



CONCEPT NOTE

UN SECURITY COUNCIL ARRIA FORMULA MEETING **FOLLOW-UP TO THE ARRIA FORMULA DISCUSSION** **OF MARCH 12, 2021 ON THE SITUATION IN CRIMEA**

Date: 17 March 2021

Time: 10.00am – 1.00pm

Venue: VTC (link to be shared in due course)

Participation: The Arria meeting is open for all New-York based representatives of the UN Member States at the level of Permanent Representatives, Deputy Permanent Representatives and experts, as well as the press.

The meeting will be webcasted, recorded and available to the media

Program:

Opening remarks:

- **Mr. Vassily Nebenzia**, Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations

Panel presentations:

- **Mr. Chingiz Yaqubov**, Chancellor (rector) of the Crimean Engineering and Pedagogic University (CEPU);
- **CEPU students**;
- **Ms. Anastasia Gridchina**, Head of the Ukrainian Community of Crimea;
- **Mr. Roman Chegrinets**, the Head of the Crimean regional national-cultural autonomy “Belarusians of Crimea”;
- **Ms. Ludmila Radeva**, Vice Chair of the regional Bulgarian national-cultural autonomy of Crimea “Paisius of Helindar”;
- **Ms. Vera Pautova**, Head of educational Center for Children and Youth creativity.

Discussion:

- Statements by the UN Security Council members and other UN Member States as time permits, Q&A. Interventions are suggested to be limited to 5 minutes.

Closing remarks:

- **Mr. Vassily Nebenzia**, Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations.

Objective:

The Arria Formula meeting is organized in order to allow participants and all those interested to get access to the genuinely first-hand information on the situation in Crimea from the actual inhabitants of the Peninsula.

The organizers of the politicized discussion of March 12, 2021 failed not only to provide in the Concept Note for the event the actual background of the situation, but also from the outset rejected the idea of participation of the representatives of the multinational population of Crimea residing there, who would have provided their views on the realities on the ground. It would have been valuable, as an objective picture of what is happening in Crimea can only be seen if its actual residents are part of the conversation.

Instead, the initiators of March 12 Arria in their Concept Note focused solely on the promotion of non-consensual documents of the General Assembly with a distorted picture of the situation on the ground. Such a blatant misrepresentation of the reality is obvious to the majority of the UN Member States who either vote against, abstain or opt not to express their views on the politicized decisions, pushed by Ukraine and its allies in the General Assembly.

In order to bring to the attention of the Members of the Council a comprehensive information, the Arria meeting will provide an opportunity to listen and get the real picture of the situation on the ground from the Crimean youth – students of the Crimean Engineering and Pedagogic University, as well as its Chancellor/Rector, Mr.Chingiz Yaqubov and a number of invitees, including from national minorities groups.

Background:

March 18, 2021 marks the seventh anniversary of the reunification of Crimea with Russia, following the rejection of the outcomes of the *coup d'état* in Kiev by the population of the Peninsula and subsequent referendum organized by the local authorities in response to public demand. On that very date in 2014 a treaty was signed between the

Russian Federation and Crimea on the accession of the Republic of Crimea to the Russian Federation.

Back then, Crimeans turned to Russia with an appeal to accept the Peninsula into the Russian Federation and Russia adhered to this request of the people. The reasons for such an appeal were obvious. After the *coup d'état* in February 2014 in Kiev, inhabitants of several regions of eastern Ukraine expressed their disapproval of the unlawful actions of the then Ukrainian Maidan leaders. Authorities of the Crimean peninsula, based on public demand and appeal, held a plebiscite in compliance with international law and democratic procedure.

The results of the referendum were unequivocal – out of more than 82 per cent of voters participated in the voting, more than 96 per cent pronounced in favour of reunification with Russia. This figure became the genuine expression of the free will of the people. Through this referendum the people of Crimea exercised their right to self-determination that is enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and in a number of fundamental international legal documents.

Today's Crimea enjoys the benefits of a peaceful and prosperous life. One can rejoice this, especially against the backdrop of the Kiev-led full-fledged military operation of the Ukrainian Armed forces in Donbass against its own citizens who have also rejected the 2014 *coup d'état*.

All of the Peninsula population groups enjoy the rights and freedoms of the Russian citizens. Assistance from the Federal level and the efforts of the local authorities allowed to significantly improve socio-economic situation and to reduce the negative impact of the longstanding water-supply blockade from Ukraine, introduced contrary to basic humanitarian principles. Russian law enforcement system and the Armed Forces, located within the sovereign territory of the country, guarantee inhabitants' safety and security, effectively countering challenges inspired from the outside of the Peninsula. In fact, the Peninsula has become one of the fastest developing regions of the country.

From the day of its reunification with Russia Crimea have remained an open region for all those who respect the right of Crimeans for self-determination, enshrined in the UN Charter. This is proven by tens of millions of tourists from all over the world, including from Ukraine, who have visited the Peninsula over the last seven years, refuting all the insinuations that international representatives allegedly can not visit Crimea.