

**Intervention by Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar People**

11th Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

New York, 7-18 May, 2012

Item #8 of the Agenda: "Half-day discussion on Central and Eastern Europe, the Russian Federation, Central Asia and Transcaucasia".

**Intervention by:**

**Abduraman Egiz, Representative of the Crimean Tatar People at the 11th Session of the UNPFII**

11 May, 2012

Distinguished Chairperson,  
Delegates to the 11th session of the Permanent Forum,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are honoured to greet you on behalf of Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar People, the representative body of the Crimean Tatars.

In line with the thematic issue at this 11th session of the forum on the Doctrine of Discovery, the Crimean Tatar people were also impacted by the annexation of its state by the Russian Empire in 1783, followed by the total deportation of the indigenous Crimean Tatars from their homeland on May 18, 1944. Only recently that is, up until 1989 the Soviet Communist regime forcibly kept the Crimean Tatar people in their place of exile. Today only 300,000 Crimean Tatars have returned to Crimea and the process of repatriation still remains unresolved to this day.

In this year's 11th Session we will be talking about the International Forum on the restoration of the rights of the Crimean Tatar people in which plan to hold in Crimea later this year.

The International Forum will be discussing the following issues:

- Security and guarantees of development of the Crimean Tatars in Ukraine,
- The program of the complex socio-economic, political and legal measures aimed at restoration of the rights of the Crimean Tatars.

We initiated the International Forum because of the following three reasons:

- We are in urgent need to preserve our linguistic and cultural identity;
- There over 100 thousand Crimean Tatars still living in their places of exile and looking for ways to come back to their native land;
- The Ukrainian government has done little to regulate the restoration of our rights as the Indigenous People of Crimea, Ukraine.

The initiative to conduct the International Forum on the restoration of the rights of the Crimean Tatar people in Crimea is already supported by the European Union, USA, Canada, as well as the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities. However, the Ukrainian government has not yet demonstrated its interest and will to support our initiative consequently the Crimean Tatars are very concerned about the Ukrainian Government's neglect regarding the problems of the Indigenous People of Crimea, Ukraine.

The task of the International Forum which is to form a roadmap for the complex social, economical, political and legal measures aimed at the restoration of the rights of the Crimean Tatars. The International community on the other hand will take another step towards overcoming the consequences of genocide towards the Crimean Tatar People and will have taken political action towards the implementation of the Vilnius Declaration within the OSCE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY, "The reunion of divided Europe: promoting human rights and civil liberties in the OSCE region in the twenty first century", which was adopted on July 3, 2009.

We request that the Permanent Forum advise the Economic and Social Council to call upon the United Nations to take action towards the resolution of the longstanding issues of the Crimean Tatars. We highly recommend that the Ukrainian government develop the programs that will preserve the linguistic and cultural identity of the Crimean Tatars now and in the future, as well as, we call upon the International Community to take action towards the implementation of the rights of the Indigenous Peoples of Crimea, Ukraine.

Thank you.

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