



PRESS CONFERENCE

# ON THE INVESTIGATION INTO THE CREATION AND OPERATION OF THE “MGB DNR” SECRET PRISON

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**On September 2nd, 2019 at 02:00 pm a press conference will be held at Ukrinform (8/16, Bohdan Hmelnytskyi street) demanding an open and impartial trial of Roman Lyagin, for his involvement in the creation of a secret prison "MGB DNR" and in the organization of the Donetsk referendum in 2014.**

**Speakers:**

Dmytro Potiekhin (blogger, the former prisoner of a secret prison of "Donetsk People's Republic" at IZOLYATSIA\*), Igor Kozlovskyy

Oksana Sarzhevska-Kravchenko (director of IZOLYATSIA Foundation)

Oleksandra Matviychuk (Center for Civil Liberties)

Olga Reshetylova (Media Initiative for Human Rights)

Volodymyr Yefymenko ("Golovan & Partners" Law firm)

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**Factsheet:**

In spring 2014 Roman Lyagin was in charge of holding a referendum to establish a separatist republic in Donetsk region. In June 2014 he was at the helm of seizing the territory of Izolyatsia insulation factory based in Donetsk. These events later led to almost eight hectares of the area legally leased by the International Charitable Foundation IZOLYATSIA and by other commercial enterprises being transformed into the secret prison of the "Ministry of the State Security of Donetsk People's Republic". Since that time the exhibition spaces, the laboratory for the digital production, the library and the lecture halls of the Foundation have been used as a secret prison, the existence of which has been unconfirmed by the leaders of "Donetsk People's Republic" thus making the access to its premises unapproachable for the international, humanitarian and human rights missions. However, its existence is reported in accounts of former prisoners who were lucky to regain freedom, confirming that the territory of IZOLYATSIA was transformed for prison where people are detained against their will, tortured and compelled to forced labor. Roman Lyagin was directly privy to the seizure of the territory of IZOLYATSIA Foundation in Donetsk and its further transformation for prison.

He is also an important witness, who will be able to reveal the details on the referendum organization, establishment of "Donetsk People's Republic" and the involvement of the Russian

special forces in the formation of the "puppet" republics in the Donbas. The information obtained from Lyagin may contribute to a process of building evidence of participation of Russian Federation in the military aggression against Ukraine and duly prove that fact in the international courts afterwards.

**On September the 3rd 2019 at 03:30 pm the court hearing will be held on the case of Roman Lyagin at the Shevchenkivskiy District Court of Kyiv (31A, Dehtyarivska street).** The risk still remains that the law enforcement agencies make efforts to close the hearing to the general public in order to reach an agreement with Lyagin for mutual cooperation on conditions which by virtue of being unknown, are highly likely to be totally unacceptable for those who suffered. The closed court hearing of such a high-profile case is an unhealthy precedent for the future as similar investigations will only continue after the war with the Russian Federation is over. In the five years during which the prison of "Donetsk People's Republic" has existed, Ukraine has been unable to either set up an integral case against the functioning of the secret prison, or proceed with a purposeful search for those who witnessed the seizure, those who suffered and those who still keep this illegal entity running. This situation is evidenced by the fact that personnel involved with the operation of the secret prison of "Donetsk People's Republic" easily enter the territory of Ukraine and are not prosecuted by law. According to the testimonies of former prisoners, both the directors and the wardens who previously worked in the prison of "Donetsk People's Republic" and took part in the torture of Ukrainian citizens now live among us and enjoy free movement all over Ukraine.

Additionally, the improper media coverage and investigation of the confinement of the journalist, Stanislav Aseyev, on the territory of this prison will be included in the discussion

**The press conference is organized by:**

**IZOLYATSIA Foundation:**

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\*IZOLYATSIA is a non-profit, non-governmental platform for cultural initiatives, founded in 2010 on the site of a former insulation factory based in Donetsk. The foundation takes its name from the original manufacturer.

In June 2014 the territory was seized by armed representatives of the self-proclaimed 'Donetsk People's Republic'. The foundation was forced to move to Kyiv. To this day, IZOLYATSIA remains focused on the Donbas.

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