

17  
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▲ Lvl. 2

State  
replied

Ukraine

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## Ukrainian Local Newspaper Raided, Office Sealed by the Representatives of the Local Authorities in Kivertsy

SOURCE OF THREAT ▶ State

CATEGORY  ▶ Harassment and intimidation of journalists

**PARTNER: EFJ/IFJ, AEJ**

The office of the Ukrainian local newspaper “Vilnym Shliakhom” (Free Way) based in Kivertsy, Volyn oblast, was raided and its office sealed by the representatives of the local council in the morning of 8 September 2016, without a Court judgment or a decision of the State Execution service.

The doors of the office were broken, locks were changed and the newspaper’s premises were sealed by the local representatives, who claimed to be acting on the “decision of the local council”. The police officers on the spot failed to intervene. The editor of the newspaper was changed and the Charter modified by the head of the Kivertsy district council without the agreement of the staff (who co-own the newspaper alongside the council).

The raid is only the latest action in the long-standing row between the Kivertsy district authorities and the newspaper over the privatisation process, launched by the newspaper following the adoption in Ukraine of the law on “reforming the state and communal printed media”.

The staff of “Vilnym Shliakhom” announced an indefinite strike starting on 19 September, over the “illegal actions of the local government”, inaction of the local enforcement structures and the inability to resolve the conflict with the district council.

The Independent Media Trade Union of Ukraine condemned the attack and denounced it as an attempt to stop the privatisation. International journalists organisations appealed to the Ukrainian President, as the guarantor of the Constitution, to stop attacks which undermine media freedom. They requested using all possible means to resolve the conflict -

negotiations, reconciliation commission, appeals to the Prosecutor General and the Head of the National Police of Ukraine – in order to avoid the strike.

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

 Statement by the Independent Media Trade Union of Ukraine (in Ukrainian)

#### STATE REPLIES



17 Feb 2017 | Reply from the Government of Ukraine

 Official position of Ukraine