**46th Session of the Human Rights Council**

**Item 10 – Interactive Dialogue on High Commissioner‘s**

**report on Ukraine**

*22 March 2021*

**Statement by the Czech Republic**

Thank you, Madam President,

The Czech Republic aligns itself with the EU statement. We would like to thank the High Commissioner for her latest report on the human rights situation in Ukraine.

While security situation in Eastern Ukraine has seen some progress recently, situation of human rights and international humanitarian law on non-government controlled areas of Donbas and on Crimea, illegally occupied by the Russian Federation, is steadily deteriorating. The situation is getting worse and the COVID-19 pandemic unfortunately only catalyzes negative trends in this regard. We call on respective so-called authorities to provide adequate actions to tackle the pandemic and also to ensure freedom of movement in the conflict zone in Donbas; and to lift limited possibilities of crossing the administrative border from occupied Crimea to the Ukrainian mainland.

Reported cases of arbitrary detentions, torture and ill-treatment of both conflict and non-conflict related detainees by self-proclaimed “Donetsk and Luhansk people’s republic” are unacceptable; we call on them as well as on their Russian patrons to provide unimpeded access by OHCHR and other independent monitors to all detainees.

In occupied Crimea, the bleak situation in places of detention is similar. We call for an independent investigation of all credible reports on the use of arbitrary detentions, enforced kidnapping and torture. We call on Russia to release all Ukrainian political prisoners; here I would like to mention three names out of many of human right defenders remaining in prison: Emir-Usein Kuku, Server Mustafayev and Seiran Saliyev. Furthermore, we would like to express our concern about the recent detention of journalist Vladislav Yesypenko.

We reiterate our unwavering support to sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and independence of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders.