

Human Rights Council, 49th session
Geneva, 30th March 2022

Item 10: Interactive dialogue on the oral update of the High Commissioner on Ukraine

Oral statement delivered by the International Fellowship of Reconciliation.

Mr. President,

International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR) thanks the High Commissioner and her office for the oral presentation on Ukraine.

We stand in solidarity with the people of Ukraine at this dramatic time of armed conflict.

War should be abolished because it is never a conflict resolution, neither in Ukraine neither in other countries. Member States should pursue with all efforts a diplomatic way to peace negotiations.

As stated several times, 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.

IFOR is concerned about the violation of the right to conscientious objection in Ukraine where males 18/60 years old are currently compelled not to leave the country in order to enforce total military mobilization.¹ Summons to mandatory military service are handed over to men trying to cross border². The order was enacted not by the law but by letters of Administration of the State Border Guard Service.³

It results that the above prohibition has no exceptions for conscientious objectors to military service. Sasha and Nikita, for instance, are two young pacifists who don't want to fight and are now stranded in Lviv as internally displaced persons.⁴

Likewise, we have been informed that exception for leaders of churches and religious organizations was not included in the Ukrainian Law "On mobilization training and mobilization".⁵

Furthermore, we heard news that the Ukrainian military attempts to recruit foreign nationals⁶ trying to leave the country and rejected at the border due to racism and discrimination.⁷

IFOR joins the UNHCR calls to Ukraine for "compassionate and humane" approach to the enforcement of martial law.⁸

Thank you.

¹ <https://theconversation.com/why-banning-men-from-leaving-ukraine-violates-their-human-rights-178411>

² <https://fakty.com.ua/ua/ukraine/20220307-czina-cholovichoyi-chesti-shho-vidomo-pro-uhylnykiv-na-kordoni-i-yaka-vidpovidalnist-za-habar/>

³ On February 24th, 25th and March 17th. <https://ips.ligazakon.net/document/FN073409?an=1>
<https://ips.ligazakon.net/document/view/fn073457>

⁴ <https://www.instagram.com/p/CaxMFGOKfW7/c/17920321619132077/>

⁵ <https://irs-in-ua.translate.google/p/103? x tr sl=uk& x tr tl=en& x tr hl=en& x tr pto=wapp>

⁶ <https://twitter.com/ABCNewsLive/status/1498785622865100802>

⁷ <https://abcnews.go.com/International/nonwhite-refugees-fleeing-ukraine-caught-theyre-limbo-borders/story?id=83211545>

⁸ <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2022/mar/09/ukraine-urged-to-take-humane-approach-as-men-try-to-flee-war>