

1. POLITICAL PROCESSES IN THE CRIMEA:

THE PHASES OF DEVELOPMENT AND BASIC TRENDS

This section analyses the phases and tendencies of the political situation development in the Crimea. The first phase (1989-1994) saw aggravation of negative tendencies on the peninsula, the second (1995-1998) was characterised by certain stabilisation of the situation. At the present phase, after the approval of the new Constitution of the ARC (December 1998), some negative tendencies persist; electoral orientations of the peninsula's populace are shifted to the left, compared to the general Ukrainian situation; central state power bodies in the Crimea enjoy less support than throughout Ukraine.

As of January 1, 2001, the population of the ARC was close to 2.1 million people (4.26% of the entire Ukrainian population)¹. The autonomy covers 26,080 sq. km (4.32% of Ukraine's territory). The Crimea is inhabited by representatives of 80 national groups: Russians, Ukrainians, Crimean Tatars, Germans, Greeks, Armenians, Karaites, etc. The ARC is divided into 14 districts. There are 18 cities and towns there, one of them — Sevastopol — is directly subordinate to the central Ukrainian authorities. Industrial output in the ARC in 2000 totalled UAH 2.238 billion (1.7% of Ukraine's total). Per capita expenditures of the Crimean budget in 2000 were equal to UAH 417 (the average for all of Ukraine was UAH 341). The rate of unemployment calculated according to ILO methods is 8.6% (Ukraine's indicator — 11.5%). As of January 1, 2001, there were 3,040 active privatised enterprises in the ARC (in Ukraine as a whole — 73,349) and 1,535 farms of 32 hectares each, on the average (in all of Ukraine — 38,428 farms with an average area of 56 hectares)². The Crimea is a well-known resort with over 600 sanatoriums and holiday homes.

1.1 PHASE ONE: 1989-1994

This period in the development of political situation in the ARC was characterised by a sharp growth of separatist sentiments in the Crimea, the region's departure from the legislative field of Ukraine and actual loss of control over political processes in the autonomy by Ukraine. The basic tendencies of that phase of political life in the Crimea may be described as follows.

Revival of political life

In the late 1980s, political life on the peninsula heated up impetuously. Under the influence of "perestroika", political organisations and parties were created. *Most of the newly formed organisations declared their pro-Russian position or even stood in favour of the Crimea being a sovereign state*³.

Organisations of pro-Ukrainian political parties — the People's Rukh of Ukraine (NRU), Ukrainian Republican Party (URP), Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) — in the region were not numerous and exerted little influence on the Crimean situation⁴. The actions of some organisations, such as UNA-UNSO, led to escalation of anti-Ukrainian spirits in the autonomy⁵.

¹ *Interfax-Ukraine*, February 22, 2001.

² *Ukrainian Economic Trends*. December 2000. The Ukrainian-European Policy and Legal Advice Centre. — Kyiv, 2001, p.22-25.

³ Summer and autumn of 1991 witnessed the formation of the "Crimean Republican Movement", "20 January Movement", "Russian Society of the Crimea", "Democratic Tavrida" and other organisations that stood for the establishment of an independent state in the Crimea or its reunification with Russia.

⁴ In spring 1992, pro-Ukrainian political forces attempted to energise their activity by creating the association "The Crimea with Ukraine" (NRU, URP, OUN, the "Prosvita" Association and others). Some deputies of local councils spoke out for the Crimea accession to the Kherson oblast.

⁵ For instance, after the trip of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine member S.Khmara and UNA-UNSO activists, the collection of signatures for the referendum about the autonomy's future sharply intensified. As of the end of March 1992, 240,000 signatures of its supporters were collected (60,000 of them — in Sevastopol). See: Malgin A. *The Crimean Knot. Features of the 1989-1999 Political History of the Crimean Peninsula*. — Simferopol, 2000, p.67.



Departure of the Crimea from the judicial field of Ukraine

In that period, different political forces in the Crimea put forward the idea of establishing autonomy, including Crimean Tatar autonomy, formation of an independent Crimean democratic republic, or the Crimea's accession to the Soviet Union as a separate legal entity.

On January 20, 1991, a Crimean referendum was held, whereby 93.26% of people who took part in the voting spoke in favour of restoration of the Crimean Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. On February 12, 1991, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine approved that decision by passing the Law of the Ukrainian SSR "On Restoration of the Crimean Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic". The Crimean Oblast Council of People's Deputies was temporarily granted the status of the Verkhovna Rada of the Crimean SSR.

In that way, a specific state formation was established on the territory of the USSR and, later on, of the unitary Ukrainian state — an autonomy created not on a national but on a territorial basis⁶, which later led to attempts of the Crimea's secession from Ukraine.

On May 5-6, 1992, the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC adopted "The Act of State Independence of the Republic of Crimea" and the Constitution of the Republic of Crimea. By those acts, **the Crimea actually proclaimed itself as an independent state organism and a subject of international relations and, in fact, went beyond the limits of Ukraine's jurisdiction⁷.**

"The war of laws"

After the adoption of said acts, a true "war of laws" flared up between Kyiv and the Crimea. In 1992-1995, the central authorities of Ukraine took dozens of legislative acts that invalidated more than 40 legislative acts of the Republic of Crimea. *However, on the Crimean territory, local authorities were governed by legislative acts approved by the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC and the autonomy's President.*

On May 20, 1994, the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC voted for the resumption of the Constitution of the Republic of Crimea (May 6, 1992 edition) that declared negotiable principles of relations between the Crimea and Ukraine.

All in all, in that period, the authorities of the Republic of Crimea were forming the legislative basis for their activity, and had determined their functions and powers.

Gradual loss of control of the events in the Crimea by Ukraine's central authorities

In fact, Kyiv did not control the developments on the peninsula; directives of the central authorities were ignored. Then, Ukraine's authorities were so weak that they could not cancel the decision to establish the post of the President of the Republic of Crimea and hold presidential elections, which further destabilised the political situation.

The hierarchical structure of the executive branch was ruined, the most sensitive and critical instruments of state governance were destroyed. Ukraine's law-enforcement bodies and special services based in the Crimea partly went out of control of the central ministries and agencies (the President of the ARC Yuriy Meshkov created his own Security Service and ordered subordination of the local Ukrainian law-enforcement structures to him)⁸. The Verkhovna Rada of the ARC assumed authority for appointing Crimean judges⁹, and the President of the Republic of Crimea — executives of the state television company¹⁰. First steps were made at a regionalisation of Armed Forces of Ukraine: Crimean draftees were to serve conscript military service on the territory of the peninsula (without the consent of the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine)¹¹.

Growth of separatist and pro-Russian spirits in the Crimea

The actions of the Crimean authorities were supported by part of the Crimean population. Separatist and pro-Russian sentiments were caused, among other factors, by economic factors. The Crimean economy was deeply integrated into the economy of the Soviet Union. The Crimean

⁶ The majority of the Crimean population are ethnic Russians, but a Russian autonomy was not established in the Crimea.

⁷ Article 9 of the Constitution of the Republic of Crimea emphasised that the Republic "is part of Ukraine and determines its relations with it on the basis of treaties and agreements". However, throughout its territory, "the Republic of Crimea exercises the full entirety of power" (Article 1); "the carrier of sovereignty and the only source of authority is the people made up of Crimean citizens of all nationalities" (Article 9); the Republic of Crimea "independently enters into relations with other states and organisations". The very absence of the word "autonomy" in the Republic's name bears witness to the attempt at raising the status of the Crimea. What is interesting is that the Crimeans called it "the Republic of Crimea", and Ukraine's central authorities — "the Autonomous Republic of Crimea"; this explains the discrepancies in the name of the autonomy as presented in this section.

⁸ See, for instance: the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Resolution "On the Performance of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Resolution "On the Politico-judicial Situation in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea" of November 17, 1994; the President of Ukraine Decree No.160 of April 14, 1994 "On the Decrees of the President of the Republic of Crimea No.33 and No.34 of April 11, 1994".

⁹ Articles 1-3 of the Law of the Republic of Crimea "On Amendments to the Constitution of the Republic of Crimea" of September 7, 1994.

¹⁰ The Decree of the President of the Republic of Crimea "On the President of the State Television and Radio Company "Krym" No.21 of March 31, 1994.

¹¹ Directive of the President of the Republic of Crimea No.330 of March 15, 1994.

population saw the main reason for the disastrous socio-economic situation in the breakdown of economic ties with Russia: according to public opinion polls, this thought was shared by 65% of Crimean collective and state farm directors, 75% of state enterprise managers, and 80% of the peninsula inhabitants¹².

In spring, 1993, only 17.1% of the Crimeans were ready to give an affirmative answer to the question of the all-Ukrainian referendum (December 1991) on Ukraine's independence¹³, 60.5% spoke out against it. In the autumn of 1993, those indicators were 9.3% and 63.4%, respectively¹⁴.

A wave of manifestations swept over the region: in winter and autumn, 1993, dozens of meetings were held under the slogans of the Crimea's reunion with Russia, each of them attended by up to 10,000 people.

Victory of the pro-Russian forces at the Crimean Verkhovna Rada and Presidential elections in 1994

Those processes resulted in Yu.Meshkov's victory at the Crimean presidential elections (he was supported by 72.92% of voters who took part in the elections) and the success of the "Russia" bloc in elections to the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC ("Russia" obtained up to 70% of the seats in the Crimean Parliament). Their election platform was based on such ideas as: further development of Crimean statehood; an independent foreign policy; dual citizenship; reunion of the Crimea with Russia.

The issue of the Crimea's secession from Ukraine's jurisdiction and unification with Russia became practical. The future existence of Ukraine as an integral unitary and, in general, independent state was put in question.

Negative influence on the political processes in the ARC on the part of some of Russia's bodies of state power and political forces

On the 21st of May 1992, the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation passed the Resolution "On Judicial Assessment of the



Decisions of the RSFSR Supreme State Power Bodies on the Change of Status of the Crimea Adopted in 1954" that recognised the decision to transfer the Crimean oblast to Ukraine null and void from the moment of its adoption. The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine declared that such actions of the Russian Parliament posed "a direct interference into the internal affairs of Ukraine"¹⁵. On the 9th of December 1992, Russia's Supreme Soviet decided to review the issue of the legal status of the city of Sevastopol, and on the 9th of June 1993, a session of the Congress of People's Deputies of the Russian Federation adopted the Resolution "On the Status of the City of Sevastopol" that declared Russia's jurisdiction over that Ukrainian city¹⁶.

Russia's political elite actually supported declarations of the "unlawful character" of acts on the transfer of the Crimea and Sevastopol to Ukraine. This was stated by politicians of not only the radical but also the "liberal" wing: A.Sobchak, S.Stankevich, V.Lukin, Ye.Pudovkin and others¹⁷.

The situation was further aggravated due to the uncertain status of the Black Sea Fleet. Ukraine and Russia were on a brink of an open conflict after the relevant decrees of the President of Ukraine L.Kravchuk and Russia's President B.Yeltsin¹⁸. In 1992-1994, four top level meetings on the problem of the Black Sea

¹² See: Malgin A. The Crimean Knot..., p.73.

¹³ In 1991, 54% of Crimeans who took part in the voting supported Ukraine's independence.

¹⁴ See: Malgin A. The Crimean Knot..., p.73.

¹⁵ The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine Resolution "On the Declaration of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation on the Crimean Issue" of June 3, 1992.

¹⁶ The extremist policy of some Russian leaders was restrained by a more balanced position of the leaders of the Russian Federation, and particularly of President B.Yeltsin. Some representatives of the Russian elite also believed that the disintegration of Ukraine would give impetus to similar processes in Russia and might bring about deterioration of Ukraine's Russian-speaking population. For instance, then acting Prime-Minister of the Russian Federation Ye.Gaidar stressed: "The Crimea is, so to say, entirely "tied" to Ukraine, and its annexation to Russia, even purely hypothetically, will kill Russia's economy".

¹⁷ For instance, A.Sobchak stressed: "Ukraine has neither legal nor moral grounds to claim the Crimea". Cited: Malgin A. The Crimean Knot..., p.10. Some political forces in the Crimea employed such support for the aggravation of political situation. For instance, the leader of the Sevastopol branch of the Russian (!) "National Salvation Front" O.Kruglov turned to the Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation R.Khasbulatov with a request to perform a legal expertise of the legitimacy of transfer of Sevastopol to Ukraine.

¹⁸ See: The President of Ukraine Decree "On Immediate Steps at Ukraine's Armed Forces Building" No.209 of April 5, 1992; the President of the Russian Federation Decree "On Transfer of the Black Sea Fleet under the Jurisdiction of the Russian Federation" of April 7, 1992.

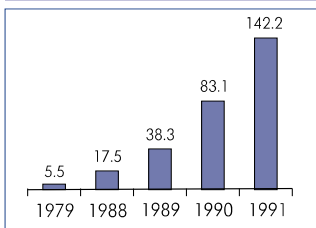
Fleet division were held but no compromise was found¹⁹.

Statements of some Russian politicians and the activity of Russia's authorities exerted a negative impact on the Crimean political situation. The presence of the Black Sea Fleet and the uncertainty of its status also presented a destabilising factor in the Crimea and in Ukraine-Russian relations in general.

Beginning of Crimean Tatars return to their historic motherland

On November 14, 1989, the USSR Supreme Soviet took a decision on rehabilitation of deported peoples. A mass return of Crimean Tatars to their historic motherland got underway²⁰. In 1979, there

The number of Crimean Tatars in the Crimea, ths. people



were some 5,500 Crimean Tatars in the Crimea, in 1988 — 17,500; in 1989 — 38,300; in 1990 — 83,100; in August, 1991 — 142,200²¹ (Diagram "The number of Crimean Tatars in the Crimea").

Socio-economic problems of the repatriates were aggravated due to the lack of housing, jobs, educational establishments with the Crimean Tatar language of teaching, etc.

Attempts were made to resolve those problems by "violent" methods. As of July 1991, Crimean Tatars had seized close to 10,000 land plots for housing construction²². In that way, almost 300 new settlements and micro-districts appeared each of them housing from 50 to 2,000 families²³. According to preliminary estimates, the Soviet authorities planned to allocate 4.5 billion roubles in 1984 prices (the dollar equivalent was almost identical) for the settlement of Crimean Tatars.

Crimean Tatars were not integrated into the Crimean political system: they were against the referendum on territorial autonomy for the Crimea

and sought quotas to guarantee their representation in the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC²⁴. On October 5-6, 1992, Crimean Tatars for the first time resorted to violent actions, demanding release of 26 people, arrested in the village of Krasnyi Rai.

The "Declaration of the National Sovereignty of the Crimean Tatar People" adopted by the Kurultai (Congress of Crimean Tatars) on June 26-30, 1991, stressed that "in the event of counteraction of the authorities or any other parties to the attainment of goals proclaimed by the Kurultai, the Kurultai reserves the right to declare the Crimean Tatar people a nation fighting for its national liberation"²⁵.

Therefore, the neglected political, judicial and socio-economic problems of Crimean Tatars created additional destabilising factors on the peninsula.

1.2 PHASE TWO: 1994-1998

This phase was characterised by the following tendencies: restoration of the administrative hierarchy in the ARC, return of the autonomy under Ukraine's jurisdiction; signing of the Large-scale Ukraine-Russia Treaty and the basic agreements of the terms on Russia's Black Sea Fleet stationing in the Crimea; aggravation of problems related with the settlement of Crimean Tatars; sharpening of relations between separate political forces in the ARC; increased influence of criminal groupings on the political situation on the peninsula.

Gradual restoration of the executive branch structure in the Crimea

In March, 1994²⁶, the Representation of the President of Ukraine in the Republic of Crimea was established. V.Horbatov was appointed Permanent Representative of the President of Ukraine in the Crimea²⁷. The Representation obtained the status of a state executive body. Its duty was to provide for the "implementation of Ukraine's Constitution and laws of Ukraine on issues falling under the competence of the President of Ukraine as the head of state and of the executive branch"²⁸.

¹⁹ Meetings were held in June, 1992 (Dagomys), August, 1992 (Yalta), June, 1993 (Zavidovo), August, 1993 (Masandra).

²⁰ The USSR Supreme Soviet Declaration "On the Recognition of Repressive Acts against Nations Subjected to Forcible Resettlement Unlawful and Felonious and the Guarantees of Their Rights" of November 14, 1989.

²¹ Grach L. The Crimean Autonomy Is a Response to the Historic Challenge. — Simferopol, 2001, p.5.

²² Malgin A. The Crimean Knot..., p.124.

²³ Umerov I. The Problems of National Education of Crimean Tatars. Socio-Economic Aspects of Integration of Crimean Tatars. Round-table materials, March 17, 1999. The Ukrainian Independent Centre for Political Studies. — Kyiv, 1999, p.21.

²⁴ At the 1994 elections to the Crimean Verkhovna Rada, they obtained a 14-seat quota.

²⁵ Cited: Grach L. The Crimean Autonomy Is a Response to the Historic Challenge..., p.7-8.

²⁶ The Law of Ukraine "On the Representation of the President of Ukraine in the Republic of Crimea" was adopted as far back as December, 1992, but the relevant decree of the President of Ukraine on establishment of the Representation was signed and the Permanent Representative was appointed only in March, 1994.

²⁷ The President of Ukraine Decree "On the Representation of the President of Ukraine in the Republic of Crimea" No.119 of March 31, 1994.

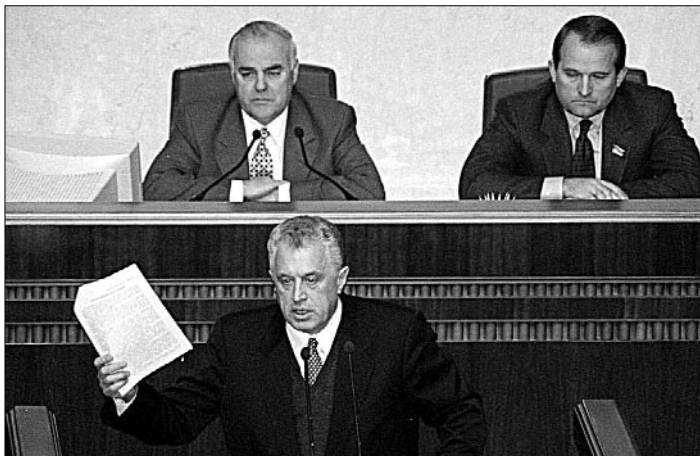
²⁸ The Law of Ukraine "On the Representation of the President of Ukraine in the Republic of Crimea".

Measures were taken for the restoration of controllability of law-enforcement bodies. In May, 1994, the President of Ukraine issued a decree on reorganisation of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Security Service of the Republic of Crimea, respectively, into the Main Administration of Internal Affairs of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine in the Crimea and the Main Administration of the Security Service of Ukraine in the Crimea, subordinate directly to the Minister of Internal Affairs of Ukraine and the Head of Ukraine's Security Service²⁹.

In March, 1995, the President of Ukraine issued a decree stipulating that the Prime Minister of the Crimean Government is appointed directly by Ukraine's President on the proposal of the Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC, and the members of the ARC Government — by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine³⁰. In August 1995, that procedure was somewhat changed: the ARC Prime Minister was to be appointed and dismissed by the Verkhovna Rada of the Crimea, upon agreement with the President of Ukraine. At the same time, district state administrations subordinate to the Crimean Government, the Cabinet of Ministers and the President of Ukraine were formed in the Crimea³¹.

That procedure of appointment and dismissal of the head of the Crimean Government was fixed in Article 136 of Ukraine's Constitution (1996) and the Law of Ukraine "On the Constitution of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea" (1998).

Therefore, in 1994-1998, the manageability of the executive branch structure, including law-enforcement bodies, was resumed in the ARC,



which contributed to stabilisation of the political situation in the autonomy. The central executive bodies regained lost control of the developments in the Crimea.

Return of the ARC to Ukraine's jurisdiction

Priority tasks of Ukraine's authorities included harmonisation of the regulatory-legal acts of the Republic of Crimea with the national legislation.

