

Human Rights Council, 51st Session

23rd September 2022

Item 4: Interactive dialogue with the International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine

Oral statement delivered by the International Fellowship of Reconciliation.

Mr. President,

War should be abolished because it is never a conflict resolution, neither in Ukraine nor in other countries. On the contrary it brings devastating and dramatic consequences on the people and on the land.

Excellencies, colleagues, we are here today addressing violations directly connected to the ongoing war.

The victims are waiting for action. [As we head yesterday during the ID with the SR on Myanmar, concerning another violent conflict, actions speak louder than words.]

In resolution (A/HRC/S-34/L.1) the Human Rights Council reiterated its demand for an immediate end of military hostilities against Ukraine, and for all parties to the conflict to respect the fundamental principles and rules of international humanitarian law

We stand in solidarity with the people of Ukraine and mourn with them. We stand in solidarity also with those opposing to war and refusing to kill.

We have been notified that the Ukrainian Ministry of Defence replied to the *Ukrainian Pacifist Movement* that "Due to martial law, since 24.02.2022 the temporary military service in Ukraine is no longer implemented. Therefore, the implementation of alternative service is not applicable." ¹

The UN Human Rights Committee has clearly stated that the right to conscientious objection cannot be restricted for reasons of national security.²

IFOR is also concerned by the forced mobilization of conscripts in Ukrainian territory controlled by Russian affiliated armed groups³.

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. The right to conscientious objection to military service should be absolutely protected and cannot be restricted as highlighted by the quadrennial analytical thematic report by OHCHR presented at the 50th session⁴.

Thank you.

¹ <https://en.connection-ev.org/article-3614>

² <https://www.refworld.org/docid/453883fb22.html>

³ Situation of human rights in Ukraine in the context of the armed attack by the Russian Federation, 24 February –15 May 2022, a report published by the OHCHR on 29 June 2022 (see paragraphs 109, 110), <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/country-reports/situation-human-rights-ukraine-context-armed-attack-russian-federation>

⁴ Conscientious objection to military service. Analytical report by the OHCHR (see paragraph 5), <https://undocs.org/en/A/HRC/50/43>.