



ASSOCIATION OF REINTEGRATION
OF CRIMEA

France, Paris, 14 Avenue de l'Opera, 75001

Ukraine, Kyiv, 56 Kharkivske highroad, 02175

arcconstructionofcrimea@gmail.com

15.05.2024 № 366/2024

UN Special Rapporteur on the sale and sexual exploitation of children

Russian Aggression and Sexual Abuse of Children in Digital Environment

Prof. Borys Babin, PhD. Julia Sidorenko

Our Association of Reintegration of Crimea (ARC)¹, is non-governmental expert and human rights organisation², our expert researches are related with human rights and humanitarian issues, including displacement and relevant situation on the Russia-occupied territories, including Crimea³⁴⁵⁶⁷. Experts of ARC co-operated with OSCE and UN bodies on issues of protecting and defending internal displaced persons, migrants, noncombatants and deported groups including children.

We informed UN Special Rapporteur for annual thematic report to be presented to the 76th session of the General Assembly in October 2021⁸ that criminal groups, involved in the child sexual abuse and child trafficking in the Crimea, are closely connected to Russia's special services and to the so-called "Crimean republican authorities"⁹. So there is no surprise that, no "criminal cases" or "court decisions" on those issues have been initiated or finalized in the Crimea by Russia de-facto "authorities" since 2014¹⁰.

We informed UN Special Rapporteur that such groups, involved in the child sexual abuse and child trafficking in the Crimea, have features of ethic-grounded criminal entities that operate in Yalta¹¹, Alushta¹² and other places¹³. They have close connection with "Crimean republican authorities" as the "Head of the Republic of Crimea" Sergey Aksyonov¹⁴, "Head of State Council of the Republic of Crimea" Vladimir Konstantinov¹⁵, head of "Supreme Court of the Republic of Crimea" Igor Radionov¹⁶ and others¹⁷. Sergey Aksyonov played a key role in the criminal group "Seylem" before 2014, while Vladimir Konstantinov is a de facto boss of the concern "Consol" closely connected with the criminal world. Thus, the criminal groups that use

¹ <https://arcrimea.org/>

² https://www.journal-officiel.gouv.fr/associations/detail-annonce/associations_b/20210005/1348

³ <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/Slavery/SR/ReportHRC48/CSOs/ARC.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/Children/SR/GA76/Association-of-reintegration-of-crimer.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/truth/nsa/2022-09-14/submission-NSAs-hrc51-academia-Association-of-Reintegration-of-Crimea-ARC.pdf>

⁶ <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2022-01/Association-of-Reintegratin-of-Crimea.pdf>

⁷ <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/truth/cfi-achieving-sdgs/2022-10-10/submission-NSAs-hrc51-academia-Association-of-Reintegration-of-Crimea-ARC.pdf>

⁸ <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/Children/SR/GA76/Association-of-reintegration-of-crimer.pdf>

⁹ <https://web.archive.org/web/20220513192034/https://arc.construction/5153?lang=ru>

¹⁰ <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/children/cfi/vulnerabilities-children/csos/2022-07-26/submission-sdgs-cso-ARC-second-submission.pdf>

¹¹ <https://web.archive.org/web/20220609150130/https://arc.construction/10072>

¹² <https://web.archive.org/web/20220807154450/https://arc.construction/10172>

¹³ <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/children/sr/cfi-chidrenvictims/csos/2023-01-23/submission-reparation-hrc52-cso-association-of-reintegration-of-crimea.pdf>

¹⁴ <https://web.archive.org/web/20220607092333/https://arc.construction/8656>

¹⁵ <https://web.archive.org/web/20220615101543/https://arc.construction/6015>

¹⁶ <https://web.archive.org/web/20220527225826/https://arc.construction/8712>

¹⁷ <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/children/sr/cfis/entertainment-industry/subm-study-sexual-abuse-cso-association-reintegration-crimea.pdf>

forced labour in Crimea (including youth sexual exploitation in digital environment), are subordinated and closely cooperate with the Russian de facto “authorities”.