On March 17, 1995, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine cancelled the Constitution of the Republic of Crimea (May 6, 1992 edition); the laws of the Republic of Crimea "On Election of the President of the Republic of Crimea", "On Restoration of Constitutional Fundamentals of Statehood of the Republic of Crimea", "On the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Crimea", "On Election of Members and Heads of Village, Settlement, District, City, City District Councils"³². The post of the President of the Republic of Crimea and the system of election to local councils, different from the national system, were abolished. The Autonomous Republic of Crimea was recognised as an administrative-territorial autonomy within Ukraine³³.

The Crimean populace was rather critical of the decisions of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine: according to the results of a poll held by the Crimean Centre for Humanitarian Studies, 52% of Crimeans flatly rejected the cancellation of the Crimean Constitution. However, there was no serious social turmoil in the autonomy.

Article 135 of the Constitution of Ukraine stipulated that regulatory-legal acts of the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC and resolutions of the ARC Council of Ministers could not run contrary to the Constitution and laws of Ukraine. The President of Ukraine was granted the right to suspend regulatory-legal acts of the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC and simultaneously apply to Ukraine's Constitutional Court. The adoption of the new ARC Constitution in 1998 and its approval by the Law of Ukraine "On the Constitution of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea" finally determined the present status of the autonomy.

The return of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea under Ukraine's jurisdiction in that time-frame marked the end of the "war of laws", contributed to stabilisation of the political situation in the ARC and repair of relations between Kyiv and the Crimea on a legal basis³⁴.

²⁹ The President of Ukraine Decree "On the Main Administration of Internal Affairs of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine in the Crimea" No.233 of May 18, 1994; the President of Ukraine Decree "On the Main Administration of the Security Service of Ukraine in the Crimea" No.234 of May 18, 1994. Directors of the mentioned administrations obtained the status of Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs of Ukraine and Deputy Head of the Security Service of Ukraine, respectively.

³⁰ The President of Ukraine Decree "On some Issues of Relations between the Central Executive Bodies of State Power and Executive Bodies of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea" No.278 of March 31, 1995.

³¹ The President of Ukraine Decree "On the Central Executive Bodies of State Power of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea" No.759 of August 19, 1995.

³² The Law of Ukraine "On Cancellation of the Constitution and Some Laws of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea" of March 17, 1995.

³³ The Law of Ukraine "On the Autonomous Republic of Crimea" of March 17, 1995.

³⁴ Not all contradictions between Ukraine's legislation and regulatory-legal acts of the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC have been removed, but they are being settled pursuant to the provisions of Ukraine's Constitution. See, for instance: Ruling of the Constitutional Court of Ukraine on Case No.1-20/2001 of February 27, 2001.

Internal political confrontation in the ARC

That period witnessed aggravation of relations between the President of the Republic of Crimea Yu.Meshkov and the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC, and later — within the representative body itself. This was caused by the differing views of executives and politicians on further development of the autonomy and the ambitions of the leaders.

In the autumn of 1994, political confrontation between Yu.Meshkov and the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC toughened: in September, 1994, the latter significantly restricted the powers of the Crimean President³⁵ (Yu.Meshkov encountered opposition even of deputies from the "Russia" bloc who had supported him at the elections). In response, Yu.Meshkov issued decrees on the termination of powers of the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC and a referendum on the new Crimean Constitution to be held on April 9, 1995. However, the deputies managed to steal his thunder: on the 15th of September 1994, the "pro-Russian government" of Ye.Saburov resigned, and the Franchuk government loyal to Kyiv was formed.

Yu.Meshkov lost the political support of not only his former allies but also of the Crimean population: according to different polls, only 10% of the Crimeans supported his actions³⁶. In March 1995, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine abolished the post of the President of the Crimea.

The political crisis led to a decrease in the influence of pro-Russian political forces on the peninsula that could not offer a real alternative to Crimeans. According to sociological survey results, in 1995, only 5% of the Crimean population supported the Republican Party of the Crimea (that had formed the "Russia" bloc jointly with the Popular Party)³⁷. The "Russia" bloc also lost its positions in the Crimean Verkhovna Rada: in 1995, their representative S.Tsekov was dismissed from the post of the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC Chairman, and pro-Russian forces united in the "Soyuz" ("Union") party.

In 1995-1998, the centre of political confrontation shifted to the Crimean Verkhovna Rada and the Government. The absence of a clear political structure in the Crimean representative body led to a permanent regrouping of factions, the "wobbling" of deputies from one group into another, and endless changes in the autonomy's

leadership. As a result, in 1995-1998, the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC was headed by four speakers³⁸; as many governments changed one another in the same timeframe³⁹.

Permanent conflicts between the Crimean President and the Verkhovna Rada and inside the autonomy's representative body, and the change of leadership of the Verkhovna Rada and the Government of the ARC did not contribute to stable work of state power bodies and solution of economic problems in the Crimea.

Aggravation of problems of Crimean Tatars

In that period, the suspended problems of the Crimean Tatar people turned into an important factor that influenced the political situation in the autonomy. **The foundation of this problem, so clearly felt in 2001, were laid down exactly in that timeframe.**

With the beginning of privatisation in 1994, the majority of Crimean Tatars were barred from that process, and no special reserve fund (to provide for the participation of deported national groups in privatisation) was established⁴⁰.

The economy crisis did not allow to allocate funds necessary for the settlement of Crimean Tatars. For instance, in 1997-1998, UAH 75 million were earmarked on capital construction, close to UAH 28 million — on social and cultural events; in reality, UAH 11.93 million and UAH 9.1 million were allocated, respectively. Experts calculated that in 1998, UAH 7,20 or close to \$2 was spent on the settlement of one Crimean Tatar⁴¹. According to expert estimates, participation of Crimean Tatars in the process of collective farm land sharing commenced in 1996 also was limited.



³⁵ The Crimean President has lost the status of a head of state (but has retained powers of the head of the executive branch), the right to appoint heads of city and district state administrations, propose candidacies for the Constitutional Court of the Crimea.

³⁶ Malgin A. *The Crimean Knot...*, p.92.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ S.Tsekov (1994-1995); Ye.Supruniuk (1995-1996); V.Kyseliov (1996-1997); A.Grytsenko (1997-1998).

³⁹ Ye.Saburov (1994); A.Franchuk (1994-1996); A.Demydenko (1996-1997), again A.Franchuk (1997-1998).

⁴⁰ Crimean Tatar leaders repeatedly turned to the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine with a proposal to establish such a fund; relevant assignments were given, but they were never accomplished.

⁴¹ Umerov I. *The Analysis of the Socio-Economic Standing of the Crimean Tatar People in the Crimea. Socio-Economic Aspects of Integration of Crimean Tatars. Round-table materials, March 17, 1999. The Ukrainian Independent Centre for Political Studies. — Kyiv, 1999, p.52.*



Those unsettled problems, as well as non-recognition of the Mejlis and Kurultai as the representative bodies of the Crimean Tatar people by Ukraine's authorities⁴², prompted Crimean Tatars to radical actions: they blocked rail and motor ways, and organised unauthorised meetings and demonstrations⁴³.

The suspended political, judicial and socio-economic problems of Crimean Tatars aggravated the situation in the ARC, pushed them to radical steps and formed the potential for future political conflicts.

Increased influence of criminal gangs on the development of political situation in the Crimea

In 1995-1998, gradual merger of criminal structures and corrupt officials and "infiltration" of criminals into authorities took place. In 1994, four representatives of organised criminal groups were elected to the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC. According to expert assessments, in 1995, 44 deputies directly or indirectly connected with criminal structures were elected to local self-administration bodies⁴⁴.

The "settling of criminal scores" was quite prevalent in politics on the peninsula. Two powerful criminal groups that seriously impacted the political situation on the peninsula were distinguished: the "Bashmaki" and the "Seilem". There was information that the "Seilem" was closely tied with the leadership of the Party of Economic Revival of the Crimea (PERC). On order of the former Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC Ye.Supruniuk, fighters from that gang beat up the ex-speaker of the ARC Verkhovna Rada S.Tsekov. PERC politicians accused their political opponents in ties with the "Bashmaki" criminal grouping.

According to the present Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC L.Grach, "criminals did everything to put the economy and political sphere, administrative, managerial bodies and officials under their control... Time has come when a leader of a criminal group... might... hold conversations in the office of the Crimean Prime Minister, while a militia General was waiting behind the doors, in the lobby"⁴⁵. Political killings on order became widely spread⁴⁶. The Declaration of the Presidium of the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC of February 6, 1998, stressed that criminal

structures were trying to "take control of the authorities and officials in the autonomy"⁴⁷.

The populace of the ARC shared that view: 58% of Crimeans polled by the Crimean Centre for Humanitarian Studies in early 1995 were sure that real power in the Crimea belonged to "Mafia".

Criminal groups not only were used in the political struggle but themselves exerted noticeable influence on political decisions and developments on the peninsula.

Unsettled key problems in bilateral relations between Ukraine and the Russian Federation

Jurisdiction over the city of Sevastopol and the problems of the Black Sea Fleet stationing remained the main destabilising factors in Ukraine-Russia relations in that timeframe. On the 5th of December, 1996, Russia's Federation Council turned to President B.Yeltsin with a request to declare a moratorium on signing of international agreements on the Black Sea Fleet division, the status of the Crimea and Sevastopol before the end of the work of a special commission of the Federation Council.

The position of some top executives of the Russian Federation also pointed to the existence of Russian territorial claims to Ukraine. For instance, Moscow mayor Yu.Luzhkov stressed that "the text of the Large-scale Ukraine-Russia Treaty should confirm the Russian status of Sevastopol — part of the Russian Federation and the main naval base of the Black Sea Fleet"⁴⁸.

Talks on the division of the Black Sea Fleet between Ukraine and the Russian Federation continued. On June 9, 1995, Ukraine's President L.Kuchma and Russia's President B.Yeltsin signed an agreement on the Black Sea Fleet's division: 81.7% of the ships were transferred to the Russian Federation, 18.7% — to Ukraine. Russia was *allowed to use* Black Sea Fleet facilities in Sevastopol and other Crimean bases. This in fact meant recognition of Ukraine's sovereignty over Sevastopol and the Crimea.

The issue of control of Sevastopol, the Crimea and division of the Black Sea Fleet were finally resolved on May 28, 1997, after the signing of relevant documents on the Black Sea Fleet⁴⁹, and on June 30, 1997, with the signing of the Agreement of Friendship, Co-operation and Partnership between Ukraine and the Russian Federation.

⁴² For more details about these and other requirements of Crimean Tatars, see the next section.

⁴³ For instance, in summer 1995, Crimean Tatars held mass actions in the towns of Sudak and Planerske. On March 24, 1998, criminal cases were initiated against the participants of those actions organised by the Mejlis, for the attempt of blocking transport routes and malignant disobedience to the militia. In the result of events on March 24, 1998, 19 militiamen and 47 Crimean Tatars were injured.

⁴⁴ Chernetsov K. *The Gangster Crimea*. — Moscow, 1998, p.222.

⁴⁵ See: Grach L. *On Legal Regulation of the Crimean Geopolitical Problem*. Two Parts, Part 2. — Simferopol, 2000, p.150.

⁴⁶ In that period, First Deputy Head of the Council of Ministers of the ARC A.Safontsev, Head of the ARC State Property Fund A.Gilivizin and the ARC Minister of Resorts and Tourism D.Gildich were killed.

⁴⁷ See: Grach L. *On Legal Regulation of the Crimean Geopolitical Problem...*, p.151.

⁴⁸ Malgin A. *The Crimean Knot...*, p.43.

⁴⁹ Agreements between Ukraine and the Russian Federation "On Mutual Settlements Related with the Division of the Black Sea Fleet and Stationing of Russia's Black Sea Fleet on Ukraine's Territory"; "On the Status and Terms of Russia's Black Sea Fleet Stationing on Ukraine's Territory"; "On the Parameters of Division of the Black Sea Fleet".

Signing of the Large-scale Ukraine-Russia Treaty and the agreements of the terms on Russia's Black Sea Fleet stationing in the ARC contributed to a certain stabilisation of the political situation in the Crimea.

1.3 PHASE THREE: 1998-2001

The adoption of the new Crimean Constitution (December, 1998) marked a new phase in the development of the political situation in the autonomy. Below, we analyse the results of the 1998 elections to the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC⁵⁰ and political orientations of the Crimean population.

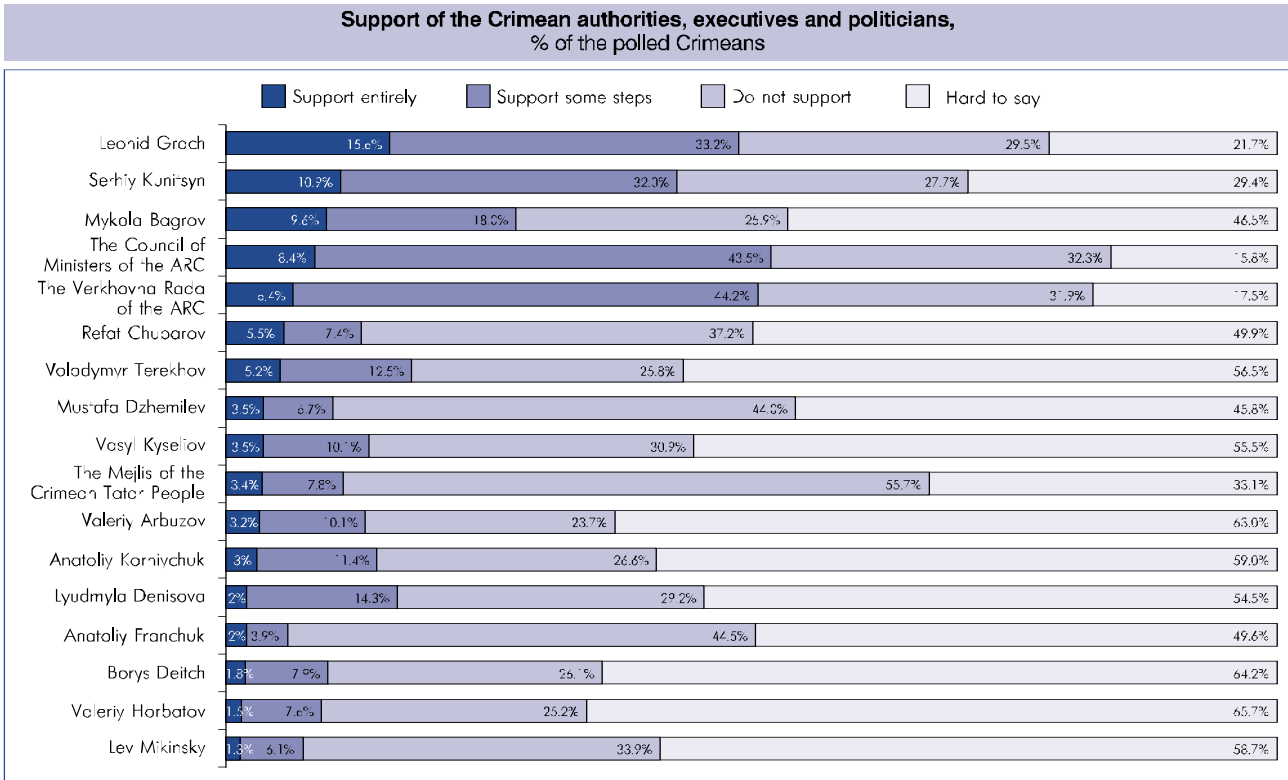
As of November, 2000, 49 regional branches of all-Ukrainian political parties were registered in the ARC⁵¹ (according to the Permanent Representation of the President of Ukraine in the ARC, only 28 political parties were more or less active there).

The analysis and sociological surveys performed by UCEPS⁵² revealed the following tendencies and specific features of the Crimean political situation.

Popular support for the left, and particularly for CPU, in the Crimea is much higher than throughout Ukraine. This is demonstrated by the following data.

First of all, the regional branch of the Communist Party of Ukraine (CPU) headed by L.Grach won the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC elections held in March, 1998⁵³ and took more than a third of all seats in the autonomy's representative body (36 deputies)⁵⁴. Other parties, including pro-presidential, performed poorer⁵⁵.

The Crimean communist leader L.Grach was elected Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC, which gave CPU control of the autonomy's representative body. L.Grach has the highest rating among the Crimean politicians — 15.6% of respondents completely support his actions (*Diagram "Support of the Crimean authorities, executives and politicians"*). The Verkhovna Rada of the ARC enjoys the full support of 6.4% of the polled Crimeans.



⁵⁰ Pursuant to the ARC Constitution, the Verkhovna Rada of the autonomy is the representative body consisting of 100 members elected in constituencies by a majority vote. The Verkhovna Rada of the ARC adopts the autonomy's Constitution to be approved by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and regulatory-legal acts (resolutions and decisions). By a majority of votes, the autonomy's deputies appoint the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the ARC (upon agreement with the President of Ukraine) and form the ARC Council of Ministers on a proposal of the Head of the ARC Government.

⁵¹ Data of the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine Administration in the ARC.

⁵² The national poll was conducted by UCEPS sociological service between February 26 - March 7, 2001, in all of Ukraine's regions. 2,037 people above 18 years were polled. Hereafter, with respect to Ukraine, we refer to this UCEPS survey, unless stated differently.

The Crimean poll was held by UCEPS sociological service on March 14-28, 2001, in different areas of the ARC. 600 Ukrainian citizens above 18 living in the ARC were polled. With respect to the Crimea, hereinafter we refer to this UCEPS survey, unless stated differently.

⁵³ 10 MPs were elected to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine in the Crimean majority constituencies. Two of them were CPU members, two — represented the NDP, one — the APU, one — the "Soyuz" party. One Crimean Tatar was also elected.

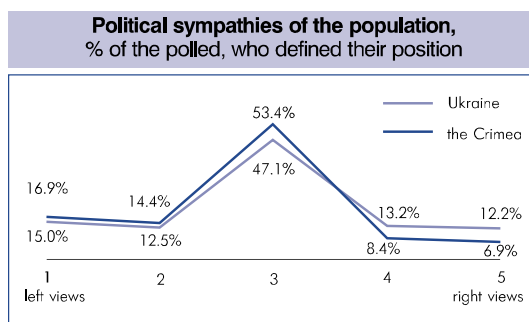
⁵⁴ The Communist Party faction in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine numbers 112 peoples, which is close to a quarter of all MPs of Ukraine.

⁵⁵ The NDP won seven seats, the "Soyuz" party — five; the APU — five; the Party of Economic Revival — two; the Socialist Party — one. Another 44 members of the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC are non-partisan.



Second, seven communists are members of the ARC Council of Ministers. This allows the CPU to influence the autonomy's executive branch.

Third, the Diagram "Political sympathies of the population" shows that the political sympathies of the Crimea clearly gravitate to the left, compared with all of Ukraine. This is reaffirmed by the intention to vote for specific political parties. While throughout Ukraine, 14% is ready to vote for the CPU, in the Crimea, more than a quarter of the electorate (25.5%) would vote for the CPU. The CPU influence is confirmed by the fact that it has the most numerous party organisation in the region — up to 15,000 members.



The second influential political force in the ARC is presented by political parties that support the present Ukraine's President: the NDP, SDPU(u), APU, etc. These political forces are in control of the autonomy's Government, headed by the regional NDP leader S.Kunitsyn since May, 1998⁵⁶. His activity as the Chairman of the ARC Council of Ministers is entirely supported by 10.9% of respondents, which is the second best indicator in the autonomy. Compared to the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC, the Crimean population is a bit more sympathetic to Crimea's Government (8.4% of clear supporters against 6.4%). The leader of the Crimean branch of the Agrarian Party of Ukraine A.Korniychuk is the Permanent Representative of the President of Ukraine in the ARC.

Experts estimate the total membership of regional organisations of pro-presidential political parties in the ARC at approximately 20,000⁵⁷.

