

## **Position of the UHHRU on the Crimean issue. Abstracts**

The Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union (hereinafter the UHHRU) vindicates the internationally recognized position on the illegitimacy of the so-called "referendum" of integration of the Crimea to the Russian Federation and the non-recognition of the subsequent annexation of the Crimean peninsula to the RF.

We condemn any attempts to legitimize the annexation of the Crimea under the guise of the will of the population.

We emphasize that the so-called "general support" of the Crimean population of the unrecognized "referendum" is a product of the information propaganda of the Russian Federation.

We believe that the appearance of unanimous support was the result of a deliberate policy of the Russian Federation in the occupied Crimean peninsula aimed at ignoring, intimidation and political persecution by the occupation authorities of the part of population which does not agree with the occupation of the peninsula and the suppression of all pro-Ukrainian sentiments in the Crimea. The UHHRU does and will provide legal assistance to victims of such harassment, including in international bodies.

The UHHRU undertakes steps to identify, investigate and publicize human rights violations in the Crimea, caused by the occupation of the peninsula or the consequences of occupation, analyzes trends in the human rights situation in the Crimea in connection with the occupation and the change of the legal field. In its work on the Crimea the UHHRU takes into account and applies international humanitarian law and international human rights standards.

With its activities the UHHRU promotes proper international legal evaluation of the occupation of the Crimea and the development of new principles of international law, which would make the price of occupation too high for the occupier. We also help to build a proper policy of Ukraine concerning the occupied Crimean peninsula, which would take into account the subsequent return of the peninsula under the jurisdiction of Ukraine and would help to avoid the adverse effects of de-occupation for the population of the peninsula.

The UHHRU does not support the idea of a total blockade of the Crimea - such policy could lead not only to serious human rights violations, but also will prevent the subsequent reintegration of the peninsula.

The UHHRU will advocate the adoption by the State of Ukraine of a comprehensive strategy of reintegration and relations with the occupied territory of the peninsula, based on the following principles:

- Consideration of the humanitarian needs of Ukrainian citizens in the occupied territories in all decisions of state bodies of Ukraine regarding the Crimea;

- The urgent creation for the Ukrainian citizens in the occupied territories most loyal conditions for education through the introduction of accessible distance learning system, simplification of issuing documents (issuing certificates, passports, letters of verification, diplomas and other documents), the maximum reintegration into cultural and scientific spheres of life of the Ukrainian community, unimpeded entry and exit to/from the continental part of Ukraine;
- Adoption of a package of regulatory legal acts regulating policies and actions of the Ukrainian authorities at the time of de-occupation of the Crimea (step by step guide to action before and the day after the de-occupation of the peninsula).
- Establishment and operation of the key authorities "in exile", ready to take responsibility on the reintegration of the Crimea at the time of de-occupation, budget planning for the restoration of the peninsula;
- Limitation of the economic and other development of the occupant state.

The UHHRU considers unacceptable any persecution of Ukrainian citizens working in the structures created by the occupation authorities in the Crimea, except in cases of criminal prosecution of persons directly involved in the preparation and implementation of an armed coup and the occupation of the Crimea, or committed criminal offenses entailing violations of human rights and political persecution of Ukrainian activists or individuals expressing disagreement with the occupation of the Crimea.