



CRIMEA SITUATION REPORT

February 2017

In February the pressure on the civil activists in Crimea continued. There were administrative detentions, searches, arrests, summonses for questioning. It is notable that not only pro-Ukrainian, but also pro-Russian activists, who are against the lawlessness of the officials and the police, become the object of repressive actions by de facto authorities more and more often. Moreover, there was the first precedent when 10 search witnesses were detained. The activity of independent press is limited significantly: Ukrainian Internet media resources are blocked, journalists are detained. The mobilization of contractors to the Russian army and so-called "vigilante groups" ("self-defense") is conducted simultaneously in several towns of Crimea.

On February 4, the functionary of the Russian opposition party "Rot Front", Valery Bolshakov was detained in Sevastopol. On the eve of it he held a press-conference where criticized the local officials and the policemen. On February 6 another two pro-Russian activists: Sergey Akimov and Ilya Bolshedvorov were detained in Simferopol. They were detained for the picket requesting the resignation of the head of the local administration. The next day, on February 7, Akimov was again detained with the participant of the "Crimean spring" Yurii Belov for the picket near the prosecutor's office in Simferopol. On February 10 in Kerch the Crimean "enforcement officers" drew up a report on Andrey Strashko (the pro-Kremlin movement "Social popular front" activist) for the organization of the unauthorized rally. On February 16 in Evpatoriia the anarchist Evgeniy Karakashev was called to the procecutor's office for giving explanation on "the placement of an anti-Russian publication in the Internet". On February 22 the Sevastopol anarchist Aleksey Prysyzhnyuk was called to the centre against extremism because of the interview, which he had given to the resource "Krym.Realii".

On February 21 in Simferopol Russian security forces searched the house of the Crimean tatar Marlen Mustafaev. It was caused by the publication of the symbolism "Hizb ut-Tahrir", which he placed on his page "Vkontakte" in July 2014. After the search Mustafaev was arrested for 11 days. Ten Crimean tatars, who came to the house of Mustafaev to take a video of Russian security forces' actions, got 5 days of arrest. Thus, all the Crimean tatars, who witnessed violation of human rights, can be at risk.

One of the manifestations of the critical situation with humanitarian rights in Crimea is the pressure on press. So, on February 13 it became known that the sites "Censor.Net", "Ukrayinska Pravda", "Hromadske Radio", "Krym.Realii", "15 minutes", "ATR" were blocked in Simferopol. On February 14 the Crimean "public procecutor's office" gave to the court another 48 claims for blocking of the sites with "prohibited information". On February 16 the journalists of STB and "Hromadske Radio" were detained for inspection of documents in Simferopol. On February 18 the film crew of the network STB were detained again. They were released after being questioned and fingerprinted. On February 21 the "Supreme Court" of Crimea declined the appeal to the arrest extension of Aleksey Nazimov, the owner of "Tvoya Gazeta", which impartially covered protest actions on the peninsula. Nazimov and the local deputy Pavel Stepanchenko, who was detained with him, are charged with extortion and mediation in the commercial bribery. On February 22 Roskomnadzor fined the Russian edition "Mediazona" to 5 thousand rubles over the news about Mejlis, where it wasn't indicated that the organization is prohibited.

On February 2 on the Kerch city administration site appeared a message where de facto authorities called on local people to participate in the forming of "self-defense" units. Also, in February the military commissariat of Simferopol recruited and registered the residents of the peninsula for the contractual service in the military units of the South military region. On February 23 in the centre of Sevastopol was opened the entry point to the contractual service in the RF army. Russian officers agitated local people for entering the Russian army and promised them high salaries.

Last month in Crimea there were important staff appointments. Oleg Kamshilov was approved to the post of the Crimean "public prosecutor". Viktor Tanify was appointed the head of the investigations department of the Russian Investigation Committee on Sevastopol. The "parliament" of Crimea agreed on the candidacy of Boris Zimin, ex-director of the Russian company "Nortgas", to the post of vice-

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premier of Crimea. No appointees are residents of Crimea and, except Zimin, who worked in the commercial sector, were government officials in the Russian regions before. Thus, Kremlin continues to appoint to the key public positions Russians, who probably are considered to be more “trustworthy”.

On February 10 Gunduz Mamedov (the public prosecutor of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea) reported that there had been created the Directorate General of the Ukrainian Security Service in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea. At the beginning of February, the public prosecutor's office of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea gave to the court indictments concerning three ex-deputies of the Supreme Council of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea. It became known that another 11 indictments were given to the court at the end of 2016. Moreover, from February 7 the trial of Maksim Odintsov, the Crimean military man accused of desertion and treason, has been started in Kiev.