Thursday, 22 September 2016, 08:15 Side Event: "Donbas: Surviving Hell" – Documentary evidence of torture, gender-conditioned violence and extrajudicial executions - Irina Dovgan's speech

(English text below)

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## SPEECH DOVGAN IRINA

Hello. My name is Irina Dovgan, i am a resident of a small town near Donetsk. Prior to the events occurred, I had a private beauty salon and worked as a beautician.

When in my town was started Russian propaganda on how well healed Donbas, if Russia will come here, I actively explain to the people that you need to build a happy life in their own country, not to invite to this neighboring country. But adverse events developed rapidly in the city there were people in camouflage uniforms and with weapons. It was dangerous to express their opinion, this has led to arrests or violence. Donetsk filled with armed men, were checkpoints that separate the city from the free territory. It became dangerous to gather or organize something. I was waiting when the Ukrainian army will come to the city and really wanted to accelerate the release. Leaving on a free area in the direction of Slavyansk, I stopped at the site of the Ukrainian Armed Forces deployment and communicated, saw the disastrous state of the Ukrainian military.

Returning home, I resolutely took up the collection of all necessary for the Ukrainian army. Soon joined me and other women friends, with a large number of which I have communicated in the nature of their activities. We drove to the Ukrainian military blankets, sheets, shirts, cooked soup, fried pancakes almost every day. A lot of people passed me money, I began to buy medicines, hygiene products, cigarettes. The last trip we were able to get from Kiev volunteers some camouflage uniforms and pass it to the soldiers. Returning from a recent trip, I came under serious fire in my yard hit by a shell, the house was seriously damaged. The city was stuck with a huge number of armed men, dug trenches, installed artillery. It was very scary. A colleague of my husband was about to go to Mariupol, where were my husband and daughter. There, they took care of the sick father, and I have decided to pass my tablet with some notes and photos from the danger zone. This person was stopped at a roadblock by the so-called representatives of the Donetsk People's Republic, beaten, and he, to save himself, gave away my things and told them that I was helping the army. It was near to 10 armed men arrived to arrest me by two cars. They broke into the house, beat me, forced to tell them the safe code, from which all taken away, searched the house, immediately took all the computers, valuables, jewelry. None of them did not explain how the same law I violated and they arrested me. Later, they found two binoculars owned by my husband and I immediately called me the fire spotter and took in handcuffs to Donetsk. Neither the police nor the prosecutor, nor to any more bodies, I refer to no avail. No legal protection does not exist there.

In Donetsk, on the basis of Vostok battalion I was interrogated, beaten, demanded to call addresses of the people who helped the Ukrainian army with me. I told that do not know their names or addresses. Then I was taken for questioning people oriental appearance that spoke in Russian with a heavy accent. They were very cruel and ruthless. They fired a pistol at the ear, I was stripped, threatened with rape, beaten with rifle butts on the legs and thighs. I told them the amount of its contribution in the bank PIN-codes of my cards, and more. When it became clear that I don't know nothing else, I was taken to the Donetsk area, set in the post with a sign around my neck: "accomplice punitive, she kills children." I was beaten by passers-by, drove a jeep with the words "Allah Akbar" armed men with a pronounced Russian accent. This horror was when I saw the man in white shirt took a picture of me, as it turned out - a foreign journalist. This saved my life/ A little later, I was returned to the battalion Vostok base. There I was placed into a narrow chamber filled with armed men in the room. I was occasionally kicked, mocked, I sprayed the gas spray in the face. In this room, I've seen many other arrested people were beaten and taken away in the other chambers. In such circumstances, I was still almost three days until I was freed foreign journalists who were able to negotiate with the so-called head of the republic. All five days I did not eat and hardly drink. On the

erritory of the so-called DNR - there is no law and any legal protection against arbitrariness of people vith guns. That is why people in the territory are living in an atmosphere of total fear and terror.	