



SEIMAS OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA

COMMITTEE ON EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

STATEMENT

**ON THE CONTINUING OCCUPATION AND ANNEXATION OF CRIMEA BY THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION AND SERIOUS VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND
FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS OF UKRAINIAN CITIZENS**

20 February 2019

Vilnius

The Committee on European Affairs and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania (hereinafter referred to as ‘the Committees’),

recalling that five years have passed since the start of the occupation and annexation of Crimea through military force and serious violation of international law by the Russian Federation;

having regard to the United Nations General Assembly resolutions 68/262 of 27 March 2014, 71/205 of 19 December 2016, 72/190 of 19 December 2017, and 73/263 of 22 December 2018, which enshrine the UN commitment to the recognition of the territory of Crimea as part of Ukraine and express concern about human rights violations in the occupied Crimean peninsula;

noting that the Russian Federation has been pursuing, for some time, the militarisation of the Azov Sea and the annexed Crimean peninsula, thus posing a threat to the security of the region and of Europe as a whole;

recalling, as noted in Resolution No XIII-1702 of the Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania of 10 December 2018 on Support for Ukraine in the Face of Aggression by the Russian Federation, that Russia perpetrated an act of aggression on 25 November 2018 whereby the Ukrainian navy vessels on sail from Odessa to Ukraine’s Azov sea ports were attacked and prevented from passing through the Kerch Strait, during which incident the Ukrainian crew members were wounded, illegally arrested, interrogated and imprisoned in the Russian Federation and Crimea occupied thereby;

emphasising that the measures taken by the authorities of the Russian Federation against Ukrainian citizens, including politically motivated persecution, unlawful arrest, detention, and restrictions of the right to consular protection, are incompatible with the obligations of the Russian Federation under international law;

reiterate their strong support for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine and the inviolability of its internationally recognised borders;

strongly condemn the ongoing five-year long military aggression against Ukraine and occupation and annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation; and **declare** the continued commitment to an active policy of non-recognition of the occupation and annexation;

strongly condemn severe ongoing violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms of the Crimean Tatars and Ukrainians and the discriminatory policies imposed against them in Crimea occupied by the Russian Federation;

call on the authorities and law enforcement institutions of the Russian Federation to adhere to the rule of law and human rights, comply with their international obligations, and implement the United Nations General Assembly resolutions 68/262 of 27 March 2014, 71/205 of 19 December 2016, 72/190 of 19 December 2017, and 73/263 of 22 December 2018, as well as the Decision on the Situation in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol (Ukraine) passed by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe of 3 May 2017;

call on the authorities of the Russian Federation to put an immediate end to the politically motivated harassment of Ukrainian citizens, immediately and unconditionally release all illegally detained Ukrainian citizens, including the seamen illegally detained during the attack in the Kerch Strait, and ensure unhindered access to Crimea for the Human Rights Monitoring Mission of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and other international human rights organisations and independent experts with the view to enabling them to make an objective investigation and assessment of human rights violations;

call on the United Nations Organisation in general and its Human Rights Council in particular, the national parliaments of the European Union and NATO Member States, the European Parliament, NATO, and the parliamentary assemblies of the Council of Europe and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe to continue the sanctions against the Russian Federation until it enforces its international legal obligations.

Gediminas Kirkilas

Chair of the Committee on European Affairs

Juozas Bernatonis

Chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs