

Russian Journalists Deported from Ukraine

On 14 and 30 August 2017 respectively, the Security Service of Ukraine deported journalists Tamara Nersesian and Anna Kurbatova, nationals of the Russian Federation, from Ukraine. They were returned to the Russian Federation and banned from entering Ukraine for three years for carrying out activities against national interests of Ukraine.

Tamara Nersesian made a video report for the Russian channel Rossia 1 (Russia 1) about the Ukrainian musical festival Bandershtat which was held from 4 to 6 August 2017. In the report she openly calls the festival “neo-Nazi”. Some quotations from Tamara Nersesian’s report: “The song Arey’s Sword has been an unofficial anthem of punitive battalions fighting in Donbas for a few years. Bandershtat was first held in Volyn’ in 2007, on the 65th anniversary of the creation of the Ukrainian Insurgency Army – the one which was destroying Polish and Jewish population en masse on the same soil during World War II. This year, thanks to the efforts of the Ukrainian Government, neo-Nazi organizations and Western curators, the festival gathered more than 12,000 participants.” (link: https://russia.tv/video/show/brand_id/5402/episode_id/1530926/).

Such expressions are propagandistic, prejudiced and do not correspond to the reality, which is a gross violation of professional ethics and standards of journalism.

Anna Kurbatova, journalist of the Russian First Channel, was giving overtly propagandistic, distorted and unreliable information about Ukraine when reporting on the military parade in Ukraine dedicated to the Independence Day (24 August 2017).

In Kurbatova’s report, Ukraine is presented as underdeveloped state in deep economic crisis, and is compared to primitive society, whereas the military aggression of the Russian Federation in Eastern Ukraine is called “a civil war”. Such a way of presenting distorted and prejudiced information also largely constitutes a violation of journalistic standards.

Kurbatova’s report is accessible via https://www.1tv.ru/news/2017-08-24/331370-v_kieve_voennym_paradom_otmetili_den_nezavisimosti.

The Government of Ukraine pursues the policy regarding the protection and support of freedom of speech and expression in Ukraine. Ukraine condemns any restrictions on freedom of speech and pressure on mass media, while also calling upon all journalists to comply with the standards of journalism as to comprehensive, impartial and credible coverage of any information.

Nevertheless, in circumstances of military and information aggression by the Russian Federation, the Security Service of Ukraine is compelled to take measures which in part restrict activities of foreign visitors in Ukraine who produce distorted and propagandist materials grossly violating journalistic standards and which are incompatible with journalist activities. The aim of these measures is to comply with the requirements of Ukrainian legislation while observing the human rights and fundamental freedoms.