We informed UN Special Rapporteur that these criminal groups operate internationally, with connections to some regions of Russia like Moscow Region¹⁸, Ossetia¹⁹, Chechnya, Tatarstan, Bashkortostan²⁰ and Ukraine’s mainland. The Armenian ethnic criminal group from Yalta is connected with child trafficking and child pornography, including Internet and other digital forms, as well as with forced labour in building sector, and in the same time this group is the key sponsor of so-called “Friends of Crimea” project²¹, co-ordinated by the Russian government, with participation of some extremist and marginal politicians from Austria²², Italy, Germany, France²³ etc.

We informed UN Special Rapporteur that the “Crimean authorities”, including the highest “judges” are totally corrupted and connected to the organised criminal groups involved in the child sexual abuse and child trafficking in the Crimea, including digital environment, that enjoy impunity.

The participation of the Crimean organised criminal groups in sexual exploitation of youth, including digital environment, poses additional challenges to the identification of victims as there are no effective remedies in the occupied peninsula as a “grey zone”²⁴. Legislative frameworks to combat child sexual abuse and child trafficking in the Crimea, are not effective there, as Russia illegally applies its own legislation on the occupied territory since 2014, including in criminal and administrative proceeding. Ukraine has no possibility to use its own legislation as it does not control this region.

And later, as it is well-known, since 24th of February 2022 Russia committed broad and open military aggression to all Ukraine’s territory. Due last two years Russia occupied some territories of Donetsk, Kherson, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhya regions. Such Russia’s illegal activities cause non-precedent flows of migration of millions of Ukrainian; our Association informed UN bodies on relevant risks and challenges to such persons²⁵²⁶²⁷²⁸²⁹³⁰.

Ukraine filed an Application with the International Court of Justice (ICJ) but Russia refused to execute the ICJ order in this case to stop the aggression³¹. Russia-controlled troops and mercenaries committed in Ukraine gross violation of international law³²³³³⁴³⁵³⁶³⁷³⁸. Those issues now are the subject of the investigation the International Criminal Court (ICC),³⁹ including issue of Russia’s deportation Ukrainian children. Due to gross violation the human rights Ukraine filed an application to the European Court of Human Rights also⁴⁰. Russia refused to

¹⁸ <https://web.archive.org/web/20220608185639/https://arc.construction/10705>

¹⁹ <https://web.archive.org/web/20220807152501/https://arc.construction/3537>

²⁰ <https://web.archive.org/web/20220608181507/https://arc.construction/13499>

²¹ <https://web.archive.org/web/20220609150130/https://arc.construction/10072>

²² <https://web.archive.org/web/20220609150222/https://arc.construction/8345>

²³ <https://web.archive.org/web/20220706035205/https://arc.construction/13035>

²⁴ <https://web.archive.org/web/20220513192034/https://arc.construction/5153?lang=ru>

²⁵ <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2022-04/association-reintegration-crimea-ukraine-minnesota-protocol.pdf>

²⁶ <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2022-04/AssociationReintegrationCrimeaSubmission.pdf>

²⁷ <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2022-04/association-reintegration-crimea.pdf>

²⁸ <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2022-04/association-reintegration-crimea.pdf>

²⁹ https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2022-05/arc_replies-dp.pdf

³⁰ <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/disappearances/cfi/draft-stm/submissions/2022-09-05/association-of-reintegration-of-crimea-draft-stm.pdf>

³¹ <https://www.icj-cij.org/en/case/182>

³² <https://sofrep.com/news/russian-soldiers-gang-raped-ukrainian-woman-as-her-child-was-crying-in-the-next-room/>

³³ <https://www.icj-cij.org/public/files/case-related/182/182-20220307-PRE-01-00-EN.pdf>

³⁴ <https://www.bbc.com/ukrainian/features-60888528>

³⁵ <https://hromadske.radio/en/news/2022/03/09/members-of-the-wagner-group-have-been-killed-in-ukraine>

³⁶ <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-60547807>

³⁷ <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/03/1113652>

³⁸ <https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/04/03/ukraine-apparent-war-crimes-russia-controlled-areas>

³⁹ <https://www.icc-cpi.int/ukraine>

⁴⁰ <https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng-press?i=003-7282553-9922068>

execute the demand of the ECtHR and the order of ICJ to immediately suspend the military operations⁴¹.

