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## **Thousands rally for Saakashvili's release in Ukraine and for impeachment of Poroshenko**

*Тисячі мітингувальників для звільнення Саакашвілі в Україні та імпічмент  
Порошенка*

*Тисячі людей зібрався в центрі Києва, вимагаючи звільнення затриманого колишнього грузинського лідера М. Саакашвілі та імпічменту його суперника, президента України Петра Порошенка. "Влада перейшла червону лінію», - вважає дружина Саакашвілі Сандра Рулофс. З такими гаслами виступили мітингувальники, які зібралися біля пам'ятника українському поетові Тарасу Шевченку виступаючи з протестом проти корупції в Україні.*

<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/12/11/world/politics-diplomacy-world/thousands-rally-saakashvilis-release-ukraine-impeachment-poroshenko/#.Wi5OKtJl8dU>

Thousands of people rallied Sunday in central Kiev to demand the release of detained former Georgian leader Mikheil Saakashvili and the impeachment of his rival, Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko.

Saakashvili, 49, who entered Ukrainian politics after serving as president of Georgia, was arrested last week in Kiev, accused of trying to stage a coup sponsored by Russia.

"The authorities have crossed a red line. You don't put opponents in prison," said Saakashvili's wife, Sandra Roelofs, as marchers brandished anti-government and anti-corruption slogans.

Saakashvili was president of Georgia from 2004 to 2013 but acquired Ukrainian nationality and served as a governor in Ukraine before falling out with Poroshenko.

“I am very afraid that our government is about to collapse. Ukraine is headed for the abyss, the people are getting ever poorer. Corruption is everywhere and the authorities do nothing,” one marcher, Nikolai Sharapa, 58, told AFP.

Ukrainian security services arrested Saakashvili on Saturday following a botched attempt several days earlier when supporters swarmed the van where he was being held.

On Saturday he said he was going on a hunger strike to protest his detention.

He is also wanted in his native Georgia for alleged abuse of power.

He spearheaded the pro-Western “Rose Revolution” in Georgia in 2003 and fought a disastrous war with Russia five years later that eventually prompted him to flee the Caucasus country.

Saakashvili returned to the spotlight as a vocal champion of the three-month street uprising in Kiev that toppled a Moscow-backed government in 2014 and put Ukraine on a pro-EU course.

Poroshenko rewarded Saakashvili for his efforts by appointing him governor of the important Black Sea region of Odessa in 2015 before the two men fell out.