



Warsaw, 29 March, 2016

**The Open Dialog Foundation's position as regards the anonymous study entitled
'8 things you should know about the Open Dialog Foundation'**

In view of the scale of its operations and the significant and growing number of incidents of so-called *hate speech*, the Open Dialog Foundation (ODF) is not able to comment on an ongoing basis on all allegations directed at it, in particular, criticism which is loosely based on fact, as expressed by anonymous authors. At the same time, the ODF takes legal action whenever it identifies and documents violations of its moral rights (e.g. against the publisher of the weekly 'Wprost').

According to available information, the aforementioned study is likely to have a negative impact on the reputation of the ODF among its potential and important partners and lead to denials of cooperation in the implementation of grant projects; therefore, we would like to respond to it in a most comprehensive way.

The study, cited below, contains anonymous allegations against the Foundation; each time, the accusations are presented in a red frame. Every allegation is followed by our official comment on the issues, raised therein.

The aforementioned anonymous study which we received, was produced in the polish language. In this language version, the quotes in the red frames were also translated (for better understanding).

The original study has been sent as an attachment.

1. Ivan Sherstyuk

THE ANONYMOUS ACCUSATION:

8 things you should know about the Open Dialog Foundation

- One of those to establish the Open Dialog Foundation in 2010 was Ivan Sherstyuk (Иван Шерстюк), who, according to reports by the Lviv newspaper 'High Castle', was accused of attempting to hire a paid assassination.

- <http://www.wz.lviv.ua/ukraine/print/123792>
- <http://194.44.10.23/life/print/121682>

In 2005, Ivan Sherstyuk defended his Master's thesis entitled 'Evaluation of the intentions and motives underlying the actions of the main character of the television news in the postconscious priming paradigm' at the Faculty of Social Sciences of Lublin Catholic University; subsequently, a postgraduate student and employee of the LCU (in the academic year 2007/2008).

He also studied philosophy at St. Basil College, Stamford, Ct., USA.

He graduated from School No. 11 in Lviv (Principal: Pavlo Khobzey)

He took part in the local elections in 2010. (the Makarivskiy Election District)

- <http://vk.com/club21063658>
- <http://www.osce.org/home/73453?download-true>
- http://www.kul.pl/19-stycznia-2005,art_2784.html
- http://www.kul.pl/1-pazdziernika-2007,art_6812.html
- <http://plus.google.com/116830306485626439355/about>

THE ODF'S COMMENT:

The Foundation was established in December 2009. In 2010, it was registered in the National Court Register.

Since 2011, Ivan Sherstyuk has not been associated with the ODF or its activities in any way. Since then, neither the Management Board nor the ODF team have maintained any contacts with him. The ODF is not responsible for private actions and fate of their founders. We wish to emphasise that they have no connection with or any impact on the ODF.

2. The 'Dialog for Development' Foundation and the observation mission to Georgia in 2008

THE ANONYMOUS ACCUSATION:

- Lyudmyla Kozlovska and Ivan Sherstyuk worked closely in Lublin's Foundation 'Dialog for Development', established in 2006 (KRS number: 000263972).

In 2008, when the director of international programmes of the Foundation for Development was Lyudmyla Kozlovska, the Foundation conducted a controversial election observation mission in Georgia. The results of the mission were presented by Ivan Sherstyuk. Given the lack of qualifications of the organisers, the results differed significantly from other results which were announced via UNIAN by Irina BEKESHKINA, a prominent Ukrainian sociologist and political analyst with the Ukrainian Foundation 'Democratic Initiatives'.

- <http://www.unian.ua/politics/91236-ekzit-pol-na-viborah-u-gruziji-provodili-proydisviti-z-ukrajini.html>
- http://aratta-ukraine.com/news_ua.php/gallery/prn_news_ua.php?id=4528
- <http://photo.unian.net/ukr/keywords/8933>
- <http://blogs.pravda.com.ua/authors/nayem/477cfbd366feb/>

Ivan Sherstyuk is Member of the Board of the 'Dialog for Development' Foundation. Lyudmyla Kozlovska has been a coordinator of international projects since 2007.

THE ODF'S COMMENT:

The President of the Board of the ODF, Lyudmyla Kozlovska, hasn't been in any way connected with the 'Dialog for Development' Foundation since 2009. Lyudmyla Kozlovska was not the organiser of the aforementioned observation mission in Georgia, and in 2008, she was focusing her efforts on the provision of humanitarian aid to Polish and Ukrainian victims of Russia's aggression against Georgia. That year, as part of the activities of the aforementioned Foundation, Lyudmyla Kozlovska organised the International Forum on Human Rights in Central Asia (Warsaw, December 2008).

3. The ODF's sources of financing

THE ANONYMOUS ACCUSATION:

- For many months, the Open Dialog Foundation attempted to conceal the sources of its funding (in spring, one of the members of the Foundation stated that he didn't not know what the ODF's sources of financing were). When (was it under external pressure?) the ODF published a complete report for 2013, it transpired that 1.6 million PLN had come from private contributors with Russian-sounding names. It seems that most of the donors came from the Sevastopol area.
 - <http://en.odfoundation.eu/report/10024,financial-report-2013>

THE ODF'S COMMENT:

The ODF, with respect for the applicable law, prepares and submits annual financial statements (Tax Office, KRS), as well as reports on activities (addressed to Poland's Minister of Foreign Affairs). Wishing to further satisfy the principles of transparency (as well as the requirements resulting from the regulations of some grant competitions), on its website, it publishes both reports regarding the activities and financial issues, which are available at: <http://en.odfoundation.eu/> (the page contains reports from the beginning of the ODF's activities).

In connection with the specifics of its activities, the ODF also conducts additional reporting in relation to the funding obtained from public collections and allocated mainly for the financing of humanitarian aid: <http://en.odfoundation.eu/a/5948,an-annual-summary-of-the-activities-of-the-open-dialog-foundation-for-ukraine> , and presented the results of such collections regularly at press conferences.

As we have repeatedly pointed out, the ODF is financed from all kinds of donations and grants coming from individuals, companies and institutions, both Polish and foreign.

The ODF does not comment on the facts of private life and does not speculate on the sound of names, or countries, or places of origin of individual donors. It should be emphasised that in many cases, digging into these issues is not advisable for safety reasons related to the aforementioned people, and often, it is also virtually impossible for practical reasons (for example, more than 2,000 donors in 2014; the inability to identify the identity of all donors, who put their money into collection tins).

The Foundation has no knowledge of any kind of 'external pressure' (mentioned in the said study) or facts of the alleged lack of knowledge of "one of the members of the Foundation" with regard to the sources of financing of the ODF. It should be stressed, however, that financial and substantive reports of the ODF are approved by means of resolutions, adopted at the Board's meetings by its members.

We would also like to mention that in connection with the conducted activity (and the interest that it arouses), we have been subjected to numerous inspections by competent institutions.

In addition, the ODF, as the holder of a license of the Ministry of the Interior to carry out business activities in the field of marketing, certain products for military or police use (due to the necessity to supply bullet-proof vests and helmets as part of the humanitarian aid campaign for Ukraine) has undergone verification processes conducted by the police, the Internal Security Agency and the Military Counterintelligence Service. The verification process ended successfully – the ODF was granted a license:

<http://en.odfoundation.eu/a/7520,a-license-for-our-foundation>

We presume, therefore, that the aforementioned authorities ruled out the possibility of the ODF having any dangerous connections (intelligence-related, threat to Poland's state security, safety, public order?) which the author of the study alludes to numerous times.

4. The Visegrad Fund

THE ANONYMOUS ACCUSATION:

* contrary to the declarations of the Foundation, the Foundation's finances raise serious doubts.

* According to the declarations of the Foundation, it received material and financial support from the Visegrad Fund. On its websites, the Fund provides information about the allocation of the grant in the amount of 7000 Euro in 2012 for the Festival 'Mould from the eyes' (9-13 October, 2012). The fact that the festival was organised, was confirmed in the report of 2012. The Visegrad Fund, however, is not included in the detailed list of donors of the Foundation.

- <http://en.odfoundation.eu/a/1400,statement-by-the-open-dialog-foundation>
- http://visegradfund.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/download/annual_report?IVF_2012.pdf
- <http://en.odfoundation.eu/report/10024,financial-report-2013>

"Thus far, the Foundation has received material and financial support, among others, from the city of Lublin, The Visegrad Fund, Foundation for Democracy, Kasparov Chess Foundation Europe, Goethe Institute, daily Gazeta Wyborcza, Theatre Institute and the Polish Ministry of Culture. (...) Financial and substantial statements on the activities of the Foundation are submitted to the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and are available on the Foundation's website in compliance with the applicable provisions of law".

THE ODF'S COMMENT:

According to the information available via the ODF's websites and in its reports, the Visegrad Fund financed the organisation of the aforementioned project in 2012. Subsequently, the project implementation was fully approved by the donor.

We do not understand exactly what the argument, given by the author, is intended to prove.

5. Public fundraisers

THE ANONYMOUS ACCUSATION:

In accordance with its declarations, the Open Dialog Foundation carried out a public fundraiser, under the authorisation of the Ministry of Administration and Digitisation No. 51/2014 dated 29 January, 2014. According to the decision, **"with allocation of the collected funds to assistance rendered to participants in the protests at the Maidan in Kiev by providing the collected and purchased medicinal products and medical devices, and support the mission of international observers and mission volunteers, including transport costs, daily allowances, food, accommodation, transport, insurance"**. Based on the aforementioned permit, the collected funds are used to purchase, among other things, helmets and bulletproof vests. **It seems that the fundraiser has not been settled yet.**

Within the framework of the public fundraiser, we help equip Ukrainian soldiers and the National Guard with basic life and health protection means - bulletproof vests, helmets (...) We conduct fundraisers under the authorisation from the Ministry of Administration and Digitisation No. 51/2014 dated 28 January, 2014 r. (...) We have also transferred **275 vests, 52 helmets** (...)"

- <http://en.odfoundation.eu/a/4324,help-for-ukrainian-militaries-and-national-guards>

THE ODF'S COMMENT:

Detailed explanations regarding the conducted public fundraisers are available on ODF's websites, and the online portal devoted to public collections, run by the Interior Ministry.

The fundraiser, carried out in 2014, was fully settled in March 2015, and the report was published on the ODF's website:

<http://en.odfoundation.eu/report/10027,the-public-announcement-of-the-fundraiser-results-no-51-2014-as-amended>

Hence, the allegation regarding the failure to settle the fundraiser is not true.

6. The Basilian Fathers from Miodowa Street

THE ANONYMOUS ACCUSATION:

At the same time, the Open Dialog Foundation's employees and associates continuously attack the Miodowa Street's Basilian Fathers who refused to expand the enormous practical help for the needy in Ukraine by the Greek Catholic community of Warsaw, to purchasing helmets and vests.

THE ODF'S COMMENT:

It is not true. The ODF has never attacked the Basilian Fathers. We value their activity, although we do not have contact with them on a daily basis as we do not have any reason for doing so.

7. Petro Kozlovsky

THE ANONYMOUS ACCUSATION:

- **One of the ODF's major donors, Petro Kozlovsky, continues to run his several businesses freely.**
 - <http://sbis.ru/contragents/9201006954/920101001#msid=s1423206170666>
 - <http://sbis.ru/contragents/9102062588/910201001#msid=s1423206969147>
 - <http://sbis.ru/contragents/9201007919/920101001#msid=s1423206309935>

And his wife Victoria Chuchra, one of those who made donation to the activities of the ODF in 2013, is a real estate agent in Sevastopol: <http://sferos.estcrimea.com/>. The family lives in Miami, and in the end of December they had a baby.

<http://vk.com/id4600129> .

THE ODF'S COMMENT:

As indicated earlier, the ODF does not comment on the private lives of their donors. We also recommend that the sources of information listed above and, in particular, the official and quasi-official registers concerning the situation in Sevastopol and the Crimea, temporarily occupied by the Russian Federation, be taken with a pinch of salt.

