



Crimean Human Rights Group



CHRONOLOGY OF PRESSING THE FREEDOM OF SPEECH IN CRIMEA

**ARBITRARY DETENTIONS,
TORTURES,
QUESTIONING**

(March 2014 - September 2019)



One of the most commonly used methods of pressure on journalists and bloggers is an arbitrary detention. Such actions were mainly carried out by representatives of law enforcement structures or paramilitary units, with the journalists having been usually detained without drawing up any reports. In some cases, battery, injuries, theft or damage to the property of journalists during such detentions were recorded, though the occupying authorities refused to investigate these facts.

YEAR 2014

On March 4th 2014 the shooting teams of «**Al Jazeera**» and «**1+1**» **TV Channels** were blocked in the military unit close to Yevpatoria. The unknown people encircled their vehicles, demanded them to show the records and allowed them to go only in several hours¹.

On March 5th 2014 the 'self-defence' members did not allow the journalists of «**1+1**» **TV Channel** to enter the territory of Crimea. Earlier, when entering the peninsula, the attackers took the shooting team hostages and threatened them with using the journalists as 'a human shield' – the journalists were released only after the lengthy negotiations.



Dunja MIJATOVIĆ in Crimea. Screenshot of Bogdan KUTEPOV'S video/
Hromadske TB, March 5th 2014

On March 5th 2014 the 'self-defence' blocked Ms **Dunja Mijatović**, an OSCE Freedom of Speech Representative, who was meeting with Crimean mass media editors and civil activists, in the center of Simferopol. Then she and persons who escorted her were forced to go to the Simferopol Airport².

On March 9th 2014 the unknown wearing the military uniform detained two groups of Ukrainian journalists at the entrance to Crimea: , **Mr Oles Kromples**, a GLAVCOM website camera reporter, and **Ms Yelena Maksimenko**, TYZH DEN' journalist as well as their driver Yevgeniy Rakhno. Two AVTOMAYDAN activists: Ms Yekaterina Butko and Ms Aleksandra Riazantseva who were carrying letters, foodstuffs, and national symbols to the Ukrainian military men – disappeared together with them. The AVTOMAYDAN activists and the journalists were released only in three days – in the evening of March 11 2014³.

1 Journalists Detained in Military Unit in Yevpatoria/BBC Ukraine, 04 March 2014 - http://www.bbc.com/ukrainian/news_in_brief/2014/03/140304_rl_crimea_journalists_blocked.shtml

2 In Simferopol 'Aksionov's Self_Defence' Blocked An OSCE Representative for Mass Media Freedom / TsZhR 05 March 2014 - <http://investigator.org.ua/news/120997/>

3 More Kidnapped Journalists in Cimea/Ukrayinska Pravda, 09 March 2014 - <https://www.pravda.com.ua/rus/news/2014/03/9/7018242/>

On March 12th 2014 the men of BERKUT special police unit and 'self-defenders' beat and detained a camera man and a correspondent of «**Franse TV1**» French TV Channel. Their equipment was destroyed. With some time passed, they were released⁴.

On March 13th 2014 Mr David Geoffrion, a journalist of French «Canal+», was detained at the fuel and lubricants warehouses taken by the 'self-defence'. In several hours the Crimean journalists managed to free him and move to a safe place⁵.

On March 14th 2014 a group of armed people detained **Mr Oleg Balaban**, a UkrStreamTV camera man. He was released in a couple of hours⁶.

On March 16th 2014 **Mr Yaroslav Pilunsky** and **Mr Yuriy Gruzinov**, camera men of VAVILON 13 Cinematographer Association, were kidnapped in Simferopol. They were released on March 21st. In Kyiv the camera men reported the torturing⁷.

On March 18th 2014 **Mr Ibragim Umerov**, an ATR journalist, and a camera man were took hostages by the Russian military men at BOGDAN AVTO Showroom in Simferopol by the Russian military men. The shooting team camera was withdrawn. Umerov was punched in the face and his knee was broken. He was released the same day⁸.

On March 19th 2014 the unknown kidnapped **Mr Levko Stek**, a Radio Svoboda journalist, brought him in the field and asked 'not to visit them the nearest time'. The journalist was withdrawn sim and flash cards of his camera⁹.

On March 22nd 2014 «**Al Jazeera**» TV Channel shooting team was detained by the Russian Border Guard Service of Crimea at CHONGAR check point. The freedom of journalists was restricted from 8:00 to 22:00, and then they were released¹⁰.

On May 15th 2014 **Mr Maksim Vasilenko**, a KRYMSKY TELEGRAPH Newspaper camera reporter, was detained by 'self-defence' representatives. He was forced to enter the building of the AR of Crimea Council of Ministers occupied by the 'self-defence' where his photo equipment and documents were withdrawn.

Mr Vasilenko was threatened with a bodily harm, insulted, and promised that he would be sentenced to a prison. About an hour later the journalist was transferred to the police of the Simferopol Central District. The policemen asked him to write down the explanation, returned the documents and cameras, and then released.

On May 18th 2014 on the Memory Day of Crimean Tatar People Victim Deportation, the 'self-defence' gunmen demanded **Mr Petr Ruzavin**, a journalist of DOZHD Russian TV channel, to delete the recorded videos. The journalist did what they demanded, but he was anyway forcedly brought to 'self-defence' head quarters where he was subject to physical abuse and his cameras were damaged. With some passed, Mr Ruzavin was released¹¹.



David GEOFFRION. Photo – Center of Journalist Investigations (TsZhR)



Maksim VASILENKO and a Crimean 'self-defence' representative, Simferopol, 15 May 2014

4 French Journalists Detained at Armiansk Got in Touch – EUROMAYDAN SOS activists / SVOBODA Radio, 12 March 2014 - <http://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/25294678.html>

5 «Aksionov's Self-Defence» Did Not Torture the Kidnapped French Journalist /TsZhR, 13 March 2014 - <https://investigator.org.ua/news/121988/>

6 Ukrstream.TV Camera Man Released/ Ukrstream.TV, 14 March 2014 - <https://is.gd/izlyMF>

7 Yaroslav Pilunsky Kidnapped in Crimea Beaten Because of His Father - MP/TsZhR, 23 March 2014 - <http://investigator.org.ua/news/122862/>

8 Riflemen Broke a Knee of ATR Journalist and Took Away the Equipment /QHA, 18 March 2014 - <http://qha.com.ua/ru/politika/avtomatchiki-perebili-koleno-jurnalistu-«ATR»-i-otobrali-apparaturu/134278/>

9 Unknown Kidnapped a Radio Svoboda Journalist and Then Left in the Field/Radio SVOBODA, 19 March 2014 - <http://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/25302144.html>

10 Account of EUROMAYDAN SOS/Facebook, 22 March 2014 - <https://www.facebook.com/EvromaidanSOS/posts/393261117481570>

11 DOZHD TV Channel Journalist Attacked in Crimea / Gordon, 19 May 2014 - <http://gordonua.com/news/localnews/v-krymu-napali-na-zhurnalista-telekanala-dozhd-23321.html>

On May 18th 2014 the FSB men, without any justified grounds, detained **Mr Vaclav Radzivinovicz**, a reporter of Polish 'Gazeta Wyborcza; in Moscow, **Mr Nickolay Semena**, a reporter of the Ukrainian 'DEN' newspaper in Crimea, and **Ms Lenara Abibulayeva**, a 'DEN' own photo reporter. They were brought to the FSB Department in Simferopol, were not allowed to make a phone call, all the detained were questioned without any reasons, and released six hours later¹².

On May 18th 2014 **Mr Artur Moriakov**, a cameraman of REALNOST' Russian Documentary Project, were forcibly detained by OMON men. He was examined, finger printed, and had to write an explanatory note. Four hours later, with hand disarticulation, he was released¹³.

On May 18th 2014 the 'self-defence' detained Crimean Tatar journalist **Osman Pashayev** and his cameraman **Djengiz Kizgin** when they were recording the comments of the bypassers in Simferopol. The 'self-defence' detained five more journalists and one bypasser who stood up for them. They were not allowed to see lawyers for a long time and were released only late at night. According to Pashayev's words, the gunmen stole his equipment and the money for a total amount of about USD6,000¹⁴.

On June 2nd 2014 the 'self-defence' men detained forcibly **Mr Sergey Mokrushyn**, a journalist of 'Center for Journalistic Investigations', and **Mr Vlad Mel'nikov**, a camera man of CHERNOMORSKAYA TRK, in Simferopol, accusing them of insulting Vladimir Putin, President of Russia. The journalists were handcuffed and brought to the 'self-defence' HQ. The 'self-defence' men were insulting the detained, hitting them and threatening to use a violence. In addition, the photo camera of one of the journalists was damaged. In an hour the journalists were transferred to the police. The detained were released late at night. Mr Mokrushyn filed a statement on illegal detention and tortures, but a criminal case on this fact was not started in Crimea. A bit later Mr Sergey Mokrushyn had to leave Crimea¹⁵.

On June 22nd 2014 the police detained journalists of Ukrainian HROMADSKE TB TV Channel: **Ms Tati-ana Kozyreva** and **Mr Karen Arzumanian**, her camera man, who were broadcasting one of the rallies. They were questioned and released without any demands after an hour of waiting¹⁶.

On September 21st 2014 **Ms Gayana Yuksel**, a director of QHA IA, was detained when he was returning home from Kyiv, and kept for three hours in a special room of Djankoy Railway Terminal by Russian border guards. Most of this time she spent waiting, while her interview lasted about 20 min. The border guards did not show her any documents or give any verbal explanations why she had been detained and kept¹⁷.

YEAR 2015

On March 14th 2015, when recording an interview with the pro-Ukrainian activists, **Mr Tomasz Kulakowsky**, a Polish journalist of 'Polsat News', and his camera man, faced an aggression of 'self-defence' gunmen and their illegal demands. They had to call the police, that took the journalists and the interviewees to the police station to give explanations, having taken any actions to detain the gunmen. Having been questioned, all were released the same day¹⁸.

On March 30th 2015 eight persons (with seven of them being students – ed. note) were detained in Simferopol for an intention to make a video to support the **ATR** Channel. All of them were kept till late at night and then released¹⁹.

On April 8th 2015 the FSB men questioned in Simferopol **Ms Anna Shaydurova**, a reporter of the "Center for Journalistic Investigations, as a witness. The questioning was related to a criminal case on

12 ФСБ в Крыму 6 часов допрашивала корреспондента «Gazeta Wyborcza» Reporter Questioned for 6 Hours by FSB in Crimea/ Krym. Realii, 17 May 2014 - <https://ru.krymr.com/a/25388773.html>

13 Video of Rude Detention of Crimean Camera Man by OMON Appeared/Krym. Kommentarii, 20 May 2014 - <http://crimea.comments.ua/news/2014/05/20/152045.html>

14 Case of Pashayev: Journalist Demands To Get Through with Self-Defence/BBC Ukraine, 20 May 2014 - http://www.bbc.com/ukrainian/ukraine_in_russian/2014/05/140519_ru_s_pashaev_selfdefense

15 CHRГ Review for June 2014/CHRG- https://crimeahrg.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/crimea_field_mission_report_June_2014_RUS.pdf

16 HROMADSKE TV Journalists Detained in Sevastopol/ TsZhR, 22 June 2014 - <https://investigator.org.ua/news/130488/>

17 Gayana Yuksel Kept at Djankoy Railway Terminal for About 3 Hours by Border Guards /QHA, 21 September 2014 - <http://old.qha.com.ua/ru/politika/gayana-yuksel-okolo-3-chasov-uderjivali-na-vokzale-djankoya-pogranichniki/140002/>

18 Journalist Tomasz Kulakowsky Described Details of His Detention in Simferopol /Details 14 March 2015 - <http://podrobnosti.ua/2021934-zhurnalyst-tomash-kulakovskij-rasskazal-podrobnosti-zaderzhanija-v-simferopole.html>

19 Students To Be Judged in Simferopol for Supporting ATR Channel /Ukrayinska Pravda, 31 March 2015 - <http://www.pravda.com.ua/rus/news/2015/03/31/7063293/>

appeals for breaking the territory integrity of Russia due to an article about the CRIMEA battalion in the ATO area published by journalist **Anna Andriyevska**. The questioned journalist and her lawyer had to sign a non-disclosure agreement²⁰.



Security Service agents Made Journalist Lie on the Ground, Kerch, 22 April 2016, Photo - Kerch.com.ru

On April 22nd 2016 during the anti-terrorist exercises in Kerch the people who appeared in the exercise zone were handcuffed and laid face down on the ground. This happened also with **Kerch.com.ru** local media resource reporters²¹.

On May 18th 2015 the policemen detained in Simferopol **Ms Yekaterina Kysenko** and **Mr Aleksey Russkikh**, working for the Russian 'FOR HUMAN RIGHTS' media. According to the journalists, the formal reason was lack of accreditation to record in the city. Later the policemen failed to explain what accreditation they meant. The mass media people were brought to the district police station to give explanations. The policemen were interested in the reasons for meeting a Crimean Tatar activist they had been interviewing when detained. The journalists were demanded to explain the format of their collaboration with the media as well as the police tried to fingerprint them. Three hours later they were released without any charge made²².

On May 21 2015 the Patrol Police and the Police men stopped a car of the Ukrainian **INTER** Channel on the highway Simferopol – Armiansk. The journalists were shooting a video about Ukrainians who were celebrating the VYSHYVANKA Day, national Ukrainian clothes. After the check of the documents the policemen examined the car and demanded to go with them to the police station 'to verify the identity'. At the station the journalists had to be fingerprinted. They spent about 5 hours at the police station²³.

On June 11th 2015 a journalist who was travelling with a family to the mainland Ukraine was detained, without any explanation of reasons, at the ARMIANSK Russian check point. After the questioning and examination, that took about four hours, everybody was released, though the reasons remained non-explained. No reports on examining and detaining were made²⁴.

On August 24th 2015 when shooting at the monument to Ukrainian poet Taras Shevchenko in Sim-

20 Journalist Shaydurova Questioned As Witness On 'CENTER of JOURNALISTIC INVESTIGATIONS' Case /TsZhR, 08 April 2015 - <http://investigator.org.ua/news/152903/>

21 Casual Victims of Anti-Terrorist Exercises in Kerch /YouTube, 23 April 2016 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HH41Thp0x0w>

22 Specifics of Detaining Journalists in Crimea Became Known /TsZhR, 19 May 2015 - <https://investigator.org.ua/news/155598/>

23 Inter Journalists Kept in Police for 5 Hours in Crimea/Podrobnosti, 21 May 2015 - <http://podrobnosti.ua/2035778-zhurnalistov-intera-v-krymu-zaderzhali-na-semkah-dnja-vyshivanki-video.html>

24 CRHG Review for June 2015/CHRG- https://crimeahrg.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Crimean_Field_Mission_Review_June_2015_RU.pdf

feropol the policemen demanded the Ukrainian **INTER** TV Channel staff to show their documents, and then they were brought to the district police station 'to verify the identity'. The documents were officially checked there and offered an apology for the staff actions. The report on bringing to the police was not made²⁵.

On September 25th 2015 an **ATR** TV Channel camera man was detained at the ceremony of starting the construction of Council Mosque in Simferopol. He was brought to the district police station, kept there for some time and then released²⁶.

YEAR 2016

On January 15th 2016 Ruslan Shambazov, a Russian police captain, together with the OMON men, detained blogger **Zair Akadyrov** at the 'Supreme Court of Crimea' in Simferopol. There was a session on the 'Case of 26th February' in the court, but the blogger was not allowed to be present 'at the session' because, as it was explained, there were seats available in the room. The journalist was brought to Zheleznodorozhny district police station where he was questioned by Shambazov. After the questioning the journalist reported threats and a psychological pressure. No detention report was made²⁷.

Later the 'Prosecutor's Office' of Crimea informed that it had not found any violations of law in the actions of the policemen who had threatened Mr Akadyrov to use a violence²⁸.

On May 10th 2016 the police, without giving any reasons' detained Ukrainian journalist **Igor Burdyga** in Simferopol. Firstly, he was brought in one of the district police stations where he was being questioned by the Russian FSB men for 5 hours. Threatened with arresting 'for acting without accreditation and suspecting of conspiracy with the 'PRAVY SECTOR', he agreed to give an official testimony within the case of blowing up power line supports at the border with Crimea. The questioning lasted for about an hour, and was made by investigator Mikhail Golyshev. Then the journalist was released. A report on detention was not made²⁹.

On June 28th 2016 the police detained **KRYM 24** TV Channel journalists and local residents in Gurzuf during the shooting. The TV men were brought to the district police station where they were to write explanations. No report on delivery to the police and an administrative detention was made. In two hours the journalists were released³⁰.

On September 18th 2016 the policemen detained **Ms Marina Reznikova**, a 'ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA' journalist, and brought her to the Central District police station. The reason for this was her professional interest. The girl made a photo of the house where Sergey Aksionov, a head of Russia annexed Crimea or his family members, are supposed to live³¹.

Then Ms Reznikova, after she had explained, was released without any charge.

On September 25th 2016 **Mr Ragim Gumbatov**, an editor-in-chief of ALUBIKA newspaper, was called for questioning to the Department of the RF Investigation Committee for Republic of Crimea. Gumbatov himself suppose that the questioning might be related to his professional actions, but then he refused to disclose his conversation with the investigator in detail, referring to the secrecy of investigation.

25 CHRNG Review for July 2015/CHRG - https://crimeahrg.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Crimean_Human_Rights_Group_July_August_15_RU.pdf

26 Construction of Council Mosque in Simferopol Started With Detaining Camera Man /Krym. Realii 25 September 2015 - <https://ru.krymr.com/a/news/27269877.html>

27 Journalist Akadyrov 'I Was Subject to Psychological Pressure'/15 Minutes, 15 January 2016 - <http://15minut.org/news/155098-zhurnalists-akadyrov-na-menya-okazyvali-psihologicheskoe-davlenie>

28 'RC Prosecutor's Office' Failed To Find Violations in Detaining Akadyrov/QHA, 02 June 2016 - <http://old.qha.com.ua/ru/obschestvo/prokuratura-rk-ne-nashla-narushenii-v-zaderzhanii-akadirova/160425/>

29 How I Was A Spy: RBK Ukrayina Reporter Spent A Day at the FSB in Crimea/ RBK-Ukrayina, 13 May 2016 - <https://daily.rbc.ua/rus/show/poldnya-fsb-eshche-odna-istoriya-akkreditatsiyu-1463131347.html>

30 In Crimea Police Detained Journalists-Propagandists and Gurzuf Residents For Protests on the Beach/TsZhR, 28 June 2016 - http://investigator.org.ua/rss_yandex/182526/

31 Police Overreach in Simferopol. House of Sergey Aksionov, Head of Crimea/18 September 2016 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rm4h11S53N0>

YEAR 2017

On March 10th 2017 the Russian border guards detained a foreign **journalist** at CHONGAR check point for an additional check. In addition to the check measures established by the Russian laws, his finger prints were taken without his consent, he was pictured full face and profile, and his mobile was checked.

On March 21st 2017 activists of the 'Ukrainian Cultural Center' that published the Ukrainian language newspaper – KRYMSKY TEREN: **Leonid Kuz'min, Mikhail Batrak, Galina Balaban, and Aliona Popova** were called for questioning to the Simferopol FSB Department under the case of Vel'dar Shukurdjiyev. FSB investigator Chumakov informed them that Mr Shukurdjiyev was accused of extremism. In addition to the questions about Shukurdjiyev, the investigator also asked them about journalist Liudmila Schekun and Mr Andriy Schekun³², EUROMAYDAN Crimea Movement leader, who lived in Kyiv.

On March 30th 2017 journalist **Taras Ibragimov** was speaking with the activists at the building of Center for Counteracting Extremism in Simferopol. The Center E men came to them and demanded to go with them. They explained their actions by a received call on presence of the unknown people at the security regime building. Mr Ibragimov was taken to the Center E, where he had to write down an explanation, and his personal stuff was checked. Then he was released though reports on bringing to the police or detaining as well as examining belongings were not made. Ibragimov informed that during the questioning the policemen claimed that he, in their view, 'presented the events only from one side, and suggested to address them for comments'.



Taras IBRAGIMOV (in the center), Osman ARIFMEMETOV, and Remzi BEKIROV. Photo - Facebook of Lutfiye ZUDIYEVA

On April 6th 2017 **Taras Ibragimov** was detained again at the Central Market of Simferopol where he was making photos and videos of mass scale detentions of the market employees and visitors by the OMON and National Guard men. An unknown with masked face ordered his detention, having called the journalist by family name. Ibragimov was escorted to the police encircle-

³² Questioning Activists of Ukrainian Cultural Center of Crimea/CHRG, 21 March 2017 - <https://crimeahrg.org/fsb-doprashivaet-aktivistov-ukrainskogo-kulturnogo-tsentra-kryima/>

ment where he showed his journalist card to the OMON, but they did not allow him to go. Then the same person ordered Ibragimov to be brought to the Central District police station of Simferopol where the journalist was held without registering and making reports for three hours and a half. Then he was moved to Center E, and one hour later, when the lawyer arrived, he was released.

The same day blogger Timur Yalkabov was detained, and kept in the Center E till about 20.00. Timur planned to shoot photos and videos of detentions at the market but he was himself detained by the OMON. The policemen threatened him with administrative arrest if he refused to agree on a forcible finger printing.

On May 17th 2017 **Mr Shevket Kaybullayev**, the Crimea Tatar AVDET Newspaper, was called to the Simferopol District Prosecutor's Office and threatened with an administrative arrest. The reason for that, as said by prosecutor's office staff, was a statement of an Ivanov that Kaybullayev was planning to hold unauthorized mass events. Though the prosecutor's office staff refused to show the statement. They also refused to explain which legal norms they based on their threat of detention. Kaybullayev was released in several hours.

On August 24th 2017 the Zheleznodorozhny district policemen of Simferopol detained two employees of the Ukrainian language KRYMSKY TEREK newspaper – **Aliona Popova** and **Galina Balaban** at the Simferopol railway terminal. As Ms Popova informed, the policemen were waiting for them at the agreed meeting place, detained them without stating any reasons and brought to the Zheleznodorozhny district police station. They were not indicated the reasons of detention, no report on bringing to the police and on administrative offence was made. But the Main Police Department in Crimea staff spoke with the women. In addition, Ms Balaban was finger printed, and private belongings of Ms Popova were examined. Then they both were released without any charge made.

