

Strasbourg, December 2015

**Open letter from European Parliamentarians in support of Ukrainian journalist
Ruslan KOTSABA**

We, Members of the European Parliament, are calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Ruslan KOTSABA, a journalist jailed in Ukraine since February 7, 2015, simply for doing his work.

Two days after his arrest, Amnesty International stated that it considers Kotsaba to be a prisoner of conscience. Ruslan Kotsaba is prosecuted for "Betrayal of the Motherland" according to article 111 part 1 of the Ukrainian Criminal Code. The court has regularly prolonged his pre-trial detention.

Ukraine, as an upcoming candidate country to join the EU is obliged to respect the right to freedom of expression as set out in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers.

Members of the European Parliament:

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Yana TOOM (ALDE group)

Andrejs MAMIKINS (S&D group)

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