Dear High Commissioner for Human Rigths,

Distinguished guests,

I am extremely grateful and honoured to address this Intersessional Seminar on Youth and Human Rights on behalf of the youth of my country.

Being a Youth Delegate of the country, which has up to 1,5 million internally displaced persons, many of them children and youth, I have to touch upon the situation of human rights in temporarily occupied territory of Ukraine. Attempted annexation of Crimea and armed aggression by Russia in Donbas is a major obstacle to Ukraine's development and has an extremely dire impact on the society as a whole.

The needs of young people differ and are constantly changing, and all these socio-economic needs can be solved by appropriate reforms and regulatory legal documents. The only need that cannot be changed unilaterally is international peace. I strongly believe that the most active force that can lead to the de-occupation of Crimea and Donbas, is in reality you and me and our solidarity. Propaganda will not work with people who are united for a common goal. I know that many of young people, who live now in the temporarily occupied territories, did not choose such a life, but became hostages of the circumstances. I personally know the experience of being forced from a home town, fearing for life and not knowing whether I will ever come back home at all.

Thus, I appeal to the young people leaving in the temporary occupied territories not to let false statements deceiving you. You have neither been forgotten nor abandoned!

Filter aside the hate speech that you hear from everywhere, from the media surrounding you, and simply try to filter the truth among all of this.  No matter how good Russia’s multifaceted and hybrid strategy is – with our unity and solidarity, the aggressor won't have a chance!

Thank you!