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CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON
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United States Senate

March 23, 2016

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The Honorable John F. Kerry
Secretary of State
U.S. State Department
2201 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Kerry,

I am writing to express my concern regarding the recent sentencing and continued imprisonment of Nadiya Savchenko. As you know, it has been nearly two years since Nadiya Savchenko, the first female military pilot in post-Soviet Ukraine and an Iraq-war veteran, was abducted from Ukrainian territory by pro-Russian separatists and smuggled across the border to Russia where she faces continued detention and ill-treatment. Throughout her illegal and unjust imprisonment, Ms. Savchenko has demonstrated immense courage and resilience, and she has served as an inspiration for the Ukrainian people in their fight for freedom and democracy.

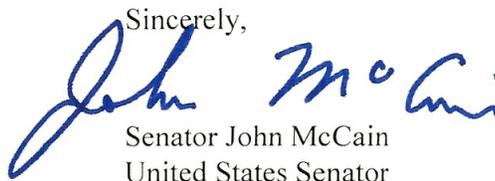
On March 22, a Russian court sentenced Ms. Savchenko to 22 years in jail based on fabricated charges that she was involved in the killing of two Russian journalists. Ms. Savchenko announced that she will not appeal the court's decision, despite clear documentation that the court routinely violated due process and fair trial standards.

As you prepare for your upcoming trip to Moscow, I strongly urge you to make Ms. Savchenko's case a central element of the agenda. As you noted in your recent statement, her continued imprisonment and sentencing demonstrate a clear disregard for international law and violate Russia's commitments under the Minsk agreements. A strong message must be delivered to the Russian government that it must honor its international obligations and release Ms. Savchenko immediately.

If Russia upholds Ms. Savchenko's sentence and continues its shameful and blatant breach of international law, I ask that you take all necessary steps to initiate targeted sanctions, as authorized under the Magnitsky Act, against those responsible for her kidnapping and illegal imprisonment, as well as officials involved in the fabrication of false charges against her.

Ms. Savchenko deserves to go home to her family and friends. I appreciate your continued action on behalf of and support for Ms. Savchenko, and I trust that you will take every action to bring about her immediate release.

Sincerely,



Senator John McCain
United States Senator