
The Investigative Committee Brings to Criminal Responsibility Those Involved in Murdering Civilians of Donetsk And Lugansk People's Republics



Ignoring the norms of international acts and treaties, the Ukrainian authorities and paramilitary units continue to eliminate the civilian population, incessantly shelling the settlements of the Lugansk and Donetsk People's Republics. For almost 8 years, civilians who do not participate in the armed conflict have been falling victims of these massive attacks with large-caliber artillery, mortars, grenade launchers, and small arms.

Women, children and the elderly are being killed. Essential civil infrastructure facilities have been destroyed or damaged. As a result, at least 5,500 civilians have been wounded. More than 2,600 civilians have been killed. More than 2,200 civil infrastructure facilities have been destroyed completely or partially. And these numbers are steadily growing. Almost every day we receive information about people dying from Ukrainian shells. Ukrainian military forces even dare to shell schools, hospitals, and kindergartens. The intent to kill the residents of Donbass is obvious.

Russian investigators have recorded hundreds of incidents qualified as the use of prohibited means

and methods of warfare. Based on the documented facts, 467 criminal cases have been initiated and investigated on the events that occurred in Ukraine and Donbass. The investigators have already identified particular persons who give illicit orders and follow them. Currently, the investigators have established that 85 servicemen of the Ukrainian armed forces and other security departments are involved in committing these crimes. Information on the establishment and prosecution of such persons is regularly published on the Investigative Committee of Russia website ([https://sledcom.ru/cases/item/1168 /](https://sledcom.ru/cases/item/1168/)).

There is evidence that the following persons are involved in committing war crimes: former Commander of the Naval Forces of the AFU Igor Voronchenko; Commander of the Air Force of the AFU Sergey Drozdov; Commander of the Highly Mobile Amphibious Forces of the AFU Mikhail Zabrodsky; Commander of the Special Operations Forces of the AFU Igor Lunev; Deputy Minister of Defense of Ukraine Oleg Shevchuk; Deputy Minister of Defense of Ukraine Alexander Dublyan; Deputy Chief of General Staff of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine Sergey Bessarab and Vladimir Khizhny; Chief of Staff - First Deputy Commander of the Ground Forces of the AFU of Ukraine Sergey Naev; Commander of the 34th Separate Motorized Infantry Battalion of the 57th Separate Motorized Infantry Brigade of the AFU of Ukraine Sergey Shpanko; Commander of the 128th Separate Mountain Infantry Brigade of the AFU Sergey Sobko; Commander of the 128th Separate Mountain Assault Brigade of the AFU Oleg Goncharuk; Commander of the 36th Separate Marine Brigade of the AFU Andrey Gnatov; Commander of the 92nd Separate Mechanized Brigade of the AFU Vladimir Kokorev, and Commander of the 28th Separate Mechanized Brigade of the AFU Maxim Marchenko. They are also responsible for people's deaths and destruction of settlements in Donbass.

Servicemen of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, including Armed Forces of Ukraine superiors are also among the defendants. Thus, Commander of the 27th Rocket Artillery Regiment of the Armed Forces of Ukraine Colonel Valery Ismailov was involved in organizing the shelling of Russian territory in June-August 2014. Commander of the 72nd Separate Mechanized Brigade of the Armed Forces of Ukraine Andrey Grishchenko was involved in committing the same shelling. Serviceman Sergey Zabolotny is prosecuted for repeated shelling of civilian infrastructure. Commander of the 25th Brigade of the AFU Major General Oleg Mikats gave orders with intention to eliminate all Russian-speaking civilians living in the Lugansk and Donetsk People's Republics. An investigation is underway against Commander of the 1st Battalion of the 14th Separate Mechanized Brigade of the AFU Mikhail Prokopiv who organized artillery attacks on Donetsk in March 2016. Commander of the 14th Separate Mechanized Brigade of the AFU Alexander Zhakun is prosecuted in absentia for organizing the shelling of the DPR checkpoint Yelenovka in April 2016. Another defendant, Commander of the 19th Separate Missile Brigade of the AFU Fyodor Yaroshevich, on the instructions of the higher command of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine, gave mandatory orders to carry out targeted launches of ballistic missiles using the Tocka-U tactical missile complex at civil infrastructure facilities in Donbass. As a result, 4 civilians, including a minor boy, were killed, 5 adults and 1 minor were injured, residential buildings were damaged, the railway track was partially destroyed.