In late 2000 - early 2001, a majority numbering 55-56 persons (co-ordinated by V.Kyseliov) was formed in the representative body⁵⁸. Its goal is to replace the Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC L.Grach who is supported by approximately 44 communist deputies and their allies.

Proceeding from present-day estimates, in case of introduction of the proportionate system at elections to the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC, the chances of crossing the 4% barrier by the CPU are high (25.5% of respondents is ready to vote for it), with the SDPU(u) (3.4%), the Green Party of Ukraine (3.2%), the NDP (2.9%), the People's Rukh of Ukraine (2.5%) following.⁵⁹

The parties that used to exploit integrationist and pro-Russian sentiments of voters — the "Soyuz" party, the Party of Slavic Unity, the Slavic Party (numbering several hundred members each) — are gradually losing support. However, pro-Russian leaders and forces still enjoy support of the voters. For instance, 5.2% of the Crimeans entirely support the actions of the head of the Crimea's Russian Community V.Terekhov. Under certain circumstances, those forces may cross the 4% barrier at elections to the Verkhovna Rada of the autonomy.

Crimean Tatar political forces, and particularly the Mejlis, exert significant influence on the political situation in the ARC. Crimean Tatars are represented by a number of social and political movements⁶⁰. So far, none of them have been officially registered with Ukraine's judicial bodies.

The Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar People (headed by M.Dzhemilev) is elected by the Kurultai (congress) of the Mejlis of Crimean Tatars⁶¹. It claims the status of the representative body of Crimean Tatars.

According to UCEPS poll, the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar People enjoys the full support of 3.4% of Crimeans (another 7.8% support some of its actions); the activity of the Mejlis Chairman, Ukraine's people's deputy M.Dzhemilev is fully supported by 3.5% of those polled; and that of the Mejlis Deputy Chairman, Ukraine's people's deputy R.Chubarov — 5.5%.

⁵⁶ Data of different public opinion polls show that the mentioned parties used administrative resources to gain support. For instance, at the 1998 elections to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine in the multi-mandate constituency, the Crimea took only the third place by the level of CPU support, and by the level of support for the CPU leader Symonenko P. at the 1999 presidential elections, it was only eighth, with 338,000 votes, against 385,000 in 1998. The data of different poll results in long-time interval confidently put the CPU in first place, by the level of electoral support among Crimeans.

⁵⁷ The Agrarian Party of Ukraine — up to 10,000 members; the Liberal Party of Ukraine (renewed) — close to 3,000; the Social-Democratic Party of Ukraine (united) — 3,000; the People's Democratic Party (NDP) — close to 2,600 members.

⁵⁸ The majority united some independent deputies, factions of the agrarians, "Soglasie" ("Accord") and "Respublika" ("Republic") made up of representatives of NDP, APU, SDPU(u) and other pro-presidential parties.

⁵⁹ There are reasons to predict that the Crimean Tatar political forces and pro-Russian political parties will overcome the 4% barrier at the ARC Verkhovna Rada elections.

⁶⁰ Other political organisations of Crimean Tatars that deserve mention: the Organisation of the Crimean Tatar National Movement, which in fact presents a socio-political movement; radical forces — the Crimean Tatar National Movement and the Crimean Tatar National Party "Adalet" that do not enjoy any significant support among Crimean Tatars; as well as of the liberal trend — socio-political movement "Milliet", also non-influential.

⁶¹ The Presidium of the Mejlis consists of nine people.



The People's Rukh of Ukraine (NRU) is oriented to close co-operation with the Mejlis, counting on weakening of pro-Russian sentiments in the Crimea (Mejlis Chairman M.Dzhemilev was elected to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine by the NRU party list). Regional NRU membership in the Crimea does not exceed several hundred.

The Crimean population supports the activity of the central authorities of the state far less than the population of Ukraine generally. Ukraine's Government is fully supported in the Crimea three times less than throughout Ukraine — 3.4% and 9.7%, respectively; the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine — 3.2% and 4.5%, respectively (*Table "Support for the activity of state power bodies and separate executives"*).

Support for the activity of state power bodies and separate executives, % of the polled

	Fully support	Support separate measures	Don't support	Hard to say
All-Ukrainian poll				
The President	11.4	34.4	43.8	10.4
The Verkhovna Rada	4.5	33.3	49.4	12.8
The Cabinet of Ministers	9.7	38.3	38.8	13.2
Victor Yuschenko	26.7	32.0	27.2	14.1
Ivan Pliusch	6.2	19.9	46.9	27.0
Victor Medvedchuk	4.2	14.6	49.2	32.0
All-Crimean poll				
The President	9.7	30.3	52.3	7.7
The Verkhovna Rada	3.2	28.8	47.2	20.8
The Cabinet of Ministers	3.4	30.9	42.8	22.9
Victor Yuschenko	5.0	30.5	39.0	25.5
Ivan Pliusch	1.7	12.2	48.7	37.4
Victor Medvedchuk	2.2	12.4	43.2	42.2

The figures of support for the activity of separate top state officials in the Crimea and Ukraine are still more different. The actions of the Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine I.Pliushch are fully supported by almost four times less respondents in the Crimea than in entire Ukraine (1.7% and 6.2%, respectively); Ukraine's Prime Minister V.Yushchenko has five times less support (5% and 26.7%). Among other factors, this may be explained by the acute unresolved socio-economic problems of the autonomy, the pro-Western orientation of V.Yushchenko and the opposition of the CPU, the most popular party on the peninsula.

It is worth notice that the attitude to Ukraine's President is roughly the same: in the Crimea, 9.7% of citizens fully support his actions, in Ukraine — 11.4%.

CONCLUSIONS

In 1991, a specific autonomy was established in the Crimea, created not on a national but on a territorial basis. This had an effect on further development of the political situation.

In 1992, the Crimea went out of the borders of Ukraine's legislation. The hierarchic structure of Ukraine's executive branch in the autonomy was in fact ruined. The Crimea's exit from Ukraine's jurisdiction and unification with Russia was in sight.

In 1994-1998, some negative tendencies were neutralised. Controllability of the executive branch in the ARC was restored, the autonomy was brought back into the limits of Ukraine's legislation. The model of relations between the Centre and the autonomy was based on the following principles: repudiation from forcible methods of conflict resolution; guarantees of the Crimean autonomy; legitimisation of Russia's military presence in the Crimea pursuant to the international law; widening the autonomy's economic powers; formation of local pro-Ukrainian political elite⁶².

However, not all the problems were resolved. This resulted in accumulation of a conflict potential that destabilises the present political situation in the Crimea. The internal political situation in the Crimea is characterised by permanent political confrontation that persists even now.

⁶² Razumkov O. Before It Is Not Too Late. — *Zerkalo Nedeli*, March 30, 1996, p.2.



Suspended political, judicial and socio-economic problems of Crimean Tatars led to aggravation of the situation at the present stage of political developments in the ARC.

The influence of criminal circles on state and political decisions and the overall situation on the peninsula was not entirely removed.

Signing of the Large-scale Ukraine-Russia Treaty and the agreements of the terms on Russia's Black Sea Fleet stationing became stabilising factors, but this also legalised Russia's military-political presence in Ukraine.

The present phase in the development of political situation is characterised by the following tendencies.

The ARC electorate is largely oriented to the support of left parties, and particularly the CPU. Leader of the regional CPU organisation L.Grach has the highest rating of popular support in the region. The Crimean population is more sympathetic to left-wing political forces than Ukraine's population in general.

The second influential political force is presented by pro-presidential political parties (the NDP, the SDPU(u), the APU, etc.). The NDP representative, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the ARC S.Kunitsyn is the second most supported figure in the Crimea.

The political forces that used to exploit pro-Russian slogans are gradually losing support but still may count on Crimean voters.

The most influential organisation of Crimean Tatars is the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar People oriented to co-operation with the People's Rukh of Ukraine on the national scale.

The level of support for the activity of the top executives and central bodies of state power in the Crimea is lower than in Ukraine. Among other factors, this may be explained by the acute unresolved socio-economic problems of the ARC and the activity of the CPU, which is the most popular party in the autonomy.

The above data show that the next composition of the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC will consist of four groupings. Communists will play the main role; even today, they may count on a quarter of seats in the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC. A coalition of pro-presidential parties will present the second most influential force. Crimean Tatar political forces and the parties that count on the pro-Russian sentiments of the Crimean electorate also may hope for seats in the autonomy's representative body.

The comparatively low level of support for the activity of state power bodies and top officials, against Ukraine's indicators, proves that the ARC should always stay in the focus of attention of the Ukrainian leadership. Fundamentals of the state policy toward the settlement of the Crimean political and socio-economic problems must be worked out immediately. ■

2. INTERNAL FACTORS OF POLITICAL TENSION IN THE CRIMEA



This section analyses the influence of internal factors that do or can negatively affect the political situation in the Crimea. The analysis shows that a significant conflict potential has been accumulated in the ARC.

The most weighty internal factors that are or may be conducive to the escalation of political tension in the Crimea include: inadequate legal regulation of relations between Kyiv and the Crimea; unsettled budget relations between the Centre and the autonomy; the lengthy political confrontation in the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC; unresolved political, judicial, socio-economic and cultural problems of Crimean Tatars; the limited presence of the Ukrainian culture and Ukrainian language in the ARC; the difficult confessional and ethnical situation in the autonomy; and the influence of criminal groups on the activity of the ARC authorities.

2.1 INADEQUATE LEGAL REGULATION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN KYIV AND THE CRIMEA

The long conflict concerning the definition of the Crimea's legal status actually ended on December 23, 1998, when the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine passed the Law of Ukraine "On Approval of the Constitution of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea", adopted at the second session of the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC on October 21, 1998. *This law marked a political and judicial compromise between different political forces both in Ukraine and in the Crimea.*

Some provisions of that Law run contrary to the norms of the Constitution of Ukraine.

First of all, Article 137 of the Constitution of Ukraine contains the full and exclusive list of issues governed directly by the Autonomous Republic of Crimea. According to the Constitution of Ukraine, Ukrainian laws, as is provided in the Constitution of the ARC (part 1, Article 18), cannot extend this list.

Second, the general procedure for enactment of regulatory-legal acts of any bodies is established

by Article 57 of the Constitution of Ukraine. Hence, establishment of any other procedure by regulatory-legal acts of the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC (part 5, Article 27 of the Constitution of the ARC) runs contrary to the Basic Law of Ukraine.

Third, the Council of Ministers of the ARC is not included into the system of subordination and control of executive bodies, as provided in section VI of the Basic Law of Ukraine. Therefore, the right of the Council of Ministers of the ARC to cancel acts of heads of local state administrations (part 6, Article 38 of the Constitution of the ARC) is not in line with the Constitution of Ukraine (part 8, Article 118).

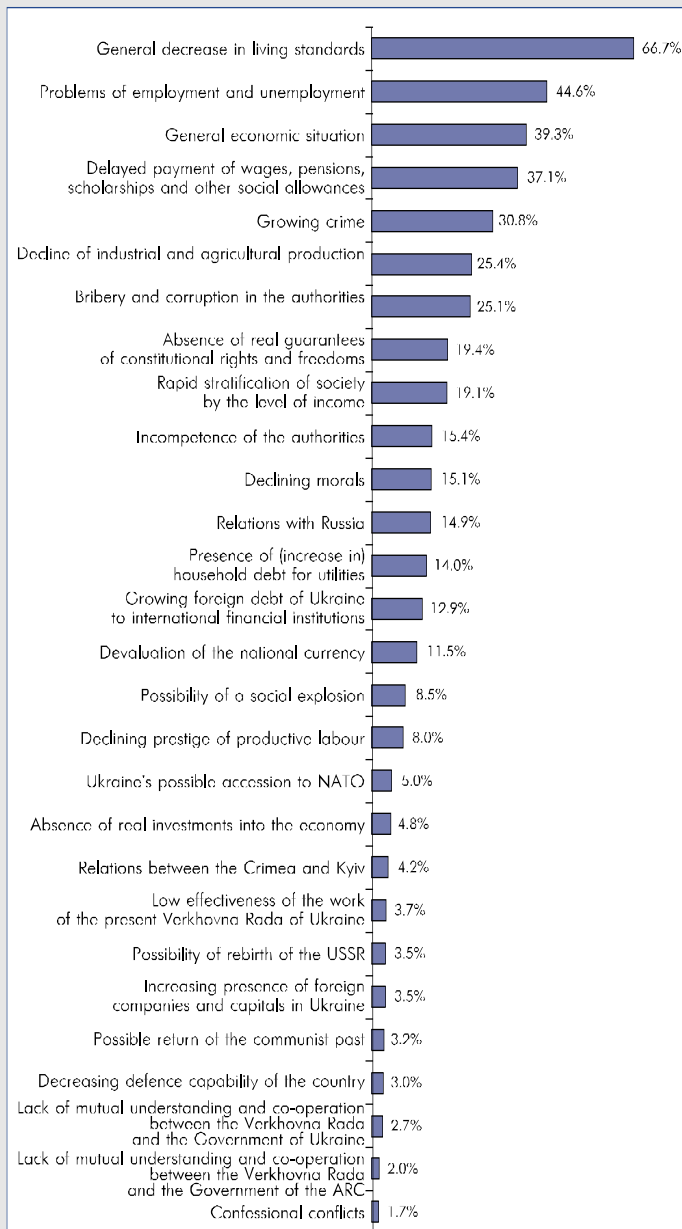
Fourth, the Constitution of the ARC grants the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC some powers in defiance of the Constitution of Ukraine, the Law of Ukraine "On the Verkhovna Rada of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea" and other laws, namely:

✦ pursuant to the Constitution of Ukraine (clause 16, part 1, Article 92), special status of cities is defined solely by laws of Ukraine. Therefore, definition of the special status of the



According to UCEPS poll, the Crimean population is first and foremost concerned about economic problems⁶³. The problems of a general decrease in living standards is clearly in the lead (66.7%). It is followed by the problems of employment and unemployment (44.6%); the general economic situation (39.3%); delayed payment of wages, pensions, etc. (37.1%). The fifth most painful problem is that of growing crime (30.8%). Crimeans are much less concerned about the autonomy's relations with the Centre (4.2%); lack of understanding and interaction between the Verkhovna Rada and the Government of the ARC (2.7%); least of all they are bothered by the confessional conflicts (1.7%).

Problems that bother the Crimean population most of all, % of the polled



city of Simferopol by acts the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC (part 2, Article 8 of the Constitution of the ARC) is unlawful;

❖ the organisation and procedure of governing elections are defined solely by the laws of Ukraine (clause 20, part 1, Article 92 of the Constitution of Ukraine), for which reason placement of issues of organisation and conduct of elections within the purview of the ARC (clause 6, part 1, Article 18 of the Constitution of the ARC) runs contrary to the Constitution of Ukraine.

Fifth, the powers and procedures of the ARC Government are set by the Constitution and laws of Ukraine⁶⁴ and by regulatory-legal acts of the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC — on issues falling under its competence (part 4, Article 136 of the Constitution of Ukraine). Hence, definition of the procedures and powers of the Council of Ministers of the ARC by the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC acts, *without taking account of its competence to do so* (part 7, Article 38 of the Constitution of the ARC) runs contrary to the Basic Law of Ukraine.

Sixth, the Constitution of the ARC places some powers not provided by the Constitution of Ukraine and the Law of Ukraine "On the Verkhovna Rada of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea" and other laws within the competence of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and its representative body, specifically:

❖ participation in formation and discharge of the basic principles of foreign policy of Ukraine (clause 3, Part 1, Article 18 of the Constitution of the ARC), foreign economic activity and external relations (clause 11, part 2, part 3, Article 18; para.13, part 2, Article 38 of the Constitution of the ARC);

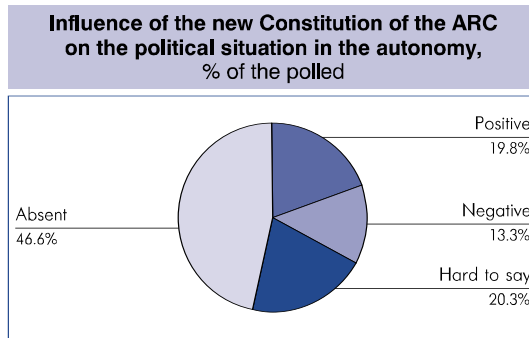
❖ solution of the issues of investment, science, technology, establishment of free economic zones, licensing and setting quotas of exports, etc.; development and pursuance of demographic policy (clauses 11, 20, part 1, Article 18 of the Constitution of the ARC).

On the 27th of February, 2001, the Constitutional Court of Ukraine recognised close to 30 articles of four regulatory-legal acts of the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC — its procedures, resolutions on human resources management, on the ARC Accounting Chamber and on property management — as unconstitutional⁶⁵. This entails the further cancellation of norms of some regulatory-legal acts adopted by the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC in accordance with unconstitutional powers.

⁶³ These issues are out of the scope of this survey; their influence on the situation in the ARC and in entire Ukraine is known. For more details, see: The Church and Society: Co-operation in the Name of Human Life. UCEPS Analytical Report. — *National Security & Defence*, 2001, No.3, p.2-30.

⁶⁴ The Law of Ukraine "On the Council of Ministers of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea" has not been passed yet, which significantly complicates the relations between the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC and the Council of Ministers of the ARC.

⁶⁵ Ruling of the Constitutional Court of Ukraine on Case No.1-20/2001 of February 27, 2001.



It is worth noting that nowadays the Crimean population is not very enthusiastic about the effects of adoption of the Constitution of the ARC on the political situation in the Crimea: almost half of the respondents (46.6%) believe that the adoption of the Constitution of the ARC has not influenced the situation in the autonomy; only one in five (19.8%) suggests its influence to be positive; instead, 13.3% of the polled believes it to be negative (*Diagram "Influence of the new Constitution of the ARC on the political situation in the autonomy"*).

Under certain conditions, the contradictions between the Constitution and laws of Ukraine and the Constitution of the ARC may lead to aggravation of relations between Kyiv and Simferopol and complicate the political situation in the autonomy.

2.2 UNSETTLED BUDGET RELATIONS BETWEEN KYIV AND THE CRIMEA

Budget contradictions, too, provoke conflicts between the Centre and the Crimea. For instance, revenues of the 2000 Crimean budget approved by the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC (VAT inclusive) make UAH 779 million. Meanwhile, the 2000 state budget adopted by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine provided transfer of the total amount of VAT to the Centre. In that way, the autonomy's budget revenues were reduced to UAH 550 million⁶⁶. The Verkhovna Rada of the Crimea applied to the Constitutional Court of Ukraine claiming the Law of Ukraine "On the 2000 State Budget" to be unconstitutional; however, no decision has been taken in this respect.

⁶⁶ *Interfax-Ukraine*, March 15, 2000.

⁶⁷ *UNIAN*, September 1, 2000.

⁶⁸ *UNIAN*, July 17, 2000.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ On March 22, 2001, the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine approved the Budget Code of Ukraine, whereby all taxes, including VAT, were channelled to the budget of the ARC. It is worth noting that said provision was absent from the submitted draft. The amendment leaving all taxes in the disposal of the ARC was proposed by MP from the Crimea V. Myronenko and supported by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. However, said provision will be effective only from 2002 (should the President of Ukraine sign the Budget Code).

⁷¹ After the presidential elections, the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC split into two roughly equal parts. At a plenary meeting on December 15, 1999, an agreement on creation of a majority was signed. However, that majority appeared situational and broke up under the pressure of law-enforcement bodies and Ex-Prime-Minister of the ARC, MP of Ukraine A. Franchuk.

⁷² By contrast to its colleagues in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, the majority neither appointed acting speaker nor directed him to sign the decision taken, which gave L. Grach a chance to retain his post.

