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issue № 17, July 2019

## PULSE OF PEACE IN DONBASS

Results of monitoring actual occurrences, related to the hybrid war in Eastern Ukraine

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 August 2019.

You can send your information for the newsletter or ask any questions at [newsletter@civilmplus.org](mailto: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. News of the CivilM+

**Re-establishment of justice and dialogue in the OSCE conflict regions – two angles of transitional justice**

On June 25-26 CivilM+ Platform and CSP Platform members met for an expert seminar “Re-establishment of justice and dialogue in the OSCE conflict regions – two angles of transitional justice“. Experts discussed the experience of legal and dialogue approaches to transitional justice in conflict regions.



**Safi van't Land**, Impunity Watch, mentioned that amongst other challenges regarding transitional justice, often the activities are focused on consequences of the conflict and not enough attention is paid to its root causes. Another challenge is the inclusion of all society and in particular the marginalised groups in the design of the transitional justice framework. Victim groups often remain side-lined from peace processes. She also mentioned that often stakeholders focus on criminal justice, but when only this component of the transitional justice process is implemented, it does not necessarily provide remedies and restore peace.

Discussing the experience of the Balkan countries, the experts agreed with Mrs. van't Land's statement, saying that even though formally the war and shelling has been over for many years, the conflicts in the societies still continue. One of the reasons for that is a strong focus on criminal justice procedures and the failure to establish a coherent process of how justice can guide peacebuilding. Trials did not influence public opinion and thus reconciliation is still on hold.

**Izabela Kisić**, from the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia, argued that the most difficult thing is the creation of a unified narrative. She believes that Serbia hasn't changed its narrative at all, the views which were widespread at the beginning of the conflict are still present in public discourse. Reforming institutions and the creation of a unified narrative should be an inseparable process. One of the good tools in this process is school education, which can bring a sustainable change of the narrative and honest reflection about the past.

Talking about Georgian experience with the transitional justice **Paata Zakareishvili**, Former State Minister of Georgia for Reconciliation and Civic Equality, pointed out that the process is overly politicised and there are hardly any attempts to implement transitional justice in Georgia. There are some single court processes, but there are no

attempts to create the truth commission, or any institutional setting dealing with the issue.

**Valerii Novykov**, Luhansk regional human rights centre Alternativa, Ukraine, said that currently, Ukraine has several draft concepts of transitional justice, but they need to come through broad discussion in the society, because there are many visions of the process and many approaches to it, but if society doesn't find consensual solution, the transitional justice will not be efficient.

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## **International Experience and National Mechanisms of Reparation for Victims of the Conflict in Ukraine**

The armed conflict in Donbas has caused losses of the widest range: human, material and economic losses, physical and mental traumas, nervous breakdowns. During the entire period of the conflict (2014-2019), OHCHR recorded 3,023 civilian deaths (1,794 men, 1,046 women, 97 boys, 49 girls and 37 adults whose gender is unknown) and more than 7,000 injuries. At the same time, there are about 9,5 thousand dead and 21-24 thousand injured among the combatants. 4,734 soldiers of the Armed Forces of Ukraine have been recognized as disabled persons, the total number of civilians who have acquired a disability as a result of the armed conflict is unknown. According to the Ukrainian side, the prevalence of post-traumatic stress disorder is estimated to occur among 60-70 thousand combatants and 512 thousand IDPs. The destruction of objects of energy, transport, industrial and social infrastructure in the course of the armed conflict in Donbas has caused losses amounting to approximately USD 50 billion.

Is it possible to make amends to all those affected by the conflict and what mechanisms should be in place to do it? These questions are answered by Oleg Martynenko, a UHHRU analyst, in the publication "International Experience and National Mechanisms of Reparation for Victims of the Conflict in Ukraine" prepared within the framework of the CivilM+ Platform. The publication provides an overview of the legal framework of national and international legislation on reparations and also examines the experience of other countries emerging from military conflicts. For example, Indonesia has decided to provide agricultural land and the necessary funds to facilitate the reintegration of ex-combatants into society and to compensate political prisoners and affected civilians. Georgia adopted a law on the restitution and compensation of property in the territory of Georgia to the victims of the conflict in the former South Ossetia region (2006). The Croatian government has allocated assistance to each victim at a rate of 35 sq. m. per owner of the house and 10 sq. m. per member of a family along with a centralized restoration of all life support systems of the civilian population.

What the state of Ukraine can and should do to compensate the victims of the conflict is presented in the last chapter of the publication. The recommendations are addressed to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, the Cabinet of Ministers, as well as to local authorities.

