



Mission
Of The President Of Ukraine
In The Autonomous Republic Of Crimea



CRIMEA
PLATFORM

Occupied Crimea and Sevastopol in the midst of Russia's all-out aggression against Ukraine: trends and highlights

July 4, 2022

Russian aggression against Ukraine was launched not on February 24, 2022, but in 2014, with the occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, followed by the invasion of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. Over the past eight years, Crimea has been turned by the Russian Federation into a military base. It is not only Ukraine that has noted this fact – the UN General Assembly has adopted resolutions on the militarization of Crimea, Sevastopol as well as parts of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov annually since 2017. From the very first days of aggression, Crimea has been used by Russia as a springboard for its offensive, and currently Crimea is used as a base for the occupation of the captured territories of Kherson and Zaporizhzhya regions, as a hub for the enforced displacement of Ukrainian citizens, and as a gray zone in the transportation chain of looted Ukrainian grain.

1

Russia is using Crimea as a military base, a springboard for its offensive to mainland Ukraine, and conducts hidden mobilization

Since Russia launched its large-scale attack on Ukraine, occupied Crimea has been directly involved in various ways.

Missile and rocket strikes are launched from the territory of the peninsula and its territorial waters. Civilian infrastructure is used for military purposes. In particular, the Kerch bridge, Tavrida highway as well as the railway are utilized to transport and transfer troops to the temporarily occupied territory of Crimea from the Russian Federation. Combat units and military resources of the Russian Federation are transferred through occupied Crimea to the newly occupied areas of Kherson, Mykolaiv, and Zaporizhzhya regions.

The occupying administrations continue to illegally conscript Crimean residents into military service. Since the beginning of the occupation of the peninsula, they have conducted conscription campaigns twice a year. Starting from 2015, 14 illegal conscription campaigns have been conducted. Since 2015 over 34,000 Crimean residents, most of them Ukrainian citizens, have been illegally drafted into the Russian military. The 15th draft into the Russian military was launched on April 1, 2022. This time, according to public sources citing the occupying authorities, 500 conscripts are to be drafted in Sevastopol alone. The occupying administration of the Russian Federation in Crimea acknowledged the fact that some Crimean residents have been killed; however, it continues to hide the real number of dead soldiers sent to the war from Crimea.

According to the information of the Mission of the President of Ukraine in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, by the beginning of Russia's full-scale invasion, Russian armed forces had about 5,000 Crimean conscripts, and at least some of them have been involved in the war. It's virtually impossible to tell their exact number, but we are talking about thousands of conscripts here. It can be expected that this practice will continue, as evidenced by the above-mentioned 15th conscription campaign that was recently conducted in Crimea.

Based on the Mission's findings as of July 2022, out of 108 Crimean residents confirmed to have died taking part in the hostilities in mainland Ukraine as part of the Russian armed forces (or other occupational forces), possibly 57 of them are Ukrainian citizens. What complicates things is the fact that some of the deceased may be Ukrainian citizens on whom Russian citizenship was unlawfully imposed and which Ukraine doesn't recognize, while others may be actual Russians that have been unlawfully residing in occupied Crimea and Sevastopol.

Most of the 108 deceased Crimean residents were 19- 22 years old, which suggests that at least some of them may have been conscripts. These are mostly sailors and marines that served in the occupying Black Sea Fleet. The majority of the deceased that we know of are from Sevastopol.

Russia's use of Crimean Tatars in the invasion indicates the deliberate policy of the occupational administration to use the "disloyal" indigenous people of the peninsula as cannon fodder while making it look as though the Crimean Tatars support the aggression, and at the same time hindering Crimea's de-occupation at the strategic level.

Crimean conscript Leonid Savin served on the guided missile cruiser "Moskva". A resident of Alupka (and a citizen of Ukraine, according to the Mission's information), Leonid was conscripted on July 2, 2021. According to his family, he had no plans to sign a contract. The young man was drafted after graduation. Leonid is officially considered MIA. Most probably he died as a result of the attack on the cruiser "Moskva".



Leonid Savin. Photo published by the Nastoyashcheye Vremya

All these facts testify point to an ongoing mobilization conducted under the pretext of a terrorist threat. It is hidden since it is implemented without informing the public. One example is the use of civilian specialists in military operations, in particular doctors.

