



ASSOCIATION OF REINTEGRATION  
OF CRIMEA

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**To the UN Independent Expert on the Enjoyment of all Human Rights by Older Persons  
Ageism and Age Discrimination: Situation in the Crimea**

*Submissions for Report*

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The Association of Reintegration of Crimea<sup>1</sup>, as a registered non-governmental organisation, herewith submits the following responses (submission) on ageism and age discrimination on the Crimean peninsula to the questionnaire of the UN Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons, for the Expert's forthcoming report to the 48th session of the Human Rights Council. We already sent to the Expert the submission on issues of the thematic report on the human rights of older women on the Crimean peninsula for the Expert's forthcoming report to the 76th session of the General Assembly.

Our responses (submission) are devoted to the situation of ageism and age discrimination, including indigenous Crimean Tatar old persons in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and city of Sevastopol (hereinafter – the Crimea). The response deals with the issues identified by the Association in its work, namely the issue of intentional and organised Russia's policy against Human and Indigenous Rights in the Crimea, including the civil, social and cultural rights and protection against discrimination.

As we pointed for the UN Independent Expert already, the illegal occupation and attempted annexation of Crimea by Russian Federation (hereinafter – RF) since 2014 have been condemned in a series of international acts, including UN GA resolutions 2014 68/262, 2016 71/205, 2017 72/190, 2018 73/263 2019 74/168, 2020 75/192, 2018 73/194, 2019 74/17, 2020 75/29<sup>2</sup>, resolutions of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe 1988 (2014), 2028 (2015), 2067 (2015), 2112 (2016), 2132 (2016), 2145 (2017), 2198 (2018), 2231 (2018) etc., of the European Parliament's resolutions 2014/2841 (RSP), 2014/2965 (RSP), 2016/2556 (RSP), 2016/2692 (RSP), 2017/2596 (RSP), 2017/2869 (RSP), 2018/2754 (RSP), 2018/2870 (RSP), 2019/2734 (RSP), 2019/2202 (INI) etc. Those acts paid special attention to the brutal violation by the RF the fundamental rights of older persons, including that belongs to the indigenous peoples and minorities.

The attempted annexation the Crimea by Russia was never recognized by the international community. Human rights violations in the Crimea, including racial, social and other discrimination of older persons, including that belongs to the indigenous peoples and minorities now are the

<sup>1</sup> <https://arc.construction/>

<sup>2</sup> for example, <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/73/263>

subject to consideration in international courts, including the International Court of Justice (case 166)<sup>3</sup> and the European Court of Human Rights (case 20958/14 and others).<sup>4</sup>

Special negative situation is connected with older Crimean Tatar persons, vulnerable to the situation of the ongoing racial discrimination the Crimean Tatar People on its historic Native Land – Crimean peninsula. The key source of discrimination of the Crimean Tatars is concentrated in Russian punitive and propaganda policy, which revitalized the Soviet myth about the “enemy people” and determined any indigenous activists as “extremists”, if they manifested any disloyalty towards the Russian policies.

In 1944 Crimean Tatars felt victims of genocide (forced deportation) under the control of the Soviet authorities. In the Soviet period since 1967, the USSR state authorities refused to recognize of Crimean Tatars as separate ethnic group, they were determined as “Tatars,” as the part of undetermined Tatar population of the USSR. Up until 1987-1989, the Crimean Tatars were not allowed to resettle back to the Crimea from the Soviet Central Asian regions. In 1990–2014 approximately 300 thousands of Crimean Tatars returned to the Crimea. Ukraine was trying to preserve the interethnic peace in the Crimea; however this policy resulted in practical impossibility for the indigenous land claims, restitution claims, and defamation claims.

The central and local authorities, municipal entities, law enforcement structures, courts, and the Ukrainian Ombudsperson had the common position that all the property taken away from the Crimean Tatar owners since 1944 will not be returned to former owners or their successors and will not be compensated. Most of the land lots and buildings once owned by the Crimean Tatars have been transferred from state property to the private property of non-indigenous users that controlled it in the late Soviet time, during the common privatization proceeding in Ukraine before 2000<sup>5</sup>.

After 2014 Crimean Tatars are the subject of repression by Russian de-facto authorities for their collective position against the attempted annexation the Crimea and against their discrimination. Now there are not less than 230 politic prisoners in the Crimea, among them 158 Crimean Tatars; since 2014 not less than 55 persons were killed very likely with participation of Russia’s punitive bodies and paramilitary groups in the Crimea and among them – 25 Crimean Tatars; since 2014 not less than 21 persons are the victims of the forced disappearances in the Crimea very likely with participation of Russia’s bodies and groups, and among them – 15 Crimean Tatars.

