

Lithuania Refuses Entry to Russian Citizens Connected to Savchenko Case

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A view of Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania.

Lithuanian authorities have prohibited entry to Russian citizens connected to the criminal cases of three Ukrainians, Lithuanian Foreign Minister Linas Linkevičius announced Tuesday, the state-run TASS news agency reported.

The cases are those of Nadezhda Savchenko, Oleg Sentsov and Alexander Kolchenko — all currently imprisoned in Russia following convictions by Russian courts.

“Specific talks are ongoing about Russian judges and prosecutors who directly took part in these cases. Currently 46 people have been prohibited from entering Lithuanian territory,” the lawmaker told the Delfi Lithuanian news website, TASS reported.

Linkevičius stressed that the list could be expanded.

The move makes Lithuania the first and as yet only member state of the European Union to take measures against Russia over the Savchenko case.

Linkevičius said that he suggested to High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini that identical sanctions be imposed in the entire European Union, an initiative that has not yet been supported.

Last month, a Russian court sentenced former Ukrainian military pilot Nadezhda Savchenko to 22 years in prison and a 30,000 ruble fine after she was found guilty of complicity in the murder of two Russian journalists and of illegally crossing the Russian border.

In August last year a Russian court sentenced Ukrainian Oleg Sentsov and his co-accused Aleksandr Kolchenko to 20 years and 10 years in prison, respectively. According to the judge, Sentsov created a terrorist cell active in Crimea and was responsible for carrying out two attacks in Simferopol.

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