

The OSCE Secretariat bears no responsibility for the content of this document and circulates it without altering its content. The distribution by OSCE Conference Services of this document is without prejudice to OSCE decisions, as set out in documents agreed by OSCE participating States.

PC.DEL/526/20
21 May 2020

ENGLISH
Original: RUSSIAN

Delegation of the Russian Federation

**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,
AT THE 1268th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL
VIA VIDEO TELECONFERENCE**

21 May 2020

On the 76th anniversary of the deportation of the Crimean Tatars

Mr. Chairperson,

On 18 May, sombre events timed to coincide with the Day of Remembrance for the Victims of the Deportation of the Crimean Tatars were held in Crimea. Seventy-six years ago, they suffered repression and were forcibly expelled from their homeland, as were many other peoples during those tragic times. As the Head of the Republic of Crimea, Mr. Sergey Aksyonov, said: “This memorable date unites all Crimeans regardless of their nationality.”

Justice triumphed only decades later and was made fully possible thanks to Crimea’s reunification with Russia. Unfortunately, until 2014, the Ukrainian Government almost never remembered the historical plight of this people or the situation on the peninsula in general.

Today, the Crimean Tatar people are an integral part of multi-ethnic Russia. Measures are being taken for the full rehabilitation and preservation of their language and culture.

Decree No. 268 of the President of the Russian Federation of 21 April 2014 on measures to rehabilitate the Armenian, Bulgarian, Crimean Tatar, German, Greek and Italian peoples and to provide State support for their revival and development is being implemented. Law No. 1107-1 of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic of 26 April 1991 on the Rehabilitation of Repressed Peoples and Law No. 1761-1 of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic of 18 October 1991 on the Rehabilitation of Victims of Political Repression apply in full to the Crimean Tatars.

Within the framework of the Federal Target Programme for the Development of Crimea until 2022, measures for the socio-economic support of the Crimean Tatars are being implemented, including the construction of apartment buildings and the opening of preschool institutions and schools and cultural centres.

The Republic of Crimea State Programme for 2018–2020 to support the rehabilitated peoples of Crimea was approved in 2018. In accordance with that programme, places with a large population of

formerly repressed peoples, including Crimean Tatars, are being developed, compensation paid and the activities of national cultural associations supported.

In December 2019, the Council on Interethnic and Interfaith Relations was established under the auspices of the Head of the Republic of Crimea. It is noteworthy that the deputy chairperson of the Council and rector of the Crimean Engineering and Pedagogical University, Mr. Chingiz Yakubov, an ethnic Crimean Tatar, was recently appointed to the Russian Federation's Presidential Council for Interethnic Relations. This confirms the fact that the well-being of the Crimean Tatars is being monitored at the highest level.

Linguistic equality is ensured on the peninsula. The Crimean Tatar language was recognized in the 2014 Constitution of Crimea as an official language of the Republic of Crimea, alongside Russian and Ukrainian.

The Crimean Engineering and Pedagogical University is a symbol of inter-ethnic harmony in Crimea. Six thousand students, 60 per cent of whom are Crimean Tatars, attend classes there. Kindergartens and schools are being built in places with a large Crimean Tatar population. A complete set of textbooks for secondary education in the Crimean Tatar language is available.

The representation of Crimean Tatars in the authorities is growing. For example, following the elections in September 2019, 250 Crimean Tatars became members of local councils. Crimean Tatar autonomous bodies are operating successfully at various levels. The House of Friendship of the Peoples is continuing its work in Simferopol, the capital of the Republic of Crimea. In addition, more than 30 Crimean Tatar community associations, including Milliy Firqa, Qirim Birligi (Crimean Unity) and Qirim (Crimea), are operating on the peninsula. Numerous publications are produced in the national language with State support (*Yani Dunya*, *Qirim*, *Yildiz*, *Arzy*, *Armançiq*, *Khidayet*, *Suvdağ sesi* and others). There are currently more than 50 Crimean Tatar media outlets.

The Public Crimean Tatar Television and Radio Company, which was established in September 2015 and includes the television channel Millet and the radio station Vatan Sedasi, is being developed effectively.

Since 2019, Crimean Tatar content has been growing steadily on the Millet television channel. The hours of broadcasting in the Crimean Tatar language have been increased. Radio Vatan Sedasi has a programme devoted to the study of the Crimean Tatar language. Significant work is being done by the Ismail Gasprinsky Media Centre, which is the main platform for the support of national print media. Thus, there can be no talk of a "clampdown" on, or "harassment" of, the media in Crimea.

Restoration work at the Bakhchisaray Historical, Cultural and Archaeological Museum-Reserve is being carried out with funding from the federal budget. Some 1.6 billion roubles are earmarked by 2021 alone for the restoration of the Khan's Palace. Work on that scale has not been undertaken there for the past 30 years. Incidentally, it might be asked why those who are apparently concerned about the fate of the reserve today have not carried out such work at this truly unique place.

With the support of the Crimean authorities, Crimean Tatar national holidays and festivals, such as the famous Khidirlez, are held regularly. This year, the 100th anniversary of the birth of Crimean Tatar Amet-khan Sultan, twice awarded the title Hero of the Soviet Union and decorated test pilot of the USSR, is being widely celebrated. And these are just examples of the biggest events.

Construction of a cathedral mosque for 4,000 people and a muftiate building are nearing completion in Simferopol. According to the Religious Administration of the Muslims of Crimea, over 40 mosques have

been built since the peninsula's reunification with Russia. In total, there are more than 300 mosques and houses of worship in Crimea. As the Deputy Mufti of the Muslims of Crimea, Haji Esadullah Bairov, noted during the OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting in Warsaw in September 2019, "Muslims and visitors to Crimea visit them freely".

Thus, the Russian Federation, unlike Ukraine, is making the necessary efforts to support the Crimean Tatar ethnic group. These achievements confirm the groundlessness of accusations of "abuses" against or "persecution" of the Crimean Tatars. This would appear to be connected with the unwillingness of some colleagues to consider this matter methodically and in good faith. This unwillingness goes as far as outright falsification. On 16 May, the distinguished Permanent Representative of the United States of America, Mr. James S. Gilmore III, tweeted a photograph showing Polish Jews being deported by the Nazis from the Łódź Ghetto to the Chełmno death camp, using it to illustrate the expulsion of the Crimean Tatars. Six-pointed stars sewn on to the victims' clothing are clearly visible in the photo. And yet your own President, Donald Trump, has repeatedly warned against spreading fake news. Are you not ashamed?

Thank you for your attention.