

Report on violation of the norms of international humanitarian law and other human rights in the territory of Crimea in the period between February 24, 2024 and May 24, 2024

The following report is a result of collected and processed factual data such as documents, interviews, and observations regarding issues connected with adherence to the provisions of international humanitarian law concerning occupied territories. The geography of the research is the territory of the Crimean peninsula. Criteria for information search for the report were the provisions of the articles of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. The objective of the work is to find the main trends of how the hostilities affect the violation of the civilian population's rights as well as to document war crimes and other violations of the norms of international humanitarian law in the occupied territories during the active phase of the armed conflict.

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War crimes

1.1. Ill-treatment, tortures, and torments:

The prohibition of such activities aimed at civilian population is fundamental, unconditional, and is enshrined in art. 3, 5, 27, 31, 32, 147 of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War. Article 8 of the Rome Statute attributes such actions to war crimes.

Illegal placement in a psychiatric hospital is one of the forms of ill-treatment actively applied in Crimea towards arrested supporters of the religious and political organization 'Hizb-ut Tahrir'. In particular, the following facts were recorded during the reporting period:

- a) It became known on May 2 that, without any obvious medical indications, the political prisoner Aziz Azizov was sent to a psychiatric hospital in order to undergo a psychiatric examination in a hospital setting.
- b) Also, on May 2, the Kyivsky district court in Simferopol issued a ruling about sending Remzi Kurtnezirov to a psychiatric examination. Due to the fact that the hospital is busy, he will be sent to a psychiatric hospital for a psychiatric examination in mid-July.
- c) It became known on May 24 that the Kyivsky district court in Simferopol issued a ruling about sending Enver Khalillayev, the activist Arsen Kashka, and Vakhid Mustafayev - the imam of a mosque in the village of Lobanovo to a psychiatric examination. According to the attorney, the court did not have any legal grounds for doing this and it relied only on an FSB investigator's opinion.

1.2. Taking of hostages and abductions:

The prohibition of taking civilian hostages in an occupied territory is fundamental, unconditional, and is enshrined in art. 34 and 147 of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War. Article 8 of the Rome Statute attributes these kinds of actions (illegal imprisonment and taking of hostages) to war crimes.

Situation with civilian hostages

Since the first months of the full-scale invasion, abductions were recorded *en masse* in the captured territories. Part of the abductees were killed or detained in the region of abduction. The other part were transferred to Crimea where they were initially kept in isolation in the territory of detention unit #1 in Simferopol and later transferred to new detention unit

#2. These people are in complete isolation from the outside world, without any connection with their families and often without any legal status.

'Trade' established during the reporting period that at least 119 civilians transferred from the occupied territories of Kherson and Zaporozhye regions are kept in detention unit #2. This number includes 31 persons charged with different felonies, and 1 person in the status of 'resisted the conduct of the special military operation'. The official bodies of the occupying power do not provide any information about the reason why at least 87 persons are kept in detention. In such cases, they often deny the fact that these people are kept in detention units, as it [has happened](#) for almost two years to Aleksandr Babich – mayor of the city Golaya Pristan, Kherson region.

The status of 'resisted the conduct of the special military operation' deserves special attention. The term 'resistance to the conduct of the special military operation' was not found in public space, neither was the order of treating persons suspected of or charged with such actions. Also, the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War states that if the occupying power has a necessity to take security measures against civilian persons due to imperative security reasons, the biggest that it can undertake is to force them to live in a certain place or intern them. Considering the rights attached to interned persons, keeping civilian persons from the occupied territories without any indictment, in the incommunicado regime in detention unit #2 is neither forcible placement nor internment.

Also, harsh conditions of keeping detainees in this unit, which Crimean convicts told their attorneys about, must be mentioned: detainees stay on their feet all day. They are prohibited to sit or lie down since 6 a.m. till 10 p.m. Surveillance camera works 24 hours a day and the bright lights are on inside the cells. Doing sport is only allowed on a special ground and with the detention unit staff's permission. Washing is once a week and lasts 3 minutes, sometimes in cold water. Walking in the corridors of the detention unit is allowed in bent position only. All belongings are taken away from the detainees, they are forced to sing the Russian anthem every day.

Forced abductions

a) On April 8, 2024, Ali Emirov, born 1987, resident of Tsvetochnoe village, Belogorsk district, was abducted on the 20th km of the Simferopol – Kerch highway. Emirov's car was later found at a 'TES' gas station near Zuya village. His whereabouts were unknown for two days. FSB officers conducted a search in his house on April 11. Since this date he has been formally detained on the suspicion of storage of a self-made explosive. Emirov refused from a lawyer whom his family had hired for him..

It is noteworthy that several days similarly passed between the abductions and the official detentions in the cases of journalists Vladislav Yesipenko (March 2021) and Irina Danilovich (April 2022). In both cases, they later claimed about tortures that had been applied to them and falsifications of their criminal cases in which explosive had been planted at them. In both cases, the FSB claimed that these people had been in the FSB building voluntarily and willfully prior to being officially detained.

b) On March 27, unidentified FSB officers conducted a search and confiscation of documents in three addresses in Lenino village. Afterwards, they drove away 3 women – Ablyazova E. U., Gayday L. S., and Pavlenko T. N. - in an unknown direction. When this report was being prepared, the families of the women did not know about their whereabouts or legal status. The FSB say to the women's families that they are not involved in the abductions.

c) There is still no information about the fate of Farkhad Soliyev and Server Aliyev who were abducted by FSB officers on November 3, 2023, as well as about Ismail Shemshedinov who was driven away in an unknown direction by FSB officers after a search on January 26, 2024. The attorneys who are in search of these people still have no information about their procedural statuses and whereabouts.