*The review "International Experience and National Mechanisms of Reparation for Victims of the Conflict in Ukraine" is available in [Russian](#), [English](#) and [Ukrainian](#).*

## 2. Political processes and the situation in the conflict zone

- June 27, 2019 - President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky [criticized the Foreign Ministry of Ukraine](#) for the fact that the Foreign Ministry independently [protested](#) the note of the Russian side with a proposal to release the sailors under the guarantee of their participation in the criminal process (*text in Ukrainian*)
- June 30, 2019 - [The OSCE SMM reported receiving notifications about the breeding of the armed forces](#) in the agreed breeding area in the Stanitsa Luganskaya area completed (*text in Ukrainian, Russian, English*)
- June 30, 2019 - Seven states that voted against the return of the powers of the Russian delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe intend to prepare a [joint resolution on the relevant decision of the PACE](#) (*text in Russian*)
- July 3, 2019 - Canadian authorities said they would not give [visas to residents of the so-called "LDPR"](#), who have Russian passports (*text in English*)
- July 4, 2019 - Yashar Halit Chevik, Head of the OSCE SMM in Ukraine, in his first address to the Permanent Council in Vienna, stated that he [welcomes the withdrawal of forces and equipment in the area in the Stanitsa Luganskaya area](#), conducted recently with the assistance and monitoring of the SMM (*text in Ukrainian, Russian, English*)
- July 4, 2019 - The security services of Ukraine [detained on the territory of the so-called "Donetsk People's Republic" the former air defence commander](#) in the city of Snowy, Vladimir Tsemakh, who is accused of creating a terrorist group or a terrorist organization (*text in Russian*)
- July 4, 2019 - Ukrainian oligarch Igor Kolomoisky [called the war in the Donbas "internal conflict"](#) (*text in Ukrainian*)
- July 6, 2019 - The Committee on Political Affairs and Security of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Parliamentary Assembly adopted a [resolution on the militarization by Russia of the annexed Crimea, the Black and Azov Seas](#) (*text in Ukrainian*)
- July 7, 2019 - Journalists found the [video](#) of 2015 with the militant Vladimir Tsemakh taken out by the Security Service of Ukraine to Kyiv, where he says that [he was hiding the Buk anti-aircraft installation in the Donbas](#) (*text in Ukrainian, Russian*)
- July 8, 2019 - President of Ukraine Vladimir Zelensky published a video in which [he suggested to hold direct talks with President of Russia Vladimir Putin](#) (*text in Ukrainian*)
- July 8, 2019 - The OSCE Parliamentary Assembly adopted a [declaration calling on Russia to immediately release the prisoners of war of Ukrainian sailors](#) (*text in Ukrainian and English*)
- July 12, 2019 - [Vitaliy Markiv, a soldier of the National Guard of Ukraine, was found convicted in the murder of photographer Andrea Rockelli](#) in the battles of Slavyansk in 2014. "[Radio Liberty](#)" and "[Grani](#)" report on the process and the verdict (*text in Ukrainian and Russian*)
- July 16, 2019 - families of those killed in the crash of flight MH17 made a [statement to the Russian Federation](#) in connection with the fifth anniversary of the

events, where they demand from the Russian state to admit their responsibility for the downed aircraft (*text in Russian and English*)

- July 16, 2019 - [Ukraine and Russia have agreed on the exchange of prisoners](#), to be held within a month, said Deputy Head of the Office of the President of Ukraine Vadim Pristayko (*text in Ukrainian*)
- July 17, 2019 - obtaining of the Russian [citizenship was simplified for residents of the Luhansk and Donetsk regions by the decree](#) of Russian President Vladimir Putin (*text in Russian*)
- July 17, 2019 - Russian court [extended the arrest for 3 months to 24 Ukrainian sailors](#), prisoners of war (*text in Russian*)
- July 17, 2019 - a memorable event was held in Schiphol (the Netherlands), dedicated to the fifth anniversary of the crash of the MH17 aircraft. [Russian officials did not attend the event](#). On the current state of the situation and the Russian position - in the [article](#) by Pavel Kanygin (“Novaya Gazeta”) (*text in Russian*)
- July 17, 2019 - an [agreement](#) was reached on a Trilateral Contact Group [meeting](#) in Minsk. It concerned an indefinite cease-fire in the Donbas from 21 July, which for the first time provides a [ban on any kind of firing and the responsibility of the parties for its violation](#). Miroslav Laichak, OSCE Chairman-in-Office, [welcomed](#) this agreement (*text in Russian and English*)
- July 18, 2019 - in Minsk parties agreed to [exchange prisoners under the scheme 208 for 69](#), according to which Ukraine will give up 208 convicts and receive 69 citizens who are illegally detained in the occupied Donbas. This does not apply to political prisoners and prisoners of war held in Russia and Crimea (*text in Ukrainian and Russian*)
- July 18, 2019 - Press Secretary of the President of Ukraine Yulia Mendel reported that the administration of [the President of Ukraine offered Russia to simultaneously exchange Ukrainian political prisoner Oleg Sentsov, convicted in Russia, and Kirill Vyshinsky, head of RIA Novosti Ukraine](#), who is accused of treason (*text in Ukrainian*)
- July 18, 2019 - The European Parliament [supported](#) the [resolution calling for Russia to immediately release all Ukrainian political prisoners](#) (*text in Ukrainian and English*)
- July 21, 2019 - Ukraine held [early parliamentary elections](#). [Analysis](#) of their results in the Donbas (*text and video in Ukrainian and Russian*)
- July 23, 2019 - The Supreme Court of the Russian Federation [upheld the sentence of Ukrainian political prisoner Pavel Hryb](#). In response, the EU [called](#) on Russia to release him immediately (*text in Ukrainian and English*)
- July 26, 2019 - President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky discussed the situation in the Donbas with the US Special Representative for Ukraine Kurt Walker and the Permanent Representative of the United States to the European Union Gordon Sondland (*text in Ukrainian and English*)

