



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

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Statement on the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture

As delivered by Ambassador Ihor Prokopchuk,
Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna,
to the 1191st meeting of the Permanent Council,
5 July 2018

Mr. Chairperson,

Ukraine joined the statement delivered today on behalf of 45 OSCE participating States. We would also wish to make a few remarks in the national capacity.

On 26 June 2018 Ukraine along with the international community marked the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture. In the statement issued on that occasion the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine noted, in particular:

“The Russian Federation, as an aggressor state, for over four consecutive years has been committing crimes against the citizens of Ukraine on a daily basis – resorting to torture, psychological pressure on illegally detained and convicted Ukrainian citizens both in the territory of the Russian Federation and on the temporarily occupied territories of our state.

Regular monitoring by specialized international mechanisms with due regard to the principles of unimpeded access to all places of detention, and full privacy of interviews with all detainees in the temporarily occupied territories are still impossible and being rejected by Russia and its occupying administration. It was further evidenced by the recent visit to Ukraine of UN Special Rapporteur on the prevention of torture Mr. Nils Melzer, whom the Russian Federation denied access to the detention places in the occupied Crimea. Meanwhile, the Special Rapporteur was able to meet many victims of torture and ill-treatment, who managed to leave Crimea. The situation is also complicated by the fact that, unlike Ukraine, the Russian Federation is not a party to the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and therefore the Subcommittee against Torture is unable to provide monitoring in Russia. This country has also almost ceased to cooperate with the Special Procedures of the HRC, in particular, the visit to the Russian Federation of the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment has already been cancelled twice.”

The MFA of Ukraine reminded the Russian Federation that it was a party to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or

Punishment and to the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. Ukraine demanded that Russia fulfills its international obligations entirely.

In this light we wish to recall that last year the delegation of Switzerland undertook intensive efforts to draft and build consensus around adoption of the OSCE Permanent Council Declaration on prevention of torture and support of victims of torture. The adoption of this important declaration was blocked by one participating State – the Russian Federation. Given the utmost relevance of this topic we propose to resume focused efforts aimed at adopting the respective OSCE document.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.