Crimean doctors are forced to serve troops directly engaged in hostilities, not just in Crimea close to the combat zone, but also in the temporarily occupied territories of Donetsk and Luhansk regions close to the combat

zone. This was promoted as a volunteer initiative, but as far as the Mission is aware, it was met with little enthusiasm among Crimean doctors. However, «doctor volunteers» from Crimea were sent to the frontlines in eastern Ukraine. Subsequently, propaganda stories were aired on TV-channels about the work of Crimean doctors in the Donetsk region, which proves that they are involved in military, rather than civilian, healthcare, as was the claim initially.

Schools are being used as places to deploy troops and wounded and captured soldiers, and to store ammunition. Crimean morgues and hospitals (including civilian ones) were overcrowded with wounded soldiers in the first months of the all-out invasion mostly those in the Northern part of Crimean peninsula.



To find additional information, please refer to the brief prepared by the Mission: cutt.ly/9JKbtZf

This hidden mobilization may soon be transformed into a non-hidden one. An announcement of the occupying administration in Crimea dated July 4, 2022, “The order on commission for mobilization of citizens in the republic of Crimea” provides for establishment of the relevant municipal-level commissions.

This step of the occupying administration may indicate that the Russian Federation is preparing to carry out illegal mobilization in the temporarily occupied territory of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol. Although the occupying administration states that the formation of commissions for mobilization is in no way connected with the so-called “special military operation”, there are reasons not to trust these statements, in particular, the fact that mobilization has already been conducted in other Russian-occupied Ukrainian territories in the eastern part of Ukraine.

In addition, Russia has resumed supplying water to occupied Crimea from mainland Ukraine, which was cut off after the peninsula’s occupation in 2014. According to the State Environmental Inspection, Ukraine is losing \$919,125 USD per day as a result of this unauthorized use of water resources. Meanwhile, the destruction of the dam at the North-Crimean Channel caused damage to Ukraine valued at a minimum of \$75,512,714 USD.

2

Crimea is used as a base for establishing the occupying regime in Kherson region

The Russian Federation continues to carry out its offensive operations to expand its occupation of Ukrainian territory by involving humanitarian, administrative, financial and logistical capacity of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol.

Apparently, the Russian Federation considered the south of Ukraine as a potential collaboration region, which is why immediately after the start of the occupation, it began to propose to local officials to go over to its side. However, having met mass refusals and resistance, it resorted to intimidation of some current and former Ukrainian officials in the Kherson region and the use of a personnel reserve formed previously in occupied Crimea. These are Ukrainian ex-officials who ended up in the peninsula under various circumstances. Thus, we see that Crimea is also used as an operational personnel reserve to fill the administrative positions of the occupying administrations in the newly occupied territories of southern Ukraine in order to create the appearance of pro-Russian support.

The so-called “head” of Crimea, Aksyonov, has stated that the so-called “government of the Republic of Crimea” is ready to provide all necessary support in organizing the process of issuing Russian passports to residents of the Kherson and Zaporizhzhya regions.

The signals of Ukrainian television and radio broadcasters, internet and mobile connection have been blocked, and Russian channels are relayed on their frequencies from equipment located in Crimea. After 2014, Ukraine cut off the cables that went from the mainland of Ukraine to Crimea, but the occupation administration of the Russian Federation restored these channels and now uses them to spread its agenda while blocking Ukrainian TV, radio, mobile communications and the Internet in the Kherson region.

We are aware of the allocation of additional funds to occupied Crimea from the federal budget of the Russian Federation for «social needs», «infrastructure» and «education», but in fact, these funds are used to finance the occupation of the Kherson region.

In addition, occupied Crimea is involved in propaganda activities. Ukrainian teachers from the Kherson region are to be “retrained” in Crimea in order to prepare them for work in the temporarily occupied territories, according to so-called Russian standards. And teachers from occupied Crimea are to be sent to work in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine.

Looting of Ukrainian grain via closed Crimean ports

Russia is using the temporarily occupied Autonomous Republic of Crimea and Sevastopol as a hub for the transportation and further sale of goods looted on the mainland Ukraine, especially agricultural products.

In April and May, 2022, Ukrainian law enforcement agencies recorded Russian-flagged vessels transporting grain presumably stolen from the Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions to third countries through Crimean seaports closed since 2014. As of the end of June, 2022, Ukraine is investigating possible involvement of companies from Syria and Türkiye which have allegedly bought Ukrainian grain that was illegally exported by the Russian Federation.