The conflict continued in 2001. Despite statements by the President of Ukraine in support of the ARC powers of collection and disposal of taxes on its territory⁶⁷ and establishment of a special commission for the regulation of budget relations between the Centre and the autonomy, *the problem has not been resolved*. Pursuant to the Law of Ukraine "On the 2001 State Budget", close to UAH 300 million of VAT collected in the ARC were remitted to Ukraine's state budget. Leadership of both the Verkhovna Rada and the Council of Ministers of the ARC stand for the VAT to stay in the Crimea⁶⁸.

Lack of budget co-ordination is also observed in the Crimea. According to the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the ARC S. Kunitsyn, the Crimean Government presently "appeared in a most difficult situation, for it cannot finance expenditures approved by the Crimean Parliament"⁶⁹.

Unsettled budget relations between the Centre and the ARC provoke tension between the two entities, complicate the political and socio-economic situation in the autonomy⁷⁰.

2.3 LENGTHY POLITICAL CONFRONTATION IN THE VERKHOVNA RADA OF THE ARC

After the elections to the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC, compromise was achieved between deputies representing the CPU and NDP. As a result, L. Grach was elected Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC, and S. Kunitsyn — Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the ARC. However, after the election of the President of Ukraine in 1999 that balance was broken⁷¹.

In 1999-2001, the autonomy's representative body is in a state of permanent political confrontation characterised by attempts of replacing heads of the Verkhovna Rada and the Council of Ministers of the ARC.

On December 15-16, 1999, 51 of 100 deputies voted for the resignation of the Presidium of the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC and its head L. Grach⁷². L. Grach, who controlled



44 deputies, appeared unable to open the session in January 2000, but the opposition also failed to get together 50 deputies at a time and lost a chance to achieve victory. L.Grach made use of this situation, refused to recognise the results of the December decision and took the initiative.

On February 1, 2000, extraordinary session of the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC recognised the work of the Council of Ministers of the ARC unsatisfactory. On May 24, 2000, the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC decided to dismiss the Council of Ministers of the ARC headed by S.Kunitsyn, but the dismissal did not become a reality⁷³.

In the result of new regrouping of political forces in the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC in late 2000 - early 2001, a new majority numbering 55-56 deputies was formed. However, it failed to attain its main goal — dismiss L.Grach from the post of the Verkhovna Rada Chairman⁷⁴.

The acute political conflict was caused by the following main reasons.

First of all, the Constitution of the ARC lays down the principles of organisation of power in the autonomy as in a quasi-parliamentary republic, where the deputies appoint the Head of the Government of the ARC and form its personal composition. However, given the almost complete absence of political structuring and influential political parties represented in the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC, the majority

organised by the deputies presents an unstable situational grouping.

Second, law does not define the relations between the Verkhovna Rada and the Government of the ARC. There is no Law of Ukraine "On the Council of Ministers of the ARC" to normalize those relations.

Third, the conflict is encouraged by personal ambitions of the leaders of the opposing centres of influence — L.Grach and S.Kunitsyn. Their confrontation is aggravated by the fact that said leaders represent ideologically opposite political forces abiding by different political views, including on relations with Crimean Tatars.

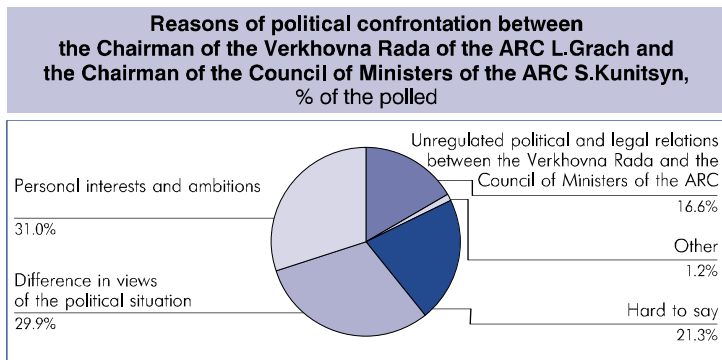
Fourth, both political leaders enjoy support of some executives in the central bodies of state power, and particularly in the environs of the head of state.

Noticeably, close to a third of respondents (31%) suggests that the political confrontation between L.Grach and S.Kunitsyn is conditioned by their personal interests and ambitions; almost as many (29.9%) attribute it to their differing views of the political situation; far fewer respondents are sure that the main reason of conflict lies in the sphere of law (*Diagram "Reasons of political confrontation between the Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC L.Grach and the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the ARC S.Kunitsyn"*).

As a result of the lengthy political confrontation, the representative body of the ARC is actually paralysed: solution of socio-economic issues is receded into the background, the political situation in the region destabilises.

2.4 UNSATISFIED POLITICAL AND JUDICIAL DEMANDS OF CRIMEAN TATARS

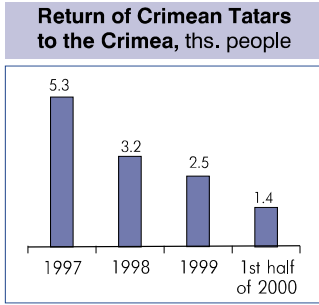
According to the data of the Main Administration of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine in the Crimea, there were 260,000 deported persons and their descendants in the ARC in November, 2000⁷⁵ (256,959 of them —



⁷³ On June 21, 2000, 62 MPs of the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC voted to postpone the enactment of the decision to dismiss Council of Ministers of the ACR till October 1, 2000; under the pressure of L.Grach, seven communist members of the ARC Government submitted resignations on September 18, 2000.

⁷⁴ On January 16, 2001, leaders of the majority groups and factions proposed L.Grach to sign an agreement providing for putting the issues of Government appointments on the agenda of the session and amending the procedures of the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC. On February 7, 2001, co-ordinator of the Parliamentary majority V.Kyseliov announced that 55 deputies from pro-Government factions intended to hold an extraordinary session. However, the extraordinary session planned for the 10th of February 2001, did not take place. On February 21, 2001, deputies of the majority approved the Crimean budget for 2001 as proposed by the Council of Ministers of the ACR. On March 21-23, 2001, the parliamentary majority again blocked plenary meetings and demanded negotiations, but L.Grach did not agree to compromise. Due to the absence of quorum (only 44 deputies were registered), session was not open. The majority stated that L.Grach ignored the deputies' opinion.

⁷⁵ This makes 12.4% of the total Crimean population; in that number, Bulgarians make 306 persons, Armenians — 320, Greeks — 1,865, Germans — 535. According to the Mejlis, 280,000-300,000 Crimean Tatars returned to the ARC.



deported Crimean Tatars). Outside Ukraine there are still another some 50,000 Crimean Tatars⁷⁶. The inflow of repatriates noticeably goes down: in 1997, 5,300 Crimean Tatars came in; in 1998 — 3,200; in 1999 — 2,500; in the first half of 2000 — 1,400 (*Diagram "Return of Crimean Tatars to the Crimea"*).

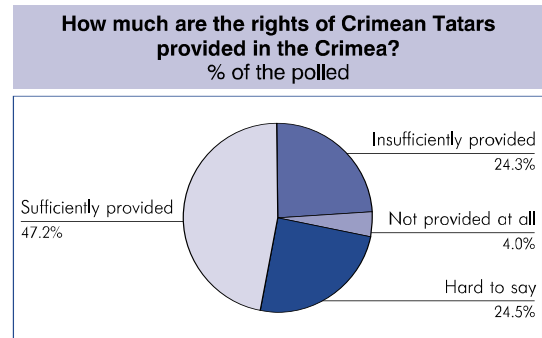
The most acute problem of the ARC is the integration of Crimean Tatars into the autonomy's public and political life. The high level of conflict potential⁷⁷ accumulated in connection with the unsatisfied political and judicial demands of Crimean Tatars regarding: official recognition of the status of Crimean Tatars as a native people in Ukraine; recognition of the Mejlis as the representative body of the Crimean Tatar people; Ukraine's responsibility for the deportation of Crimean Tatars in 1944, redemption of material losses caused by the deportation; simplification of the procedure of repatriate expatriation with the purpose of obtaining Ukrainian citizenship. Other political and judicial issues whose solution is requested by representatives of the Crimean Tatar people include setting a quota for Crimean Tatars representation in the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC, recognition of the Crimean Tatar language as the official language in the autonomy, etc.

No permanent and public dialogue has been established⁷⁸ between the authorities and the Mejlis

of the Crimean Tatar People, which discourages lawful and civilised solution of said problems⁷⁹.

The new Constitution of the ARC actually barred Crimean Tatars from public and political life⁸⁰: they are almost not represented in the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC (quotas of guaranteed representation of Crimean Tatars were cancelled during the elections to the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC in 1998)⁸¹, in the bodies of state executive power and local self-administration⁸². Today, confrontation on the problems of Crimean Tatars mainly goes along the line "Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC — the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar People"⁸³.

At the same time, almost half of the ARC population (47.2%) is sure that the rights of Crimean Tatars are sufficiently guaranteed, 4% — is inclined to believe that the rights of Crimean Tatars are not provided at all (*Diagram "How much are the rights of Crimean Tatars provided in the Crimea?"*). This proves that the Crimean



⁷⁶ The Mejlis estimates the number of Crimean Tatars outside Ukraine much higher: at 200,000-250,000.

⁷⁷ A number of unauthorised meetings were held in 1999-2001; district state administrations, courts, etc. were blocked more than once. A statement of the Crimean Tatar leaders stressed: "We are prompted to the forms and methods of the passed years, to actions of public disobedience and tough opposition to the authorities". See: *UNIAN*, May 18, 2000. For instance, on the 31st of January 1999, 50 Crimean Tatars blocked traffic on the Feodosia-Kerch highway; on March 6, 2000, close to 100 people picketed the Simferopol District State Administration; on August 19, 2000, Crimean Tatars held a meeting in front of the premises of the Nyzhnihirskiy District State Administration in protest against infringement of their rights. After the Head of the Nyzhnihirskiy District State Administration D.Kovaliov refused to go to the protesters, they decided to block the railway; in the result of clashes, two militiamen were taken to hospital. 20,000 Crimean Tatars held a meeting on the 18th of May 2000; the meeting continued on May 24, 2000. Speaking there, MP R.Chubarov said that "the tent city pitched in front of the building of the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC on the 18th of May will stay until Parliament satisfies the requirement of creation of a working group for drafting amendments to Ukraine's laws on the Verkhovna Rada of the Crimea and elections to the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC". See: *UNIAN*, May 24, 2000.

⁷⁸ There were attempts at establishing such a dialogue but they failed to bring noticeable practical results. For instance, in June, 2000, a joint consulting-advisory group of the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC, the Council of Ministers and the Council of Representatives of the Crimean Tatar People was created under the Representation of the President of Ukraine in the ARC for the solution of urgent problems of the deported. On August 2, 2000, a plan of joint actions of the Representation of the President of Ukraine in the ARC and the Council of Representatives of the Crimean Tatar People under the President of Ukraine was signed (it covered the social and humanitarian spheres, agrarian sector reform, interaction with law-enforcement bodies, etc.). By a resolution of the Council of Ministers of the ACR, a working group for the review of proposals at resolution of political, judicial, socio-economic and cultural problems of deported people was established.

⁷⁹ According to R.Chubarov, Kyiv "has no integral policy toward the Crimean autonomy. Kyiv is used to extinguishing "fires" set on the Crimean peninsula by concrete but one-time steps". See: Refat Chubarov: Both Parties Realise the Necessity of a Dialogue But None Is Doing Anything For It. — *Den*, February 21, 2001, p.4.

⁸⁰ During the previous period, the Crimean Tatar language was the official language of the autonomy; Crimean Tatars had a quota (14 seats) in the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC.

⁸¹ Today, there is one Crimean Tatar elected to the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC.

⁸² In city councils, the share of Crimean Tatars makes 5.1%; in township councils — 3.9%; in village councils — 11.8%; in district councils — 4.9%. See.: Grach L. On Legal Regulation of the Crimean Geopolitical Problem..., p.42. According to the Crimean Tatar Information and Documentation Centre, 40 deputies of the Crimean Tatar people were elected to 779 seats at 14 district councils in the Crimea, seven out of 428 — to 11 city councils of the Republican subordination, 12 out of 137 — to city councils of the district subordination, 32 out of 813 — to township councils, 489 out of 4150 — to village councils; they had six out of 122 seats in district councils in the city of Simferopol (total — 586 Crimean Tatars). Only three Crimean Tatars work in the staff of the Council of Ministers of the ARC; 10 — in executive positions at 40 Republican bodies of state power (department head and above). See: www.crimeatau.org.ua/project/crimpolit/analizpred.html.

⁸³ "Insufficiency of the Crimean Constitution for the solution of internal problems creates a permanent conflict between the interests of Crimean Tatars represented by the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar People and the leadership of the autonomy's Verkhovna Rada". See: Refat Chubarov: Both Parties Realise the Necessity of a Dialogue But None Is Doing Anything For It. — *Den*, February 21, 2001, p.4.

population, where Crimean Tatars make close to 12%, does not consider provision of the rights of the Crimean Tatar people a priority task of the state.

The main political and judicial demands of the Crimean Tatar people are reviewed below.

Demand of recognition of the official status of Crimean Tatars as a native people in Ukraine

Indeed, the Constitution of Ukraine employs the term "native peoples". Article 11 provides that the state encourages consolidation and development of ethnical, cultural, language and confessional identity of all native peoples and national minorities of Ukraine. However, national legislation does not duly define the notion of "native peoples", their status, rights and duties.

Experts believe that the recognition of the Crimean Tatar people as a native people may bring *negative consequences in the long run*.

Firsts of all, they are related with the exercise of the right to self-determination — establishment of the national state of Crimean Tatars, since it was stated at the 3rd Kurultai of the Crimean Tatar people that *"Crimean Tatars will attain determination of the status of the Crimea within Ukraine based on the national-territorial principle"*⁸⁴. This in turn may lead to the requirement of providing the Crimean Tatar people the right of ownership to the land, land interior, water and other natural resources, etc. Furthermore, demographers estimate that in areas where the share of Crimean Tatars presently is 20-25% of the population, over the next 10 years their number may reach 40%. In the future, those areas may become the basis for formation of national statehood of Crimean Tatars.

Second, this may pose a precedent for other nations and national minorities, which may lead to further autonomisation of Ukraine and question its existence as an integral state.



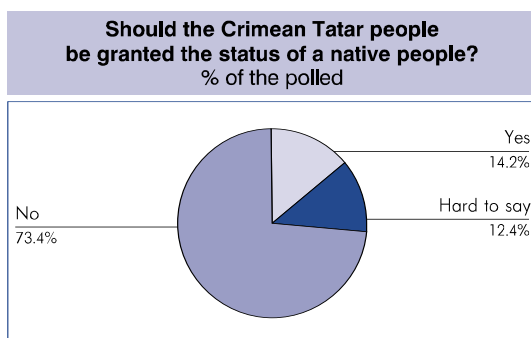
Third, recognition of the Crimean Tatar nation as a native people may cause increase of political tension in the ARC, for such a decision is unlikely to be supported by the ARC populace. Only 14.2% of all respondents sees it necessary to grant the Crimean Tatar nation the status of a native people in Ukraine; almost three quarters of Crimeans (73.4%) is sure that this should not be done (*Diagram "Should the Crimean Tatar people be granted the status of a native people?"*).

Requirements of Kurultai and Mejlis recognition as representative bodies of the Crimean Tatar people (national self-administration bodies)

As we already mentioned, the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar People has not been registered with the Ukrainian executive bodies yet. At the same time, the leadership of the Crimean Tatar National Movement is raising the issue of *Kurultai and Mejlis recognition as representative bodies of Crimean Tatars* as one of its main demands⁸⁵. Pursuant to a Decree of the President of Ukraine⁸⁶, the Council of Representatives of the Crimean Tatar People was formed. This may be viewed as a first step toward the political and legal recognition of Mejlis as a representative body of Crimean Tatars. However, legal limitations exist for the fulfilment of that demand.

The Constitution of Ukraine and laws establish a system of representative and other state bodies⁸⁷. The Mejlis cannot be viewed as a body of state power or local self-administration. According to experts, it may only be viewed as an association of citizens on the basis of their national affiliation and therefore should be registered on the grounds provided by Article 14 of the Law of Ukraine "On Public Associations".

This legal conflict may be resolved by the draft Law of Ukraine "On the Status of the Crimean Tatar People" submitted to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. The bill provides



⁸⁴ See: Refat Chubarov: Crimean Tatars Hope for Understanding of Their Tough Position. — *Zerkalo Nedeli*, August 3, 1996, p. 1.

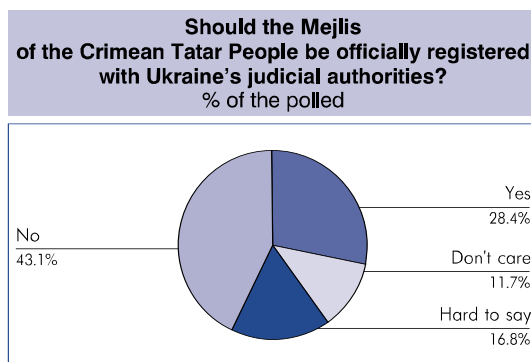
⁸⁵ Statement of the Presidium of the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar People stresses that "it is not a public organisation or party but an elected representative body, and there is no sense reiterating the necessity of its registration". See: *UNIAN*, June 20, 2000.

⁸⁶ The President of Ukraine's Decree "On the Council of Representatives of the Crimean Tatar People" No.518 of May 18, 1999.

⁸⁷ Interests of the populace may be represented by bodies of state power, local self-administration and public associations.

for recognition of Crimean Tatars as a native people and creation of representative bodies of that people (Kurultai and Mejlis) but does not establish their powers, procedure of formation and basis of activity. The bill proposes a 15% quota for representatives of the Crimean Tatar people in the Verkhovna Rada of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea⁸⁸.

More than a quarter (28.4%) of Crimeans believes that the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar People should be officially registered by Ukraine's judicial authorities, but much more (43.1%) of the polled stick to the opposite opinion (*Diagram "Should the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar People be officially registered with Ukraine's judicial authorities?"*).



Recognition of Kurultai and Mejlis as representative bodies of the Crimean Tatar people *may lead* to formation of alternative bodies of power in Ukraine⁸⁹, let alone the probability of other national minorities putting forward similar requirements.

Requirements of restoration of the rights of Crimean Tatars broken by the 1944 deportation and indemnification of inflicted material losses

Crimean Tatars insist on restoration of their rights and partial restitution of property taken in 1944. The Ukrainian state, established after the breakdown of the former USSR, cannot bear political and formal judicial responsibility for the deportation. However, it is evident that the problems of settlement of Crimean Tatars and

satisfaction of their demands should be resolved with account of capabilities of the state and the rights of other citizens of Ukraine.

Requirements of introduction of a simplified procedure of acquisition of citizenship by representatives of deported nations

227,043 deported Crimean Tatars, or 88.3% of their total number in Ukraine, are Ukraine's citizens. According to the Main Administration of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine in the Crimea, the peninsula presently houses over 20,000 deported who are citizens of other CIS countries: of the Russian Federation — more than 10,000 people, Kazakhstan — 2,774, Tajikistan — 2,630, Kirghizstan — 1,531, Georgia — 1,013, etc. As of November 2000, out of 64,178 persons who left Uzbekistan for the ARC, 83.6% resorted to the simplified procedure of expatriation and acquisition of Ukraine's citizenship⁹⁰.

Talks are underway with Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Kirghizstan and Russia for streamlining the procedure of acquisition of Ukraine's citizenship by Crimean Tatars⁹¹.

Suspended political and judicial problems of Crimean Tatars prompt them to radical actions. It should be taken into account that satisfaction of the requirements of Crimean Tatars may meet opposition of a significant part of the ARC population and in the long run lead to negative consequences on a national scale.

2.5 UNRESOLVED SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL PROBLEMS OF CRIMEAN TATARS

Settlement of deported people, especially of Crimean Tatars, and their integration into Ukraine's society (housing, employment, functioning of the Crimean Tatar language and culture) are among the most acute socio-economic and political problems of the Crimea and entire Ukraine. Some aspects of those problems are analyses below.

