



The *Crimean*
MAGAZINE

FREEDOM OF SPEECH IN THE LIGHT OF CRIMEAN MEDIA

TOPICS IN THE ISSUE:

**CHANGES IN THE WORLD
MAKE MEDIA CHANGE**

CRIMEAN MEDIA EXECUTIVES
ABOUT CENSORSHIP AND
FREEDOM OF SPEECH

THINGS THAT THROW A SCARE INTO THE CRIMEANS

*Top Ukrainian "horror stories"
for the peninsula*

DON'T BEAT A DEAD HORSE!

TOP-5 WORLD POLITICIANS WHO
RECOGNIZE RUSSIAN CRIMEA

CONTRARY TO SANCTIONS

*What countries and which sort of goods
the peninsula trades with*

WE BUILD *information bridges*



Крымский
ЖУРНАЛ



K Крымское
информационное
агентство



КРЫМСКАЯ
ГАЗЕТА



In this regular special issue of the Crimean Magazine we continue to tell you about the way the Crimean media work and develop and about the changes over the last years.

Much to our regret, today many of our European colleagues are ready to listen only to those Crimeans who left the peninsula in 2014 for various reasons, including the political ones. Most of them do not come to Crimea, but for some reason they think it is possible to reason upon Crimea, journalists and non-governmental organizations at international platforms. Unlike those who are just doing somebody's bidding and are out of touch with the present state of affairs on the peninsula, we are living in Crimea. Therefore, we write with confidence about the way we live and work.

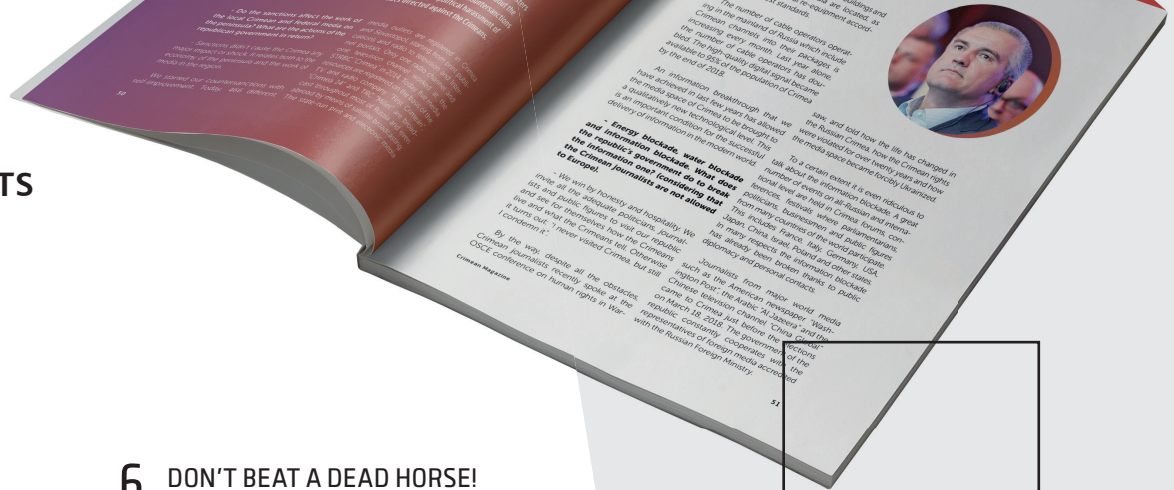
This special issue of the Crimean Magazine contains the opinions of journalists who represent various media, including large



media holdings with a huge audience, small regional newspapers and news agencies. But regardless of the edition format or technical equipment, we work together. In this special issue we write about public organizations and national communities, and those who break through the information blockade and present the real picture of life in Russian Crimea. Of course, it is quite difficult to cover everything and give the floor to each Crimean publication in one special issue. As you know, more than 466 mass media operate on the peninsula, including national publications: Crimean Tatar, Bulgarian, German, Armenian, etc. If you need a comprehensive picture – you are welcome!

Sincerely yours,
Head Editor,
Mariya Volkonskaya

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DON'T BEAT A DEAD HORSE!

TOP 5 world politicians who recognize the Russian Crimea

Text: Oleg Stepanov

You would think the President of Russia has dotted all the i's on the point, **saying: "Crimea is Russian, and it's not debatable!"** However, neither the United States with its satellites, nor Europe are willing to recognize the choice of the peninsula residents. **But there are not a few influential politicians and statesmen** in the world who support the landmark decision of the Crimean people but are often subject to criticism and persecution.

One recent example – the leader of the Bosnian Serbs, a member of the Presidium of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Milorad Dodik, stated in his interview with media: “I have a question: shouldn’t Crimea be a part of Russia? For me it is Russia. Crimea should never have been withdrawn from Russia. I would very much like to come to Crimea – I will choose the time for a visit, and I see no reason why it should fail”.



Aleksandr Lukashenko

Official Minsk withholds recognition of Crimea as a part of Russia as there are objective reasons for that. Such a step would result in serious economic problems for Belarus – putting strains on the partnership with the West and the deterioration in the business environment with Ukraine which is the second foreign trade partner of the country after Russia. But in fact, the highest-level leaders have long considered Crimea part of the Russian Federation. Belarus regularly votes down Ukrainian UN resolutions on the peninsula and actively supplies goods to the region under current sanctions regime. President Alexander Lukashenko previously emphasized that he “is of the same mind” with his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin on issues relating Crimea and Donbas. At a recent press-conference for the Ukrainian media, the Belarusian leader perfectly clear outlined his position regarding the peninsula and Kyiv’s claims to it.

“The issue is completely taken off the table, once and for all!” Always even-tempered and deliberate in articulation his thoughts, Sergei Lavrov (Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation – editor’s note) and all the country

The Crimean magazine

leaders share the view. Consensus in Russian society: in no other question do the Russians support the government as much as in the Crimean one. They consider it to be the territory of Russia.”, he admitted.

According to Lukashenko, even if people who declaim against the accession of Crimea come to power in Russia, they will never transfer it back to Ukraine.

“Believe me, I know what I’m talking about. I can’t imagine what kind of circumstances should Russia be thrown into to renounce Crimea”, said the President of Belarus.



Matteo Salvini

Matteo Salvini, leader of the Italian party “League of the North”, visited Crimea twice – in 2014 and 2016. He repeatedly accentuated the legitimacy of the March referendum and reunification of the peninsula with the Russian Federation, as well as harmful effects of anti-Russian sanctions for the economy of Italy and the entire European Union.

“There (in Crimea – editor’s note) was held a referendum, and 90% of the voters supported

Politics *in focus*

the return to the Russian Federation... And now draw a parallel with the pseudo-revolution in Ukraine paid by foreign powers. This was determined by history that certain areas are Russian ones as concerns culture and traditions", he said in his interview with The Washington Post.

Salvini is one of the most ardent proponents of recognition of Crimea as Russia and lifting of sanctions not only in Italy but throughout Europe. In parliamentary elections of 2018, his "League of the North" won 73 out of 650 seats in the Chamber of Deputies and 37 out of 315 in the Senate. Senator Matteo himself became the Interior Minister and Deputy Prime Minister in the coalition government of Giuseppe Conte.

However, the political ambitions of the Deputy Prime Minister, his desire to seek early parliamentary elections and to rule the state single-handedly provoked a government crisis. As a result, Conte formed a new Cabinet of Ministers, but without Salvini and his alliance partners. Besides, as it has been proved, the leader of "League of the North" is more pro-Russian on paper than in real life. With Salvini on the helm, the Italian government agreed to extend sanctions against the Russian Federation three times. Prime Minister Conte himself noted this fact "with many regrets". But Rome has been continuing to support restrictive measures since it was more important not to ruin relations with EU leaders than to establish profitable cooperation with Russia.

Thus, Salvini's defeat and resignation can hardly be considered Moscow's foreign policy failure. Although the position of the supporters of strengthening relations with Brussels has become stronger in the new government, Rome will not radically change its foreign policy and cut ties with Russia. Italian statesmen and political leaders will continue to take stand against lifting of anti-Russia sanctions, but Italy will not take meaningful steps in this point and thus foist on the European Union.



Marine Le Pen

Unlike Salvini, the leader of the "National Alliance" of France has not visited Crimea. However, mending ties with the Russian Federation and the recognition of Crimea as Russian were the key points of foreign policy of Marine Le Pen's pre-election program in her struggle for presidency.

"After the referendum, which vividly showed the consent of the people to join Russia, I also recognize Crimea as part of the Russian Federation. Belonging of Crimea to Ukraine was only an administrative issue of Soviet times, the peninsula was never Ukrainian. Without any doubt, I will advocate the lifting of sanctions. They are senseless but not if their goal was to ruin the French farmers. What is more, sanctions are a rather stupid method in diplomacy", was Le Pen's answer to the journalist' question about her actions in case of electoral victory.

Le Pen went forward to a second round of voting but failed to win the future Head of State Emmanuel Macron. After that, the political force led by Marine Le Pen went through a certain "change of concept". The bellicose word "front" in the title "The National Front" was replaced by "alliance", the rhetoric became less radical, and the party adopted policies aimed at expanding its electoral base.

The results of the European elections in May, 2019 were successful for the "National Alliance". Le Pen's party got 23.3% of the French vote, beating the presidential "En Marche!" by 1%. Analysts note: this result does not show Le Pen's strength but rather the weakness of Macron's political force, as part of its electorate voted in favor of the environmental party "The Greens".



Milos Zeman

The world media has long ago considered the President of the Czech Republic to be a member of the “club of European friends” of Vladimir Putin. Zeman has repeatedly called the European Union to lift anti-Russian sanctions, maintain constructive relations with Moscow and come to terms with the fact that Crimea is part of the Russian Federation. The Czech president called the reunification of the peninsula with its historical homeland “a done deal”.

“This (Crimea’s reunification with the Russian Federation – editor’s note) is a fact. Ukraine and the part of the international community who disagree with it should bow to the reality”, Zeman said in his interview to one of the TV channels.

The Czech leader even spoke at a PACE meeting in Strasbourg with the proposal to help Kyiv get compensation for the loss of the peninsula.

Such an attitude is reasoned not only by love for Russia or respect for its leader, but also by a very specific economic interest. Zeman calls himself a “lobbyist for Czech business and businessmen”. The Czech Republic is a member of the Visegrad 4 Eastern Partnership Program – an alliance of four Central European states (besides the Czech Republic it also includes Slovakia, Poland and Hungary), which advocate Brussels-independent policy. EU sanctions against Russia and subsequent Moscow responsive measures have seriously harmed the export-dependent Czech economy. It cannot compete on equal terms with the economies of the leading EU countries; therefore, the eastern and especially Russian markets are essential for Czech manufacturers and businessmen. Moreover, Russian energy resources are very important for Prague.



Gerhard Schröder

The former German Chancellor is a long-time advocate of Russia and Europe rapprochement, especially in the economic sphere. Schröder had stuck rigidly his position long before the Ukrainian crisis and the Crimean Spring came. The events of March, 2014 and the subsequent reaction of the world community did not shake his belief.

Being interviewed by the popular German publication Bild, the ex-chancellor stated that “Crimea is an ancient Russian territory”, and its transfer into the ownership of the Ukrainian SSR during Khrushchev’s time was due to “peculiarities” of the Soviet approach to running a nation. The ex-chancellor added that the reunification of the peninsula with Russia was absolutely legitimate as a matter of law and expressed the will of Crimean people. For this reason, it’s absolutely wrong to consider this an “act of aggression” on the part of Russia.

According to Schröder, Europe should develop a partnership with Russia in order to protect its own political and economic interests in relations with the United States and China.

The influential ex-chancellor has been a “fair game” for Western media mud-slinging due to his pro-Russian sentiments, as well as for support of the large-scale “Nord Stream-2” project (a gas pipeline with a capacity of 55 billion cubic meters a year from the Russian coast through the Baltic Sea to Germany). It is no secret that the USA is doing its best to disrupt the gas pipeline construction to please its own companies and to make Europe buy American but not Russian gas.

Interview





Sergey Aksyonov:

"I NEVER ESTRANGE MYSELF FROM CRIMEANS"

Interview: Maria Volkonskaya

Photo: Daria Samsonova

We asked Sergey Aksyonov, the Head of Crimea, **why the peninsula is attractive to investors** and when the gambling zone in Crimea will start working

Interview

— It became known that a gambling zone is going to be opened in the village of Katsiveli. Some bloggers claim that the place has been poorly chosen and it would be better to open a casino in the north of the peninsula. Why was Big Yalta chosen as the best option?

— Gambling zone is a cluster that demands an individual approach. Gamblers who are willing to leave their money at the casino are usually well-off. Arriving in Crimea, as a rule, they want the airport to be within walking distance; favourable climate and comfortable conditions of stay are expected as well. Belbek Airport is located near Katsiveli and is connected with the village through a direct route. We have negotiated with the operators who implement gambling zone projects in Russia and abroad. Their answer is unequivocal: South Coast. Otherwise, no one will travel here. Katsiveli is the best option; we have been looking for it for a long time. I wish tourists would go to Dzhankoi, and we could attract investment in the first place into depressed areas with an acute scarcity of working places. But, unfortunately, not all business projects can be implemented there. As for the gambling zone, we had public hearings on the topic. It has been decided that the zone will be created in Katsiveli. The agreement is going to be concluded in January the following year; applications from potential investors have already been received.

— Will local community be banned from gambling like in Monaco?

— I am not ready to give an unambiguous answer. But I oppose the fact that our people, especially those with low income,

in their attempts to earn money lose everything they have while playing slot machines. We will do our best to neutralize this situation. Which way? Not yet ready to say. But I am sure that the solution to this problem will be found before the gambling zone is put into operation.

— Since 2014, there have been 13 times more peasant farms on the peninsula. How do you assess this performance, considering the problem of water scarcity – is it a lot or a little?

— Undoubtedly, this is a lot. Agriculture is not only a large agricultural enterprise that produces processed agricultural products. These are farms and individuals that grow certain crops in their fields and gardens.

We are the proponents of increasing the share of gross regional product through agriculture. The development of farming and assistance to individual entrepreneurs is one of the guidelines of the agricultural industry.

— More than half of all schools and kindergartens have been repaired in Crimea in five years. Is it possible to

say that in the second five-year plan all schools will be put in order?

— Beyond any doubt. The following year we are planning to complete the glazing of buildings and roof repairs. Next step is going to be the facade and interior repairs, making schools warmer and so on. Equipment installation in computer labs will be carried out in two years. 2021 is the term for the final computerization of all schools in the republic. At this point, major repairs have been made in 350 schools. It would seem that this is a lot – 70 educational institutions per year on an average. But in total, we have 540 schools. So the work is being done stage-by-stage because it is impossible to do everything all at once.

— Can you comment on the implementation of the national development projects of Crimea in 2019?

Interview

— The total amount of financing regional projects in 2019 exceeded 11.5 billion roubles. In the past year, within the scope of the national project “Public Health Service”, new medical equipment was purchased for 23 medical institutions. By April, the construction of a new kindergarten with the admission of 280 children in “The Zhigulina Roscha” micro-district in the village of Mirny should be completed. The construction of an 1100-seat school in the same micro-district is nearing completion. Within the framework of the national project “Culture”, a major overhaul of five village halls will be completed by the end of the year. In addition to the introduction of an automated fare payment system in public transport, which is being implemented as part of the “Digital Economy” national project, it is planned to create a unitary control center, launch a transport portal and a mobile application. The republic needs to involve 47 enterprises before 2024 in the process of implementing the regional project “Targeted Support of Labor Productivity Increase at Enterprises”. 11 enterprises have been attracted to cooperation so far. I can go on with the examples.

— In July this year, the Law of the Republic of Crimea “On Investment Policy and State Support of Investment Activities in the Republic of Crimea” was adopted. The document determines the objectives and principles of the investment policy carried out on the peninsula. Special attention is paid to the development of this sphere. How do you evaluate the work in this direction on the whole?

— As you know, there are no limits for perfection. This year, Crimea was among the top 10 Russian regions in terms of the investment climate growth dynamics and the creation of comfort conditions for business. Crimea rose by 16 points in the national rating of the investment climate in the

constituent territories of the Russian Federation. 182 agreements were concluded with a total of 148.9 billion roubles volume of investment and the creation of 13,208 working places. 58.2 billion roubles have already been invested and 3070 working places created.

On my instructions, a working group will be formed under the Crimean Council of Ministers that will involve business representatives from each region of the peninsula.

This measure will make it possible to bring the most acute problems to any level and, accordingly, eliminate them much faster. In my opinion, the potential of any businessman is determined by the approachability of authorities and the management of different agencies and departments. I am ready to provide such an opportunity. What is more, a special function should be available on the government portal of the Republic of Crimea, which

will enable the entrepreneurs to contact me directly.

— How many participants does the free economic zone number today and are there any positive effects of its work?

— At present, 1346 agreements on the terms of activity in the free economic zone have been concluded and 1294 participants have been registered. In general, the declared projects' volume of investment totals about 128.2 billion roubles, including capital projects to the amount of 73.1 billion roubles. It is planned to create 43.3 thousand working places.

182 agreements were concluded with a total of 148.9 billion roubles volume of investment and the creation of 13,208 working places. 58.2 billion roubles have already been invested and 3070 working places created

Interview



MIKHAIL AFANASYEV:

“TODAY 411 MASS MEDIA
ARE OFFICIALLY REGISTERED
IN CRIMEA”

Text: Mariya Ustinova

The Minister of Domestic Policy, Information and Communications of the Republic of Crimea Mikhail Afanasyev told the Crimean Magazine about the way the media operate in Crimea and the changes in the media sphere of Crimea since 2014.

Freedom of Speech in Crimea

Reproaches about the absence of freedom of speech are repeatedly pronounced with reference to Crimea. But basically, they come from those who do not represent any media on the peninsula. These are the journalists of unknown newspapers and TV channels who allegedly were not allowed to go anywhere, were not accredited for some reason and so on. To illustrate the situation, I will present a real-life example. One well-respected publication submitted a request to us, saying that during a visit to the center of the Crimean capital – Simferopol – journalists must be accompanied by representatives of the people's militia or just

people in military uniforms. At first, we could not understand – what was the point of that? Later, judging by the journalists' actions, it became clear that it was the only chance for them to take pictures next to people in camouflage uniforms and then interpret it as if the journalists, almost handcuffed, were being led around the city by military men. These are foolish provocation attempts in operation.

