

## HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL - 50th SESSION

### Interactive dialogue on the oral update of the High Commissioner on the situation of human rights in Ukraine (HRC res. 47/22) and the interim report of Secretary-General on the situation of human rights in Crimea (GA res. 76/179)

05 July 2022

In her opening remarks, **Ms. Michelle Bachelet, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights**, condemned the high numbers of civilian casualties and the extent of destruction caused to civilian infrastructure by attacks conducted by Russian armed forces that are not complying with IHL. Also, that the Ukrainian armed forces did not fully comply with IHL in eastern parts of the country on a smaller scale. She mentioned that the findings of her report are based on information gathered by the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine during 11 field visits, visits to 3 places of detention, and 517 interviews with victims and witnesses of human rights violations, as well as other sources of information. She also expressed she still needs to be provided with access to territory occupied by Russian armed forces, and will continue to record all violations from all parties.

She also expressed concern over the placement of military objectives near civilian objects and the use of human shields by both parties to the conflict. The mass displacement of the civilian population has had a disproportionate impact on women, children, older persons and persons with disabilities. Concerns persist about unlawful killings, including summary executions by the Russian armed forces and some documented enforced disappearances by Ukrainian law enforcement bodies. Cases of torture and ill-treatment by both parties continue. The HC also remains concerned for people, among them Mariupol residents, who have not passed the so-called 'filtration' process by Russian armed forces in evacuations and for conflict-related sexual violence, including cases of rape, gang rape, torture, forced public stripping, and threats of sexual violence. Freedom of expression has also drastically deteriorated.

Regarding the human rights situation in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine, new legislation is curtailing the already limited space to express dissenting opinions. The HC called for independent, impartial and effective investigation of all allegations of torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, enforced disappearance, arbitrary arrest and detention. Finally, she called upon all the parties to ensure full compliance with their obligations under international human rights and international humanitarian law and commit to protecting every civilian. She further encouraged the international community to help support those actors working with survivors of sexual violence, torture or ill-treatment, particularly in smaller towns and rural areas. She stressed the need for both parties to ensure timely and effective investigations into all allegations of violations.

**Ukraine (Country concerned):** The Russian forces continue to destroy millions of homes and displace civilians. The epicentre of hostilities has turned to the Eastern and Southern regions. Mariupol, cities in Donbas and many others are destroyed by Russian machinery every day. Kiev and Odessa are under constant threat of missile attacks. Russia's attacks claim the lives of innocent children as well as destroy civilians' infrastructures. The attack on the shopping mall that killed civilians has no military justification and should be considered as a terrorist attack. The country urged international human rights mechanisms to provide assessments of Russian crimes. In addition, it condemned the massive kidnapping of civilians and the intimidation of activists, human rights defenders and journalists. Crimea has been turned into a lab of systemic violations of human rights Russia. Justice can only be restored through accountability. Finally, it expressed concern over the food security crisis, which could lead to starvation in Africa and Asia.

**Russian Federation (Country concerned):** The country decided to make its statement in the context of the Interactive Dialogue.

### Interactive dialogue

The majority of states and state's organisations, including, **Lithuania (On behalf of the Nordic Baltic Countries), the EU (On behalf of 54 countries), Japan, the US, Australia, Montenegro, Georgia, Rumania and Albania** denounced **Russia's** illegal attack against Ukraine as well as the arbitrary detentions, instances of torture and ill-treatment, forced relocation, placement in filtration camps and persecution of Crimean Tatars. They urged Russia to grant international and regional human rights monitoring mechanisms unimpeded access to Crimea and conflict areas in Ukraine. In addition, they urged Russia to ensure an impartial investigation of all allegations of human rights violations and abuses. They reiterated their support for the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and independence of Ukraine. They also condemned Russia's disruption of supply chains, of pushing food prices higher, and the intimidation and restrictions against journalists, human rights defenders and defence lawyers. They also expressed concern about how the crisis is affecting in particular women, girls, children, older persons and persons in vulnerable situations. Regarding the Crimean Tatars, they remain concerned that they continue to be persecuted, arbitrarily arrested and detained. Countries also condemned the widespread disinformation campaigns carried out by Russia.

The **Russian Federation** mentioned that a disinformation campaign against the country is being carried out. The Kyiv regime has been replicating lies, manipulating public opinion, including to justify the use of weapons against civilians in the DPR and LPR. The HC's report is covering up the crimes of the Kyiv regime and how the Ukrainian armed forces are destroying religious facilities. The country condemned the massive shelling of residential areas and civilian facilities in the DPR and LPR on a daily basis using heavy weapons, including those supplied by **NATO countries**. **Belarus** expressed that the conflict is the consequence of years of **NATO countries** ignoring the legitimate interests of other states and refusing to engage in dialogue on sensitive regional security issues. The reason for it was Kiev's rejection of the Minsk agreements and discrimination against the Russian-speaking population of Donbas.

**The Syrian Arab Republic, Nicaragua and Venezuela** argued that Agenda Item 10 should not be politicized to discuss such issues. The HC should commit to its mandate by refraining from selectivity, double standards, non-interference in country's internal affairs and politicization. Rather, constructive dialogue and genuine dialogue should be promoted.

**The majority of NGOs** expressed concern over Russia's attacks on freedom of religion/belief and freedom of expression in Crimea. Religious minorities have been labelled "extremist," "terrorist," or "undesirable." In addition, they condemned the Russian military who continue sexual assault practices in Ukraine. They also remain concern about Russian violations against Ukrainian prisoners of war, who are deprived of any contact with their relatives and others in the outside world. In Kharkiv, Ukraine and other cities, Russia has been committing indiscriminate attacks against civilians, bombing houses, hospitals and schools. They also condemned cases of extrajudicial killings, torture, ill-treatment and enforced disappearances of civilians by Russian armed forces. Another NGO reported that the Roma, one of the most vulnerable communities in Ukraine, are being displaced and attacked. Women and children have been disproportionately affected, with millions of displaced women and children, and a high number of reported rapes. Another NGO also expressed concern over the right to conscientious objection to military service. This right should be protected by both parties and cannot be restricted as highlighted by the quadrennial analytical thematic report by OHCHR.

Other observers such as the **Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights**, expressed concern over Russia's use of Crimea as a hub for forced deportation. Crimeans continue to be prosecuted on political and religious grounds. Russia continues to transfer weapons and troops to the peninsula, as well as conducts hidden mobilization there, including for women. Russia also uses Crimea as a military base to carry out missile strikes.

Delegations that took the floor during the Interactive Dialogue (44 country delegations):

*Lithuania (on behalf of the Nordic-Baltic countries), European Union, European Union (on behalf of a group of countries), Slovenia, Sovereign Order of Malta, Estonia, Lithuania, Japan, Switzerland, Iceland, Spain, Germany, France, Czech Republic, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Russian Federation, Belgium, Australia, Latvia, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Denmark, Portugal, Albania, Turkey, Belarus, Georgia, Finland, Croatia, Austria, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Ireland, Bulgaria, Romania, Slovakia, Poland, Netherlands, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Timor-Leste, Nicaragua, United States of America.*

NHRIs and NGOs that took the floor (11):

*UN Women, Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights, International Fellowship of Reconciliation (Joint Statement), DIGNITY - Danish Institute Against Torture, Minority Rights Group, European Union of Jewish Students, Catholic International Education Office, Human Rights House Foundation, World Federation of Ukrainian Women's Organizations, World Organisation Against Torture, Baptist World Alliance Center for Global Nonkilling.*

To watch full meeting refer to [UN Web TV](#):