1.3. Prohibition of coercion to military service in the occupying power's armed forces and propaganda of military service

Article 51 of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War enshrines that the occupying power cannot force civilians in the occupied territory to serve in its armed forces. Pressure or propaganda in favour of voluntary conscription to the army and sending persons to work outside the occupied territory where civilians stay are also prohibited. Article 8 of the Rome Statute attributes to the war crimes 'compelling the nationals of a hostile party to take part in the operations of war directed against their own country'.

During the reporting period, the human rights defending initiative 'Irade' recorded numerous facts (including street agitation stalls) of propaganda of voluntary conscription to the Russian army; using of mobilized citizens from the occupied territory in the hostilities against their own country.

1) Coercion to military service in the occupying power's armed forces

On April 1, 2024, a new spring conscription campaign began in Crimea, its objective was to conscript about 2500 Crimeans to the armed forces of the Russian Federation. One of coercive measures of service in the occupying army is criminal accountability for draft evaders, it is widely applied to the civilian population in the occupied territory. During the reporting period, at least 17 criminal cases under art. 328 of the Russian criminal code 'Draft evasion' were transferred to courts (there were 11 similar cases last year). This number demonstrates the overall coverage of the whole occupied territory by the coercive system, as well as the scale of the coercive measures aimed at conscription for the Russian army.

2) Using residents of the occupied territory in the hostilities against their own country

During the reporting period, it became known from open sources about the deaths of at least 11 Crimeans mobilized after the beginning of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine. In all the cases, it has been established that they were born and resided in Crimea permanently,

hence being civilian persons in the occupied territory before mobilization. In total, it became known about the deaths of at least 45 residents of Crimea in the combat zone within 3 months.

At the same time, the 'Irade' experts do not confirm the information which appeared in the Ukrainian media space that a mass mobilization campaign had started in Crimea since April 20.

3) Propaganda of military service in the occupying power's army

During the reporting period, propaganda of voluntary conscription to the Russian army had a total character in the whole territory of Crimea, also with the use of the local authorities' resource.

The following facts were the most illustrative:

- meetings with Russian combatants are regularly held for 11-graders in the schools of Simferopol to advertise signing a contract after leaving school or entering military schools



- meetings with combatants are held in cultural centers and libraries, they are also involved in educational events such as 'Talks about Important Things'
- advertisements of contract military service in the Russian army are constantly broadcast through loudspeakers in public places
- mobile units which select people for contract service in the Russian army were organized in Simferopol, Sevastopol, Saki, Sovetskoe, and Nizhnegorskoe.
- Reels containing calls for contract service are regularly shown on screens in the

- public transport in Simferopol. Posters with contact information about centers of application for contract service are placed in the public transport in Sevastopol.
- Significant amount of propaganda of contract service in the Russian army also oriented at Crimean Tatar viewers is seen on Russia-controlled media (especially TV), social media, and on the local authorities' websites.

1.4. Willfully causing great suffering or serious injury to health

According to art. 76 of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, convicted civilians shall receive the medical attention required by their state of health. Article 8 of the Rome Statute attributes willfully causing great suffering or serious injury to body or health to war crimes.

Since the occupation of Crimea began, the problem of providing medical service in prisons has been poignant and it was also acknowledged by the officials of the occupying power. The situation has aggravated even more since the beginning of the full-scale invasion. During the reporting period, the following facts about residents transferred from Crimea to prisons in the territory of Russia were recorded in the territory of Crimea:

a) On March 22, the Crimean Tatar activist Tofik Abdulgazyev, who was in critical health condition, was transferred from the prison in Verkhneuralsk, Chelyabinsk region. He was put in prison tuberculosis hospital #3 in Chelyabinsk where he was placed in intensive care two weeks later. Subsequently, he was diagnosed with eight illnesses with a various degree of severity and danger. The presence of such illnesses as bilateral pneumonia and hydrothorax in the diagnosis can indicate the absence of efficient treatment during a certain period of time which resulted in the deterioration of the political prisoner's health to the critical level. As the representatives of 'Irade' found, Abdulgazyev's health condition is estimated as preterminal, the prison administration is preparing documents about his release, which is being done solely to demonstrate lower statistics of deaths in places of detention.

b) On April 29, 2024, Iryna Danilovich claimed to the court of of cassation that she refused to participate in the case hearings due to her poor health condition. She explained that she is not provided with any medical treatment in prison, so she suffers from headaches and earaches all the time, and participation in the trial via videoconferencing where she struggles to hear is 'like a torture' to her. As the 'Irade' representatives specified, after medicines were stopped to be provided to her, which became known on February 5, 2024, the prison administration still keeps depriving Danilovich, who suffers from sensorineural hearing loss, of necessary medicines.

c) On April 12, it became known that the Crimean political prisoner Asan Yanikov did not receive any medical aid in the prison of the city of Vladimir after the prison staff had hit his head on the concrete floor twice. His face was slashed to blood and he had a headache, however, a medical worker in the prison examined his feet and claimed that everything was alright with him. She ignored his complaints of the headache and the open wound.

d) In March 2024, the Frunze district court in Vladimir refused to release the Crimean political prisoner Amet Suleymanov from prison, despite the fact that his illnesses are

included in the list of those incompatible with detention conditions. As his wife says, Suleymanov's health condition continues to worsen.

e) On May 13, the wife of the political prisoner Emil Ziyadinov informed that she had earlier reached a deal with a doctor from Lipetsk that a dental operation would be done to her husband in order to install a dental implant, however, the doctor never visited the prison 4 months later. Ziyadinov still suffers from toothaches, and, according to his wife, from unusually low arterial pressure. The paramedic refuses to conduct medical testing claiming that he has no problems with his health.

f) On March 19, it became known that the political prisoner Server Zekiryayev addressed the prison administration multiple times with complaints of vomiting, dizziness and breathing problems, but all his complaints were ignored, he was neither examined nor appointed any treatment.

