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PULSE OF PEACE IN DONBASS

Results of monitoring current events, related to the hybrid war in Eastern Ukraine

On 4th December 2017 in Vienna, civil society organizations and activists from Ukraine, Russia and other European countries founded a joint international [platform CivilM+](#) to push for peace and the rule of law in eastern Ukraine.

The platform's aim is to streamline civic actors' efforts in spheres like human rights protection, peacebuilding, education and information, humanitarian work, and to work on rebuilding the territories of Donetsk and Luhansk as peaceful, integrated and developed regions of a democratic Ukraine and united Europe. CivilM+ seeks to promote the involvement of the regions' population as well as refugees and displaced persons in these activities. CivilM+ offers its participants opportunities for cooperation, elaboration of joint positions, mutual support and solidarity, improvement of qualification and close coordination of work.

The newsletter is devoted to the work carried out by civil society organizations and initiative groups from Ukraine, Russia, as well as international organizations, to overcome the consequences of the hybrid military conflict in the eastern regions of Ukraine.

This newsletter will be published regularly; the next issue will be published in November 2018.

You can send your information for the newsletter or ask any questions at: newsletter@civilmplus.org

The selection of news presented in the Newsletter is subjective. The opinions expressed in the published materials may not coincide with the opinion of the authors and participants of CivilM+.

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1. Political processes and the situation in the conflict zone

- December 26, 2018 - President of Ukraine Petro Poroshenko announced the [termination of martial law](#) which had been introduced in 10 regions of the country for 1 month (*text in Ukrainian*)
- December 27, 2018 - Martin Sajdik, Special Representative of the Acting OSCE Chairperson in the Trilateral Contact Group and Ertugrul Apakan, Head of OSCE SMM in Ukraine have published a joint [statement welcoming the renewal by the parties of obligations to observe the ceasefire](#) on the occasion of the New Year and Christmas holidays (*text in English*)
- December 26, 2018 - [Ukrainian citizen Igor Kiyashko has been sentenced to 8 years](#) in a maximum security prison for espionage (*text in Russian*)
- December 28, 2018 - Chancellor of Germany Angela Merkel and President of France Emmanuel Macron published a [joint statement demanding that Russia immediately release "all illegally detained Ukrainian sailors"](#) without setting any conditions (*text in Russian*)
- December 31, 2018 - [The European Court of Human Rights has registered documents that the Government of Ukraine](#), together with human rights organizations, prepared for the hearing on the joint complaint concerning the violation of human rights in the annexed Crimea (*text in Ukrainian*)
- January 6, 2019 – the Orthodox Church of Ukraine gained autocephaly. [Chronicle](#) of events and a [review](#) of [opinions](#) in the materials of “Radio Liberty” (*text in Ukrainian*)
- January 11, 2019 - Osnat Lubrani, UN System Resident Coordinator, Humanitarian Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in her statement concerning the injury as a result of the shelling of employees of the water enterprise “Water of Donbas”, [called for the strengthening of the protection of infrastructure and the civilian population in eastern Ukraine](#) (*text in Ukrainian and English*)
- January 14, 2019 - Ukraine conveyed its [observations and position on the claim of the Russian Federation to the UN International Court of Justice](#), denying the Russian Federation’s arguments about the lack of jurisdiction of the Court for damages for the Russian Federation’s continuing systematic violations of the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism and International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (*text in Ukrainian*)
- January 15, 2019 - Miroslav Lajcak, new [Chairperson-in-Office of OSCE had his first official visit to Ukraine](#) during which he held talks with officials and visited the region of Donbas (*text in Russian and English*)
- January 15, 2019 - The Lefortovo District Court of Moscow [allowed the investigator’s request to hold a meeting to extend the arrest of Ukrainian sailors](#) in the absence of journalists and listeners. On the progress of the investigation in the [material](#) of “Radio Liberty” (*text in Russian*)
- January 16, 2019 - Ukrainian journalist Elena Boyko, who spoke on Russian television and criticized the Ukrainian authorities and in support of the so-called “DPR”, [was deported from Russia](#) (*text in Russian*)

