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CIVILM+

№ 7, September 2018

PULSE OF PEACE IN DONBASS

Results of monitoring actual occurrences, related to the hybrid war in Eastern Ukraine

On 4th December 2017 in Vienna, civil society organizations and activists from Ukraine, Russia and other European countries founded a joint international [platform CivilM+](#) 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 work on rebuilding 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 as well as refugees and displaced persons in these activities. CivilM+ offers its participants opportunities for cooperation, elaboration of joint positions, mutual support and solidarity, improvement of qualification and close coordination of work.

The newsletter is devoted to the work carried out by civil society organizations and initiative groups from Ukraine, Russia, as well as international organizations, to overcome the consequences of the hybrid military conflict in the eastern regions of Ukraine.

This newsletter will be published regularly; the next issue will be published in October 2018.

You can send your information for the newsletter or ask any questions at: newsletter@civilmplus.org

The selection of news presented in the Newsletter is subjective. The opinions expressed in the published materials may not coincide with the opinion of the authors and participants of CivilM+.

CONTENTS

1. Political processes and the situation in the conflict zone
2. Public initiatives dedicated to overcoming the consequences of war and searching for opportunities for dialogue
3. Legal initiatives and analysis of the conflict
4. Assistance to internally displaced persons, refugees and affected civilians
5. Interviews and opinions

1. Political processes and the situation in the conflict zone

- May 24, 2018 - international experts claimed that the missile that shot down the MH17 flight over Donbass came from the [53rd Anti-Aircraft Missile Brigade of](#)

- [Russian army](#). Russian officials denied this (*text in English*)
- June 22, 2018 - Oleksandr Kuts, the newly appointed head of the Donetsk regional administration, said that the Ukrainian authorities [will support the reintegration](#) of residents of the uncontrolled part of Donbass (*text in Russian*)
 - At the end of June, 2018 - Stanyслав Aseyev, a Ukrainian journalist who has been imprisoned by the so-called "DPR" for more than a year, [went on hunger strike](#). In August, a propaganda "[interview](#)" accusing him of espionage was screened on a Russian TV-channel. The OSCE [called](#) for his immediate release (*text in Ukrainian and English*)
 - August 26, 2018 - Yuri Lextutes, the former "Minister of Culture" of the so-called "DPR", [was brought to the territory controlled by the Ukrainian government](#). He is the only representative of the pro-Russian forces leadership who has been detained up till now (*text in Ukrainian*)
 - August 31, 2018 - [Aleksandr Zakharchenko, the leader of the "DPR", was killed](#) by a bomb explosion in Donetsk. There's a [number](#) of [versions](#) of what happened. The Carnegie Center [publication](#) on the impact on the balance of power in Donbass (*text in Ukrainian and Russian*)
 - August 31, 2018 - [Dmitry Trapeznikov was appointed as the interim head of the "DPR"](#), he previously held the position of "Deputy Prime Minister" (*text in Russian*)
 - September 4, 2018 - [Sebastian Kurz, the Federal Chancellor of Austria, said that Russia is an aggressor](#) because of its actions against Ukraine and urged Russia to continue negotiations (*text in Ukrainian*)
 - September 5, 2018 - the EU sanctions against more than 150 Russian citizens and about 50 Russian organizations have been [extended for six more months](#) (*text in Ukrainian*)
 - September 5, 2018 - Iryna Herashchenko, Ukrainian representative at the Minsk negotiations, stated that [Russia had blocked the exchange of captives](#) (*text in Ukrainian*)
 - September 5, 2018 - Martin Sajdik, the OSCE Chairman-in-Office's Special Representative of the Tripartite Contact Group stated after the meeting that, although the summer of 2018 was the calmest since the beginning of the conflict, additional [measures to ensure the ceasefire regime, amnesty issues, communications and the situation of detainees](#) were discussed (*text in Russian*)
 - September 7, 2018 - [Denis Pushilin, "Chairman of the People's Council of DPR", was appointed as the new interim head of the "DPR"](#). Earlier, the "Prosecutor's Office of DPR" stated, that Dmitry Trapeznikov was unlawfully appointed to this position (*text in Russian*)
 - September 8, 2018 - EU officials stated that the decision of the "DPR" and the "LPR" to hold "[elections](#) of heads of regions and parliaments" are [violating](#) the Minsk agreements (*text in Russian*)
 - September 13, 2018 - Tony Frisch, the coordinator of the Humanitarian Working Group of the SMM OSCE, briefed on the [details of his visit to Ukrainian captives](#) in isolated districts of Luhansk and Donetsk regions (*text in Russian*)
 - September 14, 2018 - The UK Court of Appeal has [upheld the complaint of Ukraine](#) in the case of a \$3 billion loan that Yanukovych's government had

borrowed from Russia. Now this case will be heard considering all the political issues, as Ukraine demanded (*text in Ukrainian*)