According to the Ukrainian Embassy in Türkiye, several Russian vessels are exporting looted grain (with their radars turned off), namely the

cargo ships “Nadezhda”, “Phenicia”, “Sormovskiy”, “Viera” and “Mikhail Nenashev” as well as others.

With the radars off, they approach the berth of the largest grain terminal in Crimea – “Avlita”. From time to time, Syrian and Russian ships have appeared near the grain terminal and then sailed bound for either Syria or Türkiye. The Russian occupying administration forged shipping documents in order to «clean up» and to legitimize the stolen grain being transported.

President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy in his address on May 30 reported that “the occupiers have already stolen at least half a million tons of grain and are looking for ways to sell them somewhere.”

At the end of May 2022, the occupying authority of Crimea boasted that the flow of trucks had increased from the Kherson region towards the occupying peninsula. Also the occupying authority announced that “work has begun on expanding checkpoints from the Kherson and Zaporizhzhya regions”. Therefore, we may expect that the flow of stolen Ukrainian grain via the Crimean ports will continue to increase.

Russia steals, among other commodities, the grain that Ukraine would be sending for export to Africa, Asia and European countries. In the meantime, the majority of reserves remain in warehouses in Ukrainian seaports blocked by the Russian military.

Currently, the Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine is conducting an investigation of the above-mentioned allegations (in particular, as a possible war crime as well as a violation of the rules of entry and exit the country), but under the current conditions, as Ukraine cannot engage with the violators, it has addressed Türkiye through diplomatic channels whilst the Ukrainian Prosecutor’s Office has requested international legal assistance from colleagues in Türkiye.

On July 3, Türkiye arrested the Russian dry cargo ship transporting grain, which Ukraine considers stolen. Thus Türkiye is already taking certain steps, for which we are grateful, and we hope that this case, as well in the case of other ships, will be brought to a logical conclusion.

The stealing of grain is a serious violation of international humanitarian law. Under the conditions of armed conflict, international humanitarian law imposes an obligation on the occupying state, that is, the Russian Federation, to ensure normal conditions for the life of the civilian population in the occupied territory. This concerns the provision of basic needs: food, drinking water, sanitary and hygienic conditions. Stealing food and raw materials constitutes not only a plundering of national resources, but can also lead to starvation, which is a prohibited method of warfare and a war crime.

Southern Ukrainian regions were serving as a breadbasket not only for Ukraine, but also for other regions. But to date, a significant part of Ukraine’s agricultural land (over 1900 thousand hectares in total) already requires demining. As Ukraine seeks to liberate the territories occupied by Russian troops, this area will only increase. Given the complexity of the demining process, the resumption of grain cultivation in the Kherson, Mykolaiv and Zaporizhzhya regions may take more than one year. This, in turn, will lead to a future deficit of agricultural products.

Crimea is used as a base for the forced displacement of Ukrainian citizens

The Russian Federation has created a humanitarian crisis and causes terror in the newly occupied territories of the Kherson and Zaporizhzhya regions through constant shelling of these territories. Thus, Russia has created conditions under which persons who have found themselves in the zone of active hostilities cannot leave in any direction other than the territory temporarily occupied by Russia, in particular, occupied Crimea.

It's difficult to estimate the number of Ukrainians who have found their way to occupied Crimea since February 24, as the only statistics available come from the occupying authorities. Thus, based on their statements, as of mid-May, almost 154,000 Ukrainians had crossed the administrative borderline into occupied Crimea, including from the occupied territories of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions.

These Ukrainian citizens can be divided into the following categories:

