

“Saakashvili Auctions Off Odessa to American Investors”

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File photo of Columbia University alumnus Saakashvili slicing the cake

Stop NATO [recently published](#) a news item from Interfax Ukraine which virtually went unnoticed. The short news piece [said](#): “Odessa regional administration head Mikheil Saakashvili has departed for the U.S. to present the region’s investment opportunities to international investors.” ([Saakashvili presenting Odesa region’s investment opportunities in U.S.](#), Interfax-Ukraine, June 20, 2015)

Mikheil Saakashvili, the former (US sponsored) President of Georgia (January 2004 – November 2013) accused of “exceeding official powers” during demonstrations in 2007, was offered Ukrainian citizenship by President Petro Poroshenko who appointed him governor of the Odessa Oblast region. He abandoned his Georgian citizenship to avoid extradition and jail time in his country.

Only a month after leaving office in 2013, Saakashvili joined [The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy](#) at Tufts University in the U.S. In 2005, “[Saakashvili was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize](#)” by two notable warmongers, Hillary Clinton and John McCain.

Saakashvili said the following regarding his latest trip to the U.S.:

“I am presenting the Odessa region’s investment opportunities to international investors in New York. Odessa has a lot of advantages, in particular, a very well-educated and talented population and an amazing tourism potential, and we will guarantee investors’ protection from extortions and racket, which has obstructed economic growth so much until lately,” Saakashvili said on Facebook on Friday. (Interfax-Ukraine, op., cit.)

Saakashvili’s comments would be laughable if the situation in Odessa was not so dramatic.

The US-backed coup d’état in Ukraine, labelled “democratic revolution” by Western leaders and their mainstream media, brought to power unelected officials, including several neo-Nazis. What followed has been a real nightmare for the populations of Odessa and other regions, which had overwhelmingly voted for Viktor Yanukovich, ousted by the US-backed coup, and rejected an antidemocratic government handpicked and imposed by foreigners.

We may recall the [May 2, 2014 massacre](#), in which 200 people were injured and 48 activists were killed by fascist thugs, some burned to death in the Trade Unions Building fire, others beaten and/or shot while trying to escape the flames.

Political repression in Odessa is an ongoing process. About a month ago Eric Draitser wrote:

In recent weeks and months, the local authorities have engaged in politically motivated arrests of key journalists and bloggers who have presented a critical perspective on the developments in Odessa. Most prominent among them are the editors of the website infocenter-odessa.com, a locally oriented news site that has been fiercely critical of the Kiev regime and its local authorities. (Eric Draitser, [Kiev's Repression of Anti-Fascism in Odessa](#), CounterPunch, May 27, 2015)

Back in April a group of Odessan residents announced their intentions to break away from Ukraine and join the newly formed Donetsk and Luhansk Republics in Eastern Ukraine. Shortly after, Ukrainian security forces arrested and tortured several dozen residents:

The security forces (SBU) arrested several dozen residents of Odessa, supporters of New Russia. Those arrested were subjected to severe torture.

Here is the text of the official statement sent by the head of the EPD [People's Republic of Odessa]:

"Odessa again, is choking on the blood of their sons. At this time, the Nazis did not wait for May to act. Punishers of 'Security Service of Ukraine' arrested several dozen supporters of the New Russia. According to information received, they are now trying the most sophisticated, almost medieval torture-methods. I was told about this by reliable and trusted sources.

"On the outskirts of the city there were created some form of 'national guard'. (Eric Zuesse, [Ukraine: Odessa Region "Breakaway Republic" Project Announced, to Join Donetsk and Luhansk Republics](#), Global Research, April 13, 2015)

An unelected government appoints a foreign Governor to silence and torture its population and sell Odessa to foreign investors. That's what "democracy" looks like in post-Maidan Ukraine.

Selling cities and countries is increasingly part of a neoliberal new normal.

For more on the Odessa Massacre, listen to the [Global Research News Hour Special with Michael Welch, Stephen Lendman and Roger Annis](#).

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