

Ukrainian President Urges U.S., EU to Join Savchenko Sanctions Initiative

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Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko

The Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko has expressed hope that the United States and the European Union will join the Savchenko-Sentsov sanctions list against Russia, the TASS news agency reported Thursday.

“We have published a list of sanctions against those involved in the Savchenko, Sentsov and Kolchenko cases. I hope that our American and European partners will join this initiative,” Poroshenko was quoted as saying by TASS in Washington, where the Ukrainian President was attending the Nuclear Security Summit.

Poroshenko said that Savchenko “didn’t do anything apart from being an Ukrainian officer protecting her country,” the RIA Novosti news agency reported.

Poroshenko added that Kiev is currently seeking the release of 120 Ukrainian citizens “from captivity” in Ukraine’s Donbass region and dozens of Ukrainians “being held as political prisoners in Moscow,” RIA Novosti reported.

On Wednesday, Poroshenko approved sanctions against those involved in the trials of Ukrainian nationals in Russia. The list includes 84 individuals, including head of the Russian Investigative Committee Alexander Bastrykin, director of the Federal Security Service Alexander Bortnikov and the Crimean prosecutor Natalia Poklonskaya.

The action comes the week after Ukrainian pilot Savchenko was convicted by a Russian court for compliance in the murder of two Russian journalists. She has been sentenced to 22 years imprisonment.

In August 2015, Ukrainian director Oleg Sentsov and activist Alexander Kolchenko received a 20-year and 10-year sentence respectively, on charges of allegedly planning terrorist attacks in Crimea.

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