Socio-economic infrastructure

As of January, 2001⁹², 73% of points of repatriate concentration in the Crimea were not

⁸⁸ The bill was submitted in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine by MP R.Bezsmertnyi in September 1999. There are doubts as to its approval by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. According to R.Chubarov, there is open opposition to its adoption on the part of the left forces in Parliament. See: Refat Chubarov: Both Parties Realise the Necessity of a Dialogue But None Is Doing Anything For It. — *Den*, February 21, 2001, p.4.

⁸⁹ According to expert assessments, the establishment of Councils of Representatives of the Crimean Tatar People under district state administrations has already led to creation of parallel structures of authority.

⁹⁰ The Ukraine-Uzbekistan Agreement on simplified procedure of exit from the Uzbek citizenship expired on December 31, 1999.

⁹¹ A Ukrainian-Kazakh Agreement of simplified procedure of exit from the Kazakh citizenship by deported people and their descendants was signed and ratified. Since there is no Tajik Embassy in Ukraine, a consular group of the Tajik Embassy in Moscow will receive deported in Simferopol in the near future. Consular services for deported persons were arranged by employees of the Kirghiz and Georgian embassies to Ukraine in Simferopol. Exit of the deported from the Russian citizenship today looks problematic, since relevant talks have not begun yet. For the positive solution of the problem of streamlining the procedure of exit of deported persons and their descendants from Russian, Tajik and Turkmen citizenship, Foreign Ministry of Ukraine should intensify efforts in that direction.

⁹² Unless specified otherwise, the data presented in this section were granted by the Permanent Representative of the President of Ukraine in the ARC.



provided with running water; 25% — with electricity⁹³; the rate of gas supply did not exceed 3%; sewerage and heat supply were actually absent; not more than 10% of roads had hard surface.

Housing

At present, 128,298 deported persons have no own housing. More than 15,000 families are on the waiting list for communal housing; 21,000 individual developers could not complete construction of own houses due to the lack of funds. Over the entire period of return of Crimean Tatars, close to 50,000 land plots were allocated for individual housing construction⁹⁴.

Since 1988, Crimean Tatars have seized close to 6,000 land plots for housing construction, 5,605 of them were later legalised⁹⁵. The majority of such cases was registered in the city of Simferopol — 3,795, Bilohirsk district — 920, Bakhchysarai district — 446, Lenino district — 416.

Employment

Out of 136,000 able-bodied deported persons, only 63,000 have jobs (close to 46%)⁹⁶, and the rate of unemployment among them is approximately eight times higher than the ARC average.

In the places of deportation, close to 70% of Crimean Tatars lived in towns; after the return to the Crimea, over 72% of them had to settle in rural area. This makes the rate of unemployment still higher, since a large share of the disabled population works not by profession or cannot find work at all. Crimean Tatars have to count on occasional work, survive at the expense of individual small holdings and market trade⁹⁷.

Land allotment

193,003 deported people, 155,009 of them — adult, live in rural area. 39,028 applications of repatriates for arable land for individual small-holdings out of the reserve have been satisfied (53.4% of all applications of Crimeans satisfied

in the ARC)⁹⁸. Actually all repatriates are provided with individual small-holdings.

Allocation of land and property shares to Crimean Tatars in the process of collective farm reform poses a more serious problem. Only 19,7000 repatriates are entitled to land and property shares (18,003, or 9.4% of all Crimean Tatars living in rural area, have obtained them)⁹⁹. Therefore, **90% of Crimean Tatars living in rural area were excluded from the process of land sharing in course of collective farm reform**¹⁰⁰.

Pursuant to the effective legislation, this problem may be resolved at the expense of land staying in the reserve fund and in the land reserve. However, this approach is unacceptable for the Mejlis, *since the quality of that land is worse than of the shared land; furthermore, those plots are remote from the places of mass settlement of Crimean Tatars*¹⁰¹. So, the Mejlis speaks about the "oblivion of interests of the Crimean Tatar people in the process of land relations reform in Ukraine". UCEPS experts believe that this issue should be made a subject of not political confrontation but a dialogue, with a view of its practical resolution¹⁰².

Culture and education

Cultural, educational and informational needs of Crimean Tatars remain unsatisfied in the proper manner.

There is only one Crimean Tatar drama theatre (its premises need repair) and one Crimean Tatar library named after Ismail Gasprinski in the ARC. **The autonomy has only nine schools with the Crimean Tatar language of teaching**¹⁰³, **33 bilingual schools (Russian and Crimean Tatar), 81 Crimean Tatar classes in Russian language schools.**

Only two newspapers are published in the Crimean Tatar language ('*Kyrym*' and '*Yani Dunya*'). At the State Television and Radio Company '*Krym*', there is a Crimean Tatar editorial board that accounts for 7% of the company's total air.

⁹³ For the solution of those problems, 380 km of power lines and 730 km of water supply lines worth UAH 58.8 million need to be built.

⁹⁴ Nearly 7,000 applications for land stripes obtained from individuals were not satisfied. There are problems with land allocation to deported persons for housing construction: in Yalta district, 1,775 families are on the waiting list, in Alushta — 2,000 families, 1,200 applications for land stripes were submitted in Sudak district (800 of them — in the town of Sudak alone).

⁹⁵ As of the beginning of 2000, 369 cases of seizure of land stripes were not legalised, 168 of them — in the town of Simferopol and Simferopol district, 200 — in Sudak district.

⁹⁶ More than 30,000 — in agriculture, over 11,000 — in industry and construction, 4,300 — in the sphere of education and culture, 3,600 — in healthcare.

⁹⁷ Today, Crimean Tatars make up to 70% of salespeople at Crimean food markets and up to 30% — at commodity markets.

⁹⁸ In all, repatriates submitted 49,211 applications.

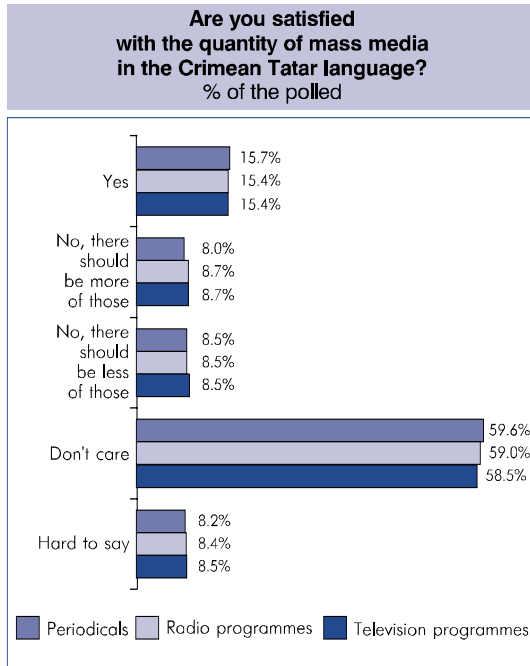
⁹⁹ Repatriates - former collective farmers obtained close to 100,000 hectares of arable land.

¹⁰⁰ As we mentioned in the previous section, the leaders of Crimean Tatars raised that issue as far back as 1996, but the authorities were not resolving it.

¹⁰¹ While solving that problem at the expense of reserve lands, one should take into account their scantiness. Even if all those resources (270,000 hectares) are granted in repatriates' ownership, their share will be 4-5 times less than the autonomy's average.

¹⁰² In the future, the problem will aggravate. Nearly 3,000 deported persons have been arriving to the Crimea every year; for their provision with land stripes, reserves totalling close to 23,000 hectares of arable land accumulated in the process of collective farm sharing and the land fund with an area of 18,006 hectares located in the 2 km zone along the Azov and Black Sea shore are needed.

¹⁰³ In Bakhchisarai district — three schools, in Bilohirsk district — two, in Dzhankoi, Kirovske, Krasnohvardiyske and Sovetsky districts — one school each.

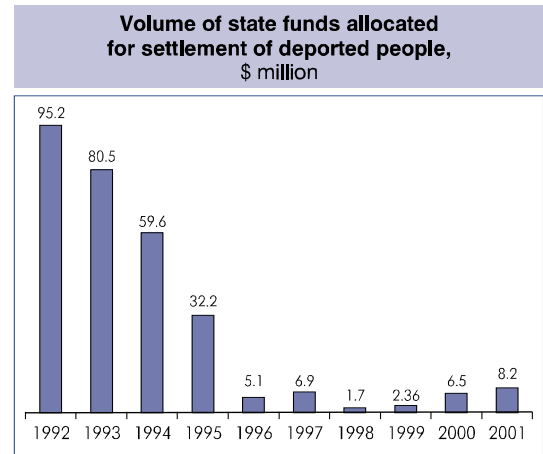


Only 15.7% of respondents polled in the ARC by the UCEPS sociological service believes the quantity of periodicals published in the Crimean Tatar language to be sufficient, 8% of the polled believes that there should be more such publications, 8.5% — less; 59% does not care about it. 15.4% of the polled considers the quantity of radio programmes sufficient; 8.7% of respondents suggests that there should more of those; 8.5% — believes that there should be less. The situation with television programmes is very much the same: 15.4% of the polled is satisfied with their number, 8.7% — wants more, 8.9% — less (*Diagram "Are you satisfied with the quantity of mass media in the Crimean Tatar language?"*).

The above data show that the Crimean population of other nationalities does not realise the importance of creating proper conditions for the satisfaction of cultural, informational, educational and other needs of Crimean Tatars.

State funds for the settlement of Crimean Tatars

Socio-economic and cultural needs of Crimean Tatars require adequate budget funding. According to expert assessments, at least \$3 billion are needed for the settlement of Crimean Tatars; maximum estimates achieve \$20 billion (2 million sq. m of housing alone need to be



provided). The state is presently unable to allocate such funds.

All in all, in 1992-2001, Ukraine's state budget allocated close to \$300 million for assistance to the deported (*Diagram "Volume of state funds allocated for settlement of deported people"*).

In 2000, 37 projects in the housing and communal sphere were commissioned, including: 5,904.7 sq. m of housing, 27 km of plumbing, 29 km of power lines, one gas supply project; 74 apartments and houses were acquired. However, the situation remains rather difficult. Strict control should be established over the use of funds channelled for settlement of the deported¹⁰⁴.

A programme of further settlement of repatriates with a budget of UAH 315 million is being developed for 2001-2005¹⁰⁵. Electrification of all places of concentration of Crimean Tatars in 2002 depends on real funding of that programme. In 2004, running water must be provided there¹⁰⁶. It is earmarked to grant material assistance (UAH 2,100 per family) to 5,000 households over the same period for completion of individual construction.

International assistance

Over the recent years, the world community has been actively involved in the solution of repatriate problems in the Crimea. The Representative office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the UN Programme for the Crimea development and integration performed projects worth nearly \$10 million over the last five years¹⁰⁷. Unfortunately, CIS countries actually do not render Ukraine any assistance in the solution of problems related with the return of Crimean Tatars.

¹⁰⁴ For instance, in one criminal case only, UAH 1.2 million of state funds were defalcated in 1997-1999. See: *UNIAN*, January 8, 2000.

¹⁰⁵ It is earmarked to allocate UAH 50 million in 2001; every following year that sum will increase by another 2 million. Therefore, in 2005, annual funding will reach UAH 60 million.

¹⁰⁶ More than 60% of funds will be channelled to infrastructure development. The programme provides for commissioning of housing in the amount from 16,000 sq. m in 2001 to 25,000 sq. m in 2005.

¹⁰⁷ In particular, water supply lines in the village of Kamyanets and the town of Sudak were built, several schools and hostels were repaired and other projects completed with those funds.



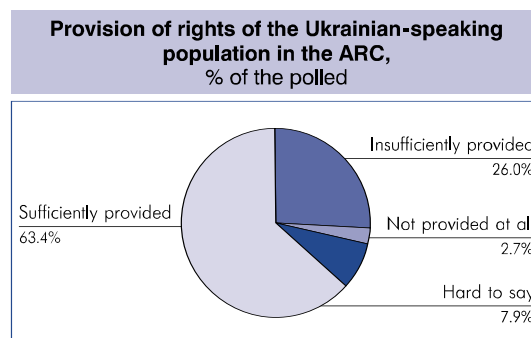
Unresolved problems of Crimean Tatars may lead to large-scale social disturbances with serious consequences. In order to prevent such dangerous developments, a systematic dialogue should be established between state power bodies and the leadership of Crimean Tatars for the solution of urgent problems of repatriates by joint efforts.

2.6 INSUFFICIENT PRESENCE OF THE UKRAINIAN CULTURE AND UKRAINIAN LANGUAGE IN THE ARC

Nowadays, the presence of the Ukrainian culture and language (Ukrainian language media, educational and cultural establishments) in the Crimea cannot be considered sufficient. The present situation is largely conditioned by objective reasons, since the overwhelming majority of the Crimean population (80-85%) is Russian-speaking.

The issues of introduction of the Ukrainian culture and Ukrainian language is rather sensitive; they should not be attained by forcible measures (as this would cause a negative reaction). The Ukrainian authorities should accept that process might take generations.

The results of the poll held by UCEPS also prove that the policy in that sphere should be careful. The overwhelming majority (63.4%) of Crimeans believes that the rights of the Ukrainian-speaking population of the ARC are sufficiently guaranteed; 26% of respondents is inclined to think that those rights are not sufficiently provided; only 2.7% — believes that those rights are not provided at all (*Diagram "Provision of rights of the Ukrainian-speaking population in the ARC"*).



¹⁰⁸ The newspapers 'Budmo', 'Dzhereltse', 'Krymsport' and bulletin 'Krymskotatarske Pytannia'. The national newspaper 'Krymska Svitlytsia' is published in the ARC, too. The newspaper 'Dumka' founded by the 'Ukrayinskyi Dim' public organisation is gaining ground on the Crimean information market. Many Ukrainian language materials are published in the bulletin of the Centre of Independent Political Researchers and Journalists 'Svoboda Slova v Krymu' ('Freedom of Press in the Crimea'). According to the Permanent Representation of the President of Ukraine in the ARC, there is also a Ukrainian language newspaper 'Dzvin Sevastopolia' published in Sevastopol.

¹⁰⁹ One should also take into account that in the holiday season, the Crimean population actually doubles at the expense of guests from other regions. In the realities of market economy, mass media are mainly oriented to the language of the majority of consumers (Russian).

¹¹⁰ Data of the Republican Information Committee of the ARC.

¹¹¹ The issue of decentralised printing of national publications by the Crimean printing houses was repeatedly raised but has not been resolved for economic reasons.

¹¹² Data of the Republican Information Committee of the ARC.

¹¹³ Other television and radio companies are broadcasting only in the populated locations where the transmitter is installed. Such companies work in the towns of Armiansk, Krasnoperekopsk, Dzhankoi, Yevpatoria, Feodisia, settlements of Lenino, Zhovtneve, Pervomaik. As a rule, Ukrainian language broadcasts occupy 10-15% of their air.

The central authorities and state power bodies of the ARC should create conditions for encouraging the progress of the Ukrainian culture and wider use of the official [Ukrainian] language on the peninsula. The presence of Ukrainian language media, educational and cultural establishments in the ARC are analysed below.

Printed media

At the beginning of 2001, close to 240 periodicals were published in the autonomy; only four newspapers¹⁰⁸ were issued in the Ukrainian language; 57 publications were bilingual¹⁰⁹ (*Diagram "Ukrainian and bilingual publications in the ARC"*)¹¹⁰.

The number of Ukrainian and bilingual publications in the ARC



Over 100 periodicals from Kyiv, Lviv, Donetsk, Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv, Odesa can be found in the autonomy, but those publications come to the ARC with a three-four day delay¹¹¹.

Electronic media

The programmes of all three national television channels are received in the autonomy (*UT-1* covers 97% of the ARC territory; *UT-2* jointly with the '1+1 Studio' — 87%; *UT-3* and 'Inter' — 80%)¹¹².

The most influential television and radio companies include the 'Chornomorska' Television and Radio Company whose programmes are received throughout 52% of the ARC territory (15% of the broadcasts transmitted are in the Ukrainian language); the State Television and Radio Company 'Krym' that covers 10-15% of the autonomy's territory (Ukrainian language broadcasts compose 27% of airtime); Sevastopol Regional Television and Radio Company and 'Briz' Television and Radio Centre broadcast in the city of Sevastopol (Ukrainian language programmes — 15% and 60%, respectively)¹¹³.



In 2000, more central television and radio companies have begun broadcasting in the Crimea's air: *STB* — in Simferopol and Sevastopol, *ICTV* — in Simferopol and Armiansk.

According to UCEPS poll, 43.7% of the polled Crimeans is satisfied with the quantity of Ukrainian language publications, 45.2% — of radio broadcasts, 42.2% — of television programmes. As for those who are not satisfied with the presence of Ukrainian language media, 7.7% believes that there should be more Ukrainian language publications; 24.8% is sure that there should be less. Only 3.5% of the polled believe that there should be more Ukrainian language radio broadcasts in the Crimea, and 4.2% want more TV programmes.

Educational and cultural establishments

Out of 583 general education schools in the Crimea, only in four schools is instruction conducted in the Ukrainian language¹¹⁴; 98.2% of pupils study under Russian language programmes. Noticeably, at the 2000 finals, 47% ninth-formers chose dictation and 25% of the 11th class graduates expressed a desire to write a composition in Ukrainian. Furthermore, according to the Ministry of Education of the ARC, 89% of Crimeans want their children to study in the Russian language. This is 10% less than the actual figure¹¹⁵. This allows concluding that the number of Ukrainian schools in the ARC is insufficient. Teachers of the Ukrainian language and literature are in short supply and great demand: there are more than 100 such vacancies¹¹⁶.

There are only two Ukrainian libraries in the ARC, neither of them state-sustained; the autonomy's book market is 99.9% filled with Russian language editions. Only two plays in the Ukrainian Musical Theatre are performed in Ukrainian. The Ukrainian State Vocal and Choreographic Ensemble '*Tavria*' is on the brink of collapse.

Therefore, the Ukrainian culture and language occupy a narrow sector in the life of the Crimean society. The central state power bodies of Ukraine and the ARC authorities should encourage the development of the Ukrainian culture and language in the Crimea, refraining from forcible measures.

2.7 DIFFICULT CONFESSIONAL AND ETHNICAL SITUATION IN THE AUTONOMY

As of April 1, 2001, there were 945 active religious communities in the Crimea representing 46 Churches, confessions, directions and trends¹¹⁷. Of these, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church had 349 communities; the Spiritual Administration of Muslims of the Crimea — 296 Muslim communities. Protestant Churches account for 207 communities; the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate — 14; the Roman Catholic Church — 11; Evangelical Lutherans — seven; the Armenian Apostolic Church — seven; the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church — two.

Muslim communities have received 94 mosques, and 24 buildings were granted for use as mosques. In comparison to Muslims (provided with houses of prayer at a level of 47.4%), adherents of Orthodox Churches are provided with religious buildings in a somewhat better fashion: 53% of UOC communities have their own temples.

*The main conflicting parties in the ARC are the Spiritual Administration of Muslims of the Crimea (SAMC) and the Crimean Eparchy of the UOC*¹¹⁸. The situation has recently become aggravated because of the suspension of SAMC membership in the inter-confessional union 'Peace Is God's Gift' in July 2000, in protest against the erection of worship crosses and slogans "The Crimea Is the Cradle of Orthodoxy" by the Simferopol and Crimean Eparchy of UOC. On October 23, 2000, Crimean Tatars dismantled such a cross

¹¹⁴ According to the Permanent Representation of the President of Ukraine in the ARC, those were a Ukrainian gymnasium in Simferopol, a college in Alushta, the Prymorska secondary school in Feodosia and a primary school in Yalta.

¹¹⁵ Sadovskyi V. About the State Language in the Crimea and More. — *Narodna Armija*, March 21, 2001, p.4. At the beginning of the 2000-2001 school year, parent requests for the Ukrainian language teaching of their children remained unsatisfied in the cities of Simferopol, Yevpatoria, Kerch, Yalta, Bakhchysarai district. See: www.polit.com.ua, March 2, 2001.