- January 16, 2019 - a [meeting of representatives from the Presidential Council for Civil Society and Human Rights of the Russian Federation and Lyudmila Denisova, Ombudsperson of Ukraine was held](#), where cooperation in preparation for the exchange of prisoners was discussed (*text in Russian*)
- January 17, 2019 - Martin Sajdik, Special Representative of OSCE in Ukraine, reported on the results of negotiations in the Trilateral Contact Group that the [number of ceasefire violations from December 29th to January 15th was almost halved compared to the same previous period](#). But after that, their number began to grow again. He also shared that the humanitarian working group discussed issues related to the exchange of detainees and the economic working group discussed water supply and pension payments to the residents of territories of L/DPR (*text in Russian and English*)
- January 21, 2019 - UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission [reported that almost 13.000 people became victims of the conflict in Ukraine](#). Around 3.300 of those killed in Donbas were civilians, 4.000 - Ukrainian soldiers, and 5.500 - Russia-supported combatants. In addition to this, between 27.000 and 30.000 people have been wounded during the conflict (*text in Ukrainian*)
- January 22, 2019 - the Netherlands, Australia, Belgium, Malaysia and Ukraine signed a [memorandum on financial support of a criminal investigation into those responsible for the crash of Boeing MH-17](#) that was downed above Donbas (*text in Russian*)
- January 23, 2019 - [Lawyer of the arrested Ukrainian sailors, Nikolay Polozov, representative of the Ukrainian Ombudsman, Oleg Trohimenko, and representatives from Ukrainian civil society took part in the events of the Council of Europe](#). The preparation of a resolution on this situation, the adoption of which is planned by parliamentary delegations, was discussed (*text in Russian*)
- January 23, 2019 - Maria Zakharova, spokesperson of Russian MFA, [stated during a briefing that Dutch authorities are trying to hide the results of the investigation into Boeing MH-17](#) (*video in Russian*)
- January 24, 2019 - former president of Ukraine, [Victor Yanukovich, has been convicted of treason](#), aiding changes to the state border and conducting the war (*video in Ukrainian*)
- Lawyer Ilya Novikov on the [trials to prolong the arrest of Ukrainian sailors](#) and on the defence strategy (*text in Russian*)
- A Russian court decided to [recover one million roubles from the Ukrainian political prisoner Nikolai Karpyuk as compensation](#) for the relatives of soldiers killed during a battle during the first Chechen war, in which Karpyuk is accused of participating (*text in Russian*)

2. Public initiatives dedicated to overcoming the consequences of war and searching for opportunities for dialogue

- [The open-ended anti-war picket continues in Moscow](#). In addition to this, anti-war protests have taken place in Saint-Petersburg, Kirov, Ivanovo and other cities of Russia. In December, civil courts against the war in Ukraine took place in Moscow by the headquarters of MFA and FSB (*text in Russian*)
- Ertugrul Apakan, Head of OSCE SMM in Ukraine, insists on the [importance of gender equality for conflict resolution in Ukraine](#) (*text in Russian and Ukrainian*)
- The project “Tumbler” conducted a [camp for children from the Luhansk and Transcarpathia regions](#). Children were able to learn more about each other’s lives and about the culture of different nationalities in Ukraine (*text in Russian*)
- The anti-war [reading “Justice for the Dictator”](#) took place in Pskov. It was produced by the public anti-military initiative “War is outdated” (*video in Russian*)
- More than 3.000 children from small villages in Donbas from both sides of the contact line [have received New Year’s presents](#), they were bought with donations raised by the “Reindeers of Saint Nikolay” (*text in Russian*)