On September 15th 2017 the policemen detained journalist **Taras Ibragimov** at the FSB building in Simferopol. He was brought to the Simferopol City Public Security Unit. The journalist explained that he had been suggested to write down an explanation that he then signed. The policemen insisted also on the finger printing, but he refused. Neither report on bringing to the police nor that on the administrative detention was made. Ibragimov, as he said, had spent about four hours in the unit. The witnesses also said that the policemen had demanded the journalist to block out his mobile, and the journalist did that, and then the phone was withdrawn for about 15 min.

YEAR 2018

On April 5th 2018 the activists of the 'Ukrainian Cultural Center' in Simferopol: **Ms Aliona Popova** and **Ms Olga Pavlenko** were invited for the 'conversation' by Aleksey Puchkov, senior assistant of 'prosecutor' of Simferopol. He was interested in the Center activities and publication of KRYMSKY TEREK Newspaper. The activists referred to the right not to testify against themselves and their relatives³³.

On September 13th 2018 streamers **Eldar Umerov** and **Selim Teyfukov** who were recording the acts of the law enforcement agency men at the place of search at Osman Belialov's, the Crimean Solidarity Group activist, were detained. They were brought to the Bakhchisarai police station and released after they had been pictured and finger printed.

On July 24th 2019 the Crimean Solidarity activists informed that Mr Nuri Abdureshytov, a Crimean Solidarity activist and streamer, was called to the questioning to the RF MIA because on July 11th 2019 he had been at the building of the RF Supreme Court in Moscow where there was a campaign for supporting the 'Case of Crimean Muslims' defendants³⁴. The same day the Russian policemen visited also journalist Emin Rustemov to get a testimony on the campaign for supporting 'Case of Crimean Muslims' defendants³⁵.

33 Ukrainian Activists Called to 'Prosecutor's Office' in Crimea/ CHRГ, 05 April 2018 - <https://crimeahrg.org/v-kryimu-ukrainskih-aktivistov-vyzyvali-v-prokuraturu>

34 Crimean Solidarity, Facebook, 24 July 2019 - <https://www.facebook.com/crimeansolidarity/photos/a.416800078687454/889824981384959/?type=3&theater>

35 Crimean Solidarity, Facebook, 25 July 2019 - <https://www.facebook.com/crimeansolidarity/photos/a.416800078687454/890156434685147/?type=1&theater>

PHYSICAL ATTACKS ON JOURNALISTS

One of the most dangerous types of obstructing the journalist activities is physical attacks recorded mainly during the annexation of Crimea. Such cases include also attacks of 'Crimean self-defence' men on the journalists, in particular when they were trying to shoot how the Russian military men were attacking the Ukrainian military units and other strategic facilities.

YEAR 2014

On March 1st 2014 the unknown attacked **Mr Rustem Murtazayev**, an ATR Channel camera man. He was several times stricken in the neck. Then he gave a flash card with the records, and was released³⁶.

On March 2nd 2014 the unknown stoned a car of "1+1" TV Channel shooting team, when **Mr Grigoriy Zhygalov**, a reporter, and **Mr Pavel Miasnov**, a camera man, were inside.

The same day during a live broadcast at the military unit in the village of Perevalnoye, Simferopol District, a man with steel wires attacked the "1+1" TV Channel shooting team when he heard **Mr Ruslan Yarmoliuk**, a reporter, speaking Ukrainian. A bit earlier the unknown attacked Yarmoliuk's group in Feodosiya when shooting at the Ukrainian marines unit. An aggressive group of people encircled the journalists and started pushing them³⁷.

On March 3rd 2014 **Ms Tatiana Rikhtun**, Grazhdanskaya Oborona website editor-in-chief, was hit on the head in Sevastopol, at the Ukrainian Navy HQ blocked by the Russian military men, and when the journalist went faint, her camera was taken away³⁸.

On March 4th 2014 'self-defence' gunmen attacked Crimean photographer **Andrey Kanischev** at the building of the AR of Crimea Government building in Simferopol³⁹.

On March 5th 2014 when attacking a military unit in Yevpatoria, 'the self-defence' men attacked Mr Aleksey Bobrovnikov, a "1+1" TV Channel reporter. 'Last week at Chongar passage, when passing the seized check point, the "1+1" journalist and cameraman were forced to lay face down on the car hood and clubbed on the back', TSN website informed on March 6th 2014.

On March 5th 2014 the 'self-defence' gunmen attacked **Mr Stanislav Yurchenko**, Agrumenty Nedeli. Krym online media reporter, at the building of the Ukrainian Navy Coast Defence Forces HQ in Simferopol, and tried to break his camera⁴⁰.

On March 6th 2014 the 'self-defence' gunmen beat up a Ukrainian Channel 5 camera man in Sevastopol at the Ukrainian Navy HQ building⁴¹.

On March 6th 2014 a group of young people attacked two journalists of the **BILD** German newspapers in Simferopol, shouting 'Invaders, get Away From Crimea'. The journalists managed to pull a laptop from the attacker's hand and disappeared by car. One of attackers had damaged the car rearguard before it left⁴².

On March 6th 2014 pro-Russian armed Kazaks attacked two foreign shooting teams in Simferopol at CAMELOT night club, including **Associated Press Television News** one. The journalists were taken away a camera, a phone, and all satellite equipment. Bulgarian journalists: **Mr Dimitriy Kenarov**, and **Mr Borian Katsarov** who started shooting what was happening, were beaten up and taken away the camera. It was found out that the journalists had been attacked by the Kazaks from SOBOL Russkaya Obschina organization (Sevastopol)⁴³.

On March 7th 2014 when Ukrainian Air Forces KRYM Group Tactical Headquarters was being

36 Chronology of Events in Crimea March 1/15 MINUT, 01 Mar 2014 - <http://15minut.org/news/32773-hronika-sobytij-v-krymu-1-marta-obn-ovljaetsja-2014-03-01-11-23-20>

37 Administration of Crimea Jamming 1+1 TV broadcast/TSN, 06 March 2104 - <https://ru.tsn.ua/ukrayina/administraciya-kryma-glushit-televizionnyy-signal-telekanala-1-1-353308.html>

38 Journalist Hit on Head And Stripped of Camera in Sevastopol/TsZhR, 03 March 2014 - <http://investigator.org.ua/news/120739/>

39 Aksionov's Men Attacked a Well-Known Journalist/ TsZhR, 04 March 2014 - <http://investigator.org.ua/news/120869/>

40 Pro-Russian Supremacists in Crimea Attacked Women and Journalists/ATN, 05 April 2019 - <https://atn.ua/proisshestviya/v-krymu-prorossiyskie-shovinisty-napali-na-zhenshchin-i-zhurnalistov>

41 Attack on Channel 5 journalists in Crimea/YouTube, 06 Mar 2014 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tNzp2UcLXFA>

42 'Crimean Self-Defence' in Simferopol Attacked Foreign Journalists/Tyzhden.ua, 06 Mar 2014 - <http://tyzhden.ua/News/104244>

43 Car Used to Transport Away Journalist Stolen Equipment Is Owned by Khramov, Kazak Community Leader / TsZhR, 09 Mar 2014 - <http://investigator.org.ua/news/121392/>

attacked in Sevastopol (m/u A 2355), the journalists who were shooting the assault were attacked and beaten up by the unknown. **Mr Andrey Tsapliyenko**, a special INTER TV Channel reporter, and **Mr Vladimir Diedov** were injured.⁴⁴



Journalist Andrey TSAPLIYENK is telling about an attack on the shooting team, 8 March 2014, Crimea. Photo - Podrobnosti.ua

As Mr Tsapliyenko said, they were attacked by five or six men. First, they were firing Makarov guns in the air and then started beating unmercifully the shooting team members. According to his words, the armed gunmen took away their money, documents and equipment.⁴⁵ The Channel 5 director **Mr Anton Laktionov** was injured also during the attack. As his colleagues said, his fingers were broken during the attack.⁴⁶ And Greek journalist **Mr Kostas Onisenko** got a broken nose⁴⁷.

On March 12th 2014 there were conflicts between pro-Ukrainian and pro-Russian activists in Yalta. During the action the pro-Russian rally participants attacked INTER TV Channel shooting team. According to the words of journalist **Ruslan Smeschuk**, he and his cameramen were punched in the body and on the hands. During the attack on the journalists the attackers sprayed CS gas.⁴⁸

On March 13th 2014 in Yalta the people with the Russian flags ran on an pro-Ukrainian rally and attacked the people with pro-Ukrainian signs. **Journalists from Germany and France** suffered. And a camera of one journalist was broken.⁴⁹

On March 17th 2014 in Yalta the unknown beat **Mr Dmitriy Bunetsky**, a special reporter of the SE-GODNIA Ukrainian newspaper, and photographer **Sergey Nikolayev**. They were bruised, their faces were injured, and the teeth were knocked out. In addition, the unknown took away the journalists' mobiles, passports, and money⁵⁰.

44 'I Was Not Touched. I Was Killed Morally'/'Detector Media', 19 Mar 2014 - http://video.detector.media/show/intervu/1912-elena_mehan

45 Journalists Beaten in Crimea/Podrobnosti, 08 Mar 2014 - <http://podrobnosti.ua/963349-v-krymu-izbili-zhurnalistov.html>

46 Journalists Beaten Unmercifully in Sevastopol/Ukrayinska Pravda, 07 Mar 2014 - <http://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2014/03/7/7018119/>

47 Pressing Machine. How Russia Was Liquidating Freedom of Speech in Crimea, p.26- <https://bit.ly/2MfzDE4>

48 Rally in Yalta Finished In Fighting/Podrobnosti, 12 Mar 2014 - <http://podrobnosti.ua/964390-miting-v-jalte-zavershilsja-drakoj.html>

49 In Yalta Russia Supporters Beat Pro-Ukrainian Rally Participants /Glavred, 13 Mar 2014 - <http://glavred.info/politika/v-yalte-storonniki-rossii-izbili-uchastnikov-proukrainskogo-mitinga-273922.html>

50 BSegodnia Journalists Beaten In Crimea/Segodnya.ua, 18 Mar.2014 - <http://www.segodnya.ua/regions/krym/v-krymu-izbili-zhurnalistov-segodnya-503371.html>



Photo from photographer Serger NIKOLAYEV'S Facebook account

On March 22nd 2014 **Mr Aleksandr Aksakov**⁵¹, a news photographer from Saint Petersburg, was injured when the Russian military men were attacking A4515 military unit (204 tactical air force brigade)⁵².

YEAR 2015

On April 9th 2015 in the morning in Sevastopol **Ms Irina Ostaschenko**, a copy editor of INFORMER web based media, was attacked in the corridor of her house. The unknown hit her severely on the head, and she went faint. She was brought to the Neurosurgical Department where she was diagnosed a chopped, avulsed, and scalp laceration of the front and back parts of the head.

The journalist criticized the Sevastopol authorities in many her articles, including the issue of uncontrolled development destroying the nature and historical monuments. She started receiving threatening messages after her criticizing articles on the Fiolent Cape development. On April 7th the INFORMER published the article: 'Sevastopol Che Guevara Flying Away For Ever?', and then next day she was attacked. Both Irina and her colleagues were sure that the attack had been caused by her professional activity as journalist⁵³.

On May 12th 2015 the deadline for commencing a criminal case on the fact of attacking her expired. The case was not commenced, and the RF Investigation Committee stated that the attack on the journalist had no link to her professional activity⁵⁴. On August 31st 2015 Ms Irina Ostaschenko, an editor of INFORMER website, died in Moscow at hospital. The official diagnosis is lungs cancer, but her colleagues and friends stated that her death had resulted from the injuries got during the attack in April⁵⁵.

51 In Belbek a Reuters Photographer Stopped an Armored Car to Save a Russian Colleague/Detector Media, 23 Mar 2014 - [https://detector.media/community/article/91841/2014-03-23-u-belbeku-fotograf-reuters-ryatuyuchi-rosiiskogo-kolegu-zupiniv-btr-dopovnenoi/](https://detector.media/community/article/91841/2014-03-23-u-belbeku-fotograf-reuters-ryatuyuchi-rosiiskogo-kolegu-zupiniv-btr-dopovnen/)

52 Raw: Pro-Russian Forces Storm Ukrainian Air Base / YouTube, Associated Press, 22.03.2014 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SiEvP1yqxSE&feature=youtu.be>

53 CHRG Review for September 2015/CHRG - https://crimeahrg.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Review_Crimean_Human_Rights_Group_September_2015_RU.pdf

54 Body Injuries of Journalist Ostaschenko Are Not Caused By Her Occupation - Investigation Committee/ForPost, 22 June 2015 - <http://sevastopol.su/news.php?id=76390>

55 Death of Crimean Journalist: Questions Without Answers/Krym. Realii, 01 Sept 2015 - <http://ru.krymr.com/a/27221179.html>

On July 27th 2015 a bus with journalists going to the press conference of BefooZ festival President in Popovka cancelled by the authorities the day before, was stopped once it started running. In addition to the traffic patrol police, Ms Valentina Chuprina, senior prosecutor of unit of supervising the enforcement of laws on federal security, interethnic relations, and counteracting extremism and terrorism of Republic of Crimea 'Prosecutor's Office', was present.

The journalists after they had been waiting for a bus driver for over an hour without any result, took a minibus and went on their travel privately. This vehicle was stopped by the traffic police close to Saki. All the journalists were demanded to present the documents for check. Any attempt to shoot what was happening were brutally stopped – one of journalists was pushed a video camera out of the hands. None was detained, but the journalists were two hours late when they arrived at the place.

On October 2nd 2015 an **ARMIANSK. INFO** informational channel journalist was attacked by the road maintenance workers, when shooting, who twisted his arms and took away a camera/ When the police was addressed, the camera was returned, but the case of attack was not sorted out. The victim refused appealing against the police actions⁵⁶.

DAMAGE AND SEIZURE OF PROPERTY

When working in Crimea, the journalists and bloggers faced many times the situation when their property was seized or damaged, this occurring the most often during the annexation and the first year of occupation.

YEAR 2014

On February 28th 2014 Mr Stepan Gulevatyi, Director General of the **KRYM State TV and Radio Broadcasting Company**, reported that the company building had been encircled with about 20 armed men. As journalist Shevket Ganiyev said, there was a URAL military vehicle under the editorial office window, and the armed men wearing the military uniform introduced themselves as RF Black Sea Navy men⁵⁷.

On February 28th 2014 when the armed military men tried to occupy the rooms of **RRT** Corporate Group in Simferopol and Sevastopol, some receiving and transmitting equipment was damaged⁵⁸.

On March 1st 2014 the armed men seized the **Information Press Center** in Simferopol, and the room of **Center for Journalistic Investigations** (TsZhR) IA editor office located at the same building, and placed their KRYMSKY FRONT Press Center here⁵⁹.

On March 1st 2014 Mr Bogdan Kutepov, a journalist of HROMADSKE TB TV Channel, informed that **INTER** journalists had been taken away the flash cards. Ms Aleksandra Gorchinskaya, a KyivPost paper journalist, reported that the **France24** shooting team had been taken away armored jackets⁶⁰.

On February 28th 2014 journalist **Savik Shuster** stated that a studio he rented in Simferopol was seized⁶¹.

On March 5th 2014 the tyres of **Mr Andrey Goloborod'ko's**, a Gazeta.ua media journalist, car were cut. This happened when the journalists were shooting a re-location of the Russian military men convoy. The convoy stopped at the exit from the village of Prigorodnoye, 4km far from Yevpatoriya. The military men, threatening with the arms, ordered the journalists to get off the car and put the hands on the motor hood. One military man told the journalists that they were the danger for the convoy and warned them that the journalists would face problems if they followed them. The other man took a knife and punched three wheels of the journalists' car.⁶²

56 Journalists Being Strangled for News Reports on Armiansk Development /Armiansk. Info, 02 Oct 2015 - <http://armiansk.info/news/news-archive/121-2015/5159-zhurnalystov-dushat-za-reportazhi-o-blagoustrojstve-armyanska>

57 KRYM TV R BC Controlled by Russian Military Men/TsZhR, 28 Feb 2014 - <https://investigator.org.ua/news/120348/>

58 Military Seizure of KRYM RTVTC o RRT Corporate Group/KoRRT CG, 06 Mar 2014 - <http://www.rrt.ua/presscenter/index/actualone/lang/uk?id=135>

59 Armed Men Seized Center for Journalistic Investigations /TsZhR, 01 Mar 2014 - <https://investigator.org.ua/news/120447/>

60 At Entrance to Crimea Journalists or Shooting Threatened With Firing Without Notice/IMI, 01 Mar 2014 - <https://imi.org.ua/news/na-vjizdi-do-krimu-jurnalistam-pogrojuyt-strilyati-bez-poperedjennya-za-zyomku/>

61 Yesterday Air 'ShusterLIVE' Show at 24 News TV Channel (Video) /Channel 24, 01 Mar 2014 - https://24tv.ua/ru/vcherashniy_vipusk_programmi_shuster_live_na_telekanale_novostey_24_video_n415179

62 Russian Military Men Threatened Gazeta.ua Reporter, Punched Car Wheels/Gazeta.ua, 06 Mar 2014 - http://gazeta.ua/articles/regions/_rosijski-vijskovi-pogrozhuvali-korespondentu-gazetaua-probili-kolesa-avtomobilya/545807

On March 6th 2014 the armed men seized the property of the **RRT** Ukrainian Corporate Group. The transmitters of the **CHERNOMORSKAYA TV R BC** located also in the room of the Radio TV Transmitting Center (RTVTC) in Simferopol owned by the Corporate Group were also seized and used for transmitting the Russian TV channels⁶³.

At night of March 7th 2014 during a live broadcasting in Simferopol the 'self-defence' men attacked the **STB** shooting team and damaged the equipment. Cameraman **Aleksandr Albinsky** informed that the 'backpack' with the devices used for broadcasting had been put out of order⁶⁴.

On March 8th 2014 **Allan Muuk** and **Vayk Varese**, reporters of TV3 Estonian channel, were attacked by the unknown, and taken away the equipment. The TV channel believes these were the Russian military men⁶⁵.

On March 8th 2014 the activists and journalists who came to the building of military district were attacked by the armed men wearing the green uniform. **Ms Anna Babinets**, a HROMADSKIE TV journalist, informed that the attackers had taken away their flash cards and damaged the equipment⁶⁶.

On March 9th 2014 in Sevastopol when shooting a rally dedicated to the anniversary of Ukrainian poet Taras Shevchenko birthday **Ms Lidiya Guzhva**, a journalist of Ukrainian «Spilno.tv» Channel, was pulled out a smart camera phone just on live broadcasting. The streamers were also taken away driver's licences⁶⁷.

On March 11th 2014 the armed men and security men wearing BERKUT uniform robbed **TK SKY TG 24** Italian channel shooting team that was trying to shoot block posts at the entrance to Crimea. The journalists were taken away batteries to the cameras, a memory card with records, an online streaming device, and two laptops⁶⁸.

On March 11th 2014 at the border with Crimea the unknown in masks took away the equipment of the **NRK** Norwegian Channel shooting team, and accused the journalists of espionage⁶⁹.

On March 12th 2014 **Mr Yan Guzar**, a Slovak news photographer, was detained at the Simferopol airport. He was taken a passport and all equipment away for some time, though everything was later returned but for the memory cards. He was demanded to give a USD500 bribe for them⁷⁰.

On March 13th 2014 at 05:00pm the Sevastopol 'self-defence' gunmen ran into the rooms of the **IPC Sevastopol Media Center and its Grazhdanskaya Oborona website**. Ms T.Rikhtun, Media Center Director, told, that 'according to the 'self-defence' men words, they had been informed about some terrorist actions, and they wanted to check the rooms'. The policemen called to the place were searching the media center rooms for 5 hours, and accused the director of storing illegally special purpose means, speaking of two armored jackets found.



Search in IPC Sevastopol Media Center. Photo: Tatiana RIKHTUN

63 Military Seizure of KRYM RTVTC o RRT Corporate Group/KoRRT CG, 06 Mar 2014 - <http://rrt.ua/presscenter/index/actualone/lang/uk?id=135>

64 In Simferopol STB Shooting Team Attacked on Live Broadcasting by Aksionov's Men/Argument, 08 Mar 2014 - <http://argumentua.com/novosti/v-simferopole-na-semochnuyu-gruppu-stb-napali-v-pryamom-efire-druzhinniki-aksenova>

65 Unknown Attacked Shooting Team of TV3 Estonian Channel in Crimea (video)/Postimees, 08 Mar 2014 - <https://rus.postimees.ee/2721692/v-krymu-na-semochnuyu-brigadu-estonskogo-telekanala-tv3-napali-neizvestnye-video>

66 Hromadske TV Journalists Attacked in Crimea at Seized Military District Building/Ukrayinska Pravda, 08 Mar 2014 - <https://www.pravda.com.ua/rus/news/2014/03/8/7018163/>

67 Spilnobachennia Streamers in Sevastopol Taken Away a Smartphone and Driver's Licenses /Detector Media, 10 Mar 2014 - <https://detector.media/community/article/91303/2014-03-10-u-strimeriv-spilnobachennya-v-sevastopoli-vidibrali-smartfon-i-vodiiski-prava/>

68 Italian TK SKY TG 24 Shooting Team Detained/Krym_ SOS, 11 Mar 2014 - https://www.facebook.com/KRYM.SOS/posts/607993425943947?stream_ref=10

69 NRK-journalister fratatt utstyret på Krim/NRK, 11 Mar 2014 - <https://www.nrk.no/urix/nrk-journalister-anholdt-pa-krim-1.11598449>

70 Yan Guzar Slovak News Photographer Detained in Simferopol Airport and Demanded a Bribe/IMI, 12 Mar 2014 - <https://imi.org.ua/news/slovatskogo-fotokora-yana-guzara-z-ATRimali-v-aeroportu-simferopol-i-vimagayut-habara/>

On March 13th 2014 in the evening in Kerch the unknown damaged purposefully a part of electric cable and an electric meter of the radio mast in Chernyshevskogo Street owned by local **BRIZ TVR BC**⁷¹.

On March 13th 2014 the Russian military men in Armiansk detained **Mr Rodion Chepel**, a DOZHD Russian TV Channel reporter. He was taken away the equipment, kept in the basement and sent back by car to Kyiv, with all the records deleted⁷².

On March 14th 2014 the Russian military men attacked **Ms Yekaterina Sergatskova**, a UKRAYINSKA PRAVDA web-based media journalist, at the military district building in Simferopol, in Kiyevskaya Street. The military men, threatening her with the arms, had almost pulled her on the territory of the seized military district building. The activists managed to ward her off, but she was taken away all the equipment⁷³.