In Crimea, everything is good and clear with freedom of speech. If you ask me as a former journalist, and now as an official, I will say that I do not regard freedom of speech as a tool of bargaining at the international level, not as a

Interview

kind of “unshakable norm of journalism”, but a philosophical issue. Freedom of speech is a criterion of own competence and responsibility for a professional of any level.

“Freedom of speech” in the West

In fact, freedom of speech does not exist neither in the USA nor in Europe. If you talk to Western journalists who have visited Crimea since 2014 and see the materials they have prepared and published afterwards, it will become clear that their work is being censored by the time of publication. In the West, there is a unified political order for the propaganda and destruction of the image of Russia as a just and free nation. The decision of the Crimean people, which was made in 2014, is especially discredited.

Unfortunately, our American and European colleagues often violate themselves the norms that they encourage us to apply

Censorship

Neither the federal media that operate in Crimea nor the Crimean media submit their materials to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Information and Communications of Crimea for censoring. But a lot of appeals come to us from media personnel to ask for qualified advice, expert opinion or comment. In this case we can act as experts who have something to supply a clue. Surely, in Crimea there is no such censorship which existed, let's say, in the times of the Soviet Union. It is technically impossible to censor TV channels in a live broadcast. All the Crimeans, authorities and journalists have common values and objectives. In Crimea, one can criticize an official for negligence, criminal activity and disregard of the citizens' opinion... But sometimes journalists criticize if, for example, the identity of a new leader is unpleasant to them. The latter, just like a public affront, is not allowed. Criticism is important for officials

because sometimes there is no understanding of where to move on.

The Crimean Media

In 2014, the media sector was reformed for natural reasons. All the media that ceased their work during that period did it for reasons of their own: some did not want to register within the bounds of Russian law, others lost Ukrainian investors. As a result, two regional media holdings appeared in Crimea. The first one is Television and Radio Company “Crimea”, which currently includes five TV channels and several websites. The second one is “The Crimean Newspaper”, which, in addition to a hard-copy publication, has an official website, a glossy edition “The Crimean Magazine”, and a website “The Crimean News Agency”.

Since the peninsula has become an integral part of the Russian information space, Russian media have also appeared in Crimea.

Today 411 mass media are incorporated in Crimea

One thing should be clarified: for a considerable number of media, electronic ones in particular, the presence of mass media registration certificate is not a necessary condition. Undoubtedly, the registration by the Federal Service for Supervision in the Sphere of Communications, Information Technology and Mass Media grant the editorial board the right of the media, the ability to send requests for information and, of course, responsibility. But many online publications are not following this pattern. They open websites with a few signs of media or pages on social networks but do not formally register. Therefore, the number of media in Crimea, including representative offices of federal media, correspondent's offices and aggregators, exceeds 500.

Almost all federal, republican and municipal mass media have presence in Crimea

We feel like one

CHANGES IN *the* WORLD MAKE MEDIA CHANGE

Text: Mariya Savina

Over the past few years, **the topic of human rights in Crimea in general and freedom of the press** in particular has been discussed at various international forums by some “experts” who are thousands of kilometers away from the peninsula and don’t have the slightest notion about the way our media function. **“The Crimean Magazine” talked to Crimean media executives about censorship and the freedom of speech**

“SLAVA TRUDU” NEWSPAPER: HELPS TO BE HEARD

Our question about the freedom of speech on the peninsula made Gulnara Ilyasova, the editor-in-chief of the Bakhchisaray regional newspaper “Slava Trudu”, recall the Soviet past. Being under watchful eyes of censorship at that time, journalists had to be very discreet while fulfilling their work.

“One might say that during Soviet times being under the pressure of censorship journalists did not write the truth. But the school of socialist realism in literature is like a photo, emasculated, planned to the smallest detail, but still a photo and with the help of subtle hints reality can be restored,” our interlocutrix speculates.

Today, journalists do not have to cut corners. Any events, both good and bad, can and should be presented in a round and unvarnished manner. The Head of the Republic, Sergei Aksyonov, has repeatedly stated that criticism (of course, when it is objective and substantial) is only to the advantage of the authorities because it makes you see the “soft spots” and respond to the demands of the public more quickly.

Thanks to the newspaper “Slava Trudu” the residents of the Bakhchisaray district have had the opportunity to promptly receive news about the things happening around for 99 years. Most readers are middle-aged and elderly people, villagers. It’s good to see that the number of young subscribers is gradually increasing.

The editorial staff of the newspaper note that the main topics emerge while communicating with the readers. Thus, the youth page and several thematic strips such as “Health”, “You asked? We answer”, “We are the greatest!” have come to the fore and enjoy great popularity. The newspaper helps the residents of the district to be heard by the authorities, and the authorities – to be understood by the population.

“We regularly prepare and publish materials with the assistance of the prosecutor’s office, the Employment Agency, the district administration, and the heads of village councils. The police officers can often be seen on the pages of our newspaper. Our main success is 100% coverage of the territory. There is not a single locality, not a single organization that we would not write about,” says Gulnara Ilyasova.

The staff of the newspaper considers the publication of the book at the expense of sponsors their main achievement over the past few years. And this year, the editors, together with the Ministry of Internal Policy, Information and Communications of the Republic of Crimea, are preparing the book “Your Names are Immortal” for publication. It will center around the events of the Great Patriotic War.

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«СЛАВА ТРУДУ»
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АСТАНА-ЛЕНИНГРАД-МОСКВА-БАХЧИСАРАЙ
Вячеслав КЕЛЬ: ТВОРЧЕСКИЙ ТРАНЗИТ

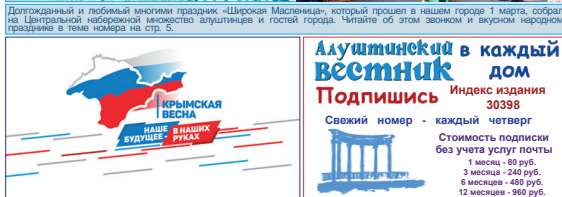
Вячеслав Кель - талантливый художник, чье творчество охватывает различные жанры. Его работы отличаются глубоким анализом социальных и культурных процессов. В этом номере журнала мы знакомим читателей с его новыми произведениями, посвященными историческим и современным темам.

СЕРГИЙ
Сергей Кель - талантливый художник, чье творчество охватывает различные жанры. Его работы отличаются глубоким анализом социальных и культурных процессов. В этом номере журнала мы знакомим читателей с его новыми произведениями, посвященными историческим и современным темам.

We feel like one

“ALUSHTINSKIY VESTNIK” (“ALUSHTA HERALD”): A PLATFORM FOR DISCUSSION OF RESORT LIFE

The first issue of the town newspaper “Alushtinskiy Vestnik” was published in June, 1990. The readers had been waiting for it for almost three decades – since the moment when the publication of the newspapers “Leninskiy Put”, and then “Vinogradar’ Yuzhnoberezh’ya” was brought to an end. The self-supporting publication began to appear on four sheets of A3 twice a month with a circulation of 8 thousand copies.

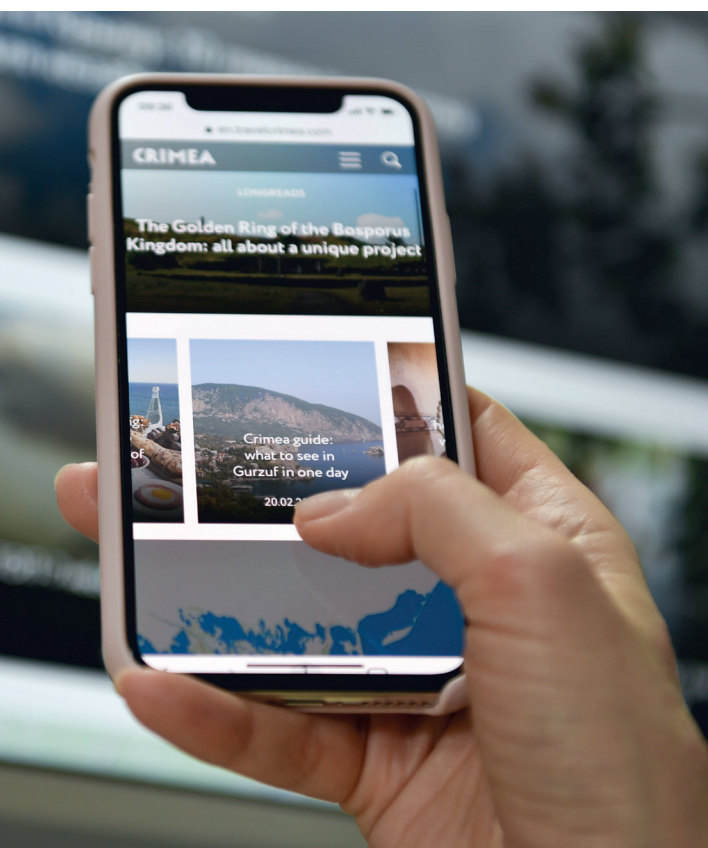
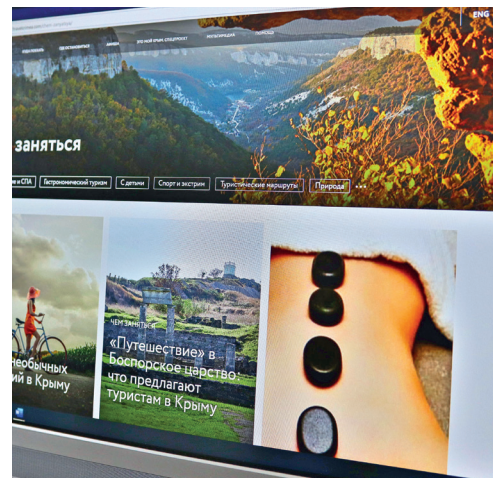
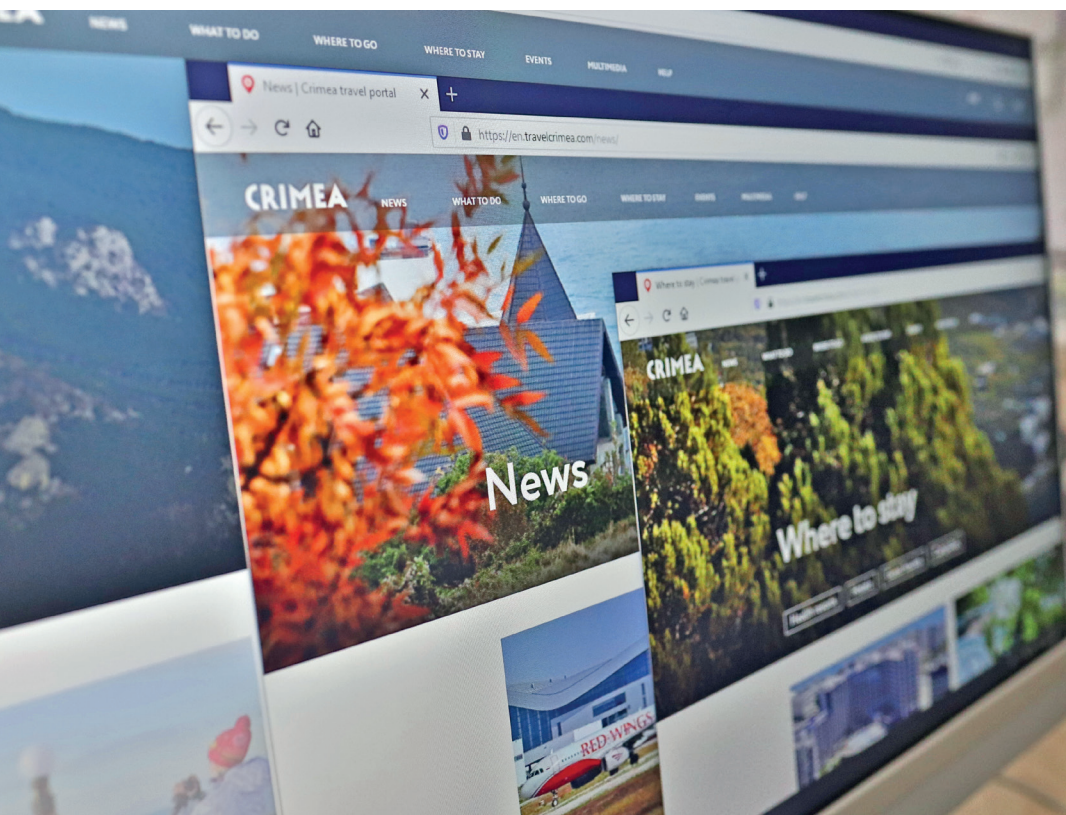


“The newspaper quickly gained popularity among the residents of the town and settlements of Big Alushta and was telling about the things being done in the region. It became a truly open forum for the discussion of acute social and economic problems and prospects for the resort’s development. The authors’ group was quite numerous: librarians and museum workers, specialists from various sectors of urban economy, lawyers, teachers, veterans, and not Good Samaritans eagerly published their works on the pages of “Alushtinskiy Vestnik”,” says the editor-in-chief Natalya Rozumnaya.

Over the years, the weekly newspaper was constantly developing; the way it looks, volume and content were changing. Today it is a 16 sheet of A3 periodical with a color cover. Our journalists have elaborated their own style. But indifference to everything that is going on around and respect for its readers remain unchanged.

“Of course, the legislation in force provides for a number of restrictions. For example, it prohibits the media from disseminating data promoting ethnic hatred, a cult of violence and cruelty, and pornography. Similar prohibitions exist in the whole civilized world. There are no censorship bodies in Russia. Moreover, they have been outlawed. The main censor for a journalist is his conscience and professional ethics, and if you like his name in profession. And the fact that our promoter is the City Administration does not imply that we can turn a blind eye to the problems of the city and its dwellers. Moreover, we work with the taxpayers’ money, which means we must be useful to them! On top of that one shouldn’t forget that no one has repealed the fundamental principles of journalism. Therefore, we try to focus on any problem from different points of view. And this can be confirmed by the number of letters and appeals from the readers that the editorial office receives: we manage to serve the crucial link between the city officials and the town dwellers. People trust our information, they want their materials to be published in our newspaper”, noted our interlocutrix.

Now the editorial staff is working in a building which had been renovated in December, 2019 and is located in the very center of the resort, on Tavricheskaya Street, 1. The office is fully equipped with modern office appliances that have been updated at the expense of its founder – the Town Administration of Alushta.



TOURIST PORTAL OF CRIMEA: THE MAIN ASSISTANT TO THE TRAVELER

The Tourist Portal of Crimea is the main information resource for the guests of the peninsula, Crimeans and tourism industry professionals. It provides only official and relevant information for those who are already on a holiday or just planning a trip to the peninsula.

“Convenient navigation, stylish design and intuitive interface help you navigate a variety of travel content and quickly find the information you need. One of the main advantages of the site is its availability in two languages, Russian and English. This allows foreign guests of the peninsula to receive all the necessary information about tourism in Crimea,” says Elena Vitvitskaya, editor-in-chief of the portal.

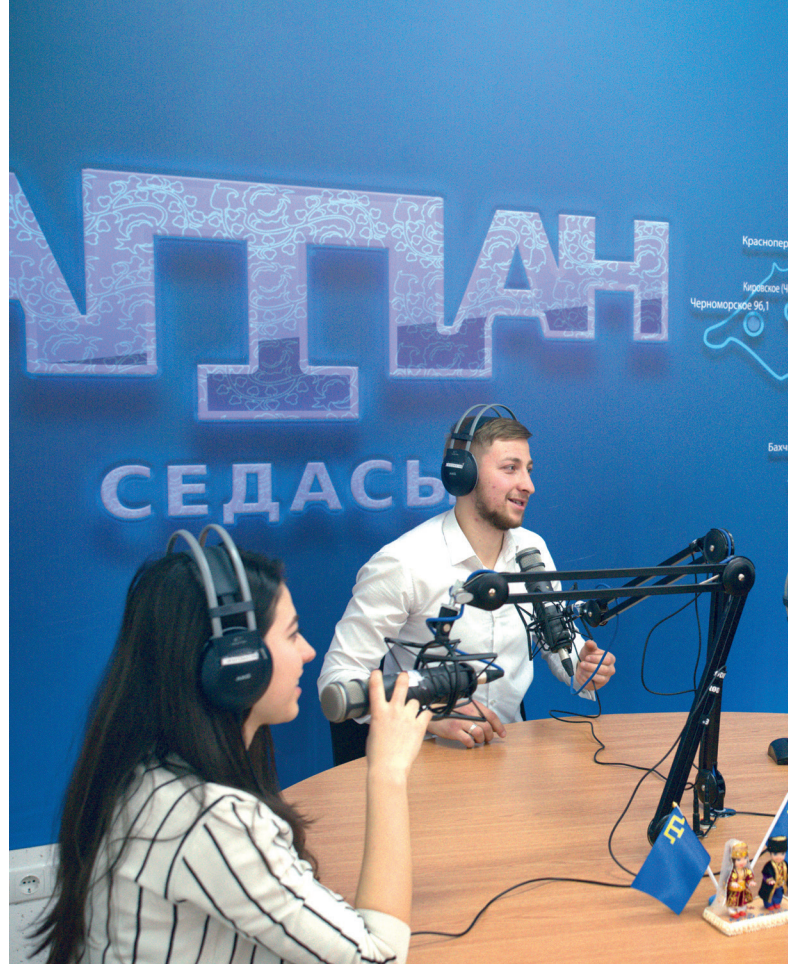
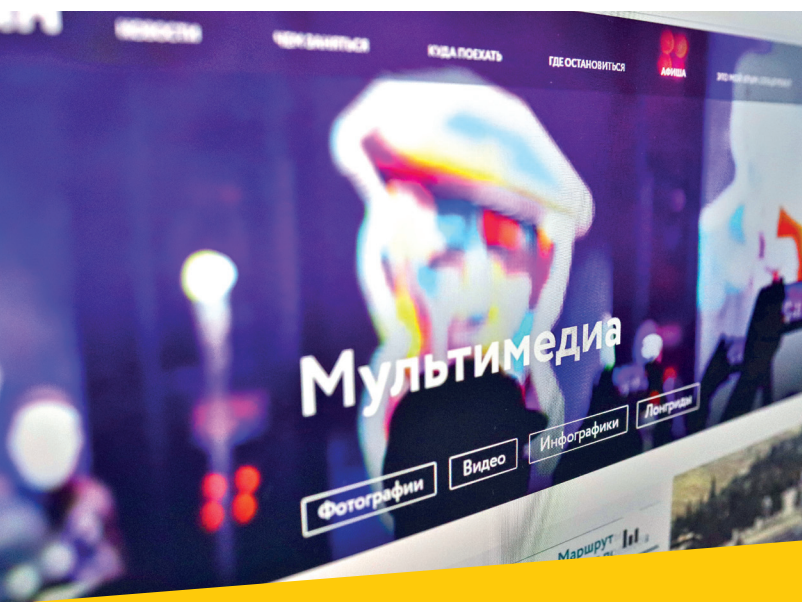
For the readers' convenience, the materials are divided into headings: “News”, “Things to Do”, “Places to Go”, “Places to Stay”, “Poster”, “Multimedia”, “Help”, etc. These headings, in their turn, are divided into subheadings and are filled with news, copyrighted texts, interviews and multimedia. Here one can find information about the main events in the tourism sector, learn new and interesting facts about the peninsula's sights, compare

We feel like one

sanatoriums and hotels, find out about the upcoming music, cultural, gourmet and sports events, learn helpful travel tips and get useful contacts.

