

# Press release: FCO Minister welcomes release of Ilmi Umerov and Akhtem Chiygoz

Minister for Europe Sir Alan Duncan has welcomed the release of the Crimean Tatar leaders and drawn attention to the considerable number of Ukrainian political prisoners who continue to be detained by Russia.

I welcome the fact that the Crimean Tatar leaders Ilmi Umerov and Akhtem Chiygoz were freed yesterday, 25 October. They were both arrested and sentenced by Russia for their opposition to the illegal annexation of Crimea. The UK had previously called for their release, and appreciates the efforts of all those who worked for this outcome.

Nevertheless we must not lose sight of the many others, including other Crimean Tatars, who have been detained by the de-facto Russian authorities for their opposition to the illegal annexation of Crimea. I call once again for the immediate release of all Ukrainian political prisoners on the Crimean Peninsula and in Russia. The UK remains clear that Crimea is part of Ukraine, and that its annexation by Russia is a breach of international law.