

**Thursday, 22 September 2016, 10:10 Working session 6: Fundamental freedoms I, Speech of Gennady Afanasiev:
(English text below)**

2014

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2014

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: « ?».

I am Hennady Afanasiev. I am crimean. My homeland is Ukraine. Autonomous Republic of Crimea.

I want to say about hate speech and about the specific facts.
I am one of the few liberated citizens of Ukraine who have been imprisoned for political reasons, to Russia, and in the occupied Crimea. In May 2014, I was abducted by FSB employees as punishment for the demonstration and open expression of their civil position against the annexation of the Crimea, as well as cooperation with international journalistic publications. Due to the fact that I have expressed my opinion openly, I was tortured to extract confessions, so I gave evidence against myself on charges of terrorism and extremism. I was choked with a gas mask, was subjected to an electric current, I was beaten. As a result, I was convicted for my statements and sentenced to 7 years in prison for taking a part in a fictional FSB terrorist group which according to investigators led by Ukrainian film director Oleg Sentsov. 767 days I spent in inhuman conditions in the prison, under constant pressure, pressing only for his position. I was forced to change the Ukrainian citizenship, and only in June this year due to international sanctions pressure on Russia I was exchanged for two employees of GRU arrested in Ukraine. My case is not the only one. Annexed by Russia Crimea led to numerous violations of Human Rights and freedoms, as well as the creation of a system of political persecution. One of the most vulnerable groups are the representatives of civil society - the Crimean Tatars and Ukrainians about the Ukrainian position. All those who feel the Crimea as a part of Ukraine and called everything that happened occupation and annexation. Including this, journalists and bloggers. Using the full arsenal of repression of killings and enforced disappearances, to the oppression of freedom of speech and the dispersal of peaceful assembly. It all

started in 2014 and continues to this day. One of the recent case law is the arrest of Nikolay Semeny, Radio Svoboda journalist, Crimea. Realities, which is held in the occupied Crimea, as well as one of the last precedents that sounded all over the world this thing happened to Ilmi Umerov Medzhelis Deputy Country Director, who in an interview with the Crimean Tatar TV Channel ATP said that Crimea is part of Ukraine and because of this statement on Ilmi Umerov was open a criminal case and the prosecution of charges of extremism and then Deputy Head Medzhelis in order to exert pressure, was placed in a psychiatric hospital, and only with the help of international pressure, he was released. Another precedent is Yuri Ilchenko, which was held 11 months in jail in Simferopol, only for the fact that he did a census in social networks and asked the public "if the recovery of control over the Crimean territory of Ukraine." The situation with human rights is rapidly deteriorating in the occupied Crimea. Freedom is minimized to a level where the risk of a prison cell come to be more and more innocent people. The international community must adequately respond to the worsening situation, the instrument that Russia understands. It is very necessary to strengthen the sanctions that were imposed on Russia over the annexation of the Crimea.