

Ukraine Amnesty Law Declared for pro-EU Protesters

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An amnesty law to drop criminal cases against hundreds of pro-EU protesters in Ukraine will enter into force on Monday, authorities said Sunday.

Charges will be dropped against demonstrators who were detained or charged with crimes during mass anti-government rallies in Ukraine between December 27 and February 2, a statement on the general prosecutor's website said.

The statement did not specify how many protesters would be amnestied. Ukraine's chief prosecutor said in early February that a total of 259 demonstrators would receive clemency under the agreement.

The announcement appears to signal that the Ukrainian opposition has satisfied government demands to unblock streets and release City Hall in Kiev, which has been occupied by protesters for over two months, as a condition of the amnesty.

Demonstrators [withdrew from the building](#) on Sunday afternoon, but threatened to take it back if authorities did not immediately make good on promises to drop charges against political activists.

Protesters also left Gruskevsky Street in Kiev, the scene of the most violent clashes that injured over 200 people on both sides and left three protesters dead last month, as part of the deal to relieve tensions in the capital.

The European Union's foreign policy chief, Catherine Ashton, welcomed the evacuation of City Hall on Sunday as a de-escalation of the standoff between the government and opposition that has seized the country since November.

Protests erupted across Ukraine after President Viktor Yanukovich [rejected an association agreement](#) with the European Union to sign a \$15 billion aid package with Russia instead.

The demonstrations initially vented anger at the abandoned trade deal, but quickly turned into a broad anti-government protest movement.

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