

---

Multiple injuries in Kiev as grenade explodes during protest against constitutional law

31/08/2015



### **Trends** [Ukraine turmoil](#)

The protest started on Constitution Square in Kiev in front of the parliament, the Verkhovna Rada.

There are conflicting reports about the number of casualties near the Ukrainian parliament. Initial reports said that at least five officers were killed in the clashes.

The Ukrainian National Guard has [claimed](#) that “about 50” people sustained injuries.

Kiev police chief Alexander Tereshchuk has claimed that some 100 law enforcement officers have been wounded in the blast, according to 112 Ukraine TV channel. He added that the person who threw the combat grenade into a crowd of officers has been detained.

According to Ukrainian Interior Minister Arsen Avakov, the people who threw the combat grenades were wearing T-shirts of the Svoboda political party.

*“About 30 people have been arrested. Police have detained the man who threw the combat grenade,”* Avakov [said](#) on his Facebook post.

Other reports in the Ukrainian media allege that one of the servicemen has died from his injuries.

*"A combat grenade has been thrown at the Ukrainian special forces. Some of the servicemen from [Ukraine] National Guard have been seriously injured. Their life is in danger,"* Anton Gerashchenko, an adviser to Kiev's Interior Ministry, [wrote](#) on his Facebook page.

Tweets from journalists at the scene said supporters of the radical group Right Sector were brutally attacking police officers.

The demonstrators attacked police with long sticks and threw at least one smoke bomb grenade, Russia's RIA Novosti and TASS news agencies reported.

The Ukrainian UNIAN news agency also reported that smoke bombs were being thrown along with stones. Police are now trying to stop the demonstrators from storming the parliament building.

Both protesters and police officers used gas against each other, UNIAN said. According to other reports, firearms were also deployed, though, it is unclear by which side.

The agency added that the protesters are reportedly shouting "Shame!" and "Impeachment!" in front of the parliament building, which is currently blocked from the outside.



Stun grenades and Molotov cocktails now being used [#ukrainedebratesdecentralisaton](#)

Earlier in the day, the parliament passed amendments to the Constitution on decentralization in the first reading. The amendments proposed by President Petro Poroshenko were supported by 265 of the parliament's 450 lawmakers.

The lawmakers did not discuss giving a special status to Donbass, a historical area in eastern Ukraine that includes the Donetsk and Lugansk regions. Since April 2014 the area has been fought over by pro-Kiev and anti-government forces.



Police get beaten up and taken away their shields

Despite the special status for the war-torn areas being a separate bill, the protesters who came out in the capital Monday were angered by the prospect of Eastern Ukraine getting autonomy from the central government. Photos posted on social media showed people holding banners saying, “No to special status of Donbass,” and “Occupants in Donbass, go away.”

The protesters on Constitution Square in Kiev are from the right-wing Radical, Self-Help, Svoboda (Freedom) and Republican Platform parties. TASS news agency has estimated their number to be around 1,000.

Inside the parliament, members of the Radical Party attempted to block the tribune as the debate got under way. The disruption was led by the leader of the Radical Party, Oleg Lyashko.

[READ More: 2 Ukrainian ultra-radical MPs face investigation for kidnappings, torture](#)

Lyashko, along with his fellow party member Igor Mosiychuk, have recently been accused of organizing a criminal group, kidnappings and torture. On Saturday, Ukraine’s prosecutor general opened a case against the two right-wing politicians.

[READ MORE: Poroshenko cancels ‘special status’ law while EU leaders stress local elections in E. Ukraine](#)

Meanwhile, the Svoboda party issued a statement where it put responsibility for the clashes on the Ukrainian government, in particular on Arsen Avakov.

*“It was the police who first used force against the protesters, prompting numerous clashes. However, the police failed to take appropriate measures to neutralize the provocateurs. We demand the resignation of the Interior Minister of Ukraine Arsen Avakov, whose criminal inaction led to the tragedy,”* the group added.

---