



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International Organizations in Vienna

**Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine
on the occasion of the International Day of Victims of Enforced
Disappearances**

As delivered by Ambassador Yevhenii Tsymbaliuk,
Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna,
to the 1279th meeting of the Permanent Council,
3 September 2020

Mr. Chairperson,

On the International Day of Victims of Enforced Disappearances we call on the world community to remain seized of the fate of persons missing or abducted in the Russian-occupied territories of Ukraine in Crimea and Donbas.

The Prosecutor's Office of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol provides procedural guidance in 115 criminal proceedings on 117 cases of enforced disappearance, deprivation of liberty, and abduction.

In the vast majority of cases, there were facts revealing the involvement of the Russian occupation authorities in the disappearances. Cases of intimidation of relatives of missing persons, witnesses, as well as lack of effective investigation were recorded.

Alike the overall picture of the persecution of those who disagree with Moscow's policy, the majority of victims of enforced disappearances in occupied Crimea are Crimean Tatars.

Reshat Ametov was abducted during a single silent protest against the invasion of his homeland by Russia and tortured to death in March 2014.

Ervin Ibragimov, a member of the Bakhchisarai Regional Mejlis and of the executive committee of the World Congress of Crimean Tatars, abducted on 24 May 2016, is still missing. Erwin openly condemned the occupation of Crimea, participated in the protection of the rights of Crimean Tatars, regularly attended court hearings on politically motivated cases, and spoke of persecution at international events.

In both cases, human rights activists accuse the occupying authorities of failing to conduct an effective investigation.

The facts of enforced disappearances of Ukrainian and Crimean Tatar activists in the occupied Crimea are reflected in the application of Ukraine instituting proceedings against the Russian Federation in the case of violation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination by the Russian side, submitted to the International Court of Justice in 2017.

We must keep such violations by Russia as an occupying power in the focus of our constant attention and increase the pressure on Russia in all cases of enforced disappearances.

In this regard, it is important to increase international pressure on the Russian Federation to fulfil its obligations as an occupying power under international humanitarian law and international human rights law, in particular as regards the guarantee of the right to life, liberty, and security of person.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.