

## **Ukrainian Journalist Missing in Donbass**

\*\*\*

In early June 2017, friends and family lost contact with Mr Stanyslav Aseev, journalist. Ukrainian bloggers and journalists were the first to report his disappearance on 7 June 2017.

On 11 June 2017, given the disappearance of Mr Aseev, the National Union of Journalists of Ukraine addressed the Office of the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media requesting the observers of the OSCE to help clarify the fate of the journalist in the city of Donetsk.

On 8 June 2017, the Darnytskyi Police Department of the Directorate General of the National Police in Kyiv received a statement from Mr D. Kaplunov on taking action in order to establish the whereabouts of Mr Aseev, resident of the city of Donetsk, who didn't get in touch since 2 June 2017.

On 9 June 2017, the Darnytskyi Police Department submitted relevant information to the Single Registry of Pretrial Investigations and subsequently initiated relevant criminal investigation based on the elements of crime under Article 115 para 1 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine.

On 18 June 2017, the said Police Department opened a special investigative case regarding Mr Aseev. In the framework of this case, actions on establishing his whereabouts are being carried out and information which may help find the latter is being ascertained.

In addition, the information on the disappearance of Mr Aseev in the temporarily occupied territory of Ukraine has been provided to the Joint Centre on the Coordination of Search and Release of Illegally Imprisoned Individuals, Hostages and on the Establishment of Whereabouts of Missing Persons in the Area of the Anti-Terrorist Operation, which operates under the Security Service of Ukraine.

The case of Mr Aseev is under special monitoring procedure by the National Police of Ukraine.

For a month and a half the fate of Stanyslav Aseev had remained unknown.

On 4 July 2017, Iryna Gerashchenko, Vice Chairman of the Parliament of Ukraine and representative of Ukraine in the humanitarian subgroup of the Trilateral Contact Group for the settlement of the situation in the East of Ukraine, reported that representatives of the so-called "DPR" and "LPR" were ignoring all Kyiv's requests about the fate of the hostages, in particular regarding the fate and whereabouts of Stanyslav Aseev.

Only July 16th, it became known that the journalist was kept by the so-called "Ministry of State Security of DPR". In a written confirmation to the family and friends of Stanyslav Aseev, the so-called "Ministry" officially confirmed that he was detained. He is accused of espionage like all other journalists detained before.

Ukraine condemns the illegal detention of journalists by the terrorist groups operating in non-Government controlled areas of Ukraine and demands their release. The Government of Ukraine will continue to take appropriate action in order to release journalist Stanyslav Aseev from captivity.

\*\*\*