



ASSOCIATION OF REINTEGRATION
OF CRIMEA

France, Paris, 14 Avenue de l'Opera, 75001
Ukraine, Kyiv, 56 Kharkivske highroad, 02175
arcconstructionofcrimea@gmail.com

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To UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women and Girls

**Russian Aggression in Ukraine,
Prostitution and Violence against Women and Girls**

ARC experts, DrHab Borys Babin, PhD Anna Prikhodko, Julia Sidorenko

Our Association of Reintegration of Crimea (ARC)¹, is non-governmental expert and human rights organisation, with activities devoted to Crimea's issues. ARC's expert researches are related with human rights of Crimean residents and ethnic groups, including social and economic rights. Since 2020 we sent more than 70 submissions and proposals to UN human rights' strictures, major part of them were published in the UN web-sources, including the issues of women rights²³⁴⁵

Regarding questionnaire of UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women and Girls on the nexus between the global phenomenon of prostitution and violence against women and girls we submit such information describing situation on Russia-occupied territories of in Ukraine

In 2014 Russia occupied Crimea and some areas on East of Ukraine.

We informed UN Special Rapporteur on the sale and sexual exploitation of children for annual thematic report to be presented to the 76th session of the General Assembly in October 2021⁶ 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"⁷ and 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 2014.

We informed UN Special Rapporteur that in 2015-2017 (no recent information is available from open sources) no criminal cases on such issues (article 127-1 "Human Trafficking" of the Russia's Criminal Code, illegally implemented in Crimea since 2014) have been under consideration in the Russia's "courts" illegally established in Crimea⁸. Later situation was and is the same on all Russia-controlled territory of Ukraine.

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 Yalta⁹, Alushta¹⁰ and other places. They have close connection with "Crimean

¹ https://www.journal-officiel.gouv.fr/associations/detail-annonce/associations_b/20210005/1348

² <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/OlderPersons/OlderWomen/submissions-csos/Association-reintegration-Crimea.docx>

³ https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/HRBodies/CEDAW/DGD24June2021/Oral_statements/Part1/31.DOC

⁴ <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/Women/SR/Femicide/2021-submissions/CSOs/association-of-reintegration.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2022-06/Association%20of%20Reintegration%20of%20Crimea.pdf>

⁶ <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/Children/SR/GA76/Association-of-reintegration-of-crimer.pdf>

⁷ <https://web.archive.org/web/20220513192034/https://arc.construction/5153?lang=ru>

⁸ http://vs.krm.sudrf.ru/modules.php?id=75&name=docum_sud

⁹ <https://web.archive.org/web/20220609150130/https://arc.construction/10072>

¹⁰ <https://web.archive.org/web/20220807154450/https://arc.construction/10172>

republican authorities” as the “Head of the Republic of Crimea” Sergey Aksyonov¹¹, “Head of State Council of the Republic of Crimea” Vladimir Konstantinov¹², head of “Supreme Court of the Republic of Crimea” Igor Radionov¹³ and others. 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, including prostitution and trafficking. Thus, the criminal groups, which use prostitution in Crimea (including sexual exploitation and youth trafficking), 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 Region¹⁴, Ossetia¹⁵, Chechnya, Tatarstan, Bashkortostan¹⁶ and Ukraine’s mainland. The ethnic criminal group from Yalta is connected with child prostitution and child pornography, 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” project¹⁷, co-ordinated by the Russian government, with participation of some extremist and marginal politicians from Austria¹⁸, Italy, Germany, France¹⁹ U.S.²⁰ 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 prostitution and other sexual abuse and child trafficking in the Crimea, that enjoy impunity.

The participation of the Crimean organised criminal groups in contemporary forms of slavery poses additional challenges to the identification of victims as there are no effective remedies in the occupied peninsula as a “grey zone”²¹. Legislative frameworks to combat young women prostitution, child sexual abuse and child trafficking in the Crimea, are not effective in the Crimea, 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.

Since 24th of February 2022 Russia commits broad and open military aggression to all Ukraine’s territory against Ukrainian mainland.

