

Monitoring the human rights situation in Ukraine

Switzerland supports the UN Mission

Background

From the very start of the conflict, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) has followed developments in Ukraine closely. The human rights situation worsened dramatically following the events on the Maidan square in the capital city of Kyiv in late 2013 and early 2014.

After the Russian annexation of Crimea and the open outbreak of conflict in eastern Ukraine, upon invitation of the Ukrainian government, the OHCHR rapidly set up a human rights monitoring mission in Ukraine (HRMMU) within the framework of the Human Rights up Front Policy of the UN Secretary General. HRMMU is tasked with the promotion and protection of human rights in Ukraine and the impartial monitoring and reporting of alleged human rights violations and protection concerns, affecting all parties to the conflict, especially in the east. It commenced work on 15 March 2014 and its mandate has been regularly extended since then, every three months. HRMMU works closely with the UN system in Ukraine, international and regional organisations, including the Council of Europe and the OSCE, as well as various national stakeholders.

Task of the UN Mission

The main task of the OHCHR Mission is to contribute to enhancing respect for human rights in the current conflict in Ukraine. It monitors the human rights situation in the critical regions, formulates recommendations, shares its expertise and provides support for observance of human rights. Pursuant to its mandate, the mission submits regular reports and ensures that all relevant authorities in the conflict take note of its information and recommendations, and take them under consideration in their actions.

Country

Ukraine

Theme

Human rights

Project name

UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine

Objective

Monitor human rights in Ukraine

Target groups

Parties to the conflict, population in the conflict regions, international community

Partner organisation

Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

Total budget

CHF 4,000,000

Swiss contribution

CHF 400,000

Set-up phase

15 December 2014 – 31 December 2015

The mandate also calls for the OHCHR Mission to share its know-how with the Ukrainian government, with national institutions for the defence of human rights and with non-governmental organisations and international partner organisations. This knowledge transfer is meant to ensure that human rights recommendations from the international human rights mechanisms are incorporated and taken into consideration in all areas of governance by Ukraine as well as supported by relevant actors in-country.

Swiss contribution

Acting on Switzerland's behalf, the Human Security Division (HSD) of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA) is providing financial support in the amount of CHF 400,000 for the OHCHR Mission until the end of 2015. This falls under Swiss peace and human rights policy activities, which advocate a stronger presence of the Office of the High Commissioner in the field.

The HRMMU is interviewing local residents of Kuibyshevskiy district, (which has been one of the most affected by shelling) of Donetsk city in late March 2015. People report of casualties and damage, looting and intimidation by armed groups and no medical care available, shortage of clean water, food and hygiene kits. Copyright: HRMMU

