

5 February 2016

**Statement by the Steering Committee of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum
regarding the European Parliament Resolution on the Human Rights Situation in
Crimea, in particular that of the Crimean Tatars**

The Steering Committee (SC) of the EaP Civil Society Forum welcomes the adoption of the European Parliament (EP) resolution on the human rights situation in Crimea, in particular of the Crimean Tatars.

The resolution is timely and of crucial importance since it puts the pressing issue of human rights abuses in Crimea on the EU's agenda.

The SC is particularly concerned about the high level of the human rights violations against Crimean residents who oppose the de facto local authorities, as well as abuses directed specifically against the Crimean Tatar community. It is important to note that the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine recently recognized the deportation of Crimean Tatars in 1944 as genocide of the indigenous people of Crimea.

The SC joins the EP in condemning the regular harassment of civil society activists and independent journalists in Crimea. The SC is equally concerned about the restrictive re-registration rules which have been imposed on civil society organizations and media outlets. Cases of torture of prisoners in Crimea must be investigated by the de facto authorities and political prisoners must be released.

The existing constraints on the freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly are deplorable. The SC supports the EP in its call on the Council to maintain sanctions related to the export of certain goods and technologies, investment, trade and services in Crimea until the territory is fully reintegrated into the legal order of Ukraine under international law.

Members of the Steering Committee of the Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum