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**The situation in the temporarily occupied territories
of Ukraine**

**Promotion and protection of human rights: human rights
situations and reports of special rapporteurs
and representatives**

**Letter dated 21 September 2020 from the Permanent
Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the
Secretary General**

I have the honour to transmit herewith the comment dated 16 September 2020 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine regarding the unlawful sentencing, on the same date, of Ukrainian citizens in the fabricated “Hizb ut-Tahrir” case (see annex).

I would appreciate your kind assistance in having the present letter and its annex distributed as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 65 and 72 (c), and of the Security Council.

(Signed) **Sergiy Kyslytsya**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative



Annex to the letter dated 21 September 2020 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary General

Comment by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine regarding the unlawful sentencing of Ukrainian citizens in yet another fabricated “Hizb ut-Tahrir” case

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine expresses its resolute protest to the Russian Federation regarding the unlawful sentencing of Marlen Asanov, Memet Belialov, Server Zekiriaiev, Timur Ibrahimov, Server Mustafaiev, Seyran Saliiev and Edem Smailov, all citizens of Ukraine, by the North Caucasian district military court on 16 September 2020 in Rostov-on-Don on fabricated charges of the involvement of the aforementioned individuals in the activities of a so-called terrorist organization “The Second Backhisaray Hizb ut-Tahrir Group”.

All the above mentioned Ukrainian citizens were illegally detained by the Russian authorities in the temporarily occupied Autonomous Republic of Crimea, charged under Article 205.5 of the Penal Code of the Russian Federation “Organization of and participation in terrorist activities” and in violation of the international law - unlawfully transferred to Russia to Rostov-on-Don. The pre-trial investigation and the trial were conducted with numerous procedural violations. All the proofs presented by the defense that demonstrated unsubstantiated nature of the charges were completely ignored. The final point of this shameful trial was today’s verdict sentencing M. Belialov to 18 years, M. Asanov to 19 years, T. Ibrahimov to 17 years, E. Saliiev to 17 years, S. Mustafaiev to 14 years, E. Smailov to 13 years, S. Zekiriaiev to 13 years of imprisonment.

Shocking terms of imprisonment on fabricated charges serve as a clear demonstration of the Russian occupation administration’s use of its anti-terror legislation as a cover up for its systemic policy of religious discrimination and political reprisals against the Crimean Tatars to intimidate and suppress any disloyal civil activity in the temporarily occupied peninsula.

The courage and the principled position of our citizens in upholding their innocence during the “farcical” court process deserve our special recognition.

The Russian Federation has to cancel the court verdict and immediately release Marlen Asanov, Memet Belialov, Server Zekiriaiev, Timur Ibrahimov, Server Mustafaiev, Seyran Saliiev and Edem Smailov along with all Ukrainian citizens illegally detained and held by Russia.

We call on the international community to react on this unlawful sentencing, condemn resolutely Russia’s illegal prosecution of those who have a different opinion, demand Russia stop violating norms of the international law, including the humanitarian law and the human rights law, in the occupied territories of Ukraine, continue active engagement in protecting rights and freedoms of the residents of the occupied Crimea, using both national and international mechanisms, and increase pressure on Russia, including through sanctions.