

**MEJLIS OF THE CRIMEAN TATAR PEOPLE
GAYANA YUKSEL
MEMBER OF THE MEJLIS OF THE CRIMEAN TATAR PEOPLE and
Indigenous Journalist of QHA (QIRIM HABER AJANSI)**

Dear Madam Chairman!

Rapporteur on indigenous Human rights

Dear members of the indigenous peoples' forum!
Brothers and sisters!

As a member of the self governing indigenous body, the Crimean Tatar Mejlis, continues to be occupied for the third year by the Russian Federation.

We call on this body to convey that the occupier needs to comply with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Crimea has become not only a peninsula of fear, it is also a place whereby articles of UNDRIP have been violated as we continue to live in involuntary isolation.

Article 3 Right to self determination, freedom of speech and freedom of association has been violated.

Just because indigenous Crimean Tatars in the Crimea are silent does not mean they have agreed to the so-called Referendum of March 16, 2014 to which the Venice Commission has not recognized as valid given the military presence and lack of democratic process.

And this is happening while we are acknowledging the 10 years of our declaration.

Indigenous Crimean Tatar, deputy chairman of the Mejlis Ahtem Chiyhoz has been imprisoned for more than two years and is accused of organizing a rally, which was a peaceful demonstration against the occupation in 2014.

Crimean Tatar Ruslan Zeytullaev was groundlessly sentenced to 12 years in prison on charges of extremism. He went on a hunger strike in order to have his voice heard.

Indigenous Human Rights defenders such as Emil Kurbedinov and Edem Samedlyayev are actively trying to defend the 23 plus indigenous Crimean Tatars who are imprisoned on false charges and are calling for increased transparency and freedom of speech –so that they can convey to the international community what is ACTUALLY occurring in occupied Crimea.

And, in conclusion,

We call to the attention of the Special Rapporteur-

the intermediate decision of the International Court of Justice in The Hague,

namely, to stop the pressure, the persecution and racial discrimination of the indigenous Crimean Tatars for Russia to comply with CERD, under paragraph 137 to 138 in its application

and,

to restore the activities of the indigenous representative body of the Crimean Tatar people to conserve its indigenous representative institutions.

Thank you Chair, please do not forget us in occupied Crimea.