



**5 1/2 DAYS**

Dear Sirs,

**I am pleased to welcome you, dear conference participants!**

***Why do I approach you concerning my homebirth?***

My name is Svetlana Demianova-Ponomarenko. On 19<sup>th</sup> June 2013 I along with my husband gave a birth to our second beautiful son. We live in a city of Khartsyzsk with population of 30,000 people, a small town in comparison

with other cities in Ukraine. Our first baby appeared at the regional maternity hospital 6 years ago, while with the second baby boy we were preparing for the homebirth. I have attended psychological courses, practiced yoga, dancing and swimming pool for pregnant women, communicated with mothers of home children in my country and worldwide, including solo birth practitioners.

***What attitude to pregnant women in antenatal clinics in Ukraine?***

My pregnancy was going very well, and to avoid afterward problems with the state registration of the child after birth, I have been on account of the pregnancy at the local antenatal clinic. I visited it 8 (eight) times (!) Each time my blood pressure, abdomen size, weight, uterine fundus height measured, as well as a fetal lie, presentation and a heart rhythm. I passed multiple tests of blood and urine. I refused from the ultrasound, studying thoroughly its effect on the brain and the genetic memory of the child. I have been invited to the office of the Head of antenatal clinic where there were a chief physician and other 3 medics and I was asked whether I need mental health services if I refused from the ultrasound (US). I have been also sarcastically asked whether I graduated from a high school if I think so about the US. I remarked that I graduated from the Donetsk National University on International Economics (Ukraine), as well as the University of Sunderland (England), finished a PhD course on Economics, and did traineeships in the UK, Germany and Sweden. During my 8 visits to the antenatal clinic I've been asked about my condition, mood and food inclinations only once! So I've changed my mind to tell the doctors about my decision to give birth at home.

***Do you want to be gynecologically examined for 7 times after homebirth?***

I along with my husband gave birth to our healthy baby at home, in the inflatable pool at presence of my friend whose mother of 2 home children too. We did it happily, softly, without any ruptures! We enjoyed it 5.5 days sharp. As my Ukrainian homebirth mothers advised me, we called my obstetrician-gynecologist who has observed me at the antenatal clinic. She has conducted a gynecological examination, got convinced in my breast milk, and I have been breastfed my baby in front of her and a nurse. That day our baby has been examined by a sector pediatrician also and has been considered as a healthy baby. After the gynecological examination, my health has become worse: fever and overflow lochia. Next day medical board at the local hospital was convoked, and it asked us to file an application to confirm the fact of a homebirth.

My health kept on becoming worse, and on the 10<sup>th</sup> day with my temperature of 39.8<sup>o</sup>C came to a regional hospital where I passed one more painful gynecological examination with speculums and uterus ultrasound. We applied to the medical board the copies of our passports, my prenatal record, my case record confirming my puerperal period, a pediatrician's conclusion after the baby examination, as well as a small pelvis US record. However the medical board started to demand one more gynecological examination

exactly by ALL members of their board (5 members!), as well as additional blood and urine tests. I did the tests and declined the gynecological examination. After 2 months we received a conclusion of that medical board declaring that it doesn't have documents enough to confirm the fact of delivery of exactly this baby.

***To be or not to be... That is the question... - how to get a citizenship and official name after the homebirth?***

Within those 2 months we approached the Public Health Ministry in Ukraine for 4 times, the President's Authorized Representative on Child's Rights in Ukraine, the Maternity and Childhood Health Department in Kyiv (capital of Ukraine), the Health Care Department in the Donetsk region State Administration for 3 times, the Khartsyzsk City Council (Child's Rights Service), Attorney General's Office. Taking into account that from January until August 2013 there was no an appropriate decree of the Public Health Ministry about the creation and activities of such a medical board to confirm the homebirth, the Khartsyzsk medical Board has been illegal. Nevertheless, the Health Care Department in the Donetsk region State Administration has started to cover up Khartsyzsk doctors.

