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Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the United Nations

CONCEPT NOTE

UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL ARRIA-FORMULA MEETING **Human Rights Situation in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine**

Organized by the Permanent Missions of Belgium, Estonia, France, Germany, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States to the UN in partnership with the Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the UN.

Date: 6 March 2020

Time: 10.00am – 12.00pm

Location: Trusteeship Council chamber, UNHQ, New York.

Participation: The Arria-meeting is open for all UN member states, Permanent Observers, Non-governmental Organisations and the press. The interpretation will be available in all official languages of the United Nations.

The Arria Meeting will be webcasted at webtv.un.org

Program:

Welcoming remarks:

- **Mr. Paul Teesalu**, Deputy Foreign Minister of Estonia

Panel presentations:

- **Mr. Anton Korynevych**, Permanent Representative of the President of Ukraine in Crimea
- **Mr. Refat Çubarov**, Chairman of the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar People
- **Ms. Olga Skrypnik**, Head of the Crimean Human Rights Group

Discussion:

- Statements by UN Security Council members and other UN member states and Permanent Observers as time permits, Q&A. In order to allow as many interventions as possible, organizers suggest to limit the interventions up to 5 minutes.

Closing remarks:

- **Ambassador Christoph Heusgen**, Permanent Representative of Germany to the UN.
- **Ms. Anne Gueguen**, Deputy Permanent Representative of France to the UN.

Objective:

This Arria meeting will mark six years since the temporary occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea. It will provide an opportunity to hear first-hand accounts and expert assessments on the human rights situation in Crimea. It will also present an opportunity to discuss how the international

community, including the Secretary-General, the UNSC, other UN bodies, international organizations and civil society can assist in addressing human rights violations, and in seeking a political solution to the conflict. It is also a call on the international community to continue to take a principled stand in the face of Russia's ongoing and systematic violation of international law in Crimea as well as in Eastern Ukraine.

The participants are encouraged to discuss the following questions:

- How can we ensure accountability for the cases of human rights violations in Crimea?
- What could be done to achieve international, independent human rights monitoring in Crimea?
- How to better support the victims of human rights violations in Crimea, in particular Crimean Tatars, and persons belonging to other minorities and activists as well as human rights defenders?
- What could be done to support the freedoms of opinion and expression in Crimea, online and offline, including for media outlets and journalists?

Background:

Six years since Russia's military operation against Ukraine, which led to the temporary occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, the human rights situation in the peninsula continues to deteriorate.

Since 2014 Russia continues to violate Ukraine's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity. The norms of international law, the UN Charter as well as a number of bilateral and multilateral agreements and commitments, including the Helsinki Final Act and the Budapest Memorandum have been breached. This has consequently led to grave violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine.

Because Crimea has remained closed to any form of international control or monitoring, the OHCHR has not been able to conduct a mission in the peninsula. Furthermore, OHCHR has not been provided with the information they requested from the Russian Federation. From the most recent report of the Secretary-General on Crimea, it is clear, that international human rights law continues to be violated, with respect to civil, political, economic, social, cultural and religious rights. Violations are mostly targeted towards Ukrainian activists and Crimean Tatars, but also towards persons belonging to any other minority, group or organization that dissents from the views of the government of the Russian Federation. Residents of Crimea who reject Russian citizenship also face the risk of deportation and limited access to social security and public services. Moreover, the Russian Federation conducts policies and practices aimed at changing the demographic structure in Crimea. Other victims are charged with extremism, affiliation with groups banned in the Russian Federation, sabotage or "anti-Russian" activities. Arbitrary arrests, house raids, groundless detentions, harassments, intimidations, unfair trials, degrading treatment of detainees, torture, sexual violence and other violations continue in a systematic and unpunished manner.

Many religious groups in Crimea have lost their right to operate – they were either found to be in breach of Russia's anti-extremism law or considered as terrorist and extremist groups. The activities of the Mejlis, a representative body of the Crimean Tatar People, remain banned in Crimea, despite the order of the International Court of Justice delivered on 19 April 2017.

Criminal charges have also been selectively applied against individuals, journalists and public figures, who have expressed dissenting views towards the Russian Federation. Public events initiated by supporters of Ukraine's territorial integrity have been prohibited by the de facto "authorities" in Crimea. The rights to freedom of assembly and association of LGBTI persons have also been denied, as the Russian Federation's legislation prohibiting propaganda for "non-traditional sexual relations" has been applied in Crimea.

These are some of the many violations observed by the UN.