3. Legal initiatives and analytics on war conflict

- Ukraine has developed a scheme for civilians to obtain the status of someone with a disability as a result of war. [Analysis of the legislation and procedures](#) prepared by Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union (*text in Ukrainian*)
- December 31, 2018 – the application period for a temporary change of voting location without changing the voting address began. [Forced migrants wishing to participate in the presidential election can use this procedure](#) (*text in Ukrainian*)
- January 17, 2019 - the law №6240 “[On amendments to some laws of Ukraine](#)” (on the electoral rights of internally displaced persons and other mobile citizens within the country) was supported by the Verkhovna Rada Committee on Legal Policy and Justice (*text in Ukrainian*)
- Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union has [stated the need for the urgent adoption of draft law](#) No. 9438 “On introducing changes to a number of legislative acts to harmonize criminal legislation with the provisions of international law” in the context of the ongoing conflict in the Donbas (*text in Ukrainian*)
- January issue of the [newsletter “Election rights of IDPs and labour migrants”](#) has been published by the civil society organization “Group of Influence” (*text in Ukrainian*)
- Series of analytical [interviews with speakers at the forum “Justice and law in post-conflict societies? - European experience and perspective”](#), organized by DRA e.V. and international NGO platform CivilM+ in November 2018 in Berlin (*video in Russian and English*)
- [The presentation](#) of the analytical [report “Rehabilitation of victims of war. Does the state provide anything besides disability status and crutches?”](#) by Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union took place (*text in Ukrainian*)
- Only [about 44% of IDPs aim to take part in presidential and parliamentary elections in Ukraine](#) in 2019. The reason for this is the complicated voting procedure (*text in Russian*)
- December newsletter with a review of the human rights situation in Eastern

Ukraine, prepared by the coalition [“Justice for Peace in Donbas”](#) (*text in Ukrainian*)

- A report by [OSCE SMM regarding the participation and representation of women in conflict resolution](#) was published (*text in English, Ukrainian, Russian*)
- A review on the [human rights situation in Donetsk and Luhansk regions](#) in December 2018 was published by “East-SOS” (*text in Ukrainian, Russian, English*)
- [A review on the situation for IDPs](#) in Ukraine in December 2018 was published by “Crimea-SOS” (*text in Ukrainian*)

4. Assistance to internally displaced persons (IDPs), refugees and affected civilians

- [Around 4.500 children from Luhansk regions have received the status of victims of military operation.](#) Most of them have suffered from psychological violence (*text in Ukrainian*)
- [More than 50 people died in 2018 while crossing the contact line](#) due to shelling and health issues, the UN Office for coordination of humanitarian affairs says. Since the beginning of 2019, 9 people died as well (*text in Russian*)
- [Meeting between Liudmila Denisova, Ukrainian Ombudsperson and Russian human rights defenders took place in Moscow.](#) Participants had discussed issues of prisoner exchange between Russia and Ukraine (*text in Russian*)
- [A letter by Oleg Sentsov](#), imprisoned in Russia, to Russian civil society activists has been published (*text in Russian*)
- “East-SOS” charitable foundation [reports on the help provided to people who have been held in captivity and to the relatives of missing people](#) (*text in Russian*)
- “East-SOS” charitable foundation has conducted [53 humanitarian trips](#) to the villages along the contact line (*text in Russian*)

5. Interviews and opinions

- Former US National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley calls for [resistance to Russian aggression in Ukraine](#). In his commentary on Foreign Policy, he argues that the West is not doing enough to contain Russia and overcome the conflict (*text in English*)
- Resolution of conflict in Donbas is only possible through dialogue. For this we need to include the civil society of Russia and Ukraine in the official peace negotiations: [interview with Alexander Hug](#), former Deputy Head of the OSCE Monitoring Mission in Ukraine (*text in Russian and English*)
- “People have to know their rights during the military conflict”: [interview with Marie Lequin, head of Geneva Call in Eurasia](#), on plans of their work in Donbas (*text in Russian*)
- [Report by Kharkiv Human Rights Group on the ecological impact made by factories in Luhansk and Donetsk regions](#), including the under-controlled territories (*text in Ukrainian*)
- [Interview with Eugeny Vasiljev \(CF “East-SOS”\)](#) on human rights situation in the under-controlled territories of Donbas (*audio and text in Russian*)
- [How can the participation of Vladimir Zelenskiy in election campaign influence](#)

[the situation in Donbas](#), Konstantin Skorkin reflects on this for Carnegie Center (*text in Russian*)

- [“Donbass Reali” on results](#) of the year for the so-called “L/DPR” (*video in Russian*)
- [The story of miners](#) who moved from Donbas to Russia (*text in Russian*)
- [A review of opinions from international media](#) regarding autocephaly for the Ukrainian Church (*text in Ukrainian*)
- [A report on the daily work of OSCE SMM](#) in the conflict zone (*text in Russian*)

Реализовано при поддержке правительства Германии в рамках проекта «Диалог за взаимопонимание и право: Европейские НПО вместе за преодоление конфликта на Донбассе».

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