- ▶ *Those who were forced to go (or were displaced) to occupied Crimea (or pass through it) because of the humanitarian crisis caused by Russia's invasion and recent occupation of territories in southern Ukraine.* Some of the displaced Ukrainians had their Ukrainian passports confiscated when crossing the administrative border and were issued so-called "temporary residence permits". Due to the high quantity of illegally displaced citizens of Ukraine to the territory of Crimea, the occupying "Ministry of Emergency Situations" asked the "authorities" to exclude Crimea from the list of regions where displaced citizens can be accommodated, in order to "free hotels for tourists". Ukrainians are to be sent to other regions, mainly to Bashkortostan and Udmurtia. At the same time, there are provisions to grant those people Russian citizenship rather than providing them some status envisioning social guarantees and payments. On May 25 Putin signed a decree on simplifying the procedure for granting Russian citizenship to residents of Ukraine's Zaporizhia and Kherson oblasts.
- ▶ *Children that were unlawfully transferred from the recently occupied territories to the occupied Crimea or through it to Russia.* As with the number of Ukrainians arriving in occupied Crimea, it is difficult to say how many children are involved and how many have been taken deeper into Russia. All we have is fragmentary information and news reports about groups of children taken to the occupied Crimea. One thing is for certain: occupied Crimea is being used as a hub for the unlawful transfer of thousands of Ukrainian children, some of whom – orphans and children deprived of parental care – were essentially kidnapped. According to Darya Gerasymchuk, the Adviser-Commissioner of the President of Ukraine for Children's Rights and Child Rehabilitation, as of June 1, "over 234,000 children crossed the border to Russia and Russian-occupied territories." As for information from occupied Crimea, on May 14, the occupational "Health Ministry of the Republic of Crimea" reported on social media that children from Zaporizhia Oblast had been brought to the Republican Children's Hospital in Simferopol. At the same time, "volunteer organizations" controlled by the Crimean occupational authorities have reported transfers of seriously ill Ukrainian children.

The situation with orphans and children deprived of parental care is even more difficult. The occupying administration imposes Russian citizenship on them as well. On May 30, Vladimir Putin issued a special decree on a simplified procedure for granting Russian citizenship to orphans from Ukraine, in particular those from the temporarily occupied territories of Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhia and Kherson oblasts. This decree also applies to children that end up in the occupied Crimea.

- *Hostages, including activists, Russian-Ukrainian war veterans, local government officials and representatives of the Crimean Tatar people who were brought to occupied Crimea from the recently occupied territories in southern Ukraine as hostages.* According to the Kherson regional Prosecutor's Office, as of July 1,431 people disappeared or were abducted in Kherson region alone since the invasion began. According to investigators, 269 people have been released and 162 remain in captivity. These are just the cases that have been confirmed. The Mission's sources suggest that at least 600 Ukrainians are being unlawfully held in places of detention in Kherson Oblast.

Some of these people are taken to occupied Crimea, of which most are held in Simferopol and Sevastopol. In Sevastopol, according to one of the victims who is quoted below, people are held in barracks in one of the universities with "bars simply welded to windows". Several sources have told the Mission that as of May 2, Ukrainian POWs and abducted activists from Kherson Oblast are being held at Simferopol pre-trial detention center №1.

Indigenous Crimean Tatars are persecuted in the Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions as well. Searches are conducted of their houses, and some are abducted and transferred to Kherson, where they are charged with membership in the Noman Chelebidzhykhan Battalion. The Mission's database currently contains 11 cases of Crimean Tatars imprisoned on these charges. Four of them were detained in Kherson Oblast after the start of the all-out invasion and taken to occupied Crimea (Rustem Guguryk, Arsen Ibraimov, Rustem Osmanov and Ayder Umerov). Brothers Edem Asanov and Refat Asanov were also detained but have yet to be charged. Ruslan Abdurakhmanov was detained for participating in the organization Asker, members of which took part in a civic blockade of occupied Crimea.

The persecution of Crimean Tatars in the recently occupied southern Ukrainian territories began as soon as Russian troops set foot there. To quote the statement of the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar People on April 11, "Just as in occupied Crimea since February 2014, the Russian occupiers are systematically persecuting the indigenous Crimean Tatar people in the settlements of Kherson and Zaporizhia regions."

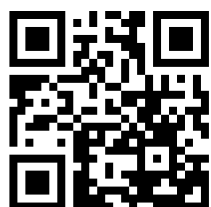
Most of the activists that are transferred from Kherson to Crimea are brutally tortured, and some of them die. We are aware of at least one such case, reported by the Media Initiative for Human Rights.



After February 24, Kherson resident Denys Myronov joined the Kherson TDF. Once the city was occupied and armed resistance became impossible, he began volunteering and passing on information about Russian troop activity to the Ukrainian Army. Denys was eventually detained and held in a basement where he was tortured: as a result, one of his broken ribs pierced a lung. Soon after he was transferred to occupied Sevastopol. After a medical examination Denys was hospitalized. He died from his injuries.

► *POWs and members of Ukraine's Territorial Defense Force (henceforth – TDF).*

According to our sources, POWs may be held in Simferopol pre-trial detention center №1 and in Sevastopol. These transfers may be done for logistical reasons, as in the case of a Ukrainian soldier who was transferred from the occupied territory of the ORDLO (certain areas of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts) to Russia and then to occupied Crimea, most likely because of a lack of doctors able to provide medical support in ORDLO.