8. A fundraiser for '20-year-old Svetlana from Ukraine'

THE ANONYMOUS ACCUSATION:

- The Open Dialog Foundation has repeatedly declared the initiation of a public fundraiser for 20-year-old Svetlana from Ukraine, who suffers from acute leukemia and gave birth to her child prematurely. It seems that the fundraiser was never formally registered, although the Open Dialog Foundation collected funds on one of its bank accounts.
 - http://warszawa.gazeta.pl/warszawa/1,34862,16,Swietlana_choruje_na_bialaczke_11_dni_temu_urodzila.html
 - <http://www.rynekzdrowia.pl?Po-godzinach/Zbiora-pieniadze-na-leczenie-Ukrainki-w-Warszawie.141481.10.html>
 - <http://odfoundation.eu/a/4234,wsparcie-dla-swietlany-i-malej-nikoli>

THE ODF'S COMMENT:

The ODF, indeed, for a short period, organised support for the aforementioned family. The public fundraiser was not officially announced, but this was due to changes in regulations, which currently do not consider an action carried out via Internet (with the use of social media) 'a public fundraiser'; it only allows collections which are carried out through traditional means, where the money is collected in cash in public spaces (usually in line with WOŚP actions - volunteers, equipped with collection tins, standing on the streets).

Of course, the total amount acquired for the benefit of the aforementioned person was later transferred to her, which was announced by the ODF:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/543797615749685/permalink/598202680309178/>

9. Caritas and the daily 'Gazeta Wyborcza'

THE ANONYMOUS ACCUSATION:

- The Open Dialog Foundation announced in Gazeta Wyborcza that it is the closest partner of Caritas Ukraine in Poland, and, in order to support Caritas Ukraine, people should transfer money to the ODF's account.

I'm asking Kamila who Putin is – “He came and took Crimea” - explains the 5-year-old girl. – “I would like to live in Crimea, I would like to go back there”, - she adds. Dilara looks at her daughter and comforts her: “We will return to Crimea. This is our fatherland and our home”.

The closest partner of the Ukrainian Caritas in Poland is the Open Dialog Foundation. In order to help, you are welcome to transfer donations to the following bank account: Open Dialog Foundation, PL56 2490 0005 0000 4600 5911 3255 Alior Bank SAKod.

On the website of Caritas Ukraine, the Open Dialog Foundation is not listed among its partners. When requesting support from abroad, Caritas cites its own bank account details. After interventions on FB, the information on the GW site was changed.

THE ODF'S COMMENT:

The author of these words was a journalist of Gazeta Wyborcza, and the aforementioned information (which is, indeed, imprecise) came from her. The ODF does not claim to be a partner of the entire, complex structure of the Ukrainian Caritas(es); still, it supports the work of the *Caritas of Sambir-Drohobych Diocese* of Ukrainian *Greek-Catholic* Church in Drohobych (which has been widely announced by us in our reports), which is headed by Father Artur Deska. The whole situation was previously time widely discussed with representatives of all interested parties (the daily GW, Drohobycz Caritas, the ODF, ‘friends of the ODF’) in social media.

Currently, the information under the article

http://wyborcza.pl/1,76842,17138785,Tatarzy_z_Kryma_Wrocimy_tam_A_Putin_Wzial-na-siebie.html reads as follows:

I'm asking Kamila who Putin is – “He came and took Crimea” - explains the 5-year-old girl. – “I would like to live in Crimea, I would like to go back there”, - she adds. Dilara looks at her daughter and comforts her: “We will return to Crimea. This is our fatherland and our home”.

One of the partners of the Ukrainian Caritas in Poland is the Open Dialog Foundation. In order to help, you are welcome to transfer donations to the following bank account: Open Dialog Foundation, PL56 2490 0005 0000 4600 5911 3255 Alior Bank SAKod BIC-SWIFT ALBPPLW. When transferring funds from Polish bank accounts, please use the account number 56 2490 0005 0000 4600 5911 3255 (enter the description: “for Crimean Tatars”).

We would like to emphasise that our influence on the interpretation of certain facts and circumstances (often simplified by the natural course of things) by the media, is limited.