1.5. Illegal deportation or transfer

According to the provisions of art. 66 of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, the occupying power may hand over the accused to its properly constituted, non-political military courts, on condition that the said courts sit in the occupied country. Article 49 of the Geneva Convention prohibits forcible transfers, regardless of the motive, as well as deportation of civilians from the occupied territory to the territory of the occupying power. This norm is complemented by article 76 which defines that the accused civilians shall be detained in the occupied country, and if convicted they shall serve their sentence therein. Actions aimed at transferring the population, according to art. 8 of the Rome Statute, are attributed to the category of war crimes.

1. Trials against Crimeans in courts located in the territory of Russia

Trials against supporters of the religious and political association 'Hizb-ut Tahrir' who are charged with terrorism have been held at a significant distance from the occupied territory – in Rostov-on-Don for a long period of time, and appeals are heard in Moscow region. A similar practice has been common for residents from the newly occupied territories accused of art. 361 of the Russian criminal code 'Act of international terrorism' since the full-scale invasion began.

The following events which have signs of the violation mentioned above were recorded:

a) On May 2, a trial against 8 persons accused of preparation of a terrorist act and storage of explosives began in the Southern district court. Some of the defendants had earlier resided in the newly occupied territories, such as citizen Petranov from Mariupol, however, at least one defendant – Kirill Barannik - is a resident of Crimea and is persecuted by the court outside the occupied territory.

б) On March 22, the military court of appeal in the city of Vlasikha, Moscow region, left the ruling of the Southern district military court in Rostov-on-Don about the extension of restraint measure to 5 Crimean Tatars Ayder Asanov, Leman Zekeryayev, Osman Abdurazakov, and Refat Seydametov unchanged, the copies of the appeal were not provided at all (their receipts are absent from the case materials), the defendant Enver Krosh also denies

receiving a copy of the document.

c) On May 2, the City court in Moscow extended the arrest to the Crimean Leniye Umerova accused of espionage to three more months. She is detained in the FSB prison 'Lefortovo'.

2. Forcible transfer of convicts in order to serve the sentence in the territory of Russia

The occupying power violates the requirements of the Geneva Convention on detention of residents of occupied territories systemically and without exceptions. During the reporting period, the following violations of the norm were recorded:

a) On April 18, the Crimean political prisoner Rustem Sheykhaliyev was transferred to a detention unit in Krasnoyarsk; he was transferred to a prison in the city of Yeniseysk, Krasnoyarsk krai, on April 25. On March 18, 2024, Sheykhaliyev was sent to this prison from a detention unit in Novochoerkassk (Rostov region) where he had been detained since 2019.

b) On May 8, it became known that the civil journalist and activist Osman Arifmemetov was transferred to a prison in the city of Minusinsk in Krasnoyarsk krai. On March 18, 2024, Arifmemetov was sent to this prison from a detention unit in Novochoerkassk (Rostov region) where he had been detained since 2019.

c) On April 22, it became known that the Crimean civil journalist Ruslan Suleymanov was transferred to a prison in Verkhneuralsk, Chelyabinsk region. On March 18, 2024, Suleymanov was sent to this prison from a detention unit in Novochoerkassk (Rostov region) where he had been detained since 2019.

d) On April 1, it became known that the Crimean political prisoner Zekirya Muratov was transferred from a prison in Balashov, Saratov region, to penal colony #5 in Nizhni Novgorod to serve his sentence.

e) On February 14, the Crimean political prisoner Eskender Abdulganiyev arrived in a penal colony in the city of Yurga, Kemerovo region, where he was immediately put in a punishment cell.

f) On March 1, it became known that the Crimean political prisoner Rustem Murasov was transferred to Perm, and he is most likely to be transferred to a prison in the city of Vladimir from there. Earlier, he was incarcerated in the detention unit in Novochoerkassk, Rostov region.

1.6. Deprivation of the right to fair and regular trial

Article 3 of the Geneva Convention unconditionally prohibits the passing of sentences and the carrying out of executions without previous judgment pronounced by a regularly constituted court, affording all the judicial guarantees which are recognized as indispensable by civilized peoples. Article 5 guarantees persons detained as spies or saboteurs the right to fair and regular trial, article 70 says that the occupying power cannot arrest, persecute or

convict civilians for acts committed or for opinions expressed before the occupation. Article 147 attributes deprivation of civilians of their right to impartial and regular trial to gross violations. Article 6 of the ECHR guarantees access to fair trial to everyone and enlists the guarantees accepted in the civilized world as necessary. Article 8 of the Rome Statute attributes willful deprivation of a protected person of their right to fair and regular trial to war crimes.

Within the context of these provisions, the following 3 categories of cases which have signs of violations of current international norms draw attention:

1) persons suspected of espionage, sabotage and participation in illegal military formations are deprived of the right to fair and regular trial

1.1) During the reporting period, information about 10 detentions of persons charged with ties with Ukrainian special services or military formations were recorded in Crimea. They include: 2 persons suspected of espionage, 7 persons suspected of sabotage and terrorist activity, one more case – charges with participation in the illegal military unit named after Noman Chelebidzhikhan. In neither of the cases, the official websites of the courts provided information about hearings on selecting a measure of restraint for these persons. As well as there was no public information about trials connected with these detentions¹.

This fact alone deprives the detainees suspected of espionage and sabotage of the guarantees of regular trial. Apart from that, due to the complete absence of publicity of the trial it is impossible to estimate other circumstances of hearing these cases – the independence and impartiality of the judges, the right to defense, interrogation of witnesses, etc.

The fact that twelve people from the Nazi association 'the White Suit' were detained, charges of whom in connection with the military conflict are intensified with claims of their alleged ties with the Armed Forces of Ukraine, the Main Intelligence Service's task to form a combat group, intentions to join the military units 'Azov' and 'Russian Voluntary Corps', draws special attention. It was impossible to establish the liability of the indictments or adherence to the norms of trial in the cases against these persons.

1.2) During the reporting period, 4 new trials in cases on high treason or confidential cooperation with a foreign state were recorded (all the cases are heard by judges who are biased towards Ukraine), as well as carrying out of at least 3 verdicts in cases which had been heard earlier. These include:

a) 2 verdicts concerned charges with high treason against unidentified persons (the information on the court website is hidden, the hearings were held in a closed mode, the verdict was pronounced in a closed mode, judge Natalya Kulinskaya, who is biased towards

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In situations when the publicity of the trial is unacceptable due to national security reasons, judgment shall be pronounced publicly. Art.6 ECHR

Ukraine, participated);

b) a verdict to Vladimir Tikhonov for storage of a self-made explosive device by the command of the Ukrainian special services (the hearings excluded the presence of listeners, the verdict was pronounced without listeners);

The closed mode of the trials deprives defendants accused of espionage, sabotage, and participation in the activity of illegal military formations of the right to regular trial, due to the absence of publicity and openness of trial. Also, the analysis of the list of the judges involved in administering justice in these cases often raises doubt in their impartiality and independence. Independence and impartiality of judicial bodies is one of guarantors of fair trial, which defendants are deprived of in some of the cases.

2) criminal persecutions for expressing opinions

2.1) During the reporting period, at least 3 detentions under the charges of crimes connected only with expressing own pro-Ukrainian beliefs were recorded:

a) On April 30, officers of the Counter-extremism center came to Sergey Yeryomenko, a resident of Simferopol, in order to issue a protocol on 'discrediting the Russian army'. During a search, two kilograms of artillery powder and fuses for it were found in his household.

b) On April 9, FSB officers detained an unidentified man, born 1972, who had publicly cried out anti-Russian and anti-governmental mottoes, including calls for extremism. Criminal proceedings under art. 280 of the Russian criminal code were initiated.

c) On March 12, it became known about detention of an unidentified man, born 1990, by FSB officers, he had called for violence against Russians on the internet. According to 'Irade', approval of killing Russian soldiers is meant here. Criminal proceedings under art. 280 of the Russian criminal code were initiated.

2.2) During the reporting period, at least 3 verdicts were carried out in criminal cases against Crimeans charged with different crimes exclusively for expressing their own pro-Ukrainian or anti-Russian beliefs:

a) On May 16, 2024, Nikolay Onuk, who had earlier been detained for placing Ukrainian symbols in public places in the territory of Crimea and alleged storage of an explosive, was convicted to 5 years of imprisonment by the Zheleznodorozhny district court in Simferopol. The trial and reading of the verdict were held in a closed mode.

b) On April 10, the Kirovskoe district court in Crimea convicted Dlyaver Salimov to one year of imprisonment, he was accused of threats of politically-motivated killing as he had threatened a gas station attendant at a gas station because of his cap with a 'Z' - a symbol of Russian military aggression. The trial and reading of the verdict were held in a closed mode, the judge had arrived from Russia and did not have any right to hear the process.



Дявер Салимов во время оглашения приговора

PHOTO: Dlavver Salimov during the announcement of the sentence

c) On February 27, the Supreme court of Crimea convicted Yevgeny Shved, a resident of Dzhankoy, to 2,5 years of imprisonment in a general regime colony for 'rehabilitation of Nazism' by spreading knowingly false data about the activity of the USSR in the period of World War II – for saying that veterans do not receive necessary social support. He was also accused of 'spreading data about the days of military glory which express blatant disrespect of the society' for his opinion that May 9 is 'a nasty pseudo-holiday'. It is noteworthy that after this opinion was posted, Yevgeny Shved disappeared and it became known only a month later that he was incarcerated in a detention unit.

Crimes against humanity

According to art. 7 of the Rome Statute, 'a crime against humanity' means acts when committed as of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population. The norm emphasizes that one of the indicators is multiple committing of the acts, against any civilians, initiated in order to pursue a state policy or assisting such policy.

2.1. Politically motivated persecution of a group or community

Article 27 of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War defines that the occupying power shall treat all civilians with the same consideration, without any adverse distinction based, in particular, on race, religion or political opinion. Paragraph h of the Rome Statute also attributes to war crimes persecution of any identified group or community on political, racial, national, ethnic, cultural, religious, gender or other motives which are recognized as unacceptable according to international law.

