



OPEN DIALOG

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# Open Dialog Foundation's 2017 season's greetings and 2016 top achievements

As the Open Dialog Foundation, we would like to thank you for your support during the past year and wish you all the best in your professional and personal life in 2017!

On this occasion we would like also to share with you some of the ODF's top achievements of the year 2016, its initiatives, projects and advocacy campaigns, publications and events to promote, support and protect human rights, democracy and rule of law in the post-Soviet area, as well as our ongoing work for the present year.

## WHAT WAS DONE IN 2016?

### Campaigns...

Since its foundation in 2009, the ODF has constantly monitored the human rights situation in the post-Soviet region and through the preparation of publications and organization of events and meetings, advocated at the European and international levels to raise the attention to problematic general issues and particular cases. In 2016 we continued our work on and for political prisoners and refugees in and from the post-Soviet states including inter alia our main campaigns on the Ukrainian political prisoners in Russia and illegally occupied Crimea ([#LetMyPeopleGo](#) & "[Savchenko List](#)"), as well as on political misuse of [International Criminal Police Organization \(INTERPOL\)](#) and [international legal cooperation](#) by non-democratic countries in order to persecute their opponents and critics abroad.

**...and successes!**

In 2016, thanks to the continued pressure, the international community was able to secure the release of **Vladimir Kozlov**, the first political prisoner of Kazakhstan (August 2016); as well as these of **Nadiya Savchenko** (May 2016) and three other Ukrainian 'hostages of the Kremlin', **Yuriy Soloshenko**, **Gennadiy Afanasyev** (June 2016) and **Hayser Dzhemilev** (November 2016). Also **Yuriy Ilchenko** escaped from illegally occupied Crimea (August 2016). In the same month, **Umyt Hallyyev**, Turkmen independent journalist and former contributor to Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty was granted asylum and the right to family reunification in the Netherlands, while just before that **Gyuzyal Baydalinova**, Kazakh independent journalist and editor of Nakanune.kz was released and her sentence was suspended (July 2016). In December 2016 France refused to extradite to Russia and Ukraine **Mukhtar Ablyazov**, Kazakh businessman and opposition politician, while during the first part of the year **Syrym Shalabayev**, his brother-in-law was denied to be extradited from Lithuania to Kazakhstan and Ukraine (June 2016), as well as **Aleksander Orlov**, Polish investigative journalist and human rights defender was released from custody in Ukraine (May 2016).

## Projects...

In addition to work on the particular human rights cases, the ODF has focused on general issues and had been an active partner within several international grant and didactic projects such as the **Chernobyl VR Project**, the first interactive virtual museum of Chernobyl, Ukraine, in cooperation with The Farm51; the **youth project "Support for young people as a stimulus for the strengthening of democracy in Ukraine"** to help Ukrainian youth to develop a keen interest in political processes and activities and to become engaged in civil societal matters in Ukraine through the promotion of democratic values, in cooperation with the European Exchange and the Federal Foreign Office of Germany, as well as a **report "Years behind bars without judgment: prolonged pre-trial detention in Ukraine in violation of reasonable time of criminal proceedings"**, in cooperation with the Ukrainian Bar Association and the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research.

## ...and agreements.

We are also happy to inform you that on 6 October, 2016 the **ODF has concluded an Amicable Settlement within a lawsuit with the Polish "Wprost" weekly magazine**, filed by the ODF against the magazine, in connection with the publication of a material concerning the Foundation's alleged links with 'the oligarch from Kazakhstan' (Mr Ablyazov) in February 2014.

## WHAT CAN BE DONE IN 2017?

Therefore, the ODF would like to thank you once again for your support and ask for it during the present year. We would be particularly grateful for your interest and assistance in the issues and cases of other **Ukrainian political prisoners in Russia and illegally occupied Crimea**, Kazakh **land reform** protesters **Maks Bokayev** and **Talgat Ayan**, Russian citizen **Tatiana Paraskevich** in the Czech Republic and a Russian businessman **Artur Trofimov** in Austria.

We would like also to raise your particular attention to the most recent: **risk of extradition** of a Russian whistle-blower **Nail Malyutin** from Austria; political persecutions that involved opponents and critics of a Moldovan oligarch Vlad Plahotniuc, including the cases of lawyers and human rights defenders **Ana Ursachi** and **Eduard Rudenco**, as well as the problem of **Ukraine's assistance in the persecution** of other post-Soviet states' political opponents and refugees.

If you would like to read more on our activities in 2016 or be updated on these in 2017, please visit, like or follow us on: [TWITTERFACEBOOK](#)

If you appreciate our work, please also [support us financially](#).

**Gallery: 2016 in photos**