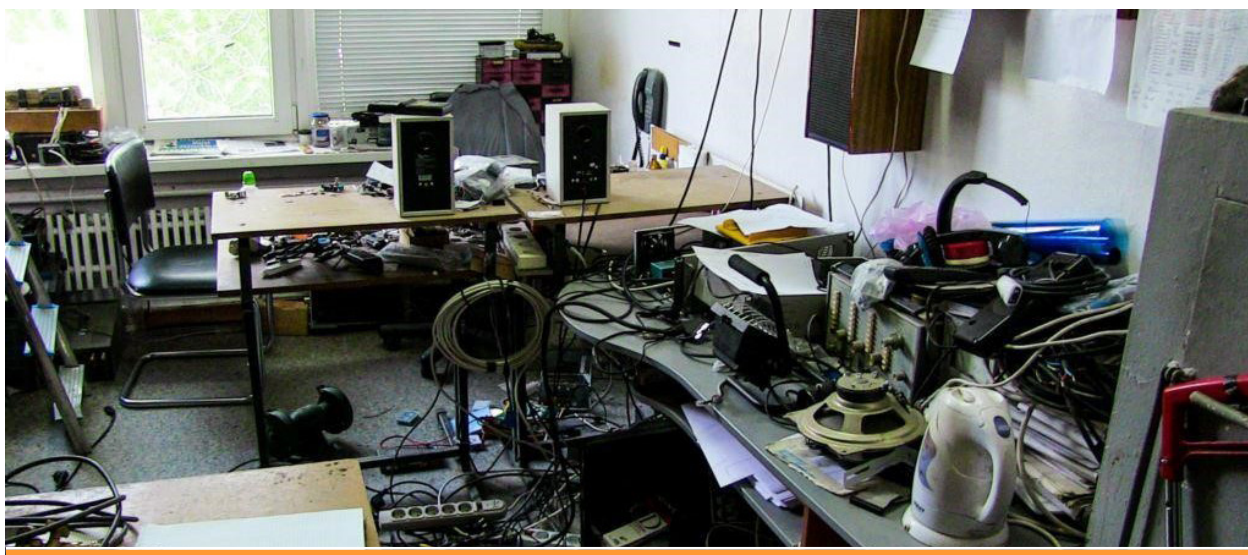
On March 15th 2014 in the evening several men wearing the military uniform and armed with Kalashnikov assault rifle blocked one of the floors in the MOSKVA Hotel (Simferopol) where many journalists were staying, though then they left.

On March 16th 2014 – the day of so called ‘referendum’ – the shooting team of **Al Jazeera** TV Channel was attacked by the ‘self-defence’ gunmen at the voting station no 01004 in Alushta, they damaged the team equipment and forced to leave the station, not allowing to shoot further⁷⁴.

On April 11th 2014 the ‘self-defence’ gunmen attacked the **CHERNOMORSKAYA TVR BC** at the Simferopol railway terminal and destroyed the flash card with recorded video⁷⁵.

On May 15th 2014 the Crimean ‘self-defence’ men attacked a camera man of the **FM** pro-Russian Crimean TV Channel on Lenina Square in Simferopol. They took away his phone, broke a camera tripod and a microphone, and forbade to video OMON special police units exercises in the city center.

On August 1st 2014 the territory of the **CHERNOMORSKAYA TVR BC** was seized by the ‘self-defence’ gunmen who did not allow to enter the place by **Center for Journalistic Investigations** IA journalists who rented some rooms at the broadcasting company, and the company lawyers. The company rooms were released in several days, but according to the award of ‘Sevastopol Court of Appeal’, the court bailiffs supported by the security men arrested the entire property of the TV Channel for a debt of RUR3mln to RTVTC. The property of the Center for Journalistic Investigations was also moved out, though it was not mentioned in the ‘court’ award.⁷⁶



CHERNOMORSKAYA TVR BC after the visit of the Federal Court Bailiff Service of Russia men, 4 August 2014.

Photo – Krym.Realii \RFE\RL

71 Radio Switched Off in Kerch: Radio Mast Feeding Damaged/TsZhr, 14 Mar 2014 - <https://investigator.org.ua/news/122058/>

72 Rodion Chepel About ‘Colonel Lekha’s’ Questioning and Refugees from Crimea /Dozhd, 14 Mar 2014 - https://tvrain.ru/teleshov/here_and_now/rodion_chepel_o_doprosah_polkovnika_lehi_i_bezhentsah_iz_kryma-365018/

73 Just from Military District Unit.../Evromaidan SOS, 14.03.2014 - <https://www.facebook.com/EvromaidanSOS/posts/389450811195934>

74 Journalists Not Allowed to Voting Stations and Beaten at Crimean Referendum/Ukrayinska Pravda 16 Mar 2014 - <http://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2014/03/16/7019025/>

75 CHRNG Monitoring Review for April 2014 https://crimeahrg.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/crimea_field_mission_report_April_2014_RUS.pdf

76 CHRNG Review, July - August 2014/CHRNG- https://crimeahrg.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/crimea_field_mission_report_July-August_2014_RUS.pdf

On September 12th 2014 the TVR BC management informed that they had been denied returning the property which attachment had been lifted by the occupation 'court'⁷⁷.

On November 11th 2014 the 'Sevastopol Court of Appeal' denied an appeal of the RTVTC of Crimea against the 'Commercial Court' award that had decided on lifting the attachment of the **CHERNOMORSKAYA TVR BC** property on August 11th 2014. But the withdrawn equipment was not returned to the company, and the TV channel was unable to keep on broadcasting⁷⁸.

In the mid December 2014 the equipment was returned, but it lacked the components: one computer did not have a 3Tbyte hard disk, another – an audio card worth about USD600, all cameras were without batteries, some were without memory cards, microphones and other assemblies. The DC hard disks were removed when storing by the special security agencies.⁷⁹

On December 22nd 2014 **Center for Journalistic Investigations** also managed to return its equipment, but it was damaged, a part of it could not be used, while restoring would require substantial funds.

YEAR 2015

On May 26th 2015 the Russia FSB men inspected a car of Kherson region residents. This was shot by a local blogger who was an incident and search witness. When the inspection finished a FSB man demanded to go with him to the department, where he asked to give a camera to add the video records to the case files. The camera was returned in 40 min, but all records were damaged.

On August 2nd 2015 the unknown entered into the room of the **YANY DIUNYA** newspaper editorial office, stole some computers and hard disks, including the archives of paper issues. In addition, they seemed to have stolen the media paper archives, and destroyed the subscription bills⁸⁰.

At night from November 18th to 19th the unknown tried to enter the editorial office of **YILDIZ** Crimean Tatar Literature Magazine in Simferopol. They broke metal window grates but failed to get inside the room.

In November 2015 the editorial office of **YANY DIUNYA** weekly newspaper in Crimea was robbed again. The thieves took a laptop and a scanner.

CRIMINAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSECUTIONS

One of the ways to obstruct the mass media activities in Crimea is a criminal and administrative persecution of journalists. The criminal cases against the journalists were commenced for the publications and statements on Ukraine's sovereignty over Crimea.

YEAR 2015

On February 2nd 2015 the investigation unit of the RF FSB Department for Crimea commenced a criminal case under RF CC Article 280.1-2 (appeals to acts aimed at violating the territorial integrity of the RF) against journalist **Anna Andriyevska** for the article 'Volunteers of CRIMEA Battalion' published at the website of Center for Journalistic Investigations⁸¹.

On March 10th 2015 the FSB commenced a criminal case under Article 280.1 (public appeals to acts aimed at violating the territorial integrity of the RF) against **Mr Andrey Klimenko**, editor-in-chief of

77 Chernomorka President: We Are Obstructed to Work, Keeping Illegally Equipment/Krym. Realii, 12 Sept 2014 - <http://ru.krymr.com/content/article/26580122.html>

78 CHRG Review for November 2014/CHRG- https://crimeahrg.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Crimea_Field_Mission_Report_November_2014_RU.pdf

79 CHRG Review for January 2015/CHRG- https://crimeahrg.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Crimea_field_mission_report_January_2015_RU.pdf

80 Crimean Tatar Paper Editorial Office Vandalized in Crimea /TsZhR, 04 Aug 2015 - <https://investigator.org.ua/news/160650/>

81 Volunteers of CRIMEA Battalion/TsZhR, 11 Dec 2014 - <https://investigator.org.ua/ua/articles/144257/>

the BlackSeaNews media. According to the journalist's information, the houses of more than 10 his colleagues in Yalta were searched.

On March 13th 2015 the RF FSB Department men searched the Crimean apartment of **Anna Andriyevska's** parents, and withdrew the journalist father's computer⁸². On March 13th 2015 within the case of Anna Andriyevska, the search was also carried out at **Natalia Kokorina's**, another Center for Journalistic Investigations journalist, who had then to move from Crimea to Kyiv. One more journalist of the Center for Journalistic Investigations – **Ms Anna Shaydurova** was called for questioning within the case, and had to sign a non-disclosure agreement.

On April 15th 2015 two under legal age students were fined for RUR10,000 each for an attempt to shoot a video clip to support the ATR TV Channel on March 30th. Mr Aleksey Yefremov, who initiated the action, was fined for RUR20,000⁸³.

On April 21st 2015 in Simferopol the investigation committee men searched the house of **Mr Eskender Nebiyev**, the ATR TV Channel camera man. He was detained and arrested the next day under on the count of participation in the mass riots as the investigators determined two mass actions at the building of the ARC Supreme Council on February 26th 2014. According to the investigation opinion, Mr Nebiyev was present at the rally as participant, not as journalist though the TV Channel management proved the opposite⁸⁴. On April 22nd 2015 the 'Kiyevsky District Court' of Simferopol arrested Mr Nebiyev for 2 months⁸⁵. He was freed on bail on June 18th 2015.

On April 22nd 2015 **Ms Gayana Yuksel**, QHA IA chief, was called to the Center for Counteracting Extremism. The reason for calling was the information published at the agency website about the organization declared extremist on the RF territory in November 2014. The explanation that the file had been published before that date, was neglected, and a report on the administrative offence was made against Ms Yuksel that she did not agree with. According to her information, there were articles published in 2006. Then the case was dismissed due to a lack of evidence⁸⁶.

On July 2nd 2015 blogger **Yuriy Ilchenko** was detained in Sevastopol on the charge of extremism. The reason was a publication of article with a severe criticism of the Russian occupation of the peninsula and calls 'to resist the aggressor'⁸⁷ on his own website. Mr Ilchenko spent 11 months in the detention center, then was placed under house arrest. In June 2016 the blogger managed to escape to the mainland Ukraine⁸⁸. The RF put him on the wanted list, stating that Mr Ilchenko had been accused of inciting the hatred on account of the ethnic descent.

On October 9th 2015 upon the demand of the prosecutor the 'court' changed a pre-trial restriction for the former ATR TV Channel camera man **Eskender Nebiyev** who was a defendant of the disorder case during the rallies at the walls of the AR Crimea Parliament on 26 February 2014. He was arrested and kept in custody for four days – till the award was issued. On October 12nd 2015 the 'Tsentralny district court' of Simferopol sentenced Mr Nebiyev to two and half years suspended under RF CC Article 212-2 – participation in mass riots.

YEAR 2016

On April 19th 2016 at about 07:00am the FSB men searched the home of journalist **Nilolay Semena** as well as some other journalists whom the Russian security agencies suspected of collaborating with KRYM.Realii website (Radio SVOBODA project). After the search Mr Semena was conveyed to the FSB department, questioned and released.

The FSB commenced a criminal case against **Nikolay Semena** accusing him of appeals to violate the RF

82 CHRNG Review for March 2015/CHRNG - https://crimeahrg.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Crimea_Field_Mission_Review_March_2015_RU.pdf

83 ATR Support – Severe Crime Enough to Judge Under Legal Age? An Crimea, 15 Apr 2015 - <http://an-crimea.ru/page/news/101981>

84 ATR Camera Man Detained in Crimea – For Participation in 26 February Rally /Ukrayinska Pravda 21 Apr 2015 - <https://www.pravda.com.ua/rus/news/2015/04/21/7065323/>

85 ATR Camera Man Nebiyev Arrested for Two Months /TsZhR, 22 Apr 2015 - <https://investigator.org.ua/ua/news/153892/>

86 Crimean Unfreedom of Speech or Notes from OSCE Forum/Detector Media, 05 Oct 2016 - <http://detector.media/infospace/article/119369/2016-10-05-krimskia-nesvoboda-slova-abo-notatki-z-forumu-obse/>

87 Ukrainian Patriot Accused of Extremism and Arrested in Sevastopol/QHA, 10 Jul 2015 - <http://old.qha.com.ua/ru/politika/v-sevastopole-obvinili-v-ekstremizme-i-arestovali-ukrainskogo-patriota/146183/>

88 Crimean Human Rights Group Account/Facebook, 17 Aug.2016 - <https://m.facebook.com/crimeahrg/posts/1762767774008856>

integrity⁸⁹. On April 29th the FSB men, when questioning, charged him under the article on appeals to violated the RF integrity for the article titled 'Blockade – First Necessary Step to Liberate Crimea'. Then he was included into the list of terrorists and on July 7th of the same year his bank account was blocked⁹⁰.



Nikolay SEMENA. Photo – Alina SMUTKO\Krym.Realii\RFEBRL

On June 14th 2016 editor-in-chief of pro-Russian website ARGUMENTY NEDEIL – KRYM **Aleksey Salov** was detained in Simferopol. As was reported by Ms Anastasia Medyntseva, an employee of one of the Russian newspapers in Crimea, Mr Salov was on the wanted list due to a charge with extortion. According to her data, in 2010 Mr Salov was blackmailing Grigoriy, a RF State Duma Member, demanding RUR50,000 monthly, otherwise he would disseminate the information that may harm the MP. He was told to have been transferred RUR100,000 for two months. In 2012 a court in Vladimir Town sentenced Mr Salov to one year in the penal settlement. But instead of coming to the punishment place, he moved to Ukrainian Crimea.

The AN KRYM editorial office stated that detention of Mr Salov 'was related to his journalistic work in Vladimir six years ago'. 'Aleksey did not fear to tell the truth, sometimes even unflattering, 'inconvenient' for someone. And it seems that many in the region disliked this', the statement pointed out. 'The editorial office hopes that this confusion that has been a bombshell for us, would be resolved in the forthcoming days'⁹¹.

In July 2016 the Russian Federal Financial Monitoring Service published a list of 7,000 individuals – RF nationals – 'terrorists and extremists'. Three Crimean journalists: **Anna Andriyevskaya** from the "Center for Journalistic Investigations", **Andrey Klimenko** from BlackSeaNews, and **Nikolay Semena** – were included into the list. Criminal cases had been commenced against them earlier in Crimea. Ms Andriyevskaya and Mr Klimenko had been left to the mainland Ukraine by that time, where they have been working as journalists.

Due to Law no 115-FZ 'On counteracting legalization (laundering) the incomes generated criminally, and financing the terrorism', Mr Semena faced restrictions in using his bank account.

⁸⁹ Case of Extremism Started Against Radio Svoboda Branch Journalist in Crimea/ TACC, 19 Apr 2016 - <http://tass.ru/politika/3217310>

⁹⁰ Crimean Journalist Nikolay Semena in List of Terrorists of Bank of Russia/Krym.Realii, 08 Jul 2016 - <https://ru.krymr.com/a/news/27846288.html>

⁹¹ Arrest of Crimean Media Editor-in-Chief: Criminality or Politics?/Krym. Realii, 15 Jun 2016 - <http://ru.krymr.com/a/27800799.html>

YEAR 2017

On January 20th 2017 FSB investigator Aleksandr Parshutin handed journalist **Nikolay Semena** an indictment. The journalist was charged under RF CC Article 280.1-2 – public appeals to acts aimed at violating the RF territorial integrity. According to the investigation opinion, the Crimean journalist ‘prepared the article titled ‘Blockade – Necessary First Step to Liberate Crimea’ that contained appeals to violated the Russian Federation territorial integrity’. The indictment was based on the findings of linguistic examination. The journalist was in Crimea under the written pledge not to leave country.

On February 21st 2017 streamers **Remzi Bekirov** and **Osman Arifmemetov** were among ten Crimean Tatars detained for coming to the place of search of Marlen Mustafayev’s house in the village of Kamenska, and recording the violations of the security men with mobiles. The bloggers were determined guilty of violating RF CoAO Article 20.2 – violation of established procedure to organize or hold an assembly, rally, demonstration, procession or picketing. They were sentenced to 5 days of administrative arrest each. Lawyer Emil Kurbedinov reported that his clients had stated that after detention the police men had not purposefully given them anything to eat and drink from morning till late night. In addition, they stayed for a long time in the unheated vehicle. The court disregarded these circumstances and declarations⁹².

On March 30th 2017 Crimean Tatar streamer and activist of ‘Crimean Solidarity’ **Remzi Bekirov** was detained by the Center for Counteracting Extremism (acronym E Center – ed note) men⁹³. He was accused under RF CoAO Article 20.29 (production and dissemination of extremist information) for placing two videos in the VKontakte Social Network in 2010 – interview with so called ‘Primorya resistance fighters’ and ‘Black Hawks Blow Up FSB’. According to the words of Bekirov’s friends, at the moment of detention the page had been deleted for more than a month. However, Ms Svetlana Belik, a judge of ‘Simferopol District Court’, issued a judgement on a three day’s administrative arrest for Remzi Bekirov.

Nikolay Semena, a journalist of Krym.Realii media, who remained to work in Crimea, received a two years and a half suspended sentence on September 22nd 2017 for publishing the article ‘Blockade – Necessary First Step for Liberation of Crimea’. He was accused under RF CC Article 280.1-2.

On April 12th 2017 the house of Crimean Tatar activist and citizen journalist **Seydamet Mustafayev** was searched.

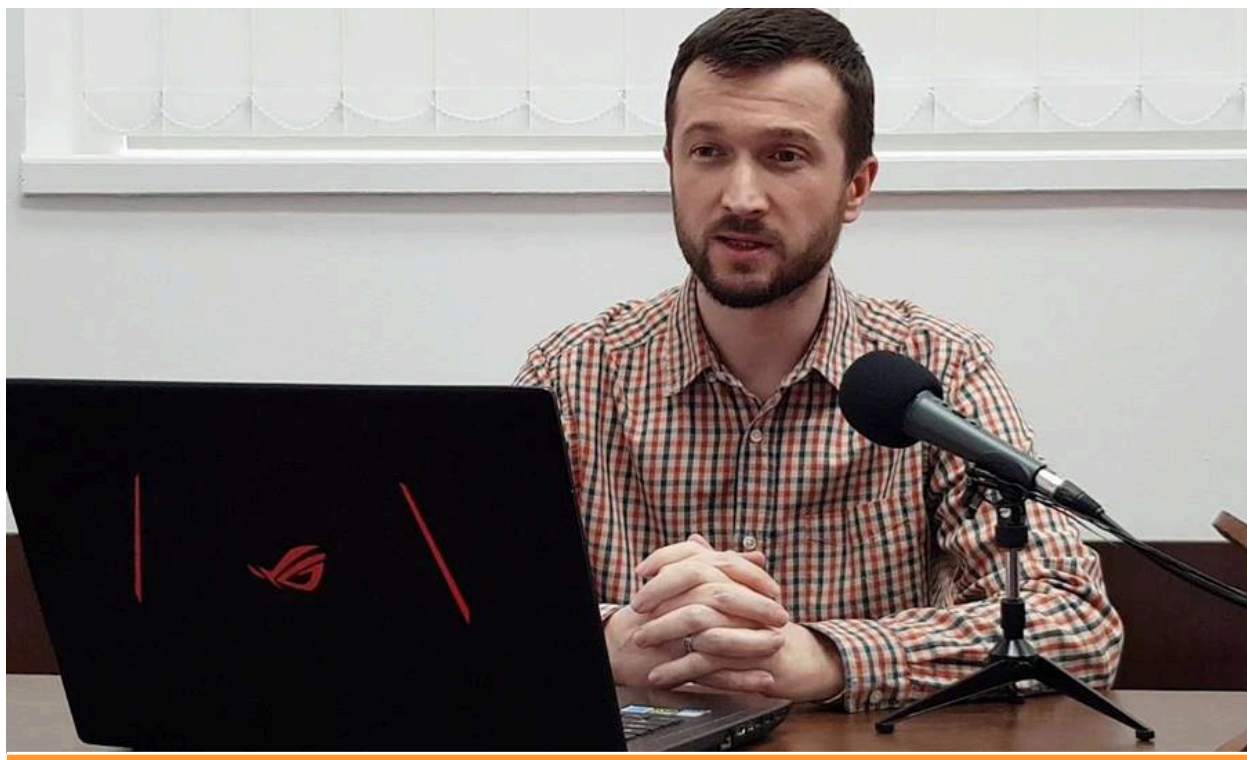
Over 40 OMON men were involved in detaining Seydamet Mustafayev. Photographer **Seytumer Seytumerov** who came to support Mustafayev in this situation, went faint. The same day judge Vasiliy Koshelev determined Seydamet Mustafayev and **Midat Muzhdaba** whose houses had been searched, guilty of violating CoAO Article 20.3-1 (public demonstration of extremist organization symbols) for placing publications with Hizv-ut-Takhrir international Islamic party symbols in the social networks. They were sentenced to three and ten days of administrative arrest, correspondingly⁹⁴.

On October 11th 2017 when the houses of Crimean Tatars were searched in Bakhchisarai, the policemen detained Crimean Tatar activists **Alimdar Belialov** and **Amet Suleymanov**. Both affirm that they were recording the actions of the law enforcement agencies men. Later they were alleged an administrative offense under RF CoAO Article 20.2-2 (organization of simultaneous staying or moving of citizens that has caused a public order violation). According to Mr Belialov’s words, he had just taken out his mobile and switched on video recording, when an unknown in mask, most probably a FSB man, noticed that and ordered to detain him. As Mr Suleymanov explained, he had been recording for a long time, and after the policemen’s command started walking away from the encirclement but the policemen purposefully caught him up and detained. In the police station the FSB men used force to take away the mobiles to get the information out of these devices. ‘Bakhchisarai district court’ sentenced Mr Alimar Belialov to a fine of RUR10,000, and Amet Suleymanov – RUR15,000.

