

IAP Information Note No. 1

LIST OF PUBLIC STATEMENTS ABOUT THE MAIDAN RELATED INVESTIGATIONS¹

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¹ This document contains the main oral public statements made by the Maidan investigation authorities up to 23 February 2015. It is not intended to be exhaustive and, in particular, does not include official press-releases. Since the relevant public statements are in Ukrainian, the English version contains either summaries of those statements or transcript translations. The summaries or transcripts in this document should not be used as a substitute for the original statement.

24 February 2014 – O. Makhnitskyi, speech in the Verkhovna Rada

(video and transcript are in Ukrainian only)

Summary: Mr Makhnitskyi said that around 50 persons were suspects in the case against the former high State officials and law enforcement officers relating to mass killings. The case concerned 74 deaths. He stated that a special investigation group had been formed which included 44 prosecutors from the Main Investigation Department of the PGO and from the regional prosecutors' offices. The MoI and SSU had been invited to provide 250 persons for operational assistance in those criminal proceedings. A number of investigative steps had been taken: requests had been made to identify witnesses of the killings and to provide video evidence; the MoI had been requested to inform the PGO who had been involved in public order protection in Kyiv and what weapons they had been armed with at the material time. The MoI had also been requested to provide documents (orders, rules) on police activity during the demonstrations and the regulations on the use of firearms, as well as to provide the serial numbers and indicate the types of weapons issued to police officers at the relevant time. Crime scenes, at the National Bank building and in Instytutska Street, had been examined and some parts of sniper weapons had been found, as well as cartridges and one bullet. Forensic examinations had been ordered. Mr Makhnitskyi noted that when the case-files had been received from the MoI, they contained nothing except for a copy of the act on examination of a crime site.

As for the events on 30 November 2013 the proceedings in the case, according to him, had been resumed under Article 340 of the CC (hindrance of peaceful demonstration).

In the Lutsenko and Verbytskyi kidnapping case two high-ranking MoI officials had been arrested.

26 February 2014 – O. Makhnitskyi, press conference

(video and transcript are in Ukrainian only)

Summary: Mr Makhnitskyi noted that proceedings had been instituted on 25 February 2014 against former high officials: Messrs Yanukovych, Kliuiev, Pshonka, Zakharchenko, Yakymenko, Shuliak (the head of internal troops) had been issued with notices of suspicion of the organisation of mass killings and abuse of power. Searches had taken place in the Mezhygiria residence, the Presidential Administration and the National Bank. A number of investigative acts had taken place: 12 forensic medical examinations had been ordered; the area of the Ukraina hotel had been examined; investigation officers had begun to study the radio exchanges between the police officers on 18-22 February 2014; and traffic police officers were being questioned. Mr Makhnitskyi noted that the information provided by Mr Moskal on the "Wave" and "Boomerang" operations was being verified. The prosecutors had been instructed to report by 10 March 2014 on their achievements in investigating the cases of killings and injuries on Maidan.

As to the Tetiana Chornovol case, Mr Makhnitskyi stated that the previous PGO officers had transferred the case in respect of two suspects (Messrs Kotenko and Zaliubovskyi) to a court for consideration. The proceedings in respect of Messrs Zinchenko, Kotenko, Khramtsov, Nosikovskiy and two more persons had been disjoined from the above set. The PGO had requested the court to return the case for additional investigation. On 5 February 2014 Mr Zinchenko had been arrested in Moscow and his extradition proceedings were pending.

In the Lutsenko and Verbytskyi kidnapping case one high ranking MoI official had been arrested.

In the Kozak Havryliuk case four police officers had, according to him, “confirmed the ill-treatment of Mr Havryliuk”.

26 February 2014 – O. Makhnitskyi, interview on Radio Svoboda
(*video in Ukrainian only*)

Summary: Mr Makhnitskyi reiterated that all Maidan cases had been investigated by the police and that, when the PGO had received the case-files, it had turned out that nothing had been done in relation to those cases.

26 February 2014 – A. Avakov, press conference
(*video and transcript are in Ukrainian only*)

Transcript in Ukrainian and [English](#).

