

Statement by Nara Narimanova
Crimean Tatar Youth Council

Dear Chairperson, thank you for giving me the floor.

My name is Nara Narimanova, I am from the Crimean Tatar ethnic minority group and I represent the Crimean Tatar Youth Council. I would like to raise attention to the issues faced by Crimean Tatar women in Ukraine.

Crimean Tatars, are indigenous to the Crimean peninsula in Ukraine. In 1944, 200,000 Crimean Tatars accused of collaboration with the Nazis were deported to in Central Asia. and confined in settlements. Meanwhile, settlers replaced the Crimean Tatars in their lands. 46% of deported Crimean Tatars perished in less than a decade.

As the Soviet Union collapsed in the early 1990s, Crimean Tatars began to return to their lands, where they now constitute an estimated 13% of the Crimea. However, many live in settlements without basic facilities or rural areas where there is a lack of infrastructure and access to basic services and they face continued high levels of discrimination and stigma, discouraging the return of the estimated 150,000 Crimean Tatars from Central Asia. In particular unemployment is a major problem: 60 per cent of those who have returned are unemployed. The restitution of the land they owned before deportation is not guaranteed, and. it is illegal to build on or to cultivate land for which one has no title deed.

Women are particularly vulnerable in this situation as they bear the most of the burden in such conditions, as they remain closer to the home. The numerous. problems Crimean Tatar women face upon return are aggravated by non-equality in access to rights and social opportunities. There is no right to educate children in their mother tongue, meaning many do not have access to learning in their own language and there is little opportunity to move beyond the limited circumstances described. There are for example only two universities, which provide. for Crimean Tatars to learn their mother tongue. Therefore I strongly recommend the adoption of recommendation 55 and its application in Ukraine.

That services in the Crimea do not provide adequately for Crimean Tatar women, can also be reflected in the low level of participation in decision making processes. Approximately only 5% of elected positions in the Crimea are held by Crimean Tatars and there is only 1 Crimean Tatar woman. This is actually part of a decline in overall representation for Crimean Tatars, Therefore I also strongly recommend the adoption of Recommendation 60 of the Forum

The situation of the Crimean Tatars is contrary to both the Constitution of Ukraine and . International Human Rights standards to which Ukraine is a signatory. The legal status of the Crimean Tatars in Ukraine is not defined yet, and therefore, Crimean Tatars are considered as national minority under the Law on National Minorities of Ukraine. This law does not guarantee the realization of the Crimean Tatar people rights, and specifies only some of the cultural and linguistic rights, but not of political, economic and social rights. For example, according to the Article 47 of the Constitution of Ukraine

"Everyone has the right to housing." And "Citizens in need of social protection are provided with housing by the State and bodies of local self-government".

But, only 20% of Crimean Tatars received the allotted land plots in the regions of depressive development.

In current situation the further delay in restoring the rights of the Crimean Tatar people can have disastrous consequences that may result in loss for humanity of one of the most original and ancient European peoples.

Therefore I make the following specific recommendations

The government of the Ukraine, implements a compensation system for lost property by virtue of deportation is necessary to implement equal access for housing facilities. National and local authorities as well as UN field agencies should cooperate on specific programs targeting the situation of women residing rural areas and involve them in programs towards strengthening their capacities to participate equally in society and increase their job opportunities or to assist them in pursuing alternative sources of income.