

Jailed Ukrainian Filmmaker Sentsov Transferred to Another Siberian Jail Ukraine

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Oleh Sentsov appears in court in Rostov-on-Don in August 2015.

From RFE/RL's Russian Service, Sep 11, 2017 IRKUTSK, Russia -- Ukrainian writer and filmmaker Oleh Sentsov, who is jailed in Russia over his opposition to Russia's 2014 annexation of Crimea, has been transferred from a penal colony in Yakutsk to a notorious detention center in the city of Irkutsk, some 1,900 kilometers away. Lawyers and members of the Public Monitoring Commission in Angara, who visited Sentsov in Detention Center #1 in Irkutsk, said on September 11 that he was in solitary confinement in the jail's basement. Lawyer Svyatoslav Khromenkov told RFE/RL that the Irkutsk detention center was considered one of the worst jails in Siberia, but he added that Sentsov's cell was recently repaired and was "more or less OK." Khromenkov said Sentsov did not know why he was moved so far. Khromenkov suggested Sentsov may have been transferred to prevent him from staying at one detention facility long enough to establish himself there. Inmates in the former Soviet Union are typically moved from detention facility to another in so-called Stolypin train carriages that are specially equipped for the transportation of convicts. Transfers from one jail to another, especially long-distance transfers, typically have been used to put pressure on some inmates. Convicts are forced to spend days in narrow cages inside the train cars, which very often are jammed with people. There often is no fresh air nor the possibility to use a toilet on the train. Long distances are covered in many days because Stolypin trains are only allowed to move during certain hours, usually at night. That means prisoners are kept either inside the railroad cars at stations or in transit jails, making such trips long and exhausting. [⋮]
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