13 March 2014 – O. Makhnitskyi, M. Golomosha, O. Baganets, press conference
(*video and transcript are in Ukrainian only*)

Summary: Mr Makhnitskyi mainly described the criminal proceedings against Mr Yanukovych in respect of property embezzlement, the unlawful seizure of power in 2010 and unlawful calls for the seizure of power on 27 February 2014. All necessary documents for the extradition of Mr Yanukovych had been prepared and Interpol’s response was awaited. Mr Makhnitskyi also confirmed that, among other issues, the involvement of titushky was being investigated.

27 March 2014 – O. Makhnitskyi, interview in a weekly magazine, *Ukrainian Week*
(*text is in Ukrainian only*)

Summary: Mr Makhnitskyi mentioned the lack of personnel available for the Maidan-related investigations. He explained this by referring to the large number of other cases relating to economic crimes and corruption which were the subject of investigation and to the state of conflict. Mr Makhnitskyi reiterated that the investigation was ongoing and that it was very voluminous. Since a number of suspects were missing, it was also dependent on the SSU and MoI, which had special search units.

2 April 2014 – O. Makhnitskyi and O. Baganets, comments posted by the PGO
(*video and transcript are in Ukrainian only*)

Summary: On 2 April 2014 Mr Makhnitskyi and his deputy, Oleksiy Baganets, commented on the investigation of the Maidan killings. It was said that the joint operational searches with SSU and MoI had been conducted and, as a result, a number of Berkut special unit officers had been apprehended. Mr Makhnitskyi said that “nine persons are being worked with” and that this was the unit which had been involved in the killings.

Mr Baganets confirmed that the head of this unit had been arrested. The unit’s aim was to cover the retreat of police forces. Three persons had been arrested and “six persons were worked with”. He added that it was planned to arrest four more persons.

The difficulties in the investigation were noted. In particular, it was noted that this was a unique case and that there had been no methodology for its investigation. Very many people (more than 30,000 police officers) had been involved in the events in question. Internal investigations in the MoI and SSU had taken much time. Mr Makhnitskyi also noted that their predecessors had destroyed the relevant documents.

3 April 2014 – Joint press-conference of PGO (O. Makhnitskyi), MoI (A. Avakov) and SSU (V. Nalyvaichenko)

(video and transcript are in Ukrainian only)

[English translation.](#)

11 April 2014 – O. Makhnitskyi, interview with DW

(text is in Ukrainian only)

Summary: Mr Makhnitskyi reiterated the achievements of the investigation – the arrest of a commander and of ordinary officers - and noted that this had been a case of a criminal organisation, acting on orders from the Presidential Administration, which had been issued to those at a lower level for execution. He further noted that Russian involvement in the events in question was being checked and that there was no evidence in support of various rumours that corpses of the tortured Maidan protesters had been burned in the crematorium or that there were fresh mass graves. When asked whether the PGO was willing to cooperate with the Panel, Mr Makhnitskyi replied that such cooperation was welcomed.

26 April 2014 – O. Baganets, interview on Espresso TV channel

(video and transcript are in Ukrainian only)

[English summary.](#)

30 May 2014 – O. Makhnitskyi, interview to the 5 TV Channel

(video and transcript are in Ukrainian only)

Summary: Mr Makhnitskyi stated that the case, which had been opened under the former Prosecutor General, Mr Pshonka, following the events of 30 November 2013, had been investigated “quite objectively”. In his view this had been done since the Amnesty Law had later allowed the guilty persons to evade responsibility. When he had been appointed an Acting Prosecutor General, the case was re-examined and new proceedings had been instituted under Article 340 of the CC.

As for the killings on 18-20 February 2014, Mr Makhnitskyi said that around 1,500 investigation actions had been performed in the case and around 1,000 questionings had taken place. According to him, the PGO had had to count on its own resources since all police officers were deployed in the East. He reiterated that three Berkut officers had been arrested and said that the case would be sent to the court in June.