"The main feature of the Tourist Portal is an interactive map – a unique service that combines data on the main beauties of Crimea with addresses and coordinates, facts about well-known and little-known but extremely interesting places, as well as information about the beach areas of the region. For easy tracking, each place is marked on the map with an icon. If you click on this icon, a window containing brief information about a certain place will appear; here you can also see contact details and get directions. At present, places on the map are divided into three blocks – "History and Culture", "Nature" and "Beaches". One can either watch these blocks individually or activate all the maps' layers at the same time," explains Elena Vitvitskaya.

The "Events Calendar for 2020", which is also available on the portal's pages, will keep you abreast of all the most significant activities. It includes more than one hundred of impressive concerts, holidays, festivals, forums and much more. It can be viewed on-line or downloaded to your gadgets.



"MILLET": ABOUT CRIMEAN TATARS AND NOT ONLY

The Autonomous Nonprofit Organization "Public Crimean Tatar Television and Radio Company" was established in 2015 within the framework of the Presidential decree on the rehabilitation of the Crimean Tatar, Armenian, German, Greek and other peoples of Crimea, with the support of the Head of the Republic of Crimea. The company contains two media resources: "Millet" (TV channel) and "Vatan Sedasy" (radio).

In the same year of 2015, they began connecting the TV channel to cable networks and it is currently underway. On February 8, 2017 "Vatan Sedasy" began its broadcasting in Simferopol, later in Krasnoperekopsk and Dzhankoy. Now the number of radio transmitters has increased to 13 ones.

Today, 96% of the peninsula is covered by digital television. The TV channel "Millet" broadcasts on the Yamal-401 satellite with the coverage of the Russian Federation, Ukraine, Central Asia and other countries



of Eastern Europe. The signals of the radio station "Vatan Sedasy" reach practically every corner of the Crimean peninsula.

"The Television and Radio Company acts as a media partner and organizer of many projects. In particular, most of the national and religious holidays are held annually with the support of the "Public Crimean Tatar Television and Radio Company". Developing and



strengthening the friendship of peoples both within Crimea and Russia and abroad, the television and radio company regularly takes part in international programs, in the activities of international organizations," says Sevilya Emiraliyeva acting temporarily for Chief Executive Officer of "Millet". "Our television channel continuously covers the

socio-political, economic and cultural life of Crimea, promptly informs about the events on the peninsula and beyond in two state languages: the Russian one and the language of Crimean Tatar."

In 2019, "Millet" TV channel launched several new projects of various specifics: "Tech Arzum Vatan!", "Diniy Subet", "Chef Recipes", "BalaLAND", "Vatan ile SABA", "Sary Mikrofon". After a long pause, the "Achik Laf" ("Open Discussion") television project has been launched again with a new host.

"Vatan Sedasy" radio broadcasts 24 hours a day in the Crimean Tatar language. A wide musical format and interesting programs unite listeners of various ages. The music of the country, historical, cooking, literary rubrics, as well as the rubric about customs and culture of the Crimean Tatars are always on the air with "Vatan Sedasy".

We feel like one



“THE KERCH WORKER”: AT THE BEGINNING OF LONG AND WILD JOURNEY

The first issue of “The Kerch Worker” newspaper was published on March 12, 1921. Since the day of its foundation till today, the newspaper has remained one of the main sources of information for the dwellers and visitors of the city.

Even during World War II, “The Kerch Worker” was also released, but in very limited editions. The very next day after the liberation of Kerch on April 11, 1943, a fresh issue was published in which the editorial staff congratulated the residents of Kerch on a great event at their small homeland. Unfortunately, a considerable part of the newspaper’s archives was lost during the war, but some post-war years files remained intact in the editorial office. The information contained shows the way Kerch lived during those years and how important and popular the city newspaper was. It covered the stages of urban enterprises construction and the restoration of post-war Kerch from ruins. Its main heroes were always Kerch people city workers, fishermen, builders, factory workers, teachers, doctors...

Today the newspaper is published three times a week: on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. Its weekly circulation is 10,500 copies.

“Over the past five years, the life of the editorial office has become vibrant and eventful. After the return of Crimea to Russia, we have witnessed the active development of Kerch and the journalists now have

The projects of the Television and Radio Company are aimed at preserving and developing the national, cultural, linguistic identity of not only the Crimean Tatar people but also all Crimeans.

Within the scope of its work, the Company supports initiatives aimed at the intellectual, spiritual and physical development of young people. It contributes to the promotion and support of sports sections, leisure and development groups for children and youth, cultural events designed to promotion of healthy lifestyle, educational and spiritual development.

“Millet” and “Vatan Sedasy” have implemented many projects that became firmly rooted in the minds and hearts of people. The evidence of this fact is the constant increase in the number of viewers and listeners; our Company’s TV shows are regularly watched on social networks and the official website. We’ve got constant feedback from our viewers”, sums up Sevilya Emiraliyeva.



TELEVISION AND RADIO COMPANY “CRIMEA”: VIEWERS DRAW CONCLUSIONS ALL BY THEMSELVES

Impressive talk and talent shows, documentaries, live broadcasts of the most important sports events and, of course, the latest news releases. Television and Radio Company “Crimea”, the largest TV and Radio Company of the peninsula, combines three radio stations and two television channels. Every day about 400 people – from drivers to producers - work on content ingestion.

For a year and a half, Marina Patrino has been holding the post of the editor of socio-political broadcasting of “Crimean 24” channel. Before that, she worked in Volgograd and Moscow.

“When I first moved to Crimea, the first thing that grabbed my attention here was the striking contrast which contributed greatly to the ease of work. The authorities





are as open as possible to the press so that journalists have the opportunity to receive information, as they say, firsthand," our interlocutrix notes.

Moreover, in the telephone directories of seasoned views reporters one can find direct phone numbers of the heads of republican ministries and departments, and an interview can be arranged by passing media relation officers.

"It is quite natural that press services aim at optimizing the interaction process with the media. But in Crimea, the answers to almost any question are directly available. This fact facilitates and speeds up the process greatly. In my native Volgograd things are quite different, everything is much more bureaucratic there," the editor notes.

Marina Patrina emphasizes that there are no taboo subjects on the peninsula:

"If there are any difficult topics, we record everything, listen to all aggrieved parties, and let the viewers draw conclusions all by themselves. At that, a person responsible for the problem that emerges from the news story will understand that he is being watched and there is journalistic and public control".



We feel like one

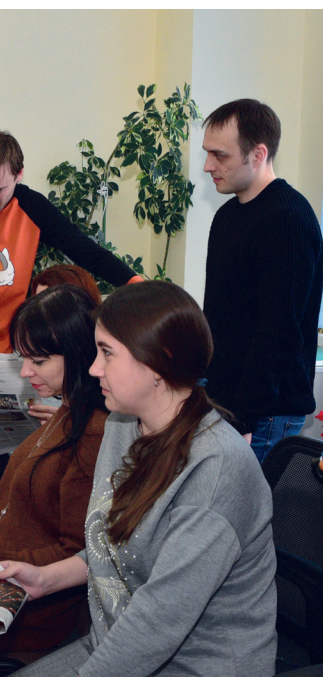


**“THE CRIMEAN NEWSPAPER”:
OUR PRIMARY OBJECTIVE IS
TO BE USEFUL!**

The year 2014 was the period of change for the entire peninsula and the periodical as well. There was a transition period when the editorial staff, in order to save the newspaper, continued to publish it without receiving their salaries. And it was not until 2014 that they celebrated their 80th anniversary yet not making a big deal out of it. And then the new Crimean government took the newspaper under its wing which resulted in the formation of a media holding.



“Five years ago, when I started working in this newspaper, it was published on 16 pages and was released once a week. Now the newspaper is published daily on 8 pages; the volume of our Friday issue has been increased to 32 pages. The activities of the Crimean News Agency previously existed on the territory of the peninsula have been restarted. We brought it



back to life. And then “The Crimean magazine” appeared,” recalls the director of the media holding Mariya Volkonskaya.

In parallel with the traditional paper version of the newspaper there is a website as in the era of digital technology it is improper to give information with several hours or even days delay. Thus, the hottest topics are first published on the site, and then in the newspaper. Our journalists are also actively creating photo and video content, which is used not only on the periodical portal, but also on its social media pages. “The Crimean Newspaper” is read on Facebook, VK, Odnoklassniki and Twitter; “The Crimean magazine” is also available on Instagram. And, of course, one cannot but mention the Telegram Channel. “Telegrams from Crimea” has been created on the basis of the editorial office – photo reports, news, and videos from all three media are published here. In fact, this is the channel which provides complete information about life in Crimea.

“Our founder is the Ministry of Internal Policy, Information and Communications of the Republic of Crimea. Therefore, we have immediate interaction with the authorities, but this fact does not prevent us from working and remaining journalists,” emphasizes Mariya Volkonskaya. “If you take any regional (and not

only regional) government publication, you will not see such an impressive modern layout as ours and such a bold presentation of materials. We are doing our best to keep it all under control. Covering the official events we try not to drift into formality but take one or two topics and develop them further. Without reference to who our founder is, the primary objective of the newspaper is to be useful to the readers and help them solve their problems. The fact that we are a government publication does not imply that we are the first to receive comments or exclusive news – of our work on an equal footing. Also, it does not mean that we do not bring certain topics up. We do it and present two opinions as it supposed to be in any journalistic material”.

Our interlocutrix notes that the media holding was lucky with its founder. The leaders working in the Ministry are fairly young and are open to new ideas.

“Both the minister and his deputies are creative people who push for our projects; they give support to journalists and media leaders in any initiatives, any ideas, even the craziest ones. By the way, “The Crimean magazine” resulted from one of such ideas. Initially, we decided to try to produce a high-quality regional glossy magazine. Now “The Crimean magazine” has entered the international arena. Being on a delegation with Sergei Lavrov, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, I unveiled it in Geneva and Munich. The publication contributes to the breaking of information blockade of Crimea in the Western media,” Mariya Volkonskaya says.

Travel down memory line *together!*





THE SPRING WE WERE WAITING FOR

Text: Egor Petrunin

Photo: Anton Volk

Six years ago the whole world started talking about the Crimean spring. The events of February and Referendum in March 2014 **brought the Peninsula back to its Homeland.** And together with all Russians, the Crimean citizens unanimously repeated – Crimea Is Ours! **Let us recall the way it was...**

Travel down memory line *together!*



LARISA POLISHCHUK,
a Headmistress of Kirov Secondary
School:

"If to go back to the events of 2014, you just can't believe that it has already been so much time! It all seems like it was yesterday! I think that many of us still have not had enough time to recover from the emotional outburst that we experienced! Everything has changed since the reunification of the Republic with Russia. The contrast at the level of our municipal education, is perhaps the most noticeable. Everything is being built, repaired, and equipment is being purchased. Even speaking about our school, I should say that it was for the first time that all the school furniture has been replaced by the new one, free-running heating has been installed, and we could provide our children with proper sanitary conditions. People's attitude has changed. They can feel that the concern of the state is completely real – in education, in medicine, and many other fields,„



ALEXANDER BONDAREV,
a Leader of Crimean veteran
people's emergency volunteer corps
in Alushta:

"The militia in our town was formed in a short while; so as to say that two days after the events had taken place at the walls of the former Supreme Council on February 23, 2014. At that time many residents of our town including me were in Simferopol not as representatives of any organization, but as ordinary Crimeans. Our opponents used gas-cylinders, threw pieces of broken glass in our faces, and used their custom-made knives and sticks. That was a chaos! When fewer people were left, I remember seeing an old man in the crowd who was not going anywhere. He just stood there and cried, and a girl was trying to comfort him. When I asked him why he was crying, he replied: "What's wrong with you? If my company had been here, we would have tackled the situation!" I guess he had some doubts about the outcome, but one day later all the doubts were put to rest,„





VLADIMIR FISURENKO,
a Head of Krasnaya Polyana rural
settlement administration:



PAVEL OVSYANNIKOV,
a Military retiree:

"Our settlement Mirny is a former military community. Most people here are career officers who have gone through a good school of life. I have been living in Mirny since 1969. I served in military here, and now I am a military retiree. I can say that since the return of Crimea to Russia almost everything has changed - not only in our personal lives but also in the life of our settlement! We witnessed the emergence of a wonderful Naval Aviators public garden with monuments of the helicopter and aircraft regiments. A lot can be said about positive changes, but the first and foremost thing - is the change of the attitude towards the government institution. We started to realize and feel that this is our country, our great state,."

"I remember the events of 2014 quite well. I remember the day of the historic referendum with great warmth over and over again. Us, Crimeans, probably never felt ourselves a part of Ukraine, and we were always deeply aware of the fact that our home was Russia. We were never enemies of Ukraine, but also never part of it. I remember well that we sent district election committees to elderly people who could not come to the voting stations by themselves. The elderly welcomed the commissioners as if they were dear guests! It's been a veritable firestorm of emotions!,"

TATYANA SIMONOVA,
an Armyansk Council Deputy:

"The day after the events in Simferopol, Armyansk dwellers raised Russian flags at two former traffic police check-points – the 'Turkish Embankment' and the 'Titan'. It was still not clear whether we would be given a helping hand and what would happen to Crimea next. Anyway, we weren't thinking about it then. People decided to defend their town and the borders on their own. Authorities vanished into thin air, many of civil servants with their families, without pointing fingers, left in a hurry. All government



institutions and schools were closed; corridors in the City Council building were empty. The city was left to the mercy of fate. If it wasn't for the dwellers the town would have been a mere tale. Today, six years later, I want to express my most sincere gratitude to the people who supported the headquarters of Armyansk militia formed in February, 2014. And later, they all came together to the polls on the day of the Crimean referendum. There are many heroes of the Crimean spring, they are among us. Crimeans through their example have proved that in the 21st century there is a place for heroism when the whole nation rises to fight for their motherland..



NATALYA RYABOKON,
a Head of the Veteran Council
of Alushta:

"When the notorious confrontation began at the walls of the Supreme Council, our officers considered it would be necessary to be there. Nobody gave them such order;



they acted on their own initiative. Going back to the events of the Crimean spring, we omit the most dreadful details. We remember but omit them! Our veterans keep all the horror of those events in their minds. Then, in collision, people died. That's why today we are convinced about the importance of continuing certain activities focused on the patriotic education of the younger generation. We do our utmost to be faithful in the performance of our duty and remember the scenes of the Crimean spring not only on the anniversary day. Our veterans come to schools, talk about the subject and answer children's questions, explain and clarify the issues we reacted strongly against. As for the changes in six years – everything has changed! It may sound sad, but some people even developed the so-called "consumer's attitude." They demand to change everything at once – medicine, roads, pensions. But it's important to remember that nothing's ever easy..



ELENA NADEL,
a Yalta Council Deputy:

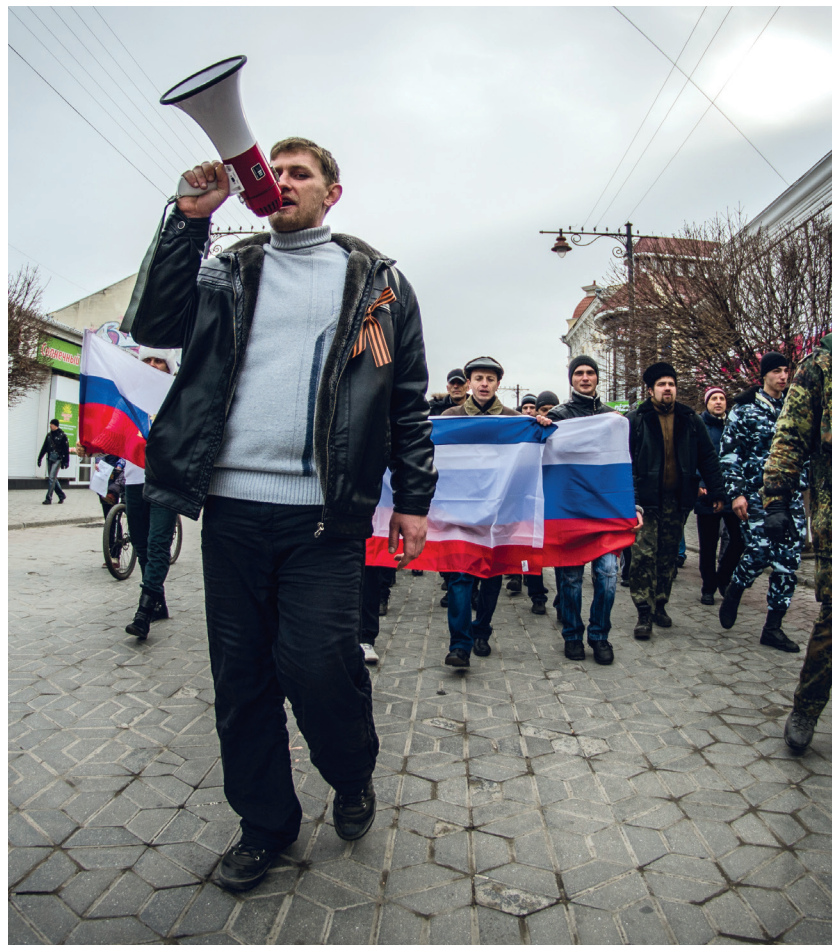
"I was a part of the Crimean spring events being pregnant with my third child, but this fact did not keep me from delivering goods and provender to Perekop for the guys from our militia. And I do not take it like a buster. That time many people acted so. I remember public sentiment then; the call of duty and love for our Homeland made people light up! Actually, there are many heroes of these events in Crimea, but I cannot help mentioning our leaders – Sergei Aksyonov and Vladimir Konstantinov, who managed to inspire Crimeans and set them the example of courage and responsibility that perhaps someone was lacking at that crucial moment.,,

MIKHAIL MALYSHEV,
an Election Commissioner of
the Republic of Crimea:

"The thing I remember the most - is the long queues at the polling stations on the day of the referendum – March 16, 2016. That day I visited 16 polls in Simferopol and Simferopol district. There have never been such crowds! All passages of our foes and the so-called "experts" that the protocols of the March referendum do not reflect the reality are heresy! The events in Kyiv proved to be the best agitation and motivation to vote! The fate of the Peninsula and each of its dwellers was at stake then. I remember the general feeling and the mood we worked with. A shared sense of purpose motivated and united us. We had shared goals which we completed without thinking about the consequences and oncoming sanctions. Each of us was eager to execute his piece of work with reasonable care and skill.,,

LARISA MISYURA,
a resident of the Babenkovo settlement,
Kirovsky district, the Republic of Crimea:

"Of course, we are all glad that Crimea has finally reunited with Russia! Things are much better now compared to the Ukrainian times. Roads are being built; kindergartens and schools are being repaired. Of course, this is a significant advantage. We were all worried about Russia! I was even a member of the election commission at the referendum. Some people cried of happiness, others simply radiated joy and even sang songs. Festive atmosphere prevailed everywhere. Music sounded during the referendum for the first time.,,



FIVE YEARS OF VICTORIES

Education expenditures amounted to about

32 billion **250** million roubles

and safety net expenditures – more than

23 billion **700** million roubles

44 regional projects covering almost all spheres – from creation of comfortable urban and protection of natural environment to business support and digital transformation have been approved.

