

Working session 11: Humanitarian issues and other commitments

Illegal deportation of Ukrainian citizens from Crimea by Russian Federation

In Crimea, which was occupied by the Russian Federation, there is a number of social groups that are being deliberately and forcibly moved to the territory of the Russian Federation, in violation of Article 49 of the Geneva Convention.

This applies even to citizens of Ukraine who are being imprisoned by the verdicts of Ukrainian authorities. According to the Regional Human Rights Centre, since the beginning of the occupation, no less than 4,700 people have been taken from Crimea to the territory of the Russian Federation. The Regional Human Rights Centre recorded at least 6 deaths in the colonies of the Russian Federation due to the lack of necessary medical care for Ukrainian citizens. A few more people are now on the verge of life and death. According to reports from prisoners from the correctional facility № 1 which is located in the Republic of Adygea, from 2 to 3 people die there each week.

The Crimean citizens which were deprived of freedom, refuse to go to places of imprisonment in Russia, insisting on their Ukrainian citizenship. Two prisoners in Crimea, sentenced by a Ukrainian court, in April 2017, declared a dry hunger strike, protesting against the fact of forcing them to the Russian citizenship and moving them to the prisons in the Russian Federation. Their demands were ignored and one of them cut his veins during an attempt to convoy him. He was taken to the Russian Federation in a week, directly from the hospital, without medical support.

The detainees, who have already been taken out of Crimea, report that they experience pressure from the side of the management of places of detention and employees of the FSS of the Russian Federation to recognize themselves as citizens of the Russian Federation. They are held for months in isolation ward, do not receive medical assistance, they are not allowed to meet with representatives of the Consulate of Ukraine in Russia.

In addition, Ukrainian citizens are involved into the physical labour. Andrei Kolomiets reported that he works in the Russian colony without holidays for 14 hours a day. For the first month of such work, he received 20 packs of cigarettes. The Russian authorities imprisoned him for 10 years for taking part in protests in the Ukrainian capital Kiev.

The Russian authorities ignore the appeals regarding the opportunity to serve their sentence in their homeland for citizens of Ukraine. The only positive step was the transfer of twelve prisoners to the Ukrainian authorities.

These actions are a brutally violation of Art. 49 of the Geneva Convention

For more than three years, Ukraine has not been able to obtain information from the Russian Federation on the fate of more than 4,000 orphans who were in orphanages in Crimea at the time of the occupation. It is known that in October 2014 several children were taken from Crimea and moved to the families of Russian citizens in the framework of the Train of Hope project. However, the Russian authorities refuse to give Ukraine any information about the fate of moved children and those who remained in Crimea.

Forced deportations from the territory of the peninsula are being also related to the residents of Crimea who did not receive Russian citizenship. A vivid example is the case of Nedim Khalilov. This

Crimean Tatar, who lived in Crimea since 1986. He did not receive the passport of Ukraine and had only the passport of the USSR and at the time of the occupation of Crimea was a stateless person. In November 2016, the authorities of the Russian Federation forcibly moved Khalilov from Crimea and still keep him in a filtration centre in the Krasnodar region of the Russian Federation for more than 10 months.

The Crimean human rights group demands from the authorities of the Russian Federation to stop the practice of moving of Ukrainian citizens and persons who, in accordance with the laws of Ukraine, had the right to be in Crimea at the time of the occupation from the occupied territory of Ukraine. We insist upon transfer of all Ukrainian citizens already deported from Crimea to the Russian Federation to the Ukrainian authorities.

The Crimean Human Rights Group