Majority of those victims are men who were the main breadwinners for their families, often in the rural areas of the Central Crimea<sup>6</sup>. So their old family members are now in extremely hard situation as the “dangerous family members of terrorist and extremists” as they are named by Russian propaganda. And more they are now in extremely dangerous social situation as dependents who lost the source of own minimal economic stability.

And even more, older Crimean Tatar persons are the direct subject of the politic repressions by Russian punitive bodies in the Crimea. The most terrible example is the Mrs. Veciye Qaşqa story. Veciye was deported in 1944 in nine-year old age from Crimea and from the end of 1950<sup>th</sup> she united the Crimean Tatar national movement. In 1960<sup>th</sup> she tried twice to return to Crimea but was deported again by Soviet punitive structures.

In Soviet and post-Soviet time Mrs. Qaşqa’s house was a place of meeting the Crimean Tatar’s activists. Mrs. Qaşqa took part in the activities of the Crimean Tatar ethnic movement.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.icj-cij.org/public/files/case-related/166/166-20191108-JUD-01-00-EN.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng?i=001-207622>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.intechopen.com/books/indigenous-aboriginal-fugitive-and-ethnic-groups-around-the-globe/legal-statute-and-perspectives-for-indigenous-peoples-in-ukraine>

<sup>6</sup> <https://ctrcenter.org/en/zherthy-okkupacii>



traveled with errands to Russia and Turkey, helped to organize mass events. After the occupation of the Crimea begun in 2014, she advocated the blockade of Crimea by the civilized nation, was the active member of groups that organized help to the politic prisoners and their families. On 23 November 2017 Mrs. Veciye Qaşqa who was 73 years old, was arrested in brutal form by the Russian punitive structures (Federal Security Service and “police”) in Simferopol cafe “Medobory” with some other Crimean Tatars<sup>7</sup>. Arrested Mrs. Veciye Qaşqa felt herself bad and died in few hours, in road from café being under control of Russian officers. Russian de-facto authorities refused to investigate the death of Mrs. Veciye Qaşqa and Russian propaganda used hate speech against dead Mrs. Qaşqa as “Crimean Tatar extremist”. In January 2021 the European Court of Human Rights started the proceeding on application the lawyer of Mrs. Qaşqa’s relatives on issue of her forced death<sup>8</sup>.

But not only Crimean Tatar old persons are in the extremely vulnerable situation in Crimea. Russian invasion in Crimea caused the collapse of the medical system on peninsula by its forced transfer to the Russia’s insurance model and it caused the shortage of medical staff. Also artificial restrictions were established by de-facto authorities, as for possibilities to buy medical drugs of Ukrainian or other civilized countries’ origin, so for the travels from the Crimea to the mainland of Ukraine for social and medical purposes. Such situation became extremely dangerous for Crimea-residing old persons in situation of the COVID-19 pandemic.

And even more, stuff of the “semi-official” monopolist insurance company “Krymmedstrakh”, controlled by Russian de-facto authorities in the Crimea, uses the insurance data to determine the lonely older person with high-priced property in the Crimea. Later such person dies in Crimean hospitals and their real estate goes to the relevant mafia tightly connected with Russian de-facto authorities. Such situations became public when in December 2020 82-year old Yalta resident Mrs. Iryna Lvovna died in the Livadia Hospital emergency room without any medical aid. Mrs. Lvovna, former school teacher of Ukrainian language, well-known in Yalta, has the large apartments in this resort city in her private property. When local bloggers wrote in social networks on Mrs. Lvovna, dying from cold and hunger in the emergency room, the so-called “Head of Republic of Crimea” Sergey Aksyonov and “Major of Yalta” Yanina Pavlenko promised in media that they will allegedly help to this person to get to the “House of Mercy”<sup>9</sup>.

But in reality Mrs. Lvovna died in the same Livadia Hospital two days later<sup>10</sup> and her own daughter residing on the mainland of Ukraine was not allowed by Russian “board guard service” even to visit own mother as before her death so for burial. And the “Krymmedstrakh” mafia<sup>11</sup>, related with de-facto authorities got the apartments of Mrs. Lvovna, formally as ceded to the “municipal property”.

The Association of Reintegration of Crimea believes that a special research on the older persons’ rights in situations of armed conflicts and related “grey zones” like Crimea, done by the UN Independent Expert, may be a starting point for improvement of the situation. The UN Independent Expert’s visit to Ukraine, including Crimea would contribute to collection of information, and would enable the Expert to make a first-hand impression of the situation with older persons’ rights in the region.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/ukrainian/features-russian-42103579>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.ukrinform.ru/rubric-crimea/3169666-espc-prinal-klassmotreniu-zalobno-pro-delu-vedzie-kaska.html>

<sup>9</sup> <https://arc.construction/7719>

<sup>10</sup> <https://crimea-news.com/society/2020/12/16/738650.html>

<sup>11</sup> <https://arc.construction/7870?lang=ru>

