



Notes for the HRC/Forum on Minority Issues

14th session

Thursday, December 2, 2021 - Friday, December 3, 2021

In a world of hybrid forms of warfare and conflict, our traditional understanding and classifications of war and conflicts targeting minorities requires a rethink.

Today Russia, with a centuries long history of ethnocide and genocide, has become a global leader and innovator in new layered hybrid methods whose ultimate goal is the elimination of ethnic, religious and LGBTQ minorities.

Numerically, the largest group being victimized by Russia is its Ukrainian minority. This has been an ongoing policy since at least the pro-democracy Orange Revolution of 2004 in neighbouring Ukraine. According to official Russian censuses between 2002 and 2010 over 1 million ethnic Ukrainians in Russia, or 35%, “disappeared”, decreasing numbers from 2,942, 961 to 1, 927, 988.

Since 2010 this process has accelerated. During the past 15 years and at progressively increasing and expanding tempos Russian authorities have been liquidating Ukrainian organizations in various regions of Russia, depriving the Ukrainian ethnic minority of institutional and organizational frameworks and of any opportunities to study their native language, or



practice their culture.

In addition, the Russian government has completely isolated the Ukrainian community in Russia from the global Ukrainian community by labelling the Ukrainian World Congress as an “undesirable organization” according to Russian law.

Russian laws are written targeting the human rights of the Ukrainian minority through legislative prohibitions of Ukrainian organized life. In 2010, Russian authorities liquidated the Federal National-Cultural Autonomy of Ukrainians of Russia, and in 2012 they banned the Organization of Ukrainians of Russia – the two main coordinating associations of Ukrainians in Russia, which had operated in Russia since the 1990’s.

Additionally, in 2017, the Russian authorities liquidated the Library of Ukrainian Literature in Moscow, the only cultural institution of its kind in the Russian Federation, serving Moscow’s large Ukrainian community. Community leaders are threatened with job losses, their children with the loss of educational opportunities.

In the Russian controlled/occupied Ukrainian territories of the Donbas and Crimea, Ukrainians and Crimean Tatars suffer more traditional forms of violence: extrajudicial killing, disappearances, arbitrary arrests, torture, and show trials.

The architect of this policy for the methodical ethnocide of the Ukrainian



minority in Russia became evident on July 12, 2021. It was on this day that President Putin published his infamous treatise “On the Historical Unity of Russians and Ukrainians”; not only denying Ukraine’s historic right to statehood, but ultimately also denying Ukrainian existence, claiming Ukrainians are really Russians.

Last month around the world Ukrainians memorialized the millions who died during the Holodomor genocide targeting Ukrainians, during which millions were starved to death in the very breadbasket of Europe.

Today, Europe is once again the host of a large-scale plan of ethnocide. Putin is methodically laying the groundwork to achieve the same outcome: the elimination of one of the world’s largest minorities, Ukrainians within the Russian Federation.

We call upon the UN to stop this ethnocidal plan to eliminate millions of Ukrainians.