Due last twenty three monthes Russia occupied some territories of Donetsk, Kherson, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhya regions and active hostilities were are going with total population of thousands of persons near the frontline and millions in the occupied zones.

Russia-controlled troops and mercenaries committed in Ukraine, during this aggressive operation, gross violation of international humanitarian law and international human rights’ law already, including broad crimes against women²².

Russia commenced an unprovoked invasion throughout Ukrainian territory, which is already causing catastrophic harms to Ukraine and its people, including gross violation the international humanitarian law and destruction the fundamental human rights²³²⁴²⁵²⁶²⁷²⁸²⁹.

¹¹ <https://web.archive.org/web/20220607092333/https://arc.construction/8656>

¹² <https://web.archive.org/web/20220615101543/https://arc.construction/6015>

¹³ <https://web.archive.org/web/20220527225826/https://arc.construction/8712>

¹⁴ <https://web.archive.org/web/20220608185639/https://arc.construction/10705>

¹⁵ <https://web.archive.org/web/20220807152501/https://arc.construction/3537>

¹⁶ <https://web.archive.org/web/20220608181507/https://arc.construction/13499>

¹⁷ <https://web.archive.org/web/20220609150130/https://arc.construction/10072>

¹⁸ <https://web.archive.org/web/20220609150222/https://arc.construction/8345>

¹⁹ <https://web.archive.org/web/20220706035205/https://arc.construction/13035>

²⁰ <https://arcrimea.org/en/news/2024/01/17/indicative-adventures-of-sex-offenders-daughter-in-grozny-and-washington/>

²¹ <https://web.archive.org/web/20220513192034/https://arc.construction/5153?lang=ru>

²² <https://sofrep.com/news/russian-soldiers-gang-raped-ukrainian-woman-as-her-child-was-crying-in-the-next-room/>

²³ <https://www.icj-cij.org/public/files/case-related/182/182-20220307-PRE-01-00-EN.pdf>

²⁴ <https://www.bbc.com/ukrainian/features-60888528>

²⁵ <https://hromadske.radio/en/news/2022/03/09/members-of-the-wagner-group-have-been-killed-in-ukraine>

²⁶ <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-60547807>

All war crimes, committed by Russian invaders during ongoing hostilities, are connected with absolutely clear Russia's war targets in maximal destruction the civil infrastructure, including objects, essential for human security, sustainable development and ecologic systems³⁰³¹³²³³³⁴³⁵.

So millions of Ukrainians, including women, who are extremely vulnerable in conditions of the interstate conflict, lost their houses and save access to medical and social services due to Russian aggression and related hostilities³⁶.

Russia's broad-scale aggression created principal barriers facing these realization by Ukrainian women and girls the right to equality, to sustainable development and to dignity.

In Russia-occupied territories women are vulnerable targets of rape, enforced disappearances, tortures and degrading threatment; Ukrainian-speaking and Crimean Tatar women are victims of racial discrimination also.

Women lost in Russia-controlled zone their property, works and assets, social payments and family connections. It generated high level risks for growth of prostitution, including trafficking, minors' prostitution and diseases' dissemination.

Such prostitution activities is under full commercial control of Russian unitive bodies, illegal «administrations» and criminal gangs, affiliated with them. As Association's experts informed UN Special Rapporteurs in the Russia-occupied Crimea, all Ukrainian minors taken in this way from the war zone to the peninsula were subject to criminal "sorting"³⁷.

A lot of displacing persons, including children, disappeared after they were captured by Russians to the so-called "filtration camps".³⁸ 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"³⁹. Local sources informed about sexual exploitation of such children, including girls' prostitution⁴⁰⁴¹⁴².

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 mainland⁴³. In the Russia-occupied Crimea a lot of children, transferred from Ukraine's mainland, disappeared in April-May, 2022⁴⁴⁴⁵⁴⁶. 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.