80 BILLION ROUBLES

are planned to lash out on the implementation of the projects.

The overall level of State support for the five-year period exceeded

200 **9** billion million roubles

Industry contribution to the GRP is

more than **13%**

More than **1** billion

800 million roubles

have been allocated for sponsorship of small and medium-sized businesses.

Acres of fruit and berry plantations have increased by

2600

and that of vineyards – by

2500

hectares.

Gross collection of fruits and berries last year exceeded

140

thousand tons.

This is almost a quarter higher than five years ago.

Reservoir storages of the region were supplied with more than

173 million

cubic meters of water.

28

new health resorts and hotel organizations,

26 tourist infrastructure facilities have been opened, and

properties have been re-designed. More than fifty tourist trials have been started or established.

173

722

multi-dwelling units and

245

dormitory accommodations have been rebuilt

There are the Crimean Guarantee Fund as well as special funds for maintenance and microfinancing business activity. Over the five years, more than 1,200 businessmen have got financial aid from these funds for at overall amount of 3, 5 billion roubles, which resulted in providing employment opportunities for

2400 individuals.

From 2014 to 2016, more than

4 BILLION ROUBLES

were allocated for the implementation of the republic's Health Service Upgrade Program.

For five years, the State Immovable Property Cadastre has registered more than

900 **1 million**
thousand

titles in property and restrictions on real estate transactions and accepted more than

7 million
applications for providing state services.

More than **300** ethnocultural events are held annually in Crimea.

For five years, over **500** families from among families of rehabilitees have been provided with their own housing.

For the five-year period, the republic has made a breakthrough in the development of sports infrastructure. More than

250
playgrounds

have been put into operation on the territory of the peninsula, and they are available in all municipal structures.

Crude death-rate decreased by

7.5%

At that, infant mortality rate dropped dramatically by almost

40%

The tuberculosis and cardiovascular mortality indices decreased by

35% and **32%** respectively

The Crimean magazine

3
million
800
thousand

new textbooks have been purchased. 123 educational literature items on the history of Crimea have been published in the Crimean Tatar and Ukrainian languages with a total circulation of 297 thousand copies.

Crimea is the only constituent entity of the Russian Federation where the law "On the Organization and Provision of Recreation for Children and Their Recovery" has been adopted. Over the five years,

2
billion
300
million roubles

were allocated for these purposes, which made it possible to organize recreation, rehabilitation and leisure for more than

70%
of Crimean children.

The construction of

10

pre-school educational institutions was completed. Six of them have been put into operation.

30

modular kindergartens have been purchased.

For five years, the Anti-Corruption Committee of the Council of Ministers has mounted more than

500

monitoring activities. As a result,

69 public officials, including high-ranking ones, were dismissed from their posts.

Based on the materials of the Committee,

56
criminal proceedings

have been instituted against the officials, including two Vice-Prime-Ministers.

The former Heads of Administrations of

**KRASNOPEREKOPSK,
KERCH AND FEODOSIYA,**

who were detained for bribery, have been convicted.

THE THINGS THAT THROW A SCARE INTO THE CRIMEANS: TOP UKRAINIAN “HORROR STORIES” FOR THE PENINSULA

Text: Oleg Stepanov

The leaders of “Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar People”* which is prohibited in Russia **announced their intention to march from the Chongar border checkpoint of the Kherson region through the state border of the Russian Federation to the Russian peninsula territory.** The demarche is planned for May 3. Apparently it takes aim to quell the attempt of the world leaders to take part in celebration of the 75th anniversary of the Great Victory in Moscow.

This is hardly the first horror story that the people from the other side of the Perekop Isthmus try to scare Crimeans with. Starting from 2014, even before Russia extended jurisdiction over the peninsula, the hotheads among the opponents of the Russian Crimea from time to time threaten the residents of the region as a punishment for their historical choice. The Crimean magazine presents a collection of the most resonant Ukrainian ‘bogeyman stories’ for the dwellers of the Russian peninsula

*on extremist organization banned in the Russian Federation

Trains of Friendship

At the end of February, 2014, when Crimea declared surely that it denied the new "Euromaidan" Ukrainian authorities, some representatives of neo-Nazi volunteered to "to gain control over separatists". Igor Mosiychuk, the activist of the extreme right-wing organization "Social-National Assembly", said that the Right Sector* (movement that united Ukrainian national radicals of all colors) would send the so-called "train of friendship" to the rebellious peninsula.

Truth to be told, the "train of friendship" did not even reach Crimea! Strong evidence suggests that the train with armed combatants went to the peninsula after all, but the brave young men scattered in the Kherson region, having learned that 1,500 pro-Russian fighters had been waiting for them to "make friends". The invasion of Crimea, clashes and bloodshed did not take place. At the same time, Crimeans demonstrated that they were ready to fight till the bitter end for their beliefs and values!

"Military Campaign" to Crimea

Despite warlike attitude, aggressiveness and appetite for revenge against Russia and the overwhelming majority of Crimeans, Ukrainian "patriots" have concluded that such an operation is impossible either now or in the near future. Nevertheless, there are very desperate individuals who seriously (verbally at least) believe in the success of the "military and liberation campaign" to Crimea. Among them is Lenur Islyamov, a businessman and one of the masterminds of trade embargo, economic warfare and blackout of the peninsula.

Since autumn, 2015, when the so-called "civic activists" of the Crimean Tatar and Ukrainian nationalists have blocked movement of trucks with food products and other goods to Crimea, Islyamov, with support of "The Mejlis"*, announced the beginning of the formation of a volunteer battalion named after Noman Celebidzhikhan, also known as "Asker". Looking for the help of Turkish fellow partners and donations of sympathizers Islyamov expected to form an effective diversionary unit that would participate in the "military campaign" to Crimea.

*on extremist organization banned in the Russian Federation

TRAVEL TRACK
MILITARY CAMPAIGN
TAVRIDA

In fact, the "Asker" battalion became its commander's poodle. In the recent years, its numbers dwindled noticeably. "Asker" received neither the promised assistance from Turkey nor the status of organization as part of Ukrainian Armed Forces.

"Members of Islyamov's gang are being exposed as heroic revolutionaries. But this is just wishful thinking. It is actually a gang formation that has been racketeering in the Kherson region for two years", said Ilya Kiva, an adviser to the head of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine in 2017.

Naval Blockade

One and the same Lenur Islyamov at the end of 2015 threatened Crimea not only with ground but also naval blockade. According to Islyamov, his partners "have already dealt with blockade of the Kerch Strait" in order to interrupt communication between the peninsula and the Russian mainland. Islyamov did not specify the way he was going to organize the sea blockade of Crimea and moreover the rest of the world did not see it.

Demolition of the Crimean Bridge

If we make a symbolic rating of basic Crimean "sources of major concern" for toxic Russophobes in Ukraine, the Crimean Bridge will undoubtedly hold one of the leading roles. Media of the neighboring state tried "to feed" their readers with various sorts of myths about this object. "They won't be able to build the bridge", "The Bridge will collapse due to the slimy bottom", "The Bridge will be destroyed by ice and lithospheric platforms motion", "The bridge pillars begin to crack" ... The list may seem endless. "Missile and bomb attacks" on the main traffic aisle through the Kerch Strait were presented by the Ukrainian information "warriors" as the major "horror story" for the Crimeans and guests of the peninsula.

The Crimean magazine



TAVRIDA

SIMFEROPOL AIRPORT

TRACK

NAVAL BLOCKADE

MILITARY CAMPAIGN



THE GREATER OUR SUCCESS, THE MORE AGGRESSIVE OUR ENEMIES ARE

*Who the criminals called “political prisoners”
by Ukraine really are*

Text: Vanda Yazvitskaya

Ukrainian human rights activists of every sort and kind actively interfere in Russian Crimea’s internal affairs. Almost every event is followed by ridiculous comments, in which we are accused of the harassment of “prisoners of conscience”. Later, during the process of investigation and trial, it turns out that the criminals have no conscience

“Stage Manager“ of Terror

Oleg Sentsov, a never-before-heard director, who shot a couple of controversial films, was among the first to be named political prisoners. When the move of public protest known as “Euromaidan” was in full swing in Ukraine, Sentsov became an active member of “Automaidan”. Vehicle convoys were on picketed duty of the buildings and villas of public persons, politicians, and oligarchs in Kyiv and the regions.

Why was this not enough for him? And why did the journey from director to terrorist prove to be so short?

When the public uprising against the Euro-Maidan coup began in Crimea, it appeared that the Maidan activist Sentsov opposed his countrymen. Of course, those who call him “political prisoner” and “prisoner of conscience” claim that

the only thing he was doing was buying and delivering food to the military units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine in Crimea blocked by self-defense forces. But the investigation concluded that Sentsov and a group of his partners in crime (Aleksander Kolchenko, Gennadiy Afanasyev and Aleksey Chirniy) were closely connected with the “Right Sector” (an organization banned in Russia) and were preparing a series of terrorist attacks in Simferopol, Sevastopol and Yalta.

The outcome is as expected: in May, 2014, two months after the reunification of Crimea with Russia, Sentsov and three of his associates were detained by the Federal Security Service under reasonable suspicion of terrorism. A video of the

detention of a group member at the time of planting the explosive device in a certain place in Simferopol was also laid open to the public. This was preceded by development of information received by security officials. The security forces alleged them acts of arson of the offices of non-governmental organization "Russian Community of Crimea" and those of United Russia party on April 14 and 18 respectively. Among the other charges were the preparations for the detonation of improvised explosive devices near the Memorial of Glory (Eternal Fire) and the Lenin monument in Simferopol on the night of May 8-9, 2014.

Tellingly, the director's partners in crime Gennadiy Afanasyev and Aleksey Chirniy betrayed Sentsov, having made a confession and driving a plea bargain. The court tried their case under the special procedure and found both of them guilty, assigning a punishment in the form of seven years of imprisonment in a high-security prison. It turned out that Sentsov, through Afanasyev, gave instructions to Chirniy, who requested the assistance of a certain Alexander Pirogov. Pirogov, in his turn, handed Chirniy "an object imitating an explosive mechanism made from a digital watches". In fact, Pirogov handed him a hoax explosive device and immediately reported to the Federal Security Service about Chirniy's criminal request. So, the passing of fake devices had been already carried out as part of law enforcement intelligence operations.

Unlike his counterparts who admitted the charges, Sentsov pleaded not guilty. In the course of juridical proceedings he stated that he had been put to the torture. The same tactics was later followed by the squealers who had already been imprisoned. They claimed they had slandered their ideological leader under the pressure of brutal tortures. And even after the exchange and release of this terrorist group in Ukraine, they do not communicate with each other.

But the case was based on both another witnesses' statements and the intelligence information. The Crimean terrorists' case became high-publicised. Human rights defenders living at foreigners' expense announced Sentsov and his "team" to be the victims and "prisoners of conscience". And the fact that the terrorists' actions posed a real threat to the lives of Crimeans didn't worry the defenders at all.

Journalists "Activists" = Terrorists

Followers of various extremist religious factions banned in the Russian Federation feel free and easy on the territory of Ukraine. After reunification of Crimea, they have become very active in view of influencing the events and erosion of stability on the peninsula. And despite the fact that the vast majority of Crimean Tatars voted for the Russian future of Crimea and were among the first to receive Russian passports, it appeared that among them there were supporters of the outlawed Muslim organizations, in particular 'Hizb ut-Tahrir al-Islami' (Party of Islamic Liberation banned in the Russian Federation). This is an international religious and political organization founded in 1953 in Jerusalem. In 2003 its activities were banned in Russia by the Supreme Court. On the part of its extremist cult members, it was naive to assume that their extremist activity would be continued in the Russian Crimea.

The Crimean magazine

In the meantime, at international platforms, the attention of the world community is focused on terrorism and extremism in the EU, Africa and the Middle East. However, here the examples of prevented acts of terrorism, the detention of the representatives of banned extremist organizations in Crimea and specific facts of crimes committed against the Crimean people are persistently not taken into consideration.

What do prominent European politicians think about terrorism?

ANGELA MERKEL,

the Federal Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany:

– We have to admit that terrorists make attacks everywhere: in Istanbul, in Paris, in Tunisia and Ankara. Today, international terrorism has again revealed its ugly face. Therefore, we have to get it over with, once and for all.

EMMANUEL MACRON,

the President of France, at a press conference with Jens Stoltenberg, the Secretary-General of NATO:

– NATO is a collective defence organization. But who do they defend from? Who is our common enemy? We need to make it clear. And this is a very strategic issue. Sometimes I hear people say that Russia and China are our enemies. Is the goal of the North Atlantic Alliance to identify one or the other as our enemies? I do not think so. Our common enemy is terrorism, which has affected our countries.

Unmasking

Over the past three years, Federal Security Service went public on wholesale liquidation of five cells of this organization in Crimea: two in Bakhchisaray and one each in Simferopol, Sevastopol and Yalta. Thus, on October 12, 2016, the first series of searches and arrests among Muslims in Simferopol took place. During the searches, while working out the acquired intelligence information, clear evidence of proof of the Muslims' criminal activities against the authorities was found by the riot police officers. Five residents of the villages of Kamenka and Stroganovka were arrested.

Later in Rostov-on-Don, six members of the terror entity were pronounced a sentence. The residents of Crimea Muslim Aliyev, Inver Bekirov, Vadim Siruk, Refat Alimov, Arsen Dzhapparov and Emir-Usein Kuku were convicted in a crime by the Southern Regional Military Court and imprisoned for 7-19 years. They were convicted of organizing or participating in terrorist criminal activities, committing crimes by a group of persons, and preparing for a violent coup.

The longest prison terms were given to Aliyev and Bekirov (19 and 18 years, respectively) for recruitment and incitement to extremism. Of course, they pleaded no guilty, but facts are stubborn things. Thus, according to the data of law enforcement officials', the detainees "during the public meetings with the inhabitants of the peninsula, using habits of security, were spreading the terrorist creed and recruiting Crimean Muslims into their ranks". During searches in the houses of the members, not only literature of extremist nature but also weapons, ammunition and explosive devices were found by the security forces.

A noteworthy detail is that even upon trial they made no disguise of emotions and sentiments, and were shouting phrases that were nothing short of extremist. And, again, even those who initially admitted intentions to put the explosive devices near the vital infrastructures in different corners of Crimea, later, having been arrested, chose the already well-established line of defense – they insisted on that admission was coerced under tortures. Nevertheless, some explosive devices were found in the earlier indicated locations. The question is – where were they from, who were they planted by, and how did the detained "activists" know about them?

Over the years that Crimea has been a part of Russia, security agencies have dealt with quite a number of persons related to the above-mentioned organization. Many of

them were put on trial, and some of them have already handed their sentences. But the potential threat coming from the underground Hezbollah members remains to be an urgent one.

At the same time, while in detention (temporary holding or pre-trial detention facilities), the "political prisoners" immediately acquired various chronic and acute diseases. According to the statements of their lawyers, they couldn't afford to retain all those "terminally ill" supporters of an extremist organization in custody. However, in the past these supposedly serious diseases did not prevent the detainees from being engaged in their prohibited activities and crossing the border several times a year, or even a month, and meeting other like-minded people. And now is when they suffer from constant pain in their knees, gastritis and severe headaches.

Among the persons involved in "Hizb ut-Tahrir" case (an organization banned in the Russian Federation) there are persons who are mentioned as Crimean journalists and who hold themselves out as those ones. It should be noted, that the vast majority of all these citizens have never been journalists and are known by no one in the journalists' circles. However, they conducted their activities on the Internet, leaving their comments under various pseudonyms (and without them) and called for "dynamic actions" with the view to "blowing up" the peaceful situation on the peninsula. But their assumptions that the names of the authors of illegal appeals are reliably hidden by anonymous messages did not come true. And now such "journalists" hope only for the world community.

It is amazing but professed terrorists who, for example, joined the battalion named after Noman Celebidzhikhan in Ukraine (the illegal armed group banned in Russia) also cannot understand why they were carpeted. Indeed, what else can the citizens having left the Russian Crimea and organized its blockade on the border with Ukraine are charged with? It is because of commercial, power and water blockade. A bet that the peninsula would mire in sanctions, darkness, famine and lack of water has failed –

Russia lent its helping hand. The saboteurs of this battalion are still fighting on the side of the Ukrainian security forces in Donbas.

By now, four people have been convicted on charges for participating in a battalion; the basis for this was article 208, paragraph 2 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation (organization of an illegal armed group or participation therein). Another person involved has recently been detained and is awaiting a verdict in the pre-trial detention center.

