

## **Ukraine scheduled an early parliamentary election**

### **Political and civil rights in Ukraine. May 20-26, 2019**

*The new president of Ukraine took the oath and announced the dissolution of the Verkhovna Rada. An early parliamentary election is scheduled for July 21st in Ukraine, the preparation for which has already begun. At the same time, the courts continue to delay the consideration of cases for political reasons. For more than 5 years, a number of accused persons have been in a pre-trial detention center without a sentence, and there is no progress in the courts in relation to their cases.*



On May 20th, during the inauguration ceremony in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, the newly elected President Vladimir Zelensky swore an oath to the people and became the sixth President of Ukraine. One of the first decisions of the newly elected president was the dissolution of the VIII convocation of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. An early parliamentary election is scheduled for July 21st. The election will be held in accordance with the old electoral legislation, since on May 22nd people's deputies disrupted consideration of changes to the law on the election of people's deputies.

On May 24th in Ukraine the electoral process for the early parliamentary election was officially launched. The “Uspishna Varta” human rights platform intends to monitor the electoral process as an official observer.

### **INCITING ETHNIC ENMITY AND HATRED**

The State Bureau of Investigation (GBR), in response to the complaint of “Uspishna Varta”, initiated criminal proceedings under Article 161 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine (incitement of ethnic hatred) against the people's deputy of Ukraine Nina Yuzhanina, who acted in a preliminary agreement with Oksana Zabuzhko, Ivan Malkovich, and other unidentified persons from the headquarters of the candidate for the post of President of Ukraine Petro Poroshenko. The decision to file this case on a mandatory basis in the Unified Register of Pre-Trial Investigations (URPI) on April 26th was made by the Shevchenkovsky Court of Kiev.

As a reminder, this concerns the distribution of campaign material in the form of the newspaper “April 21st, VOTE”, which was distributed in Kiev and other Ukrainian cities by volunteers/representatives of the headquarters of Petro Poroshenko. According to the lawyers of “Uspishna Varta”, the authors of the published materials, in a preliminary agreement, publicly and through the media called the citizens who voted for Vladimir Zelensky “contaminated biomass”, “malorossiyans”, and supporters of Vladimir Putin.

### **FREEDOM OF WORLD VIEW AND RELIGION**

On May 26th, during the day, the parishioners of the Svyato-Uspensky temple of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (UOC) in the village of Vaslovovtsy in the Chernovtsi region opposed an attempted raider capture of the church. According to them, “activists” of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine (OCU), under the leadership of officials at the district and regional levels, came to the

gate of the temple with a grinder to cut the locks. But the police officers that arrived at the scene were able to save the temple from capture. The parishioners of the Svyato-Uspensky temple of the UOC appealed to the President of Ukraine Vladimir Zelinsky with a request to protect them from the atrocities committed against them by the “activists” of the OCU.

## MONITORING OF HUMAN RIGHTS CASES

On May 22nd, a hearing on the case of **General Aleksandr Shchegolev** was held in the Shevchenkivskyi Court of Kiev. During the hearing the prosecutors, on behalf of the representative of the victims during the clashes on Independence Square in 2013-2014 Evgeniya Zakrevskaya, requested to change the order of the hearing - they asked the court to continue to hear the testimonies of the witnesses. The court rejected the motion and continued the investigation of the evidence. Following the hearing, the court extended the measure of restraint in the form of the detention imposed on Aleksandr Shchegolev for another 60 days. The next hearing is scheduled for May 30th. Recall that General Aleksandr Shchegolev has been in jail for more than 3 years. More about his case can be read [here](#).

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The court extended for 2 months the measure of restraint imposed on the “**translator of Groysman**” **Stanislav Ezhov**, who is accused of state treason. The Goloseevskyi District Court of Kiev made this decision on May 23rd. The previous hearing took place 2 months ago. As was stated by the lawyer of Ezhov, the court does not consider the case on its merits, but only appoints hearings to extend the measure of restraint. Recall that Stanislav Ezhov has been in jail for 1 year and 5 months without any alternative. More details about his case can be read [here](#).

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On May 23rd a hearing was held in the Central District Court of Nikolaev on the **case of Sergey Dolzhenkov and Evgeny Mefedov**, who are accused of organising the Odessa-Nikolaev motor rally on March 28th 2014. From the witnesses filed by the prosecution, only one has appeared at a hearing - an employee of the patrol police service of the Primorsky territory. According to the witness, none of the participants of the rally committed any violent acts. He had not seen specifically Dolzhenkov and Mefedov before. During the hearing the lawyer requested

that the court oblige the prosecutor to bring 10 out of 49 witnesses to the next hearing and remove the charges against Dolzhenkov and Mefedov under Article 110 due to the statute of limitations. The prosecutor did not object to the motion of the lawyer. The court ruled that it would decide on this case in the deliberation room before sentencing. The next hearing is scheduled for the beginning of June 2019. Recall that Sergey Dolzhenkov and Evgeny Mefedov have been imprisoned for more than 4 years without a court sentence. More about their case can be read [here](#).



On May 24th the Dneprovsky court of the city of Kiev did not find the grounds to take into custody the **volunteer Aleksandr Mekha**, who the SBU suspects of encroaching on the territorial integrity of Ukraine for allegedly publishing and administering groups on social networks.

In 2014 the resident of Kiev Aleksandr Mekha travelled to Donetsk with a volunteer mission. According to Mekha, the volunteer organization “Donbass Development Center”, on whose behalf he travelled to the non-controlled territories, collaborated with “UNICEF Ukraine” and “People in Need”. On May 15th 2019 officers of the SBU came to the apartment of Aleksandr Mekha for a search. According to their version of events, after returning from Donetsk, Mekha posted provocative information from the group “Our Novorossiya” in one of the groups on the social networking site Facebook, where he was the administrator. For this he was charged with suspicion under Article 110 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine. Aleksandr Mekha denies any involvement in the suspicion. Employees of the SBU, without giving their details, tried to persuade the suspect to make a deal, but Mekha refused. On May 24th the court decided to leave Mekha free, citing the absence of grounds for taking him into custody. Commentary by the lawyer Valentin Rybin can be found [here](#).

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On May 17th 2019 in the Kuibyshevsky district court of the Zaporozhye region a regular hearing was held on the case of the **businessman Andrey Tatarintsev**, who is accused of financing terrorism by transferring diesel fuel to a children's hospital located on the part of the Lugansk region not controlled by Ukraine. Before the beginning of the hearing, Tatarintsev told the coordinator of “Uspishna Varta” that, for the first time in 1.8 years of being in custody, he was offered food in the pre-trial detention center in the morning

before leaving for trial, but it contained carbohydrates that the accused is forbidden from consuming. Also, Tatarintsev complained that in the pre-trial detention center the pills needed for treatment are given selectively. At the beginning of the hearing the lawyer asked to call an ambulance for the accused. When the doctors arrived they determined that his blood sugar level was 14.2, and that his pressure and temperature were elevated. The court decided to postpone the hearing until May 29th.

*Remember that you can contact the human rights defenders of “Uspishna Varta”:  
by calling the toll free hotline number: 0 800 20 40 04  
by sending an email to: [info@uspishna-varta.com](mailto:info@uspishna-varta.com)  
by sending a message to the social network page: [facebook.com/UspishnaVarta](https://facebook.com/UspishnaVarta)*