92 CHRГ Review for February 2017 CHRГ - https://crimeahrg.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Crimea_Field_Mission_Review_February_2017_RU.pdf

93 Streamer Arrested for Three Days in Crimea for Video Published 7 Years Ago/ЦЖР информации по правам человека, 30 Mar 2017 - https://humanrights.org.ua/ru/material/streamer_arrestoval_na_troje_sutok_za_opublikovannoje_7_let_nazad_video

94 CHRГ Review for April 2017/ CHRГ - https://crimeahrg.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Crimean-Human-Rights-Group_April_2017_RU.pdf



Seytumer SEYTUMEROV. Photo from his Facebook Account

On November 8th 2017 **Mr Seytumer Seytumerov**, one of the most active streamers of “Crimean Solidarity” movement, after the search, was brought by the police to ‘Bakhchisarai District Court’ that held him liable under RF CoAO Article 20.3 for publishing ‘Hizb-ut-Tahrir’ party symbols. The organization is officially forbidden in the RF, but acted legally on the territory of Ukraine. The ‘court’ imposed a fine of RUR2,000 on him. In addition, his computer with ‘Crimean Solidarity’ video files was withdrawn. Later Mr Seytumerov had to leave to the mainland Ukraine. Now he works as an anchorman at the ATR Crimean Tatar Channel.

On November 20th 2017 in Simferopol the patrol police stopped a car of **Mr Alimdar Belialov**, a ‘Crimean Solidarity’ movement streamer. As he said, he had been followed by Skoda white car before he was stopped. The man from that car said something to the patrol policemen and they said Mr Belialov that his car was on carjacking list. The car was arrested, though Belialov himself refused going to the police station. The streamer explained that he had been held liable for road traffic rules violation before, but he had been never told that the car was on carjacking list.

On December 8th 2017 an appeal of journalist **Nikolay Semena** was considered. As a result Mr Semena was again determined guilty, but the ban on occupation was reduced from three to two years.

YEAR 2018

On January 25th 2018 **Mr Enver Krosh**, a Crimean Tatar activist, and a citizen journalist, was arrested for 10 days after his house had been searched. He had been tortured with electric current when the security agency men were trying to recruit him.

On February 7th 2018 British journalist **Madeline Roache** was expelled from the territory of peninsula and out of the RF for journalism in Crimea and that ‘introducing herself as journalist, was interviewing and surveying the citizens, collecting the information about the residents and traditions of Crimea’. A judge of ‘Tsentrally District Court’ of Simferopol imposed a journalist a RUR2,000 fine for two administrative offences under RF CoAO Article 18.8-1 and 18.8-2 (violation of rules on entering the Russian Federation or staying (living) on the territory of the Russian Federation by a foreigner or a stateless person).



Nariman MEMEDEMINOV. Photo from his Facebook account

On March 22nd 2018 the RF FSB men detained Crimean Tatar blogger **Nariman Memedeminov** in the village of Kholmovka, Bakhchisarai District, following the search when his devices and religious books had been withdrawn⁹⁵. He was placed in custody upon the FSB request. Mr Memedeminov was charged with RF CC 205.2-2 (public appeals to acts of terror, public justification of terrorism or propaganda of terrorism) for videos placed in YouTube before the Crimea occupation where he had been criticizing the RF for persecution of Muslims and declaring his religious opinion on restoring the caliphate⁹⁶.

YEAR 2019

On January 26th 2019 the RF police stated an administrative case against **Mr Nuri Abdurashytov**, a 'Crimean Solidarity' movement blogger, under RF CoAO Article 17-2 for video recording in the corridor of 'Kiyevsky District Court' of Simferopol⁹⁷. In February 2019 his lawyer Emil Kurbedinov informed that **Nariman Memedeminov** had been handed reports with accusing

95 CHRG review for March 2018/CHGR- https://crimeahrg.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Crimean-Human-Rights-Group_Mar_2018_RU.pdf

96 Channel of Nariman Memedeminov/YouTube - <https://www.youtube.com/user/NarimanChannel>

97 Crimean Solidarity Account post/ Facebook? 26 Jan 2019 - https://www.facebook.com/crimeansolidarity/posts/778313392536119?__tn__=R

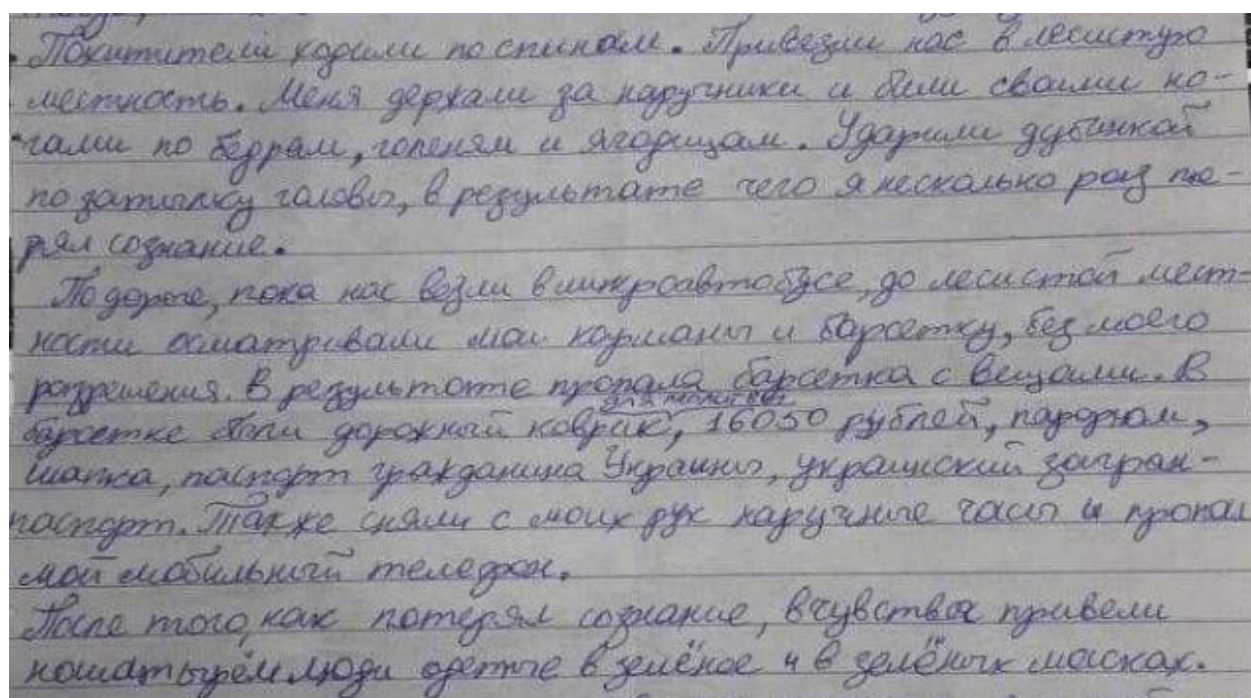
him of 'disseminating, studying, communicating the extremist ideology'. Then he was moved from the mass cell to special cell of the Simferopol Detention Center with a 24h audio and video surveillance⁹⁸.

On February 13th 2019 Ms Galina Khulapova, a judge of 'Kiyevsky District Court' of Simferopol, as requested by FSB investigator Aleksandr Parshutin, extended a detention period for **Mr Nariman Medeminov** till March 16th 2019⁹⁹.

On February 26th 2019 Ms Yelena Kliopova, a judge of 'peace court of Republic of Crimea', imposed of RUR500 fine on blogger **Nuri Abdurashytov** for recording in the corridor of 'Kiyevsky District Court' of Simferopol. He was charged with violation of RF CoAO Article 17.3-2 (failure to fulfil a legal court officer's instruction).

On March 6th 2019 the men who introduced himself as E Center men searched the home of **Mr Yevgeniy Gayvoronsky**, a PRIMECHANIYA website journalist. He links this search with his occupation. When posts with pro-Ukrainian content, criticizing the RF authorities and denouncing the occupation, appeared on his Facebook page, the PRIMECHANIYA website editorial office declared officially the termination of collaboration with Mr Gayvoronsky. On March 26th Krym.Realii website published an interview with him where he stated that Crimea should be returned under the control of Ukraine. The same day E Center men detained the journalist on the charge of taking drugs and brought to the court. A 'peace judge' determined him guilty under CoAO Article 6.9-1 (consumption of narcotic drugs) and imposed a 12 day's administrative arrest.

On March 27th 2019 **Mr Remzi Bekirov** who had obtained already a GRANI.ru media journalist identification card, and **Mr Osman Arfimetov**, a 'Crimean Solidarity' blogger, were detained in Rostov-na-Donu on the count of membership in the Hizb-ut-Tahrir international Islamic party. Both reported torturing when detained.



Похитители ходили по спискам. Привезли нас в лесистую местность. Меня держали за каручники и били своими когтями по бедрам, голени и ягодицам. Ударили дубинкой по затылку головы, в результате чего я несколько раз потерял сознание.

По дороге, пока нас вели в микроавтобусе, до лесистой местности осматривали мои каручники и барсетку, без моего разрешения. В результате прощания барсетка с вещами. В барсетке были дорожный коврик, 16050 рублей, паспорт, шапка, паспорт гражданина Украины, украинский загранпаспорт. Также сняли с моих рук каручные часы и пропали мой мобильный телефон.

После того, как потерял сознание, в состоянии привели комнатуры. Ноги держали в железных ч в железных масках.

Extract from blogger Osman ARIFMEMETOV'S letter describing tortures on detaining

A day earlier two more 'Crimean Solidarity' bloggers: **Tofik Abdulgazyev** and **Rustem Sheykhaliev** were detained in Simferopol.

The 'Kiyevsky District Court' of Simferopol issued a decision on custody for all four bloggers till May 15th 2019. Mr Remzi Bekirov was accused under RF CC Article 205.2-1 (organization of actions of ter-

98 Crimean Solidarity Account post Facebook, 03 Feb 2019 - <https://www.facebook.com/crimeansolidarity/photos/a.416800078687454/783066915394100/>

99 List of cases to be heard on 13 Feb 2019, case 3/2-50/2019/« Kiyevsky District Court' of Simferopol» - https://kiev-simph--krm.sudrf.ru/modules.php?name=sud_delo&sr_num=1&H_date=13.02.2019

rorist organization). Mr Osman Arifmemetov, Mr Rustem Sheykhaliyev, and Mr Tofik Abdulgazyev were accused under RF CC Article 205.5-2 (participation in activities of terrorist organization). All four are in the Rostov-na-Donu detention center.

On May 7th 2019 'Kiyevsky District Court' of Simferopol 'sentenced Yalta blogger **Yevgeniy Gayvoronsky** to 10 days of administrative arrest for rejecting a medical examination during his previous detention on March 26th 2019.

On May 14th 2019 court officers of Kirovsky District Court of Rostov-na-Donu made a report on administrative offence under CoAO Article 17.3 (failure to fulfil a judge or court officer instruction on maintaining the established court operation procedure) regarding Crimean activist **Valeriy Grigor** for recording in the court corridor. That day the court was considering extending the detention periods for 24 defendants of the 'Crimean Muslims Case'. The court officers informed that his case would be considered in Rostov-na-Donu though the activist lives in Crimea¹⁰⁰.

On May 31st 2019, according to the Crimean Human Rights Group, Ukrainian journalist **Taras Ibragimov** was detained by the RF police at the building of 'Kiyevsky District Court' of Simferopol where the case of citizen journalists **Ms Lutfiye Zudiyeva** and **Ms Mumine Saliyeva** were heard. He was brought to the police station where a report was made under RF CoAO Article 18.17-2. Then police Colonel Aleksandr Khilevsky issued a fine award of RUR2,000. The same day the 'court' imposed RUR2,000 and RUR1,000 fines on Ms Lutfiye Zudiyeva and Ms Mumine Saliyeva, correspondingly, for supposed public demonstration of extremist organization symbols – RF CC Article 20.3-1.



Mumine SALIYEVA (in the center) after a court session in Simferopol, 31 May 2019

On June 20th 2019 Mr Vladimir Agin, a judge of 'Supreme Court' of Crimea, upheld a punishment in the form of fine for the Crimean Tatar citizen journalist **Lurfiye Zudiyeva**. The activist was fined also for a post with Muslim symbols that she had not created and placed on her page. She had been just tagged by the post author.

On July 11th 2019 Ms Zoya Kurapova, a judge of 'Supreme Court' of Crimea, upheld a punishment in the form of RUR1,000 fine for citizen journalist **Mumine Saliyeva**. The judge rejected photo and video

100 Administrative Case of Valeriy Grigor' / Crimean Solidarity account in Youtube, 14 May 2019 - <https://www.facebook.com/crimeansolidarity/videos/899526227045762/>

recording of the session. Ms Saliyeva was fined for the publication of the Hizb-ut-Tahrir party symbols in the social network that had been placed in 2013, before the occupation of Crimea, when this had not been a violation of the Ukrainian laws.

On July 12th 2019 Mr Denis Didenko, a judge of 'Kiyevsky District Court' of Simferopol, delivered a judgment on keeping in custody, *durante absentia*, for Ms Gulsum Khalilova, a Crimean Tatar ATR TV Channel journalist. The criminal case was commenced under RF CC Article 208-2 – participation in a military unit on the territory of foreign state.

SEARCHES

The human rights defenders have documented the cases when the homes of bloggers and media activists were searched without issuing necessary procedure documents. Almost in all cases the searches finished with withdrawing the computers, mobiles and other devices that obstructed them further to keep on their occupation.

YEAR 2014

On September 8th 2014 at about 06:00am the security agency men searched the house of pro-Ukrainian activist and blogger **Yelizaveta Bogutska**. According to her husband's words, they were not allowed to call a lawyer or just make a phone call. At the end all equipment and digital information media were expropriated. The blogger was convoyed to the RF Police Extremism Counteracting Center and was not allowed to see the lawyer for half an hour. Then she was released without any documents justifying the detention. With some time passed, the blogger left Crimea and moved to the mainland Ukraine.

On September 16th 2014 several dozens of armed security agency men were searching the main office of the Crimean Tatar People Mejlis and the **AVDET** newspaper located at the same building for 12 hours. The next day the editorial office journalists and other tenant organizations were given 24h to release the offices under the threat of criminal persecution. The editorial office had to move to another place¹⁰¹.

YEAR 2015

On January 26th 2015 the rooms of **ATR TV Channel** were searched with a lot of OMON men involved. This caused a short-term suspension of the analogue broadcasting and brought to a day standstill the TV channel information service.

As the search notice stated, the search was within the criminal case on the fact of death of two people at the Crimean Parliament walls on February 26th 2014. The TV channel was assumed to have videos related to the investigation. The **ATR** people were restricted in moving, and were not allowed to visit even WCs for a long time.

On March 13th 2015 at about 07:00am the security agency men searched the apartment of **Natalia Kokorina**, a journalist of the "Center for Journalistic Investigations". The security agency men enticed her to the search under the false pretence that the apartment had been unlocked and there was nobody inside as she had been informed on behalf of the district police inspector. One of the lawyers was not allowed to enter at once the apartment being searched. Ms Kokorina and her relatives were forbidden to make a phone call. When the journalist came to the place of search she was handed an interrogation notice paper and brought to the FSB. Only during the interrogation it became clear that she was named in the case as witness. Later it was found out that two criminal cases were commenced: one under the article for offending against the RF integrity and the other in relation to the mass media.

On April 9th 2015 in Yalta the RF FSB men searched the house of former deputy editor-in-chief of the pro-Ukrainian BlackSeaNews web-based media **Tatiana Guchakova**. According to the media staff, the search lasted for about 10 hours. Then the journalist was interrogated and released late at night¹⁰².

101 24 h for Crimean Tatar People Mejlis to Move Out/Krym. Realii, 17 Sept 2014 - <http://ru.krymr.com/a/26590238.html>

102 Crimean Journalist Tatiana Guchakova Released from FSB /Krym.Realii 10 Apr 2015 - <http://ru.krymr.com/a/news/26948258.html>

On April 11th 2015 the RF MIA Extremism Counteracting Center men searched the house of **Mr Amet Umerov**, a former ATR TV Channel camera man. After the search he was brought to the E Center for interview. Though Mr Umerov said that the search had been caused by his friendship in the social network with a man who committed the suicide, his relatives linked the actions of the security agency men with Umerov's critical statements in the VKontakte social network¹⁰³¹⁰⁴. After an hour conversation the camera man was released.

On November 5th 2015 at about 06:00am the search started in the house of **Ms Lili Budjurova**, a former ATR TV Channel editor, and deputy Director General of Qaradeniz Production studio. According to lawyer Djemil Temishev, he was not allowed to enter the house during the investigation actions that he appealed against later at the local 'court' but the claim was sustained. According to the words of Ms Budjurova, the law enforcement officials who were searching had been armed and withdrawn during the search each and all digital media, including a mobile. On January 12th 2016 the "Supreme Court" of Crimea dismissed an appeal of Crimean journalist Lili Budjurova on the claim against the FSB men who had searched her house in November 2015¹⁰⁵.

On November 2nd 2015 the houses of **Ms Elzara Isliamova**, a former director of ATR TV Channel, and **relatives of Mr Lenur Isliamov, the ATR TV Channel owner: his sister Lenara Isliamova and his father Edem Isliamov**, were searched. The Moscow apartment of Lenur Isliamov was searched, too. The reason for searches was a criminal case started by the RF FSB against Lenur Isliamov on October 22nd 2015. However, an article under which the criminal cases was started was not indicated neither publicly not in the court judgements on searches, as well as the relation of people who were searched to the case was not stated.



Russian security agency men who searched the ATR TV Company rooms interrupted an interview of TV Channel Director General Elzara ISLIAMOVA to the journalists, 26 January 2015. Photo - ATR

On November 2nd 2015 the law enforcement officers searched also Lenur Isliamov's companies, including the rooms of the transport company and 15 MINUT wen based media. The building was encircled by the OMON men, and the staff was not allowed to enter. The computers and documents were withdrawn during the search¹⁰⁶.

On December 9th 2015 at about 06:00am the house of **Ms Elzara Isliamova**, a former director of ATR

103 Amet Umerov Told About Search Reasons/QHA, 11 Apr 2015 - <http://old.qha.com.ua/ru/proissheshtiya/amet-umerov-rasskazal-o-prichinah-obiska/144243/>

104 ATR Former Camera Man Searched in Simferopol/Krym. Realii, 11 Apr 2015 - <http://ru.krymr.com/a/26950132.html>

105 In Crimea Supreme Court Dismissed Budjurova's Appeal on Claim Against FSB/ Krym.Realii, 12 Jan 2016 - <http://ru.krymr.com/content/news/27483227.html>

106 Monitoring Review for November 2015 / CHRГ , - https://crimeahrg.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Crimean-Human-Rights-Group_November_2015_RU.pdf

TV Channel, was researched. The reason remained the same – the criminal case against the TV Channel founder – Mr Lenur Islamov¹⁰⁷.

On December 10th 2015 at about 06:00am the apartment where **Mr Roman Spiridonov**, a journalist and a former ATR TV Channel editorial officer, lived with the family, was searched. During the search one of the security men went to the kitchen that had been searched already to answer the phone, and then pointed on a folder on the fridge. Later a guidance to produce a bomb was found in it. Though the search report indicates that the folder was found when most investigation actors were absent, the journalist, due to the search, was withdraw the digital data carriers and business cards. Then the security agency men went with the journalist to his parents' apartment that was also searched. With some time left, the journalist with the family had to move to Kyiv.

YEAR 2016

On April 19th 2016 there were searches at six Crimean journalists. For instance, at **Ms Lenyara Abibulayeva's** the digital carriers were withdrawn, **Ms Ruslana Liumanova** was not allowed to call a lawyer, **Mr Pavel Veselik** was put under pressure by threatening the relatives. The home of **Mr Zair Akadyrov** was searched in his absence. After the searched Ms Abibulayeva, Ms Liumanova, and Mr Veselik were brought to the FSB Department in Simferopol where they were interrogated and released.

YEAR 2017

On May 4th 2017 in Simferopol the law enforcement officials searched the house of Crimean Tatar **Tofik Abdulgazyev**. As he said, nothing was withdrawn. Informally the law enforcement officials said Mr Abdulgazyev that if he went on participating in the Crimean Muslims supporting events and video recording them, 'he would be spoken with in the other way'. After the search he was invited to the E Center where there was an attempt to finger print him and make him write an explanatory note. He refused to do both things.

On November 8th 2017 in Stary Krym the law enforcement officials searched the house of **Alim-dar Belialov**, one of the most active 'Crimean Solidarity' movement streamers. During the search he was withdrawn mobiles. After the investigation actions it was found out that about USD3,000 and RUR60,000 had been stolen from the house. During the search one of the men who was in Belialov's house was taken by the security agency men to the microbus and hit in the head several times. The reason for the search seemed to be 'appeals to extremisms' though Mr Belialov was not presented any charges.

YEAR 2018

On August 29th 2018 in Simferopol the RF FSB men searched the house of **Ms Olga Pavlenko**, an activist of the Ukrainian Cultural Center that published the KRYMSKY TEREN Ukrainian language newspaper. The search was justified by the judgement of the 'Kiyevsky District Court' of Simferopol. The notebooks with notes and the mobile were withdrawn, and the information of the personal DC was copied. After the search the activist was interrogated at the RF Investigation Committee as witness within the criminal case of the participation of the Crimean activists in the actions of PRAVY SECTOR organization forbidden in the RF¹⁰⁸.

On November 28th 2018 an apartment of **Ms Galina Balaban**, an activist of the Ukrainian Cultural Center, was searched in Simferopol. A lawyer was not present during the investigation actions. During the search a laptop, a mobile and digital carriers were withdrawn. Galina was released after the search. No documents on the search reasons were presented to Ms Balaban¹⁰⁹.

107 Lawyer: Re-Search at the Islamova's Within Case of Crimea Blockade Coordinator/Krym. Realii 09 Dec 2015 - <http://ru.krymr.com/a/news/27415984.html>

108 FSB Men Searched House of Olga Pavlenko, Ukrainian Cultural Center Activist/CHRG, 29 Aug 2018 - <https://crimeahrg.org/vdome-aktivistki-ukrainskogo-kulturnogo-tsentra-v-krymu-olgi-pavlenko-sotrudniki-fsb-proveli-obyisk/>

109 CHRG Account post/Facebook, 28 Nov 2018 - <https://www.facebook.com/crimeahrg/photos/a.1677121552573479/2199128330372796/>

THREATS AND INTIMIDATION

Journalists and bloggers working on the territory of peninsula, have regularly received different kinds of threats, verbally or in writing. Sometimes the authors of such threats are unknown, but there are cases when journalists were explicitly threatened by the security agency men, paramilitary unit men and local officials. To terrify the journalists and exert pressure on them a visible surveillance, unjustified checks in the editorial offices, handing notices on extremist activity inadmissibility, searches and interrogations of the journalists' relatives were used.

YEAR 2014

On February 27th 2014 a percussion grenade was blown up in the building of the Supreme Council of AR of Crimea seized by the Russian military men when representatives of the Ukrainian, Turkish, Russian and other foreign mass media were trying to enter. The Russian military men were threatening them with opening a fire¹¹⁰.



