



CRIMEA SITUATION REPORT

OCTOBER 2020

Hospitals in Crimea are unable to cope with the rapid increase in the number of COVID-19 cases. There are further water consumption restrictions in Crimea. Jehovah's Witnesses face criminal prosecution for their religious beliefs. Illegal draft to the Russian army is underway in Crimea. The occupying authorities' illegal actions endanger the valuable historical and cultural sites of Crimea.

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Hospitals in Crimea are unable to cope with the rapid increase in the number of COVID-19 cases

Crimean hospitals are unable to cope with the increase in the number of COVID-19 cases and are forced to deny people hospitalization. The number of COVID-19 infections in Crimea has reached new record highs. The de facto government claims that as of the end of October, 2,827 people contracted COVID-19. The de facto authorities blame weddings and funerals for the sharp increase of infections. However, they allow mass cultural events, fairs, and educational first aid sessions for children without masks and social distancing. There is an acute shortage of medical personnel and ambulances. Due to a shortage of doctors, hospitals are being closed. The Bakhchisarai maternity hospital recently suspended its work. There is an acute shortage of medicine for COVID-19 treatment. Crimean volunteers are trying to find necessary medicine for seriously ill Crimeans via social networks. Human rights activists claim that the occupying authorities underreport the COVID-19 mortality rate.

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There are further water consumption restrictions in Crimea

There are new water consumption restrictions in the Belogorsk region of Crimea. Water shortages are expected in Sevastopol: Sevastopol's water supplies can last only for three more months. Law enforcement officers searched the houses of three opposition activists who had picketed against the occupying authorities' insufficient response to the water crisis. The activists – Ilya Bolshedvorov, Sergei Vasiliev, and Sergei Akimov – were later fined for “an unauthorized public event”.

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Four Jehovah's Witnesses were incarcerated for their religious beliefs

On October 1, law enforcement officers searched the houses of nine Jehovah's Witnesses in Sevastopol. Four men – Vladimir Maladyk, Yevgeny Zhukov, Vladimir Sakada and Igor Shmidt – were put in custody on suspicion of “organization of activities of an extremist organization” (Part 1, Art. 282.3 of the Russian Criminal Code). This is the first time when defendants in the cases against Jehova's Witnesses in Crimea were put in pre-trial detention.

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The occupying authorities violate the basic rights of Crimean political prisoners

The occupying authorities grossly violate the rights of Crimean political prisoners. The detention centers' administrations do not provide the necessary medical help to the defendants in the “Hizb ut-Tahrir cases”. Medical care is urgently needed by Ruslan Mesutov, who dislocated his leg; Asan Yanikov, who has pain in his gastrointestinal tract; and Dzhemil Gafarov, who has a severe disability and requires constant medical assistance. Asan Yanikov has been held in an unsanitary basement quarantine cell for two months. Timur Ibragimov and Server

Mustafayev are given meals with pork every other day in violation of their religious beliefs. The Simferopol court¹ sent Alexander Sizikov, who has a severe vision disability, to a compulsory forensic psychiatric examination in a psychiatric hospital. Alexander's lawyer believes that hospital conditions can harm his health since due to the complete loss of vision, he needs constant assistance.

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The occupying authorities grossly violate the rights of Crimean political prisoners

Contrary to international humanitarian law, the Russian Federation forcibly conscripts Crimeans into the Russian army and subjects children to the Russian military propaganda. The occupying authorities are planning to draft around 3,000 Crimeans in autumn 2020. About 200 Crimean conscripts have already been sent to Russia. From October 1 to 16, the occupying authorities held military propaganda events for schoolchildren in Crimea.

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Russian Federation conducts illegal conscription of Crimeans into its army and subjects children to the Russian military propaganda

The occupying authorities' illegal actions endanger the valuable historical and cultural sites of Crimea. The occupying authorities of Simferopol are selling historical buildings to commercial entities linked to the authorities. In violation of international and Ukrainian law, the Russian Federation conducts archaeological excavations in Alminskaya Valley and constructs buildings in Chersonese Tavrichesky, a protected reserve.

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The occupying authorities' illegal actions endanger the valuable historical and cultural sites of Crimea

¹ Hereinafter, all state bodies in the territory of occupied Crimea and their representatives are mentioned with the reservation that they are under the control of the occupying Russian authorities and are not legitimate from the point of view of Ukrainian and international law.