3 June 2014 – O.Makhnitskyi, press conference

(video and transcript are in Ukrainian only)

Summary: Mr Makhnitskyi indicated that it had been most urgent to deal with unlawful criminal and administrative proceedings against the protesters. All relevant decisions had been reviewed and 328 protesters had been released. Proceedings had been instituted against judges, prosecutors and police officers. Cases on the killings and infliction of injuries on Maidan had all been joined and transferred to the investigating officers of specially important cases in the PGO. High officials had been issued with notices of suspicion and three Berkut officers had been arrested.

Mr Makhnitskyi further reported that the PGO was investigating numerous corruption cases, including 28 cases against high officials. 675 cases had been instituted in respect of sabotage, terrorist acts and threats to territorial unity. 412 persons were suspects in those cases.

13 June 2014 – O. Makhnitskyi and O. Bahanets, briefing

(text is in Ukrainian only)

[English translation.](#)

19 June 2014 – V. Yarema, press conference

(transcript is in Ukrainian only)

Summary: On 19 June 2014 the newly appointed PG, Vitalii Yarema, gave a press conference. He briefly stated that the case of the Maidan killings was top priority in Ukraine. He noted that for some time the case against the Berkut officers had not been sent to the court and that he would check this issue.

Mr Yarema also spoke about the meetings with the relatives of the Heaven's Hundred. He announced that the next meeting would take place on 20 June 2014 and requested the lawyers not to come:

“This meeting will be closed. I would even ask the lawyers not to come: we will speak about such things as the problems of those people and probably they do not want that the whole society learns about it. So around 200 persons will be present as well as the Minister of the Social Policy, the Minister of Health and all interested officials”.

18 July 2014 –V. Yarema, interview published in the web-newspaper, *Ukrainska pravda*

(text is in Ukrainian only)

Summary: Mr Yarema said that the meeting with the Heaven's Hundred relatives would take place on 23 July 2014. He further said that the guns which had been used for the shooting of protesters had been destroyed and that the majority of the persons implicated had fled to the Russian Federation or to Crimea. Messrs Yanukovych, Kliuiev, Portnov, Pshonka had been put on a wanted list as had the middle level officials such as the Head of the Berkut officers, Kusiuk, and the senior police officers, Mazan and Koriak.

Mr Yarema noted five episodes of shootings. According to him, those episodes were being investigated by “different services and different investigation sub-units”. The main episode concerned the events of 20 February when the majority of people (77 persons) had been killed on Maidan and on Instytutska Street. The Kyiv Berkut officers had been involved in

those events. The PGO had established those killers and three officers had been arrested. Mr Yarema also stated that three persons had been killed on 18 February 2014 in the Mariinskyi Park, allegedly by titushky.

In respect of the setting on fire of the Trade Union Building, Mr Yarema said the following:

“two persons who were burned there have been identified. This was done by the Alpha unit which was in charge of pushing the protesters out of the building. The issues of who set the building on fire and how those persons died are being investigated”.

Mr Yarema finally said that the killings on Hrushevskoho Street were being investigated jointly with the MoI.

As for the Lutsenko and Verbytskyi kidnapping case, Mr Yarema noted that the abduction had been organised by a certain Chebotariov who was on a wanted list.

As for the Veremii’s murder case Mr Yarema named a certain Sarkisian as the head of a criminal gang responsible for the murder. According to him, Mr Aliiev, a member of this gang, shot Mr Veremii. A person who beat Mr Veremii with a club was currently in pre-trial detention.

29 September 2014 – V. Nalyvaichenko, interview on 112 TV Channel

(video is in Ukrainian only)

Summary: Mr Nalyvaichenko mainly talked about matters related to the anti-terrorist operations. However, he also mentioned that in the cases against Messrs Yanukovych, Klymenko (former Minister of Finance) and Azarov (former Prime-Minister) sufficient evidence had been gathered and notices of suspicion had been given. From now on, the task was to bring these persons back to Ukraine in order to continue with the court proceedings in the case.