Journalists at the entrance to the Supreme Council of Crimea, 27 February 2014. Photo – Krym. Comments.

On March 1st 2014 the journalists were not allowed to enter Crimea and threatened with shooting up. The administrative border was blocked by BERKUT Special Force unit of the MIA of Ukraine in Crimea who defected to the side of the Russian military men. This was reported in Twitter by Mr Bogdan Kutepov, a journalist of HROMADSKE TV Ukrainian TV Channel¹¹¹. According to his information, the journalists of «CDF», «France24» and INTER TV Channel were not allowed to enter either¹¹².

On March 9th 2014 the unknown wearing the uniform of BERKUT Special Force unit, on the block post at exit from Crimea, searched rudely Mr Sergey Gumeniuk, a Ukrainian INSIDER media new photogra-

110 Terrorists Threw a Light Persecution Grenade Towards Journalists Trying To Hear The Demands /TsZhR, 27 Feb 2014 - <https://investigator.org.ua/news/120046/>

111 Journalists Not Allowed to Crimea and Threatened with Kalashnikovs – Kutepov, HromadskeTV /Delo.ua, 01 Mar 2014 - <https://delo.ua/ukraine/zhurnalistov-ne-puskajut-v-krym-ugrozhajut-kalashom-kutepov-s-hr-228768/>

112 At Entrance to Crimea Journalists Threatened with Firing Without Notice for Shooting/ IMI, 01 Mar 2014 - <https://imi.org.ua/news/najizdi-do-krimu-jurnalistam-pogrojuyut-strilyati-bez-poperedjennya-za-zyomku/>

pher. He was threatened with violence and there were two attempts to take away his cameras¹¹³.

On March 15th 2014 when shooting the Ukrainian military unit in Kerch encircled with the Russian military men, one of them was threatening Ms Irina Siedova, a BRIZ TV R BC journalist, with a gun and demanded to stop shooting.



RF military men making trenches at the Ukrainian military unit, Kerch, 15 March 2014. Photo – Irina SIEDOVA

On March 21st 2014 Crimean journalist **Yelena Lysenko** who was trying to shoot the Kerch Ferry line was pushed away by a dozen of Kazaks, kicked in the back and threatened with guns¹¹⁴. In 2016 she had to leave Crimea.

In May 2014 **Mr Shevket Kaybullayev**, editor-in-chief of Crimean Tatar AVDET paper, received a notice from the Simferopol Prosecutor's Office for an interrogation within checking the facts of violating the provisions of RF Law no 114-FZ of 25 July 2002 'On counteracting the extremist activity'¹¹⁵.

On June 3rd 2014 the Simferopol City Prosecutor's Office made a warning notice to Mr Shevket Kaybullayev, editor-in-chief of the AVDET weekly paper and member of the Mejlis, for 'communicating the extremism' in the paper. As the editor-in-chief explained, the prosecutor's office considered such terms as 'annexation', 'occupation' and 'temporary occupation' used in the articles extremistic¹¹⁶.

On June 2nd 2014 the Crimean 'self-defence' men entered the office of '**Center for Journalistic Investigations**' IA in Simferopol and demanded to show the documents on mass media registration. Within the entire June the 'self-defence' gunmen several times interfered into the 'Center for Journalistic Investigations' activity, demanded to present founding and registration documents, and threatened with property withdrawal. The media staff thought that their purpose was to force the journalists to leave the rented rooms. In July 2014 the editorial office had to move to another building.

On June 5th 2014 **Mr Ruslan Yugosh**, editor-in-chief of SOBYTIA KRYMA IA, stated that the police was trying to put him under the pressure, calling his 73-aged mother for the interrogation. Mr Yugosh had

113 BERKUT Did Not Allow INSIDER New Photographer to Leave Crimea, Threatened with Violence/Theinsider, 09 Mar 2014 - <http://www.theinsider.ua/politics/531c4dd18f11b/>

114 Journalists Forced To Go Away from Kerch Ferry Line/YouTube, 21 Mar 2014 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HL7RVJw378s>

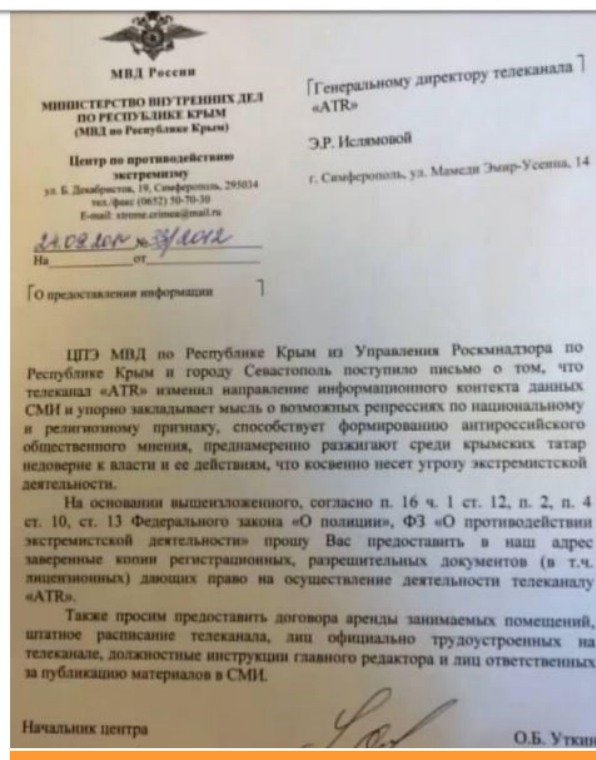
115 CHRГ Review for May 2018/CHRG - https://crimeahrg.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/crimea_field_mission_report_May_2014_RUS.pdf

116 Crimean Tatar Paper Editor in Chief Warned on Extremism/QHA, 03 Jun 2014 - <http://old.qha.com.ua/ru/proisshestiya/glavredukrimskotatarskoi-gazeti-vinesli-predosterejenie-za-ekstremizm/136688/>

been forced already to leave Crimea. As a result Mrs Larisa Yugosh was interrogated by four policemen urging her to influence the son's position¹¹⁷.

In September 2014 **Mr Shevket Kaybullayev**, editor-in-chief of Crimean Tatar AVDET paper, received the next warning from the security agencies on extremism activity inadmissibility. The document stated that he was responsible for publishing a text with 'implicit appeals not to participate in the election' in the newspaper and that 'such actions create conditions for committing a crime under RF CC Article 280'. However, not going to the elections or even appealing not to participate in voting are not covered by definition of 'extremist activity'.

On September 24 2014 **Ms Elzara Isliamova**, Director General of ATR Crimean Tatar TV Channel, received a letter from E Center to submit verified copies of operation licensing documents as well as tenancy agreements and a staffing. The check was initiated due to the letter of the ROSKOMNADZOR Department for Republic of Crimea and Sevastopol City where it was said that the 'ATR TV Channel has changed the aspect of mass media information content and data, and is persistently enrooting the idea of probable repressions due to ethnic descent and religion, supporting the development of an anti-Russian opinion, and inciting deliberately non-confidence in the authorities and their actions among the Crimean Tatars that presents an indirect threat of extremism (the letter of E Center head is with grammar errors – ed.note)¹¹⁸.



Letter to ATR TV Channel Director General from Extremism Counteracting Center Head, 29 September 2014

YEAR 2015

In early 2015 **Kafa**, a Feodosiya paper, within a month and a half since the re-registration, received four letters from the Federal Service on Supervising the Communication, IT and MM, with various comments on the newspaper's actions. The security agencies were threatened **Ms Irina Prokopiuk**, editor-in-chief, with imprisonment for violating the Russian laws on non-disclosing the information.

On February 3rd 2015 during the event in Simferopol dedicated to the memory of Ukrainian singer Andrey Kuz'menko, the 'self-defence' men in the presence of police tried to obstruct the journalists covering the event to do their job. For instance, they demanded at least three mass media representatives to stop photo and video recording.

On May 18th 2015 in the village of Siren', Bakhchisarai District, when a box at the expected place of creating a memorial to the Crimean Tatar people deportation victims was laid down, the shooting team of **ATR TV Channel** was not allowed to go farther than the first encirclement line due to the lack of accreditation. A security agency man was assigned to the shooting team who threatened the journalists verbally with taking away a camera if they tried to start recording.

On April 21st 2015 blogger **Marlen Muzhdabayev** claimed that the police had visited his parents' house and looked for him. The blogger who had moved to the mainland Ukraine, stated that this had been the fourth visit of the policemen to his parents¹¹⁹.

¹¹⁷ 'Police' Terrifying Mother of Famous Crimean Journalist Ruslan Yugosh/ Krym. Realii. 6 Jun 2014- <http://ru.krymr.com/a/25411830.html>

¹¹⁸ CHRNG Review for September 2014 /CHRNG https://crimeahrg.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/crimea_field_mission_report_September_2014_RUS.pdf

¹¹⁹ Repressions Against Crimean Tatars Became Mass Scaled/Mejlis, 21 Apr 2015 - <http://qtm.org/новости/4701-репрессии-против-крымских-татар-приобретают-массовый-характер>



Car rally on the anniversary of deportation, Crimea, 18 May 2015. Photo - Podrobnosti

On May 18th 2015 during the car rally dedicated to the anniversary of the Crimean Tatar deportation, the security agency men blocked a car of **Zair Akadyrov**, an independent Crimean journalist. The policemen demanded him to get out of the car and show the documents. The car was unblocked only when the journalist's documents had been snapped away.

In June 2014 in Sevastopol **Mr Vladislav Mokriakov**, a journalist of local INFORMER web based media, was not allowed to enter the city parliament building. His colleagues stated that this was due to his critical articles about the Sevastopol MPs activities. INFORMER also wrote that the unknown had killed a cat of blogger **Tatiana Rodionova** who criticized the activity of local parliament. She also informed that her flat had been robbed and her archives with damaging evidence against Aleksey Chaly, parliament speaker, had been stolen. Mr Moriakov and Ms Rodionova stated that they were afraid their lives¹²⁰.

YEAR 2016

In May 2016 Ms Natalia Poklonskaya stated that she would be insisted on blocking completely an access to **KRYM.REALII** website¹²¹.

On November 23rd 2016 before the next session on the '26th February Case' at the 'Tsentralny District Court' of Simferopol the court officers tried to forbid Radio Svoboda journalist **Anton Naumliuk** to enter the court building with a camera. Then the same court officers tried to prevent him from entering the session hall though there were seats available. After the session Mr Naumliuk shot a prison truck leaving, and one of court officers told the lawyer to threaten the journalist with a ban on getting into the court if the video appeared in the internet.

In November 2016 blogger from Yalta **Sergey Psarev** stated that he had been threatened with killing him and his 3 years' old son for publishing a video about a scandal construction on the slope in Krasnykh Partisan street. According to Psarev's words, the threatening person is surely to be connected with the construction.

¹²⁰ In Sevastopol Journalists Criticizing Legislative Assembly Afraid of Their Lives /NOVAYA POLITIKA, 08 Jun 2015 - <http://novopol.ru/-v-sevastopole-kritikuyuschie-zaksobranie-jurnalistyi-text169502.html>

¹²¹ Roskomnadzor De-Blocked KRYM.REALII Website»/RIA NOVOSTI, 13 May 2016 - <https://ria.ru/20160513/1432463496.html>

Строители по ялтински угрожают убить 3-х летнего ребенка!



Alex Lebedev

+Сергей Владимирович Псарев. Имя, место жительства и взгляды твои понятны. Осталось умножить тебя на ноль. Если успеешь - вали... Даю фору

Ответить

Все комментарии

Screenshot with threats for blogger Sergey PSAREV

In December 2016 the editorial office off **KERCH FM** city news website was threatened with dousing with petrol and firing up. A woman who called the editorial office stated that she would carry out the threats if at least one more article about deputy head of administration Bogdan Zhorniak was published. The website had published earlier several news that the police were asking questions about Mr Zhorniak and this could be due to corruption¹²².

YEAR 2017

On February 16th 2017 the policemen stopped a STB TV Channel shooting team (**Ms Alena Lun'kova, Andrey Shurin, Sergey Sivko, Vitaliy Kikot'**) and **Ms Irina Romaliyska**, a HRO-MADS'KE RADIO journalist, in Simferopol in K.Libknekhta Street. The journalists were asking the passers'-by opinions on various questions. The policemen were checking the documents for about an hour though did not detain anyone. Having been told that a lawyer was coming to the incident place, the police finished the check quickly and left. Then the journalists informed that they had been surveilled from Yalta to Kerch.

On May 18th 2017 in Simferopol during the mourning events at the Memorial Stone to the Victims of the Crimean Tatar People Deportation, the policemen tried to detain a shooting team of the '**Crimean Tatars Club**' Project of **Qaradeniz Production Studio**. The police explained their actions by the fact that the journalists had not been authorized for shooting. They wrote down the passport data of the journalists, and the type and number of camera used for shooting.

On August 28th 2017 a **blogger** from Yalta known under nickname '**Aleksey Vladimirovich**' informed that he had to leave Crimea because of the 'threats that his spouse has started receiving and that have threatened the health of child'.

On August 28th 2017 **ForPost** Sevastopol **web based media** informed that Leonid Degtiarev, a Crimea Development Corporation employee, had threatened the media correspondent with 'damaging slightly the health'.

On August 30th 2017 **Mr Leonid Kuz'min**, the head of Ukrainian Cultural Center and one of the authors of Ukrainian language newspaper '**KRYMSKY TEREN**', had to leave Crimea due to threats of criminal persecution and physical violence. The text messages with threats had been sent since mid August. In addition, when the first issue of '**KRYMSKY TEREN**' had appeared in July 2017, the FSB men had a 'preventive' conversation with Kuz'min's relatives and have them a cue that Mr Kuz'min might be criminally persecuted.

¹²² Threat for KERCH FM Editorial Office – Pout With Gasoline and Fire Up /Kerch FM, 22 Dec 2016 - <http://kerch.fm/2016/12/22/redakciyu-sayta-kerchfm-ugrozhayut-oblit-benzinom-i-szhech-audiozapis.html>

On October 2nd 2017 when persons suspected of **Tablighi Jamaat** religious movement¹²³, were being searched, **one of the streamers** was broadcasting what was happening. A couple of hours later Mr Eyvaz Umerov, a head of sector for international relations of the unit for culture and international relations, came to his job and started threatening that the streamer would be also soon held liable for 'participating in the terrorist organization actions'.

On October 14th 2017 when shooting single man protests against detaining the people along the Crimean roads¹²⁴, the streamers were also regularly threatened by the policemen that they would be detained and transported to the police station for personal identification.

On October 28th 2017 **Mr Yevgeniy Gayvoronsky**, a reporter of **PRIMECHANIYA**, Sevastopol web based media, was threatened by phone with killing¹²⁵. The PRIMECHANIYA editorial office connects the threat of killing with Gayvoronsky's investigation published at the media website on September 24th and titled 'GASPRA: Concrete Sarcophagus for Money'. A head-hunting campaign was started against the journalist in the social networks. A Facebook fake account published posts that Yevgeniy was hosting 'parties for the blues' at home, with a journalist's phone number indicated under the post. Later, as he said, the account's owner with family name Tiukayev wrote in comments to one of the posts 'Who knows how to kill 'n....y boy?'

Mr Gayvoronsky said that he had to leave temporarily his apartment and stayed at the friends'. On October 30th 2017 he informed the police about the threats.

DISMISSALS

For five years of occupation dismissals of the mass media staff have been recorded. At the beginning of the occupation the dismissals were related to media re-organization, re-registration, and movement of some mass media to the mainland Ukraine. In some cases the media reorganization became a cause for dismissing pro-Ukrainian journalists. Some dismissals happened due to the censorship or pressure on the journalists due to their publications.

YEAR 2014

On March 6th 2014 **Mr Zair Akadyrov**, editor-in-chief of ARGUMENTY NEDELI – KRYM media, and **Ms Anna Andriyevskaya**, its journalist, declared their resigning due to the censorship that the media owners started introducing into the editorial policy¹²⁶.

In June 2014 KRYM State TVR BC dismissed **Mr Seitislam Kishveyev** from the position of Crimean Tatar broadcasting unit director. The administration first asked him to submit a notice of resignation, and when he refused fired him with cause. This was justified by lack of word based translation of the shows in Crimean Tatar, though the company administration failed to provide a proper equipment and a competent interpreter¹²⁷.

In early September 2014 Mr Seyran Mambetov, a new Crimean Tatar broadcasting unit director of the KRYM State TVR BC, dismissed seven employees who had worked many years in the unit. He kept full time only two persons from the former staff: his wife Susanna Beytullayeva and her colleague on air Susanna Khalilova. As the employees mentioned, the dismissal had been initiated by Ms Yekaterina Kozyr', a new TV company director general, though Mr Mambetov himself explained the dismissal of the unit staff by their 'professional incompetence'¹²⁸.

Since September 2014 due to closing down KRYM State TVR BC and establishing TELECOMPANIA

¹²³ A religious movement founded in 1926 by Muhammad Ilyas al-Kandhlawi forbidden in Russia since 2009. It is not forbidden in Ukraine.

¹²⁴ On October 14th 2017 about a hundred of people were in the streets in various parts of the Crimean peninsula protesting against new criminal cases commenced against the Crimean Tatars and the Muslims on October 2 and 11.

¹²⁵ 'You will be killed soon!' Why Developer Threatens Sevastopol Journalist with Death/ Krym. Realii, 2 Nov 2017 - <https://ru.krymr.com/a/28830656.html>

¹²⁶ Post in Zair Akadyrov's account/Facebook, 06 Mar.2014 - https://www.facebook.com/zair.bakkal/posts/10200654270319177?stream_ref=10

¹²⁷ Fired Employee: A New Company with Loyal Staff to Be Set Up at KRYM State TVR BC base/Krym. Realii, 27 June 2014 - <https://ru.krymr.com/a/25437523.html>

¹²⁸ Fired Crimean Tatar Journalists To Pursue in Court With KYRM GTRK /QHA 30 Sept .2014 - <http://old.qha.com.ua/ru/obschestvo/uvolennje-krimskotatarskie-jurnalisti-budut-suditsya-s-gtrk-krim/140234/>

KRYMA autonomous non-commercial organization, as **Ms Arza Selimova**, a former editor-in-chief of the show informed, about 150 employees were fired. The KRYM State TVR BC journalists stated that the dismissal was not legal since the state TV broadcasting company was closed down with the gross procedure violations¹²⁹.

YEAR 2016

On January 14th 2016 **Ms Olga Kramnaya**, an employee of the KRYMSKAYA GAZETA weekly newspaper controlled by the occupation power, was dismissed the day after she had been present at the talk show attended by Oleg Zubkov, a Crimean opposition member, and had supported him. An official reason for dismissing Ms Kramnaya was told was failure to meet her functions though she had never been told about any problems for all years she worked at the KRYMSKAYA GAZETA before the incident¹³⁰.

In October 2016 **Ms Marina Reznikova**, a journalist of ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA (Crimean Branch) newspaper, was dismissed for a video about the house of Mr Sergey Aksenov, Head of annexed Crimea. Another reason, as her colleagues pointed out, was an information campaign for protecting the trees in Simferopol central street, she had participated into.

YEAR 2018

On August 29th 2018 **Ms Zera Bekirova**, editor-in-chief of YANY DIUNYA Crimean Tatar Paper, resigned due to the censorship and a constant pressure on the paper journalists of the Crimean authorities de facto. Several more paper employees submitted resignation notices together with her¹³¹.

DENUNCIATIONS

YEAR 2014

On July 29th 2014 **Mr Shevdet Kaybullayev**, AVDET Newspaper editor-in-chief, was called to the FSB where he was informed that the FSB had received a notice from Mr Rinat Shaymardanov, a pro-Russian activist and a member of MILLK FIRKA organization who accused the newspaper in publishing extremist articles. This was how the activist determined, for instance, a resolution of the Mejlis to refuse participating in the elections to the annexed peninsula parliament. As Mr Kaybullayev said, the FSB had made him feel that this notice could have serious consequences for the paper. No legal effects of Shaymardanov's notice have not been recorded. He also complained on KRYM newspaper in the same notice¹³².

On August 18th 2015 the administration of the 1st City Hospital of Sevastopol proposed its employees to sign an application to the governor. The application stated that local journalists, 'penetrating secretly in the hospital', obstructed the medical staff to work. The application was also addressed to the FSB, the Investigation Committee, the prosecutor, the administration of President of Russia. However, a lot of staff, despite of the heavy situation in the health care sector, refused signing the letter¹³³.

YEAR 2015

129 CHRGR review for October 2014/CHRG- https://crimeahrg.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Crimea_Field_Mission_Review_October_2014_RU.pdf

130 Show with Zubkov Made Crimean Journalist Fired /Novosti Kryma, 16 Jan 2016 - <http://news.allcrimea.net/news/2016/1/16/efir-s-zubkovym-lishil-krymskuju-zhurnalistku-raboty-52209/>

131 Editor-in-Chief and Part of Staff Resigned from YANY DIUNYA Paper /Avdet, 29 Aug 2018 - <https://avdet.org/ru/2018/08/29/glavnyj-redaktor-i-chast-kollektiva-uvolilis-iz-gazety-yany-dyunya/>

132 Denunciation on AVDET Crimean Tatar Paper Written to ROSKOMNADZOR /Krym.Realii, 25 Jul .2014 - <http://ru.krymr.com/a/25469274.html>

133 Sevastopol HC Department Decided to 'Press' Mass Media Via FSB and SK /Primechaniya, 19 Aug 2015 - <http://primechaniya.ru/home/news/7152/7457/>

On December 3rd 2015 a denunciation was sent to Sergey Aksenov, 'head' of Crimea, regarding the functioning of Krym.Realii and Krymsky Banderobets websites. The author of the application is asking 'to terminate the functioning of these websites, and to identify Crimeans linked to them to prevent disseminating the extremist opinions in the Crimean society'.

YEAR 2018

On November 21 2018 the Crimean 'Prosecutor's Office' was addressed with a request to check KRYM.REALII website and radio station regarding illegal, as the author thought, actions 'aimed at driving enmity and doubts of the peninsula residents in the current RF government, and further at overthrowing the constitutional system'.

YEAR 2019

On June 17th 2019 Crimean ROSPOTREBNADZOR received a claim requesting to check KRYM.REALII media 'on the presence of anti-Russian statements'.

