

# UN Human Rights Council 42 – High Commissioner’s oral update on Ukraine

The United Kingdom thanks the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for her update and welcomes the 27th report of the Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine.

Fighting continues in and around civilian areas of eastern Ukraine. In this reporting period, we have seen an increase in casualties and injuries. Of the sixty citizens who were injured, nine were children; 3,339 civilians have died since the conflict started. We call on both sides to do more to protect civilians.

We are concerned by the crackdown on the right to freedom of expression in illegally annexed Crimea, particularly in cases where Russian anti-extremism legislation has been applied to content posted on social media before the annexation. We condemn Russia for failing to comply with UN General Assembly resolution 73/263, and urgently call on Russia to allow international monitoring organisations unhindered access to the peninsula.

The recent release of the 24 Ukrainian servicemen and political prisoners, such as Oleg Sentsov, was long overdue. However, there are still over 70 Ukrainian political prisoners detained in Crimea and Russia. This includes 23 Crimean Tatar activists detained during house raids in March 2019. We call on Russia to release all Ukrainian political prisoners.

We welcome this year’s successful Pride Equality Marches, including the steps taken by the Ukrainian authorities to ensure that participants were able to enjoy their rights freely and safely.

Madam High Commissioner,

What more can the international community do to highlight and tackle the continued persecution of Crimean Tatars in illegally annexed Crimea?