



# Ukraine needs help!

## Ukraine protests: 70 protesters killed, 500 wounded in Kiev

### What happened?

Thursday, Feb 20 was the deadliest day yet at the sprawling protest camp on Kiev's Independence Square, also called the Maidan. Snipers were seen shooting at protesters there and video footage showed at least one sniper wearing a Ukraine riot police uniform. Other videos show police officers shooting protesters using automatic rifles. Dozens of protesters have been killed by gunfire.

Earlier, on the 18th of February, in Kyiv, in the center of Europe, the demonstration which started as a peaceful march, was drowned in the blood of innocent people.

People have been injured in the clashes in the government quarter and on the Maidan (Independence square) in Kyiv, when the government and security forces did not allow protesters to peacefully block the parliament. Moreover, the security forces were the first to spread traumatic fire onto the demonstrators, and cover the paid thugs of athletic frame (called "titushki"), who threw explosives into the crowd. The titushki, operating under the protection of the police, also attacked activists on the Maidan and harassed people on the city streets.



The Kiev city administration said 75 people had now died in clashes since Tuesday, Feb 18.

Many died as a result of gunshot wounds, including sniper fire.

Hospitals are overcrowded. Kyiv subway is unlawfully closed (for the first time in its history), and roads leading to the city from all sides are blocked. In fact, the state of emergency has been introduced (however, without any official announcement). Yanukovych government kills innocent people, calling it an "anti-terrorist action", and refuses to meaningfully negotiate with the opposition and foreign leaders.

Doing this, Yanukovych declared war on the Ukrainian people! People die, but do not leave the Maidan. On the contrary: in all the regions of Ukraine, people take under control governmental buildings and ride to Kyiv in groups. Kyiv residents and people from all the regions, women, students, artists, members of the opposition – all people who stand on the Maidan – are desperate to get rid of the criminal government of Yanukovych.

## What does the Maidan stand for?

The first meeting was held on 21 November 2013 – people gathered to defend the perspective of European integration for Ukraine. Hundreds of thousands arrived later after 30 November when 'Berkut' (militarized riot unit of police) had brutally beaten the students who peacefully protested on the Maidan. People called for resigning of the Government and for punishment of the policemen guilty of beating the people on Nov 30 and Dec 1 and 11. Yet, the government has ignored people's demands for almost three months, and the demands became more focused. Now people stand for total replacement of criminal regime, which orders killing of people. People call for resignation of the President and new elections, amendments to the Constitution of Ukraine (in 2004 edition which would decrease a part of Presidential powers) and for the appointment of new Government, which would implement a program of badly needed economic reforms, that were neglected by Yanukovich.

## WHO COMMITS VIOLENCE?

The riot police unit 'Berkut' was the first to commit violence. These units have been thrown against peaceful students who even didn't expect any violence and were sleeping on Maidan on 30 November. Later on 'Berkut' became the most violent unit of police, which committed deliberate violence again towards peaceful people – during well-known attack on 22 January 2014, where first people were killed by gunfire. Now police do not hide the fact that they use military ammunition and re-make noise grenades into military ones (attaching stones or metal debris to explosive parts). People defend with whatever they could find, no guns in their hands.

## Who finances the Maidan?

People standing on the Maidan get support from all parts of Ukraine. This is another example of serious self-organization of Ukrainian civil society. People, including security guards and medical workers, volunteer there 24 hours to the Maidan. People donate warm cloth, medicine, food, money.



Hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians took to the streets here for many weeks in row, blockading government buildings and demanding that President Viktor Yanukovich fire his cabinet and reject plans to form a closer alliance with Russia.

## How US Government can help?

The crisis could be partially downgraded by Ukrainian Parliament, where part of its members are being controlled by Ukrainian oligarchs. We call the Western countries to ban entry for these Ukrainian public officials (including Yanukovich) who are guilty of violence committed against peaceful people. We also call for anti-money laundering measures, including bank accounts freezing for Yanukovich and his close fellows, and for the investigations into the origin of their money and property abroad.

## How you can help?

If you have any ways of bringing media attention through radio, tv, newspaper, social networking – this is a huge help because it increases the awareness of this cause. If you can spread the word on your facebook pages and have your friends and family do the same, the momentum will be great and widespread.

Also, you can call or email your State Senator and Representative and ask to support this initiative.

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