unmarked mass graves that were arranged outside specially designated places out of necessity due to the ongoing hostilities.

Thus, in August – October 2021, 5 spontaneous mass graves were found near the town of Snezhnoye, settlement of Slavyanoserbbsk, near the Sokologorovka residential area in the city of Pervomaisk, village of Vidnoye-1 village near Lugansk and on the outskirts of Verkhneshevyrevka village of Krasnodonsky District. The remains of at least 295 civilians who died as a result of indiscriminate

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shelling by Ukrainian armed formations in 2014 were exhumed from these graves. It is already clear there are bodies of women of different ages among the remains.

The Main Investigative Department of the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation initiated a criminal case on this fact under Part 1 of Article 356 of the Criminal Code – ill-treatment of civilians, use of means and methods prohibited by an international treaty in an armed conflict.

The Investigative Committee continues to take all possible measures to uphold the principle of the inevitability of punishment for those responsible for committing crimes in Donetsk and Lugansk areas.

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