Mr Nalyvaichenko also gave the following response to question about the persons responsible for the shooting of people on Maidan:

“The main suspect in the case is the former head of the SSU, Mr Yakymenko, who has fled Ukraine together with all the materials concerning the planning and implementation of the crime of shooting people in the centre of Kyiv. In addition, among the suspects are the heads of departments who directly participated in the planning and realisation of the operation, including as to the deployment of snipers on the roofs and who directly invited foreign, that is Russian, officers of the FSB, who participated in the planning and implementation of the criminal plan in the centre of Kyiv. Criminal cases have been instituted against those persons. All the materials concerning these persons and the cases are with the PGO at the moment. Back in April-May, we, together with Minister Avakov reported to the PGO that we had detained commanders and officers of the special police forces. SSU officers who may have been involved are all in Ukraine and are being questioned by the PGO. Independent investigations and arrests of the MoI and SSU officers have taken place. It is for the court now to answer the question who was involved in the shootings.”

19 November 2014 – PGO press conference

(video and transcript are in Ukrainian only)

Summary: On 19 November 2014 a press conference exclusively on Maidan events was held by the Deputy PG, Oleh Zalisko, the Deputy Head of one of the investigating units of the

Major Crimes Division of the PGO, Vitalii Svirieпов, the Head of the Main Investigation Department of the PGO, Serhii Horbatiuk and his First Deputy Head, Sviatoslav Lagniak.

Mr Zalisko submitted at the beginning that, out of 1,000 prosecutors, only 500 investigation officers were left because of the changes introduced by the previous administration.

In respect of the Maidan crimes it was noted that between 30 November 2013 and 20 February 2014 77 persons had died and more than 900 had been injured. 67 persons had been shot. 181 persons had received firearms injuries and more than 750 persons had received other injuries.

In respect of the killings and firearms injuries more than 2,000 persons had been questioned and 400 examinations of crime scenes, clothes, items and video recordings had been carried out. More than 80 witnesses and 61 victims had participated in reconstructions at the scene of the crime. More than 400 authorisations to access the printouts of telephone communications had been received from the court. 1,140 telephone communications of law enforcement officers, high officials and victims had been checked. More than 100 searches had been performed and more than 1,000 forensic examinations ordered.

It had been established that on 20 February 2014 the majority of the 49 killings had been caused by Kalashnikov weapons, with a 7.62 mm calibre.

1,167 proceedings had been opened. 77 persons had been given notices of suspicion. The following high officials were “held liable”: Messrs Yanukovych, Azarov, Pshonka, Zakharchenko, Ratusniak, Lekar, Shuliak, Yakymenko, Kliuiev, Popov, Zinov, Koriak, as well as a number of police officers (59) and civilians, titushky (11).

The fact that the majority of them had escaped had considerably hindered the investigation. A great deal of evidence had also been destroyed: guns were hidden and investigation materials, as well as documents on police locations, had been destroyed.

By 19 November 2014 47 persons had received notices of suspicion. 21 traffic police officers and two Berkut officers had been held liable for unlawful actions against the AutoMaidan protesters.

Mr Zalisko noted that the most important task was to investigate crimes against peaceful citizens. He further noted that the society was scrutinising their work in this respect. There had been meetings with the initiative groups and with the victims’ lawyers, who had participated in the planning of investigation activity and in the search for victims, so “our work is the result of our joint efforts as well as of certain shortcomings”.

The main case was considered to be the case of shootings on Instytutska Street. Three police officers had been given notices of suspicion. Mr Zalisko noted that the investigation had been very complicated. The police officers had refused to provide any information. A lot of evidence had been received following the analysis of video recordings. The witnesses of the events in question had been established and they had participated in more than 50 reconstructions. The telephone communications of the police officers present on Maidan had been obtained.

Many forensic examinations had been performed, including examinations which had never been done before, such as anthropometric-phototechnic-portrait examination. The persons were identified following the analysis of the body shape, size and forms of various body parts. Three Berkut officers had been identified exclusively through the efforts of the PGO.

Mr Zalisko commented on the decision relating to Mr Sadovnyk's release; criminal proceedings had been instituted against the judge and the case would be transferred to a court for consideration in the nearest future.

A number of other cases were being investigated: the killings of Messrs Nihoian, Zhyznevskiy and Senyk; the killings of five persons in the Mariinskyi Park and in Kripostnyi Lane on 18 February 2014; the killings of 13 persons on the night of 18-19 February 2014, during the storming of Maidan; and the seizure of the Trade Union Building, when two persons died.