On March 16 2022, Russia was excluded from the Council of Europe and refused officially to execute the demands of European Convention on Human Rights⁴² that guarantees rights to life, freedom and safe migration. UN HRC expressed grave concern at the documented harm to the enjoyment of many human rights, resulting from Russia's aggression against Ukraine⁴³.

On 8 March 2022 UN human rights recalled that intentional attacks against civilian objects amount to war crimes⁴⁴. On 6 May 2022 UN human rights experts and the Global Protection Cluster Coordinator issued a statement alarming by the scale of displacement in Ukraine⁴⁵.

UN General Assembly in its resolution ES-11/1 recognized that the military operations of Russia inside Ukraine are on a scale that the international community has not seen in Europe in decades⁴⁶. UN General Assembly in its resolution ES-11/2 demanded again full respect for and protection of objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population⁴⁷.

Such UN decisions^{48,49,50} are not executed by Russian troops, Russia-controlled mercenaries and terroristic groups, which established policy of terror and repressions over the Russia-occupied territories of Ukraine. Russian troops, fake "military-civil administrations" and "military commandant's offices" created by Russian invaders use actively the practice of deportation and extrajudicial executions of local civil population, including children^{51,52}.

A lot of persons, including children and their relatives, who tried to evacuate themselves from conflict zone, were killed or kidnapped as "non-loyal" ones⁵³. Russian troops blocked since 2022 the humanitarian corridors established to evacuate civil population, including children from hostilities zones and occupied territories and blocked any information about such corridors.

In the Russia-occupied Crimea, all Ukrainian minors taken in this way from the war zone to the peninsula were subject to criminal "sorting"⁵⁴. A lot of displacing persons, including children, disappeared after they were captured by Russians to the so-called "filtration camps".⁵⁵ This approach is accompanied by the attitude of the occupiers, Russian colonizers and collaborators to "Ukrainian refugees" as "third-class people" because of "their long residence in Ukraine"⁵⁶. Local sources informed about sexual exploitation of such children.

On April, 2022 the aggressor-controlled newspaper "Yevpatoriyska Zdravnitza" published a de facto instruction for scheme of criminal "re-registration" of deported children that simplified its illegal sexual exploitation⁵⁷. On May 31, the aggressor-controlled so-called "Commissioner for protection of children's rights" of Sevastopol, Marina Peschanskaya, stated during a "report" that displaced persons who arrived in the city from the war zone in mainland Ukraine were "massively hiding from registration". Ukrainian citizens do it understanding the corresponding risks for them and their own children in the occupied Crimea⁵⁸.

⁴¹ <https://www.icj-cij.org/public/files/case-related/182/182-20220316-ORD-01-00-EN.pdf>

⁴² <https://web.archive.org/web/20220322175027/https://arc.construction/26897>

⁴³ <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/RegularSessions/Session49/Pages/ResDecStat.aspx>

⁴⁴ <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=28231&LangID=E>

⁴⁵ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2022/05/ukraine-millions-displaced-traumatised-and-urgently-need-help-say-experts>

⁴⁶ <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3959039?ln=ru>

⁴⁷ <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3966630?ln=en>

⁴⁸ <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/04/1115782>

⁴⁹ <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3967950?ln=ru>

⁵⁰ <https://web.archive.org/web/20220612122520/https://arc.construction/31039>

⁵¹ <https://hromadske.radio/en/news/2022/03/09/members-of-the-wagner-group-have-been-killed-in-ukraine>