¹¹⁶ Given the pension and pre-pension age of teachers, another 62 vacancies are expected.

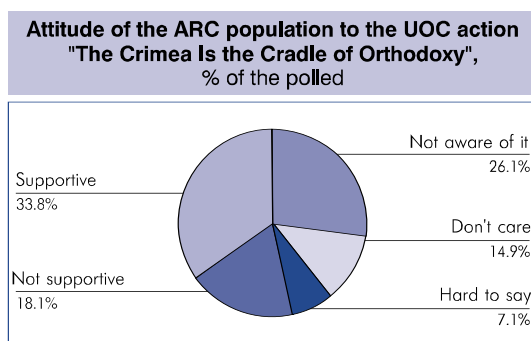
¹¹⁷ Data of the State Committee of Ukraine for Religious Affairs.

¹¹⁸ UOC-KP is actively involved in the conflict. For instance, during his visit to the Crimea in late June 2000, UOC-KP Patriarch Filaret met M.Dzhemilev, who expressed his dissatisfaction with the attempts of the Archbishop of Simferopol and the Crimea Lazar to turn the peninsula into the "cradle of Orthodoxy". Patriarch Filaret, in turn, qualified such intentions as the creation of tension on confessional grounds. At that meeting, M.Dzhemilev expressed his confidence that the Crimean Muftiate and representatives of some other confessions would "quit the existing inter-confessional union in protest against the present policy of the Crimean eparchy". Experts suggest that co-operation between UOC-KP and the Mejlis may exert a negative impact on the stability on the peninsula, should UOC-KP obtain recognition of the Constantinople Patriarch with the Mejlis assistance. This will lead to a significant growth of the role of Crimean Tatars and Turkish influence in the region, which may lead to escalation of the inter-confessional conflict.



near the village of Morske in Sudak district. Clashes between them and the Orthodox population were avoided thanks to the interference of law-enforcement bodies¹¹⁹. On the other hand, unknown people desecrated gravestones on a Muslim cemetery in Bakhchysarai. Crimean Tatar pickets of the district state administration followed.

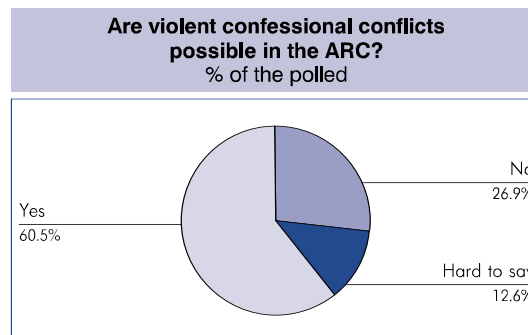
A third of Crimeans polled (33.8%) support the deeds of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in its action "The Crimea Is the Cradle of Orthodoxy". Almost twice fewer respondents (18.1%) do not approve such steps (Diagram "Attitude of the ARC population to the UOC action "The Crimea Is the Cradle of Orthodoxy"). At the same time, the ARC population believes that the influence of the Russian Orthodox Church on the Crimean Orthodox is insignificant: 49.7% of the polled suggests that such influence is insignificant or entirely absent; only one in five (19.9%) called the ROC influence significant.



On March 20, 2001, the Association of Free Journalists of the Crimea released a declaration against the attempts of flaring up inter-ethnic and inter-confessional hostility and war propaganda. As an example, it referred to the article "Papa's Drang Nach Osten" (*Krymskaya Pravda*, March 13, 2001, No.46) that openly stirred up inter-confessional confrontation and insulted religious feelings of Ukrainian Catholics. The article "Shevchenko Full Size" (*Krymskoye Vremia*, March 13, 2001, No.47) stressed the "backwardness" of the Ukrainian nation and the "second grade" of its culture¹²⁰. Such publications do not contribute to inter-confessional and inter-ethnic accord and provoke conflicts.

Although almost two thirds (63.4%) of the Crimeans believes that the freedom of faith is

equally guaranteed for all confessions in the autonomy, 60.5% of respondents does not rule out the possibility of violent confessional conflicts in the Crimea (Diagram "Are violent confessional conflicts possible in the ARC?").



The situation is aggravated by occasional radical actions. As far back as 1999, the Crimean Tatar National Movement (CTNM) announced collection of signatures under the requirement to call an international tribunal for the investigation of crimes of genocide and ethnocide against Crimean Tatars. In its statement addressed to international organisations¹²¹, CTNM demanded bringing Ukraine to trial as "the main defendant, a state that unlawfully possesses and disposes of the territory of the Crimean Tatar people and is unable to guarantee the rights of the peninsula's population"¹²².

At the 4th session of 3rd Kurultai of the Crimean Tatar people (January, 2001), Deputy Chairman of the Central Council of the Organisation of the Crimean Tatar National Movement E.Kurtiev proposed an ultimatum to the President of Ukraine L.Kuchma demanding prompt resolution of the issue of national sovereignty of the Crimean Tatar people.

The main goal of the newly-formed Union of Crimean Turkic 'Azat Kyyrim' is the "liquidation of the colonial system in the Crimea and building of an independent national state of Crimean Tatars, where the power shall belong to the Crimean Tatar nation". According to its Statute, the Union is not limited in the means for the attainment of the purpose of salvation of Crimean Tatars and other Turkic peoples.

In their turn, representatives of pro-Russian associations on the peninsula (Crimea's Russian Community 'Otechestvo', the 'Soyuz' party, Russian Youth Centre of the Crimea, Russian

¹¹⁹ The following month, another four crosses were ruined: in the Inkerman monastery, the town of Kirovske, on the Meganom cape and near the village of Mazanka.

¹²⁰ Crimean Journalists against Xenophobia. — *Den*, March 22, 2001, p.1.

¹²¹ Statement addressed to the UN General Assembly, Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, International Court in Hague, Organisation of Islamic Conference, League of Arab States, CIS countries.

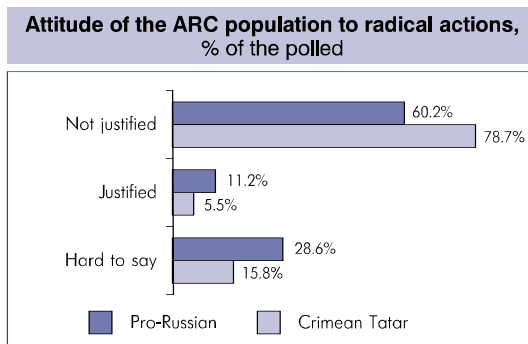
¹²² *UNIAN*, February 9, 2001.

National Congress, Russian Community of Sevastopol, Russian Movement named after Stolypin, Sevastopol Association of Russian Culture named after A.Pushkin), fighting for leadership and sole access to financial flows, are pretending to be carriers of historical values in the region. For this, they resort to large-scale propaganda campaigns timed to historic dates and events (Russian annexation of the Crimea, anniversary of A.Pushkin, etc.). For instance, on the May 18, 1999, pro-Russian organisations widely celebrated the 216th anniversary of annexation of the Crimea by Russia and demanded establishment of a Russian autonomy on the peninsula¹²³. "The Union of Russians of Tavrida" uniting representatives of nearly 18 political parties and movements addressed to the leadership of Russia, Ukraine and the Crimea with a request to help establish the Russian national autonomy in the ARC¹²⁴.

It is worth notice that according to Crimean respondents, the rights of the Russian-speaking population are provided for worst of all. More than half (52.3%) of those polled believes that such rights are insufficiently guaranteed. A bit more than a third (37.1%) — believes that those rights are properly provided for; 6% — is sure that the rights of the Russian-speaking population are not provided for at all.

The results of UCEPS poll show that the Crimean population is more supportive of radical actions of pro-Russian political forces, compared to radical deeds by some Crimean Tatar representatives: 11.2% of respondents justifies such actions by pro-Russian forces, 5.5% — of Crimean Tatars.

However, the majority of Crimeans does not justify any radical actions: radical deeds of Crimean Tatars are not welcome by 78.7% of those polled, and by pro-Russian forces — by 60.2% (*Diagram "Attitude of the ARC population to radical actions"*).



¹²³ *Interfax-Ukraine*, April 18, 1999.

¹²⁴ *Slavianski Mir*, April 22, 1999.

¹²⁵ Among them: former Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC Ye.Supruniuk, Minister of Education of the ARC Yu.Podkopayev, Minister of Resorts and Tourism V.Nikolayev, deputies of the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC V.Shpylkin and M.Kotliarevskiy, Feodosia's mayor V.Shaiderov, Head of the Staryi Krym City Council D.Chebyshev and others.

¹²⁶ *Interfax-Ukraine*, February 27, 2001.



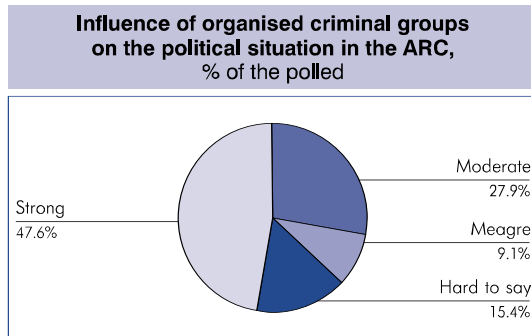
Confessional confrontation in the Crimea leads to general destabilisation of the political situation on the peninsula and can cause violent clashes between the Orthodox and Muslim population of the ARC. The majority of the Crimean population does not rule out possibility of violent conflicts on religious grounds. Radical organisations, although less numerous and influential than in the previous years, continue to destabilise the political situation on the peninsula.

2.8 INFLUENCE OF CRIMINAL GROUPINGS ON THE ACTIVITY OF THE CRIMEAN AUTHORITIES

In 1998-2001, the influence of criminal groups on the political processes in the ARC was significantly limited. Notorious organised criminal gangs — 'Seilem', 'Bashmaki', 'Imdat', 'Ruliaka' — were liquidated; criminal cases were initiated against 10 former high executives of the autonomy and deputies of the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC, two city mayors¹²⁵. At the beginning of 2001, the Head of the Main Administration of Ukraine's Interior Ministry in the Crimea Yu.Seleznirov said that in 2000, all known criminal groups on the peninsula "were finally dispersed and liquidated", and that the courts were examining 46 criminal cases initiated against 190 their members¹²⁶.

We suggest this optimistic report is somewhat premature. The use of criminal groups and criminal methods in political struggle continues. For instance, during the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC elections in late 2000, the ARC Finance Minister L.Denysova received death threats. An explosion was made in the Communist Party of Ukraine office in Simferopol. **Criminals show particular interest in the decisions of state power bodies on privatisation of sanatoriums, resorts and other economically attractive facilities on the Crimean soil.**

Crimeans are sure that organised criminal groups seriously influence the political situation in the Crimea — this thought is shared by almost half of the population (47.6%), only 9.1% — sticks to the opposite opinion (*Diagram "Influence of organised criminal groups on the political situation in the ARC"*).



The Crimean population believes that the law-enforcement bodies of the ARC are involved in political struggle: 64.9% of Crimeans polled agrees with that. This result of UCEPS poll causes particular concerns and requires special analysis.

All in all, 1998-2001 witnessed a significant decrease in the influence of criminal groups on political development on the peninsula, but it has not been entirely eliminated.

CONCLUSIONS

A significant potential of conflicts has been accumulated in the Crimea. The first vector of the conflict is connected with the relations between the Centre and the autonomy: some contradictions between the Constitution of Ukraine and the Constitution of the ARC persist; budget relations have not been finally regimented; the Ukrainian culture and language are poorly represented on the Crimean soil; the state mechanism of political conflict prevention and resolution in the ARC is imperfect. Under certain circumstances, those contradictions may lead to further

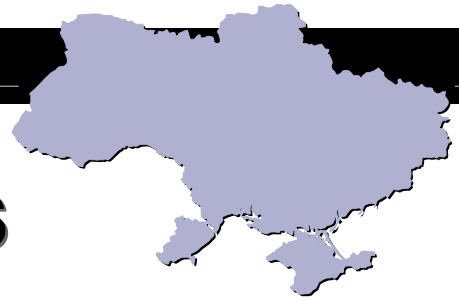
escalation of political tension between the Centre and the autonomy, give grounds for the propaganda of separatist forces fighting for power in the ARC.

The second vector of the conflict is connected with the long internal political confrontation in the ARC, which has already led to the paralysis of the autonomy's representative body and reduced the effectiveness of the executive branch in the Crimea. Such confrontation is not good for the co-operation of the ARC power bodies at resolution of socio-economic problems of the ARC, which in turn may lead to the decline of the living standard of the Crimeans and encourage separatist sentiments.

The third vector of the conflict is determined by the difficult inter-ethnic and inter-confessional situation on the peninsula, and particularly aggravation of political, judicial and socio-economic problems of Crimean Tatars, that prompts them to radical actions. Up until now, no permanent dialogue between state authorities and Crimean Tatars has been established. Crimean citizens of other nationalities poorly understand the necessity of satisfying language and cultural needs of Crimean Tatars. Said problems may lead to mass public disturbances involving serious consequences. "The Crimean Tatar card" may also be played at the future parliamentary and presidential elections in Ukraine.

Unfortunately, despite the acute problems mentioned above, no fundamentals of state policy of resolution of the key issues of the autonomy, and particularly of the Crimean Tatar people, have been worked out in Ukraine. This makes the authorities react to emerging political developments and conflicts in a slapdash fashion. A systematic analysis of threats to the national security, medium and long-term forecast of the situation in the region are needed. This will make it possible to develop a well-grounded strategy of state policy aimed at prevention and neutralisation of conflicts in the ARC. ■

3. EXTERNAL FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN THE CRIMEA



This section analyses the main external factors that influence the situation in the Crimea. Some of them are good for the development of political processes in the ARC while others are fraught with conflicts.

The Crimean peninsula lies at the crossroads of geopolitical interests of different countries and international political forces. Russia, Turkey, and Muslim and other countries have interests in this region.

The ARC takes an active part in foreign economic policy of Ukraine through interregional agreements. As of the beginning of 2001, the Verkhovna Rada and the Council of Ministers of the ARC had agreements and ungratified proposals for co-operation with Belarus, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, 16 regions of the Russian Federation¹²⁷ and Minsk¹²⁸.

According to the State Statistics Committee of Ukraine, the ARC maintains trade relations with 110 countries; its total turnover was almost \$320 million in 2000. The main partners of the autonomy include Russia, Turkey, the U.S. and Spain. As of January 1, 2001, foreign investments in the ARC totalled \$147 million, or close to 4% of all foreign investments in Ukraine; the main foreign investors in the autonomy were Russia, Uzbekistan, the U.S., Germany and the Netherlands. There are 159 joint ventures active in the ARC.

3.1 THE POPULATION'S ASSESSMENT OF EXTERNAL INFLUENCE ON THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN THE CRIMEA

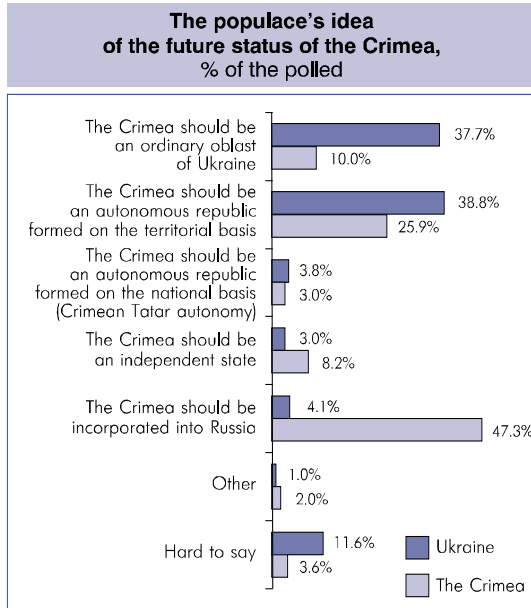
The populace of the Crimea and Ukraine has different views of the degree of foreign influence on the political situation in the Crimea.

Ukrainian citizens equally assess the influence of **Ukraine** (30.5% of respondents consider it to be "strong") and **Russia** (33%). Crimeans point to the much stronger influence of Ukraine on the Crimean situation (65.2% — "strong influence"); three times fewer residents of the autonomy consider Russia's influence to be "strong" — 21.3%. (In this context, external influence of Ukraine is understood as the influence of the Centre on one of the country's regions).

The assessments of Turkish influence on the Crimean situation also differ greatly. While in Ukraine, **Turkey's** influence is generally viewed as insignificant ("strong influence" — 5.6%,

¹²⁷ The city of Moscow, Moscow region, Krasnodar Kray, Tatarstan, Tambov Region, Buriatia, the cities of Tiumen, Voronezh, Orel, Orenburg, Bashkortostan, Perm Region, Novosibirsk Region, Karelia, the cities of Saint Petersburg and Tomsk.

¹²⁸ Data of the Permanent Representation of the President of Ukraine in the ARC.



Tatar autonomy or an independent state is rather low (3% and 8.2%, respectively).

The analysis presented below proves that Russia's presence in the Crimea is gradually transforming from the political to the economic. The stationing of Russia's Black Sea Fleet on Ukraine's territory remains an important factor that influences the situation in the ARC.

Economic relations

Russia is the main trade partner of the ARC. It accounts for a third of the total Crimean foreign trade turnover. Russia is also the main foreign investor in the ARC. According to the State Statistics Committee of Ukraine, as of January 1, 2001, the Russian Federation had invested nearly \$82 million in the autonomy's economy — more than all other investors. There are 37 Ukrainian-Russian ventures in the Crimea. One of them is the *KrymavtoGAZ* automobile plant, which assembles such automobiles as the *Volga*, *Gazel* and *Sobol*.

One of the most ambitious joint projects is the construction of a bridge across the Kerch strait before 2005 worth \$500 million - \$1 billion¹²⁹. Commissioning of the bridge will promote economic ties with Russia, create employment in the autonomy and attract tourists to the ARC. In 2000 alone, 2 million holiday-makers from Russia came to the Crimea (out of total 3 million visitors), which is good for tourist business in the Crimea.

Russia's economic presence in the ARC is noticeable and substantially influences the situation in the autonomy. The development of economic relations between the ARC and Russia

promotes creation of new jobs in the autonomy, development of the tourist business and overall strengthening of mutually beneficial co-operation between Ukraine and Russia.

Relations in the information and humanitarian spheres

Russia's presence in those sectors in the Crimea remains substantial. As was mentioned in the previous section, the overwhelming majority of schools in the autonomy teach in the Russian language, and only 2% of pupils study in the Ukrainian language. The Black Sea Department of the Moscow State University named after M.Lomonosov has been established in the Crimea.

The lion's share of programmes of the Crimean radio and television companies is transmitted in the Russian language (75-80% of air-time). Sevastopol Regional Television and Radio Company transmits genuine Russian programmes, State Television and Radio Company "Krym" — a news block of the Russian channel RTR, "Chornomorska" Television and Radio Company — Russia's NTV news, "ZhYSA" Television and Radio Company — programmes of the Russian channel TV-6. Russian television programmes are broadcast in Sevastopol too. Some Russian programmes are transmitted by cable networks that cover close to 35,000 subscribers¹³⁰.

In 2000, 1,995 Russian and only 846 Ukrainian newspapers and magazines were offered for subscription in Ukraine, including the Crimea. The daily Ukrainian circulation of such newspapers as "Argumenty i Fakty-Ukraina", "Komsomolskaya Pravda. Ukraina", "Trud-Ukraina", "Izvestiya. Ukraina" exceeds 807,000 copies. Those newspapers are registered in Ukraine, but they mostly reprint materials from the "mother" Russian publications. Some Russian newspapers and magazines are smuggled into Ukraine; this problem is especially acute during the holiday season in the Crimea.

Russian editions dominate the book market of the ARC, as well as of Ukraine generally. In 1999, three books of Russian origin were sold for one of Ukrainian origin in Ukraine.