10. The cooperation with the Italian 'Five Star Movement'

THE ANONYMOUS ACCUSATION:

- **In 2013, the Open Dialog Foundation organised a visit of Italian politicians from the 'Five Star Movement' party to Kazakhstan.** It seems that the cooperation between the ODF and the politicians from the 'Five Star Movement' continues. It is well known that the Italian party supports Putin's policies. Its leaders spoke positively about the pseudo-referendum in Crimea; also, the party supports Italy's exit from the European Union and the Eurozone.
 - <http://en.odfoundation.eu/report/10052,report-2013>
 - http://m.megapolis.kz/art/Pyatizvyozdochnaya_zabota_za_svoy_schyot_i_v_svoyu_polzu
 - <http://en.odfoundation.eu/a/5585,italian-senator-appealed-to-the-ukrainian-authorities-in-defence-of-mr-ablyazov1>

THE ODF'S COMMENT:

In 2013, the Open Dialog Foundation arranged a mission involving 'Five Star Movement' parliamentarians to Kazakhstan in connection with the abduction from Rome and the house arrest of Alma Shalabayeva, the wife of Kazakh businessman and dissident Mukhtar Ablyazov, along with her six-year-old daughter. Later, under intense pressure from the international community, Kazakhstan permitted the return of the above-mentioned persons to Italy in December 2013. The mission formed part of the activities conducted by the ODF in connection with the campaign in support of her release:

<http://en.odfoundation.eu/a/1251,the-unlawful-deportation-of-alma-shalabayeva-was-the-result-of-a-targeted-special-operation-carried-out-by-kazakh-and-italian-security-forces>

It should be noted that the aforementioned trip was financed using the resources of the 'Five Star Movement' party/its representatives, and was only one of numerous activities organised in the second half of the year by (or with the support of) the ODF. During this period, missions to Kazakhstan connected with Alma Shalabayeva's situation were organized with participation of representatives of various political groups from Poland, Italy and other countries, as well as journalists and activists of non-governmental organisations and Poland's Supreme Bar Council: <http://www.adwokatura.pl/zycia-nra/sukces-adwokatury-polskiej-w-obronie-praw-deporto-wanych-z-ue/>

The ODF is an apolitical non-governmental organisation. However, we cooperate with politicians from different countries and different groups in order to defend human rights and achieve other goals as set out in our statute. Occasionally, the ODF also meets with politicians who have a negative attitude towards the aforementioned matters in order to influence them (e.g. through confrontation with documented incidents of human rights violations, as well as with victims of persecution).

At that time, politicians from the 'Five Star Movement' party opposed the dictatorship of President of Kazakhstan, N. Nazarbayev and demanded the return of A. Shalabayeva to Europe.

The ODF ceased its cooperation with representatives of the aforementioned group following the events of 2013. The ODF, as evidenced in our activities, consistently opposes the dictatorship of V. Putin, in particular, the aggression against Ukraine and the occupation of Crimea (which took place in the spring of 2014).

We cannot be held responsible for the evolution of views or actions contrary to our beliefs, expressed or undertaken by independent persons or institutions — even if we have previously cooperated with such groups in certain areas.

11. A debate with representatives of Ukrainian presidential candidates

THE ANONYMOUS ACCUSATION:

- On 11 May, 2014, in Warsaw, the Foundation organised an open debate with the Ukrainian presidential candidates as part of an unprecedented initiative. So far, there have been no instances of pre-election meetings of Polish presidential candidates, which would be organised in Prague or Lviv. Nor have presidential candidates from Germany, Russia or Ukraine ever arranged debates in Warsaw. The meeting resulted in a wave of anti-Ukrainian comments in Poland.
 - <http://en.odfoundation.eu/a/3564,pre-presidential-election-debate-in-ukraine1>
 - <http://www.rp.pl/artykul/1108984.html>

THE ODF'S COMMENT:

According to our knowledge, leaders of political parties running in the election, as well as Polish presidential candidates, often meet with Polish citizens residing abroad (e.g. in the UK or the US) within the framework of election campaigns:

<http://www.tvp.info/19155832/duda-w-londynie-nie-chce-by-kolejne-pokolenie-polakow-rodzilosie-za-granica>

The aforementioned meeting, held at our 'Ukrainian World' centre in Warsaw, was carried out in line with the same principle. The aim of the meeting was to reach the huge number of Ukrainian citizens living in Poland. The second target group was Polish journalists interested in Ukrainian matters.

