

Press Release

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Gongadze case: PACE rapporteur welcomes the arrest of Oleksiy Pukach

Strasbourg, 22.07.2009 - Sabine Leutheusser-Schnarrenberger (Germany, ALDE), former Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) rapporteur on the Gongadze case and co-rapporteur on Ukraine, today welcomed the arrest of former general and top Ukrainian Interior Ministry official Oleksiy Pukach, who had been in hiding since 2003. He was charged *in absentia* with having participated in the murder of journalist Giorgiy Gongadze, for which three policemen were sentenced to prison terms last year.

“The arrest of Oleksiy Pukach provides the Ukrainian law enforcement authorities with a unique opportunity of shedding light on who ordered the gruesome murder of journalist Giorgiy Gongadze”, Mrs. Leutheusser-Schnarrenberger said. “Recent events have shown once again that in order to effectively deter such crimes, not only the actual perpetrators, but also the organisers and instigators must be held to account, all the way up the chain of command”, she added.

“It goes without saying that Mr. Pukach's safety must be ensured in order to avoid a similar scenario as that of the violent death of his former superior, ex-Interior Minister Kravchenko, who was found dead, with two gunshot wounds in his head, in the morning of the day on which he was going to be interrogated by the prosecutor's office”, Mrs. Leutheusser-Schnarrenberger concluded.

[PACE wants action to bring to justice those who ordered murder of Giorgiy Gongadze](#)
[Recommendation 1856](#)
[Resolution 1645](#)

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