

UK statement on the human rights situation in Ukraine

Thank you, Mr President,

The United Kingdom thanks the Deputy High Commissioner for her update and welcomes the 28th report of the OHCHR Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine.

Fighting regrettably continues in and around civilian areas of eastern Ukraine in this fifth year of the conflict. In this reporting period, we saw 42 civilian casualties, seven of which were children. We remain concerned about mines and explosive remnants of war, which continue to cause fatalities on both sides of the Line of Contact. We call on both sides to better protect civilians.

Russia continues to commit human rights violations in illegally annexed Crimea. We condemn the arbitrary arrests, detentions and crackdown on freedom of expression, all aimed at intimidating the people of Crimea. Russia continues to ignore UN General Assembly resolution 73/263. We urgently call on Russia to allow international monitoring organisations access to the peninsula.

We are particularly concerned by reports of torture, ill-treatment and denial of medical care to persons unlawfully detained in Crimea and Russia. Following the release of Oleg Sentsov and four other Ukrainian detainees on 7 September, the released men informed the OHCHR of torture, including electroshocks, threats of sexual violence, suffocation, and beatings, during their time in detention. Over 86 Ukrainian political prisoners remain in detention in Crimea and Russia. We call on Russia to immediately end this appalling treatment and release all remaining Ukrainian political prisoners.

Madam Deputy High Commissioner,

What can the international community do to help end the ill-treatment and torture of detained Ukrainian citizens in Crimea and Russia? Thank you.

Finally, I would like to thank Deputy High Commissioner Gilmore for her for her years of exemplary service and her contributions to the cause of human rights around the world.