Mr Zalisko also indicated that the case against two Members of Parliament, Messrs Oliynyk and Kalietyuk, under the "draconian laws" of 16 January 2014 was being investigated, as well as the case of abuse of power related to the unlawful decision on special means of 22 January 2014. In particular, Mr Zakharchenko and the former Deputy Minister of Interior, Mr Lekar, had unlawfully brought to Ukraine various special means and had spent more than UAH 1 million on customs formalities.

Mr Zalisko provided information on the investigation of crimes against the AutoMaidan protesters and on the unlawful arrests of protesters. In particular, there were 20 criminal cases against judges.

In the Mr Veremii's murder case, in August 2014 the case against Mr Krysin, a person who beat Mr Veremii, had been transferred to a court.

He finally indicated that the investigation officers had had significant difficulties when starting the investigation: there had been no appropriate inspection of crime scenes; and around 90% of all documents had been destroyed.

Mr Svirievov reported on the identification of the firearms. He submitted that the protesters had been killed with modified Kalashnikov weapons. 16 protesters had been killed with such guns. Also the Finnish "Saka-TRG" with a 3.08 mm calibre had been used – a powerful weapon with a very good aiming and length-of-shot feature. The Dragunov sniper rifle was also used. The following weapons had also been used: the Ukrainian "Fort-500" gun, a smoothbore gun for firing rubber bullets and grapeshot, as well as special bullets for stopping cars. In particular, Messrs Senyk and Zhyznevskiy had been killed by such bullets. There was information that the police could have used hunting bullets.

As for the victims, the majority (49 persons) were killed on 20 February 2014; 17 persons were shot on 19 February 2014 and eight persons on 18 February 2014. 182 persons received firearm injuries.

111 ballistics examinations had been carried out. An examination of the Berkut firearms was still pending. Examples of the weapons used by the State Guard Department (the counter-sniper unit group "Grin", which had been deployed on Maidan), and by the Sokil, Alpha, Berkut and Omega units had been taken for examination. There were problems caused by the

fact that weapons had been intentionally taken away or destroyed. The information that those weapons could be in Crimea was being verified.

Mr Lagniak commented on the possible involvement of foreign security service officers at that time in Ukraine. He stated that this information was being verified by the SSU.

As for the Berkut unit on the Instytutska Street, the PGO representatives commented that three persons had been identified and there was evidence of their involvement in 36 killings. It was also established that the unit consisted of 24 persons. The snipers who had been deployed on the roofs had been questioned and had testified that they had not been shooting since they had seen no weapons being used by protesters.

11,000 police officers had been deployed during the Maidan events. Their identities were established but since the deployment documents had been destroyed it was very difficult to identify their exact locations at the material time.

Finally, the PGO representatives underlined that the society should understand the difficulties in the investigation of such cases. However, the investigation officers were working hard. They asked for the assistance of the relatives of the victims and the lawyers since the investigation was not yet over.

8 December 2014 – joint PGO, MoI and SSU press conference

(text is in Ukrainian only)

Summary: Messrs Yarema, Avakov and Nalyvaichenko announced that a special operative-search group was to be created. It included 83 investigation officers and task force officers from the PGO, SSU and MoI. The activity of this group was being coordinated and the above entities would work as one team. There was a separate unit which was in charge of searching for suspects, currently 22 persons.

Mr Yarema noted that the PGO had prepared changes to the CPC since it was quite difficult to investigate crimes and to arrest somebody under the current CPC.

Mr Yarema further said that 138 employees had been fired under the Lustration Act and 300 more would be fired. He noted that the victims, their relatives and the relatives of the Heaven's Hundred had been systematically informed about the course of investigation. In his view this had even been done in breach of the secrecy of the investigations and the current CPC. Moreover, there were objective difficulties caused by the necessity to combine the investigations and the lustration process.

According to him, the suspects in killings on 18-20 February 2014 case were studying the casefile materials.

Mr Avakov stated that the Tetiana Chornovol case had been solved – three persons had been arrested and three more were on a wanted list.

He further said that the Lutsenko and Verbytskyi kidnapping case had been solved – two persons had been arrested and nine more were on a wanted list.

