

Statement

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To the Members of the European Parliament, the European political community in light of the critical socio-political situation in Crimea

Distinguished Members of the European Parliament, distinguished Europeans!

Today, as a result of the Russian aggression, two Ukrainian nations in Crimea – Ukrainians and Crimean Tatars, as well as all the whole Ukrainian nation – became victims of the Russian political, economic and administrative arbitrariness and of the deranged Russian propaganda. This system, aimed at turning Crimea into a socially depressed area, is a closed enclave of Russification, of backward, illiberal culture and total administrative control.

In Crimea, national education system has been dismantled; a rampant Russification is being carried out, together with a wide-ranging militarization, introduction of military education for children and young people in schools and universities. The deceitful propaganda is aimed at falsifying history, glorification of one nation, and campaigning against the fundamentals of democracy, universal human values, as well as at inciting interethnic and interreligious enmity.

In Crimea, the independent media have been shut down, freedom of speech, association and peaceful association has been eliminated, any manifestation of peaceful protests is qualified as terrorism and extremism, the police and the courts subject activists to elaborate repressions.

The abrogation of the freedom of speech and other civil liberties in Crimea is based on the Russian authorities trying to disguise the true goals of the aggression. It is aimed at the destruction of national and cultural diversity of Crimea, at establishment of a dictatorship, the transition from a nuclear military power to power politics and territorial occupation in order to justify the violation of international law, diminish the public resonance on murdering and kidnapping of people, use of terrorist methods against the peaceful population.

In Crimea, where I devoted more than 30 years to the journalistic work, criminal cases are falsified and court sentences are rendered against authors of articles and reports, which truly reflect life.

Our references to the need for freedom of speech, freedom of discussion and for the right to personal opinion and worldview are not respected by the illegally constituted Russian courts and investigative organs.

The population is practically cut off from the truth, here about 30 to 40 information websites are blocked, independent newspapers and TV channels are closed down, radio and Ty channels from Ukraine are *constantly under threat*. It is known that the director Oleg Sentsov has been sentenced to 20 years of imprisonment for having tried to resist the occupation of his motherland, an "espionage" case has been falsified against the journalist Roman Sushenko in Moscow, in Crimea even the users of social networks are persecuted for expressing their thoughts or even for reposting quotes from other authors.

In Crimea, already tens of activists and journalists have been arrested and put behind the bars, have been subjected to unfair court trials and illegal punishment.

As a matter of fact, we have to acknowledge that a backslide of the repressions of the mid- 1930s is ongoing in Crimea, and in the sphere of information an iron curtain isolating Crimeans from the truth has been built up.

In Crimea, there are Russian state TV companies, newspapers, information agencies, pseudo-journalistic organizations, which work under the severe dictate of the authorities and serve as a megaphone for the glorification of the authorities in any, even unsuccessful projects, for the embellishment of reality, the cover-up of problems, for which the authorities are guilty.

We highly value the support of European institutions. Unfortunately, in their aggression, dictators count not only on their military force, but also on the weakness and tardiness of the world's and European democracies.

Hence, democratic movements worldwide should understand that the Russian dictatorship today is threatening not only Ukraine, it threatens the whole Europe, in the end it put the whole world on the edge of the third world war.

Today's Ukraine is on the frontline of the battle for democracy, which cannot be given up under any circumstances, since this can lead to the future catastrophe for the international law and democratic movements, the tragedies that befell humanity in the XX century can be repeated and can lead to numerous and unjustified victims.

As the current events demonstrate, the world is on the brink of formation of new chauvinistic, misanthropic movements.

We cannot allow for a repetition of the tragedies of the XX century, which the whole nations of the world have suffered.

Thus, the global democracy today, in the XXI century, cannot be weak. Democratic movements worldwide, the progressive humanity should unite, in order to stop the aggressor, to force it to leave the illegally annexed territories, to return to the Crimean Tatar people their motherland, Crimea, where a national territorial autonomy should be created, the militarisation of politics, education and public life must be stopped, freedom of speech and other civil liberties must be ensured, illegal repressions against journalists and activists must be put an end to, political prisoners must be freed.

Besides other measures, the global democratic movement should create an international monitoring committee on Crimea, which should record the ongoing violations of human rights in Crimea, violations of the international law and bring the case before an international court.

This shall be done, since we in Crimea believe that democracy is stronger than any aggressor, any weapon, and any dictatorship.

At the same time, you have to know that until now – and soon it will be already four years and rarely a war lasted so long – we have been victims of aggression and for us the issue of time, the issue of lost lives, the issue of stolen prospects, the issue of life and death, the issue of the ruined destiny of an entire generation of people in Crimea – who are now exposed to a deceitful propaganda by the aggressor, to education in its militarized schools, to zombification by its propagandist means of mass disinformation, persecutions and repressions – are all extremely sensitive.

Your support, power of global democracy, and your effective measures are our last hope in stopping the aggressor and in our liberation.