1) Administrative accountability for 'discrediting'

Since March 4, 2022, accountability for discrediting the Russian army has been introduced in

the occupied territory. It is regulated by article 20.3.3 of the Russian administrative offense code. However, the law enforcement bodies and courts of the occupying power interpret discrediting as a term that is wider than just undermining the authority and image of the Russian armed forces, they detain civilians for showing their sympathy towards Ukraine, using of Ukrainian language (including listening to music) or posting images of the Ukrainian flag. During the reporting period, at least 168 persons were detained in Crimea. As the experts say, the trials in most cases are held on the same day, informing in advance about hearings is mostly absent, the percentage of cancelled protocols or protocols to be returned is less than 1%.

2) ***Additional tools of punishment for 'discrediting'***

Along with formal persecution under art. 20.3.3 of the Russian administrative code, law enforcement officers often apply separate elements or the whole complex of additional repressive measures aimed at suppression of pro-Ukrainian sentiment among Crimeans. The following must be attributed to such measures:

- using unmotivated physical violence during detention of civilians
- conducting searches or confiscation of digital devices
- fabrication of additional violations (hooliganism, non-compliance with the police's legal requirements, demonstration of extremist symbols, etc.) with the aim of administrative arrest
- coercion to humiliating behaviour
- spreading personal data and videos of victims with self-humiliating behaviour on social media for non-judicial mobbing
- extortion of money under the pretext of voluntary help for the Russian army
- dismissal from work, expelling from school or interference with business.

The practice of complex work in small places of residence when several detentions are done on one day recorded in the previous period was not seen on this stage.

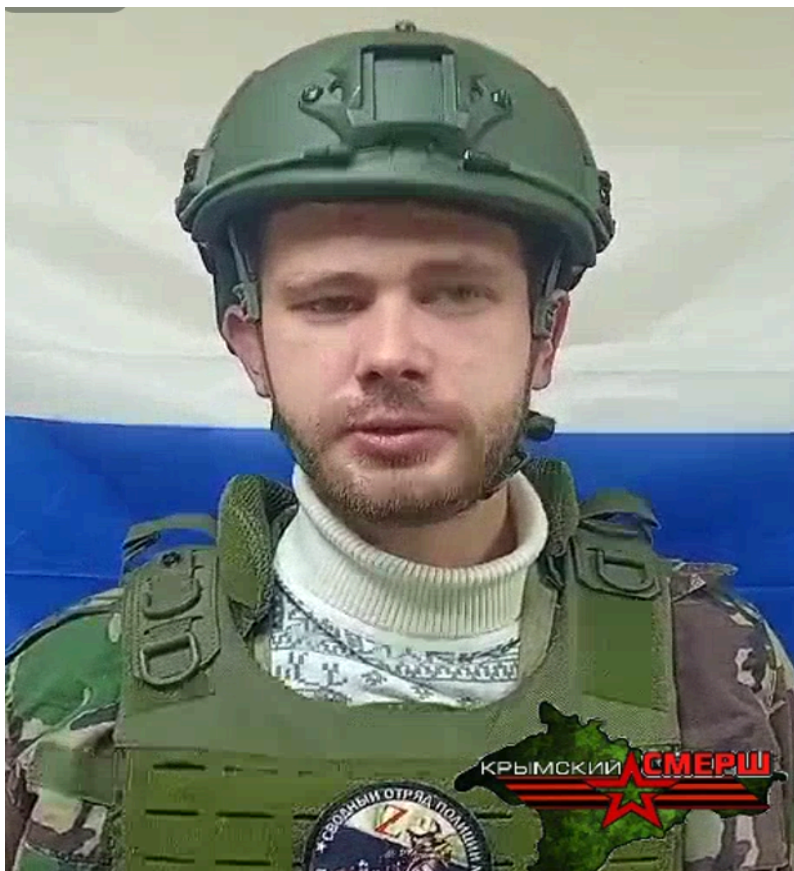
In total, during the reporting period, at least 34 cases which have signs of willful causing physical suffering, detention and attack on human dignity under the political motif of open or hidden sympathy towards Ukraine² were recorded:

- a) On March 27, the court arrested Dmitry Belolazov for 7 days in Simferopol because the door of his house was painted black and red. The court established that such a colour palette corresponds with the attributes of the organization 'Pravy Sector'. However, the court did not establish the fact that the door was demonstrated publicly as the inseparable element of the offense under art. 20.3 'Public demonstration of extremist symbols'.

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17 such facts were recorded in the previous period, 10 had been recorded earlier

- b) On May 6, the court arrested Dinar Abduraimov for 7 days in Simferopol because he had added the Ukrainian song 'Chervona Kalyna' to his playlist on his social media page. It is noteworthy that the attribution of the song to extremist symbols was established not by an expert but from a receipt that a policeman had written.
- c) On May 3, the court arrested Refat Kasymov for 8 days in Simferopol because he had added the Ukrainian song 'Chervona Kalyna' to his playlist on his social media page. It is noteworthy that the attribution of the song to extremist symbols was established not by an expert but by the court without any reasoning.
- d) On March 6, the court in Simferopol arrested Oleg Lukashevich for 14 days because he had posted a video where he was wearing a Ukrainian military uniform and used the expression, 'Glory to the nation!' He was also fined for discrediting. 13 fully equipped special forces officers were involved in his detention. After the detention, the law enforcement officers spread a humiliating video where he is supporting the Russian army and wearing the Russian military uniform.
- e) On March 12, Regina Galagan was detained by the Russian law enforcement officers because she had added the song 'Chervona Kalyna' to her playlist on her social media page. Subsequently, the Crimean media and social media spread a video containing her personal data and actions which humiliate human dignity – Regina Galagan is apologizing for what she did and expressing support to the Russian military aggression.



f) On March 22, videos were posted on Crimean public groups which showed how a group of special forces officers are detaining residents of Bakhchisaray district – Denis Levchuk and Vitaly Shcheglov. Later, their personal data were spread as well as photos humiliating human dignity in which they are apologizing for their actions.

g) On March 29, Medine Bekirova was fined in Sudak

for a pro-Ukrainian motto posted on social media. One day later, a humiliating video

where she is apologizing for her actions was spread on social media along with her personal data. On the following day, she was dismissed from work for 'committing a deed incompatible with the job' of a teacher.