⁵² <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-60547807>

⁵³ <https://web.archive.org/web/20220819134455/https://arc.construction/26918>

⁵⁴ <https://web.archive.org/web/20220929173744/https://arc.construction/29005>

⁵⁵ <https://web.archive.org/web/20220701233834/https://arc.construction/33269>

⁵⁶ <https://web.archive.org/web/20221002154444/https://arc.construction/28224>

⁵⁷ <https://web.archive.org/web/20220607090836/https://arc.construction/29119>

⁵⁸ <https://web.archive.org/web/20220608184817/https://arc.construction/32274>

Some thousand persons were kidnapped by Russian militaries and punitive structures in occupied part of Kherson Region only. A lot of persons were kidnapped by Russian invaders in the “checkpoints” between the Crimea and Ukraine’s mainland⁵⁹. In the Russia-occupied Crimea a lot of children, transferred from Ukraine’s mainland, disappeared in April-May, 2022⁶⁰⁶¹⁶². A big group of Ukrainian youth disappeared from Yevpatoria, where the Russian occupiers concentrated up to 2,000 criminally “evacuated” children in September, 2022 on the basis of Ukrainian children’s sanatoriums illegally seized in 2014, those children have been in difficult living conditions, had significant problems with food and warm things.

Local sources informed about sexual exploitation of such children by “administration” of those “youth camps” and a lot of propaganda media content was made by aggressor’s authorities with those children, including digital environment.

Later, from the last days of December 2022, all these “evacuated” children of the aggressor’s structures were suddenly, without warning, and en masse taken out of occupied Yevpatoria, but they did not return to the Kherson region, in particular, to its Russian-occupied part, there was no information about the current whereabouts of these children for months⁶³⁶⁴⁶⁵.

Next search of this children and returning them to Ukraine, as the PACE and Euro Parliament resolutions 2482 (2023) and 2022/2049 directly pointed⁶⁶⁶⁷, demand usage modern technologies, including genetic expertise. “Conflict Observatory” published on February, 14 report “Russia’s systematic program for the ‘re-education & adoption’ of Ukraine’s children”. Report points that facilities in Russia and Russia-occupied Crimea had held, at least, 6,000 children from Ukraine’s mainland since 24 February 2022.

The separation of children from their parents for indefinite periods documented in this report, which constitute a violation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Some of the actions of Russia’s government and its proxies detailed in this report, such as unnecessarily expediting the “adoption and fostering” of children from Ukraine during the current emergency, constitute a potential war crime and crime against humanity in some cases, researchers stress. Experts identified the network at least 43 facilities, 41 of which are pre-existing summer camps in Russia-occupied Crimea and Russia. Experts point that the exact number of facilities is likely significantly higher than identified in this report⁶⁸.

On February, 23, 2023 the UN General Assembly called for ending the war in Ukraine and expressed grave concern at the high number of civilian casualties, including women and children, the number of internally displaced persons and refugees in need of humanitarian assistance, and violations and abuses committed against children⁶⁹.

On February 24, 2023 OSCE officials and structures made a number of statements, condemning the Russia’s atrocities⁷⁰⁷¹. Also on February 24, a Joint Statement of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Bureau, was made also. In a Joint Statement, the OSCE PA Bureau condemned Russia’s kidnapping of thousands of Ukrainian children for forced adoption and

⁵⁹ <https://web.archive.org/web/20220608175342/https://arc.construction/30144>

⁶⁰ <https://web.archive.org/web/20220929173744/https://arc.construction/29005>

⁶¹ <https://web.archive.org/web/20220609151253/https://arc.construction/32309>

⁶² <https://web.archive.org/web/20221004172453/https://arc.construction/28407>

⁶³ <https://arcrimea.org/en/news/2023/01/15/disappearance-of-kidnapped-kherson-children-from-yevpatoria/>

