

10 December 2021

Crimea: human rights defender Mustafa Seidaliev detained

On 8 December 2021, the Kirov District Court of the Republic of Crimea ruled in favour of the sentencing of human rights defender **Mustafa Seidaliev to 10 days detention**. The Court found the human rights defender guilty of “production and publication of extremist data” (Article 20.29 of the Code of Civic Conduct) and “propaganda of prohibited symbols” (Article 20.3.1 of the Code of Civic Conduct) in relation to his social media posts published in 2012. Representatives of the organisation [Crimean Solidarity](#) believe that the charges against the human rights defender result from his peaceful and legitimate human rights work.

[Mustafa Seidaliev](#) is a human rights defender working on the protection of Crimean Tatars rights following the annexation of Crimea in 2014. Since 2017 he works as a public defender, supporting lawyers in cases before the courts and representing Crimean Tatars in civil proceedings and court cases. In 2019 Mustafa Seidaliev joined Crimean Solidarity. Crimean Solidarity monitors and documents human rights violations, provides legal aid, observes trials, and provides various types of assistance. Crimean Solidarity focuses mainly on providing support to the Crimean Tatar community, which has been particularly targeted by the Russian authorities. In June 2019, the human rights defender was detained in Moscow, Russia, alongside 40 other representatives of the Crimean Solidarity movement peacefully protesting the prosecution of Crimean Tatars based on alleged extremism charges.

On 23 November 2021, in expectation of human rights lawyer Edem Semedliaev’s release, activists peacefully gathered in front of the detention facility to greet him. The Centre for Combating Extremism officers began to unlawfully arrest people present, including Mustafa Seidaliev. The human rights defender was sentenced to 14 days of administrative arrest for the “organization of simultaneous mass stay and/or movement of citizens in public places, entailing a violation of public order” under Article 20.2.2 of the Code of Civil Conduct of the Russian Federation.

On 7 December 2021, the day of Mustafa Seidaliev’s release, the human rights defender was only able to exit the premise of the Evpatoria Temporary Detention Centre when law enforcement officers detained him again, accusing him of producing extremist data and propaganda. The human rights defender has had no access to lawyers. Police officers filed an arrest report against him for his publication of a video on Hizb ut-Tahrir on his social media in 2012 and in January 2014. Despite the fact that the publication dated back , to the time when Crimea was a part of Ukraine’s jurisdiction and members of Hizb ut-Tahrir were not prosecuted in Ukraine, the Court argued that such video was included in the Federal Database of Extremist Content list of Russian Federation in April 2014. On that basis, on 8 November 2021, the Kirov District Court of the Republic of Crimea charged Mustafa Seidaliev with two counts of violation of the Code of Civil Conduct, and sentenced him to 10 days of administrative arrest.

Front Line Defenders expresses grave concerns about the continuous judicial harassment and prosecution of human rights defenders in the annexed Crimea by Russian law enforcement and federal security service authorities. Front Line Defenders condemns the prosecution of Mustafa Seidaliev, and it believes that the charges against him result from his peaceful human rights work.

Front Line Defenders calls upon the relevant Russian authorities to:

1. Immediately cease the prosecution and the judicial harassment of Mustafa Seidaliev and all human rights defenders in the Crimea peninsula for their peaceful human right work and guarantee in all circumstances that they are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions;
2. Release of all imprisoned human rights defenders, including those in long-term detention;
3. Ensure that human rights defenders are recognized as a social group and guarantee their right to conduct their non-violent and legitimate human rights activities.

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