

– What kind of “truth” about Crimea was presented by the Ukrainian side in Geneva?

– At every turn they scream at full volume about the fact that the Ukrainian language is oppressed and that Ukrainian-speaking people are physically punished in Crimea. I regret to inform you that I could not answer all the charges as well as couldn't say that it is in Crimea that the first Ukrainian-language Information Portal “Pereyaslavka Rada

2.0” based in Russia is created. Nevertheless, I was successful with my speech during the Roundtable meeting, which was arranged by the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs at the United Nations building in Geneva. The Roundtable was open to all comers, and I shall be honest with you, there were a lot of them - representatives of non-governmental organizations from Ukraine as well as those of the media, various Internet communities and others.



Roman Chegrinets,

Member of the Public Chamber of the Republic of Crimea, Co-Chairman of the Assembly of Slavic Peoples of Crimea

– Do you think we have a real chance to break through the information blockade by these ways?

– Absolutely! Such working visits are important for Crimea as they play an important role in promoting the position of Crimea as a constituent territory of the Russian Federation. In my opinion, we should demonstrate and emphasize the fact that Crimeans have the right for self-determination. I am very glad to have a chance to give a presentation in 2019 at one of the most important and significant international venues – the meeting of Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) in Warsaw.

Members of the Crimean delegation talked about the achievements and development of modern Russian Crimea. We were so pleased about the response of Western colleagues! They, just like us, got fed up of brazen provocations masterminded exclusively by the official Ukrainian delegation at the instigation of the Americans. To my mind, everyone understands that Crimea has always been and will be Russian. I am very proud to be the first to speak out at this very OSCE session and declare about the long-term “Ukrainian occupation” of Crimea, and that, thank God, Crimea could get rid of it and reunite with Russia.

– Did you invite the participants of the meeting to visit Crimea and see everything with their own eyes?

– Yes. Moreover, I believe that Crimea should introduce its diplomats to the world and be as open as possible to the visitors from anywhere. Foreigners should come more often and see the way our beloved land lives.

– I would also like to remind Europeans how the Crimean people are infringed upon their rights due to the imposed sanctions...

– I mentioned the fact in my report. I asked for the order to amend a resolution of Warsaw Meeting of the Conference on the Human Dimension of the OSCE to cease the media and economic war against the peoples of Crimea. I also invited the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities Lamberto Zannier to pay a personal visit to the peninsula in order to become acquainted with living conditions of the peoples and nationalities in Crimea. In general, a visit to the OSCE international platform had its effect and some of the foreign colleagues we met there visited the “Forum of Crimea’s Friends”.

Opinion *to the point*

**“WE HAVE TO GRAB
INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION
TO OUR POINT OF VIEW”**



Ruslan Balbek,

State Duma Deputy from
the Republic of Crimea

The most effective measure against Western anti-Russian propaganda is alternative information that comes from independent sources not connected in any way with either Russia or the Russian government. Accustomed to freedom of speech Western society usually listens to the view of both sides. But today, unfortunately, on the media platforms of Western countries and the USA the number of those who are against Russia is much bigger – they are the vast majority. Therefore,

we have to grab international attention including that of the UN Council to our point of view.

I can't understand why delegations of some so-called European countries (and which in truth have become today's Europe in many respects owing to Russia) express their deep anger and disrelish for Russian representatives. It was our country that saved them from total destruction in World War II. Where would they be, these over-privileged politicians, if Russia had not saved Poland with its infrastructure in 1945, and then poured money into their war-torn economy? Where would the rest of the Europeans be if Russia had not sacrificed hundreds of thousands of soldiers' lives to dislodge the Germans with the least possible damage and destruction of such beautiful places as Budapest and Prague? Where would today's Baltics (that continually make claims against Russia) be if we had not built a huge number of factories and port facilities on their territories? And all these people are still using those Soviet capacities for their own maintenance.

Probably, they believe that there can be the only one legitimate referendum with Crimeans going around holding Bandera's portraits in

their hands and shouting "Heil Ukraine" and things like that. Or, perhaps, the Crimean people, just like some of Maidan ideologists, should have painted their faces blue with yellow stars in a circle in the form of the EU flag's emblem? Would their opinion be regarded as legitimate then? Didn't Europe know that Crimeans always considered themselves part of Russia? And there are many such examples.

Even during Maidan I thought Ukraine as a political actor was on the downward path.

I would hardly call the things happening on the central square in Kyiv the "velvet revolution" – it was a frenzied crowd of fascist youths fighting with the police. In any country in the world, in Europe first of all, all the gang members with their chains and masks would have already been imprisoned for their behavior. And now they are trying to make these people "revolutionaries of dignity" – they don't even understand the meaning of this concept!

Thus, public speaking at international media platforms is a necessary and right way to promote dialogue with the Western world. We do not turn our heads away.

We are not aggressors. We are a state of European culture. The works of our writers and scientists are province of all mankind. Why would anyone flatter oneself to call our country the barbaric one?

Only time will tell! Truth is always the same, and that is not to deny!

CONTRARY TO SANCTIONS

Text: Oleg Stepanov

In 2019, the volume of foreign trade of sanctioned Crimea has almost doubled. What countries and which sorts of goods does the peninsula trade with?

Breaking through barriers

According to the Southern Customs Administration data, the republic's volume of foreign trade amounted to \$ 70.5 million within the first six months of 2019 which is nearly twice as much as for the same period last year. At that, imports accounted for about \$ 53 million and exports – \$ 17.6 million.

Moreover, one should take into account that because of the infamous sanctions many Crimean enterprises cannot directly deal with a number of countries. For this reason, goods are delivered to the Russian mainland, change their "place of residence registration" and then are sent abroad. It means that their record is kept not by the customs officers of the Republic of Crimea, but of other territories. Therefore, the real export of Crimean goods is higher than the statistics show.

The Head of the Republic of Crimea, Sergei Aksyonov, noted the urgent need to break in methodology of Federal Service of State Statistics and the Federal Customs Service so that they could maintain records of exports not for the area of exporting organization location, but by the place of manufacture of commodity.

Switch to New Markets

In 2015, passenger ships, floating structures, and inorganic chemistry products accounted for more than half of total exports (about \$ 45 million). As far as back as in 2016, the main exported goods were machinery and equipment as well as chemical products (\$ 28.5 million, or 57% of the overall production of exported goods). In the years that followed, these two indices firmly held ground in export structure of Crimea: 66% in 2017 and 55% in 2018.

Goods made by Simferopol "Fiolent" Works are very popular among our trading partners: rotatory saws and drills with built-in motors, angle