



AUSTRALIA



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UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL

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Crimea: 7 years of violations of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity

**Statement on behalf of Australia delivered by H.E. The Hon.
Mitch Fifield, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of
Australia to the United Nations**

To be delivered

This year marks seven years since Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea. It is critical this Council continues to focus on the situation in Ukraine and ongoing violations of international law there.

As we mark this bleak milestone, Australia reiterates its full and unequivocal commitment to supporting Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Australia reinforces this commitment with robust sanctions, including targeted financial sanctions and travel bans on individuals and entities responsible for or complicit in undermining Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity in Crimea and Sevastopol.

We are also concerned by the Russian Federation's efforts to militarise Crimea and undermine regional stability.

Australia deplores Russia's suppression of human rights in Crimea, including arbitrary detentions, arrests, torture and forced disappearances. In particular, Crimean Tartars have been viciously targeted. We strongly condemn the limitations on freedom of religion and belief, and freedom of expression and association.

Australia welcomes the European Court of Human Rights' decision to proceed with Ukraine's case regarding human rights violations committed by Russia in Crimea. We also welcome the December 2020 announcement by the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court to request authorisation to open an investigation into possible war crimes and crimes against humanity committed on Ukraine's territory from 2014 onwards.

Sadly, this year will also mark seven years since the tragic downing of MH17, which killed 38 people who called Australia home. Australia's determination to establish the truth of the circumstances surrounding the downing of MH17 will not wane. We will continue to reiterate calls for Russia to re-join trilateral state responsibility talks.

We also note Ukraine's case in the European Court of Human Rights, joined with that of the Netherlands, regarding the conflict in eastern Ukraine and the downing of MH17.

Finally, we call on Russia to respect Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders, including its territorial waters.

(305 words)