***Persecution of breastfeeding mother!***

On national and local TV channels Khartsyzsk doctors gave an interview where they blamed me that I didn't an US, didn't pass any medical test, didn't allow them to measure my abdomen, and I delivered 2 (two) babies 'cause doctors don't have an US conclusion! Police and social service came to my home for inspection. In its official website the Donetsk region Health Care Department announced that it was going to send law-enforcement authorities to check up my Family Development Studio '*Indigo Light*' since I ostensibly promote homebirth there while women are obliged to deliver at maternity hospitals. At the same time the Donetsk region Health Care Department does not comment about 2 deaths of women from sepsis and medical carelessness at maternity hospitals in the Donetsk region.

I've contacted regional TV reporters with intention to interview me where I could disprove the Khartsyzsk doctors' slander by representing my medical documents and correspondence. However, reporters refused when the Head of the Donetsk region Health Care Department called them.

We came to the medical boards twice but they were not convoked! We told physicians about prevailing force of international conventions, Constitution and laws in Ukraine while physicians use merely subordinate acts and medical internal regulations...

***My fears***

We took a matter to count in the city of Khartsyzsk to ascertain the juridical fact of our childbirth. It is unknown how long this matter will go on while I could lose 2 kinds of child allowances, might pay a fine for untimely official registration of the child (not within 1 month). I am afraid of the Khartsyzsk court corruption. Moreover, I am afraid that Khartsyzsk doctors have falsified my medical documents since they have the originals of my prenatal record, my case record and puerperal US-record (I have copies). I am also afraid of losing my breast milk and my family subsequent health. I'm afraid that activities in my Family Development Studio and my husband's work as a programmer couldn't go on successfully because of slander and ruined reputation countrywide.

**5 <sup>1/2</sup> days within last 4 months my family spent in full peace and parenthood enjoyment.**

From the moment of my baby birth hundreds of homebirth babies in Ukraine have their birth certificates. Instead of my maternity enjoyment, care of 2 kids and doing my family and public responsibilities and missions, I'm forced to lose my energy, time and forces for composing applications, complaints, clarifications, - to lose my family's energy not for the constructive endeavor!..

**What I plan to do**

Being a co-founder of Ukrainian public organisation, I also have an intention to establish a social organisation similar to that Katerina Perkhova runs in Russia (Inter-regional Public Organisation 'Mother') that will defend women's right in their choice of baby birth circumstances, help in delivery and constitutional children rights.

***Dear conference participants, I'm approaching you as INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY, with my request for consulting, legal, sharing assistance in solving my situation of encroachment on homebirth parents' rights, as well as child's rights for state registration and financial allowance!***

***I would be also pleased if you discuss the means of sanctioning of doctors for their excess of powers and slander!***

Yours faithfully,

**Svetlana Demianova-Ponomarenko**

**Discover Light in Yourself to Shine Others!**

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Cheerful Hostess of International Family Development Studio 'Indigo Light', co-founder PO 'Life Artists', leader of the Conscious and Joyful Parents Club, author of programmes for kids and adults 'Science of Dreaming' and 'Abundant Thinking', leader of gymnastic trainings for mothers and babies over 2 moths, assistant and inspirer for kids and parents of indigo children. Grateful wife and conscious mother.

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**Video reports:**

<http://tsn.ua/video/video-novini/na-donechchini-batki..>

<http://novosti.donbass.tv/ua/vremya/view/2013/10/24/1..> - from 3rd min

<http://podrobnosti.ua/videoarchive/2013/10/24/6566.html> - from 9:20 min

[http://union.ua/news/events/v\\_khartsyzske\\_novorozhdennomu\\_ne\\_dayut\\_svidetelstvo\\_o\\_rozhdenii/](http://union.ua/news/events/v_khartsyzske_novorozhdennomu_ne_dayut_svidetelstvo_o_rozhdenii/)

First newspaper article :

<http://kp.ua/daily/231013/419892/>