DENYING SHOOTING, ACCESSING AND RECORDING THE INFORMATION

The most common cases of putting pressure on the freedom of speech are denying the access and obstructing shooting. Journalists coming to publicize politically motivated court hearings, are not usually allowed to enter the court building and selectively and groundlessly rejected in authorizing to take photos and videos. Denying the entrance to the court session halls have become a common practice in Crimea to restrict the communication of the court session process, first of all for the politically reasoned cases. A selective entrance of journalists to the buildings and institutions of the occupational power state bodies. Sometimes these refusals are completely unreasonable, sometimes they are reasoned by lack of accreditation. Sometimes the journalists are refused to enter the institutions referring to the written and verbal instruction of superior bodies. Denying the entrance to shoot concerns mainly pro-Ukrainian journalists while the staff of the RF controlled mass media work at the same places without any obstruction.

Bans on entering the RF are applied de factor the territory of Crimea, since the RF enforced its laws on the peninsula.

In addition, the Crimean officials leave unaddressed information requests of the journalists on providing socially relevant data. Such information requests are usually left without any answer, that de facto is a violation of the RF laws valid on the territory of Crimea.

YEAR 2014

On February 26th 2014 violent young people obstructed a shooting team of the Ukrainian 1+1 TV channel composed of reporter **Mr Grigoriy Zhygalov** and camera man Mr Pavel Miasnov to shoot a rally at the Sevastopol City Administration¹³⁴.

On March 1st 2014 the armed men did not allow **Mr Igor Trubayev**, a reporter of KHERSONSKIYE VESTI website media, and **Mr Oleg Zaychenko**, a reporter of TVOYA PRAVDA website, to enter Crimea¹³⁵. **Ms Yekaterina Gorchinskaya**, editor-in-chief of KYIV POST paper, was not also allowed to enter Crimea¹³⁶.

On March 1st 2014 unknown in masks did not allow an **ATR** Channel shooting team to attend a press-conference in the seized Council of Ministers of the ARC in Simferopol, while the Russian

¹³⁴ AR of Crimea Administration Switched Off Broadcasting of 1+1 T Channel/TSN, 06 Mar 2014 - <https://ru.tsn.ua/ukrayina/administraciya-kryma-glushit-televizionnyy-signal-telekanala-1-1-353308.html>

¹³⁵ Men in Camouflage Did Not Allow Kherson Journalists to Enter Crimea /IMI, 01 Mar 2014 - <https://imi.org.ua/news/hersonskih-jurnalistiv-lyudi-v-kamuflyajniy-formi-ne-pustili-do-krimu/>

¹³⁶ Crimea: Pressure on Journalists/IMI, 17 Mar 2014 - <http://imi.org.ua/analytics/43315-krim-tisk-na-jurnalistiv.html>

journalists entered without obstruction¹³⁷.

On March 4th 2014 pro-Russian activists were preventing **Mr Mikhail Kolesnik**, a reporter of INTER Ukrainian TV Channel, and is camera man **Andrey Kostiuk** from shooting at the Coastal Defence HQ in Simferopol. They tried to grab the journalists' video equipment¹³⁸.

On March 6th 2014 people in civvies were preventing **Mr Bogdan Kutepov**, a HROMADSKE TB TV Channel, from shooting in Feodosiya, and threatening with damaging a video camera. The journalist did not manage to come close to the military unit blocked by the Russian military men¹³⁹.

On March 6th 2014 Ukrainian and foreign journalists (except Russian ones) who wanted to attend an extraordinary session when the members of parliament were taking decisions on including the peninsula into the RF, were still not allowed to enter the building of the parliament of the AR of Crimea.

On March 12th 2014 in Yevpatoria at military unit A 4519 the Russian military men forced **Ms. Anastasia Bereza**, a journalist of 'Ukrayinska Pravda', to delete photos¹⁴⁰.

On March 16th 2014 not all the journalists though accredited were allowed to enter voting station no 08069 in Simferopol on the day of illegitimate 'referendum'. For instance, this happened to **AFP** and some other English language media staff¹⁴¹.

On March 16th 2014 the 'self-defence' gunmen forbid taking photos and videos at voting station No 10020 in Feodosiya. At voting station 07010 in Saky an announcement with a ban on taking photos and videos was placed. In Djankoy entrance to voting stations was strictly forbidden for all mass media representatives. In Simferopol at voting station no 08163 the ICTV Ukrainian TV Channel shooting team was attempted to forbid shooting despite the available accreditation. Such actions were explained by the fact that the journalists had failed to register before the station opening^{142 143}.

On March 16th 2014 at entrance to Sevastopol the 'self-defence' blocked for some time **Ms. Irina Tumakova**, a reporter of FONTANKA Russian web based media who came to report on the 'referendum' as instructed by the editorial office¹⁴⁴.

On March 25th 2014 in Sevastopol **ForPost** pro-Russian information media reported that the 'self-defence' men, 'with battery', had been preventing the journalists to work on March 22nd when military unit no 204 of the Sevastopol Tactical Air Forces Brigade was being attacked. 'They were forced to delete photos from the memory cards. The camera men were taken away recorded video cassettes and they were destroyed, the pockets were searched', was written by ForPost¹⁴⁵.

On April 1st 2014 the Crimean 'self-defence' men obstructed the work of photo reporters and journalists of **KRYMSKAYA PRAVDA**, **KRYMSKIY TELEGRAPH**, and **MOSKOVSKY KOSOMOLETS** papers at the Simferopol Railway Terminal.

On May 15th 2014 in Simferopol the Crimean 'self-defence' men forbid **Ms. Anna Chenskaya**, a journalist of KRYMSKOYE INFORMATSIONNOYE AGENTSTVO, to take photos. The reason for ban was a lack of specific authorization. But they refused saying who issued such authorizations, how they looked like, and who had ordered to prevent shooting. It was an attempt to take forcibly away her voice recorder.

On May 18th 2014 in Simferopol the Crimean 'self-defence' men forbid **Mr. Aleksey Lokhvitsky**, a reporter of pro-Russian KRYMSKAYA PRAVDA paper, to take photos.

On June 1st 2014, when a church of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Kyivan Patriarchate was bashed in the village of Perevalnoye at Simferopol, the armed Crimean 'self-defence' men tried to obstruct the journalists and threatened them many times¹⁴⁶.

137 ATR Shooting Team Not Allowed to Attend Press Conference in Seized Council of Ministers of Crimea/IMI, 01 Mar 2014

<https://imi.org.ua/news/znimalnu-grupu-«ATR»-ne-pustili-na-pres-konferentsiyu-u-zahopleniy-radi-ministriv-krimu/>

138 Podrobnosti Shooting Team Attacked in Crimea/Podrobnosti, 04 Mar 2014 - <http://podrobnosti.ua/962517-v-krymu-napali-na-semochnuju-gruppu-podrobnostej.html>

139 Feodosiya: «Public TV – You Joking!»/YouTube, 06 Mar 2019 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K0ojtS0SKG8&feature=youtu.be>

140 UP Journalist Told How Russian Military Men and BERKUT Had Obstructed Her in Crimea/IMI, 13 Mar 2014 - <https://imi.org.ua/news/jurnalist-up-rozpovila-yak-v-krimu-jij-pereshkodjati-rosijski-vijskovi-ta-berkut/>

141 Foreign Journalists Not Allowed to Station Where Aksionov Voted /TsZhR, 16 Mar 2014 - <http://investigator.org.ua/news/122207/>

142 'Referendum' in Crimea With Violations, Journalists Obstructed to Work/TsZhR, 16 Mar 2014 - <http://investigator.org.ua/news/122237/>

143 Mass Media Not Allowed to Voting Stations in Djankoy/TsZhR, 16 Mar 2014 - <http://investigator.org.ua/news/122285/>

144 Fontanka Reporter Deblocked at Sevastopol By 'Personal Order of Minister of Defence of Crimea'/Fontanka, 16 Mar 014 - <http://www.fontanka.ru/2014/03/16/066/>

145 'When/Polite Men' Seizing Belbek, Impolite Self-Defence Men Trained on ForPost Journalists, 25 Mar 2014 - <http://sevastopol.su/news.php?id=59300>

146 'Self-Defence' Came to Help Kazaks Blocking Ukrainian Church Member At Simferopol/Krym. Realii, 01 Jun 2014 - <http://ru.krymr.com/a/25406001.html>

On August 9th 2014 **Mr. Ismet Yuksel**, a coordinator of QHA Information Agency, and an adviser of the Mejlis of Crimean Tatar People head, was banned to enter Crimea for 5 years. He was informed about this at the Crimean checkpoint when coming home after holidays in Turkey which national he was. Mr. Sergey Aksenov stated that Mr Yuksel had been inciting an inter-ethnic enmity. Mr.Yuksel called these words slander¹⁴⁷.

On August 11th, 2014, the Permanent Commission on Standard-Setting, Work Management and Public Relations of so-called Crimean parliament, revoked the accreditation of ATR TV channel journalist **Mr. Shevket Namattulayev** because he had not stood up when the Russian anthem was performed.

On September 14th, 2014, on the day of local elections to the "State Council of Crimea" and the "Legislative Assembly of Sevastopol", held according to the laws of the Russian Federation, a number of journalists were not allowed to the polling stations. Journalists were required to show a passport and an editorial assignment in writing with the media seal. Without these documents, access to a polling station for journalists was banned¹⁴⁸.

On September 17th, 2014, in the BORCHOKRAK Djamisi Simferopol mosque the security officials forbade media representatives to take videos and forcibly collected journalists' personal data¹⁴⁹.

On December 2nd 2014, during a meeting of the Russian Minister of Crimean Affairs Igor Savelyev in Simferopol with journalists, TV channel camera men were allowed to shoot only the first five ceremonial minutes of the event. The remaining representatives of accredited media were banned to take photos¹⁵⁰.

In December 2014, representatives of **QHA IA** were not allowed to enter the building of the Council of Ministers of Crimea to attend the meetings and other events. According to Mrs. Gayana Yuksel, director of the news agency, the reason was the lack of QHA data in the Russia registered media list. This was an answer of Vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Information Dmitry Polonsky. Though most of the Crimean media were only registering at the moment under the new legislation and were not enlisted in the state register, this did not prevent the occupation authorities from allowing them to the events.

In December 2014 Ms. Galina Ogneva, chairman of the Alushta city council, expelled Mr.Andrei Oblezov, journalist of the local **TVOYA GAZETA** newspaper, from the session hall¹⁵¹.

YEAR 2015

On January 28th a camera man of **CHERNOMORSKAYA TVR BC** was not allowed to the building of the 'Kievsky District Court' of Simferopol for the court session. That day the court was to determine on the nationality of political prisoner Aleksandr Kol'chenko (a defendant of the Crimean director Oleg Sentsov 'terrorist group' case). The security denied shooting due to the lack of judge's decision on allowing the video recording. The request on shooting general views inside the building, not the court session itself, was denied either.

On February 3rd, 2015, the Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Crimea Genadiy Narayev refused to answer the journalist's question about the environmental impact assessment of the producing wells, demanding a written request for information. On February 9th, the journalist sent a written request to the institution, though the answer was not given within the period - seven days - as established by the Russian Federation legislation.

On February 3rd, 2015 in Simferopol, during the event dedicated to the memory of Ukrainian singer Kuzma Scriabin, paramilitary unit men, in the presence of the police, prevented journalists from doing their job. For instance, the 'Crimean self-defence' men demanded at least three mass media to stop taking photos and videos¹⁵².

On March 12th, 2015, during the court session on the administrative cases against the organizers and participants of the event dedicated to the birthday of Taras Shevchenko, the **ATR TV** channel journalists

147 Ismet Yuksel about Aksenov's Words: This Is Slander on Me/ QHA, 12 Aug 2014 - <http://old.qha.com.ua/ru/politika/ismet-yuksel-o-slovah-aksenova-eto-kleveta-v-moi-adres/138962/>

148 CHRG Review for September 2014/ CHRG - https://crimeahrg.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/crimea_field_mission_report_September_2014_RUS.pdf

149 Search in Simferopol Mosque/TsZhR, 17 Sept 2014 - <http://investigator.org.ua/news/136931/>

150 Secrets of Federal Minister/KRYMSKY TELEGRAPH paper website 08 Dec 014 - <http://ktelegraf.com.ua/6390-tri-chasa-vne-zapisi.html>

151 What Alushta Town Council Hides? / KRYMSKY TELEGRAPH paper website 24 Feb 2015 - <http://ktelegraf.com.ru/6643-chto-skryvayut-v-alushtinskom-gorsovete.html>

152 CHRG Review for February 2015/ CHRG - https://crimeahrg.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Crimea_Field_Mission_Review_February_2015_RU.pdf

were not allowed to enter the building of the 'Zheleznodorozhny District Court' of Simferopol.

On March 13th, 2015, the RF FSB men forbade the filming crew of the **CHERNOMORSKAYA TVR BC** to take video at the houses being searched. Two days earlier the journalists were forbidden to shoot at the house of arrested pro-Ukrainian Aleksandr Kostenko.

On March 13th, 2015, during the interrogation of journalist Natalya Kokorina, police men approached a group of journalists waiting for her at the FSB building and demanded that they go with them to the police station for identification. When the journalists explained them that identification did not require going to the police department, the police copied the details of their IDs and even the licence's plates of the cars they had arrived by. The patrol car was there until the end of the interrogation, and the police forbade taking videos.

At the end of March 2015, the press center of Russia Today MIA opened in Simferopol, and its administration acknowledged that it would reserve the right to refuse accreditation without any explanation of grounds.

On April 27th, 2015 in Simferopol, only a part of the journalists was accredited to the event of the Prime Minister of the Russian Federation Dmitry Medvedev. An application for accreditation had to be submitted a week before the event. For instance, photos of events on the Maydan, taken in the course of professional activity, were found on the page of one of the journalists in the social network. This became the reason for denying the accreditation¹⁵³.

On May 14th, 2015, the operator of the **ATR** TV Channel was not allowed to enter the court building, where extending the pre-trial restriction for the Deputy Chairman of the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar People Akhtem Chiygoz was considered, and the sentence in the case of Maydan activist Alexander Kostenko was to be read out. It is worth noting that staff of Russian TV Channels (NTV, Rossia 1) entered the court building without any obstruction.

On May 17th, 2015, in Simferopol, for official events related to the anniversary of the deportation of the Crimean Tatar people, police men allowed only journalists listed on a pre-compiled list, to the secured perimeter.

In May 2015, a judge of the "Supreme Court" of Crimea rejected the request of the **ATR** TV Channel crew to shoot the session on appealing and selecting a measure of restraint for the TV channel employee Eskender Nebiyev. According to the journalists, the reason for the judge's refusal was the fact that the shooting equipment would clutter the room.

According to Ms Lilia Budzhurova's, deputy Director General of **ATR** TV channel, in June 2015, budget financed institutions of the Crimean Tatar culture began to refuse the channel journalists recording the videos referring to the letter of the 'Ministry of Information of the occupying government of Crimea'. It recommended not to allow the journalists representing the **ATR** TV channel and **15 Minut** and **KRYM.REALII** online media as well as the **QHA** news agency¹⁵⁴.

On June 13th, 2015, Russian border guards did not let a film crew of one of the Azerbaijani TV channels to enter Crimea, as **Mr. Ragim Gumbatov**, editor of the **ALUBIKA** Crimean newspaper said.

On June 19th, 2015, Mr. Maxim Nikolayenko, editor-in-chief of the Kryminform news agency controlled by the occupation authorities, informed that he refused to accredit **ATR** journalists to cover press conferences held at his agency until the channel was accredited by with the RF Ministry of Foreign Relations. In addition, he expressed his distrust of **KVIN MEDIA** Company, on which behalf the **ATR** journalists had been accredited though **KVIN MEDIA** had been registered in the Russian Federation even before the annexation of Crimea, so that the **ATR** could operate on the territory of the Russian Federation¹⁵⁵.

On August 17th and 20th, 2015, accredited journalists of the ForPost online media and NTS TV company were not allowed to attend a session of the city government that their owner was in conflict with. The journalists called the police to record the violation of their rights. The prosecutor's office recommended that they make a statement¹⁵⁶.

On August 23rd, 2015, the **ForPost** online media and **NTS** TV company management announced that their journalists were not still allowed to attend the events in the Sevastopol government, as well as that the officials

153 CHRG Review for April 2015/ CRG - https://crimeahrg.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Crimea_Field_Mission_Review_April_2015_RU.pdf

154 KRYM.REALII and ATR Declared PERSONA NON GRATA in Crimea /Krym. Realii, 25 Jun 2015 - <http://ru.krymr.com/a/27093560.html>

155 KRYMINFORM Rejected Accreditation to ATR TV Channel Journalists/QHA, 19 Jun 2015 - <http://qha.com.ua/ru/politika/kriminform-otkazal-v-akkreditatsii-jurnalistam-telekanala-«ATR»/145741/>

156 Journalists Loyal to Chalyi Not Allowed Again to Sevastopol Government Session/Sevkor, 20 Aug 2015 - <http://sevkor.ru/loyalnyh-chalomu-zhurnalistov-vnov-ne-pustili-na-zasedanie-pravitelstva-sevastopolya/>

were specifically instructed not to give interviews and comments.”¹⁵⁷

On August 25th, 2015, an information request was sent to the head of the Simferopol occupation administration Gennadsy Bakharev through the ROSOTVET system. The requested information was not provided during the September.

In August 2015, Mr. Enver Ametov, head of the interethnic relations department of the Yalta Town Council, forbade the **ATR** TV channel journalists to film a meeting of fellow villagers in one of the Big Yalta villages. A group of Crimean Tatars stood up for the journalists. But when the police arrived, it was decided to cancel the holiday¹⁵⁸.

September 30th, 2015 a director of the Gasprinsky library refused communication with the journalists of some mass media, as it was recommended by the ‘Ministry of Information of the Crimean occupation government’, at the opening ceremony of the Crimean Tatar children’s reading club.

In October 2015, in Sevastopol, a visit of local journalists to the clinic ended with a police call. As “**Health Navigator. Crimean Region**” show journalists stated, the City Health Care Department issued an order stating that “unidentified persons with cameras cannot enter the territory of medical institutions without a prior approval of the shooting.” The Chief Medical Officer of Clinic No. 1 stated that she was forbidden to communicate with journalists without a department permission. After phone negotiations with a city health department official, the film crew decided to continue working, but the clinic staff called the police. According to the journalists, the CMO of the clinic made a written statement that there had been an unauthorized video recording in the institution. Mr. Oleg Lavrov, a department press officer, said that the mass media work in the local medical institutions should be agreed with the department, and pointed out that the cooperation would be possible ‘subject to positive coverage’¹⁵⁹.

In October 2015, the Ministry of Construction of the Occupation Government of Crimea unreasonably refused **KRYMSKYI TELEGRAPH** journalists to answer an information request about the corruption scheme for developing the Southern Coast of Crimea.

On October 19th, 2015, Kerch media representatives were unable to attend the session where the criminal case against Kerch mayor Oleg Osadchy was considered. The session was supposed to be open, as judge Yelena Kuzmina had not made a decision on the closed. However, a representative of the prosecutor’s office told reporters that the hearing would be in camera¹⁶⁰.

On December 6th, 2015, the military men forbade **Kerch.FM** online media journalists to shoot laying of the energy bridge. The Russian military men insisted that journalists format the camera’s memory card. The military men told the journalists that in pursuance of the order of the President of Russia (however, they were unable to refer the number and title of the document), the energy bridge was a secured facility, and information on its construction as well as permission to take photos and videos had to be applied for at the Crimean Council of Ministers¹⁶¹.



People in the building of court in Simferopol before session on Akhtem CHIYGOZ Case, 28 December 2015

157 Union of Journalists of Russia Promised to Help Defend Rights of Their Sevastopol Colleagues/Primechaniya, 25 Aug 2015 - <http://primechaniya.ru/home/news/7152/7561/>

158 ATR 31 Aug 2015/19:30

159 In Sevastopol Police Received Claim on Journalists for Shooting in City Clinic/Meridian Sevastopol, 20 Oct 2015 - <http://meridian.in.ua/news/21017.html>

160 Court on Osadchy Criminal Case Held in Kerch/ Kerch.FM, 19 Oct. 2015 - <https://kerch.fm/2015/10/19/v-kerchi-proshel-sud-po-ugolovnomu-delu-osadchego.html>

161 Permission on Shooting Energy Bridge To Be Requested Now at Council of Ministers of Crimea/Kerc.FM, 06 Dec 2015 - <https://kerch.fm/2015/12/06/razreshenie-na-videosemku-energomosta-teper-nuzhno-prosit-v-sovmine-kryma.html>

On December 28th, 2015, before the court session on the criminal case of riots that Mr. Akhtem Chi-ygoz, the deputy Chairman of the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar people, was one of the defendants, the court officers and the police blocked the entrance to the courtroom, where only close relatives of the accused were later allowed to enter. The court officer refused to let in the media representatives, though there were a journalist of the Kryminform pro-government news agency and a shooting team of Russia Today TV channel inside. Based on personal observations, it was found out that these journalists did not enter the courtroom after the cordon was made, so they had been allowed to enter before.

YEAR 2016

On January 5th, 2016, before the court hearing on the "February 26th case," court officers and security men blocked the entrance to the courtroom. Only close relatives and several representatives of the pro-Russian media were let in. The court officer refused to let in other journalists, and a spokeswoman of the court explained that there were no seats available for them in the courtroom, though when the session started four more seats remained vacant.

On January 15th, 2016, before the start of the court hearing on the "February 26th case," court officers who were in the lobby of the 'Supreme Court' of Crimea building forbade the mass media to take photos and videos. When the spokesperson of the court was pointed out the wrongfulness of their actions, the court officers allowed to shoot only the building lobby. At the same hearing the mass media representatives made several applications on taking photos and videos of the court proceedings. Ms Natalia Poklonskaya, Prosecutor of Crimea, opposed, and the board of judges rejected all applications.

On January 25th, 2016, under similar circumstances, several media men expected to attend the session to take photos, but the court official explained that the applications had been rejected for all sessions of the legal action. Thus, she misled the journalists, that resulted into abandoning the intention to cover the course of the proceedings.

On February 2nd, 2016, **ARGUMENTY NEDELI – KRYM** media journalists together with journalists of other Crimean media were not allowed to quarantine zone of the African swine fever near the village of Novoselovskoye, Razdolnensky District. The refusal was grounded by verbal order of Mr. Valeriy Ivanov, Chief Veterinary Officer of Republic. The police forbade also taking photos and videos.

On February 15th, 2016, before the court session in the criminal case against Mr. Akhtem Chiygoz, the deputy Chairman of the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar people, the court officers blocked the entrance to the courtroom. Later only close relatives of the accused were allowed. Media representatives had no opportunity to attend freely the session.

