

URGENT ACTION

CRIMEAN TATAR LEADER BANNED FROM HOMELAND

The leader of the Crimean Tatar community, Refat Chubarov, has been banned from entering Crimea for five years. This highlights a broader campaign of harassment and intimidation against the Crimean Tatar community since Russia annexed the Ukrainian peninsula in March.

Refat Chubarov was travelling back to occupied Crimea from the neighbouring Ukrainian region of Kherson on 5 July when he was stopped at a checkpoint manned by Russian military. According to Refat Chubarov, the de facto Prosecutor of Crimea arrived and presented him with a written warning. It stating that his activities and the activities of the Mejlis (a representative body elected by Qurultai, an informal assembly of the Crimean Tatar people) of which he is the Chair, violate Russian law on extremism. He was told he could appeal against the warning. Refat Chubarov thought he would be allowed to continue his journey into Crimea but instead representatives of the Russian border services gave him notice of a five year ban on entering the territory of Russia. He is the second Crimean Tatar leader to be banned this year from entering the peninsula after it was annexed by Russia in March.

Refat Chubarov had been in Kherson for a Crimean Tatar community meeting which could not take place in Crimea because in April the community's informal leader and the previous Chair of the Mejlis, Mustafa Dzhemiliev, was also banned from entering Crimea for five years. So that Mustafa Dzhemiliev could attend, the community was forced to hold its meeting outside Crimea.

The ban is a violation of Refat Chubarov's right to freedom of movement as guaranteed by Article 12 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and Protocol Four of the European Convention of Human Rights, to which Russia is a state party.

Amnesty International has documented a number of cases of harassment and intimidation of the Crimean Tatar community by the de facto Crimean and the Russian authorities since March.

Please write immediately to the de facto Crimean and the Russian authorities, in Crimean Tatar, Ukrainian, Russian or your own language:

- Calling on them to lift the entry ban on Refat Chubarov as well as Mustafa Dzhemiliev, giving them immediate and unimpeded access to Crimea, so they can exercise their right to enter their own country;
- Urging them to respect the right to freedom of movement and freedom to choose one's place of residence, in accordance with Article 12 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and Protocol Four of the European Convention of Human Rights, with regard to all residents of Crimea;
- Urging them to ensure that all who live in Crimea are able to exercise their human rights, without discrimination.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 20 AUGUST 2014 TO:

Prosecutor of Crimea

Natalia Poklonskaya
Ul. Sevastopolskaya, d.21, Simferopol
Republic of Crimea 295015, Ukraine

Fax: +380 652 550-310

Salutation: Dear Prosecutor

Prosecutor General, Russian Federation

Yurii Yakovlevich Chaika
ul. B. Dmitrovka, d.15a
125993 Moscow GSP- 3, Russia

Fax: +7 495 987 58 41/+7 495 692 1725

Salutation: Dear Prosecutor General

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Since the start of the Russian occupation of Crimea, although the Russian authorities have publicly declared full support for the rights of the Crimean Tatar people, they have simultaneously been targeting the community through arbitrary restrictions on their rights, including the rights to freedom of movement, expression, assembly and association. There have also been reports of violence and reprisals against Crimean Tatar people targeted by both the authorities and “self-defence” armed groups (“krymskaya samooborona”) which emerged in Crimea at the beginning of the Russian occupation.

The de facto Prosecutor of Crimea issued a formal warning to Refat Chubarov on 4 May, which said he might face criminal prosecution under Russia’s anti-extremism legislation. She accused him of organizing “unlawful public protest actions” in various places in Crimea. The protest actions were related to the Russian Federal Migration Service’s 22 April ban on the former leader of the Crimean Tatars’ Mejlis, Ukrainian MP and former Soviet dissident Mustafa Jemiliev, from Crimea. The Russian authorities have given no official explanation of the ban to Mustafa Jemiliev. Law enforcement officials searched Mustafa Jemiliev’s house in Crimea on 14 May, but because of the ban, he was not there.

Faced with what many believe to be a targeted campaign against their community, thousands of Crimean Tatars have fled to other areas of Ukraine. For a number of Crimean Tatars, this has painful echoes of the trauma suffered by their community in 1944 when their entire population was deported from Crimea to Central Asia and other distant parts of the Soviet Union by the Soviet authorities under Stalin. It was not until the late 1980s that they were permitted to come back to Crimea, and not until the 1990s that significant numbers returned to the peninsula.

Refat Chubarov has appealed against the ban, of which he has said: “They simply tore me from my homeland. They have forbidden me from seeing my mother ... and from serving my people ... They have robbed me of everything”.

For further information on Amnesty International’s concerns regarding harassment and violations of the rights of Crimean Tatars by the de facto Crimean and the Russian authorities, please see this public statement:
<http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/EUR50/023/2014/en>.

Name: Refat Chubarov
Gender m/f: m

UA: 175/14 Index: EUR 50/035/2014 Issue Date: 9 July 2014