- h) On March 28, using unmotivated violence, the law enforcement officers detained Vladimir Tsikalo for posting his opinion in support of Ukraine on social media. On April 1, a humiliating video was spread on social media where he was forced to apologize for his actions.
- i) On April 3, using unmotivated violence against a sleeping person, the Russian law enforcement officers detained Dmitry Yanyuk for several pro-Ukrainian posts on social media. The court found him guilty of discrediting and extremism, however, it has still been impossible to establish the fact of detention. On the same day, photos were spread on social media which showed how a man is being forced to put on Ukrainian military uniform over his casual clothes, his hairstyle was spoilt, and an ironic caption was added to the photo.
- j) On April 2, Elvina Emirova was fined for a pro-Ukrainian post on social media. Several days later, a humiliating video where she is apologizing for her actions was spread on Crimean social media along with her personal data. It is noticeable on the video that the woman is struggling to say the words of apologies.
- k) On April 5, Natalya Turta was detained and possibly arrested for posting pro-Ukrainian content on social media. Later, a humiliating video with her apologies was spread on Crimean social media along with her personal data.
- l) On April 12, Ivan Tsygankov was detained in Pervomayskoe district on the charge of discrediting and extremism. 2 days later, videos were shown on social media which humiliate this person's dignity – his household after the search had been conducted, and a recording of his apologies during which he was forced to hold a small Russian flag in his hand and say that he loves Russia.
- m) On May 20, it became known about the detention of the Avdeev family from Evpatoria for listening to Ukrainian songs and shouting the motto 'Glory to Ukraine'. It is clear from a video which was spread on social media that during the detention the special forces officers used unmotivated violence to Aleksandr Avdeev. Later, he and his wife were forced to apologize for their action for a video recording. This humiliating video, photos of their documents, and other personal data were spread on social media and in Crimean media.
- n) On March 26, Pavel Guzeev was detained, he was forced to do humiliating actions – apologize for his actions - for making critical posts on his social media page. Also, his personal information was spread in Crimean media which claimed that he had insulted the president. Similarly, during the reporting period, humiliating actions were applied to Braguta, Yudin, Derbenyov, Omelchuk, Idrisov, Kudryavtseva, Fandyushkin, Popov, Kurtiyev, Gurtovoy, Bibik, Pastushok, Serbinova, Grivakova, and Zamirailo were subjected to degrading treatment.
- o) In addition, at least 5 more people were non-publicly subjected to administrative arrest for displaying pro-Ukrainian beliefs, which the court regarded as propaganda

of Nazi or extremist symbols.

2.2. Religion-motivated persecution of a group or community

Article 27 of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War defines that the occupying power shall treat all civilians with the same consideration, without any adverse distinction based, in particular, on race, religion or political opinion. Paragraph h of the Rome Statute also attributes to war crimes persecution of any identified group or community on political, racial, national, ethnic, cultural, religious, gender or other motives which are recognized as unacceptable according to international law.

Since 2015, the practice of criminal persecution against Crimean Muslims who are mostly charged with terrorist activity and ties with the political and religious association 'Hizb-ut Tahrir' has been applied, subsequently, persecution of this religious group was complemented with some limitations of the administrative legislation on extremism, mass illegal inspections with collecting DNA prints, and since 2019 – with criminal accountability for not informing about terrorism (a universal norm without any strict legal terms). Moreover, since 2018, criminal persecution of representatives of the religious association 'Jehovah's Witnesses' began in the occupied territory.

During the reporting period, the human rights defending initiative 'Irade' recorded at least ___ cases of ungrounded discriminative approach to separate religious groups in the territory of Crimea.

1. Persecution of Muslims in Crimea

- a)** On March 5, 2024, a number of searches was conducted in Dzhankoy and Bakhchisaray districts, 10 Crimean Muslims including the former and present imam of the mosque in the village Lobanovo were detained as a result. All of them are charged with participation in the activity of terrorist 'Hizb-ut Tahrir' branches. 9 of them were imprisoned, one was put under home arrest due to his poor health condition.



