

***Protesting against violation of human rights
schools will begin to strike in Ukraine***

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

Nowadays it is much talked about violation of human rights in Iran and Afghanistan, Iraq or on Caucasus. The prisoners of Guantanamo on the pages of press already grew into the «prisoners of Castle If». And in the countries of the developed democracy is actively discussing the problem of unisexual marriages and right for homosexual pair on adoption.

In such time in the centre of Europe remains without the proper estimation daily discrimination more than 17 million people. The question is about Ukraine, country with a population in 45 millions of persons.

More than 30 million Ukrainians (60% population) use Russian every day, and for 17 millions from them he is native. But present Ukrainian authorities in contempt of all democratic principles and norms of international and internal legislation deprive these people right to use the mother tongue in public life. Legal standards of Universal Declaration of Human Rights, European Charter of Regional or Minority Languages, European Convention on Human Rights, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and other legislation rudely ignored in Ukraine by adopting contradictive delegated legislation and impossibility to litigate it in courts. Thus not only the Russian-language citizens of Ukraine but also representatives Hungarian, Romanian and other communities suffer from this policy. It is shown in the thousands of complaints and appeals testify not only in the public and judicial organs of Ukraine, but, also, in UNO, Council of Europe, OSCE.

Article 10 of the Ukrainian Constitution, declares the Ukrainian shall be the State language. At once in the same article the state undertook an obligation to provide «free development, use and defence» of Russian and other languages of national minorities. And article 3 of the Ukrainian Constitution declares that to “affirm and ensure human rights and freedoms is the main duty of the State”.

Under the Resolution of the Constitutional Court of Ukraine No. 10-пн, dated 14 December 1999, which is final and cannot be revised, the sphere of use of national minority languages was groundlessly narrowed, only to the possibility of use, but not the guarantee. Moreover, the legislative mechanisms are completely absent allowing to use unofficial languages.

In the sphere of television and radio broadcasting there were introduced factitious restrictions for TV and radio broadcasting companies (irrespective of their form of ownership and regional viewer) with the requirement of 75% - 100% of broadcasting in the Ukrainian language.

Film distribution without Ukrainian dubbing is prohibited.

All information in the transport sphere of Ukraine — on railway, automobile, air and other types of transport is distributed exclusively in the Ukrainian language.

Since 1 September 2005 the Ukrainian proceedings (administrative and civil) are carried out exclusively in the state language, thereby the constitution principles of equality of citizen before the law, access to court proceedings and the principle of competition in courts are being destroyed. A person cannot lodge a claim or other judicial documents in regional or minority languages. Regional or minority languages are actually outside the law in the Ukrainian court proceedings.

All state administration and laws is conducted in Ukrainian language. The advertising and instructions medical preparations goes out to it also.

In the field of science and education of politician of Ukraine directed on the intensive ousting of other languages, especially Russian, from an educational and scientific process and substitution them by exceptionally Ukrainian. In 1989 – 1990 academic year in the Ukraine there were 4,633 schools where the Russian language was the only language of teaching. But now there are less then 1,5 thousands of such schools in Ukraine. Since 1990 the number of schools with the Russian language of teaching reduced by 3,000 in favour of Ukrainian and mixed type schools, i.e. reduction made up 65%. Thus the amount of students in them diminished in 7 times – to 480 thousands. Every year about 130 schools lose its status as schools with Russian language of teaching. In many regions of Ukraine the minorities whose representatives made up hundreds of thousands do not have their own educational institutions and are deprived of the fundamental language rights.

On December, 25-th, 2007 a Minister for Education and Science of Ukraine signed an Order №1171 about the external testing of persons interested to enter Higher education (institutes, universities, academies) which obliged to conduct testing exceptional in Ukrainian language, and for the students taught in other languages – to give out short dictionaries! Where is equal possibilities for all scholars? One of them take tests in native language and language and teaching, others – in foreign language, and language which they studied only.

On May, 26-th, 2008 by Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine was published additional Order №461, obligating Russian-language and other schools with teaching in unofficial languages, to change teaching of basic disciplines - mathematicians, physicists, histories, literatures - at first in a bilingual format (on 2009-2010), and then - only on Ukrainian.

In higher educational establishments students are taught in Ukrainian, non-regarding regional characteristics and duty of the State to ensure the functioning of non-state or minority languages in education.

Mentioned acts of the Ministry of Education not only destroyed any sense of teaching in the mother tongue in the schools of national minorities of Ukraine, but actually force students to abandon their native language. Russian-speaking citizens of Ukraine - the indigenous inhabitants and founders of the State are on the verge of losing a generation and the enormous reservoir of Russian culture in Ukraine. After all, according to the newest researches teaching in a foreign language affects child's mental capacity at 25-60%.

Each language has its advantages, and linguistic diversity of Ukraine - is the source of its wealth and vitality. Channel of unity of the Ukrainian people can be found in a variety of languages, and attempts to create a one-language state will for sure be accompanied by a high level of discontent and civil unrest.

During the voting for Ukraine's independence in a referendum in 1991 and the adoption of the Constitution of Ukraine in 1996, Russian-speaking Ukrainians believed that their language is protected, despite the choice of the Ukrainian language as the state one. In other words, normalization of the Ukrainian language was expectative, but Russian-speaking Ukrainians unexpected de-normalization of the Russian language (Ukrainian Constitution does not allow this also).

While the work was carried out over the Basic Law of the country, Ukraine adopted and ratified the set of binding international treaties and conventions on the protection of minority rights, also international law was implemented in the Ukrainian legislation. Taking into consideration this level of legal protection, Russian-speaking Ukrainians considered their language rights had been protected.

But governors cruelly deceived them, placed over the brink of survival.

In fact, now we are witnessing how the Russian, Hungarian, Romanian and other languages and human rights are systematically attacked. All that can be named as "the policy of ethnocide", defined by UNESCO as any action directed to deprive the ethnic characteristics or identity, any form of national assimilation or integration, forced to move to other people's lifestyles and all the propaganda against the indigenous peoples.

And despite the fact that the State has the obligation to its citizens concerning the language. And a primary duty of the state regarding the language - is respect of language choice.

Accordingly, the September 26, 2009 Ukrainian nongovernmental organization "Human Rights Public Movement "Russian Ukraine", during its congress signed a cooperation agreement with more than 90 Russian speaking Ukrainians organizations and representatives of national minorities in Ukraine, and adopted a resolution "On the support of strikes and strike committees of students, parents and teachers of Russian schools and national minorities schools". The purpose of the strike - using the methods of public opinion expression guaranteed under the law: movements, pickets, collecting signatures, parades - to force the Ukrainian authorities to execute the Ukrainian legislation and adopted international obligations in the sphere of language regulation.

**The People's Deputy of Ukraine,
Head of the All-Ukrainian Nongovernmental Organization
“Human Rights Public Movement
“Russian Speaking Ukrainians”
Vadym Kolesnichenko**