In addition, Commanders of the 1st Howitzer Artillery Division Viktor Yushko and of the 55th Separate Artillery Brigade Sergey Brusov, Commander of the 10th Separate Mountain Assault Brigade of the Mechanized Troops of the AFU Vasily Zubanich, and Commander of the 30th Separate Mechanized Brigade of the AFU Ivan Garaz are prosecuted for artillery shelling of peaceful territories and civilian infrastructure, which led to people's deaths. The commander of the Aidar battalion, Sergei Melnichuk, was directly involved in the mortar shelling of a peaceful territory when Russian VGTRK journalists were killed. Servicemen Oleg Gromadsky, Dmitry Delyatitsky, and Sergey Shaptala are also held accountable for organizing the shelling of civilians.

The list of defendants includes not only security forces and military personnel, but also representatives of Ukrainian state authorities and supreme military command - both former and acting ones. The crimes of former Deputy Interior Minister of Ukraine Anton Gerashchenko and former Defense Minister of Ukraine Anatoly Gritsenko, who publicly called for terrorist activities, are obvious. It is worth noting that a verdict has already been passed against Gritsenko, former defense minister and candidate for the post of president of Ukraine. He was sentenced in absentia to 6 years of imprisonment in a medium security penal colony.

Former Defense Minister of Ukraine Valery Gelety and former Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine Viktor Muzhenko are also involved in the criminal case, as they gave orders aimed at complete elimination of the national group of Russian-speaking citizens living in the Lugansk and Donetsk People's Republics. This is only a part of the defendants involved in committing violent crimes and brought to criminal responsibility by the Investigative Committee of Russia.

The Russian investigators also prosecute former Minister of Internal Affairs of Ukraine Avakov and Governor of the Dnipropetrovsk Oblast of Ukraine Kolomoisky, as well as Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada Turchinov.

The investigators found that in December 2013, being in Ukraine, citizens of this country Yarosh, Tarasenko, Stempitsky, and Voronov created and headed the extremist organization Right Sector, activities of which are prohibited in Russia. Irrefutable evidence has been obtained that members of this organization and the nationalist Azov battalion committed violent crimes against peaceful citizens of Donbass.

A number of mercenaries who joined these organizations are also known by name. One of the last defendants, the case against whom was filed for trial, was a citizen of Russia Anton Korolyov, a supporter of nationalist views. Back in 2014, for the purpose of financial enrichment and propaganda of his views, he contacted Ukrainian nationalists, then arrived in Ukraine and voluntarily joined the Ukrainian nationalist battalion Azov. There he gained skills in handling weapons and explosives, knowledge of military strategy and tactics. And in the period from 2015 to 2019, as part of his unit, he directly participated in military action in the south-east of Ukraine against the forces of the People's Militia of the DPR, for which he received regular financial remuneration.

Earlier, Russian citizens Shirobokov and Zheleznov, who participated in military action in Donbass as Azov battalion mercenaries and who are currently hiding from Russian justice on the territory of Ukraine, were sentenced to imprisonment in absentia.

Another convict is Litvinov, who was found guilty of committing a robbery involving violence against a Russian citizen on the territory of Ukraine.

The war criminals who inflicted harm to civilians, including women and children, must face trial. These crimes are confirmed by the evidence available to the Investigative Committee; some of the evidence were published earlier. Acting as a guarantor of imposing legal enforcement measures on the perpetrators, in order to implement the principle of the inevitability of punishment, the Investigative Committee of Russia continues to identify those involved in murdering civilians of the Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics to make them face justice sooner or later. The list of the persons involved is growing.

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