

Press release

**International Civil Society Platform CivilM+ for peaceful conflict resolution in eastern Ukraine founded**

Vienna, 6 December 2017

On 4th December 2017 in Vienna, civil society organisations and activists from Ukraine, Russia and other European countries founded a joint international platform to push for peace and the rule of law in eastern Ukraine.

The platform’s aim is to streamline civic actors’ efforts in spheres like human rights protection, peacebuilding, education and information, humanitarian work, and to rebuild the territories of Donetsk and Luhansk as peaceful, integrated and developed regions of a democratic Ukraine and united Europe. CivilM+ seeks to promote the involvement of the regions’ population and of displaced persons in these activities.

Coming from different backgrounds, the members of CivilM+ understand the depth of contradictions and trauma, which appeared as a result of the armed conflict. They recognize the necessity of peaceful solutions to the conflict and the priority of human rights in the process of conflict resolution.

CivilM+ operates on the basis of democratic values, respect for human dignity, and protection of fundamental rights and freedoms.

CivilM+ offers its participants opportunities for cooperation, elaboration of joint positions, mutual support and solidarity, skills training and close coordination of work.

Among the tasks of the platform are to build trust and promote dialogue between civil society activists on all sides of the conflict and in different spheres of work, to enhance the impact of civil society in the process of conflict resolution, to counteract disinformation and to raise awareness of the conflict across Europe.

The members of CivilM+ strive to develop concepts for transitional justice and reconciliation while, at the same time, ensuring accountability for war crimes and human rights violations. They also plan to monitor official peace negotiations relating to Donbas and to strengthen the voice of citizens’ initiatives in these fora.

Among the founding members are: from Ukraine – Center for Civil Liberties, Luhansk HR Center “Alternativa”, Center for public initiatives “Ideas for Change”, „Country of free people”, Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union, and The Kharkiv Human Rights Protection Group; from Russia – Union of Don Women, HRC Memorial, Citizen and Army; from Germany – DRA e.V.; and from France – European Citizens’ Assembly and Ukraine Action.

Independent civil society actors dealing with Donbas issues can apply for information on the possibility of joining the platforms’ work.

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