



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Permanent Council No. 1221 Vienna, 28 March 2019

EU Statement on the current issue raised by the Delegation of Ukraine “On political prosecution of Pavlo Hryb and other Ukrainian citizens illegally detained by Russia”

The EU is deeply concerned about last week’s sentencing of Pavlo Hryb by a Russian military court in Rostov-on-Don to six years imprisonment on the grounds of “promoting terrorism” without any substantiated charges. Mr. Hryb is a 20-year old Ukrainian citizen who suffers from a disabling and serious medical condition. He was abducted from Belarus by the Russian Federal Security Service in August 2017. Since then he has been illegally detained in Russia and his health condition continues to worsen. The European Union expects Mr. Hryb to be immediately released and granted access to the special medical treatment he needs. For so long as he remains in detention, Ukrainian doctors must be allowed to see him as required by a ruling from the European Court of Human Rights.

The EU also reiterates its call on Russia to release unconditionally and without further delay the Ukrainian crewmembers and their vessels and equipment illegally captured in the Kerch Strait last year. Pending their release, Russia should respect their rights to legal representation and access by consular authorities, and provide the injured crewmen with appropriate medical treatment.

Over 70 other Ukrainian political prisoners are illegally detained in Crimea and the Russian Federation. The EU reiterates its call for the immediate release of Oleg Sentsov, Edem Bekirov, Oleksandr Kolchenko, Volodymyr Balukh, Emir-Usein Kuku

and all those who have been detained in the Crimean peninsula and sentenced in breach of international law. Journalists, human rights defenders and defence lawyers should be able to work independently and without undue interference and intimidation. We remain gravely concerned about the dire human rights situation on the illegally annexed Crimean peninsula. The EU calls for full compliance with international human rights standards in the peninsula. All pending cases of human rights violations and abuses, such as enforced disappearances, torture and killings, violence, politically motivated prosecutions, discrimination and harassment should be thoroughly investigated. It is crucial that the regional and international human rights monitoring mechanisms as well as the non-governmental human rights organizations have unimpeded access to illegally annexed Crimea and Sevastopol and we call on Russia to stop restricting this access.

The Candidate Countries NORTH MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO*, and ALBANIA*, and the EFTA countries ICELAND and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA and ANDORRA align themselves with this statement.

* North Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.