The Enemy Is Watchful

In November, 2016, Dmitriy Shtyblikov, Alexey Bessarabov and Vladimir Dudka, the employees of the Crimean analytical center "Nomos", were detained in Sevastopol. All three were accused of preparing sabotage in Crimea on orders from Ukrainian intelligence service. In April, 2019, based on the witness statement and obtained evidence, Dudka and Bessarabov were sentenced by the Sevastopol City Court to 14 years imprisonment and imposed fines in 350 thousand roubles and 300 thousand roubles respectively. Although the Ukrainian authorities shrug off the spies, the saboteurs are still looking to for help of Ukraine.

On December, 17 in Simferopol, a local resident Denis Kashuk was picked up by the Federal Security Service officers on suspicion of illegal acquisition and possession of weapons having been found during the search. At that, a court session to be dealt with according the law was held behind closed doors at the request of the suspect himself, who had acknowledged his guilt. But the case of Oleg Prikhodko, a Ukrainian activist as he is referred to, is in the pre-trial phase. It should be reminded that Prikhodko embraces an ideology of Nazi and is a member of Ukrainian extremist organizations - the fact he comes out into the open. He was charged with manufacture of explosives and preparing an act of terrorism in Saki. All of these were confirmed by security forces during a search – homemade explosives were found in his garage in Saki. The activist himself applies that the explosives were planted as he "has not been using the garage for a long time". The investigation believes that Prikhodko was preparing to dynamite the building of Saki Administration in order to affect the local authorities.

Ivan Yatskin, who was detained in Simferopol, is charged with treason against the State by way of espionage. According to the Federal Security Service investigators, he collected in Crimea information classified as a state secret of the Russian Federation and then gave classified intelligence to the Ukrainian authorities. He faces up to 20 years in prison.

Thanks to the prompt actions of the security, defence and law enforcement of Crimea we managed to avoid the potential fallout of impending acts of terrorism at the hands of arrested offenders. And there are so many things that we are still unaware of ... And those who call these people "innocent victims" just do not want to know! They tend to call all criminals, thieves, spies, murderers and even terrorists arrested in Russia as "political prisoners", especially if they hate the government. But, as judged by their statements and actions, they hate all Russian people.

ANTÓNIO GUTERRES,

the Secretary-General of the United Nations:

– Nothing can justify terrorism. Not a single reason or discontent can ever justify the fact that the civilians are becoming the targets, lives are extinguished and means of living retire to the background.

GABRIELA GUEVAS BARRON,

the President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union:

– Terrorism follows only one ideology – violence as an instrument, and demoralization of society as a goal. Today, this problem is of particular concern for the society and the world. Ideas of superiority and intolerance are the primary enemies of diversity. The history of mankind remembers the importance of pursuing dialogue and exercising patience.

THOMAS GREMINGER,

the Secretary-General for the OSCE, at a meeting of the CSTO Permanent Council:

– Our interaction is an important and effective means of strengthening regional and international security and stability, preventing conflicts and resolving them throughout the Eurasian region and counteracting new challenges and threats.

To Crimea *for knowledge*

EDUCATION IN THE FACE OF SANCTIONS

Text: Andrey Novokhatko

V.I. Vernadskiy Crimean Federal University, the largest center of higher education in Crimea, has become one of the country's leading universities in the total number of foreign students in six years despite the pressure of the West





To date, the international activities of CFU represent a vivid example and demonstrate that the discriminatory and illegal system of international sanctions, despite its whole range of negative consequences, does not seriously affect the functioning of the university. As of 1 March 2020, 2272 foreign students from 54 countries study in V.I. Vernadskiy Crimean Federal University.

– “Despite Western sanctions, Crimea remains a major international educational center. For example, for decades, the university has been training medical practitioners for India. Experience shows that in this country there is a high success rate for student employment following graduation. Almost in every major Indian city, there is a Medical Graduate from our university”, says Alexander Mashchenko, Head of the International Relations Department of CFU.

And even though the international sanctions imposed on Crimea are much more severe than those that are targeted at the Russian Federation as a whole, Crimean Federal University is among the top ten Russian higher educational establishments with the highest number of foreign students. In 2018, CFU was ranked 8-9th on the territory of the Russian Federation in terms of the total number of foreign students.

– “The second traditional region where university entrants come from is the post-Soviet countries: Ukraine, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan”, states Alexander Mashchenko. “Besides, another

strategic region is represented by a number of African countries: Zimbabwe, Ghana, and Namibia. Our education is now in great demand there. We also enroll students from the countries of the Arab world. First of all, Jordan, Palestine, Lebanon, and Egypt”.

Now Crimean Federal University is actively working in the People’s Republic of China.

– “Our university delegations have made several visits to the PRC, as a result, cooperation agreements with Shandong Transport University, Harbin Commercial Institute, Beijing Pedagogical Research Institute and Sanya University have been signed”, says Alexander Mashchenko.

On the basis of Yalta Humanitarian and Pedagogical Academy, a unique for Crimea and the South of Russia specialty “Chinese language” has been introduced.

To Crimea *for knowledge*



For language practice, in 2018 and 2019 the academy students went to summer language schools in China for three weeks at the expense of the CFU Development Program.

International activities of V.I. Vernadskiy Crimean Federal University in 2019 were aimed at expanding opportunities for cooperation with higher educational institutions and other scientific and educational organizations, public image perfection of the University and its upward mobility, spread and promotion of the Russian language and Russian education abroad. So, by the end of 2019, the number of visits of CFU lecturers abroad amounted to 16: to Italy - 1, to Israel - 1, to China - 3, to Kazakhstan - 1, to Vietnam - 3, to Syria - 2, to Iran - 2, to the Republic of Cyprus - 2, to Germany - 1.

In 2019, structural divisions and branch campuses of the university were visited by 7 foreign delegations numbering over 50 people from 22 countries, including Bulgaria, Vietnam, Germany, Greece, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Canada, China, the Netherlands, Norway, Serbia, USA, Thailand, Turkey, Uzbekistan and others.

More than 4,000 teachers and students took part in the meetings. CFU graduates now have the opportunity to receive a document of a common European standard, which simplifies the recognition of their academic and professional achievements abroad.



Last year, V.I. Vernadskiy Crimean Federal University began issuing a Diploma Supplement to its graduates - a document of international standard, the form of which was developed by the European Commission, the Council of Europe and UNESCO with a view to achieve mutual recognition of national documents on higher education following the principles of the Bologna Declaration on the European Higher Education Area.

Two foundation courses are now available in CFU for both humanitarian and medical specialties. In 2019, 42 students of non-medical and 60 students of medical specialties completed their studies at foundation course and received certificates.

It has become a tradition for the university to host the International Forum of Foreign Students and University Graduates "Crimea in the Global Scientific and Educational Space". In October 2019, the II International Forum was held. It was attended by the CFU graduates from Vietnam, Canada, Jordan, as well as students from more than 50 countries. Such events play an important role in overcoming the imposed external restrictions against the Republic of Crimea and contribute to turn Crimean Federal University into a modern educational, scientific, research and



cultural center competent in training achievement-oriented commercially successful specialists.

Students go to Crimea to study from...

1. India
2. Ukraine
3. Uzbekistan
4. Nigeria
5. Jordan
6. Kazakhstan
7. Palestine
8. Turkmenistan
9. Azerbaijan
10. Ghana

Interesting Facts

CFU was ranked **8-9th** on the territory of the Russian Federation in terms of the total number of foreign students in **2018**

As of 01.03.2020, **2272** foreign students from **54** countries study in V.I. Vernadskiy Crimean Federal University.

In 2019, structural divisions and branch campuses of the university were visited by **227** foreign delegations numbering over **50** people from countries.



KHAMIDOVA SITORA (UZBEKISTAN),

Medical Academy named after S.I. Georgievsky, Resident of the 2nd year (R2)

– I received the master’s degree at Crimean Federal university named after V.I. Vernadsky. I had a choice either to go to the mainland to continue my studies there or to stay in Crimea. I preferred to stay here as at the Academy everybody knows me; we have brilliant professionals, excellent teachers, peaceful skies, beautiful nature, and friendly people. It’s very comfortable to live and study in Crimea.



ISMAIL M.D. ABUHARBID (PALESTINA),

S.I. Georgiyevskiy Medical Academy, resident

– I am a 2016 graduate of International Medical Faculty of Medical Academy of Crimean Federal university named after V.I. Vernadsky. After graduation, I returned to my homeland and worked at a clinic gaining experience in my profession. But for career growth I had to take a course of residency training. Although I’d continue training in my homeland I still decided to come to Crimea, to Alma-Mater. During the years of studies I had gone through a lot: came to study to Ukraine, was a bystander of Crimean Spring events, and went on to a Russian Diploma!



MISSAMU BUKONDZO NUPTIYA ODREY (REPUBLIC OF CONGO),

Tavrisheskaya Academy, an undergraduate student

– I came to Crimea to study in 2017. Back when I was a schoolgirl I made a decision to study in Russia. I sent my request form through Rossotrudnichestvo (Federal Agency for CIS Affairs). I had a choice to study at any higher educational institution of the Russian Federation, and it was Crimea and Crimean Federal University that I have chosen. I am very interested in Russian literature. I learned the Russian language in Congo, at the Russian Cultural Center. Now at the university I have a lot to do, but I study with great relish. After graduation I want to become a diplomat as this profession will allow me to learn tough languages and get acquainted with different cultures. It is that very profession that helps maintain peaceful relations between countries in educational, financial and cultural spheres.

Welcome to my Epic Crimean Adventure™!



Anna Belkina,

Deputy Editor in Chief

Head of Communications,

Marketing and Strategic Development RT

A few years ago, after Crimea became reabsorbed into Russia, I took my very first trip there. I was probably one of very few adult Russians who had never ventured into the peninsula when it was still part of the USSR or Ukraine. I was very curious and, as someone far more used to vacationing in North America and Western Europe, a little apprehensive. I did not know what to expect - would there be anything to do beyond lazing on a beach? Would I be saddled with shabby Soviet infrastructure? Would it be safe for a woman traveling solo (spoiler alert: absolutely)? Friendly? Interesting?



I fell in love with Crimea irrevocably. The region is barely known to non-Russians and Ukrainians. Yet it is a massively underrated holiday destination, with many exciting experiences to offer to any kind of traveler, from a beach bum to an outdoors adventurer to a history buff.

Here are four really good reasons to visit Crimea:

Go if you are into Nature

Before the trip I thought of Crimea as mostly beaches and somewhat sparse Mediterranean greenery inland. Turns out this small peninsula has it all: pine forests, temperate rain forests, blooming fields, limestone plateaus, sharp mountain peaks and barren deserts. Go on foot, or on a stallion, or an ATV. Scale volcanoes, swim under waterfalls, trek on horseback across rolling hill or pull yourself through one of the longest underground lakes in Europe. Enjoy as little or much of civilization as you are comfortable with.

Go if you are into History

Whether it is ancient, medieval or modern. Greek, Byzantine, Tatar, Ottoman, Italian or Russian. Whether you want to explore cave fortresses like Chufut-Kale, royal palaces of Yalta or World War II battleships in Sevastopol, Crimea has endless tales to tell and will keep ardent history buffs fully enthralled.

Go for Sea, Sand & Sun

Crimea is a great resort destination with clean water, sandy of pebble beaches, myriads of cafes and bars and dozens of water-bound activities (sailing, fishing, parasailing, tubing, swimming



with dolphins, jet skis, water skis and more) offered daily even in small sea-side towns.

Go if you love Wine

So many vineyards, so little time! Wine production in Crimea dates back thousands of years ago. Some wine grapes were brought here by the ancient Greeks, others came with the Genoese and the Venetians, who battled for control of strategic trade and defense outposts here during the Middle Ages. Wine culture permeates everything in the region and is reflected in the elements of decor like café dishes and church gates. From the champagnes of Novy Svet to the deep reds of Massandra to the ports and cognacs of Koktebel you can spend your days sipping and relaxing, and might even learn something during the tastings (which are done in English too).

My journal highlights:

Arrival

Wildflower meadows. Blue, pink, purple, yellow, white, red. Cornflowers, poppies, daisies, clovers, heather, wild lavender. Cows grazing idly by the side of the road. Cypress trees peppering wide

Crimea *Chronicles*



open spaces. Tiny village houses hidden by the lush orchards. Blue mountain ridges looming in the distance. Echoes of Provence and the American West. Small Orthodox churches. Small mosques. Small trolley buses right out of the 1950's – literally out of the 1950's, that's how long some of them had been on the road. A taxi ride down a serpentine road, through vineyards, pine forests, rolling hills, valleys. Finally, a glimpse of the sea, just as the sun is ready to set.

Wake-up call

I wake up in the middle of a pine forest. Well, not so much wake up as am woken up at 5 am – very much against my will – by a chorus of songbirds. My accommodation is a rustic bungalow set in a grove steps away from the beach of Novy Svet. This will be an adventure.

At Sea

Twice a day a boat named Gulyona leaves Novy Svet and takes her passengers on a journey along the south-eastern coast of the Crimean peninsula. Gulyona passes pine-covered mountains, Shalyapin Grotto and Pirate Beach along the Golitsyn Trail, and the 14th century Genoese fortress in Sudak. It drops anchor 200 meters off of the protected Tsar's Beach, and you can go diving right off the deck.

There Be Lions

The origin story of the Taigan Safari Park is a heartwarming tale of an oligarch using his powers for good. Oleg Zubkov convinced the local authorities to let him turn the ruins of an abandoned military base into animal reserve. He ponied up his own cash for the project and personally traveled to many countries, visiting underfunded or mismanaged zoos and circuses, rescuing ill and maltreated animals and bringing them to Taigan for care and rehabilitation. Today Taigan is the largest reserve of its kind in Europe, and is unlikely to give up the top spot any time soon due to the park's remarkable feature: lions and tigers kept here are reproducing like bunnies.

Saddles and scandals

Crimean tour guides are full of fascinating stories from the region's history and culture. If one such tale is to be believed, in the 19th century, just as Crimean coast has established itself as the Russian Riviera and a favorite of Russian royals and international nobles, it started to gain a bit of ill-repute as...well, in today's terms, as a sex tourism hot-spot. But this was no ordinary by-the-sea debauchery. The customers of these services were often women – the ladies of the highest echelons of Society at that. While taking their daily promenades on the embankments of Yalta, Alushta and Sudak, mesdames and mademoiselles would be entertained by the Tatar dzhigity – highly skilled horsemen – showing off their mastery and stature. The rugged locals with their fit bodies and commanding presence appealed to the corseted dames of Moscow and Saint Petersburg. Eventually a lady would pick a dzhigit she liked best and hire him for a guided horseback excursion into the mountains. What looked like an entirely appropriate activity came with far less society-approved fringe benefits, dispensed in the shade of a cherry tree.

Yalta

Though it is first and foremost a holiday destination, Yalta is a full-blown, year-round city, with a population of nearly 80 thousand. It has hundreds of hotels, restaurants, stores and nightclubs. Menus are duplicated in surprisingly accurate, colloquial English. Yalta is located smack in the middle of a lot of Crimea's natural and cultural attractions, including Vorontsov, Livadiya and Massandra palaces, Nikitsky Botanical Gardens, the Ai-Petri Mountain and the Big

Canyon. It is also home to the sight that over the last hundred years has become Crimea's international calling card: the whimsical, Neo-Gothic Swallow's Nest Castle perched atop a cliff overlooking the Black Sea.

To the Waterfalls

Jur-Jur ("Water-Water" in Armenian) is the most abundant waterfall in Crimea. It is preceded, upstream, by beautiful rapids that form three magical pools in the mountains. The one closest to the waterfall washes away all your sins. The next one up is the basin of eternal love. And the top one is the pool of eternal youth. On the hike to the pools I am swearing and sweating my butt off in yoga pants and sneakers; meanwhile, young local ladies around me are prancing



around in denim short-shorts, bedazzled tank-tops and strappy sandals, waist-length hair swinging freely around them like it's a shampoo commercial.

Moria

"Breathtaking" is the only word to describe the Eminé-Bayir-Hasar caves located at the bottom of Chatyr-Dag plateau. The name is a preview of things to come – translated from Turkic it means "a vortex on the side of a mountain near an oak tree." A vortex indeed – 125 meters deep and stretching for two kilometers of surreal, majestic chambers, multistory halls, narrow and steep passages, steaming lakes, remains of prehistoric animals, crystals and shimmering columns that measure their age in tens of millions years...The place is made for legends and magic – or maybe it is made of them.

Vorontsovsky Palace

Part Tudor castle (Count Vorontsov was mostly raised and educated in England), part Moorish palace (a nod to the Ottoman influence on the region), on the outside, all fashionable 19th-century European summer home on the inside. Six marble lion statues guard the steps of the Palace's southern terrace, with the famous sleeping lion at the bottom. Winston Churchill – a fan of booze, cigars and, importantly, naps – became exceptionally fond of his spirit animal during the 1945 Yalta Conference, but failed to convince Joseph Stalin to let him take the big marble cat back to England.

Sailing off into the Sunset

Left and right I am hooking tiny silver fish two, three, four at a time, with minimal effort. The ship's first mate chops the heads off stavridki with industrial speed, dips them into salted flour and fries them up whole. It is twilight, the skies are pink, dolphins are seeing us off – and, not counting the crew, I am alone on my favorite pirate ship. It's perfect.

