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**Item 9: Dialogue with Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Chair of the UNPFII, the Board of Trustees of the UN Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Peoples, and members of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the Human Rights Committee on UNDRIP implementation**

Armed conflicts and war often exacerbate the pre-existing patterns of discrimination against women and girls. This situation can worsen for those who have experienced multiple forms of discrimination, specifically indigenous women.

In Ukraine, Russia started its systematic repressive policies against the indigenous Crimean Tatar people immediately after occupying Crimea.

Many reports from reputable human rights NGOs and the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine evidence a continuous line of measures conducted by Russia in the occupied Crimea against indigenous peoples. Measures that aim to destroy the identity and the will of indigenous people in violation of all rights enshrined in the UNDRIP.

The persecution against indigenous Crimean Tatar people deteriorated recently after Russia started a full-scale war against Ukraine.

I'd like to bring your attention to the increasing number of cases of intimidation, pressure, and violence against indigenous women in Crimea and other parts of southern Ukraine occupied after the full-scale Russian invasion in February this year.

**On May 29** this year, in the occupied Crimea, Russian authorities arrested for five days Emine Avamileva – a human rights defender and attorney. Before the occupation, she was elected to the Mejlis – the highest representative body of the Crimean Tatar people that was prohibited and illegally labeled as extremist (Article 5) – the right to maintain and strengthen the distinct political and legal... institutions. The decision of the International Court of Justice demanded that Russia refrain from such activities and stop persecuting members of our self-governing institutions. But as you know, Russia did nothing to stop this grave violation and thousands of other abuses and war crimes committed against the Crimean Tatar people.

As a lawyer, Ms. Avamileva never refused to represent Crimean Tatar and Ukrainian civic activists and prisoners of conscience. She worked with vivid cases fabricated by Russian authorities as a part of political-based persecutions.

**Susanna Izmailova** is a well-known teacher of traditional Crimean Tatar dance in Henichesk – a city in southern Ukraine, Kherson region, occupied by Russia in February this year.

**On June 22** this year, occupational authorities searched the house of Ms. Izmailova as well as the home of her parents. On the same day, she was abducted by Russian forces. Until now, her whereabouts are unknown.

These two cases are illustrative and show us only the tip of the iceberg. When war is waged, hundreds or even thousands of human rights abuses are not reported for many reasons.

**We ask the EMRIP:**

- To advocate before governments and donors on supporting indigenous women's groups and networks to enhance their capacity in a wide range of humanitarian, human rights, and decision-making domains.
- Consider in their future work cases of violence against indigenous women from regions affected by war and armed conflicts, without excluding Eastern Europe and Ukraine.
- Advocate supporting initiatives led by indigenous women that aim to document conflict-related gender and sexual-based violence cases.
- Support programs aimed at empowering indigenous women as agents of their protection.
- Explore the ways of supporting the indigenous peoples and protecting their rights in a situation of war, military occupation, or international and other armed conflicts when IHL must be applied but ignored.

**To Russia:** Stop the war and aggression against Ukraine. Stop repressive policies against indigenous peoples in Russia and Ukraine's territories illegally occupied in the last eight years in violation of international law. Respect human rights. Respect the rights of indigenous women.