



# OVERVIEW OF THE SITUATION IN CRIMEA. TRENDS

## AUGUST 2017

Serious deterioration of the human rights situation in Crimea, which started in July, continued in August. Two politically motivated sentences (on Vladimir Balukh and Redvan Suleymanov cases) have been passed; a new criminal case has been opened against the condemned Balukh; one more Ukrainian citizen (Gennadiy Limeshko) has been arrested and charged with alleged subversive activity. Moreover, 10 days of demonstrative arrest have been adjudged to 76-year-old Server Karametov, suffering from Parkinson's disease, who held a single-person picket. Persons detained during the search in Novoklenovo village have faced torture using electricity.

**Ruslan Zeytullaev**, sentenced to 15 years of imprisonment in July, **held his third hunger strike for more than 3 weeks**, protesting against the violation of his rights. Zeytullaev will be conveyed to the Republic of Bashkortostan for serving his sentence. **At the beginning of August sentences were passed upon two more cases: Vladimir Balukh** (civil activist) got 3 years 7 months of imprisonment and a 10 000 rubles fine (about 170 dollars), whereas **Redvan Suleymanov** (so-called "sabotage case") – 1 year 8 months of imprisonment and 3,5 million rubles (about \$58 000) of compensation for damage. While Balukh was in the remand prison, he was charged with a new criminal case allegedly for beating the prison officer. When a sentence was passed on Redvan Suleymanov case, the court has acknowledged the unfairly calculated profit loss as damage, for the first time in Russian legal practice. **After a sequence of criminal sentences, FSS (FSB) of Russian Federation has announced another arrest of a "saboteur" from Ukraine** – Kharkiv region resident Gennadiy Limeshko, who allegedly possessed a weapon collection and tried to commit a series of subversive acts in Crimea. It is obvious that Russian Federation actively uses criminal prosecution as a repressive instrument.

**The detention and administrative arrest of Server Karametov – 76-year-old veteran of the Crimean Tatar national movement, suffering from Parkinson's disease** - has become the August sensation even against the background of constantly happening human rights violations. Karametov was detained on August 8 during a single-person picket; he was sentenced to **10 days of arrest and 10 000 rubles fine by 2 administrative records**. On August 14 at least 7 activists who held single-person pickets to support Server Karametov were arrested, as well as those activists who shot videos of the pickets. Most of them were released later, and the elderly activist **Yarikul Dovlatov was sentenced to a 10 000 rubles fine**. Furthermore, 3 searches took place in different regions of Crimea in August. As usual, the searches were conducted with considerable participation of special forces (of the de facto law enforcement agencies), which acted brutally and frightened people. After one of the searches the home owner Umer Emiramzaev was taken to hospital. After the search in Novoklenovo village all 4 male family members (father and 3 sons) were detained, which indicates that violence by de facto security officials, among other, is gender conditioned. **Two sons were put to torture: they were beaten and tortured, applying electricity to genitals for 12 times. One of the sons was arrested for 15 days, and the other men had to leave the peninsula urgently because of these events.**

In response to a series of administrative fines, which were adjudged in summer 2017, members of the Crimean Tatar community have launched the **"Crimean marathon"**. Within the initiative common people donate money with 10 rubles coins, in order to pay the fines. Three weeks were enough to raise the necessary sum (820 000 rubles), which confirmed the outstanding solidarity of Crimean Tatars.

**People, serving sentence in places of detention, keep facing serious violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law.** As it has been already known, prisoners are conveyed to penitentiary institutions on Russian territory often against their will. **Some of them have to announce hunger-strikes** (Ivan Fedirko, penal colony 1 of the Republic of Adygea; Evgeniy Davydov, penal colony 9 of Shakhta town in Rostov region) because of unbearable imprisonment conditions, denial of medical treatment, refusal of transfer to Ukraine. Andrey Lugin has also been refused of transfer from Mordovia; earlier he tried to cut veins because of the convoy to Russia. Besides that, in the middle of August it was reported that Ukrainian prisoners in the Republic of Adygea were forced to obtain Russian citizenship **by creating unbearable imprisonment conditions.**

**Several new cases of ethno-religious discrimination against Crimean Tatars took place in August.** The Muslim cemetery with a saint's grave, situated on the territory of "Artek" children's camp, was dug out, as long as this place is going to be built up with cottages. In Belogorsk locals complain to authorities that Ezan (call to worship) is allegedly too loud, whereas in Belogorsk region the Crimean Tatar school is being constantly discriminated (it has been deprived of the national status, has not been repaired, there are problems with the school bus).

1.

“ Ruslan Zeytullaev, sentenced to 15 years of imprisonment in July, held his third hunger strike for more than 3 weeks, protesting against the violation of his rights

2.

“ The detention and administrative arrest of Server Karametov – 76-year-old veteran of the Crimean Tatar national movement, suffering from Parkinson's disease

3.

“ People, serving sentence in places of detention, keep facing serious violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law

4.

“ Several new cases of ethno-religious discrimination against Crimean Tatars took place in August