You can read more about Anna's travels at <https://gohomeandaway.wordpress.com/>



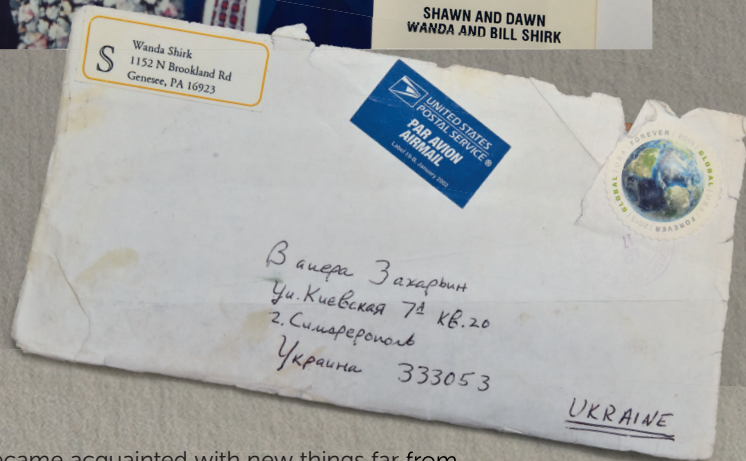
RELATIONS BETWEEN COUNTRIES ARE ALWAYS RELATIONS BETWEEN PEOPLE

Text: Egor Petrunin
Photo: Lydia Vetkhova

In 1997, a trip to the USA for almost every Crimean student was something fabulous. Valery Zakharyin, at that time a 16-year-old teenager, was lucky enough to get to the States on a student exchange program. **Six months of intensive learning of English from scratch**, more than eight and a half thousand kilometers of flight and finally a senior student of Simferopol school is hosted by the family of an English language teacher at the Ulysses School in Pennsylvania, Wanda Sherk. **For the coming year, Mrs. Sherk's house will become almost home to a guy from the so far away Crimea**



Photo from Valery Zakharyin's family album



The student not only studied and became acquainted with new things far from home but also learned the most important art in life – the art of communication. What is more, it was communication with people of different cultural background and different lifestyle, which was of great value in itself. However, this difference in cultures did not prevent either Valery or the Sherks family from getting on well and making each other rich in spirit. The Sherks learnt from a Simferopol schoolboy about the beautiful Crimean land and love for the Motherland, full of respect for the elderly and the Great Patriotic War veterans, about the glorious history of the teenager's native land. Valery wanted the whole world to know about Crimea!

Years passed. Valery became a successful Crimean lawyer. For many years, upon returning home from the States, he has maintained relations with Mrs. Sherk and her family in correspondence. The year 2014 began. Crimea grabbed

A letter from Crimea



the headlines of world's major media. Events in Ukraine, and then the status referendum in March, 2014 became a major turning point in the recent history of the Peninsula.

The article in the American magazine *Time*, published in early 2014, which made Wanda Scherk write a letter to Crimea

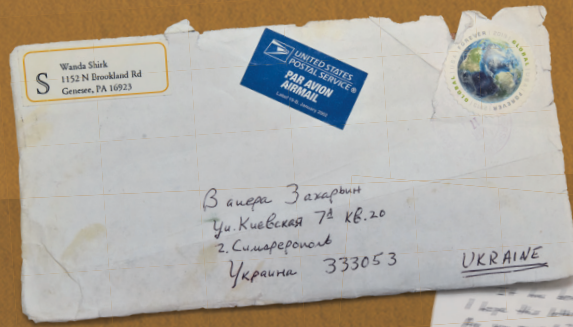
It was then that a high school teacher Wanda Scherk wrote yet another letter to the Republic:

– “Dear Val, news about the events in Ukraine appear with ever increasing frequency in TV programs. They used to talk mainly about the situation in Kyiv but now they are talking more and more about the things happening in Crimea. I always peer into the faces of people shown on the screen in the hope of recognizing you. I believe that you support the Crimean reunification with Russia”, Wanda wrote in March, 2014.

Why would an American family think that way? Because even then, back in 1997, it was clear that Crimeans were closer in spirit to Russia. It was clear from the student's stories, the language he spoke, and his general knowledge of history. Valery Zakharyin treasures this letter and brings to mind with distinct reverence.

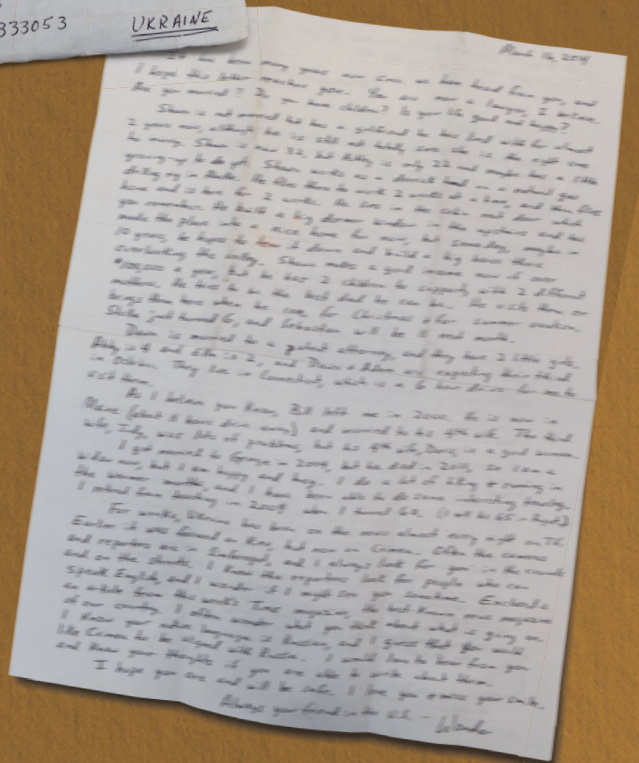
– “I remember well our conversations with Mrs. Scherk and her family about Crimea, patriotism, respect for our ancestors, and the desire of Crimeans to live better. Now I have plenty to share and tell about the way people live in modern Crimea. The situation on the peninsula is far from what is regularly presented by

The same letter from Wanda Scherk and her family in which she asks Valery about the situation in Crimea



the world media. I would like to tell more about my father, the Crimean wine grower, who in the year of the reunification of Russia and Crimea bottled wine with the symbolic name "Good Year". I have in mind to tell everyone that Crimeans made their own choice without outside pressure, and had no regrets because their choice was historically predetermined and made possible, after many years, to finally return home", said Valery Zakharyin to the Crimean magazine.

And now, some years after the letter to Mrs. Sherk, a prosperous Crimean lawyer, although behind time, responds to a message from the American Ulysses on the pages of the Crimean magazine:



"My dear Sherk family! Please, forgive me for not having written for a long time. Today Crimea is a prosperous and rapidly developing republic, where people of various nationalities and religions live and work together. Over the years your fellow-citizens have come to the Russian Crimea and been able to personally make sure about the peaceful and prosperous development of the region. I would like to tell you a lot! But your personal visit to the republic would be the best evidence of my words. I invite you to Crimea so that you can see for yourselves the amazing place I was telling you so much about. Your Val."

It's amazing, but now when the global web makes it possible to learn much more about any place in the world, when borders are becoming increasingly blurred, and transport can take you almost anywhere, we know too little about each other. Many of us tend to rely on TV news, but we forget these friendly and warm relations between people from different countries may help us find out more and see what things are really like. That is because relations between countries are always relations between people.

“I Enjoy Living in RUSSIAN CRIMEA”

Text: Mariya Gololobova



My name is Mariya Gololobova. I am 17 years old, and I am the 11th-grade student of Simferopol Academic Gymnasium. Recently, I have learned that the Crimean magazine is once again going to be published in English and distributed abroad to introduce foreigners to Crimean reality. **I have decided to express my views on the pages of this publication and display the real picture of the things that are happening in Crimea now, through the eyes of a teenager**

When I was a primary school pupil, my greatest dream was to go to the famous children's camp "Artek". Even for a pupil with excellence in studies, it was almost impossible to get a free place in this camp. But everything has changed after the reunification of Crimea with Russia: talented, active, hardworking children can now rest in camps for free. Such opportunities are provided not only by "Artek" but also by other modern camps in Crimea and Russia. Participation in a vocal contest helped

to make my dream come true. Apart from "Artek", I was also lucky enough to visit "Regata" camp in Alupka and "Orlyonok" in Tuapse. Those were unforgettable days: acquaintance with children from the CIS countries, interesting sports competitions and music contests, responsive and wise teachers and counselors. But the most important thing is new meetings, acquaintances and friends. As you know, friendship makes us strong, teaches us to be sympathetic and tolerant towards others.

** Promoted content



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Within the framework of the state program, activists of our school visited Moscow. We stayed in the high-rise, modern "Astrus" hotel, met famous people, attended master classes in oratory, visited the offices of "Mail.Ru" and "Rambler" companies, learned a lot and were highly motivated to study and develop a successful career. We were also among the audience of the international festival "We Are Together" in Anapa; our fortnight stay there was absolutely incredible and we got acquainted with the cultures of different regions and peoples of Russia.

Our school now has more opportunities for self-development. We have a school newspaper, radio and even television; everyone is welcome to try and create media or contribute their content. Classrooms have finally been renovated and are now fully equipped. Thanks to these positive changes, our school routines have been diversified and students' interest in learning has increased greatly. Security at school and in its premises has been improved: cameras and access control system have been installed.

My parents have also felt these quality changes. The abolition of the tuition fee in the music school where I study was a great relief for them. At first, they could not believe it and thought it was somebody's joke. I should say our family budget has benefited a lot from it. My parents believe that such social support is important for talented children from low-income families. And my grandfather, a veteran of

the Russian Armed Forces, was very delighted when a free medical center, which was built in just a year, was opened in Yalta. Now he goes on regular medical check-ups there. Thanks to the doctors' professionalism and modern equipment available in the center, he has forgotten about his old sores.

I can't help mentioning the construction sites in Crimea! The airport, the Crimean Bridge, new hotels and inns... New residential areas and neighborhoods are mushrooming up: modern schools, sports facilities, playgrounds, shops, cafes and, of course, bright high-rise buildings. I enjoy walking or roller-skating at a pretty good speed along Yalta's quay. Now the quay has become longer, its right side has been completely reconstructed. Its architectural design is very popular with the residents and guests of the city.

But the thing that grabs your attention in the first place is the change in Crimean people's thinking and views. People have hope and

Crimea in teenager's opinion

confidence in their future. We have free medicine, and social assistance system which supports citizens in need. Young people have the opportunity to receive a good education and study at the best universities in the country. Besides, kindergartens are being constructed, new playgrounds and sports grounds are being opened – and all of this changes Crimea for the better. And I would also like for the attitude of Crimeans to continue to change for the better.

But every time I watch the news, I'm distressed. Foreign media present a false coverage of the events which took place six years ago; the truth about the life of the peninsula is not revealed and fictional tales about our occupation are invented. Our people have made their choice and the voting was unanimous, but the truth about the real situation in Crimea still filters through a wall of misunderstanding and lies. I have decided to make a close study of foreign Internet websites and get to know the real opinions



of people living in the European Union. I have benefited greatly from the information provided by the German media website www.welt.de. Here you can find many interesting statements of Germans about Crimea, which differ drastically from the official position of the country... I would like to present a few examples.

VALDEMAR K., 57 YEARS OLD, MECHANIC, GERMAN FROM RUSSIA:

- You know, I have lived in Germany for more than 20 years. In the Soviet Union, it didn't make a bit of difference – Ukrainians or Russians. Even today, none of this would be necessary. This is all artificial. Someone is interested in turning nations against each other. As a result, people suffer. Does Crimea belong to Ukraine or Russia? This will not change as long as the Americans want Ukraine to be pro-Western. They want to make Russia weaker, it's just politics.

HERBERT S., 40 YEARS OLD:

- I believe most people there feel like Russians. After all, Crimea belonged to Russia most of the time. The problem is that Western politicians do not recognize voting. Maybe you should vote once again, but this time under international supervision.

MIKEY P., 20 YEARS OLD, A STUDENT FROM KIEL:

- You know, I have lived in Germany for more than 20 years. In the Soviet Union, it didn't make a bit of difference – Ukrainians or Russians. Even today, none of this would be necessary. This is all artificial. Someone is interested in turning nations against each other. As a result, people suffer. Does Crimea belong to Ukraine or Russia? This will not change as long as the Americans want Ukraine to be pro-Western. They want to make Russia weaker, it's just politics.

I have concluded that there are people of good sense in the West, and they are changing their attitude towards the peninsula. More and more people want to know the truth and the real state of affairs. I would like to invite all sceptics to us: "Welcome to Crimea! Come, see the way we live, the way we can live, work and enjoy the sun and the world. We are open and peaceful, we want to communicate and make friends with all countries and peoples!"

Crimea *in a snapshot*



THE MORNING MIST

Author: Roman Lyubimskiy

Urban-type settlement of
Shchebetovka in the south-east of
Crimea sunk in the morning mist

THE EVOLUTION OF FAKES: "FRESH" MYTHS ABOUT CRIMEA FROM UKRAINE AND THE WEST

**From the "Nuclear Peninsula" to the
Plasticine Bridge**

Text: Oleg Stepanov

For six years, a number of Ukrainian and Western media, along with certain politicians, bloggers and so-called social activists of all hues, have been practicing warfare with Crimea in the sphere of information. And they fight with self-forgetful inspiration, demonstrating jealously to each other who have faked up more and whose bogeyman stories about Crimea are funnier. Well, it is quite understandable, somehow you have to make your living ... It is worth mentioning that some of them are talented indeed, at least in fantasy style. Some conjure up pictures of the Crimean Bridge collapsed because of a 'mud volcano', others fancy nuclear warheads... Oh, they certainly miss those times when being particularly creative wasn't so important, and confining themselves to mentioning 'deserted beaches', 'empty counters' and 'tanks in the streets' was surely enough. Even the most devoted fans of this genre no longer give credence to such a newspaper hoax. Reality places a challenge before the anti-Russian ideological machine to strain itself and feign something fresher. The Crimean magazine decided to make a selection of the latest information phantoms about Crimea, appearing in the media.

“Nuclear Peninsula”

The topic of the alleged nuclear arms capability in Crimea has certainly been around for ages among the anti-Russian myth-makers. However, making it more mainstream has been encouraged relatively recently. Representatives of a neighboring state display particular zeal. Moreover, judging by the discrepancy in the statements on this topic, the attitude of the Ukrainian military and political figures is not at all consistent and clear.

At the beginning of 2019, the ex-commander of the naval forces of Ukraine Vitaliy Gaiduk said that Russia “expands tactical nuclear weapons in Crimea and increases the number of cruise missiles on the ships of the Black Sea Fleet”. The goal of the Russian Federation, according to Gaiduk, is “the promotion of their national interests using pressure tactics”.

In his turn, the Ukrainian MP Mustafa Dzhemilev (the former head of the Medzhlis organization outlawed in Russia) in the autumn of 2018 spoke, referring to some “source from Moscow”, of at least six nuclear warheads located on the peninsula.

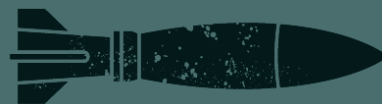
Pavel Klimkin, who at that time occupied the post of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, decided not to be so categorical and stated the following: Kyiv “has well-founded suspicions” that “there may be nuclear weapons in Crimea or at least the infrastructure for their deployment”. After all, he is a diplomat...

At the same time, judging by the statement of the former so-called representative of the President of Ukraine in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, Boris Babin, made in January 2019, there have been no nuclear weapons on the peninsula so far. But they will appear soon, he claims. Babin is firmly convinced that Russia is awaiting the completion of the construction of the railway part of the Crimean Bridge to transfer nuclear forces to the peninsula.

It seems that our neighbors have not yet decided whether there are nuclear weapons in Crimea or not. Almost like in a meme about a gopher from the movie ‘Demobbed’: “Do you see nuclear warheads? I don’t see them either. But there they are”.

Some Western-European statesmen also try to keep pace with their Ukrainian counterparts. The article written by the European Commissioner for Security, Julian King, proved to be a striking example. The material published in the British edition of The Guardian in December, 2018 contained the same “nuclear” legend.

Not only have all these “denunciators” failed to adduce any intelligible proof of such “intimidating” assertions, but their statements also run counter to logic and common sense. Those who have at least a little notion about military history and strategy know that the states with available nuclear weapons will never deploy them on the borders of their territories. At that rate, there is a great risk of annihilation of these funds in case of the conflict. Therefore, nuclear weapons are located upcountry, so that they are more difficult for the potential adversaries to reach. By definition, there is no sense in deploying such weapons in Crimea, since even without them the current concentration of armed forces on the peninsula leaves no chance for a potential enemy and fortifies the southwestern borders of Russia.



THE RESIDENTS OF CRIMEA ARE SO STERN THAT THEY MOVED TO RUSSIA WITH THEIR PENINSULA

UKRAINE URGED THE WORLD COMMUNITY NOT TO CONSIDER UKRAINIANS WHO WERE HAVING A REST IN CRIMEA AS WELL-RESTED

“Nostalgic about Ukraine”

If the average citizen unaware of current affairs in Crimea will watch for some time only Ukrainian TV channels and read only the Ukrainian media, he will come to believing that Crimean citizens have “endured so many sufferings from the Russian occupancy” in six years and are keen on reverting to the “independent” state.

The most frequently adduced argument is the “cruelty of the ruling regime”. The unwanted can supposedly be grabbed any time in the street and put behind bars. Suspects or those who have committed real criminal offenses are presented as vivid examples. But for some reason or another in Ukraine and the West, they are persistently referred to as “political prisoners”...

The debates of the supporters of “nostalgic about Ukrainian times” theory quite often reduce to the need for “bread and circuses”. Fake-makers say that Crimeans are eager to return to Ukraine because of “high prices, difficulties in obtaining Schengen visas, weariness of “Ukrainophobic propaganda”, yelling for “honest and impartial” Ukrainian TV and Ukrainian salo...”

Anyway, we are not going to be linked to them. Prices in Crimea are quite high indeed, there are certain problems in the sphere of medicine as well as housing and communal services, incomes are not as good as one would like it to be. This is an objective reality. But to speak about it as if it is the reason why

a considerable part of Crimeans wants to go back to Ukraine means openly misinforming and manipulating the public. Well, seriously, it's not about salo! But the invisible front fighters of the opposing side cannot understand this.

Here are the numbers. So, according to the results of the poll conducted by the All-Russian Center for the Study of Public Opinion in March 2019, 89% of the residents of the Republic of Crimea would again vote for joining Russia, and only 3% for maintaining the autonomy within Ukraine. More than 70% of respondents stated that the reunion of the peninsula with Russia had a positive impact on their lives. At the same time, the number of those who noted the deteriorating state of affairs amounted to 7%. Just facts, nothing more. In addition, Ukrainian journalists who spread their myths about the Crimean people yearning for Ukraine to delicately hold back the fact that the situation in their native country has dramatically changed within the last five years, and unfortunately not for the better. It is hardly worth mentioning the skyrocketing prices and tariffs, including public utility charges in the neighboring state.