On February 25th, 2016, at the Dzhankoy Checkpoint, the Russian border guards denied entry for **Ms. Anastasia Ringis**, a UKRAYINSKA PRAVDA journalist, who was going to Crimea to visit her sick father. According to the handed notice, she was forbidden entering the RF territory till 2020. According to the journalist's words, she was kept at the checkpoint for more than three hours. The journalists links the incident with her professional actions.

On March 3rd, 2016, during the first hearing on the Mejlis ban case, the press secretary of the "Supreme Court" of Crimea recommended that media representatives not to shoot in the lobby and corridors of the court. The court officers stopped any attempts to shoot in the court lobby.

On September 18th, 2016, on the day of the election to the State Duma of the Russian Federation, at a polling station in the settlement of Oktiabrsky, Krasnogvardeisk District, the commission made **Ms. Venera Ganieva**, a journalist, leave the room. The members of the commission ignored the arguments on the CEC accreditation available. The journalist was showed the door just before the start of the vote count.

On October 27th, 2016, before the pronouncement of the verdict on the appeal of one of the Crimean political prisoners in the "Supreme Court" of Crimea, a court officer with OP 27716 identification badge groundlessly refused to let **Mr Ivan Zhylin**, a Novaya Gazeta reporter, into the hall.

On October 28th, 2016 in Simferopol, during the ceremonial laying of the foundation stone of the Cathedral Mosque by representatives of the authorities and the Spiritual Administration of Muslims of Crimea and Sevastopol (DUMKS) the film crew of the **Crimeantatars.club** web based project were not allowed by the DUMKS men to get to the event epicenter. The reason was that the crew members did

not have journalist certificates, though verbally the DUMKS officials explained that they were afraid that the shot records would be aired by ATR Crimean Tatar TV channel.

In December 2016, journalists of the **KRYMSKYI TELEGRAPH** newspaper were revoked their accreditation to the Council of Ministers of Crimea and banned to attend its events. According to an anonymous source, such a decision was made by Ms. Yekaterina Polonchuk, a spokeswoman for Mr. Aksyonov, because the paper published photos of government officials with ironic captions on the humour page (the paper had followed this tradition for seven years- ed. note). Ms. Polonchuk grounded her decision by the fact that journalists provided the reader with biased information about the governmental body actions.

YEAR 2017

On January 25th, 2017, journalist **Anton Naumlyuk** took photos at the FSB administration building, where lawyer Nikolay Polozov was brought for a forced interrogation. According to the journalist, a security officer demanded to stop taking photos because this building was a sensitive facility. The journalist stopped taking pictures.

On January 26th, 2017, before the start of the session in the 'Zheleznodorozhny District Court' of Simferopol on the administrative case against lawyer Emil Kurbedinov, the court officers refused to let journalists of INTER Ukrainian TV Channel and Russian journalist Anton Naumlyuk into the building. To enter they were demanded to leave their shooting equipment for temporary storage. In the court room the journalist was forbidden to broadcast online narratively the open session.

On February 16th and 21st, 2017, judges of the 'Kievsky District Court' ignored the application of journalist Anton Naumlyuk to take photos and videos..

On February 20th, 2017, the "Supreme Court" of Crimea rejected an application of the **France 24** TV Channel to video a court hearing on February 26th Case' against Mr. Akhtem Chygoz, deputy Chairman of the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar people. The judges referred to the fact that shooting could violate the rights of the proceedings participants - witnesses, and a representative of the prosecution. At the same time, the court ignored the statement of defence that the journalists could place the equipment so as not to video other parties of the process, except for the defendant.

On March 20th, 2017, just before the start of session on the criminal case against Crimean journalist Nikolay Semena in the 'Zheleznodorozhny District Court' of Simferopol, court officers refused to let **PER-VY KRYMSKY** TV Channel journalists in the court building. The court officers claimed that the journalists had improperly sent an accreditation request to the court. **Mr. Maxim Groznov**, RIA Novosti reporter, was also not allowed into the courtroom. The reason was the lack of seats in the courtroom. The people present in the courtroom, including journalists, were warned by the court officer and the judge assistant that they should not do audio records without court permission, although this requirement is contrary to the Russian laws. This said, the court officer threatened with taking away the equipment from those who would make audio records unauthorized.

On March 27th, 2017, Ms. Lyudmila Lubina, the Crimean Human Rights Ombudsman, refused two foreign media journalist to meet and comment on the grounds that they had not obtained accreditation certificates at the RF Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

On April 3rd, 2017, Ms. Nadezhda Shkolnaya, a judge of the 'Zheleznodorozhny District Court' of Simferopol, dismissed journalist **Anton Naumliuk's** application to take photos and videos during the proceedings of the Nikolay Semena's criminal case.

On May 10th, 2017, Ms. Nadezhda Shkolnaya, a judge of the 'Zheleznodorozhny District Court' of Simferopol, dismissed journalist **Anton Naumliuk's** application to take photos and videos during the proceedings of the Nikolay Semena's criminal case. It was grounded by considering the same application earlier.

On May 18th, 2017 a closed session mode was introduced in the Supreme Court» of Crimea in Simferopol. According to the judge, this was done due to 'a complicated political and social situation'. Journalists **Anton Naumliuk and Taras Ibragimov** as well as some other people were not allowed to attend the court sessions.

On June 14th, 2017, in the "Simferopol District Court" during the session on the Ilmi Umerov's criminal

case, the judge dismissed the application for photo and video shooting, referring to Art. 51 of the Mass Media Law, that states that journalists shall not abuse their rights to conceal or falsify the information collected.

On June 14th, 2017, in the Simferopol District Court, before the Ilmi Umerov's criminal case session started, one of the ladies present had been recording with her mobile how a court officer demanded an elderly woman to leave the courtroom. Another court officer seized her mobile from her hands and deleted the video. On June 21st 2017 the same court officers also forbade everybody to shoot in the court room as well as the court premises, threatening with an administrative punishment for non-following the court officer's requirements.

On July 3rd, 2017, in Sevastopol, a journalist of the PRIMECHANIYA online media was not allowed to attend a session of the commission on amending the City Master Plan. As it was mentioned in the article, this was not the first precedent - all sessions of this body are held closed for the mass media¹⁶².

On August 1st, 2017, when preparing to the debate of the parties in the «Razdolnensky District Court» on the criminal case of Volodymyr Balukh, the judge assistant refused to take an application for a photo and video recording of the activist's last plea in court.

On August 8th, 2017, when considering the administrative case of Server Karametov, 76 years old, in the 'Zheleznodorozhny District Court' of Simferopol, judge Maria Kolotsei dismissed an application for photo and video recording.

On September 8th, 2017, in the "Supreme Court" of Crimea in Simferopol, when considering an extension of the pre-trial restriction for Hizb ut-Tahrir case defendants, the court officers announced that the judge had ordered to forbid entering the building, so a **KRYM. REALII** reporter did not manage to attend the session.

On September 27th, 2017, during the lawsuit against Ilmi Umerov, deputy Head of the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar People, a group of people demanded the **Millet** TV channel to leave the place and not to shoot. According to the Director General of the channel, among the attackers was a son of Ilmi Umerov. As a result of the attack, a video camera was broken. However, according to eyewitnesses, the filming equipment was not damaged. The Umerov's son pushed the camera man away without damaging the camera, and then the channel men quickly left the place under the verbal pressure of the audience.

On October 6, 9, 20, 24, 25, and 26, 2017, the "Supreme Court" of Crimea announced a closed session regime, when the criminal case of so-called "Ukrainian Commando" Evgeniy Panov was being considered. In most cases, court officers did not let people, including journalists, into the court building. On October 6th, a court officer did not let journalist **Taras Ibragimov** and the relatives of Yevgeniy Panov into the building. On October 9th, the entrance to the building was free, but the court officers did not let people to the floor where the session was held, refusing to give their names, numbers of personal badges, and the grounds for the ban.

On October 25th, 2017, journalist **Anton Naumliuk** applied for taking photos and videos during the court hearing of the case of one of the Crimean Tatars who were accused of membership in the Hizb ut-Tahrir international Islamic party, that is called 'terrorist' in Russia. The court dismissed the journalist's application, and court officers then demanded him to leave not only the courtroom, but also the court corridor.

On November 8th, 2017, journalist **Anton Naumlyuk** was not allowed to enter the 'Bakhchisaray District Court' where the administrative case against Seytumer Seytumerov was being considered, with a camera. A court officer justified his ban with an court chairman's instruction, though later, as Mr Naumliuk said, it became clear that the presiding judge had not issued such an instruction.

On November 24th, 2017, journalist **Anton Naumlyuk** applied to the 'Kievsky District Court' of Simferopol to take photos and videos of the defendant and lawyers during the court hearing on selecting a pre-trial restriction for Bekir Degermendji, an activist of the Crimean Tatars movement. The judge dismissed the journalist's application, arguing that the photos of the defendant might affect the course of the pre-trial investigation.

On November 10th and 24th, 2017, in the "Supreme Court of Crimea", the court officers refused

¹⁶² Commissions on Sevastopol Master Plan Still Held in Closed for Mass Media Mode /Primechaniya, 03 July 2017 - http://primechaniya.ru/home/news/iyul_2017/komissii_po_genplanu_sevastopolya_prodolzhayut_prohodit_v_zakrytom_ot_smi_rezhime/

to allow everyone (including the journalists present) to attend the court hearings on appealing against the selected pre-trial restriction for Zevri Abseitov and Enver Mamutov. The court officers reasoned their actions with an ordinance on holding the lawsuit in camera.

On November 24th, 2017, a court officer limited the number of people present in the 'Kievsky District Court' of Crimea at sessions on selecting a pre-trial restriction for Ruslan Trubach and Kiazim Ametov, activists of the national the Crimean Tatars movement, to two people, justifying this with the small size of the courtroom. This did not allow the journalist present to enter the courtroom.

On December 5th, 2017, **Zair Smedliayev**, a **QHA** online media journalist and one of activists of the national the Crimean Tatars movement, who did not have any other identification document with him except a journalist ID card, was not allowed to enter the building of the Supreme Court of Crimea.

On December 5th, 2017, during one of the sessions in the "Supreme Court" of Crimea, a judge banned the audio recording of the session. Court officers forced a freelancer present in the courtroom to turn off the voice recorder.

On December 5th, 2017, in the "Supreme Court" of Crimea, a freelance journalist applied for taking photos and videos during the session on the appeal against the extension of pre-trial restriction for Asan Chapukh (Vedjie Kashka case - ed. note). The application was dismissed since, in the judge's opinion, this could do much harm to the pre-trial investigation.

On December 8th, 2017, journalist **Taras Ibragimov** was not allowed into the building of the "Supreme Court" of Crimea, because, as explained, some sessions in camera were held there. When he named another session, he was let in, but the court officers were carefully watching him not to try to go into the corridor with the rooms where in camera sessions were held.

On December 18th, 2017, during the session in the "Supreme Court" of Crimea in the case of Nikolay Semiona, where journalist **Taras Ibragimov** was present, the defendant's lawyer Aleksandr Popkov placed a request for photo and video shooting, that was denied by judge Kryuchkov.

YEAR 2018

On January 31st, 2018, there was a video conferencing in the "Crimean Military Garrison Court" in Simferopol within the session of the North Caucasus Area Military Court on the "Crimean Muslims Case". Court officers, though there was no decision on session in camera, forbade journalists to attend and recommended them to go to Rostov-on-Don, where the session actually was held.¹⁶³

On February 14, 15 and 20, 2018, court officers refused to allow journalist **Anton Naumliuk** into the building of the "Crimean Military Garrison Court" to attend the video conferenced session of the North Caucasus Area Military Court.

On February 16th, 2018, in the "Supreme Court of Crimea" before the verdict was announced to Andrey Zakhtey (defendant of 'Ukrainian Commandos Case' – ed.note) a court officer had demanded the journalists to stop using mobile phones for text broadcasting. But as there were a lot of the RF Federal mass media journalists in the courtroom, this restriction was lifted.

On November 24th, 2018, he FSB men at the Dzhankoy checkpoint forbade Ukrainian newsreporter **Alena Savchuk** to enter the Russian Federation for ten years (until August 27, 2028 – ed.note.). She was handed a "notice of a foreign national about the taken decision on non-permission to enter the Russian Federation" and, referring to this order, she was not allowed to enter the territory of Crimea¹⁶⁴.

On November 27th, 2018, the 'Kerch City Court' officers banned the **Kerch.FM** online media journalists to take photos and videos in the building of the court. That day the "court" imposed a pre-trial restraint as keeping in custody for three wounded Ukrainian navy sailors seized on November 25th 2018 in the Black Sea¹⁶⁵.

¹⁶³ Monitoring Review for January 2018/CHRG - https://crimeahrg.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Crimean-Human-Rights-Group_Jan_2018_RU.pdf

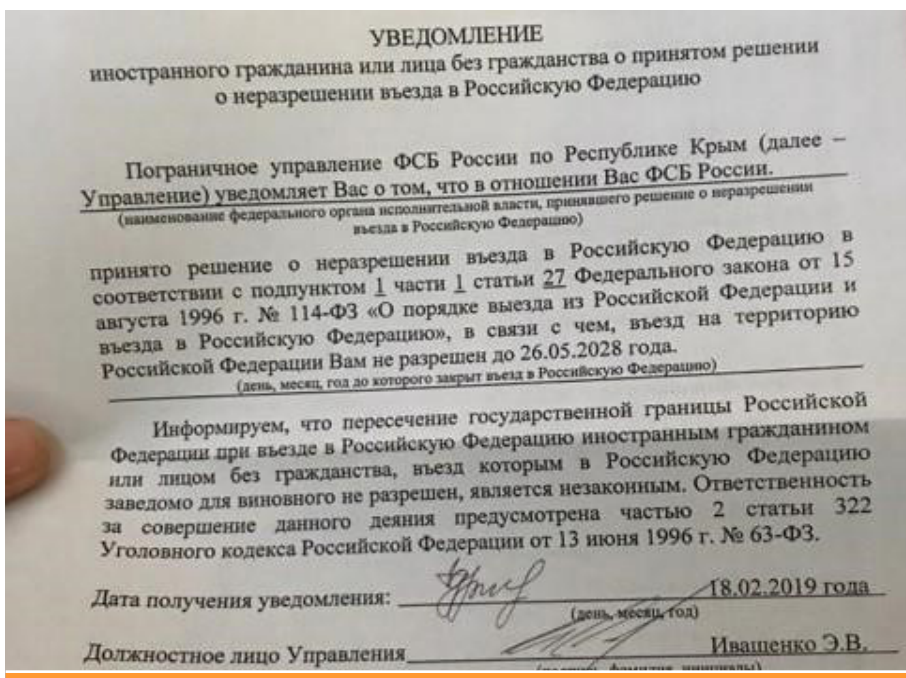
¹⁶⁴ CHRG Review for November 2018/CHRG, - https://crimeahrg.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Crimean-Human-Rights-Group_Nov_2018_RU.pdf

¹⁶⁵ Where Wounded Ukrainian Sailors Were Judged in Kerch - Unclear/Kerch.FM, 28 Nov 2018 - <https://kerch.fm/2018/11/28/gde-prohodil-sud-nad-ranenymi-ukrainskimi-morjakami-v-kerchi-ne-ponjatno.html>

YEAR 2019

On January 25th, 2019, during the court session in the 'Kerch City Court', the prosecutor and the judge tried to forbid one of the observers to take audio recording of the session.

On February 18th, 2019, the FSB men at the Dzhankoy checkpoint handed journalist **Alina Smutko** a notice that she was forbidden to enter the Russian Federation until May 26, 2028. And this was the reason why she was not allowed to enter the territory of Crimea



Ban for journalist Alina Smutko to Enter

DDOS-ATTACKS

The first years of the occupation of Crimea DDoS attacks on pro-Ukrainian media operating in Crimea were also recorded. No further information was received on such cases.

YEAR 2014

On March 3rd, 2014 **SOBYTIA KRYMA** IA reported a DDoS attack on its website. "A powerful DDoS attack on the web portal has been ongoing for more than a week. Most of the computers it comes from are located in Moscow. Other Crimean Internet resources, in particular, **Kafa** and **Svezhaya Gazeta**, have been also facing DDoS attacks"¹⁶⁶.

On March 7th, 2014, the **ATR** TV channel was disconnected from the Internet in the Crimea. The "**15 MINUT**" online media, that was a part of the same holding as the TV channel, was DDoS attacked, too¹⁶⁷.

On September 4th, 2014, the site of **Tsentr Zhurnalistikh Rassledovaniy**, a pro-Ukrainian news agency, underwent a powerful hacker attack that resulted into stopping the resource operation. It was restarted only next day. According to the media editor-in-chief Valentina Samar, the information agency reporters in Crimea are periodically questioned by FSB and prosecutors.

On December 2nd 2014 the **QHA** IA website was Ddos-attacked that caused blocking the access to the website in some countries, including Russia and Ukraine. According to the **QHA** data, there were about 10 DDos attacks on its website in October – December 2014¹⁶⁸.

¹⁶⁶ Powerful DDos Attacks on Websites Not Supporting Putin's Actions in Crimea/Sobytiya Kryma, 03 Mar 2014 - <http://www.sobytiya.info/news/14/39071>

¹⁶⁷ ATR TV Channel Disconnected from Internet in Crimea/TsZHR 07 Mar 2014 - <http://investigator.org.ua/news/121267/>

¹⁶⁸ QHA IA Website DDos Attacked /QHA, 02 Dec 2014 - <http://old.qha.com.ua/ru/obschestvo/sait-informagentstva-qha-podvergsya-ddosatake/141577/>

YEAR 2015

On March 2nd, 2015, **Meridian Sevastopol** on-line socio-political newspaper reported a hacker DDOS attack. As a result, the pages of the on-line newspaper could not be accessed¹⁶⁹.

From April 3rd to 6th, 2015, there was a powerful DDoS attack was carried out on **Meridian Sevastopol** on-line socio-political newspaper. Due to a lot of requests from false visitors, the server was overloaded and real visitors could not go to the site. The editorial office was sure that this was a response of local authorities on the «published investigation documents about abuses of Sevastopol officials»¹⁷⁰.

CENSORSHIP

Censorship has become an integral part of pressure on freedom of speech in Crimea. It is presented through verbal and written demands from government officials to remove certain publications from the media, withdrawals of newspaper issue, refusals to authorize subscribing the media, recommendation letters to the editorial offices with guidance on the contents, bans on Ukrainian music and demands to remove news about this ban.

YEAR 2014

At the end of April 2014, Crimean Tatar Unit journalists of the KRYM State TVR BC were banned to televise Mustafa Djemilev, the leader of the Crimean Tatars, Refat Chubarov, the head of the Mejlis, and members of the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar People. This was reported by Leyla Muslimova, head of the Mejlis press service, referring to information received from the editorial staff. She also said that **Seitisliam Kishvieyev**, an editorial unit director, and **Shevket Ganiyev**, editor-in-chief of information programs, were forced to go on leave¹⁷¹. Kishveev confirmed the introduction of «strict censorship»: «I can't work in such conditions, so I have to go on vacation»¹⁷².

On May 16th, 2014, **Gayana Yukssel**, the chief editor of the QHA Crimean Tatar news agency, received an e-mail from the Russian Prosecutor General's Office demanding that the newsletter be removed from the news feed that anti-government protests would be held in Russia on May 18.

In October 2014, **YANYI DIUNYA**, the Crimean Tatar weekly, complained that many post offices in Crimea refused to make a subscription for it for 2015, stating that the newspaper supposedly would cease to exist. The newspaper warned the audience about the inaccuracy of this information¹⁷³.



Gayana YUKSEL. Photo from her Facebook account

169 <http://meridian.in.ua/news/16147.html>

170 DDOS Attack on Meridian Sevastopol Website. Truth Hurts/Meridian Sevastopol, 06 Apr 2015 - <http://meridian.in.ua/news/17003.html>

171 Ban In Crimea for Djemilev, Chubarov and Other Mejlis Members To Be On Air / Interfax-Ukrayina, 21 Apr 2014. - <http://interfax.com.ua/news/general/201548.html>

172 Ban For KRYM State TVR BC To Televise Mustafa Djemilev/QHA, 22 Apr 2014 - <http://old.qha.com.ua/ru/politika/gtrk-krim-zapretili-translirovat-mustafu-djemileva/135280/>

173 Yanyy Diunya 31 Oct 014, p 1

YEAR 2015

In January 2015, **Aleksandr Hoffman**, editor-in-chief of the INFORMER, a Sevastopol pro-Russian online media, reported that billboards advertising his media were over-plastered by unknowns the day after they had appeared. He noted that the slogan chosen for the advertising campaign was: «Sergey, don't make us nervous ... read Informer better.» However, the Tell Me advertising company refused to produce billboards, as Sergey was the name of the governor. Then the name was changed to ellipsis, but the advertisement did not come out again, as it was not approved at the government advertising department. Then KRYMKONTAKT company produced and placed the advertisements in the initial version, but all four billboards were damaged. INFORMER claimed an attack on the freedom of speech¹⁷⁴.

In February 2015, the Odnoklassniki Russian social network administration blocked and then deleted one of the largest groups called "Crimea and Crimean Tatars". It consisted of more than 14.5 thousand participants, and had been active since May 2008¹⁷⁵.

In June 2015, the KYRYM, a Crimean Tatar newspaper, reported that the post offices of Crimea began to refuse subscribers to subscribe to the newspaper without any reason¹⁷⁶.

The **KRYMSKY TELEGRAPH** weekly wrote that the newspaper issue dated July 3, 2015, with a critical publication about concluding lease agreements at the city's markets, was withdrawn from sale in Feodosia¹⁷⁷.

In August 2015, Tatyana Sandulova, a member of the so-called "Legislative Assembly of Sevastopol", asked the Union of Journalists of the Russian Federation to "influence" some online media, which, in her opinion, compose publications in the way as to cause negative opinion in the people. She also supported censoring publications and comments¹⁷⁸.

On September 23rd, 2015, Natalya Poklonskaya, 'Prosecutor' of Crimea, recommended the mass media not to use the word "Mejlis" in the publications. A number of editorial boards of the peninsula received letters of recommendation with this guidance¹⁷⁹.

On September 29th, 2015, Roskomnadzor representatives warned by phone editors of the peninsula's information media about the ban on disseminating any information about the presence of Russian troops in Syria, with the exception of TASS news.

