

# Ukraine Opens Criminal Case Against Russia's Investigative Committee

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A man shakes hands with a separatist riding on an armored personnel carrier (APC) during a parade in Luhansk, eastern Ukraine.

Ukrainian prosecutors have opened a criminal case against Russia's Investigative Committee on charges of supporting "terrorist" organizations of pro-Moscow separatists in eastern Ukraine and interference in the country's domestic politics and law enforcement.

The case against the Investigative Committee is connected with that agency's newly founded department in charge of looking into "banned methods and means of war," the Ukrainian Prosecutor General's Office said in a statement Monday.

"The purpose of that department, as evident from its official website, is to bring charges against Ukrainian servicemen for alleged crimes against civilians," the statement said.

The announcement came hours after the Russian Investigative Committee said it was

beginning an investigation against Ukraine's leadership for the "genocide" of Russian speakers in eastern Ukraine.

Russian inquiries are "aimed at assisting terrorist organizations Donetsk People's Republic and Luhansk People's Republic in their criminal activity," the Ukrainian Prosecutor General's Office said in its statement.

"Committing these criminal offenses violates Ukraine's interest, sovereignty and territorial integrity, which are protected by international treaties and laws," the statement said.

The Ukrainian investigation will focus on Russia's detention of Ukrainian military pilot Nadezhda Savchenko — whom Moscow accuses of involvement in the deaths of two Russian journalists in Ukraine — among other alleged Russian wrongdoings, the statement said.

Russia's "groundless prosecution" of Savchenko constitutes "illegal interference in the activity of Ukraine's law-enforcement bodies and armed forces," the statement said. Another charge includes interference with Ukraine's state affairs.

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