Момент ареста одного из крымских мусульман - Мемета Люманова

PHOTO: Moment of arrest of one of the Crimean Muslims - Memet Lyumanov

- b)** On February 28, 2024, searches were conducted in the households of two religious activists, the imam of the Sary Krym mosque and the head of the Muslim religious community 'Eski Qirim' in Sary Krym and the village Zhuravki in Kirovskoe district. Also, a search was conducted in a mosque in the town of Sary Krym. As a result, the imam of the mosque – Izet Sayfulin and the activist Lenur Yakubov were detained and taken to the municipal police station. This was the second wave of searches within three months. The head of the Muslim religious community 'Eski Qirim' Idris Yurdamov explained these actions as follows: it was an attempt of the Spiritual department of Crimean Muslims (a structure controlled by the occupational authorities) to take control over the mosque in the town.
- c)** On February 28, 2024, the Kirovskoe district court arrester Lenur Yakubov – the religious activist of the religious community 'Eski Qirim' – for 14 days for demonstrating prohibited symbols.
- d)** On March 23, police officers issued a protocol against the religious community 'Eski Qirim' for storing prohibited literature which had been confiscated during the 28 February search. On May 15, 2024, the judge of the Supreme court of Crimea Marina Kolotsey confirmed the ruling of the Kirovskoe district court on finding the religious community 'Eski Qirim' guilty of mass spreading of extremist materials. The community has to pay 100 000 rubles of fine for storing prohibited literature in the mosque 'Az-Zubeyr' in Sary Krym, the literature was found there during a search. The head of the community – Idris Yurdamov – claims that the literature was brought there by the law enforcement officers, and also that the community has nothing to do with the mosque.

2. Persecutions of 'Jehovah's Witnesses'

- a) On April 17, 2024, a court in Sevastopol convicted Maksim Zinchenko - the representative of the religious association 'Jehovah's Witnesses' – to two years of forced labour with restriction of certain actions.
- b) On May 22, 2024, it became known about the court's decision about the transfer of Viktor Stashevsky – a Sevastopol representative of the religious association 'Jehovah's Witnesses' from the colony where he had been serving his sentence to a prison. The colony administration motivated the increased penalties with gross violation of the established order due to multiple penalties.

At the same time, it is necessary to note that on March 22, 2024, the Supreme court of Crimea cancelled the verdict to Taras Kuzyo, Pyotr Zhiltsov, Sergey Lyulin and Taras's wife Darya Kuzyo. The men were released from the detention unit, their measure of restraint was replaced with prohibition of certain actions. The case has been sent to a new hearing held by a different composition of the court.

2.3. Persecution of a group or community for human rights defense

Paragraph h of the Rome Statute also attributes persecution of any identified group or community on political, racial, national, ethnic, cultural, religious, gender or other motives, which are recognized as unacceptable everywhere according to international law, to crimes against humanity.

During the reporting period, a trend of targeted persecution of people related to defending human rights or community service of the Crimean Tatars was recorded. At least 7 facts of attacks at human rights defenders and activists were recorded within only three months.

a) On March 13, FSB officers broke the door of the household of the Crimean Tatar activist Edem Dudakov and conducted a search there and in the adjacent territory. After the search, he was detained and taken for interrogation to the main department of the FSB in the Republic of Crimea. Subsequently, no information was recorded about indictment against him on any offenses or crimes.

b) On March 20, a trial was held against the human rights defender Lutfiye Zudiyeva who was accused under article 13.15 of the Russian administrative offense code 'Abuse of freedom of information' for a post on her social media page. The trial was held *in absentia*, it took the judge 8 minutes to find her guilty and impose a fine of 2500 rubles.

c) On April 15, the Belogorsk district court endorsed its decision carried out earlier against the human rights defender Abdureshit Dzhapparov who was found guilty of abuse of freedom of information and fined with 40 000 rubles. Dzhapparov was deprived of the possibility to interrogate witnesses in the case and did not have a real possibility to prove that the protocols had been issued without his presence.

d) On April 17, the Magistrate court in Simferopol found the civil journalist and human rights defender Lutfiye Zudiyeva guilty of abuse of freedom of information for a post about a trial which mentioned the party 'Hizb-ut Tahrir' without the marking that it is banned by the Russian legislation. A fine of 2 000 rubles was imposed to her.

e) On May 7, police officers handed warnings about inadmissibility of violations of legislation to the civil journalist Lutfiye Zudiyeva, the attorneys Rustem Kyamilev, Nazim Sheykhmambetov, Lilya Gemedzhi, the regional activist Seyt-Osman Karaliyev. Most of the warnings were about 'inadmissibility of actions which create conditions for committing crimes and offenses, and inadmissibility to continue anti-social behaviour', however, the police claimed in the warning which was handed to Karaliyev that he 'could be the organizer of a mass event and must take measures to eliminate extremist activity and violations of the public order'.

f) On May 15, the Magistrate court in Simferopol found the independent lawyer Emil Kurbedinov guilty of abuse of freedom of information for a post in a Telegram channel about the fact that conscription offices practise handing illegal summons to university students who have legal deferment. A punishment in the form of a fine of 30 000 rubles was imposed on him.

g) On May 17, officers of the Counter-extremism center conducted a search in the household of Bekir Mamutov – the editor of the Crimean Tatar newspaper 'Qirim' and Seyran Ibragimov – the director of the outlet. Also, a search was conducted in the editorial office of the newspaper. All digital devices were confiscated as a result of the search. Bekir Mamutov and Seyran Ibragimov were detained, their lawyers were not allowed to see them. Two protocols were issued against the editor and the outlet – two for each – for discrediting the Russian army and abuse of freedom of information (because of quoting a UN report on tortures and cruel conditions of detention in detention unit #2).

2.4. Persecution of a group or community for sexual orientation

Paragraph h of the Rome Statute also attributes persecution of any identified group or community on political, racial, national, ethnic, cultural, religious, gender or other motives, which are recognized as unacceptable everywhere according to international law, to crimes against humanity.

In September 2023, the criteria adopted by the Roskomnadzor and which help to search which posts contain propaganda of 'non-traditional' sexual relationship came to action. Since 2024, the first cases appeared in which not only accountability is applied but also public bullying of people who are brought to accountability, with spreading their personal data and calls for violence against them is used.

