

Ukrainian Pilot Savchenko Could Be Charged for Illegally Crossing Russian Border

October 29, 2014



Protesters in Kiev demanding the release of Ukrainian pilot Nadezhda Savchenko.

Ukrainian pilot Nadezhda Savchenko, who claims she was abducted in Ukraine and taken handcuffed to Russia with a sack over her head, may be charged in Moscow for illegally crossing the border, her lawyer said.

"A new case is being sought against Nadezhda Savchenko — for an illegal crossing of the state border," lawyer Nikolai Polozov said Tuesday via Twitter.

An attached photo dated Oct. 17 showed a document signed by a senior official at Russia's Investigative Committee, saying that Savchenko arrived in Russia without proper documents and was being investigated for that offense.

Savchenko's lawyer linked the possible new charge against her with her election to Ukraine's parliament during the Sunday balloting, though the date on the document he posted comes

before the vote.

"Here's the logic of the Russian authorities: Ah, she is a hero of Ukraine, [Ukrainians] have elected her a parliamentary deputy — now have one more case," he said.

Russia accuses Savchenko, a helicopter pilot, of abetting the killing of two Russian journalists who died during a shelling attack in eastern Ukraine on June 17.

Shortly afterward, Savchenko turned up in Russian custody across the border. Russian officials claim she went to Russia voluntarily, posing as a refugee. Savchenko maintains she was abducted.

She was transferred to Moscow's Serbsky Institute of forensic psychiatry early this fall for an evaluation.

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