
Council of Europe: “ending discrimination of Crimean Tatars. They are an integral part of the European community”

“Crimean Tatars in Crimea, and especially those opposing Crimea’s illegal annexation or expressing dissent, are being subjected to numerous patterns of serious violations of human rights, persecution, discrimination, and stigmatisation by the Russian occupying authorities. This is further reinforced by a culture of impunity for such violations that is prevalent in the peninsula”. This was stated by the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, Dunja Mijatović, as she released a report on the human rights situation of Crimean Tatars in Ukraine’s Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, illegally annexed by the Russian Federation in 2014, and Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. The report recalls that “international humanitarian law prohibits an occupying power from applying its penal laws on occupied territory”. The Commissioner asks for “an end to all criminal prosecutions based on the misuse of Russian anti-extremism and counter-terrorism laws, or other similarly spurious charges, targeting many members of the Crimean Tatar community in Crimea”. Mijatović calls for “humane treatment of all those held in detention in Crimea and in Russia”. As to the “enforced disappearances” of dozens of Crimean Tatars: “All those responsible for such grave violations of human rights must be brought to justice”, she pointed out. “Crimean Tatars are an integral part of the broader European community and history”.

Valentina Bombelli