

# Freedom of Speech Assassins in Crimea

Perpetrators of journalist persecutions and freedom of speech curtailment in the three years of occupation



## Sergey Abisov

"Minister of Internal Affairs of Russia for the Republic of Crimea"

Ordered law enforcement officers to take illegal action against media representatives, including arrests, attempted kidnappings, recording passport data in the streets. His agency ensured special ops backup for all searches conducted vis-à-vis journalists and in the offices of media outlets.



## Sergey Aksyonov

Chair of the "Council of Ministers of the Republic of Crimea"

Referred from any action regarding his loyal "Crimean Self-Defense" who engaged in multiple crimes against journalists in Crimea. Approved of information-space cleansing on the peninsula done by his subordinates in the occupation authorities of Crimea.

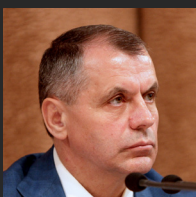
Fostered a close-down of the privately-owned Crimean Tatar television channel ATR, noting that this channel was, in his opinion, "an enemy". In November 2015 he demanded that the Ministry of Information of the "Republic of Crimea" make sure: none of the Ukrainian digital media are able to ever be tuned into from the north of the peninsula.



## Aleksandr Zharov

Head of the Federal Service for Supervision of Communications, Information Technology, and Mass Media (Roskomnadzor)

Gave approval for listing a number of Ukrainian internet-based news-sources as extremist and, thus, blocking access to them on the territory of Russia and occupied Crimea. Enabled elimination of local Crimean radio-stations and TV-channels independent of the occupation authorities through either closure or forced relocation to mainland Ukraine due to refusal to issue Russian licenses.

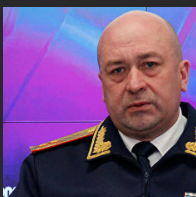


## Vladimir Konstantinov

Chair of the "State Council of the Republic of Crimea"

Covered up for numerous crimes against journalists in Crimea; dubbed the media outlets disloyal to the Russian authorities—including journalists of "Krym.Realii" website—as "enemies".

Helped expelling Ukrainian media from Crimea. In August 2016, he was enraged to learn that in Bilohirsky district one was able to tune into Ukrainian channels, and promised to "deal with it".



## Mikhail Nazarov

Chief of the Main Investigative Department of the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation for the "Republic of Crimea"

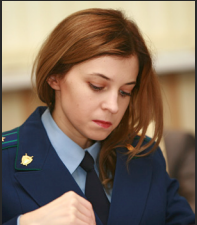
Helped to continue impunity by not investigating crimes against journalists in Crimea. He is part of the scheme to pressure journalists and fabricate cases against them. It was his subordinates that on 26 January 2015 conducted a search at the office of ATR TV-channel, allegedly to investigate the "case of 26 February". As a part of the investigation, Eskender Nebiev, cameraman for the channel, was detained, and a house-search was conducted in his home.



### Viktor Palagin

Chief of the "FSB Department for the Republic of Crimea and Sevastopol"

Ordered his subordinates to perpetrate illegal action against media representatives: wiretapping, screening of internet correspondence, tracking their location, launching criminal cases for social media posts. Amongst others, he persecuted representatives of the news-agency "Center for Journalist Investigations" and members of their families. In April 2016, FSB launched a criminal investigation against journalist Mykola Semena as well as several independent journalists and media outlets.



### Natalia Poklonskaya

"Member of Parliament" at the State Duma of the Russian Federation, ex-"prosecutor" of Crimea

The "Prosecutor's Office" in Crimea launched searches in a number of editorial offices, limited journalist activities through issuing warnings to prevent violation of anti-extremist laws of the Russian Federation, and initiated blocks for a number of information resources on the web (including the internet-platform "Krym.Realii"). Initiated a criminal case investigation against Crimean journalist Mykola Semena. Voiced "harsh reprimands" against those who would rally for support to the ATR television channel.



### Dmitriy Polonskiy

"Minister of Internal Policy, Information and Telecommunications" of Crimea

Compiled "black lists" of Crimean journalists and media, interfered with professional activities of reporters. He is a part of the team that cleansed Crimea of Ukrainian media and introduced censorship into the Crimean media. He claimed that the Ukrainian television was cut off because it "did everything to sow unrest".



### Sergey Turchanenko

Chief of the Simferopol regiment of "Crimean Self-Defense", head of government funded "Crimean Republican Headquarters of People's Self-Defense—People's Militia of the Republic of Crimea"

He is responsible for crimes committed by the paramilitary group "Crimean Self-Defense" against journalists. Took part in the capture of Chornomorska TV and Radio Company in Simferopol, confiscated and vandalized its equipment, illegally detained foreign journalists who reported on the situation in Crimea (including the camera team of Polish journalist Tomasz Kulakowski, and "Dozhd" reporter, Petr Ruzavin).



### Mikhail Sheremet

Former "Deputy Prime-Minister" of the Crimean government, "Member of Parliament" at the State Duma of the Russian Federation

Issued orders to the "Crimean Self-Defense" to perpetrate crimes against media representatives: capturing media outlets, beatings and kidnappings of journalists that worked in Crimea (including foreign ones), destruction of equipment etc. Amongst others, ATR journalist, Osman Pashaev, was illegally detained, journalists of the news-agency "Center for Journalist Investigations", Serhiy Mokrushyn and Vladlen Melnykov, were beaten.

The list of those who strangle freedom of speech in Crimea as of March 2017 contains over 60 names—including both organizers and actual perpetrators of systematic repressions against journalists in Crimea. The list is constantly expanding with newly emerging cases. Should you want to receive more information regarding those on the list or submit new evidence, we encourage you to contact us at [tp@humanrights.org.ua](mailto:tp@humanrights.org.ua)

Material prepared by the **Human Rights Information Centre** (<https://humanrights.org.ua/>) and **Ministry of Information Policy of Ukraine** (<http://mip.gov.ua/>).