According to the UCEPS poll, the majority of the Crimean population is satisfied with the quantity of Russian language periodicals (53.1%), radio broadcasts (46.2%) and television programmes (42%). At the same time, those polled who are not satisfied with the number of Russian language media believe that there should be more Russian language periodicals (40.5% of respondents), radio (48.1%) and television programmes (53.6%).

¹²⁹ The project was supported by the Presidents of Ukraine and the Russian Federation. For its implementation, a joint-stock company is being formed, where 51% of shares will belong to the Moscow City Government, 25% — to the ARC, 24% — to the Krasnodar Krai of the Russian Federation. Some experts express reasonable doubt about the project's feasibility.

¹³⁰ Data of the Republican Information Committee of the ARC.



Pro-Russian organisations obtain substantial support from the Moscow-Crimea Foundation established on the initiative of the Moscow City Government. With its assistance, 32 humanitarian programmes were performed in 1999, 50 — in 2000; for 2001, 70 programmes are planned. With the Foundation's financial support, the magazines *"Brega Tavridy"*, *"Krymusha"* and the newspaper *"Russki Mir"* are issued and distributed in the ARC.

On January 24, 2001, a Congress of Russian Linguists of Ukraine was held in the Crimea. Some representatives of the Ukrainian intelligentsia in the Crimea saw its assignment in the "political task: annexation of Ukraine by Russia"¹³¹.

Therefore, Russia's significant presence in the information, cultural and humanitarian sectors of the ARC persists. On the one hand, this is good for the satisfaction of the cultural needs of the Crimeans and strengthening of relations between Ukraine and Russia; on the other, this creates possibilities for improper influence on the autonomy's populace on the part of the Russian Federation.

The presence of Russia's Black Sea Fleet in the ARC

On May 28, 1997, after six years of difficult talks, Ukraine and Russia signed the Agreement of the status and terms of Russia's Black Sea Fleet stationing on Ukraine's territory¹³². In fact, it is a foreign military force¹³³ based in Ukraine.

Despite numerous top-level declarations about fraternal relations between the Ukrainian and Russian peoples and the navies of the two

countries, the time that has passed since the signing of those agreements has shown significant differences between the parties in the assessment of the fact of the Black Sea Fleet stationing in the Crimea, on Ukraine's territory.

The Russian side consistently emphasises its generally positive aspect as a factor of geopolitical stability in the region, the bridgehead of Russia and the CIS on the southern flank.

The Ukrainian side does not openly deny Russia's arguments but emphasises more concrete factors, largely confined to contradictions and negative consequences. The difference of approaches is most often observed in the sphere of economy. The Black Sea Fleet command draws attention to the Ukrainian side demands for payment of the Fleet's bills for electricity and utilities and to the issues of privatisation. As a counter to that, it argues that work for the Black Sea Fleet feeds many civilian inhabitants of Sevastopol (nearly 100,000 workers and their dependants). At the same time, it does not mention the negative consequences of the Russian naval base operation for tourism, trade, investments in the Crimean economy, the environment, etc.

Ukraine can hardly be satisfied with the permanent interference and comments on the part of the Russian military (the Black Sea Fleet command) and their Moscow visitors on the resolution of separate issues of bilateral relations. Furthermore, the Black Sea Fleet command constantly demonstrates its dissatisfaction with Ukraine's co-operative events with NATO held in the Crimea and the Black Sea in the framework of the "Partnership for Peace" Programme and attempts to represent joint bilateral exercises of Russia's Black Sea Fleet and Ukraine's Navy "Fairway of Peace" as a "response to aliens". The Black Sea Fleet command is especially irritated by calls of NATO ships to the Ukrainian port of Sevastopol and the fact that Ukraine does not turn to Russia's Black Sea Fleet for consent. Given such confrontational behaviour of the Black Sea Fleet, Ukrainian experts are not willing to neglect the probability of Ukraine becoming involved in a conflict because of contradictions between Russia and its potential enemies. Ukrainian mass media discussed such a possibility during the NATO operation in Kosovo in 1999.

In fact, Ukraine is already indirectly involved in this conflict, as Black Sea marines take part in

¹³¹ See: Letter to the President of Ukraine L.Kuchma, Prime-Minister of Ukraine V.Yushchenko, Minister of Education and Science of Ukraine V.Kremen, Permanent Representative of the President of Ukraine in the ARC A.Korniychuk, signed by the Head of the "Prosvita" Association, Professor of the Tavria National University (TNU) P.Harchev, TNU Professor P.Kyrychuk, Head of the Crimean Organisation of the Union of Writers of Ukraine D.Kononenko, Dean of the TNU Philology Department Ye.Rehushevskiy, Deputy Head of the "Prosvita" Association, Dean of the TNU Chemical Department V.Chyrvva.

¹³² The Agreement provides for a 20-year term for Russia's Black Sea Fleet stationing in Ukraine. Unless in 20 years Ukraine notifies Russia in writing of its desire to terminate the Agreement, it is automatically extended for another five years, and so on.

¹³³ This force includes nearly 25,000 men and almost 300 vessels. The Black Sea Fleet infrastructure includes almost 300 military communities, more than 5000 service and residential buildings in two points of stationing — Sevastopol and Feodosia, and two air force bases — Kacha and Hvardyske.



combat operations in Chechnya and are trained for that on the Crimean soil. This has repeatedly aroused protests of the Muslim Crimean Tatar population of the Crimea and Ukrainian politicians of the national-democratic wing. In March, 2001, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine even had to present a note to Russia in connection with the actions of Black Sea marines during their combat training in the Crimean mountains.

It is worth notice that the majority (51.4%) of Crimeans considers the influence of Russia's Black Sea Fleet on the Crimean political situation to be positive, only 9.6% of the polled assessed it negatively. A quarter (25%) of respondents is sure that the Black Sea Fleet does not influence the political situation in the ARC at all; 14% of the polled could not give a definite answer.

Russia's Black Sea Fleet determines the Russian political-military presence in Ukraine and presents a weighty factor influencing the Crimean situation. Both sides should establish regular interaction for the settlement of conflicts connected with its stationing on the Ukrainian territory.

3.3 THE TURKISH FACTOR

The main directions where Turkey influences the situation in the ARC are in its support for religious organisations of Crimean Tatars, restoration of mosques and establishment of economic ties. The Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey in Ukraine A.Karaosmanoglu stressed that Turkey "proceeded from the fact that it is, first and foremost, its and other members of the international community moral duty to assist the elimination of the cruel injustice by helping Crimean Tatars to return to their homeland"¹³⁴. With Turkey's assistance, nearly 1000 houses for Crimean Tatars and several motorways were built, and a social infrastructure is being created in the places of concentration of Crimean Tatars.

Economic relations

Turkey is the second (after Russia) largest importer of goods from the Crimea; its share makes 9.9% (\$16 million)¹³⁵. Turkish investments in the economy of the ARC total nearly \$1.8 million, which is 40 times less than Russian and two times less than German investments¹³⁶. There are 17 Ukrainian-Turkish joint ventures in the Crimea. However, the official statistics does

not fully reflect the state of economic relations between the ARC and Turkey, for it only partly accounts for "shuttle" trade.

Support for the Crimean Muslims

In 1991, the Spiritual Administration of Muslims of the Crimea (SAMC) was formed, and contacts were established with Islamic centres, separate organisations and parties in Turkey. During a visit of a group of Turkish public activists to the Crimea in September, 1991, M.Dzhemilev and the Head of the Association of the Turkish Intelligencia N.Yalcintas put a symbolic stone in the basis of the Kebir-Jami mosque in Simferopol. The Religious Foundation named after H.Aksemsetdin committed itself to build a religious centre in the city of Bakhchysarai. All in all, 12 mosques (almost half of all built) were built in the Crimea with Turkish assistance. A special programme is underway for the education of Crimean youths in Turkish religious schools: in 1999, 10 boys and 12 girls were sent for annual courses of Koran. In 2000, 122 students studied in Turkey. Turkish Islamic missionaries and representatives of the Turkish Ministry of Religious Affairs are active in the Crimea¹³⁷. For instance, after the 2nd Kurultai, a Turkish national with a higher religious education was elected member of the Muftiate.

Ties with Turkish political parties and state bodies

In 1993, close ties were established with the Welfare Party and its leader N.Erbakan (would-be Turkish Prime Minister). In May, 1993, M.Dzhemilev met in Cologne with Secretary General of the "Milli Geres" organisation A.Yuksel, in late August - early September, 1993, on the invitation of that organisation he took part in the Muslim conference in Davos, where the address to all Muslims of the world was announced to assist and support the struggle of Crimean Tatars¹³⁸. Turkish Islamic organisation "Nurcu" is active in the ARC. Its leader F.Gulen also heads the religious enlightenment movement "Nur" that adheres to the pan-Turkic idea and aims at establishment of an Islamic state in Turkey. According to some sources, "Nurcu" is funding the Turkish College in the ARC and grants financial support to some religious communities.

The Ministry of Religious Affairs, the Ministry of National Education and the

¹³⁴ Karaosmanoglu A. Turkish-Ukrainian Relations and the Geopolitical Realities of the 21st Century / Ukraine-Turkey: Security and Co-operation in the Black Sea Region. Materials of the international conference. — Kyiv, 2000, p.26.

¹³⁵ Turkish imports to the ARC total close to \$2.3 million — almost 30 times less than from Russia (\$62.7 million). This figure does not fully account unofficial ("shuttle") trade with Turkey.

¹³⁶ Data of the State Statistics Committee of Ukraine.

¹³⁷ This activity caused a negative reaction on the part of SAMC, but the Crimean Tatar Mejlis did not support its position.

¹³⁸ Grigoriant V. On Some Specific Features of Development of the Ethno-confessional Situation in the Crimea. See: www.fortunecity.com/boozers/grapes/293/zurnal00/1927.htm.



Religious Fund of Turkey are active in the Crimea. For instance, on May 9, 1999, a conference devoted to the anniversary of Prophet Mohammed was held with support of Turkish organisations. Ya.Erbas who co-ordinates religious activity in the Crimea on behalf of the Turkish Ministry of Religious Affairs spoke at the conference.

Hence, Turkey is strengthening economic and cultural ties with the ARC. Co-operation in the religious sphere is especially active.

3.4 THE ISLAMIC FACTOR

The Islamic factor in a broader sense has been increasingly influencing the Crimean situation of late.

Financial support

As far back as 1992, Mufti of Muslims of the Crimea Seyit-Jalil Ibragimov discussed the issue of assistance for Crimean Muslims with a delegation of the Islamic Development Bank. The problem was also discussed during the 2nd Muslim Forum (1992) that approved a relevant resolution. In 1996, a Letter of Intention was signed that envisaged allocation of \$466,000 by the Islamic Development Bank for the construction of the Islamic centre, a library, a school and a madrasah in the ARC. With the United Arab Emirates assistance, 12 mosques were erected in the Crimea, agreement has been achieved with Saudi Arabia of construction of another 10 religious buildings¹³⁹. In 1998-2000, Crimean Tatar leaders actively contacted representatives of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, international Islamic organisations; in course of their meetings, the ways of resolving social and economic problems of Crimean Tatars and expansion of Islam in the Crimea were discussed.

Missionary activity of representatives of Muslim organisations

On the invitation from the Spiritual Administration of Crimean Muslims, 30-40 missionaries from Muslim countries (Lebanon, Egypt, Syria, Kuwait) permanently stay in the Crimea. They are teaching Islam to Crimean Tatar youths, help to deliver Muslim rites and promulgate Islam. The International Corporation of Development (ICD, Russia) acting via its Crimean branch also takes steps for the spread of Islam among broad circles of the Crimean population. ICD representatives co-ordinate their efforts with the "Ahrar" association at the Crimean State Medical University, uniting students from Arab countries; they organised youth religious courses near the village of Tsvetochne, in Bilohirsk district of the ARC.

Threat of the Muslim movement politicisation in the ARC

This danger is caused by external factors, and particularly the Chechen events. Crimean Tatar representatives took a tough stance toward Russia's actions in Chechnya. For instance, as early as March 1, 1994, M.Dzhemilev received the Mufti of Chechnya Imam A.Galaborshev who arrived in the Crimea on a commission from General D.Dudaev. There were reports that in December, 1994, a detachment of Crimean Tatar volunteers departed for Chechnya to fight Russian forces¹⁴⁰. Mass media reported about contacts of the Crimean Tatar leadership with representatives of the Chechen Republic — its official representative in Ukraine B.Mirzabekov, President of the Republic Z.Yandarbiev, Sh.Basaev, M.Udugov and others¹⁴¹. Crimean Tatars held meetings where they demanded termination of the Russian operations in Chechnya. One of the events against the war unleashed by the Russian Federation in Chechnya was organised by the Islamic Party of the Crimea on November 18, 1999.

The threat of radical Islamic organisations' penetration into the Crimea

According to some media reports, representatives of separate radical Muslim organisations, such as the "Grey Wolves" or "Muslim Brothers", have come to the Crimea; in Ukraine, 11 organisations that have contacts with the latter have been established¹⁴². The Muslim community of the peninsula is also interesting for the representatives of Wahhabism, considered to be the religious and political basis of Islamic fundamentalism. Wahhabite literature that clearly tends to

¹³⁹ Ibid.

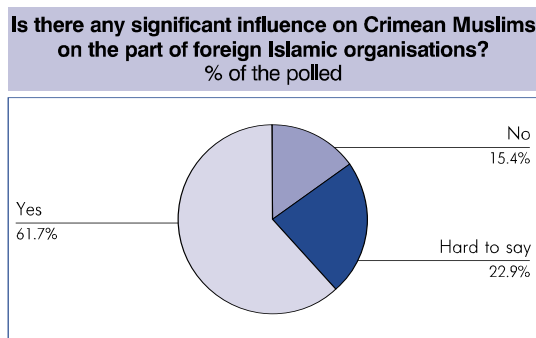
¹⁴⁰ See: Chervonnaya S. Return and Integration of Crimean Tatars in the Crimea: 1990s/ Forced Migrants. *Integration and Return*. — Moscow, 1997, p.171.

¹⁴¹ See: *Avdet*, September 30, 1998, p.3.

¹⁴² Singaevski A. Wahhabism Is Simple as a Pillar and Aggressive Like Sulphuric Acid. — *Fakty*, January 20, 2000, p.14.

justify terrorist acts appears in the Ukrainian language¹⁴³. In February, 2000, Crimean special services confirmed detention of persons involved in hostilities in the Northern Caucasus¹⁴⁴. In December, 1999, Mufti of Ukrainian Muslims A.Tamim expressed concern about the existence of radical and extremist trends in Ukraine¹⁴⁵.

The overwhelming majority of polled Crimeans (61.7%) is sure that Crimean Muslims are under the strong influence of foreign Islamic organisations. Only 15.4% of respondents believes that there is no such influence, 22.9% — could not give a definite answer (*Diagram "Is there any significant influence on Crimean Muslims on the part of foreign Islamic organisations?"*).



Recently, the influence of the Islamic factor on the peninsula is becoming more and more substantial. A programme of financial assistance for the construction of mosques, Islamic centres, schools and libraries is underway; missionary activity of Muslim countries is on the rise. Possible politicisation of the Crimean Tatar movement because of the events in Chechnya and the possible spread of radical Islamic organisations in the Crimea arouse concern.

CONCLUSIONS

The influence of external factors on the Crimean situation is observed on three main directions: Russian, Turkish and Islamic. Actually all of them are of a complex character and include economic, political, cultural and informational elements.

The views of the populace of the Crimea and entire Ukraine on the degree and polarity of external influence of the Crimean political situation differ significantly: Ukrainian citizens see the influence of Russia and Ukraine as

roughly equal, whereby they assess Ukrainian influence positively, and Russian — negatively. The Crimean population considers Ukraine's influence to be strong and negative, Russia's — not so strong and positive. The views of the Turkish influence largely coincide: it is viewed as not very strong and mainly negative.

The negative influence of the Russian factor on the situation in the Crimea has decreased. Meanwhile, Russia's presence persists in all spheres of life of the Crimea: economic, cultural, informational, humanitarian, military and political. On the one hand, such presence promotes stability in Ukraine-Russia relations and is good for the satisfaction of cultural needs of the Crimeans and economic progress in the ARC; on the other hand, under certain circumstances such presence may be used by the Russian Federation for intentional influence on the political orientation of voters.

The poll results point to a significant potential of separatist sentiments in the ARC, which are still latent and not actively manifested. However, such spirits may increase, especially in the event of deterioration of the socio-economic status of Crimeans and economic growth in the Russian Federation.

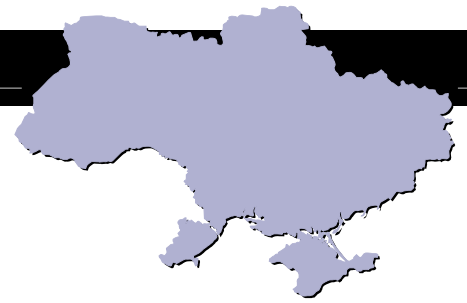
Turkey renders assistance for the settlement of Crimean Tatars, organises training of the Crimean youth at religious schools, sends missionaries, allocates funds. Close ties have been established with Turkish public organisations, political parties and state bodies. Under certain circumstances, Turkey can influence the spirits of Muslims in the ARC, but at present, such influence may be viewed as a potential threat only.

The influence of the Islamic factor increases. It is manifested in the construction of mosques, Islamic centres, schools, libraries, in missionary activity. The war in Chechnya indirectly provokes the politicisation of the Crimean Tatar movement. The possibility of spread of radical Islamic trends in the ARC should be viewed as a potential threat. ■

¹⁴³ Avrakhov T. Will Fundamentalism Raise Its Head in Ukraine? — *Kievskie Vedomosti*, November 26, 1997, p.4.

¹⁴⁴ UNIAN, February 5, 2000.

¹⁴⁵ UNIAN, December 12, 1999.



4. CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS

In 1991, the Crimea saw the creation of a rather peculiar state organism — autonomy on a territorial basis. A year later, the Crimea proclaimed state independence, and its departure from Ukraine's jurisdiction looked quite realistic at that time. After 1995, some negative tendencies were neutralised, but the entire tangle of political problems has not been solved.

The present political situation in the Crimea is characterised by four sets of unresolved problems, and each of them can affect the political developments in the ARC.

The first set of problems lies in insufficient regimentation of relations between the Centre and the autonomy. Discrepancies exist between the Constitution of Ukraine and the Constitution of the ARC; contradictions in the budget relations have not been completely removed; medium and long term fundamentals of the state policy with respect to the Crimea have not been formulated so far; the Ukrainian culture and language occupy a very narrow sector in the public and political life of the ARC (only 2% of schoolchildren are taught in Ukrainian).

All those problems potentially can be used for encouraging anti-Ukrainian sentiments and separatist tendencies in the ARC, especially at the 2002 elections to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC.

The second set of problems is connected with the internal political developments in the Crimea. The Verkhovna Rada of the ARC has been paralysed because of permanent political confrontation. Concurrent actions of the autonomy's representative body and the Council of Ministers of the ARC for the solution of socio-economic problems of the Crimeans are actually absent, despite the fact that, according to UCEPS poll, 66.7% of residents in the autonomy is concerned with the general deterioration of the standard of living, 44.6% — with the problems of employment and joblessness, 39.3% — with the overall economic situation, 37.1% — with delayed wages, pensions and social payments.

The rating of the central Ukrainian bodies of state power and top executives among the Crimeans is presently much (three-four times on the average) lower than the average Ukrainian indicators. Political sympathies of the Crimean populace are clearly shifted to the left, compared to the general Ukrainian situation. UCEPS poll results show that the CPU will have one of the most influential factions in the future Verkhovna Rada of the Crimea (nearly a quarter of seats).

Deterioration of the quality of life of the Crimeans would encourage separatist and left spirits among the ARC population and cause a critical fall of popular trust

in the central Ukrainian authorities and top executives. Therefore, the central authorities should pay special attention to the development of political processes in the ARC.