In September 2015 an editor of **PERVAYA KRYMSKAYA** newspaper was called for conversation for publishing a negative article about Vladimir Zaginaylo, a counsellor of the so called 'Parliament' of Crimea speaker, and 'MP' Olga Sul'nukova demanded, with threats and offences, to delete this information from the media website and publish an image making interview about him in the next issue.

YEAR 2016

On January 13th, 2016, a talk show was held on the air of the **ITV** TVR company attended by businessman Oleg Zubkov, during which he accused the Crimean authorities of total corruption as well as pressure on business. According to the investigation data of the Field Human Rights Center, 15 minutes after the air, the TV channel owner got a call of Dmitry Polonsky, so-called "Minister of Internal Affairs, Information and Communication" who demanded the company to refuse the scheduled talk show re-airings, and also no to place it at the company website.

In January 2016, the head of the Department for Construction Supervision and Expertise of Sevastopol, Yuri Prikhozhanov, reported that a letter had been sent to the city prosecutor's office regarding **Anton Parkhomenko**, the deputy director of the Sevastopol Independent Television. The official considered that the air describing the construction of a rest house in Laspi Area (developer

174 Informer Online Media Advertising Billboards Overplastered in Sevastopol /Novosti Sevastopolia, 17 Jan 2015 - <http://sevnews.info/rus/view-news/Svoboda-slova-po-Menajlovski-v-Sevastopole-zakleili-reklamnye-shity-internet-izdaniya-Informer/17047>

175 Blocking Crimean Tatar Communities Started in Social Networks/QHA, 09 Feb 2015. - <http://old.qha.com.ua/ru/obschestvo/v-sotssetyah-nachali-blokirovat-krimskotatarskie-soobschestva/142946/>

176 KYRYM, 15 Jun 2015, p 1

177 Krymsky Telegraph 10 Jun 2015, p.20

178 «Formula of Confidence. MP Journalist Sandulova Supported Censorship of Publications and Comments at Sevastopol Websites /ForPost, 25 Aug 2015 - <http://sevastopol.su/news.php?id=78870>

179 Mejlis To Be Removed from Crimean Mass Media/Kommersant.ru, 23 Sept 2015 - <http://www.kommersant.ru/doc/2816080>

– AGAT A LLC affiliated with the ex-Minister of Defense of Ukraine Pavel Lebedev - ed. note) features a fact of slander (TF CC Article 128.1) that shall be punished with a penalty up to RUR1 mln or to an amount of salary or other income of the sentenced for a period up to 1 year or mandatory labor for up to two hundred and forty hours. 'Statements in the mass media discredit executive bodies and cast doubt on a professional approach to the work of our department officials', he said and suggested Parkhomenko to apologize for settling the conflict. The journalist refused apologizing¹⁸⁰.

On March 16th, 2016 **Anastasia Medyntseva**, a journalist of the Komsomolskaya Pravda. Krym' newspaper, said that she had been called by Olga Sulnikova, a MP of so called "Parliament of Crimea", who had insulted her and demanded to remove from her Facebook page a post dedicated to the investigation of the meeting of the" speaker Vladimir Konstantinov with President of Ukraine Petro Poroshenko in 2014 . **(photo 42)**

At the end of March 2016, **Anastasia Silina**, producer of the only music radio station which editorial office is located on the peninsula, said that it was forbidden to broadcast Ukrainian singers in Crimea. For instance, Ukrainian singer RUSLANA, Ukrainian musical group VOPLI VODOPLIASOVA, Crimean Tatar singer JAMALA, and VOINY SVETA (Warriors of Light) song of Belorussian musical group LIAPIS TRUBETSKOY are under ban at her radio station¹⁸¹.

In April 2016, **ARGUMENTY NEDELI –KRYM** online media first placed and then deleted news about the list of Ukrainian singers put under ban on MORE radio station. According to the stored copies, the site reported that the ban was imposed on Jamala (representing Ukraine at Eurovision), Ruslana and the group "Vopli Vidoplyasova". The KRYM TVR BC, that MORE radio station is a part of, in response announced its intention to apply to the republic's prosecutor's office and Roskomnadzor and seek a fine for AN-KRYM¹⁸².

In July 2016, the so-called prosecutor's office of Sevastopol appealed to the local "court" demanding to close nine anonymizing sites in Russia. Which were these anonymizers in question was not reported¹⁸³..

In August 2016, the council of judges of Sevastopol called on the Investigation Committee and the police to punish the **NOVOSTI SEVASTOPOLIA** online media, as it considered the publication on cars parked at the court insulting. The sense of the post was that a foreign brand car had been parked at one of the court buildings on the pedestrian passage, and the court officer did not dare to remove it. The publication author criticized him severely for this, and simultaneously assessed in hard hitting manner the judicial system of the city in general. The Council of Judges considered that the publication featured signs of defamation and contempt of court and demanded that the law enforcement bodies to appraise the publication¹⁸⁴.

In October 2016, Roskomnadzor demanded the **NOVOSTI SEVASTOPOLIA** website to delete a publication about several residents of one of the apartment buildings who had announced their readiness to set themselves on fire, opposing, thus, raider attempts to seize their dwellings. The agency accused the web based media of promoting suicide, and threatened to block it if this article was not deleted. The site assessed the letter as a manifestation of censorship, but deleted the publication¹⁸⁵.

On November 10th 2016 Djankoy Town Administration placed an announcement on the planned anti-terrorist exercises across the town the third week of month at the official website. The announcement also pointed out that taking photos and videos during the exercised was forbidden, and the breakers would be held liable¹⁸⁶.

180 Meniaylo's Subordinate Called Slander Story of Ex-Minister of Defence of Ukraine Development Site /ForPost, 15 Oct 2016 - <http://sevastopol.su/news.php?id=83721>

181 Cultural Resistance/OpenDemocracy, 28 Mar 2016 - <https://www.opendemocracy.net/ru/neliubimaya-padcheritsa/>

182 KRYM TVR BC To Complain to Prosecutor's Office On News Agency For Information On Ban to Air Ukrainian Music /KRYMINFORM, 01 Apr 2016 - <http://www.c-inform.info/news/id/36991>

183 Prosecutor's Office Applied to Court To Block Access to Extremist Files at Internet/Sevastopol 'Prosecutor's Office, 20 Jul 2016 - <http://sevproc.ru/prokuratura-obratilas-v-sud-s-celyu-blokirovaniya-dostupa-k-ekstremistskim-materialam-v-internete>

184 /Judges in Sevastopol Felt Offended for Severe Critics of Their Work/ForPost, 10 Aug 2016 - <http://sevastopol.su/news.php?id=89350>

185 Roskomnadzor Declared Information Placed on NOVOSTI SEVASTOPOLIA Website Forbidden And Demanded It To Be Deleted/Novosti Sevastopolia, 11 Oct 2016 - <http://sevnews.info/rus/view-news/Roskomnadzor-priznal-informaciyu-razmeshennuyu-na-sajte-Novosti-Sevastopolya-zapreshennoj-i-potreboval-eyo-udaleniya/28647>

186 Administration of Djankoy Town of Republic of Crimea Informs/10 Nov 2016 - <https://dzhankoy.rk.gov.ru/ru/article/show/1236>

YEAR 2017

On August 22nd 2017 Yelena Golubeva, head of SEVASTOPOLSKIYE MAMY NGO, demanded the Governor of Sevastopol press service to cancel an access of **PRIMECHANIYA** online media journalists to the official events of governmental bodies because this was not an officially registered mass media.

YEAR 2018

In May 2018, Roskomnadzor emailed eight notifications to the **Crimean Human Rights Group** on including the CHRG website publications into the register of information, which dissemination was prohibited in the Russian Federation. The Roskomnadzor notifications stated that if publications were not deleted from the site, the access to the CHRG website would be restricted across the RF territory. The CHRG publications included into the register were on the illegal conscription of Ukrainian nationals from the territory of Crimea into the Russian army as a violation of international humanitarian law¹⁸⁷.

YEAR 2019

In February 2019 YouTube company informed the '**Tsentr Zhurnalistskikh Rassledovaniy**' (center for journalistic investigations) that it had received a Roskomnadzor notification with a demand to restrict an access to the story of Crimean political prisoner and human rights defender Emir-Usein Kuku placed at YouTube agency channel, and to delete it¹⁸⁸.

If the **Tsentr Zhurnalistskikh Rassledovaniy**' does not delete the information included by the RF



Политические заложники Путина: задержания по "делу Хизб ут-Тахрир"

8 396 просмотров

👍 96 🗨️ 9 ➡️ ПОДЕЛИТЬСЯ ⚙️ СОХРАНИТЬ ...

Screenshot of Tsentr Zhurnalistskikh Rassledovaniy' story to be deleted from YouTube

187 CHRG Monitoring Review for May 2018/CHRG - https://crimeahrg.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Crimean-Human-Rights-Group_May_2018_RU.pdf

188 Political Hostages of Putin: Detentions Under Hiz-ut-Tahrir Case/YouTube, 17 Feb 2016 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=awb6x2F-v7U>

register of forbidden ones, GOOGLE company may be obliged to block the content' – the company message said¹⁸⁹.

INCITEMENT TO HATRED, DEFAMATION, DISCREDITATION

Incitement to hatred against journalists and bloggers has become a common practice on the peninsula. This is manifested in the statements of local politicians and representatives of the occupation authorities, publications in the mass media controlled by the occupation authorities of the Crimea and the Russian Federation, and in the comments under publications on various media sites, including social networks.

In August 2014, Vasvi Abduraimov, the head of the MILLI FIRKA Crimean Tatar organization, asked the Russian Federation leaders to introduce a continuous monitoring of mass media and social networks targeted at the Crimean Tatar audience and to take necessary actions to prevent any information that may be appeared there and classified as 'anti-Russian'¹⁹⁰.

Sergei Shuvaynikov, head of the Committee on Information and Mass Media of the so-called "Parliament of the Republic of Crimea," and a LDPR MP, said that journalists not suitable for the authorities would not work in parliament. "We would like a person not just to come, but to really cover our activities ... If a grant-consuming website gives out any offensive, deceitful information, how to deal with this? If such a fact is established, we simply call this person and say: thank you, you are free, go ahead and earn American money," he said¹⁹¹.

On October 8th, 2014, the **ATR** TV channel disseminated a statement reporting the fact that Aleksandr Formanchuk, deputy chairman of the Republic's public chamber, called on "law enforcement agencies" to influence the TV channel editorial policy. The statement pointed out that law enforcement agencies and governmental officials were constantly accusing the channel of extremist actions and an anti-Russian position¹⁹².

On October 2014, Yulia Martynova, Deputy "Minister of Internal Policy, Information and Communications of the Crimea" said that 'till the end of the year all those media that were registered under the laws of Ukraine will operate in the territory of the Republic of Crimea, since they have been issued the appropriate licenses. By January 1, 2015, all media have time to re-register, and register a legal entity in accordance with Russian laws and obtain a license from Roskomnadzor. "Since January 1, 2015, Roskomnadzor will be authorised to apply appropriate sanctions to the media, which, according to the authorities, have been pursuing 'provocative' policy. This was how the "State Council of Crimea" determined **SOBYIA KRYMA** website and **SKIF MEDIA**¹⁹³.

In October 2014, Crimean mass media controlled by the Russian Federation (for example, the KRYMSKIYE IZVESTIYA and the KRYMSKAYA PRAVDA) regularly urged Crimean residents to "be cautious" and not to give any comments to the pro-Ukrainian journalists. In addition, if journalists asked «provocative questions» about the price increase, the decline of the resort season, about violations the people were asked to report this immediately to the «Crimean self-defense.»

On December 23rd, 2014, the so-called "Head of the Republic of Crimea" Sergei Aksyonov said that mass media that did not recognize Crimea as Russian should not work on its territory. "My attitude to the opposition media is as such: any point of view might be discussed, but those who do not recognize the Russian statehood, our president, those who give hope for the return of Crimea to Ukraine, I believe that these are enemy media, that is, they, one way or another, should not work on the territory of the peninsula," he said¹⁹⁴.

189 Roskomnadzor and YouTube Demand To Delete Story of Tsent Zhurnalistskikh Rassledovaniy About Political Prisoner Emir Usein Kuku/ TsZhR, 05 Feb 2019 - <https://investigator.org.ua/news-2/214065/>

190 How To Resolve Crimean Issue in Russia/Milli firka, 15 Aug 2014 - <http://www.milli-firka.org/content/DBAGHKJB>

191 No Censorship – Actions Will Be!/Maxpark, 24 Sept 2014 - <http://maxpark.com/community/politic/content/3001742>

192 Crimea^ ATR TV Channel Announcing Threat of Closure/BBC Ukraine 08 Oct 2014 - http://www.bbc.com/ukrainian/rolling_news_russian/2014/10/141008_ru_n_«ATR»_discrimination_campaign

193 CHRG Review for October 2014/CHRG - https://crimeahrg.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Crimea_Field_Mission_Review_October_2014_RU.pdf

194 Media Not Recognizing Crimea a Russian Region Should Not Work on Peninsula Territory - Aksyonov/Kryminform, 23 Dec 2014 - <http://www.c-inform.info/news/id/16740>

YEAR 2015

On January 13th, 2015, the so-called “Head of the Republic of Crimea,” Sergei Aksyonov, stated that Crimea was in a “semi-military state” and therefore there was no place for “enemy media” there. This he said regarding the **ATR** TV and all the independent media.

“There is only one criterion for the media today - recognition of Russia’s sovereignty over Crimea. If you don’t recognize, then there’s nothing to talk about. Other conditions for re-registration are formal in nature, which should be met,” said Grigoriy Ioffe, Chairman of the Public Chamber of the Republic¹⁹⁵.

Sergei Aksyonov, the so-called “Head of the Republic of Crimea,” stated that the **ATR** TV would not work in Crimea. In his opinion, the channel “escalates the situation”, and also gives “hope for the return of Crimea to Ukraine” and “incites people to action”¹⁹⁶.

MILLI FIRKA, a pro-Russian Crimean Tatar organization, accused the **ATR** TV channel of promoting the «ideology of aggressive nationalism» and the «values of Western European democracy.» The collaborators criticized the incompetent in their opinion, pressure of the authorities on the channel. The MILLI FIRKA said it had long been asking the authorities to take control of the channel, up to its expropriation, but the government did not follow its advice¹⁹⁷.

On June 17th, 2015, the **ATR** TV channel restarted broadcasting from Kyiv. This outraged the occupation authorities of Crimea. Ruslan Balbek, so-called “Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Crimea,” said that “**ATR**” broadcasting restarted meant that the channel “will work against Crimea and against Russia, defending the interests of Western patrons.” He warned that Russian law enforcement agencies would hold accountable the journalists who «will work to create a negative image of the Russian Crimea.»¹⁹⁸

Sergey Shuvaynikov, head of the Committee on Information policy of the so-called “Parliament of the Republic of Crimea,” said that restarting the broadcasting of the **ATR** Crimean Tatar TV channel from Kyiv “is a direct involvement of all its owners and employees in the information war against the Russian Crimea and Russia.” He warned that the channel journalists would be liable if they violated the Russian laws in preparing their information¹⁹⁹.

YEAR 2016

In 2016, many pro-Russian media of the peninsula supported the persecution of the **KRYM. REALII** journalists. So Natalya Krivopustova, the KRYMSKOYE ECHO website editor-in-chief, said: “It is amazing that only now the prosecutor’s office has paid attention to the subversive activities of these people”²⁰⁰.

KRYMSKAYA GAZETA, an official print newspaper of the annexed Crimea government, compared independent journalists with spies and suggested deporting Nikolay Semena²⁰¹.

“Crimea has become the target of information wars, and Russia should closely monitor those who work against Crimea and against Russia,” said Alexander Formanchuk, deputy Chairman of the Crimean Public Chamber, commenting on repressions against the independent journalists. He said that even those that gave interviews to free media campaigned against Russia. **KRYM. REALII** website, as Formanchuk noted, ‘is engaged in hostile activities and everyone who gives them an interview should understand this’²⁰².

195 KRYMSKOYE VREMIA 19 Feb 2015, p.7

196 Aksyoov: Inciting to Enmity in Crimea At This Hard Time Non-Acceptable 19 Mar 2015. - <https://ria.ru/20150319/1053392148.html>

197 Who ATR Working For/Milli firka, 27 Mar 2015 - <http://www.milli-firka.org/content/DBAGKEJD>

198 Balbek: Kyiv Using ATR TV Channel To Split UP Crimean Tatars/ RIA KRYM, 20 Jun 2015 - <http://crimea.ria.ru/olitics/20150620/1100289816.html>

199 Sergey Suvaynikov, Restarting ATR Broadcasting from Kyiv – Participation in Information War Against Crimea/ ‘GOSSOVET’ Kryma, 15 Jun 2015 - http://crimea.gov.ru/news/19_06_15

200 Krymskoye Vremia 21 Apr 2016, p 2

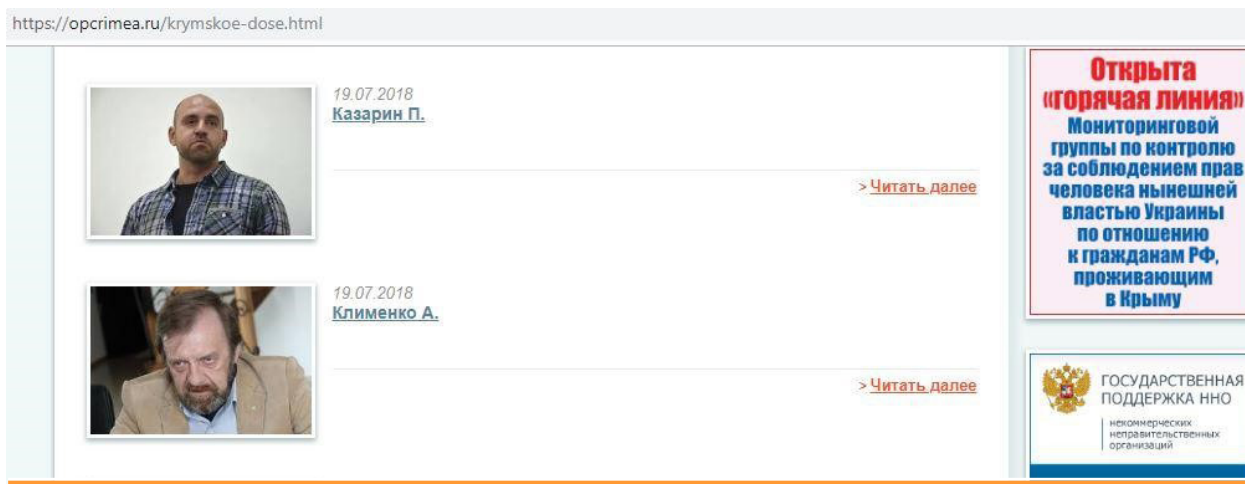
201 Krymskaya Gazeta 22 Apr 2016, p 8

202 We Should Severely Monitor Those Working Against Crimea and Russia - Formanchuk/KIA, 19 Apr 2016 - <https://kianews24.ru/news/my-dolzhy-zhyostko-otslezhivat-teh-kto-rabotaet-protiv-kryma-i-rossii-formanchuk/>

On July 19th, 2016, «prosecutor» Natalya Poklonskaya stated that Crimean journalists who disagreed with the occupation had to express their thoughts without violating the Russian laws. She noted: “Let the journalists express their thoughts and opinions in accordance with the law provisions and do not violate the law of the Russian Federation on counter-acting extremism. But what they say: “We must reconquer, return by force [Crimea], and nothing else!” They want war? What are they calling for? Want to go back to Ukraine? Well, let them go, no one is holding them here”²⁰³

YEAR 2017

In 2017, the “Public Chamber of Crimea” created a “Crimean dossier” for political and cultural figures of Ukraine and Russia who do not recognize the occupation of Crimea. The persons included there are, according to the ‘dossier’ compilers, those who «are trying to incite ethnic hatred with their statements, and also threaten terrorist acts on the peninsula.» “We will include in this dossier those people who are unofficially referred to as Crimea bitter enemies,” explained Grigoriy Ioffe, the head of the organization.



Journalists Pavel KAZARIN and Andrey KLIMENKO in CRIMEAN DOSSIE Section at PUBLIC CHAMBER OF CRIMEA website

This list includes, inter alia, Crimean journalists **Pavel Kazarin**, **Aleksandr Yankovsky**, and **Valentina Samar** who had to leave the peninsula after the occupation.^{204,205}

OTHER CHALLENGES FACED BY MASS MEDIA CAUSED BY OCCUPATION

In April 2014, **Eldar Seitbekirov**, the editor-in-chief of the *GOLOS KRYMA* Crimean Tatar weekly, stated that the newspaper had lost funding. According to him, the newspaper's own funds were frozen on the account in one of the Ukrainian banks that stopped working on the peninsula. And the budget of Crimea, despite promises, does not compensate for the loss of subsidies from the budget of Ukraine. “All our appeals to the governing bodies of Crimea so far remain unanswered. It turns out that the “GOLOS KRYMA” is actually robbed,” he said.²⁰⁶

203 «Express Your Thoughts In Line With Law Provisions/Novaya Gazeta, 19 Jul 2016 - <https://www.novayagazeta.ru/articles/2016/07/19/69303-vyskazyvayte-svoi-mysli-v-sootvetstvi-s-trebovaniyami-zakona>

204 Crimean Dossier/Public Chamber of Republic of Crimea - <https://opcrimea.ru/krymskoe-dose.html>

205 Politicians, Actors, Journalists: Crimean PC Created List of 'Crimean Bitter Enemies'/RIA KRYM, 19 Jul 2018 - <https://crimea.ria.ru/society/20180718/1114860600.html>

206 GOLOS KRYMA 25 Apr 2014, p.1

In February 2015, the “**Kerch**”, the only municipal TV channel connected with the family of ex-mayor Oleg Osadchy, stopped broadcasting in Kerch. The new city administration refused to renew the cooperation agreement with the TV channel, depriving it of further budget funding²⁰⁷.

Andriy Shchekun, Director of the National Newspaper and Journal Publishing House of Ukraine, dismissed Viktor Kachula, who had been KRYMSKA SVITLYTSIA weekly editor-in-chief for the last 16 years. The reason is Kachula’s unwillingness to move to Kyiv, where the editorial office has been recently moved²⁰⁸.



Crimean Human Rights Group



CHRONOLOGY OF PRESSING THE FREEDOM OF SPEECH IN CRIMEA

(March 2014 - September 2019)



207 TV Company of Ex-Mayor Osadchy ‘Closed Down’ in Kerch/Sobytiya Kryma 05 Feb 2015 - <http://www.sobytiya.info/news/15/49023>

208 Krymska Svitlytsia 03 Jun 2016, p. 1,7