The meeting was organised on the initiative and at the request of the District Electoral Commission at the Ukrainian Embassy in Poland. The ODF, at the request of the then head of the Consular Department, as well as the acting ambassador, supported the process of organising the presidential and parliamentary elections in 2014 (mainly by sharing space for informational meetings regarding the principles of registration and the voting procedure for citizens of Ukraine). The aforementioned meeting was part of this process.

From the ODF's point of view, it proved to be a success, as evidenced both by the high turnout and media coverage as well as statements about the importance of Polish-Ukrainian reconciliation and cooperation, expressed by representatives of various election committees: http://wyborcza.pl/1,76842,15943322,Prawy_Sektor_w_Warszawie_Granice_po_II_wojnie_sa.html

The 'wave of anti-Ukrainian comments' in question, arising after the event, was limited to the most radical, anti-Ukrainian circles of the extreme right and left wings.

12. Bulletproof vests

THE ANONYMOUS ACCUSATION:

- At the time when many people and institutions were transferring bulletproof vests to Ukraine (in accordance with Polish law), the Open Dialog Foundation, lacking the necessary permits and, as it seems, intentionally violating Polish law, decided to transport a significant number of bulletproof vests across the border. Polish customs officers, who are obliged to observe the applicable law, seized the shipment, which caused a wave of anti-Polish comments in Ukraine.

THE ODF'S COMMENT:

To the best of our knowledge, a significant element of the entities transferring humanitarian aid (including helmets and bulletproof vests) to Ukraine in 2014 did so in violation of the law (unaware of its existence) or by exploiting loopholes in the law (the so-called 'ant smuggling' method: declaring one item per volunteer for 'personal protection'). The complexity and ambiguity of applicable regulations as regards this matter should also be highlighted.

However, it should also be noted that such activities were arranged based on full conviction of acting in the so-called 'state of necessity', under circumstances of sanguinary street battles during the last days of the Revolution of Dignity, and later — in response to the outbreak of Russian aggression in Crimea and Donbas (the so-called 'hybrid warfare'). Under these circumstances, it was necessary to act rapidly and with determination, and the purpose of such actions was to protect human life and health. It must also be added that, in addition to the support given directly to members of Self-Defence of the Maidan and soldiers from volunteer battalions in Ukraine, the ODF was obliged to, and attempted to ensure the protection of its coordinators and volunteers (observers and correspondents), who worked under dangerous conditions during the protests at the Maidan and at the time of Russia's actions in Crimea and Donbas. They needed helmets and bulletproof vests as well. In addition, Polish media reporters who visited Ukraine have also repeatedly benefitted from the ODF's support in this area.

The case of the seized shipment of bulletproof vests (and related cases) was the subject of very wide media attention, including:

http://wyborcza.pl/1,76842,16822065,Zatrzymane_kamizelki_kuloodporne_przejechaly_na_Ukrainie.html

<http://en.odfoundation.eu/a/4658,discontinuation-by-the-prosecutor-s-office-does-not-mean-the-release-of-bullet-proof-vests-for-ukraine>

<http://swiat.newsweek.pl/celnicy-zwroca-helmy-zatrzymane-na-granicy-z-ukraina-newsweek-pl,artykuly,346130,1.html>

<http://www.new.org.pl/1945,post.html>

http://wiadomosci.gazeta.pl/wiadomosci/1,114871,16364903,Siemoniak_Nie_ma_powodu_by_b_lokowac_przewoz_przez.html

<http://www.rmf24.pl/raporty/raport-ukraina/fakty/news-na-ukrainie-gina-ludzie-a-kamizelk-leza-w-magazynach,nld,1483544>

<http://www.tvn24.pl/wiadomosci-z-kraju,3/jechal-na-ukraine-z-setkami-helmow-dla-mieszkancow-grozi-mu-do-10-lat-wiezienia,454084.html>

<http://warszawa.ngo.pl/wiadomosc/973535.html>

<http://stara.belsat.eu/pl/artykuly/ukraina-wojna-woluntariuszy/>

<http://www.gazetalubuska.pl/wiadomosci/zielona-gora/art/7462807,jakie-tajemnice-skrywa-200-kamizelek-kuloodpornych-ktore-trzyma-abw,id,t.html>

This matter was also described in detail in the ODF's Annual Report for 2014:

Since March 2014, the Foundation has encountered serious legal problems related to the logistics of humanitarian aid. The volunteers and employees of the Foundation participated in several penal and penal-fiscal proceedings related to alleged unauthorised trading of helmets and bulletproof vests upon their unsuccessful transportation from Poland to Ukraine, which ended in their seizure by Polish border and customs services. Eventually, under the pressure of public opinion, the aforementioned proceedings were discontinued, and the lawyers of the Foundation were able to use their experience in order to help other organisations and volunteer groups in tackling similar problems. As a result of lobbying activities initiated by the Foundation, we managed to amend (liberalise) the provisions of the Regulation of the Minister of Economy of 8 May 2014, regarding the list of weapons, which can only be traded by licensed entities (Journal of Laws 2014.627). The amendment of 12 August 2014 (Journal of Laws of 2014, item 1113) included a number of bulletproof vests and helmets for personal use, which can be held and transported across the border without permission.

Due to the need for further delivery of goods (such as specialist protective equipment — helmets and bulletproof vests) subject to licensed trading, on 15 December 2014, the Foundation obtained a license from the Minister of Internal Affairs No. B-088/2014. This license allowed us to perform business activities related to the trading of certain products designed for military or police use. In order to do this, we first had to pass the verification process that required, amongst other requirements, to obtain clearance from the Police, Internal Security Agency and the Military Counterintelligence Service.

<http://en.odfoundation.eu/report/10049,report-2014>

(section 2.2 Implementation of objectives in 2014 – Humanitarian aid).

In our opinion, the intentions attributed to the ODF, demonstrate exceptional malice of the author of the study and are in conflict with one of the main objectives of our activity, i.e. Polish-Ukrainian cooperation.

For the aforementioned activities, the Foundation gained the support, among others, of the Ukrainian Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Security Council and National Defence of Ukraine, the Embassy of Ukraine in the Republic of Poland and a large number of Polish and Ukrainian parliamentarians.

13. Mukhtar Ablyazov and press articles

THE ANONYMOUS ACCUSATION:

- The 'Tygodnik Powszechny' and 'Wprost' weekly magazines were among those to write about the connections between the Open Dialog Foundation and Kazakh oligarch Mukhtar Ablyazov.
 - <http://tygodnik.onet.pl/swiat/dlugi-cien/zanaozenu/yk51g>
 - <http://www.wprost.pl/ar/436103/Polscy-politycy-na-uslugach-kazachskiego-oligarchy>

THE ODF'S COMMENT:

For over 15 years (since his founding of the 'Democratic Choice of Kazakhstan' party in 2001), Mukhtar Ablyazov has been of fundamental importance to the opposition, civil society and independent media in Kazakhstan. In connection with his activities, Ablyazov has been persecuted by the ruling regime (more information, including reports on his case, can be found on the ODF website: <http://en.odfoundation.eu/mukhtar-ablyazov>)

In our opinion, the article of the 'Tygodnik Powszechny' magazine is relatively objective. We would like to allow readers to form their own opinions on the issues raised in it.

The 'Wprost' magazine article violated our personal rights and, as such, is currently the subject of legal proceedings initiated based on our legal action (in particular, as regards our unfulfilled requests that the article be corrected and compensation for the damage caused be paid). In recent weeks, the case has been directed for mediation by the court and is currently in its initial stages.

The content of the official statement, issued by the ODF in connection with the article is available on our websites:

<http://en.odfoundation.eu/a/1400,statement-by-the-open-dialog-foundation>

In view of the numerous attacks against the ODF (which were also reported by the media), such as:

<http://www.rp.pl/artykul/1180437-Zastraszyc-Otwarty-Dialog.html#ap-2>

<http://www.rp.pl/artykul/1177855-Putin-bije-mediarni.html>

<http://polska.newsweek.pl/wybuch-w-fundacji-otwarty-dialog-na-nowym-swiecie-artykuly,370333,1.html>

<http://warszawa.wyborcza.pl/warszawa/1,34862,18753898,ladunek-pirotechniczny-w-siedzibie-ukrainskiego-swiata.html>

the aforementioned article by the 'Wprost' magazine, as well as the entire study (to which we respond in this document) serve to remind us of the deliberate attacks, aimed at discrediting the activity of the ODF and impeding our ability to act.

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