

**Statement of the Delegation of Ukraine  
at the Working Session 4 “Ensuring equal enjoyment of rights and equal  
participation in political and public life” of  
2017 Human Dimension Implementation Meeting**

**Mr. Moderator,**

**Distinguished participants,**

Ukraine aligns itself with the statement of the European Union and in my national capacity I would like to attract attention of the HDIM participants over the negative developments with regard to rights and freedoms of persons, belonging to Ukrainian minority in the Russian Federation, which is one of the largest ethnic communities in this country.

According to the last census in 2010 there are about 2 mln of Ukrainians (4,3 mln in 1989) in the Russian Federation. The current estimations of the Russian authorities attest about 5 mln of Ukrainians who are living in Russia.

Targeted anti-Ukrainian policy in Russia is longstanding and it has growing scale. The ongoing pressure and incitement of hatred through state-owned media pose a serious threat to preserving and developing the national identity, cultural and linguistic needs of the Ukrainian community in Russia.

The most known and well-recognized Ukrainian global organizations – the Ukrainian World Congress and the Ukrainian World Coordinating Council – appeared at the “patriotic stop-list” of the “undesirable” organizations in Russia.

Ukrainians cannot realize their rights for national organizations according to the Russian legislation in power:

- the Federal National Cultural Autonomy of Ukrainians in Russia was dissolved in November 2011;
- the Association of Ukrainians of Russia was dissolved in May 2012;
- established by Ukrainian activists NGO "Ukrainian Congress of Russia" was twice refused to be registered by the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation however the new Federal National Cultural Autonomy of Ukrainians in Russia with no full representation of the regional entities was registered in 2012.

Ukrainians cannot realize their cultural, educational and information rights fully:

- millions of Russian Ukrainians has no any federal or regional mass media in Russia, they don't have any representation in the political life of the Russian Federation;
- children of Ukrainian origin have no opportunity to study in Ukrainian as their parents even don't know about such an opportunity for them and there is lack of prepared teachers and schools in Russia although Article 68 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation states that “the Russian Federation shall guarantee to all of its people the right to preserve their native language and the creation of the conditions for its study and development”;
- the only state-owned institution of Ukrainian culture "Library of Ukrainian Literature" in Moscow is closed.

Many Ukrainian local organizations in Russia and its activists are under pressure of the authorities.

- co-chairman of the regional NGO "Ukrainians of Moscow", the Moscow-resident Ukrainian citizen V.Girzhov was banned to entry to Russia;

- Russian police searched an apartment of the co-chairman of the Association of Ukrainians in Russia, representative of the Ukrainian World Congress Mr. Valery Semenenko in Moscow unfoundedly accusing him of disseminating "anti-Russian" materials. As a result, Mr Semenenko fled from the country.

- the leader of the Khabarovsk regional Ukrainian organization "Krynytsya" Natalia Romanenko for her pro-Ukrainian position is under the pressure of the local Prosecutor's Office and Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation. The representatives of the law-enforcement agencies also questioned the members of this cultural NGO trying to prove its extremist activities.

### **Distinguished colleagues,**

We condemn the deliberate anti-Ukrainian practices and discrimination by the Russian authorities against Ukrainian NGOs and activists. These actions pose a serious threat to preserving and developing the national identity, cultural and linguistic needs of the Ukrainian community in Russia.

We demand from the Russian authorities to immediately halt persecution of the Ukrainians and their institutions, including state-owned, which promote Ukrainian culture in the territory of the Russian Federation. Such steps would signal willingness to comply with international obligations on human rights and the rights of persons belonging to national minorities, including their cultural, educational and linguistic rights.

We encourage the OSCE and its institutions to give immediate attention to these worrying trends and assist the Russian Federation to fully comply with relevant OSCE commitments on national minorities.

**Thank you, Mr. Moderator.**