

8th session of the Forum on Minority Issues

Anti-discrimination Centre Memorial / Center for Civil Liberties, Ms. Olga Abramenko

Thank you, Mr Chairman, the Anti-discrimination Centre Memorial Center for Civil Liberties consider necessary to draw attention to the Forum the systemic violation of the rights of ethnic and religious minorities by the Russian Federation. Minorities and ethnic profiling during police operations. Criminal cases based on artificial allegations. Pressure upon detainees and people under investigation, and discrimination at the places of detention.

The most concerning are numerous cases of persecution of Crimean Tatars, this is the so-called case of 26th of February and the case of the third of May when participants of meetings were subjected to questioning, searches and criminal prosecution. Or persecution of the leaders of the Crimean Tatars, including the head of (...), and the deputy of the Ukrainian parliament, Mustafa Dzhemilev, who is not allowed to enter the Crimea. The son of Mustafa Dzhemilev was illegally sentenced to detention by the Russian court that makes pressure upon his father.

A criminal case was opened against employees of a broadcaster TV channel that broadcasted Crimean Tatars on their own language. Citizens of Ukraine and Russia often are accused in the framework of politically motivated criminal cases. The Crimean activist, Olexandr Kolchenko was kidnapped from Ukraine, tortured in Russia and sentenced for more than three years of detention by fabricated case. Olexandr Kolchenko by force declared as Russian citizens as well as witnesses of this case were sentenced to 20, 10 and 7 years of detention. The evidences that became the ground of accusations were given under torture.

Ukrainians living in Russia are often persecuted just for cultural and educative activities. Criminal cases were fabricated against Natalia (...), the leader of the Ukrainian (..) in Habaros and against Natalia Sharina, director of the Ukrainian library in Moscow.

Minority of the North Caucasus face lack of access to justice as well. Due to prejudices and discrimination they are sentenced to long time of detention without access to appealing of any inhumane conditions. Access to justice is also difficult for the Roma Community. The police use to conduct ethnic profile operations against named Gypsy and (...) which refers to the way of life of Roma only.

Last, there is the criminal prosecutions from (...) of representative of indigenous peoples who oppose extractive companies. Criminal cases were all open against representatives of Hunted people (...) who tried to defend the territory of (...). With (..) the Russian Federation has politically motivated persecutions of Crimean Tatars and Ukrainians to guarantee the rights of minorities providing the non-discrimination and access to justice to follow international standards, and all juridical procedures, and unconditionally of detention. Thank you.