

51st session of the UN Human Rights Council
General Debate under agenda Item 3

Interactive dialogue with the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Intervention by the delegation of Ukraine

Mr. President,

Ukraine's commitment to the protection of indigenous people is manifested in the Constitution of Ukraine and is particularly reaffirmed in the context of Russia's ongoing aggression against Ukraine.

Unfortunately, we are witnessing the increased suffering of indigenous people of Ukraine - Crimean Tatars - under the Russian occupation of Crimea.

This includes the continued violations and abuses and systematic undue restrictions of human rights and fundamental freedoms, such as the right to peaceful assembly and association, freedom of expression and opinion, religion or belief.

In the occupied Crimea, the Russian Federation continues to clamp down on freedom of expression by penalizing people for criticism of Russia and its armed forces.

Within days of the announcement of the "partial" mobilization in the Russian Federation, the Crimean Tatars residing in the occupied Crimea received over 80 % of all summonses, which could amount to the attempted ethnic cleansing of the peninsula of the indigenous people disloyal to Moscow.

Hundreds of Crimean Tatars have become victims of political persecution, detained and tried on unjust terrorism or extremism charges. Furthermore, Crimean Tatar detainees continue to be deported to remote areas of Russia to serve their sentences.

These Russia's actions represent a blatant systematic and deliberate violation of its obligations under humanitarian and human rights law.

Russia must immediately and unconditionally release Ukrainian prisoners unjustly detained in Crimea and the territory of Russia, including Nariman Dzhelyalov, the First Deputy Head of the Mejlis of Crimean Tatar people, and to comply with the order of the International Court of Justice of 2017 to lift restrictions imposed on the Crimean Tatar community to conserve its representative institutions, including the ban on the Mejlis.

Ukraine calls on the Expert Mechanism to pay close attention and adequately react to these violations.

Ukraine remains open to cooperation with EMRIP aimed at its engagement in further strengthening Ukraine's Government efforts to further promote and protect the rights of indigenous peoples.

Thank you!