

**Statement of the Delegation of Ukraine
at the Working Session 10 “Tolerance and non-discrimination I, including: rights of
persons belonging to national minorities, Roma and Sinti issues, including
implementation of the OSCE Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and
Sinti; preventing aggressive nationalism, racism and chauvinism” of
2017 Human Dimension Implementation Meeting**

Mr. Moderator,

We feel sorry that HDIM was misused today to legitimize actions, marked with flagrant violations of the OSCE founding principles, in particular those of respect to the sovereignty and territorial integrity and the inviolability of frontiers. It must be prevented in future.

It must be recalled that according to international law and OSCE founding principles, there is no such regional entities in Russia – the Republic of Crimea and city of Sevastopol. Meanwhile, there are two Ukrainian regions, which have been illegally occupied by Russia since 2014.

We condemn the provocative attempts by the Russian Federation to use the HDIM for legitimization of the illegal occupation of Ukraine’s Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol by bringing here the representatives affiliated with the Russian occupying administration of the peninsula under cover of representatives of the civil society.

Addressing the attempts of the Russian delegation and its GoNGOs from occupied Ukrainian territories we would like to reiterate that violations of the rights of minorities in Crimea were documented by ODIHR/HCNM Human Rights Assessment Mission on Crimea and UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission to Ukraine.

Moreover, in the proceedings on the case concerning Application of the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism and of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (Ukraine v. Russian Federation) the International Court of Justice adopted the provisional measures instructing Russia to “refrain from maintaining or imposing limitations on the ability of the Crimean Tatar community to converse its representative institutions, including the Mejlis” and “to ensure the availability of education in the Ukrainian language”.

Distinguished participants,

As a country with representatives of more than 130 nationalities and different religious backgrounds living in its territory, Ukraine attaches great importance to the promotion of tolerance, mutual respect and understanding within the Ukrainian society.

Ukrainian government continues its politics, oriented on support of the fruitful and effective cooperation with different organizations of the national minorities.

This spring the special Expert Council in a sphere of ethno-politics has been established and it has had several meetings so far.

At the same time with the same affiliation, with the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine, another advice body has been created – the Council of ethnic-national organizations of Ukraine, which unites all seven leaders of the existing umbrella organizations of the national minorities.

The main task of both Councils is producing of the effective recommendations as well as fruitful consulting in a sphere of implementing the state politics in the corresponding dimension.

Distinguished participants,

Government of Ukraine pays the special attention to a subject of Roma integration into the Ukrainian society. The special focus on Roma, and Sinti women, youth and girls is done as a contribution to the implementation of the Kyiv Ministerial Council Declaration, which has a particular accent on these vulnerable groups.

After many years of discussion last November the Inter-Ministerial Working Group for implementation the Roma Strategy had its first meeting. The Working Group unites representatives of 13 central state governmental bodies as well as all 25th the regional ones. As a result, 5 sub-working groups, oriented on the practical work in the concrete directions, have been created. They are working in the following spheres: culture and education; housing; social service and health care; legislation and legal protection; organizational questions and media.

Also with the support of the International Renaissance Foundation the special structure, a Secretariat, for solving any practical aspects of the activity of the Inter-Ministerial Working Group was founded several months ago.

Human rights violations and crimes committed by the pro-Russian armed extremists in the eastern regions of Ukraine against Ukrainian citizens of various ethnicities, including the members of Roma minority, as well as provocations in other regions, constitute a direct threat to security of the population, full exercise of their rights, instigate the overall rise of violent sentiments.

Such violations are clearly reflected in the independent findings of the OSCE ODIHR/HCNM Human Rights Assessment Mission to Ukraine, as well as the reports of UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission to Ukraine.

The Russian support for armed extremists undermines a wide range of the OSCE principles and commitments, including those related to the Human Dimension of security.

The Government of Ukraine strongly condemns all attacks on the persons belonging to national minorities, including Roma. The competent Ukrainian authorities undertake necessary measures to ensure comprehensive investigation of the cases of violence against Roma to bring perpetrators to justice.

Distinguished participants,

Concerning the comments on the new Law of Education we would like to emphasize that it hasn't entered into force yet as it was not signed by the President of Ukraine. The only aim of this reform, in the dimension that concerns the national minorities, is to create better circumstances for integration of the younger generation into the Ukrainian society, using the mechanism of adding more state language lessons into the school curriculum.

Last Friday Minister of Education and Science of Ukraine provided the Ambassadors of concern countries with the background information on its adoption.

We would like to emphasize that Article 7 of this Law, regulating the language of education, has been drafted in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution of Ukraine and the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages ratified by Ukraine.

I thank you, Mr.Moderator.