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Gulnara Abbasova
Foundation for Research and Support
Of Indigenous Peoples of Crimea
95000 Simferopol, Autonomous Republic of Crimea
Ukraine
Tel/Fax:(00380) (652) 278739

Thank you Mr. Chairman for giving me the floor. My name is Gulnara Abbasova. I give my intervention on behalf of the Foundation for Research and Support of Indigenous Peoples of Crimea. I represent Crimean Tatars.

I'd like to mention that Crimean Tatars first of all are Indigenous People of Crimea and secondly they are minority. As far as we all know, in reality, the difference between Minorities and Indigenous Peoples is often blurred as it is also indicated in the working paper authored by Asbjorn Eide and Ms. Erica Irene Daes (E/CN.4/2000/10 10 July). I therefore represent in this session a community, which is both Indigenous and Minority. Moreover being a representative of Indigenous People I am fully entitled to claim the rights contained in the Minority instruments as it is pointed out in Commentary to the Minority Declaration submitted by Asbjorn Eide.

Under the agenda item I would like to bring to the attention of the Working Group the land issue. The Indigenous Minorities have the full right not only to possess the land they are living on, but also use it traditionally for their own purposes. Nobody is entitled to take away the land from Indigenous Peoples because they have a special link with the land. Lots of crimes were committed against the Indigenous Populations when they were condemned to forcible migration. There were many occasions of forcible migrations of the Indigenous Populations and Minorities in the former USSR.

I would like to put forward an example regarding my people, Crimean Tatars. They went through many deprivations and difficulties. My people, one of the Indigenous Peoples of Crimea were deported under Stalin to Middle Asia and remote parts of Russia and as a consequence were deprived of their own land for approximately 45 years. After Perestroyka Crimean Tatars were permitted to return to Crimea. But on their return they encountered various difficulties, one of them was the repossession of their land.

I'd like to mention that 1,000,000 hectares of the Crimean land belonged to Crimean Tatars

before World War II. But in 1989 after returning to their ancestral Motherland they found out that their land didn't belong to them any more. When the President's decree came into being, stating that all individuals engaged in the agricultural sphere, farmers, and those who are willing to live in rural area are entitled to acquire land plots, Crimean Tatars once more realised that their right to their own land was being violated. According to this decree Crimean Tatars were given 70,000 hectares of land whereas 70 per cent of the 250,000 Crimean Tatars who returned to Crimea are currently residing in a rural area. The land plots that were given to Crimean Tatars are much smaller than the land plots distributed among ethnic Russians and Ukrainians. Consequently Crimean Tatars were excluded from the land restitution process, resulting in their exclusion from the decision-making process.

Thus Ukrainian Government violates Article 2.2 of the UN Declaration on Minorities, Article 15 of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities of the Council of Europe that reads: " states shall create the conditions necessary for the effective participation of persons belonging to the national minorities in cultural, social and economic life and in public affairs in particular those affecting them" and also Articles 4, 23 and 31 of the draft declaration on Indigenous Peoples.

My recommendation is to give Crimean Tatars an opportunity to participate effectively and equally including them as partners in the land restitution process.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.