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

- July 9, 2019 - Ukrainian Ministry on the issues of temporarily occupied territories together with partner organizations summed up the [results of the project “Heroes of our hearts”](#) about internally displaced persons (*text in Ukrainian*)
- July 10, 2019 - [street action took place on the Red Square in Moscow against the persecution of the Crimean Tatars](#), seven participants were detained (*text in Russian*)
- July 12, 2019 - [Russia hosted a television show about the relationship between Russia and Ukraine](#). This was a model of “dialogue” sanctioned by the Russian state (*text in Russian*)
- July 13, 2019 - a [series of actions took place in Kyiv dedicated to the birthday of Oleg Sentsov](#), a Ukrainian political prisoner, sentenced in Russia to 20 years in prison (*text and video in Russian and Ukrainian*)
- A [seminar “Restoring Justice and Dialogue in OSCE Conflict Regions - Two Aspects of Transitional Justice”](#) was held, focusing on the conflict in eastern Ukraine. It was organized by DRA eV together with the Netherlands Helsinki Committee for representatives of civil society from Russia, Ukraine and other European countries (*text in English*)
- The Russian civil initiative “Unlimited Picket” in support of political prisoners has been going on for 300 days. [Photos](#) are shared by its members (*text in Russian*)

#### 4. Legal initiatives and analytics on war conflict

- July 10, 2019 - [The government of Ukraine determined the mechanism of monetary compensation for housing destroyed](#) as a result of Russia's armed aggression (*text in Ukrainian*)
- July 17, 2019 - The Government of Ukraine approved [a new order for crossing the contact line](#) in the east of Ukraine (*text in Ukrainian*)
- [“Surkov leaks” study](#): the inner side of the hybrid war of Russia in Ukraine” published by the British analytical center Royal Joint Institute for Defense Studies. It was [conducted](#) by Robert Sili, a British politician and the military, together with Ukrainian journalist Alya Shandra (*text in Ukrainian and English*)
- ["International experience and national mechanisms for reparation of victims of the conflict in Ukraine"](#): publication of the Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union as part of the work of CivilM + (*text in Ukrainian and English*)
- Andreas Umland, a researcher at the Euro-Atlantic Cooperation Institute in Kyiv, [reflects on why Kyiv’s confrontation with Moscow in eastern Ukraine will continue if the EU does not change the political course](#) (*text in English*)
- [Kirill Koroteev](#) (Agora human rights group, Russia) and [Andrey Kortunov](#) (non-commercial partnership “Russian Council on International Affairs”) analyzes the causes and consequences of the return of the Russian Federation to PACE (*text in Russian*)
- Political analyst Alexander Morozov (Boris Nemtsov Academic Center) [comments on Russia’s tactics to deter arrested Ukrainian sailors](#) (*text in Russian*)
- The Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union - on the [practice of the Ukrainian courts on the cases on compensation for immovable property damaged or destroyed](#) during the operations in the Eastern Ukraine (*text in Ukrainian*)

