

**Human Rights Council, 49<sup>th</sup> Session**  
**Geneva, 8<sup>th</sup> March 2022**

**Item 2: General Debate with the High Commissioner on Human Rights**

Madame High Commissioner,

International Fellowship of Reconciliation - IFOR is extremely concerned about the deterioration of human rights as a result of warfare including in Ukraine.

We express our solidarity to all those who are suffering because of war.

We plead to promote peace without increasing ongoing violence.

The answer cannot be reduced to the alternative of suffering or waging war.

The way forward is through international law, cooperation, disarmament and the establishment of civilian peace corps, for instance.

We support the right to refuse to kill and non-violent resistance to war, in Ukraine, in Russia and in all countries, including the «No Means No» campaign in Belarus to support war resisters.

Violations of the right to conscientious objection to military service continue, including in Colombia, where irregular recruitment practices -“batidas”- persist, [ignoring rulings from the Constitutional Court<sup>1</sup>, recruitment regulations and compliance with the peace agreement].<sup>2</sup>

We are concerned about violations of the right to Freedom of Expression and Assembly also for those protesting against war. Over 13,000 protesters<sup>3</sup> have been detained in 147 Russian cities since February 24<sup>th</sup>.<sup>4</sup>

Freedom of thought, conscience and religion is a non-derogable right and, as is freedom of expression, it continues to apply in situations of armed conflict.

We would also like to draw the attention of this Council to the nuclear threat.

Nuclear deterrence does not maintain peace and security, it only brings terror and threat to humanity.

The Right to Life is “the supreme right from which no derogation is permitted”<sup>5</sup>; [the UN Human Rights Committee<sup>6</sup> stated that the threat or use of nuclear weapons is incompatible with the Right to Life and may amount to a crime under international law].

IFOR urgently calls on all Member States to ratify and implement the UN nuclear ban treaty [Treaty on the prohibition of nuclear weapons]<sup>7</sup>.

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1 Sentence C-879/11 - Measures to compel those who have not complied with the obligation to register in order to define their military situation - They cannot consist of arbitrary detentions that violate personal liberty or judicial confidentiality.

2 Annual Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General, 37<sup>th</sup> session, 26 February-23 March 2018. National, regional and international human rights law stipulates that military forces are not responsible for citizen security, the fight against organised crime, coexistence and development. In exceptional situations, the National Police may require military assistance, which must be provided in accordance with the principle of police primacy and with strict civilian control. The tasks of coexistence and development are the exclusive responsibility of the civilian authorities”.

3 As of March 6<sup>th</sup>.

4 According to OVD-Info data. <https://ovd.news/news/2022/03/02/russian-protests-against-war-ukraine-chronicle-events>

5 Parag. 2 of General Comment n. 36 of the Human Rights Committee.

6 General Comment No. 36 (2018) on art. 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) on the right to life.

7 entered into force last January 22<sup>nd</sup> 2021.