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## Nadezhda Savchenko trials start in Rostov Region



Preliminary hearings of the case against Ukrainian Nadezhda Savchenko have started today in Donetsk City Court in Rostov Region. She is charged with crimes under paragraphs “a”, “f”, “g” and “k” of part 2 of article 105 of the RF Penal Code, part 3 of article 30, paragraphs “a”, “f”, “g” and “k” of part 2 of article 105, part 1 of article 322 (murder of two or more people, attempted murder of two or more people by a generally dangerous way motivated by hatred to a social group of people committed by a group of people in conspiracy, illegal crossing of the Russian border).

The Savchenko’s case is not the hardest to prove, if not an ordinary one. The investigators of the Investigative Committee displayed due professionalism, gathered and consolidated so much evidence of Savchenko’s involvement in the murder of our journalists, that her lawyers and supporters in Ukraine have no arguments, except for attempts to influence the case politically. At first they tried to make her a prisoner of war, then they elected her a member of the Parliament Assembly of the European Council, apparently to use functional immunity in order to get her released. But all those

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arguments were basically crashed by the Russian and international law. When they finally understood unsoundness of those attempts, they simply started to appeal to pity, explaining it by Savchenko's grave condition. And of course this is not true either. In addition to regular medical examinations, she was visited by foreign doctors on the initiative of the Ukrainian side, let alone qualified Russian specialists recommended by human rights activists. All of them said that Savchenko was in good health. She also had regular visits from the Ukrainian consul and she could see her relatives.

So I can say that unlike similar cases of Russians who were in custody in Ukraine, Savchenko had all her rights and even more.

The last thing I want to mention is to ultimately dispel the myth the Ukrainian side has been using during the whole investigation is the claim that the accused was allegedly kidnapped by Russian special agencies. The investigators have unchallengeable evidence that Savchenko crossed the Russian border on her own accord, illegally, with no documents which makes an addition count to those she already has. There are evidence that she not only crossed the border, but travelled in Voronezh Region freely, stayed in a hotel for a couple of days and even tried to become legal in Russia by signing an application to the Russian Federal; Migration Service to get a paper confirming her ID.

The investigators have done great work to prove that Savchenko had a hand in the murder of two Russians, attempted murder of civilians and illegal crossing of the border. So now it's up to the court to decide whether she is guilty or not. Despite the fact that aggravated murder is punishable by life in prison, in accordance with the Russian Penal Code such punishment cannot be applied to women. Maximum punishment for women is 25 years in prison. This is why it's not a jury hearing, which was persistently asked for by defense, again demonstrating their ignorance of Russian laws.

Head of Media Relations V.I. Markin

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