

Leaders highlight plight of IDPS at high level conference in Kyiv

President Poroshenko, Prime Minister Yatsenyuk and European Commission President Juncker commit to help at the International Support for Ukraine Conference. HRWF Director Willy Fautre was at the conference which took place earlier today.

By Willy Fautre, Human Rights Without Frontiers

HRWF (28.04.2015) – ‘The illegal annexation of Crimea and the conflict in Eastern Ukraine have led to tremendous human casualties, a dire humanitarian crisis and severe economic and infrastructure losses’, Ukrainian President Poroshenko said in his keynote speech at today's International Support for Ukraine Conference in Kyiv.

Magnitude of the human toll and infrastructure destruction

According to Prime Minister Yatsenyuk, ‘over 6000 people have been killed and more than 15,000 people wounded as a result of the Moscow-backed aggression against Ukraine’ with a further 1.2 million people having fled their homes and become internally displaced persons.

Currently, Ukraine is spending 4 million EUR a day in order to defend itself against its aggressors.

The estimated value of financial losses due to illegal confiscation of property of more than 4000 enterprises by Russia on the Crimean peninsula is approximately 47 billion EUR. The annexation of Crimea was the key factor for the economic downfall in Ukraine: in 2014 Ukrainian GDP rate fell by 6.8%.

Dozens of factories and industries were also deliberately destroyed.

According to preliminary calculations, the war will cost Ukraine more than 3% gross agricultural output annually.

Over 9579 apartment buildings and 1280 energy facilities were destroyed and damaged in the Donetsk region, more than 1570 houses were destroyed in the Luhansk region.

According to tentative data, more than 1582 railway infrastructure facilities, 1571 km of public roads, 33 bridges and 28 air traffic control facilities were damaged.

According to the joint mission of the EU, the UN and the World Bank, the total sum necessary for the recovery of the affected areas in Eastern Ukraine that are now controlled by Ukraine, is about 1,5 billion EUR.

The war waged on the territory of Ukraine destroyed over 20% of Ukraine's economic potential, including its forecasted revenues and foreign exchange earnings.

IDPs: Kyiv's humanitarian assistance program in figures

Out of 1,195,016 IDPs, 103,000 required medical assistance and 25,000 needed to be hospitalized. The government covered housing costs of 18 EUR per person and per month for 323,000 families who applied for assistance.

In terms of employment, 102,000 IDPs require employment and 33,000 applied to the state employment service. 6000 were offered jobs and 25,000 IDPs are receiving state financial assistance as they are temporarily unemployed.

1.2 million pensioners fled the occupied territories (Crimea, parts of the regions of Donetsk and Luhansk) AND 981,000 of them applied to receive their pensions in their places of temporary residence. The amount of pensions paid to them is about 530 million EUR and additional funds of 200 million EUR were reserved in the state budget.

Pensioners who reside in Crimea can get their pension in Kherson. IDPs from Donetsk and Luhansk can get theirs in any region of their temporary residence in Ukraine.

Concerning energy supply, the Ukrainian government respectively paid 500 million / 355 million EUR for the delivery of natural gas and electricity into territories controlled by the separatists. The separatists control the local financial institutions, collect the money for communal utilities (including heating, gas and electricity) but fail to pay the suppliers.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Ukraine desperately needs the assistance of the international community to help IDPs, regain the full sovereignty over its whole territory and restore peace so that it can start the necessary reforms to meet EU standards, attract investments and redress its economic problems.

As Jean-Claude Juncker, European Commission President, said "Ukraine is not alone. Europe stands united behind Ukraine. We want to help the Ukrainian government to put its reform agenda into practice and trigger real change for the country and its people but our actions must speak louder than our words."