More information may be found in the report “Forced displacement of Ukrainian citizens from newly conquered territories and combat zones to the occupied Crimea” prepared by the Mission: <https://cutt.ly/ALqM3xG>

Anti-war actions and statements in the occupied territories

Since February 24, 2022, Russia's new invasion of Ukraine sparked a wave of protests and statements in occupied Crimea. These are not mass events but individual initiatives.

Most of the public protests swept through occupied Crimea immediately after February 24, although isolated displays of solidarity with the mainland are still taking place all over the Crimean peninsula: Simferopol, Yalta, Sevastopol, Kerch, Feodosia, Sudak and suburbs, Bilogirsk, Dzhankoy, Yevpatoriia, Alushta and suburbs, Saky, and Simeiz.

The Mission has documented the following formats of protests and anti-war statements: solitary protests, videos, posts on social media and private messages, anti-war posters in public places, solitary street actions, statements made in everyday situations or private conversations that were likely reported by third parties, destruction of Russian propaganda, dissemination of printed material condemning the actions of Russian troops in Ukraine, and direct action against supporters of the war.

Most people responsible for these actions face administrative penalties, and some — criminal charges. They are also subjected to harassment by security services and “unidentified persons”. Additionally, there is a new trend of publishing the «apologies» of activists, which are recorded on video and then spread on the internet by the occupying law enforcement (we have observed at least 3 cases in occupied Crimea in May-July 2022) as well as in the newly occupied southern territories in Kherson region.

The majority are held liable under an article forbidding public actions aimed at discrediting the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation. The article was introduced into Russian legislation on March 4, 2022. It is directly tied to Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine and is designed to facilitate the punishment of anyone who speaks out against the invasion, including those in the occupied territories. According to the initiative “Crimean Process”, 76 offenses were reported on the peninsula under this article between March 4 and May 31.

In addition, Crimean activists face criminal charges for “desecrating the bodies of the dead and their burials”, “spreading of fake news”, vandalism, intentional destruction or damage to property, and terrorism.

In a recent case, activist and artist Bohdan Azizov (Ziza) faces prosecution under 3 articles of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation .



Bohdan Ziza, Source: Bohdan Ziza's Instagram page. Screenshot from the video of Bogdan's confession published by the occupying law enforcement authorities

On May 16, 2022, Bohdan Azizov (Ziza) poured yellow and blue paint on the door and facade of the occupying city administration building in Yevpatoria and threw a Molotov cocktail into the building as a protest against Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The same day he was arrested by occupying law enforcement agencies. Bohdan's close friends and relatives suspect he was tortured and threatened, which resulted in the recording of the so-called video confession published by the local propagandist media. He was fined under article 20.3.3 Code of Administrative Offenses of the Russian Federation and charged with intentional destruction or damage to property, terrorism and vandalism.



Occupying City council of Evpatoria after Bohdan Ziza's action, Source: Telegram channel "Crimean Wind".

In the first weeks of the Russian Federation's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, anti-war protests and rallies were constantly held in the Kherson region, but now, due to Russia's terrorizing of the civilian population and provoking of a humanitarian crisis, these actions continue in more guerilla forms — including the spreading of leaflets and killing of representatives of the occupying forces.



You can find more information in the report “Persecution for anti-war statements and protests in the temporarily occupied territory of Crimea after the start of Russia’s full-scale military aggression against Ukraine” prepared by the Mission. Check out the link below:

<https://cutt.ly/SK7Sr5R>

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Political persecutions in occupied Crimea are ongoing. Crimean Tatar people are targeted

In addition to cases against the instances of those who protest against the war, citizens of Ukraine are held in custody, who were detained prior to the full-scale invasion. They are persecuted for political reasons. According to the data of the Mission of the President of Ukraine in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, as of June 15, 2022, 138 Ukrainian citizens of Crimean origin were imprisoned for political motives and were detained by Russia either in the territory of the occupied peninsula or were illegally transferred to the territory of the Russian Federation. Of these 138, 105 are Crimean Tatars.

Ukrainian consulates suspended their operation in the Russian Federation due to the outbreak of full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation into the territory of Ukraine, and for this reason they cannot attend court hearings, which in turn deprives our citizens of the opportunity to receive proper representation and protection.



