UKRAINE EVIDENCE HUB · PEOPLE TAKEN

Crimean Tatars: a people under prosecution

Since Russia seized Crimea in 2014, Crimean Tatars — the peninsula's indigenous people — have made up most of its political prisoners. Their elected body, the Mejlis, is banned as “extremist”. Two bodies count the prisoners, each in its own way; both counts are shown.

Presidential Representation in Crimea **tier B** as of Jul 2026	**226** **169 Crimean Tatars**	people held now on politically motivated charges (only those to whom letters can be delivered are listed by name)
Crimean Tatar Resource Center **tier C** as of 20 Apr 2026	**351** **of 520 persecuted since 2014; 277 of the 520 are Crimean Tatars**	people in pre-trial detention or serving sentences, out of everyone prosecuted on politically motivated charges since 2014

The record (selected)

- **20 Apr 2026 · Crimean Tatar Resource Center** Pattern — 520 people persecuted on politically motivated charges from Crimea since 2014 — more than double the 238 counted in February 2022; 277 are Crimean Tatars. In the first quarter of 2026 the Russian authorities made 57 arrests on the peninsula, 18 of them of Crimean Tatars.
- **18 Dec 2025 · UN General Assembly** Position — Resolution 80/223 on the human rights situation in the occupied territories of Ukraine, including Crimea, adopted by 79 votes to 16, with 73 abstentions; it condemns the persecution of Crimean Tatars and of the leaders of the Mejlis.
- **31 Jan 2024 · International Court of Justice** Established — Russia violated the Court's 2017 order by maintaining limitations on the Mejlis (11 votes to 4), and violated the Convention on racial discrimination in the way it ran schooling in Crimea after 2014 (13 votes to 2). The Court rejected Ukraine's wider claim of a campaign of racial discrimination (10 votes to 5).
- **31 Mar 2021 · OHCHR** Established — 43 enforced disappearances documented in Crimea since 2014 (39 men, 4 women); 11 men remain missing; no one has been prosecuted. Perpetrators included Russian security service agents and militia groups.
- **19 Apr 2017 · International Court of Justice** Established — Russia must refrain from maintaining or imposing limitations on the ability of the Crimean Tatar community to conserve its representative institutions, including the Mejlis (13 votes to 3), and ensure the availability of education in Ukrainian (unanimous).
- **29 Sep 2016 · Supreme Court of Russia** Pattern — Upheld the ban on the Mejlis, the elected representative body of the Crimean Tatar people, imposed in April 2016 by the Russian-installed court in Crimea as an “extremist organisation”.
- **12 Nov 2015 · Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine** Position — Recognised the Soviet deportation of the Crimean Tatars on 18 May 1944 as genocide and set 18 May as a day of remembrance.

For balance

The International Court of Justice found two breaches concerning Crimea — the limits on the Mejlis and Ukrainian-language schooling — but did not find that Russia ran a campaign of racial discrimination against Crimean Tatars as Ukraine claimed (31 Jan 2024).

What we ask

- Release all Crimean political prisoners and include them in exchanges.
- Lift the ban on the Mejlis, as the International Court of Justice ordered in 2017 and confirmed in 2024.
- Give the UN human rights monitors and the ICRC access to Crimea and to the places where Crimean detainees are held.

Sources

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- UN General Assembly, A/RES/80/223, 18 Dec 2025 — https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4098518
- Crimea Platform, 18 Dec 2025 — https://crimea-platform.org/en/news/henasambleia-oon-ukhvalyla-shchorichnu-rezoliutsiiu-shchodo-porushennia-prav-liudyny-v-okupovanomu-krymu-2/
- ICJ, Judgment, 31 Jan 2024 — https://icj-cij.org/node/203486
- OHCHR, briefing paper on enforced disappearances in Crimea, 31 Mar 2021 — https://ukraine.un.org/en/node/123652
- ICJ, Order on provisional measures, 19 Apr 2017 — https://icj-cij.org/node/105444
- RFE/RL, 29 Sep 2016 — https://www.rferl.org/a/ukraine-live-blog-events/27261855/lbl0lbi102983.html
- Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, 12 Nov 2015 — https://www.rada.gov.ua/en/print/119163.html
- Presidential Representation in Crimea, list of political prisoners, Jul 2026 — https://ppu.gov.ua/wp-content/uploads/2026/07/Spysok-politv-iazniv-ENG.pdf

Tiers: A — UN bodies and courts with a mandate; B — Ukrainian State bodies; C — independent organisations. Full tab with every source: https://ukraine-evidence.org/#people/people-crimea · Names of people still held are not given.