- Residents of uncontrolled territories of Ukraine have limited access to goods sold on the other side of the demarcation line. As human rights activist Daria Dmitrenko [comments, the list of permitted goods includes a minimum and does not meet the needs of people](#) (text in Russian)
- Yulia Gorbunova (Human Rights Watch) summarizes the [results of the investigation of the Boeing MH17 case](#), shot down over the Donbas (text in Russian)
- “Civic Assistance Committee” [report on the situation of people seeking asylum in Russia](#) (including those arriving from Ukraine) (text in Russian)
- Does Ukraine need to pin hopes on the [International Criminal Court](#) to restore justice in connection with the crimes in the Donbas and what other methods can be more effective? - by Quincy Cloet, Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights (Poland) (text in English)
- The Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union, together with member organizations of the Justice for Peace in the Donbas Coalition, prepared a [publication “The City That Started the War”](#) on the activities of illegal military units under the command of Igor Girkin in Slavyansk (text in Ukrainian)
- The humanitarian mission “Proliska” - about the [damage and destruction of the dwellings of civilians along the contact line](#) in the controlled territory of Donbas in June 2019 (text in Russian)
- The East-SOS Charitable Foundation has published a [review of human rights violations in the occupied areas of Luhansk and Donetsk regions](#) in June 2019 (text in [Ukrainian](#) and [Russian](#))
- The Ilko Kucheriv Democratic Initiatives Foundation conducted a comprehensive study of public sentiments in the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts - [“Expectations, Hopes and Concerns of the Donbas: Trend Data of Social Attitudes in 2017-2018 and State Policy Recommendations”](#). The purpose of the study was to identify the trends and factors that shape public opinion and the attitude of citizens towards possible ways of ending the armed conflict in Donbas (text in [Ukrainian](#) and [English](#))

## 5. Assistance for internally displaced persons (IDPs), refugees and affected civilians

- June 28, 2019 - President of Ukraine Vladimir Zelensky signed a [decree on granting citizenship to 14 foreign volunteers](#) who fought on the side of Ukraine in the Donbas (text in Russian)
- July 4, 2019 - [The pension fund of Ukraine did not comply with 90% of judicial decisions](#), according to which it had to pay the pension debt to IDPs. Total as of 1 June 2019 total debt of the Fund of Ukraine amounted to 600 million UAH (text in Ukrainian)
- July 5, 2019 - [Volodymyr Balukh, a Ukrainian political prisoner held in Russia, stopped the hunger strike](#) after he was visited by the Ukrainian consul (text in Russian)
- July 16, 2019 - Russian Ombudsperson Tatyana Moskalkova, and the Ombudsperson of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, Lyudmila Denisova, [exchanged lists of citizens of their countries imprisoned](#) in colonies and pre-trial

detention in foreign territories (*text in Russian*)

- July 24, 2019 - [64 prisoners were transferred to the territory of Ukraine](#), who were in penitentiary institutions of the Luhansk region at the time of the occupation (*text in Ukrainian*)
- The Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union together with the NGO “Human Rights Group” SICH ”conducted a survey, which resulted in the [conclusion that there are no statistics in Ukraine on civilians injured and those who received disabilities as a result of military actions](#) (*text in Ukrainian*)
- Sergei Litvinov, a Ukrainian [political prisoner who was convicted by Russia on fabricated charges, was discovered by the journalists of “Hromadske” in a colony in Ukraine](#). 11 July 2019 he was [pardoned](#) by the President of Ukraine Vladimir Zelensky (*text in Ukrainian and Russian*)
- On the initiative of the Ministry of Ukraine on the issues of temporarily occupied territories, the [handbook “ABC ... Armed Conflict in Terms”](#) was developed, which can be used by the media, politicians and officials (*text in Ukrainian*)

## 6. Interviews and opinions

- Andrei Bogdan, the head of the office of the President of Ukraine in an interview with RBC-Ukraine, [expressed the idea of assigning the status of regional to the Russian language in Donetsk and Lugansk](#). At the same time, he spoke against granting the Russian language the status of a second state (*text in Russian*)
- Stories of the Ukrainian military from the Krivbas battalion captured in the battles for Ilovaisk. Where they are and whether they are alive - unknown: the [investigation of “Hromadske”](#) (*text and video in Ukrainian*)
- [Publication on the influence of radical neo-cossacks movements on social processes in Ukraine and Russia](#), including the course of the conflict in the Donbas (*text in Ukrainian*)
- [Interview with Alexandra Dvoretzkaya, co-founder of the East-SOS charity foundation](#) - about the situation of internally displaced persons in Ukraine (*text in Ukrainian*)
- Interview with [family still living in Horlovka](#) about the life in the close proximity to the frontline, reasons not to leave home and how to survive after the state structures broke down (*text in Russian*)
- Publication of “Radio Liberty” about the case of Andrey [Yarovoy, a specialist in organizing programs for the prevention and treatment of HIV infection](#), held captive in the so-called “DPR” (*text in Russian*)
- “Donbas.Realii” - about the situation with [minors accused of crimes in the uncontrolled parts of Donbas](#) (*text in Russian*)

## About the platform CivilM+

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.

Supported by the government of Germany as a part of the DRA project "Dialogue for mutual understanding and rule of law: European NGOs together to overcome the Donbas conflict"

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Federal Foreign Office

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