During the reporting period, at least 2 facts of persecution under the charge of propaganda or demonstration of LGBT relationship were recorded in Crimea.

a) On April 5, officers of a special police unit used unmotivated violence against Oleg Gubsky from Kerch. Later, a protocol was issued against him for non-compliance with the police officers' legal requirements, which resulted in his 10-day arrest by the court. Also, methods of humiliation human dignity were applied to him – he was forced to admit for a video recording that he did propaganda of LGBT relationship on social media and is a supporter of non-traditional sexual relationship. The recording was spread on social media

along with his personal information.

6) On March 12, a case on administrative offense was heard against Daniil Oleshko in the Yalta city court, he had posted his photos in women's clothing and photos of his participation in a gay parade on his Instagram social media page. The court found him guilty under art. 6.21 of the Russian administrative offense code 'Propaganda of non-traditional sexual relationship among minors' and imposed a fine of 100 000 rubles. On the following day, the local social media spread his photo taken in the police station and his personal data including the photos and videos from his social media page.

3. Other violations of norms of IV Geneva Convention

Violations of some provisions enshrined in IV Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War are not attributed to the category of war crimes or crimes against humanity, however, they are also included into this report due to their significant negative impact on the rights of residents of occupied Crimea.

3.1. Coercive measures for obtaining information:

Article 31 of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War prohibits application of physical or moral measures to civilians in occupied territories with the aim to obtain any kind of information from them.

During the period under research, the human rights defending initiative 'Irade' recorded at least 2 trends in coercion of civilians aimed at obtaining information from them:

- a) The officers of the FSB border department regularly check messengers and other content of mobile phones that belong to people who are travelling to Crimea at the checkpoints near the entrance to Crimea from the other occupied territories. If suspicious content or contacts are detected, these people are detained for an additional inspection in the FSB department in Armyansk or Dzhankoy. Multiple cases of issuing protocols for public discrediting of the Russian army are recorded. Selective inspection of mobile phones is conducted on the Kerch Bridge and at the checkpoints near the entrance to Simferopol.
- b) Heads of budget institutions spread an order among their staff members about providing data of their social media accounts. An inspection of credibility of the provided data was conducted, and those members of the staff who had closed their accounts from public view were demanded to make their pages public.

3.2. Requisitioning of hospitals:

According to art. 57 of the Geneva Convention relative to Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, the occupying power may requisition civilian hospitals only temporarily and only in cases of urgent necessity for the care of military wounded and sick, and then on condition that suitable arrangements are made in due time for the care and treatment of the patients and for the needs of the civilian population for hospital accommodation.

In April 2024, the deficit of staff was officially 600 doctors and about 1700 members of paramedical and junior medical staff. The rise in the deficit was 800 vacancies within three months. In such conditions, the occupying power did not meet the needs of the civilian population in hospital treatment and cannot requisition the existing hospitals to treat its wounded and sick military. However, without requisitioning literally, the occupying power systemically and *en masse* uses the civilian medical infrastructure for treatment and rehabilitation of its military. In particular:

- a) in order to treat the military of the occupying power, the rooms and departments of city hospital #9 in Sevastopol are used, in particular, the surgery and the new module facility. Also, the military are treated together with civilians who undergo in-patient treatment in this hospital, however, the military are operated on certain days only;
- b) in order to treat the military of the occupying power, the rooms and departments of the only hospital with highly specialized medical aid in Crimea – the hospital named after Semashko – are used. Also, the military are treated together with civilians who undergo in-patient treatment in this hospital. The number of the wounded is very noticeable in different departments of the hospital, and it is the highest in the ENT department because of multiple post-concussion traumas;
- c) in order to treat the military of the occupying power, the rooms and departments of the Emergency medicine center, which has a unique highly technological equipment for intensive care and specialized surgeries, are used;
- d) in order to treat the military of the occupying power, the rooms and departments of city hospital #7 in Simferopol are used. Also, the military are treated together with civilians who undergo in-patient treatment in this hospital;
- e) in order to treat the military of the occupying power, the rooms and departments of the Krasnoperekopsk district hospital are used;
- f) In order to treat the military of the occupying power, the rooms and departments of private medical institutions are used, mostly for providing highly technological medical aid connected with prosthetics or complex laparoscopic surgeries;
- g) in order to treat the military of the occupying power, the rooms and departments of the Evpatoria city hospital are used.

3.3. Providing medical supplies:

According to art. 55 of the Geneva Convention relative to Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, to the fullest extent of the means available to it the occupying power has the duty of ensuring the food and medical supplies of the population; it should, in particular, bring in the necessary foodstuffs, medical stores and other articles if the resources of the occupied territory are inadequate.

During the research period, the human rights defending initiative 'Irade' noted the following

facts which indicate a serious deficit in medical supplies:

- a) In late February, a serious deficit in insulin was recorded for diabetic patients as well as painkillers and antibiotics in most Crimean regions. The medicine for cancer patients – medrol and most of its analogues disappeared almost completely. The Crimean authorities denied the serious deficit, explaining the absence of some medicines with the seasonal increase in incidence and later – with delays in processing of the purchases.
- b) As of April 15, 145 names of medicines (13% of all the procurement volume) were absent from a list of medicines purchased for the needy category of citizens via the ministry of health. The minister of health of Crimea claimed that he would resign if he could not solve the problem within one month. On May 15, he applied for resignation, the situation with providing medicines is not solved both for the needy category of citizens and for the whole of Crimea (in the category of the whole range of medicines produced abroad).