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Jailed Ukrainians Soloshenko and Afanasyev Ask Putin For Pardon

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Yury Soloshenko and Gennady Afanasyev, Ukrainian citizens convicted in Russia on terrorism and espionage charges, have filed a petition for clemency with Russian President Vladimir Putin, the Interfax news agency reported Monday.

Soloshenko was convicted of espionage and sentenced to six years imprisonment after attempting to buy components for S-300 surface-to-air missile systems in Oct. 2015. Afanasyev was arrested in Crimea and sentenced by the Moscow court last year to seven years in prison for preparing terrorist attacks on the peninsula.

Afanasyev's lawyer, Alexander Popkov, said that his client was urged to write the petition for pardon by Russian representatives. The petition did not admit Afanasyev's guilt, he said.

Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko claimed Sunday there was an agreement between Moscow and Kiev on the release of Soloshenko and Afanasyev, RIA Novosti reported. The next day, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said that “he didn't have enough information to be able to confirm this.”

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