Nariman Dzelyal at the opening of the Office of the Crimean Platform. Nariman Dzhelel in the Russian-controlled Simferopol court on September 6, 2021, Source: Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

The scale of the political persecutions is obvious from looking at the sentences issued in such cases starting from September, 2021. 24 Ukrainian citizens were sentenced, almost all of them Crimean Tatars: Seytumer Seytumerov (17 years in a strict regime colony), Osman Seytumerov (14 years in a strict regime colony), Rustem Seytmemetov (13 years in a strict regime colony), Amet Suleymanov (12 years in a strict regime colony), Vladyslav Yesypenko (6 years in a penal colony), Riza Izzetov (19 years in a strict regime colony), Remza Bekirov (19 years in a strict regime colony), Raim Aivazov (17 years in a strict regime colony), Shaban Umerov (18 years in a strict regime colony), Farkhod Bazarov (15 years in a strict regime colony), Akim Bekirov (14 years in a strict regime colony), Seitveli Seytabdiev (14 years in a strict regime colony), Rustem Seythalilov (14 years in a strict regime colony), Eskender Suleymanov (15 years in a strict regime colony), Asan Yanikov (15 years in a strict regime colony), Tymur Yalkabov (17 years in a strict regime colony), Lenur Seydametov (13 years in a strict regime colony), Emil Ziyadinov (17 years in a strict regime colony), Mystafa Dzhemilev (2 years conditionally), Tofik Abdulhaziev (12 years in a strict regime colony), Vladlen Abdulkadyrov (12 years in a strict regime colony), Izzet Abdullaiev (12 years in a strict regime colony), Medzhyt Abdurahmanov (12 years in a strict regime colony), Bilial Adilov (14 years in a strict regime colony).

One of the most remarkable cases is that of Ukrainian citizen and Crimean Tatar people representative Nariman Dzhelyalov, a Ukrainian Crimean Tatar politician, lecturer, political scientist, journalist and the Deputy Head of the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar people. He was detained in September 2022 on suspicion of blowing up a gas pipeline. The Mission believes that the real reason for detention was his participation in the Summit of the Crimea Platform in August 2021. He was the only representative from the temporarily occupied Crimea who openly participated, and ten days after the summit, he was arrested. Also, the occupying prosecutors included in the materials of his case file the speech of Nariman Dzhelyalov prepared for the Summit of the Crimea Platform as proof of his guilt.

Additionally, as of now, 14 Crimean journalists, including civil journalists and bloggers, are detained, and some are already serving sentences. Most of them are Crimean Tatars, namely, Osman Arifmemetov, Marlen (Suleiman) Asanov, Asan Akhtemov, Remzi Bekirov, Oleksii Bessarabov, Dmytro Styblikov, Iryna Danilovych, Vladyslav Yesypenko, Tymur Ibrahimov, Server Mustafayev, Seyran Saliev, Amet Suleymanov, Ruslan Suleymanov, and Rustem Sheikhaliev. Most of them are facing charges of terrorism, although they did not commit and did not plan any violent acts.

Also, on May 26, 2022, independent Crimean Tatar lawyers Nazim Sheikhmambetov, Aider Azamatov and Emine Avamileva were arrested, whilst Edem Samedlyayev was fined. From the very beginning of the occupation of Crimea and Sevastopol, they have been providing legal assistance to the victims of politically motivated persecution by the occupying administration. It is not the first time independent Crimean lawyers have been arrested, but it is the first case of a mass arrest of defenders.

Intensification of propaganda: mass activities, TV and education

Propaganda activities are regularly carried out in Crimea to justify Russia's military aggression against Ukraine and distort events taking place in mainland Ukraine.

Thus, according to reports from Ukrainians living in Crimea, school administrations are forcing staff to spread propaganda among children to justify the war against Ukraine. Teachers are told to «communicate the reasons and goals of the special military operation to children competently and accurately», to «make videos in support of the army and the president», etc. Teachers are also required to line up children in corridors or outside and make them sing the Russian national anthem and to hold special classes for teaching children about «war heroes». On the «Odnoklassniki» social network, they are expected to «like» videos and posts that support the so-called «special operation» and anything related to it. Failure to comply results in administrative penalties. Furthermore, everyone is forced to give at least 1,000 rubles for humanitarian aid sent to the new temporarily occupied territories, namely, to Kherson Oblast.

