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PRESS RELEASE

REGARDING THE COURT HEARING ON JUNE 4, 2026, AT THE OVIDIOPOL DISTRICT COURT OF ODESA OBLAST

On 4 June 2026, a court hearing was held at the Ovidiopol District Court of Odesa Oblast with the participation of the advocate who had filed a motion to lift the seizure imposed on property — the so-called "ferry 'Kyslitsky'" (also known as ferry VYL-0224-K).

Despite the motion filed by the representative of the victims and civil claimants to participate via videoconference, he was never connected to the hearing. As a result, the position of the victims and civil claimants in the criminal proceedings was not heard by the court. At the same time, the author of the motion to lift the seizure himself, having appeared at the hearing for only a few minutes, requested an adjournment of the proceedings citing personal circumstances. In view of this, the court hearing was adjourned.

The representative of the victims and civil claimants requests that the Ovidiopol District Court of Odesa Oblast ensure the technical capability to conduct videoconferencing and duly guarantee the realization of the rights of the victims and civil claimants to a fair trial.

Given the sensitivity of the situation that has developed around the said object at the international level, we emphasize the urgent need to avoid any additional reputational risks for Ukraine. This matter is of particular significance, as the European Court of Human Rights has already issued a judgment that directly concerned this object.

We call upon the court to ensure maximum transparency of the process and to eliminate any corruption risks. Concern over such risks has already arisen in this case due to the failure to connect the representative of the victims to the videoconference, which effectively resulted in the denial of access to justice for the victims and civil claimants.

We also call upon the court to fully exclude any unlawful influence on the part of persons involved in the creation of documents whose forgery has been established by court decisions that have entered into legal force, and on the basis of which the rights to the said object were once formalized. In the event of any pressure or attempt to influence the court, the court's leadership is obliged, in accordance with the requirements of applicable law, to immediately inform the law enforcement authorities and the High Council of Justice.

05 June, 2026