

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002933/24
to the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy
Villy Søvndal (Verts/ALE)
(13 December 2024)

Subject: Human rights in the Russian-occupied territories of Ukraine

Since the Russian Federation annexed Crimea in 2014, the situation on the peninsula has been marked by an increase in repression and the taking of political prisoners. Following the start of Russia's military offensive in 2022, the situation has spread to other parts of eastern Ukraine. According to the Ukrainian Ombudsman, more than 16 000 Ukrainian civilians are being illegally detained by the Russians. In addition, children are being systematically kidnapped and sent to Russia to change their identity, get new names and forget their language and background.

What initiatives can the HR/VP take — and what initiatives will she take — to help these political prisoners and abducted children, with a particular focus on the fact that Ukrainians in the eastern part of the country are now facing attempts to rid them of their Ukrainian identity?

Submitted: 13.12.2024

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Kallas on behalf of the European Commission
(12 February 2025)

The EU has taken significant steps to address Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea, leading to the oppression of Crimeans and turning the peninsula into a base for Russia's war of aggression launched in February 2022. The EU will never recognise this annexation, which violates international law.

The policy of non-recognition includes diplomatic pressure, sanctions, and restrictions since 2014, as well as non-recognition of any Russian passport issued in Crimea.

Since July 2022, the EU has imposed sanctions on 45 individuals and two entities responsible for the illegal deportation and forcible transfer of Ukrainians, and 16 individuals and five entities for the 're-education' and militarisation of Ukrainian children.

These sanctions aim to pressure Russia to cease its violations and hold perpetrators accountable. Additionally, the EU has supported efforts at the United Nations and other platforms to document and condemn Russia's actions.

The High Representative/Vice-President will continue to reinforce these measures and to propose new listings related to human rights violations.

The EU will continue engaging with civil society and human rights advocates to monitor and hold regular dialogues on Crimea and other occupied territories.

The EU keeps pressing for stronger international action to ensure Russia is held accountable. The EU will work on further diplomatic, legal, and humanitarian initiatives to protect Ukrainians and preserve their identity.
