

Two years after Odessa's tragedy: about some major facts hidden by the propaganda

It all started in the centre of the city where the first victim was shot down by an anti-Maidan supporter

HRWF (03.05.2016) - **HRWF was in Odessa three weeks after the tragedy and investigated the issue for one week. See our full report at <http://hrwf.eu/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Odessa-2nd-May-2014-Tragedy.pdf>**

ACT I: Six people killed by firearms in the centre of the city (allegedly 4 pro-Maidan and 2 anti-Maidan)

- ***Anti-Maidan activists came armed to the city centre***
- ***Street fighting left six dead, more than 100 wounded***
- ***The role of the medical services***
- ***The role of the police***

ACT II: About 40 people died in Kulikovo Square (This was not a massacre)

- ***Anti-Maidan crowd flees to Trade Union building***
- ***Firefighters slow to respond***
- ***32 died from gas poisoning, 7 fell from the building and 3 died from various injuries and burns***

Act III: Anti-Maidan activists attack a police station and release prisoners

Attacks against pro-Maidan football supporters started in the centre of the city

On 2nd May, a football match was to take place between the local club of Chernomorets Odessa and Metalist of Karkhiv (from Eastern Ukraine) in the afternoon.

On that day, around 14:00-15:00, Odessa and Kharkiv fans, pro-Maidan supporters and several dozens of members of self-defence units gathered in the centre of the city at Soborna Square near the Orthodox Cathedral to march for the "Unity of Ukraine". Soborna Square is one block and a half from the Greek Square area. They are interconnected by Greek street. The pro-Maidan self-defence units, a paramilitary patriotic organization formed during Euro-Maidan events in Kyiv, were equipped to protect the demonstrators in case of attack.

A number of participants in the march for the "Unity of Ukraine" supported the national idea, others were against dictatorship, and then there were ordinary football fans, the majority. According to some sources, they numbered about 2000 altogether.

At about the same time, some 200-300 armed anti-Maidan activists left their camp in Kulikovo Square, situated near the railway station, walked for about 2-3 km and gathered in Alexandrovskiy Avenue near the city centre. They had guns, bats, knives and wore helmets and bulletproof vests.

According to an anti-Maidan source the first gunshot happened close to Alexandrovskiy Avenue, about 300 m from the rally of the pro-Maidan supporters. It was however not confirmed by other sources but if it is true, it cannot be directly related to the pro-Maidan demonstration. Nobody was wounded or killed. The same anti-Maidan source claims that the shooter was beaten and handed over to the police.

According to the same source, after this first shot, the group of anti-Maidan fighters

moved towards the nearby premises of a pro-Maidan self-defence militia and tried to attack it. However, police forces protected the building.

Around 5pm, pro-Maidan activists captured a fire truck and drove it into the crowd of anti-Maidan people, using its water cannon to disperse the fighting crowd. The football fans chased the opponents, and beat those who they caught, while pro-Maidan self-defence members tried to restrain them from lynching their victims. By this time, many ambulances were at the scene.

By the end of the afternoon, six people had been killed in the city centre. While their names are known, there are still contradictory reports about their political affiliation one month after the events. Four or five pro-Maidan demonstrators were killed with firearms. Yevgeniy Losinskiy, an anti-Maidan activist, died eleven days later. Another anti-Maidan activist was also said to have been killed in the city centre. Andrey Biryukov, 36, was said to be just a passer-by.

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