The Crimean Bridge

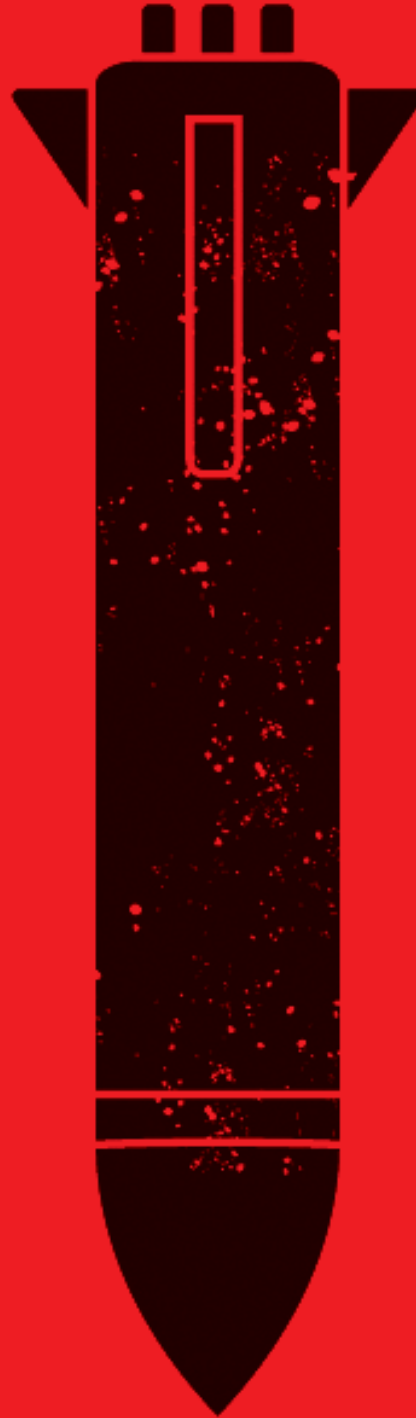
The Crimean Bridge remains one of the main irritants for Ukrainian and Western propagandists. At first, the construction project of the century was

called (and they tried to assure their readers of it) a plasticine toy model skillfully shot at Mosfilm, and the installed automobile and railway arches were just holograms. Then bold proclamations were made that the transport thoroughfare could not be possibly built because of the 'slimy bottom' and 'mud volcanoes'. When it became clear to everyone that the bridge had already been built and all too real, the "experts" began to insist that it would collapse under the weight of ice masses in the very first winter.

The only thing we can do is to show empathy for the hopes and expectations of our opponents failed to materialize: the bridge was put into operation and there is no risk of its destruction. The construction of the railway part of the bridge has been completed and the traffic of trains started. But the fake-makers don't seem to give up! Last year in January, the Minister for the so-called temporarily occupied territories and internally displaced persons of Ukraine Vadim Chernysh, after analyzing some satellite images, declared that "parts of the bridge are moving apart". Funny, isn't it? Moving apart! And what prohibited substances produce such an effect is anybody's guess...

"Theoretically speaking, some parts of the bridge move in an upward direction, while others downward. The first reason - is the bridge site; the second one is the construction itself... The photos taken from different angles show parts of the bridge moving apart. The roadbed load is enormous", said the Ukrainian official.

This canard provoked only laughter from the representatives of the information center "Crimean Bridge" and it was assumed that the Ukrainian minister's statement was nothing but the result of stormy New Year holidays. One would find difficulty to quarrel with this statement.



It gets worse and worse as it goes on! Candidate of Geological and Mineralogical Sciences Yuriy Medovar (who, by the way, stated earlier that it was impossible in general to build a bridge across the Kerch Strait) recently declared some “environmental disaster” in the Sea of Azov, provoked by the construction of the bridge. They say that the seacoast has already begun to turn “into a swamp with canes and algae”, claims the “expert”.

Moreover, he has made another ‘scientific’ prediction, according to which the Crimean Bridge “will collapse because of some mud volcano”! We’re a bit worried... But not about the fate of the bridge, but Yuriy Medovar’s state of health!

Meanwhile, scientists from the All-Russian Research Institute of Fishery and Oceanography undertook a study which showed that the construction of the bridge radically reduced pollution of the Sea of Azov. In particular, scientific studies have confirmed that the content of heavy metals, arsenic and pesticides in the water column, sea-floor sediments and aquatic organisms are lower long-term average annual, and the ecosystem contamination with petrochemicals does not exceed the level of previous years. Experts have established a clear tendency to reduction of high-toxic substances in the organs and tissues of commercial and foraging fish. Authorities in this field explain that the construction of the bridge led to the ordered ships movement in the water area and tightened control of wastewater discharge. Moreover, the number of small boats in use has been reduced in the southeastern part of the sea. That makes sense.

“Blocked Strait”

The incident in the Kerch Strait in November, 2018 when the crews of three Ukrainian warships that had violated the border of the Russian Federation were kept under arrest by the Russian border guards caused a great stir in the world community and triggered a lot of discussions. The Ukrainian provocative action was immediately used to organize yet another information and sanction attack on Russia. According to a number of experts, NATO also took advantage of the incident to build up military presence of its ships in the Black Sea.

In general, the position of Ukraine, as well as some Western countries and international organizations can be described as one big fake. Opponents have accused and continue to accuse Russia of violating the maritime law and ‘blocking’ the Sea of Azov. It has also been stated that our country is allegedly seeking to bring harm to the economy and defense capacity of Ukraine not allowing merchant ships and warships to enter the ports of Azov through the Kerch Strait. The Ministry of Infrastructure of a neighboring state has even counted “losses” from such a “blockade” – about 10 billion hryvnias (more than 350 million dollars).

Kyiv is accusing Moscow of abusing border control in the Azov-Black Sea waters. Ukrainians are of an opinion that Russian border guards intentionally stop and inspect Ukrainian vessels, so that they are supposedly forced to stand idle for hours, or even days, waiting for the authorization to proceed.

— WHY DO UKRAINIAN RESIDENTS **OPPOSE THE REUNION** OF CRIMEA TO RUSSIA?

— THEY ARE ENVIOUS

Besides, the officials of the neighboring state have once again accused Russia of “military build-up in the Sea of Azov”.

All these emotional, but unsubstantiated statements of the Ukrainian side and their appeals to the international community turn out to be nothing but myths. Some statesmen must have forgotten that the Sea of Azov is the inland waters of Russia and Ukraine, and the freedom of navigation is granted only to these countries’ vessels. Therefore, The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (1982) is inapplicable in this case, which means that the violation of the maritime law by Russia is out of the question.

As for the “overcare” to Ukrainian warships and merchant ships on the outside of Russian border guards and customs officers, any state has the right to take security measures in its inland waters with the aim of restraint of violations. According to the official data, not only Ukrainian but also Russian, as well as European vessels are inspected, which is quite justifiable. It should be recalled that in May, 2018 the highway section of the Crimean Bridge was put into operation. Given the fact that some Ukrainian military men and politicians now and again promise to damage or destroy the

construction, higher-level inspection of vehicles through the strait proves to be a reasonable and necessary measure. Subject to the existing rules and safety standards, there are no obstacles to movement of Ukrainian ships, including military ones. This was repeatedly stated by the representatives of the Russian authorities.

Statements about the “reinforcement of Russia’s military presence in the Sea of Azov” are another fake and again an unconvincing one. The Russian Federation does not have a single military base on the territory of Crimea, and the deployed forces are mainly involved in the protection of the Crimean Bridge. This claim can be addressed to Kyiv with much greater justification. In September, 2019 the setting up of a naval base in Berdyansk was announced. For this purpose, several artillery ships were redeployed there. Well, we won’t comment on their military strength...



Interview *geopolicy*

Georgy Muradov:

"RUSSIA HAS SOMETHING TO RESPOND TO NATO COUNTRIES CHALLENGE"

Interview: Maria Volkonskaya
Photo: Lydia Vetkhova

Vice-Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Crimea, RF Presidential **Permanent Representative of the Republic of Crimea** Georgy Muradov gave an exclusive interview for the Crimean magazine about the benefits of the Livadia Forum, media war, **development of Crimea and the situation in Ukraine.**





“They don’t need war, they are afraid of us - we also have something to say in response”

CJ: Georgy Lvovich, what do you think about the media war? Is there any use of its continuation or is it better to be unresponsive to the nonsense that our Western colleagues sometimes talk?

–Media war means preparations for a war. Thus we, being familiar with facts on the ground, have not to be calumniated. That is why we are eager to invite guests who get acquainted with real life in Crimea. No one is suppressed in terms of contacts: they can communicate with our national communities, non-governmental organizations, and with people on the streets. That makes sense - the information comes out to the foreign media. In the present case, I do not mean all foreign countries. And by the way, it is not necessary to assume that all countries are against Crimea. It holds truth for just a group of aggressively oriented states.

CJ: ... who do not want to hear what they are told...

– Sure thing! They stand ready for anything not to allow the trustworthy and objective information to reach their societies. From this I gather that they are preparing for war. These are no other than NATO countries. This is not China, not India, not Arab countries - they don't run media war against us. And what are NATO countries doing? They are preparing for war, and this fact is widely documented. A while ago, everyone was discussing the RAND Corporation

report on how to exhaust resources of Russia and lead the country to breaking up. In the military and political sense of a term, they decide what to do with us and how to harry our people, in economic sense how to bear us down with sanctions, how to shake the very foundations of our state, i.e. moral values of the society.

CJ: And what about harassment of those Europeans who have visited Crimea, who see in a positive light the expression of the will of Crimean people? How to respond?

– Today these countries are hardly democratic ones. They are not even countries now, but regimes. These regimes have mutated and become depressed. They put people into prison for no reason other than that they have visited Crimea or put forward a proposal on the development of relations with Russia in general or with Crimea in particular. They are faced with the fact that their cases are being passed around secret services and security ministries. As an example, Mateusz Piskorski, the coordinator of foreign monitors in the referendum, can be mentioned. Similar accusations were made against Professor Alexander Gaponenko in Latvia, who was put

into prison for several months, and Algirdas Paleckis, who came to our Forum and offered a suggestion to arrange a meeting with junior teams of Lithuania. Both of them were imprisoned. Is it possible to call these regimes democratic? As for what concerns human rights activism, they set forth an idea that it is critical to intensify it. Through the agency of International Council of Russian Compatriots we expect to create an International Association of Russian-Speaking Lawyers. And this movement of lawyers is a very useful thing; they are engaged in many processes on the protection of the rights of compatriots living abroad.

CJ: Who to defend our compatriots against? Our European colleagues believe that we have problems with democracy.

— Wait. What do they imprison people for? They can't prove anything. And this happens as far as the eye can see. Only when the public rises, they begin to "hesitate", grant bail and put under house arrest. That is what our "Friends of Crimea" have gained. Only thanks to efforts of International Association coordinator, the former Prime Minister of Slovakia Yan Chernogorskiy who met with the Polish ambassador to Bratislava and went to the Poland Parliament, - only after that the amount of bail was reduced and it became possible to admit Mateusz Peskorski to bail after three years in prison!

CJ: In the Baltic states Russophobia is gaining traction, Russian language is banned in schools.

— From the very beginning, in the late 90s – early 2000s, when they just started talking about it, it

“Today these countries are hardly democratic ones. They are not even countries now, but regimes”

was necessary to give notice that there would be a stern economic response for our part and all the economic regulations would be broken off. They thought it was much to do. Why? As, they said, that the Russians would suffer as well. And now Baltics are suffering in full, and what do we get? Economic, diplomatic, and political relations are curtailed. And the Russians suffer again! That is why we get the same result! But if we had done this from the very outset, there would have been no such consequences. That is why I repeat again and again: crisis is not always bad. But it's better to set up the priorities at once, i.e. to speak the same language with a challenger.

EUROPEAN "DEMOCRACY"

LET'S THANK CRIMEA:

IT IS WAKING US UP TO THE TRUTH!



Karl Eckstein,

D.J.S., Lawyer, Honorary Consul of the Russian Federation in Switzerland from 2007 to 2018

“Wrong Route”

Since the Age of Enlightenment in the Western world there have been several major principles of human coexistence. One of them is that a person should have the right for self-determination. These principles are enshrined in the Constitutions of all Western countries; even transnational conventions were signed based on them, for example, the European Convention on Human Rights. Western politicians are now propagating this achievement all over the world. They urge other countries to ensure respect for human rights. Holding their pointer fingers up with a gesture of the righteous apostles, they interfere in other countries' internal affairs.

In this context the Crimean peninsula proved to be a “touchstone”. When the topic of Crimea is brought up, it seems like all Western politicians suddenly become blind and immediately run out of words even in cases of the most obvious human rights violations. When it comes to Crimea, Western states forget most fundamental principles of a rule-of-law state.

Last year I wanted to participate in the Financial Congress in Kyiv. All expenses had already been paid: air travel, hotel accommodation, and participation in the Congress. When I came to Borispol in the evening, I was denied the entry. The reason for that was my visit to Crimea via Moscow. Instead of making a tiresome journey through Kyiv, driving 900 km on dirty roads and getting through tedious customs clearance on the border with Crimea, I comfortably flew by plane from a Moscow airport to Simferopol. It turned out to be a crime; therefore I was forced to spend the whole night in the transit lounge of the airport. The next morning I was sent back by plane at my own expense. As expected, my expenditures for air travel, hotel accommodation, and participation in the Congress were not reimbursed.

Note: the legal basis for the breach of visa agreement with Switzerland was choosing the wrong route!

Unlawful Law

Almost all Western countries have a list of sanctions for Crimea. It includes persons and companies that Western counterparts are banned to transact with. The list also contains names of members of parliament who voted to re-unify with Russia in 2014.

In other words, these "apostles of rule-of-law state and human rights" not only punish their members of parliament for the wrong vote but also dare to punish parliamentarians from other countries for voting that is "improper" in their opinion. Thus, not only the principle of parliamentary immunity, but also the basic international legal principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of the foreign country is grossly violated.

But Switzerland has surpassed all the other countries for the matter! Citizens of Switzerland are also not allowed to transact business with persons from the list of sanctions. In other words, this law applies to Swiss citizens.

The Crimean magazine

The following points draw particular attention:

1 Swiss authorities punish members of parliament of foreign countries for "improper" voting.

2 The effect of the law primarily extends to the Swiss who are not allowed to transact business. In Switzerland there are 4 scheduled languages: German, French, and Italian and Romanche ones. However, this law can only be found on the Internet and only in English, which is not a scheduled language!

3 Switzerland has a body of laws and regulations. They are published in the Regular Code of Federal Laws (of course, in the scheduled languages of Switzerland). However, in the Regular Code there is no instruction providing against transactions based on the list of sanctions. It can only be found on the website of the Department of Economy of Switzerland, provided you are an experienced Internet user. And one can easily imagine the "democratic" way this instruction was made.

And here is another even more interesting fact: it is clear to an English-speaking Swiss that they are not allowed to transact business with those who voted (and not just that) for the re-unification of Crimea. But it's not indicated that they are not allowed to invite them to Switzerland. In real life it means that such person will never receive a visa to Switzerland. Within Schengen there is a special police service that deals with making lists of persons who should be denied visa. But within these four walls: none of the Swiss will ever be given any legal basis – the reason why certain people will never be granted Schengen visa and why they cannot be invited to Switzerland.

So, all of this is happening in the oldest and most famous democracy in the world. Let's thank Crimea: it wakens us up to the truth!

**“IT IS TIME TO
DROP THE POLICY
OF DOUBLE STANDARDS
AND STOP THE CAMPAIGN TO DISCREDIT
FREE DETERMINATION OF THE CRIMEANS
IN THE COURT OF PUBLIC OPINION”**



Grigoriy Ioffe,
Chairman
of the Public Chamber
of the Republic of Crimea

The institute on public diplomacy is a primary instrument in forming the network of foreign friends of our republic and the whole country abroad. It's a well-known fact that our country, and especially Crimea, has been subjected to a flurry of economic and other sanctions from the part of the European Union countries, the USA and the West. After the events of Crimean spring in 2014 the enlargement of potential team of like-minded others has become particularly topical.

World events of recent years clearly demonstrate discrepancy and inconsistency of situation around Crimea. On the one hand, in existing relations of society most European countries realize that there is a historical "dead-lock", and further escalation of sanctions war against Russia and Crimea is a blemish policy. The effectiveness of public diplomacy is increasing riding on the wave of public sentiment. In an unofficial capacity, deputies from several European countries visit Crimea and become even more ascertain of the need to lift the anti-Russian

sanctions. In fact, we are talking about the tacit acceptance of a new historical reality. On the other hand, European public sentiment comes into conflict with the official policy of the EU leadership to fit and tighten sanctions.

The members of the Crimean Public Chamber bear a significant share of activities and responsibility in the field of public diplomacy. First of all, they are the representatives of national and cultural autonomies and communities – Armenian, Belarusian, Bulgarian, Crimean Tatar, and Russian ones. Since the time of reunification of Crimea with the Russian Federation, the members of the Public Chamber have repeatedly called for international organizations and leaders of Western countries to drop the policy of double standards and stop the campaign to discredit free determination of the Crimeans in the court of public opinion, rescind anti-human and anti-Crimean sanctions that violate Crimeans' rights, in particular, their freedom of movement.

For our part, the first steps were made in 2015 when a delegation of the Japanese public organization "Issuy-Kay" arrived in Crimea. I met with the delegation members and told them about the life of people in the Russian Crimea, and about a new name for us at that time institute for the development of civil society – the Public Chamber of the Republic of Crimea. The meetings in 2016 with delegations from Jordan and the Netherlands were quite impressive. I would like to note the activity of the Crimean German community. In 2019 they arranged the visits of several delegations from Germany, part of whom were not only public figures and students, but also politicians.

For several years

the Crimean Public Chamber has been monitoring violations of the rights of Crimeans by the Ukrainian authorities in various fields.

For this purpose, a Monitoring Group has been established, which, in addition to the members of the Crimean Public Chamber, includes high-

powered politologists and experts. The meetings of the Monitoring Group resulted in a number of appeals to international civil society advocacy groups, media, and official international structures.

However, it is worth noting that not a single response to our appeals has been received.

Our position has been ignored by almost all international organizations. The coverage of the Monitoring Group's work in the media was extremely scarce and one-sided.

One of the fundamental achievements of Crimea is its confident advancement towards further development of a mature civil society capable of effectively countering external and internal challenges that the Russian Federation is currently facing.

The vast majority of Crimeans feel like they are an integral part of the modern Russian state and society.

