

# URGENT ACTION

## MOTHER PLEADS TO FIND HER DISAPPEARED SON

**Dmytro Koroliiov was arrested, convicted and given a suspended five-year sentence in 2015 for joining the separatist forces in eastern Ukraine. His mother claims he was abducted by the Security Service of Ukraine on his “release” from detention on 3 August 2015 and that he has been held in secret detention since. She fears for his safety.**

**Dmytro Koroliiov**, a former Ukrainian riot policeman from Zaporizhzhie in eastern Ukraine, joined the pro-Russian separatist forces in eastern Ukraine in June 2014. A month after joining them he left and returned home. He was arrested on 5 January 2015 and on 2 July 2015 he was convicted of creating an unlawful armed group and dodging conscription. He was given a suspended five-year sentence. On 3 August, the day the court’s decision came into force and he was due to be released, members of Dmytro Koroliiov’s family came to meet him outside the detention centre. Dmytro Koroliiov’s family explained that they waited outside the gate for as long as they could stand the midsummer heat but that at around 2pm they moved to a shadier area from which they could no longer see the gate. At that point, they heard Dmytro Koroliiov crying out for help. They rushed back to the gate, but Dmytro Koroliiov was not there. According to eyewitnesses, a man whose description matched that of Dmytro Koroliiov was apprehended by a group of unknown men while he was leaving the detention centre. He was forced into a car and driven away. The car’s number plate indicated that it likely belonged to the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU). He has been missing since.

Dmytro Koroliiov unexpectedly called his mother in October asking her to urge the *de facto* separatist authorities in Donetsk to include him in the prisoner exchange list. He called her again in April, May, and June, confirming that he was being held in secret detention by the SBU for a prisoner exchange.

Dmytro Koroliiov’s mother reported his abduction to the authorities, and an official investigation into his disappearance was opened on 8 August 2015. She received official replies from the SBU, amongst other agencies, which denied knowledge about Dmytro Koroliiov’s whereabouts after his official release from the detention centre on 3 August 2015.

### **Please write immediately in Ukrainian or your own language urging the authorities to:**

- Reveal Dmytro Koroliiov’s fate and whereabouts after 3 August 2015 to his family, and immediately release him in accordance with the court’s decision of 2 July 2015;
- Immediately end the practice of enforced disappearances, and provide victims with full reparation;
- Bring those responsible for this practice to justice in proceedings that meet fair trial standards.

### **PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 7 SEPTEMBER 2016 TO:**

#### Chief Military Prosecutor of Ukraine

Anatoliy Matios  
Vul. Riznytska 13/15  
01601, Kyiv  
Ukraine  
Fax: +380 44 280 2603  
Email: [press-service@gp.gov.ua](mailto:press-service@gp.gov.ua)  
**Salutation: Dear Mr Matios**

#### Head of SBU

Vasyl Hrytsak  
Volodymyrska St., 35  
01601 Kyiv-34  
Ukraine  
Fax: +380 44 226 3431  
Email: [pressinfo@ssu.gov.ua](mailto:pressinfo@ssu.gov.ua)  
**Salutation: Dear Mr Hrytsak**

#### **And copies to:**

Presidential Commissioner for  
Supervision of the SBU  
A.M. Polyakh  
Vul. Bankova, 11  
01220 Kyiv  
Ukraine  
Email: [polyakh@apu.gov.ua](mailto:polyakh@apu.gov.ua)

**Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.**

**Her Excellency Ms Natalia Galibarenko, Embassy of Ukraine, 60 Holland Park, W11 3SJ**

**Tel: 020 7727 6312 Fax: 020 7792 1708 Email: [emb\\_gb@mfa.gov.ua](mailto:emb_gb@mfa.gov.ua)**

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

On 21 July, Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch published the joint report "*You Don't Exist: Arbitrary Detentions, Enforced Disappearances, and Torture in Eastern Ukraine*" (<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur50/4455/2016/en/>). Amongst other abuses, the report documents cases of enforced disappearance in government-controlled territory. The report provides evidence suggesting that unlawful, unacknowledged detentions have taken place in the SBU's premises in Kharkiv, Kramatorsk, Izyum, and Mariupol. It includes compelling, detailed testimonies by three individuals who claimed that they had been held unlawfully in unacknowledged detention by members of the SBU for periods ranging from six weeks to 15 months.

After the text of the report was finalised, three more cases of alleged enforced disappearance of individuals by SBU officials came to Amnesty International's attention, including that of Dmytro Koroliiov and Oleksandr Dydovych (<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur50/4455/2016/en/>). A June 2016 UN report (see here: [http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/UA/Ukraine\\_14th\\_HRMMU\\_Report.pdf](http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/UA/Ukraine_14th_HRMMU_Report.pdf)) also noted the SBU compound in Kharkiv as an alleged place of unofficial detention.

During official meetings with a number of Ukrainian officials, in July 2016, Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch delegates were told that the SBU does not have detention centres except for one in the capital Kyiv, and that it does not hold individuals in secret. At the same time, the Chief Military Prosecutor of Ukraine gave assurances that all allegations presented in the joint report would be investigated.

In the past, official investigations into alleged human rights abuses by members of Ukrainian forces and so-called volunteer battalions engaged in fighting with the separatist forces in eastern Ukraine were not effective.

One of the former victims of enforced disappearance, Kostyantyn Beskorovaynyi (<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur50/3275/2016/en/>), who was released from secret detention in February 2016 and currently lives on the government-controlled territory in Ukraine, told Amnesty International about the threats and harassment he had faced since his release intended to force him to change his testimony and come up with an alternative explanation for his 15-month absence from home and work.

Prisoner exchanges by the two sides to the conflict in Donbass started in spring 2014 and have been marred by violations of the rights of individuals intended for exchange on both sides. Evidence presented by Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch in the abovementioned joint report suggests that some detainees have effectively become "currency" for exchange.

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