²⁷ <https://web.archive.org/web/20220326173016/https://arc.construction/26892>

²⁸ <https://news.un.org/en/story/2022/03/1113652>

²⁹ <https://www.hrw.org/news/2022/04/03/ukraine-apparent-war-crimes-russia-controlled-areas>

³⁰ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/interactive/2022/ukraine-before-after-destruction-photos/>

³¹ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/interactive/2022/ukraine-before-after-destruction-photos/>

³² <https://nv.ua/kharkiv/harkov-obstrelly-skolko-domov-razrusheno-dannye-31-marta-novosti-harkova-50229919.html>

³³ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/rus/news/2022/03/31/7336102/>

³⁴ <https://www.liga.net/politics/interview/mer-aleksandr-senkevich-rakety-do-nas-doletayut-za-tri-minuty-pod-pritselom-ves-nikolaev>

³⁵ <https://unitar.org/maps/map/3540>

³⁶ <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/russia-ukraine-war/128m-people-displaced-in-ukraine-since-russia-launched-war-un-human-rights-experts/2580552>

³⁷ <https://web.archive.org/web/20220929173744/https://arc.construction/29005>

³⁸ <https://web.archive.org/web/20220701233834/https://arc.construction/33269>

³⁹ <https://web.archive.org/web/20221002154444/https://arc.construction/28224>

⁴⁰ <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/children/cfi/vulnerabilities-children/csos/2022-07-26/submission-sdgs-cso-ARC-second-submission.pdf>

⁴¹ <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>

⁴² <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/children/cfi/vulnerabilities-children/csos/2022-07-26/submission-sdgs-cso-Association-of-reintegration-to-crimea.pdf>

⁴³ <https://web.archive.org/web/20220608175342/https://arc.construction/30144>

⁴⁴ <https://web.archive.org/web/20220929173744/https://arc.construction/29005>

⁴⁵ <https://web.archive.org/web/20220609151253/https://arc.construction/32309>

⁴⁶ <https://web.archive.org/web/20221004172453/https://arc.construction/28407>

As Association's experts informed UN Rapporteurs, 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. 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 months⁴⁷⁴⁸⁴⁹.

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 children⁵⁰⁵¹.

In Russia-occupied territories illegal "authorities" use issues of deported minors as a tool of criminal influence on local population during Russia's preparations for illegal "presidential elections" that will be organized in Russia-occupied territory in February-March 2024, as Russia-controlled structures promise to local Ukrainian population, especially in Kherson and Zaporizhzhya regions, that persons who will refuse to participate in such "presidential elections" and to "vote for Putin", "will never see their children" and will be "deprived of parents' rights".

All Ukraine's attempts for the peace-building, including peace talks and negotiations with Russian government were unsuccessful and Russia rejects all peace propositions and it refuses to execute the demands of ICJ and ECtHR orders to stop the aggression and hostilities that are directly pointed against women fundamental rights.

Regarding potential areas of thematic focus for the UN future work our Association propose thematics of: prevention minors' prostitution and criminal violence against prostitution in conflict zones and territories under foreign control; prevention prostitution of deported, displaced and migrated women and girls; prevention prostitution of indigenous women and girls.

Our Association believes that next urgent, immediate steps of the UN officials and working groups in Ukraine, in condition of ongoing interstate conflict and hostilities, must be done, including all observation procedures and visit to Ukraine; monitoring procedures, mentioned in UN HRC resolutions, must be enforced immediately.

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Representative of the ARC
Dr. Borys Babin



⁴⁷ <https://arcrimea.org/en/news/2023/01/15/disappearance-of-kidnapped-kherson-children-from-yevpatoria/>

⁴⁸ <https://arcrimea.org/en/news/2023/01/22/invaders-propaganda-and-missed-kherson-children/>

⁴⁹ <https://arcrimea.org/en/news/2023/01/27/new-questions-about-children-deported-by-occupiers/>

⁵⁰ <https://www.icc-cpi.int/news/situation-ukraine-icc-judges-issue-arrest-warrants-against-vladimir-vladimirovich-putin-and>

⁵¹ <https://arcrimea.org/en/analytics/2023/03/04/deportation-of-ukrainian-youth-by-russian-invaders-specifics-of-legal-response/>