They respond to challenges with their social activism and support for the foreign and domestic policies of the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin, efforts in this direction are made by the Head of the Republic Sergei Aksyonov and the Chairman of the State Council of the Republic of Crimea Vladimir Konstantinov. In this regard, the activities of the Public Chamber of the Republic of Crimea as one of the main institutions for the development of civil society in Crimea to a great extent determine the way the Republic will advance, with its manifold opinions, national and cultural diversity. Establishing public relations with the progressive world community in all spheres of activity, whether it's politics, economics, science, culture, sports, or tourism will enable us to remove the "iron curtain", which has been artificially created around our peninsula.

All the Blockades TO SPITE

Text: Oleg Stepanov, Margarita Listyeva

The term “people’s diplomacy” was rarely used in Crimea. But after the reunification of the peninsula with the Russian Federation and the imposition of sanctions, **this phrase has firmly come into common use of those who are interested in the political and public life of the republic.** This element of civil society, along with the big power diplomacy, has become an instrument for the destruction of the Iron Curtain. The Crimean Magazine reports about the way Crimean people’s diplomatists and leaders of the Crimean ethnic and cultural communities are struggling on this front, **about the victories that have been achieved and whether we have friends on the international scene**



Ivan Abazher,

Member of the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation and the Public Chamber of the Republic of Crimea, Chairman of the Regional Ethnic and Cultural Autonomy of Bulgarians "Paisiy Hilendarskiy"

– No one has yet cancelled an information war against Crimea. Do we manage to resist this aggressive policy of our “friends”?

– A great deal of work is being done by the federal and republic authorities, by the public and especially by the ethnic and cultural autonomies of Armenians, Bulgarians, Greeks, Jews, Germans and other peoples. Owing to long-standing relations with the countries that are the parent countries for the Crimean Diasporas, these organizations enter the international platforms and deliver informed stories about life in Crimea.

I have been able to attend several OSCE meetings where the issues of respect for human rights and national minorities were discussed, as well as those related to freedom of movement and holding meetings in Crimea. The Ukrainian side tried to block both my speeches and the speeches of my colleagues. But with the help of representatives of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, we managed to surmount these obstacles. We sounded the Crimean public image about the sanctions policy of the USA and European countries, about their media malpractice; we exposed patently illegal acts of the Ukrainian authorities who organized all kinds of blockades for Crimea.

In my opinion, we have made a kind of breakthrough to the future. In 2018, at the OSCE meeting, the reaction of representatives of the British diplomatic quarters was highly significant. They have always supported the sanctions, but did not make public statements and kept a low profile. But after our speeches, they took the floor and reproached the Russian side for “using Crimean public organizations for propaganda purposes”.

– What other methods, in addition to public speaking, are used by Crimean public diplomacy?

– With the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Crimea to the President of the Russian Federation, there is a working group on international legal matters. Its chief task is to prepare proposals to increase the effectiveness of judicial protection of human rights and legitimate interests of Crimean people at the international level.

With the participation of the working group, the non-profit non-governmental organization “Tavrida International Association” was established with its headquarters in Brussels. This structure is intended to promote the interests of Crimeans in European courts and at other international venues, as well as to hold scientific and practical conferences and seminars, to participate in cultural events and human rights activities under the auspices of UN, European Council, OSCE, and PACE.

People’s diplomacy has great potential and its efforts are bearing fruit. Many people come to realize that the information about Crimea broadcasted by Ukrainian and Western media is a lie. The recent meeting on the peninsula with the members of the USA, Sweden, Great Britain and other countries’ public can serve as an example. They expressed concern about anti-Russian attitudes formed in Western countries because of fake news propagated by politicians and the media. We must stand up against them not only in words but also with a foundation of international law. We must call to account those who slander the people of Crimea and Russia.

People's *diplomacy*

– How do representatives of Ukraine act today at international platforms? Has their tactics regarding Crimea changed? Or are they still aggressive?

– They are still aggressive. They continue to make rude statements like “mass suppression on ethnic grounds is carried out in Crimea” or “national communities living in Crimea are deprived of right to study in their native language”. And that’s the end of the story. Not a scrap of evidence. They bring evidence-free accusations. These happen both at the OSCE and UN platforms. In response, we undertake our actions. For example, last year a presentation of the regional Bulgarian ethnic-

cultural autonomy of Crimea was organized within the framework of OSCE. It was attended by the representatives of Ukraine, USA, Italy, and Bulgaria. We gave a video presentation and provided our printed materials. There was not a single question that would catch us unaware. We do it all by ourselves. Moreover, if we seek assistance from the authorities either in running certain events or upgrading material and technical support, we get it. In other ethnic-cultural autonomies of Crimea the situation is the same. People from abroad now acknowledge that Ukraine’s allegations of violation of the Crimean national minorities’ rights are the veriest nonsense based on the desire to belie and undercut Russia.



Anastasiya Gridchina,

Head of the Russian Non-Governmental Organization “Ukrainian Community of Crimea”, Editor-in-Chief of the Russian Ukrainian-language Information Portal “Pereyaslavka Rada 2.0”

– On September 27, 2019, you as part of the Crimean delegation went to an OSCE meeting on the topic “Respect for Rights of National Minorities” in Warsaw. You were successful in making a statement despite the protests of Ukraine. Tell us, please, what was the participants’ reaction to the “disadvantaged” Ukrainian woman from Crimea?

– It is worth saying that our speech at the international stage went over rather well. I noticed that our foreign colleagues supported us. Of course, there were some “sniffs” on the part of the official Ukrainian delegation. They resorted to various tricks in order to prevent us, Crimeans, from speaking.

– In your opinion, what are your key tasks at such platforms?

– During my speech, as a representative of Crimean Ukrainians, I dispel a rumor about Ukrainians’ rights abuse in Crimea and explain the European Community the real situation on

the peninsula. This is because the authorities of the Republic support the Ukrainians in Crimea at an appropriate level.

– At the 12th session of the Minority Issues Forum held under the auspices of UN Human Rights Council, you weren’t given the floor...

– Exactly. That time the impressions were less rosy – the official Ukrainian delegation, having ignored the moral codes and social norms, actively sabotaged and boycotted the speeches of our delegation. Unfortunately, we yet again became eyewitnesses of outrages and barbarism on the part of representatives of Ukraine during the 12th session of the UN Forum Minority Issues Forum (“Education, Language and Minority Rights”). Ukraine is still very far from being Europe and “Ukraine is not Europe”. By doing so, they are more like barbarians who haven’t got the least notion about the rules of social behavior, and the “Maidan” of 2014 is arranged again and again by the official Ukrainian delegations but now at international platforms.

– What kind of “truth” about Crimea was presented by the Ukrainian side in Geneva?

– At every turn they scream at full volume about the fact that the Ukrainian language is oppressed and that Ukrainian-speaking people are physically punished in Crimea. I regret to inform you that I could not answer all the charges as well as couldn't say that it is in Crimea that the first Ukrainian-language Information Portal “Pereyaslavka Rada

2.0” based in Russia is created. Nevertheless, I was successful with my speech during the Roundtable meeting, which was arranged by the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs at the United Nations building in Geneva. The Roundtable was open to all comers, and I shall be honest with you, there were a lot of them - representatives of non-governmental organizations from Ukraine as well as those of the media, various Internet communities and others.



Roman Chegrinets,

Member of the Public Chamber of the Republic of Crimea, Co-Chairman of the Assembly of Slavic Peoples of Crimea

– Do you think we have a real chance to break through the information blockade by these ways?

– Absolutely! Such working visits are important for Crimea as they play an important role in promoting the position of Crimea as a constituent territory of the Russian Federation. In my opinion, we should demonstrate and emphasize the fact that Crimeans have the right for self-determination. I am very glad to have a chance to give a presentation in 2019 at one of the most important and significant international venues – the meeting of Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) in Warsaw.

Members of the Crimean delegation talked about the achievements and development of modern Russian Crimea. We were so pleased about the response of Western colleagues! They, just like us, got fed up of brazen provocations masterminded exclusively by the official Ukrainian delegation at the instigation of the Americans. To my mind, everyone understands that Crimea has always been and will be Russian. I am very proud to be the first to speak out at this very OSCE session and declare about the long-term “Ukrainian occupation” of Crimea, and that, thank God, Crimea could get rid of it and reunite with Russia.

– Did you invite the participants of the meeting to visit Crimea and see everything with their own eyes?

– Yes. Moreover, I believe that Crimea should introduce its diplomats to the world and be as open as possible to the visitors from anywhere. Foreigners should come more often and see the way our beloved land lives.

– I would also like to remind Europeans how the Crimean people are infringed upon their rights due to the imposed sanctions...

– I mentioned the fact in my report. I asked for the order to amend a resolution of Warsaw Meeting of the Conference on the Human Dimension of the OSCE to cease the media and economic war against the peoples of Crimea. I also invited the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities Lamberto Zannier to pay a personal visit to the peninsula in order to become acquainted with living conditions of the peoples and nationalities in Crimea. In general, a visit to the OSCE international platform had its effect and some of the foreign colleagues we met there visited the “Forum of Crimea’s Friends”.

Opinion *to the point*

**“WE HAVE TO GRAB
INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION
TO OUR POINT OF VIEW”**



Ruslan Balbek,
State Duma Deputy from
the Republic of Crimea

The most effective measure against Western anti-Russian propaganda is alternative information that comes from independent sources not connected in any way with either Russia or the Russian government. Accustomed to freedom of speech Western society usually listens to the view of both sides. But today, unfortunately, on the media platforms of Western countries and the USA the number of those who are against Russia is much bigger – they are the vast majority. Therefore,

we have to grab international attention including that of the UN Council to our point of view.

I can't understand why delegations of some so-called European countries (and which in truth have become today's Europe in many respects owing to Russia) express their deep anger and disrelish for Russian representatives. It was our country that saved them from total destruction in World War II. Where would they be, these over-privileged politicians, if Russia had not saved Poland with its infrastructure in 1945, and then poured money into their war-torn economy? Where would the rest of the Europeans be if Russia had not sacrificed hundreds of thousands of soldiers' lives to dislodge the Germans with the least possible damage and destruction of such beautiful places as Budapest and Prague? Where would today's Baltics (that continually make claims against Russia) be if we had not built a huge number of factories and port facilities on their territories? And all these people are still using those Soviet capacities for their own maintenance.

Probably, they believe that there can be the only one legitimate referendum with Crimeans going around holding Bandera's portraits in

their hands and shouting "Heil Ukraine" and things like that. Or, perhaps, the Crimean people, just like some of Maidan ideologists, should have painted their faces blue with yellow stars in a circle in the form of the EU flag's emblem? Would their opinion be regarded as legitimate then? Didn't Europe know that Crimeans always considered themselves part of Russia? And there are many such examples.

Even during Maidan I thought Ukraine as a political actor was on the downward path.

I would hardly call the things happening on the central square in Kyiv the "velvet revolution" – it was a frenzied crowd of fascist youths fighting with the police. In any country in the world, in Europe first of all, all the gang members with their chains and masks would have already been imprisoned for their behavior. And now they are trying to make these people "revolutionaries of dignity" – they don't even understand the meaning of this concept!

Thus, public speaking at international media platforms is a necessary and right way to promote dialogue with the Western world. We do not turn our heads away.

We are not aggressors. We are a state of European culture. The works of our writers and scientists are province of all mankind. Why would anyone flatter oneself to call our country the barbaric one?

Only time will tell! Truth is always the same, and that is not to deny!

CONTRARY TO SANCTIONS

Text: Oleg Stepanov

In 2019, the volume of foreign trade of sanctioned Crimea has almost doubled. What countries and which sorts of goods does the peninsula trade with?

Breaking through barriers

According to the Southern Customs Administration data, the republic's volume of foreign trade amounted to \$ 70.5 million within the first six months of 2019 which is nearly twice as much as for the same period last year. At that, imports accounted for about \$ 53 million and exports – \$ 17.6 million.

Moreover, one should take into account that because of the infamous sanctions many Crimean enterprises cannot directly deal with a number of countries. For this reason, goods are delivered to the Russian mainland, change their "place of residence registration" and then are sent abroad. It means that their record is kept not by the customs officers of the Republic of Crimea, but of other territories. Therefore, the real export of Crimean goods is higher than the statistics show.

The Head of the Republic of Crimea, Sergei Aksyonov, noted the urgent need to break in methodology of Federal Service of State Statistics and the Federal Customs Service so that they could maintain records of exports not for the area of exporting organization location, but by the place of manufacture of commodity.

Switch to New Markets

In 2015, passenger ships, floating structures, and inorganic chemistry products accounted for more than half of total exports (about \$ 45 million). As far as back as in 2016, the main exported goods were machinery and equipment as well as chemical products (\$ 28.5 million, or 57% of the overall production of exported goods). In the years that followed, these two indices firmly held ground in export structure of Crimea: 66% in 2017 and 55% in 2018.

Goods made by Simferopol "Fiolent" Works are very popular among our trading partners: rotatory saws and drills with built-in motors, angle

grinders, spraying guns, etc. Electric welding equipment manufactured by "Original Equipment Manufacturer Selma" is also in great demand. The range of goods produced by the enterprise is quite wide – more than 100 items of welding facilities.

Such a chemical product as ash of soda produced by the Crimean Alkali-Works is actively sold by Crimea. The enterprise daily ships for exports more than 1500 tons of soda. "Bromine" Chemical Works is the only one in Russia specializing in the production of bromine, its inorganic salts and bromine organic compounds. They are used in production of electrical-and-engineering goods, in chemical, pharmaceutical and other industries.

Agro-industrial products rank third in the structure of Crimean exports – about 20-23%. Grain crop is of principal demand. Thus in the first six months of 2019 Crimea sold grain for amount over \$ 6.6 million. This is more than 37% of the total export revenue of the Republic over the specified period. Alcohol and non-alcohol beverages are one more major item of Crimean food exports. For the first half of the year, revenues from their sale amounted to \$ 2.3 million.

The structure of imports has undergone even more significant changes over the past six years. Before 2015, Italy, Germany and Romania were the main suppliers of goods (equipment, machinery, raw materials, and wine) to Crimea. These countries accounted for about two-thirds of total imports.

In the recent years, Belarus has assumed the leading position. By the end of 2018, the country supplied goods to Crimea for the amount of \$ 15 million. For the first half of the year,

this factor reached \$ 5.4 million. Besides, even in times of tough economic blockade goods from Ukraine still made their way to the peninsula. According to the Crimean Customs data, in 2018 total imports from the neighboring state reached \$ 16 million, and during January-June period of 2019, it exceeded \$ 10 million.



Anatoly Aksakov,
Chairman of the State Duma's Committee
on Financial Market:

- The Crimean authorities and enterprises have learned to work in the face of sanctions and find primarily those trading partners who disregard them. At the same time, our partners, who were rather concerned about sanctions, are now confidently entering the peninsula and realize that it is possible to function well here. As Karl Marx said, with 300% profit, there is no crime that capital would not risk. In other words, if there is a high rate of return, no sanctions matter.

Despite of current sanctions regime, Crimea still receives products from Italy, Germany, Spain, France, and Poland. For example, for the first half of 2019 Italy became the main supplier of goods to the peninsula from distant foreign countries (\$ 7.5 million). Trade with Turkey is being expanded, and foreign trade turnover with China is being increased.

If there is a benefit, there is a way out

Distant foreign countries are mainly interested in machinery and equipment manufactured in Crimea (more than 80% of exports) as well as

Economy is on the scene

food commodities, agricultural stuffs, hardware and chemicals (about 15%). Exports of agricultural products to the CIS countries make one third (33%), machinery and equipment -28%, and chemical products – 24% of Crimean export.

Electric tools and welding equipment made in Crimea are in great demand in the ex-USSR countries (Belarus, Armenia), as well as in India. Turkey buys the produce of Crimean shipbuilding enterprises.

Soda ash is supplied to the Customs Union countries, India and Egypt, bromine and its compounds – to Ukraine, Belarus, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Nigeria, and India.

The major buyers of Crimean grain (wheat, barley, legumes) are the countries of the Middle East and Africa (Tunisia). Tajikistan and Turkmenistan buy chocolate produced in Crimea. In 2018, the republic sold this product to the amount of almost \$ 0.7 million.

The geography of Crimean wine's export is steadily expanding. The products of "Massandra", the leading enterprise of the republic, are supplied to Belarus, China, Taiwan, Kazakhstan, Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics. In 2018, 350 thousand bottles of wine were exported abroad. Last year, the company's exports grew to half a million bottles.

The same is observed in import structure from outside of the CIS to Crimea: machinery and equipment – nearly 50%, food commodities – 27%, hardware – 9%. Our partners from neighboring countries also supply foods (27%), hardware (24%) and mineral rock (19%) to the peninsula.

Milk, butter, cheese, farmer cheese, potatoes, canned meat and vegetables, as well as wooden construction materials are brought from Belarus to Crimea. Armenia supplies tomatoes, cognac and ethyl alcohol; Spain, Argentina, Moldova and South Africa – wine, and Italy – grape planting stock. There are also supplies of coal from Ukraine, ferrous metals and metal goods from both Ukraine and China. Besides, in 2018, the Republic imported sea freight and passenger transport from Germany and Slovakia.

Long-Range Partnership

Trade with Syria is gaining traction. The first ship with grain crops has been sent from the Russian peninsula to the Arab country, and Crimea, in its turn, has obtained a shipment of Syrian citrus fruits. The volume of foreign trade between Crimea and Syria in January-June 2019 amounted to more than \$ 210 thousand. It is also supposed that Kerch Railway Switch Works product will be used to restore the Syrian railways destroyed during the war. We also plan to export high-tech equipment for oil extracting and mining and processing industries. Syria is ready to supply copper ore and phosphates to the peninsula – the raw materials necessary for Crimean chemical plants.

Moreover, at the international exhibition held in Damascus, the Crimean-Syrian trading house signed a contract with an agricultural export company from Syria. Deliveries of olive oil, lemons, oranges, grapefruits, pomegranates and other goods will be carried out through Feodosiya and Sevastopol.

The total value of contracts between Crimea and Syria is estimated at \$ 250 million. Since the Arab Republic is subject to Western sanctions, contract settles will be effected in national currencies – roubles and Syrian pounds.

Crimea's foreign trade turnover in 2014 / 2018

amounted

\$ 333 million

For this period,
the republic has
exported goods to
the amount of

\$ 386 MILLION

and imported to the amount of

\$ 447 million

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