

Andriy Yermak



ground force... given his own order, the official added. It had come from the president's office. "You can guess who."

AT 6FT 2IN WITH A STURDY FRAME, YERMAK CUTS an imposing figure, but not a rough one. His hands are well-manicured and his soft, oval face is framed by carefully maintained stubble. A stack of leather bands and bracelets of wooden beads sits on his left wrist. "They are a type of talisman," he told me, rubbing the beads between his fingers. We were speaking in a flashy room down the hall from his office. Illuminated by neon lights, it looked more like a film studio than a work space. It was one of three exclusive interviews we had over the space of two years. Yermak did not respond to subsequent requests for comment for this story.

Publicly, Yermak speaks with a measured, almost monotone voice, slightly higher pitched than one might expect from a man of his stature. He talks at such great length that his meaning often gets lost. "At first I thought it was a tactic used to tire us out

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