Human Rights Council, 51st Session
4th October 2022

ID Item 4: Oral update of the High Commissioner on Ukraine

Oral statement delivered by the International Fellowship of Reconciliation.

Mr. President,

International Fellowship of Reconciliation thanks the Office of the High Commissioner for the oral update.

We stand in solidarity with the people of Ukraine who are suffering for the ongoing war which is causing tragedies and violations and an inhumane nuclear threat.

We stand in solidarity with those who courageously refuse to kill and call on the international community to ensure full legal guarantees of their human right to conscientious objection and to provide them protection and asylum.

The right to conscientious objection to military service should be absolutely protected and cannot be restricted as highlighted in the last OHCHR quadrennial thematic report [presented at the last session].

We are alarmed by the current suspension of the right to conscientious objection in Ukraine, the consequent detention sentences and the travel ban for all men aged 18-60. We have been informed of repression of students protests against the prohibition to study abroad.

IFOR is also deeply concerned by the forced mobilization in Ukrainian occupied territories and by the new mobilisation measures issued by the Russian Federation which include imprisonment for those who refuse to enlist.

IFOR gives voice to all those who are non-violently resisting war and acknowledge the efforts of the many who support reconciliation and peacebuilding efforts. For instance, Stop The War Now has just concluded its 4th peace caravan to Ukraine bringing in humanitarian aid and also support to ongoing local civil society peace initiatives.

UN Member States should urgently pursue the way to peace negotiations and facilitate such a path which is within the United Nations purposes.

Thank you.

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2. Analytical report by the OHCHR (see paragraph 5), https://undocs.org/en/A/HRC/50/43
4. Law of Ukraine “On mobilization and preparation for mobilization” and presidential decree “On general mobilization” does not mention any exemptions for conscientious objectors to military service.
6. Kucher Andrii Volodymyrovych, internally displaced person from Zhytomyr Oblast, was found guilty and sentenced to imprisonment for 4 years, with 3 years of probation in lieu of incarceration, since, according to the sentence of Mukachevo City District Court of Zakarpattia Oblast of 18 May 2022 officially published in the Unified State Register of Court Decisions [https://reestr.court.gov.ua/Review/104351558] he “avoided conscription for military service during mobilization in a special period due to the fact that he has pacifist views and does not want to take up arms”.
8. Ukrainian student was brutally beaten up, https://www.youtube.com/shorts/3hgMThRaMbA
10. Peace network to support peace in Ukraine made by over 175 Italian organizations https://www.stopthewarnow.eu/