According to people involved in the educational process, video and audio surveillance devices are being installed in Crimean Tatar classrooms. Principals or their deputies personally monitor special classes for Crimean Tatars to make sure that the children are being taught all about «patriotism» and «exploits of the new heroes», that they know the Russian anthem by heart, etc. Children are made to participate in flash mobs titled «I'm not ashamed to be Russian», to memorize and recite a poem, to make a video and post it on social media. At teachers' meetings, principals explain that this is the «ideology of the state» and that it is the teachers' duty to communicate it to the children.

Propaganda lessons, so called “lessons of modern Russian history”, are mandatory in Crimean schools, in particular, with the aim of justifying aggression against Ukraine and the mass shelling of Ukrainian cities. The Institute for Educational Strategy of the Russian Academy of Education has published a guide for the training module “Introduction to the Recent History of Russia”, approved by the educational and methodological association for general education.

As well, a new version of “the latest history of Russia” has already been sent to teachers, to be taught to ninth-grade schoolchildren.

Among other themes, those course programs include “the reunification of Crimea with Russia” and recognition by the Kremlin of the “DPR” and “LPR”.

«Антироссийский путь» Украины

- механічне копіювання зарубіжного досвіду
- посилення антиросійської риторики
- неконтрольована робота зарубіжних НКО
- російська мова на Україні оголошена вне закона
- росіян виключено зі списку корінних народів
- переписані підручники
- Росія оголошена ворогом
- російськомовні телеканали заборонені
- знищуються пам'ятники і інші символи, сполучаючі Україну з Росією
- заборона георгіївських ленточек
- репресії проти всіх, хто виступав за незалежність і нейтралітет України
- будівництво баз НАТО
- боротьба з Українською православною церквою Московського патріархату



One of the new school programs includes a presentation called “My country”. The slide above is titled “Ukraine’s anti-Russian path”. Among its points is Ukraine’s “anti-Russian steps” such as following foreign experience, the operation of foreign NGOs, the alleged outlawing of the Russian language (which is false), etc.

* Check the statistics (Ukrainians are unwilling to give up Crimea to the aggressor state)

According to a survey conducted by the Sociological Group «Rating» on March 12-13, the majority of Ukrainians believe that Ukraine should use every opportunity to return the occupied territories of Donbas (86%) and Crimea (80%). This is true for residents of all regions, and this figure is higher now than during the pre-war period. 56% of Ukrainians believe that the main goal of Russia’s invasion is the complete eradication of the Ukrainian people, and this opinion prevails in all regions of Ukraine. The rest believe that the goal is to occupy Ukraine and join it to Russia. Support for joining NATO has increased from a previous high of 68% to 76% over the past three months. Also, almost 90% of Ukrainians call for NATO to close the Ukrainian skies.

* The key requests from Crimean residents concern documentation with Ukrainian IDs and avoiding conscription to the Russian army

The Mission continues to receive appeals from residents of occupied Crimea. Among the key requests are issues related to crossing the border of third countries due to the problem of documentation (currently, the Mission together with the MFA are working to solve this problem), how to avoid conscription to the Russian armed forces as well as how to flee the Crimean peninsula.

About the Mission

The Mission of the President of Ukraine in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea (Mission) was established to facilitate the exercise of the President's powers in the ARC. After the beginning of the temporary occupation of Crimea by the Russian Federation in February 2014, the Mission started operating from Kherson. In 2019, the Mission opened an additional office in Kyiv to improve interaction and coordination with central executive bodies. The Mission is tasked with maintaining and ensuring political, social, informational, cultural and other ties with Ukrainian citizens living in the TOT; monitoring the observance of their rights and legitimate interests; studying socio-economic and political processes in the TOT; preparing relevant analytical materials and submitting them to the President for consideration, etc. In 2021, the Office of the Crimea Platform was established on the Mission's premises to ensure effective implementation by Ukraine of its commitments under the Crimea Platform. After the start of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022, the work of the Mission's Kherson offices was temporarily suspended. As for now, the Mission operates in Kyiv and continues to fulfill its duties. Currently the work of the Mission/Office is aimed at monitoring the situation on the territory of temporarily occupied Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, parts of Kherson and Zaporizhzhya region, maintaining connections with Ukrainian citizens in Crimea, coordination and cooperation with other State institutions as well as NGOs on issues related to protection of human rights of Ukrainian citizens in the occupied Crimea as well as informing the international community on the current situation in the peninsula.

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