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**General Assembly
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Agenda items 35 (a), 36 and 67**Security Council
Seventy-seventh year****Prevention of armed conflict: prevention of armed conflict****Protracted conflicts in the GUAM area and their
implications for international peace, security
and development****The situation in the temporarily occupied territories
of Ukraine****Letter dated 14 March 2022 from the Permanent Representative of
Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General**

I have the honour to enclose herewith the comment dated 11 March 2022 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine on the conviction of five Ukrainian citizens (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 35 (a), 36 and 67, and of the Security Council.

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



Annex to the letter dated 14 March 2022 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Comment by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine on conviction of five Ukrainian citizens

11 March 2022

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine expresses its protest against the groundless and politically motivated decision of the Southern District Military Court in Rostov-on-Don dated March 10, 2022. Based on falsified charges the court sentenced five citizens of Ukraine in the case so called the “second Simferopol group “Hizb ut-Tahrir”.

In addition to the ongoing cynical and barbaric killings of Ukrainian civilians, the bombardments of Ukrainian cities and towns, the regular disruption of humanitarian corridors, the destruction of critical infrastructure, the seizure of Ukrainian nuclear power plants and their personnel, the Russian Federation continues the shameful practices of political persecutions of Ukrainians, who were illegally detained on the temporarily occupied territories of our State.

According to the verdicts, “Crimean Solidarity” citizen journalist Remzi Bekirov and human rights activist Riza Izotov were sentenced to 19 years in prison, Shaban Umerov to 18 years, Raim Aivazov to 17 years, and Farkhod Bazarov to 15 years.

They were detained on March 27, 2019 by Russian law enforcement agencies in the temporarily occupied Autonomous Republic of Crimea during mass searches and detentions, and subsequently, in complete violation of the fundamental rules of the international humanitarian law illegally transferred to Rostov-on-Don – the territory of the Russia Federation. The Russian side has unjustifiably accused the Ukrainian citizens, inter alia, in participation in the activities of a terrorist organization.

The judges have disregarded the evidences provided by the defense on the defendants’ non-involvement in the incriminated acts during the trial, the lawyers and relatives were not allowed to enter the Russian Federation to participate in the trial – all this is yet another proof of the politically motivated court decision to imprison Ukrainian citizens.

The Russian Federation must immediately stop its massacres in Ukraine, withdraw its armed forces, mercenaries, weapons and equipment from Ukraine, and release all illegally convicted citizens of Ukraine, including Ramzi Bekirov, Riza Izotov, Shaban Umerov, Raim Aivazov, and Farkhod Bazarov. The Russian Federation and its military-political leadership must be brought to justice and held accountable for all internationally wrongful acts committed in Ukraine, violations of international humanitarian law, and mass crimes against civilians.

We call on the international community to condemn Russia’s ongoing violations of international humanitarian law in Ukraine, the ongoing use of political persecution of Ukrainian citizens who oppose the occupation, and to strengthen sanctions against the Russian Federation and its political leadership. We urge our partners to enhance their support of Ukraine, the country which today protects the whole Europe from the spread of the “Russian world” and Russian aggression at the cost of thousands of lives. Closing the sky over Ukraine and strengthening our country’s air defense system will help to immediately end the humanitarian catastrophe caused by Russia’s armed aggression against the Ukrainian people.