The Veremii's murder case had been investigated by a joint group of the PGO and MoI. In respect of one assailant the case had been transferred for consideration to a court. In respect of other persons the investigation was nearly complete and some others were on an international wanted list.

10 December 2014 – V. Yarema, interview to the web newspaper *Ukrainska Pravda*

(text is in Ukrainian only)

Summary: Mr Yarema said that he met the Heaven's Hundred relatives very often. He was looking for businessmen who could help the families. There were also meetings with investigation officers and lawyers. Sometimes the meetings lasted for four hours and were very difficult.

He stated that former authorities were in Russia and they were being searched for by the MoI and SSU. Mr Yarema noted difficulties in the cooperation with Interpol. SSU was also looking for Mr Sadovnyk.

As for the Maidan cases, the information provided at the time of the press-conferences of 19 November 2014 and 8 December 2014 was repeated. Mr Yarema reiterated that there had been problems in cooperation with MoI but that the work was now proceeding smoothly. By way of example, he noted that, at Sadovnyk's court hearing, there had been Berkut officers in plain clothes who had been harassing the Heaven's Hundred relatives. Mr Avakov had been requested to react to this episode but he had answered that there had been no breaches of the law. Now, however, all problems had disappeared.

As for the difficulties in investigation Mr Yarema noted that there were no weapons and that police officers had given no useful evidence. 150 Berkut officers had left Ukraine and the remaining Berkut officers had been sent to the anti-terrorist operation in the East.

It was established that 21 persons had participated in the killings. It had been possible to identify three persons and the remaining officers had fled.

18 December 2014 – V. Yarema, interview on 5 TV Channel

(video is in Ukrainian only)

Summary: According to Mr Yarema, the best specialists were in the Main Investigation Department. The Maidan related investigation was a unique case: 77 persons killed between 18 and 20 February and many injured persons and more than 3,500 victims over the whole of Ukraine.

Cases concerning Kozak Havryliuk, Veremii, Verbytskyi and Lutsenko were already pending before the courts. The accused Berkut officers had been studying the case-file for two months, so the case would soon be submitted to the court for consideration on the merits. There was a criminal case against the judge who had released Mr Sadovnyk, which would also soon be submitted to the court.

Recently a Special Investigation Department had been created with 83 employees, including employees provided also by the SSU and MoI. The Head of the Department was Mr Horbatiuk.

Mr Yarema noted that there had been consultations with the Heaven's Hundred lawyers.

As for lustration, 138 prosecutors had been dismissed including four former deputies of the PGO.

30 January 2015 – V. Yarema, interview in a magazine, *Novoye Vremya*
(text is in Ukrainian only)

Summary: Mr Yarema stated that all Maidan cases had been joined. The qualification of the crimes committed now included “Creation of a criminal organisation”, “Separatism”, “Actions aimed at the forcible change or overthrow of the constitutional order or take-over of the government” as well as the killing of a large number of persons. According to Mr Yarema, Mr Yanukovich and his “assistants” were accused of committing those crimes, so the international law enforcement bodies could assist Ukraine in the extradition process. Economic crimes were also included in this casefile. Since, after Maidan, the society wanted an immediate reaction, the investigative acts at that time had been performed hastily and had not produced positive results. No criminal proceedings had been instituted for economic crimes. Therefore, problems had arisen in putting suspects on the international wanted list and Interpol considered that the prosecution of certain persons had a political character. That was why Mr Yanukovich had not been put on an international wanted list for more than ten months. The case against Mr Yanukovich initially concerned an accusation under Article 115 CC (Murder) but Interpol decided that this was a political case.

Mr Yarema further stated that in March-April 2014 the MoI had named 16 Berkut officers in connection with the killings. However, only three had been detained. According to him, this was the fault of Mr Makhnitskyi.

According to him, Mr Yurii Ivaniushchenko had, among others, been charged with abuse of power.

As for corruption in the PGO, in a period of seven months, nine prosecutors had been accused of corruption. 154 persons in the PGO had been lustrated. According to Mr Yarema, more than 40% of all those lustrated were in the law enforcement bodies. There were dozens of cases of economic crimes currently pending against the present authorities.

2 February 2015 – V. Yarema and A. Avakov, joint briefing
(video and text are in Ukrainian only)

Summary: Mr Yarema reported that the investigation into the events of 30 November 2013 (when Berkut officers attacked the protesters with the aim of dispersing them, resulting in a total of 90 victims, including 17 students) had progressed so as to enable the organisers and executors of the crime to be identified. In particular, four former Berkut commanders had been served with notices of suspicion. According to him, Mr Zakharchenko, together with his deputies and heads of the MoI Kyiv Department, were the organisers of the crime.

The investigation into the events during the night of 18/19 February 2014 (when a group of persons shot the protesters, killing two and inflicting firearm injuries on eight persons, on the corner of Volodymyrska and Velyka Zhytomyrska Streets) had also advanced. It had been established that the then Minister of the Interior, Zakharchenko and the then Head of the MoI Department of Material Support, Zinov, as well as Armen Sarkisian, Viktor Zubrytskyi and Mr Koshelev, had set up a criminal group with the aim of blocking the protesters’ access to Mykhailivska Square, using firearms.

As a result four persons had been arrested; the organisers and some perpetrators of the crime had been put on a wanted list. The firearms allegedly used during the night of 18/19 February

2014 had been seized and the forensic ballistics reports on them were awaited. It had also been established that, in order to suppress the protesters, the criminal group had used fighters (so-called “titushky”) from several regions of Ukraine. Mr Boiko, acting upon instructions from Mr Koshelev, had been in charge of the logistic support. The MoI was currently taking measures to find those titushky, arrest and charge them.

A week before, Mr Bilokon, the former prosecutor of Sumy region who instituted criminal proceedings against those protesters who had joined the demonstrations in Kyiv, had been served with a notice of suspicion.

Mr Avakov stated that by this day the investigation had established the way in which the titushky had been transported to, organised and deployed in Kyiv. The investigation had collected relevant supporting evidence in the form of photo, video and audio files, intercepted communications, and witness testimonies.

Mr Avakov produced an audio recording of telephone conversations between Messrs Boiko and V. on 17 and 18 February 2014 (arranging for the recruitment of titushky from Bila Tserkva and Kyiv and including the number of people, the price, the meeting point, transportation, etc.) and between Messrs Boiko and P. on 17 and 18 February 2014 (discussing the number of available titushky).

According to Mr Avakov, there were many similar audio files. Furthermore the investigation had collected “irrefutable” evidence that Mr Zinov had supplied titushky with MoI firearms. He then showed a photograph of a Kalashnikov rifle seized from an arrested titushky and a photograph of the firearms seized after a recent house search. According to him, the authorities had already seized an arsenal of firearms which had been used in clashes with the protesters in Mariinskyi Park, Sofiiivska Square and Mykhailivska Street.

Mr Avakov went on to produce charts on the structure of the titushky group. At the top of it was the then Minister of the Interior, Zakharchenko who was wanted by the Ukrainian authorities. He had instructed two persons: MoI official Zinov, who was also wanted by the Ukrainian authorities, and Viktor Zubrytskyi, who was wanted by Interpol. The last two had themselves coordinated the titushky, through Armen Sarkisian, also wanted by Interpol and his assistants, Mr Krysin, against whom court proceedings were pending, and Mr Koshelev, who was wanted by Interpol. At a lower level were six persons in charge of the recruitment of fighters, their transportation, etc. Three of those six persons were wanted by Interpol (Messrs Boiko, Potorocha and Maksiura) and the others had already been arrested (Messrs Heban, Pohrebnoi and Kostenko).

In fact, the investigation authorities had more information than previously shown. In particular, the authorities had restored the documents which were burned at the office of Party of Regions. Those documents contained lists of the persons involved, money paid, etc. The authorities were currently taking measures to identify those persons, interrogate them and analyse the information obtained in order to be able to take further steps.

There were some problems in putting Mr Zakharchenko on an Interpol wanted list because Interpol considered the charges against him (crimes against “the people” and terrorist acts) to be of a political nature. However, discussions on this matter were ongoing and, as many of suspects had already been put on an Interpol wanted list, Interpol was seemingly on the side of the Ukrainian authorities.

