The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

UN Mission Criticizes Probe into Odessa Deaths

May 02, 2019



People take part in an event titled "We Remember" in memory of the victims of the 2014 Odessa clashes, outside the Ukrainian Embassy in Moscow. **Sergei Karpukhin / TASS**

The Ukrainian government has not duly investigated the dozens of deaths that took place when riots led to a trade union house fire in the port city of Odessa five years ago, the United Nations said Thursday.

Forty-two people died in a fire after pro-Russian protesters were trapped in the trade union building on May 2, 2014, and six others were gunned down in clashes. Moscow blames Kiev and its Western backers for the deaths, while Ukraine says the violence was provoked by foreign demonstrators.

Related article: At Least 42 Die in Odessa Clashes

The UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine accused Ukrainian police of failing to find those who started the fire and of selectively investigating the incidents.

“This suggests a lack of genuine interest from the authorities to ensure justice for victims and accountability for perpetrators,” the mission said in a report published Thursday.

Related article: Russian Foreign Ministry Wants 'Impartial' Investigation into Odessa Riots

The UN mission recommended Ukrainian prosecutors, police and judges to ensure effective and impartial investigations and trials into the incidents. It advised other countries, including Russia, to review Ukraine’s extradition requests and provide legal assistance if extraditions cannot be processed.

Russia’s Foreign Ministry accused Ukraine of “persistently impeding” the investigation, leading Moscow to claim that its government is “up to the elbows in blood.”

Around 200 people gathered in Odessa on Thursday to mark the five-year anniversary of the 48 deaths. Around 50 people assembled outside the Ukrainian Embassy in Moscow.

The Ekho Moskvy radio station reported that some of those who gathered outside the Ukrainian embassy did not know what they were protesting.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2019/05/02/un-mission-criticizes-probe-into-odessa-deaths-a65476