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The Open Dialog Foundation calls on the US to include Savchenko perpetrators in the list of Russian individuals sanctioned under Magnitsky Law

Last week, the Open Dialog Foundation addressed senior members of the US Congress - Chairmen and Ranking Members of the relevant committees, of both the House and the Senate, as well as the two co-Chairs of the US Helsinki Commission, presenting them with the Savchenko List composed by the Foundation, and asking to submit the names included on the list to the US President, Barack Obama, to be sanctioned under the Magnitsky Law.

The Foundation calls on the US authorities to sanction the Russian citizens – officials, politicians and businessmen, identified on the list as responsible for the abduction and illegal detention of Nadiya Savchenko, ex-Ukrainian pilot, currently a member of the Ukrainian Parliament and a delegate to PACE. Nadiya Savchenko was a member of a volunteer battalion in the East of Ukraine when she was taken hostage in June 2014 by the pro-Russian terrorist groups. She was subsequently transferred to Russia, where after a week-long unofficial detention under armed guards in a hotel, she was officially detained and arrested on 30 June 2014. Since 15 December 2015, she has been on hunger strike, demanding to be freed. Following countless international appeals, as well as personal pleas of her family members, Savchenko stopped the hunger strike for a few days in March 2015. However, seeing no other hope or way to fight back, she returned to the hunger strike soon afterwards, promising not to stop it until she is freed or she dies in detention.

Those responsible for the unlawful kidnapping of Nadiya Savchenko, as well as her continuous detention and fabrication of accusations against her should be held accountable, underlines Lyudmyla Kozlovska, President of the Open Dialog Foundation. Since there is no chance for that in Russia, the international community has to respond with a clear message. Putting these individuals on the US sanctions list under the Magnitsky Law would hurt them more than it might seem. Doing nothing, instead, is simply bringing Nadiya Savchenko closer to death, while leaving her perpetrators untouched, she added.

Savchenko is accused of being involved in the killing of two Russian journalists in the East of Ukraine. Despite proofs gathered by the defence, indicating clearly that she could not have committed acts imputed to her, the Russian court keeps prolonging the detention. By doing so, the Russian authorities are violating Savchenko's basic human right to a fair trial, as well as her immunity resulting from the role as a Ukrainian delegate to PACE. The



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hearings in the case are often held behind the closed doors, and even when open represent a sad caricature of what should be a process of reaching the truth. Lack of evidence confirming the guilt of Savchenko is being dismissed, while the prosecution continues to consider bringing new accusations against her with the clear aim of extending endlessly the period of detention.

Nadiya Savchenko should have been released under the last Minsk Agreement but we only see more closure on the Russian side, reiterated Lyudmyla Kozlovska. It is an imperative to do all in our power not to let the Russian authorities claim a yet another victim of their oppressive and imperialistic politics, she concluded.

The Open Dialog Foundation underlines that some of the individuals, such as for example Alexander Bastrykin, included in the Savchenko List have already been sanctioned by the US, as they were also involved in bringing about the death of Sergey Magnitsky. Others have been placed on the EU/US sanctions list over the role of Russia in recent developments in Ukraine. The Foundation also urges the US authorities to closely examine the role of the individuals mentioned on the Savchenko List in broader scale repressive activities, aimed at threatening a number of civic and political activists.

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