Mr Yarema added that he had served notices of suspicion of having rendered arbitrary judgments on two judges of the Pecherskyi District Court of Kyiv, Messrs Kytsiuk and Tsarevych, who had annulled the driving licences of the AutoMaidan protesters during the demonstrations in 2013-2014. Later, in reply to a question from a journalist, Mr Yarema stated that he had additionally applied to the High Qualification Commission of Judges of Ukraine to have those judges dismissed.

6 February 2015 – V. Yarema, speech in the Verkhovna Rada

(text is in Ukrainian only)

Summary: Mr Yarema gave an overview of the most serious crimes being investigated by the PGO. He started with a description of the criminal group set up by Mr Yanukovych, with Mr Yanukovych at the top, then several levels of allies, and titushky at the bottom. He gave examples of the crimes committed by that group - unlawful constitutional reform and seizure of power, embezzlement of State funds and other financial crimes, and persecution of opponents. A total of 2,500 sets of proceedings relating to those events had been instituted as a result.

The most serious were the Maidan-related crimes. In that context about 1,000 sets of proceedings were pending, including 250 sets relating to killings and over 500 to abuse of power. The following measures had been taken:

- about 3,000 persons had been interrogated;
- about 600 site inspections and over 1,000 forensic examinations had been carried out;
- 8 indictments concerning killing and ill-treatment of Maidan protesters had been forwarded to court;
- notices of suspicion had been served on over 100 persons, including high-ranking officials, such as Messrs Yanukovych, Azarov and Pshonka.

Mr Yarema also provided information on international cooperation with other States and international organisations, assistance in criminal cases, the imposition of sanctions, and the freezing of assets.

The PGO, together with the MoI and SSU, were prosecuting a chairman of a regional council, two heads of a regional State administration, one regional prosecutor, seven heads of MoI regional offices, 50 former Berkut officers, traffic police and Internal Troops, and 12 titushky, for Maidan-related crimes.

As to the persecution of AutoMaidan activists, it had been established that the authorities had forged 613 protocols and held liable 291 AutoMaidan activists. By now 235 sets of proceedings had been instituted in relation to those events and 26 indictments against 25 persons, most of them being traffic police officers, had been submitted to the court.

16 February 2015 – V. Shokin, briefing

(video is in Ukrainian only)

Summary: Mr Shokin, reaffirming his promise about the priority status given to the Maidan-related cases, reported that he had firstly dismissed his deputy, who had supervised those cases, and Mr Lahaniak, the First Deputy Head of the MID, as well as reorganising the structure of the PGO.

He further announced the appointment of two new Deputy Prosecutors General – Messrs Huzyr and Sakvarelidze.

(In reply to a question whether the investigation led by PGO confirmed the results of a BBC investigation, according to which armed persons had fired at the police first and thereby provoked the police to open fire in reply) Mr Shokin stated that the PGO did not have evidence in support of such allegations.

(In reply to a question whether the contact with the families of those killed during the Maidan events would be maintained in the course of the further investigation) Mr Shokin promised that he would in that respect follow the same policy as Mr Yarema.

(In reply to a question as to PGO's reaction to possible withdrawal of EU sanctions) Mr Shokin stated that two Deputy Prosecutors General, Sakvarelidze and Kasko, would be in charge of that matter and that the PGO would in general do its best to prevent such withdrawal.

(In reply to a request to give more names of prospective suspects) Mr Shokin stated that he could not give further names at present because of the risk of undesirable consequences. But there were certain cases which would, according to him, be completed in the very near future.

(In reply to a question whether the case against the organisers of the titushky was still being investigated, especially given that the names of Messrs Ivaniushchenko and Chebotariov, previously associated with the titushky, had disappeared from the recent speeches of Messrs Yarema and Avakov) Mr Shokin considered that it was not appropriate to give any names since that would obstruct the investigation. As for the names mentioned, the cases against them were pending. The list of names being investigated was in fact much longer. In a recent meeting with regional prosecutors he had instructed them to check their subordinates' possible involvement in Maidan-related crimes.