The third set of problems is related with the settlement of deported peoples, complex confessional and ethnic situation on the peninsula. Today, 60% of Crimean Tatars is unemployed; 73% of points of repatriate concentration in the Crimea is not provided with running water; 25% — with electricity; the rate of gas supply does not exceed 3%.

If co-operation between the authorities and Crimean Tatars is established and their standard of living begins to increase, the situation in the autonomy will stabilise. On the other hand, suspended political, judicial and socio-economic problems of Crimean Tatars may prompt them to radical actions and lead to politicisation of the Crimean Tatar movement. Signs of such a development of the situation are already seen.

The presence of inter-ethnic contradictions is also evidenced by the fact that the Crimean residents of various nationalities do not realise the importance of provision of rights of their compatriots belonging to different ethnic groups (the results of USEPS survey confirm this conclusion). So, prompt resolution of said problems, with account of the rights of Ukrainian citizens of all nationalities, presents a priority assignment of state power bodies.

The fourth set of problems is determined by foreign influence along three main directions: Russian, Turkish and Islamic. The action of each of them is of a comprehensive character and encompasses financial, political, cultural, informational, and, in some cases, military components. The influence of the Russian factor on the political situation in the ARC decreases, of the Turkish and Islamic factors — increases.

Each of the three factors has both positive and negative sides. On the one hand, they can promote the economy and tourist business of the ARC, bring new jobs, contribute to the strengthening of cultural ties, bring financial assistance, including for the settlement of deported persons. On the other hand, under certain circumstances, the influence of external factors can be used for escalation of political tension on the peninsula, intensification of activity of radical separatist organisations, including of pro-Russian or Islamic orientation.

Crimeans consider the political situation in the region not particularly stable: twice as many respondents (36.5%) as those who assess it as stable (14.7%) share this view.

All in all, the political situation in the Crimea conceals a significant potential of conflicts. Both internal and external factors are of comprehensive character and encompass practically all spheres of the autonomy's public, political and socio-economic life. Hence, the bodies of state power and political actors face the task of neutralising negative tendencies and formulation of the fundamentals of the state medium and long term policy towards the Crimea. UCEPS proposals on the principles of such a policy and steps at its implementation are presented below.

HARMONISATION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE CENTRE AND THE AUTONOMY

On the national level, fundamentals of the state policy towards the ARC should be clearly defined, and effective mechanisms created for political conflict prevention and resolution in the Crimea. UCEPS experts propose the following measures to this end.

The Cabinet of Minister of Ukraine should before the end of 2001 work out **the fundamentals of the state medium and long term policy of solution of the political and socio-economic problems of the ARC** and plan concrete events specifying the sources of funds, including from state budget of Ukraine. Basic indicators of the political and socio-economic development of the ARC should be determined and monitored at every phase.

The informational and analytical component at the development of the state policy towards the Crimea should be strengthened. In particular, **a single information analysis system of state power bodies, incorporating databases of the ARC authorities, should be created.**

The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine and the Constitutional Court of Ukraine should continue activities for the ARC's return into the framework of Ukraine's legislation by **bringing separate provisions of the Constitution of the ARC and other regulatory-legal acts in compliance with the Constitution of Ukraine and applicable laws.** This work should be done consistently, through dialogue and political compromise with the autonomy's state power bodies and the public. **Alteration of the ARC status is inexpedient at the present stage,** as attempts of widening (limiting) the ARC powers will exacerbate the relations between Kyiv and Simferopol.

The President of Ukraine should sign **the Budget Code of Ukraine** approved by Parliament that provides for the VAT's remaining in the Crimean budget.

The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine's personnel levers of influence on the Crimean situation should be strengthened: **heads of the ARC executive bodies should be appointed upon co-ordination with relevant central executive bodies of Ukraine.**

For the implementation of effective mechanisms for political conflict prevention and neutralisation in the ARC, **a Department for the support of activity of the Permanent Representation of the President of Ukraine in the ARC should be established** within the Administration of Ukraine's President, to assume the functions of analysis, forecasting and submission of proposals as to the comprehensive resolution of political problems of the ARC. The Department's employees should make regular

business trips to the Crimea, and the personnel of the Permanent Representation of the President of Ukraine in the ARC — to Kyiv.

The Permanent Representation should act as an administrative link between Kyiv and Simferopol, with a shift from supervisory to co-ordinating functions; at the same time, the Crimean leadership should be allowed to solve more issues pertaining to the relations with the Centre through the Permanent Representation as a body of the central state authorities, whose employees are better familiar with the regional problems. **The authority of the Permanent Representative of the President of Ukraine in the ARC should be raised:** the position should be filled by political figures of a national level and trusted by the main political forces in the autonomy.

Measures should be taken for the formation of managerial elite with the nation-wide outlook in the ARC, particularly: **expanded admission of public servants from the ARC to the Academy of State Governance under the President of Ukraine; dispatch of Crimean public servants to work for some time at the central executive bodies,** with further return to executive positions in the Crimea or in other regions; their substitution with public servants from Kyiv and Ukrainian regions.

NEUTRALISATION OF THE INFLUENCE OF NEGATIVE FACTORS ON THE SITUATION IN THE CRIMEA

Work aimed at neutralisation of the negative influence of internal and external factors on the Crimean situation should be continued. For this purpose, UCEPS experts propose the following measures.

The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine **should pass the Law of Ukraine "On the Council of Ministers of the ARC"**, to define the status and powers of the autonomy's executive branch, specify the procedure of the ARC Council of Ministers interaction with the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC, central executive bodies and local state administrations. The procedure of dismissal of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the ARC (procedure of co-ordination with Ukraine's President) should be elaborated on the basis of Ukraine's Constitution.

In order to provide informational support for state power bodies, **a Centre of information support for the socio-economic and cultural progress of the autonomy should be established under the ARC Council of Ministers.**

The Republican Information Committee of the ARC, jointly with the central bodies of state power, should arrange for the dissemination of information about the Crimea, its cultural, tourist and recreational sites in the media, including on the Internet, using new information technologies. Easing the tax pressure on printed media in Ukraine will help begin publication of regional editions in the Crimea.

The mechanisms of civilian control over the activity of law-enforcement bodies should be introduced on the regional level, including by means of regular hearings of their performance at sessions of the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC and broad coverage of their work in the local media. Law-enforcement bodies should be exclusively



tasked to the professional performance of their legitimate functions. Their interference in political conflicts in the ARC should be limited. There should be regular rotation of law-enforcement bodies' and procurator offices' employees with other Ukraine's regions.

The State Committee of Ukraine for Religious Affairs and the ARC Committee for Religious Affairs should contribute to the strengthening of the social component in the confessional activity in the autonomy, counter their involvement in political conflicts. The Round-table "**Ways of Attainment of Inter-confessional Accord in the Crimea**" should be planned and held with participation of representatives of different confessions, bodies of state power, experts and scholars.

The presence of the Ukrainian culture and language in the Crimean social environment and information space should be gradually expanded. Local self-administration bodies in the autonomy should strictly observe the language legislation. Artificial conflicts should be avoided in this connection, such as those caused by introduction of new rules of Ukrainian spelling, restriction of the use of the Russian language, etc. The number of Ukrainian schools (classes) should be increased not by closing Russian ones but by building new educational establishments in the autonomy.

The Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine **should staff Crimean schools with qualified teachers of the Ukrainian language and literature**, improve the material and technical basis of educational establishments, including Ukrainian. **A programme of raising the qualification of teachers of the Ukrainian language and literature working in the autonomy** should be worked out. A contest for the title of the "**Best Teacher of the Ukrainian Language in the ARC**" should be announced, with proper moral and material stimulation.

It is worth considering the possibility of establishing branches of the leading Ukrainian universities in the Crimea. Within the framework of the state budget, **special quotas for the Crimean youth admission** to philology, history, philosophy and other departments in Ukraine's universities, particularly in the western regions, should be extended.

The Ministry of Culture and Arts of Ukraine **should promote tours** of the leading Ukrainian theatres, artistic and popular musical groups, exhibitions, expositions of the central Ukrainian museums **in the Crimea**. Days of culture of Ukrainian regions should be organised in the ARC, and an annual national musical competition called "Ukrainian Stars in the Crimea" should be held.

To promote international events on the ARC territory, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine should initiate establishment of a permanent interstate **Ukrainian-Russian-Turkish forum "The Crimea Is a Zone of Stability and Co-operation"**. It might gather representatives of the authorities, political, business and cultural elites of the three countries.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Economy of Ukraine **should provide for the co-ordination of foreign economic co-operation of the ARC, first of all, with Russia's regions**, in accordance with the Programme of Trans-border and Inter-regional Co-operation Between Ukraine and the Russian Federation

through 2007, and within the framework of interstate agreements with other countries.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine **should make Ukraine's position about the undesirability of dispatching Russia's Black Sea Fleet units to "hotbeds" of Russia's internal conflicts** (such as Chechnya) **known to Russia**, since this causes the politicisation of Islam in Ukraine, and particularly in the ARC.

During military exercises with the participation of foreign troops, the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine should avoid conflict scenarios, since this may complicate Ukraine's relations with the Russian Federation and NATO; the main goals and tasks of military exercises involving foreign units should be co-ordinated with Ukraine's strategic partners in advance. During the holiday season, such exercises should be prohibited on ARC territory.

The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine and the Security Service of Ukraine **should strengthen control over the activity of radical organisations on the Crimean territory and the penetration of representatives of extremist Islamic trends** into Ukraine, including the ARC. This work must be accompanied with an active information campaign in the media.

The Council of Ministers of the ARC should work out **a set of PR measures for the holiday season**. For that purpose, contacts need to be established with the leading Ukrainian and Russian media, advertising and informational television programmes should be prepared, and articles should be published about the Crimean resorts. For that purpose, Ukraine's Foreign Ministry should enrol advisors on the issues of culture working at Ukrainian diplomatic missions. Web-sites of Ukrainian embassies should be more actively used for spreading information about the possibilities of the Crimea.

UCEPS experts believe that only large-scale reconstruction of the peninsula's tourist complex in accordance with the world standards will enable the Crimea compete with Black Sea resorts of other countries.

The Council of Ministers of the ARC should encourage joint ventures, including those established with Russia's participation, for the creation of **closed cycles of tourist and recreational services in the ARC** (information and advertising — sale of vouchers in Russia — travel to the ARC — recreation in the Crimea — return to the Russian Federation). **Foreign companies should be more actively involved in privatisation of Crimean facilities**. Barriers for tourists going to the Crimea for recreation (road barriers, environmental dues, and other restrictions) should be removed as much as possible.

RESOLUTION OF CRIMEAN TATAR PROBLEMS

The following measures need to be taken for the solution of problems of the Crimean Tatar people.

Constant dialogue between the authorities, on the one hand, and public organisations of Crimean Tatars, on the other, should be promoted.

Such a **dialogue** should take place **on all levels**: on the top, with the participation of the President of Ukraine, the Verkhovna Rada and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine; on the regional level, with the participation of the

leadership of the Verkhovna Rada and the Council of Ministers of the ARC; on the local level, involving local councils, state administrations and self-government bodies.

Invited to dialogue with the authorities (on all levels) should be authorised representatives not only of the Mejlis but also of **other public organisations and political parties** that represent interests of Crimean Tatars and express readiness to co-operate constructively. Repudiation of such public organisations and political parties from support for radical actions of Crimean Tatars would be **an important precondition** for such a dialogue.

The dialogue should involve authoritative representatives of the political, business and scientific elite — this will allow establishing the appropriate format of the dialogue, working out effective technologies of search for and fixation of compromise decisions in relevant laws of Ukraine, acts of Ukraine's President, regulatory-legal acts of the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC, decisions of executive bodies of Ukraine and the autonomy.

The status of the Council of Representatives of the Crimean Tatar People under the President of Ukraine needs elaboration.

First of all, the Council of Representatives cannot be a body of state power (possessing supervisory or other executive functions); it may only have the status of an advisory body attached to the head of state, intended for dialogue, search for political compromise and discussion of possible ways of resolution of urgent problems of the Crimean Tatar people that require decisions on the national level.

Second, the Council of Representatives should bear responsibility (political and moral) for illegal actions of Crimean Tatars, if such take place in the autonomy. Protests should be organised exclusively in the framework of the effective legislation; state power bodies should be tasked to correct but resolute countering any illegal forms of protest, moreover — violent actions committed by Crimean Tatars and people of other nationalities; in such cases the ARC population, including Crimean Tatars and their authorised representatives, should be properly informed about the actions of the authorities and their consequences.

Initial (background) basis for top level political dialogue could be formed by the following principled theses (on March 18, 2001, on the anniversary of deportation of Crimean Tatars, the President of Ukraine might make a relevant statement on that occasion).

❖ Ukraine condemns the crimes committed by the Stalin regime in 1944 but does not bear political and official judicial responsibility for those crimes.

❖ In the present situation and in the medium future, satisfaction of the Crimean Tatar demand of national autonomy is impossible: such a step would cause resolute opposition of the overwhelming majority of Crimeans, destabilise the political situation on the peninsula and in entire Ukraine and complicate the relations between Ukraine and the Russian Federation.

❖ The Ukrainian state authorities will by all means assist in resolution of political, judicial, socio-economic and humanitarian problems of Crimean Tatars, creation of proper

conditions for the development of the Crimean Tatar culture and language on the peninsula.

❖ The problem of deported peoples' return to Ukraine is of international significance, it touches the interests of many countries. Hence, Ukraine counts on more active participation of countries of the former Soviet Union and European organisations in practical resolution of the problem through settlement of Crimean Tatars in their historic homeland.

❖ Complex problem issues (and moreover acute conflict situations) in the autonomy cannot be resolved by means of ultimatums or other pressure on the authorities by Crimean Tatars; the bodies of state power will resolve them exclusively through dialogue, search for mutually acceptable decisions, with account of the interests of all parties, on the basis of applicable laws and proceeding from resources available to the state.

❖ The authorities' activity for the solution of urgent problems connected with the return of deported Crimean Tatars to Ukraine and their settlement in the homeland, first of all — allocation and intended use of budget funds, will be utmost transparent for the public.

❖ Compromise decisions can be found only on the condition of tolerant attitude of Crimean Tatars to the problems of Ukrainian citizens of other nationalities.

Proceeding from the above principles, UCEPS experts propose the following practical steps to be made.

Satisfaction of political and judicial demands of Crimean Tatars

Establishment of quotas for representation in the bodies of state power (both representative and executive) **on the ethnic basis** runs contrary to the effective legislation of Ukraine. Therefore, the Crimean Tatar requirements of establishing (restoring) their quotas in the authorities cannot be assumed legitimate. At the same time, the following steps will contribute to increased representation of Crimean Tatars within the structures of power.

The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine **should pass the new Law of Ukraine "On Election of Members of the Verkhovna Rada of the ARC"**, providing for election of the autonomy's representative body on a proportional basis.

The Council of Ministers of the ARC and district state administrations of the autonomy should ensure **the transparency of the process of employment and contests for the vacant seats in executive bodies**; this will rule out creation of artificial obstacles on ethnic, religious and other grounds. Respectively, the Council of Representatives of the Crimean Tatar People under the President of Ukraine might explain their rights and opportunities to Crimean Tatars, monitor (as a public organisation) observance of the established procedures of employment in the autonomy's bodies of power.

In district state administrations of the ARC, **the positions of deputy district state administration heads** in charge of the problems of deported peoples within the district should be established.

The Main Department of Public Service of Ukraine **should send able Crimean Tatar youths (within the limits of set quotas) for training to the Academy of State Governance under the President of Ukraine. 15-20 best-qualified specialists from among Crimean Tatars** should be prepared for appointment to responsible positions in the central executive bodies; after gaining experience in Kyiv, they might be appointed to executive posts in the ARC.



The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine and Public Prosecutor offices should ensure prompt, qualified and transparent investigation of facts of unlawful actions on the ARC territory, especially if there is a suspicion that they were committed on political reasons.

The Main Audit Department under the President of Ukraine and the Main Department of Public Service, in co-operation with local bodies of state executive power of the ARC, **should exercise control of the review of all reports of citizens about offences committed by public servants that led to conflicts between the authorities and the public in the ARC.**

The State Department of Nationalities and Migration should comprehensively survey and forecast the process of Crimean Tatar immigration to Ukraine. Proceeding from the interests of all parties and taking into account the experience of developed European countries and the U.S., mechanisms for control over those processes should be proposed. **Consultations should be held with authorised representatives of the Crimean Tatar people** on the possibility of regulating migration, within certain limits (for instance, depending on the speciality of immigrants, the time of creation of relevant jobs in the autonomy, allotment of land plots, availability of funds for housing construction, etc.).

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine should initiate (intensify) talks about introduction of a simplified procedure of expatriation of the deported and their descendants from **Russian, Tajik and Turkmen citizenship.**

In general, resolution of the problems of Crimean Tatars' settlement should be transferred from the political domain into the sphere of resolving their socio-economic problems, satisfying their cultural needs, encouraging the development of the Crimean Tatar culture and language.

Resolution of socio-economic problems of Crimean Tatars

The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine should provide for the performance of planned steps for the settlement of deported peoples, including annual financing (in that, allocation of funds for plumbing, housing and power line construction), and control of performance of the events; **ensure the transparency of distribution of budget funds, provide for personal responsibility for their intended use.**

The Ministry of Finance of Ukraine should analyse the effectiveness of the use of funds allocated by the state and international donor organisations for the solution of problems of the deported.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine should assist the Mejlis in establishing contacts with foreign countries (Turkey, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, etc.), international Islamic organisations and financial establishments with the purpose of raising additional funds for the construction of housing, educational, medical institutions and development of infrastructure in the places of concentration of deported people.

The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine should examine the possibility of creating a **non-profit institution (fund)** that, under the control of a managerial body

(composed of representatives of state power bodies, Crimean Tatars, local self-administration bodies, foreign donors), might ensure accumulation and effective use of funds channelled for the settlement of Crimean Tatars.

The Ministry of Agrarian Policy and the Ministry of Finance of Ukraine, jointly with other bodies of state power, **should examine the possibility of paying compensation to Crimean Tatars excluded from the process of sharing the land of collective farms.** As an option, such compensation might be given in the form of state securities. It should reiterate the impracticability of forcible re-division of the shared land by the state, with simultaneous encouragement of the process of land re-sharing on a voluntary basis, with the consent of locals.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy of Ukraine should prepare a comprehensive programme of Crimean Tatars' retraining and organisation of public works in the autonomy; this would help reduce unemployment among the deported.

Satisfaction of cultural, informational and other needs of Crimean Tatars

The Republican Information Committee of the ARC should provide for **the increase of broadcasting time by the Crimean Tatar editorial board of the State Television and Radio Company 'Krym'** (TV programmes — to eight hours, radio programmes — to three hours a week) and finance state order for their transmission. Additional time should be granted for the transmission of programmes of the 'Krym' Company on the national channels (TV programmes — on *UT-1* or *UT-2*, radio programmes — on *UR-1*). The Crimean media should provide all-round information about the events related with the resettlement, social and cultural progress of the deported peoples. Talks should be held with Crimean television and radio companies about paid air for national editorial boards. Co-ordinating bodies of the Republican information services should more actively employ Crimean Tatar journalists and political scientists.

The ARC Council of Ministers should earmark funds in the autonomy's budget over the following years for the support of mass media of the deported peoples, particularly, the newspaper '*Yani Dunya*' and the magazine '*Yildiz*'.

The Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine should ensure state funding for the issue of textbooks and methodical literature in the languages of the Crimean nations, including Crimean Tatar.

District state administrations of the autonomy **should establish stationary points of subscription and distribution of printed media in the places of concentration of deported people.**

The Republican Information Committee of the ARC should create a **web-site in the Internet** devoted to historic and cultural traditions of the deported peoples of the Crimea.

UCEPS experts believe that implementation of the set of proposed measures will contribute to the stabilisation of the Crimean political situation and harmonisation of relations between the Centre and the autonomy. ■