

Good day! My name is Valeriia Vershynina I present CF “Stabilization Support Services”. I was born in Donetsk and lived there until 2014. I, as 1,5 mln of my fellow citizens, lost my home, property, documents confirming my rights for the benefits ensured by legislation following the Russian aggression and occupation. Just imagine, that all population of Warsaw or the quarter in Belgium was forced to leave their homes. Their businesses were plundered. The state has to find the way to ensure their lives and reinstate their rights.

The Donetsk Regional State administration, as well as city administrative institutes and department of Pension Fund, were seized on April 6, 2014. About 1,5 mln of Ukrainian retirees lost their rightful payments following the military actions. Ukraine has lost the possibility to ensure pension rights of its citizens in the occupied territories.

The occupation regime seized establishments of heavy industry, mines, and other enterprises, plundered and exported them to Russia, thus deprived Ukraine of budgetary allocations necessary for the social protection of citizens, and the citizens themselves of the possibility to rely on either Ukrainian or Russian pensions. The basic human rights of those who stay in the occupation are being violated.

The only chance for a decent age is to leave the occupation and become an internally displaced person (IDP). The IDP certificate gives access to Ukrainian social payments and administrative services.

But the social security system for Ukrainian IDPs was developed in a hurry, in the conditions of an acute humanitarian crisis and did not take into account a number of important factors, namely the nature of displacement, risks, enforcement problems, security measures - partly justified, partly excessive. The state finds it rather difficult to implement the obligations and provide benefits envisaged by Ukrainian legislation in reducing budget allocations. In addition, a number of the Ukrainian and international non-governmental organizations work to overcome legislative collisions, which affect the situation.

Particularly, the most common complaints of internally displaced retirees are that they are monitored and checked monthly by the state authorities, which often ends up with illegally suspension of social payments and pensions. They have to report regularly on their whereabouts and use only one bank.

The draft law 6692 has been registered in the parliament for a year already. It is intended to correct the current situation. If it is adopted, retirees will be able to issue their pensions in Ukraine without IDP certificate. Also, the restriction on unclaimed pension will be lifted. We call the Ukrainian State representatives to support the draft law 6692, and thus to unlock the possibility for conflict-affected retirees to receive their pensions.

We call the representatives of the Russian Federation to liberate immediately the territory of Ukraine from their troops, as well as the economic and tactical support of the armed forces established in the east of Ukraine.

Occupation administrations under the Russian Federation ensure the provisions for civilians and especially retirees affected by the occupation, and they return to the legal field of Ukraine.

We urge the OSCE participating States to call the parties to reinstate the rights of the affected population, identify mechanisms to reinstate social and economic ties, such as pension payments, and to restore taxation within the legal field of Ukraine.