⁶⁴ <https://arcrimea.org/en/news/2023/01/22/invaders-propaganda-and-missed-kherson-children/>

⁶⁵ <https://arcrimea.org/en/news/2023/01/27/new-questions-about-children-deported-by-occupiers/>

⁶⁶ <https://arcrimea.org/en/analytics/2023/01/26/new-fundamental-resolution-of-pace-regarding-russias-aggression/>

⁶⁷ https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2023-0011_EN.html

⁶⁸ <https://arcrimea.org/en/news/2023/02/15/american-researchers-confirmed-illegality-of-aggressors-deportation-ukrainian-children/>

⁶⁹ <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/LTD/N23/048/58/PDF/N2304858.pdf?OpenElement>

⁷⁰ <https://arcrimea.org/en/news/2023/02/25/osce-statements-were-made-on-large-scale-russian-aggression-anniversary/>

⁷¹ <https://www.osce.org/odihr/537933>

assimilation. OSCE PA Bureau also called to support the children of Ukraine to overcome the trauma they have experienced⁷².

On March, 17, 2023 ICC has issued an arrest warrant for Russia's president Vladimir Putin for overseeing the abduction of Ukrainian children. In granting the request for warrants by the ICC prosecutor, a panel of judges agreed that there were reasonable grounds to believe Putin and his children's rights commissioner, Maria Lvova-Belova, bore responsibility for the unlawful deportation of Ukrainian children⁷³⁷⁴.

Special challenges appeared on issue of artificial intelligence challenges, regarding youth sexual exploitation in digital environment. Our Association's experts initiated discussion already in UN bodies on issues artificial intelligence challenges, especially in areas of human rights violation, countering hate speech, fakes dissemination, autocracy and war crimes in interstate and internal conflict zones, regarding aggressor's relevant illegal activities in the occupied Crimea⁷⁵. We stressed that Russia-controlled structures in became a tool for legalizing artificial intelligence technologies stolen by the Russian special services in democratic countries or communist China⁷⁶⁷⁷⁷⁸, applicable, among other things, for youth sexual exploitation in digital environment.

So such proposals to combating the phenomena of child sexual exploitation and abuse in digital environment may be pointed.

1. Issues of legal subjectivity and responsibility of artificial intelligence, involved into child sexual exploitation and abuse in digital environment also as of its creators and coordinators, must be researched.

2. Also, regarding conditions on hostilities and interstate conflict demands of Rome Statute, Geneva Convention and Additional Protocols must be taken in account regarding war crimes and crimes against humanity committed against children, used in child sexual exploitation and abuse in digital environment.

15th of May, 2024

Representative of the ARC
Dr. Borys Babin



⁷² <https://www.oscepa.org/en/documents/officers-of-the-assembly/4627-joint-statement-of-the-osce-pa-bureau-action-on-the-one-year-anniversary-of-russia-s-war-against-ukraine-and-the-international-legal-order-24-february-2023/file>

⁷³ <https://www.icc-cpi.int/news/situation-ukraine-icc-judges-issue-arrest-warrants-against-vladimir-vladimirovich-putin-and>

⁷⁴ <https://arcrimea.org/en/analytics/2023/03/04/deportation-of-ukrainian-youth-by-russian-invaders-specifics-of-legal-response/>

⁷⁵ <https://arcrimea.org/en/activity/2024/03/02/un-artificial-intelligence-russian-aggression-and-occupied-crimea/>

⁷⁶ <https://arcrimea.org/en/investigations/2024/03/31/scams-with-artificial-intelligence-in-crimean-healthcare/>

⁷⁷ <https://arcrimea.org/en/news/2024/04/06/aggressor-legalizes-hastily-its-crimean-provocations-in-area-of-artificial-intelligence/>

⁷⁸ <https://arcrimea.org/en/investigations/2024/03/29/artificial-intelligence-of-crimean-winemaking-innocent-scams-or-aggressors-strategic-disinformation-operation/>