- September 17, 2018 - Petro Poroshenko, the President of Ukraine [signed a decree on the termination of the Ukrainian-Russian Friendship Treaty](#), which began in 1997 (*text in Ukrainian*)
- September 22, 2018 - Oleg Sentsov, the Ukrainian political prisoner and film director, has been on hunger strike for more than 130 days in the penal colony of Labytnangi (Russia). The Bundestag Vice-president said that [Germany continues to strive for Sentsov's release](#) (*text in Ukrainian*)
- Michael Murphy, the US Second Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, [urged the Russian Federation to withdraw from Donbass](#) and to release Ukrainian political prisoners. He also reaffirmed the US' commitment to sanctions (*text in English*)

2. Public initiatives dedicated to overcoming the consequences of war and searching for opportunities for dialogue

- Families of those killed in the crash of the Boeing MH17 over Donbass published an [open letter to citizens of Russia](#): "... We are tempted to respond with hatred. But we must separate the ordinary Russian citizens from the those who are in charge - the system that led to the attack on MH17" (*text in Russian and English*)
- August 28, 2018 - The Sakharov Center (Moscow) hosted a number of [screenings of short documentary films](#) made by Russian directors in support of Ukrainian political prisoners held by Russia. The films are available [here](#) (*text in Russian*)
- August 30, 2018 - The press conference "[Missing persons](#). How can we find them?" took place in Kyiv. The representatives of "East-SOS" Charitable Foundations, the Information Center on Human Rights and Iryna Herashchenko, the President's authorized representative for the peaceful settlement of Donbass conflict, took part in the press-conference. The implementation of the law on the legal status of missing persons was discussed, as well as a draft law that would allow families of Ukrainian political prisoners to receive state financial assistance (*text in Russian*)
- September 9, 2018 - The [Festival of Opinions](#) was held in Sievierodonetsk, organized by the "East-SOS" Charitable Foundation to create a [discussion platform for local residents](#) on the current situation and the ways to influence it (*text in Ukrainian*)
- September 17, 2018 – party supporters of the "Reasonable Power" Party (Ukraine) [visited an uncontrolled part of Luhansk region](#) to discuss the "people's peace declaration" with local residents (*text in Russian and Ukrainian*)
- September 20-25, 2018 - a number of [events dedicated to the International Peace Day](#) were held in St. Petersburg, including a master class on anti-war graffiti and a discussion on life in the front-line regions of Ukraine (*text in Russian*)
- The project for [clinical supervisors dealing with trauma therapy](#) finished, implemented by DRA e.V. It will improve the quality of assistance to those psychologically traumatized as a result of the war in Ukraine (*text in Russian*)
- The project "[Building Ukraine Together](#)" on the main sites of activity in 2018 (*text*

in Ukrainian)

- A program for men, which aims to [raise awareness about domestic violence as a side-effect of military actions](#), implemented by DRA e.V., was successfully completed. Participants of seminars and information campaigns shared their views about the idea of the project and the further activities here (*text in Russian*)

3. Legal initiatives and analytics on war conflict

- The report ["Justice in Eastern Ukraine during the military aggression of the Russian Federation"](#) was published, according to research which was carried out on the initiative of the International Renaissance Foundation (*text in [Ukrainian](#) and [English](#)*)
- European experts [explain how the death of Aleksandr Zakharchenko, leader of DPR, could affect the implementation of the Minsk agreements](#). At the same time, the official representatives of France and Germany [declared](#) that the adherence of the agreements had become more important (*text in Ukrainian*)
- The [report on human rights violations in the occupied parts of Luhansk and Donetsk regions](#) in August 2018, prepared by the "East-SOS" Charitable Foundation, was published (*text in [Russian](#), [English](#) and [Ukrainian](#)*)
- The [report "Education in the line of fire: access to education near the front-lines"](#) by the "East-SOS" Charitable Foundation, was published (*text in [Russian](#) and [English](#)*)
- A coalition of human rights organizations prepared a report on [Ukraine's implementation of the International Pact](#) on the economic, social and cultural rights of those affected by the military conflict (*text in [Ukrainian](#) and [English](#)*)
- The report ["Crimes without punishment"](#), which is based on the research of official investigations of crimes committed during the military conflict in Donbass, was published by the "East Ukrainian Center for Civic Initiatives" NGO (*text in Russian*)
- The [report "Loss of civilian population, destruction of housing and infrastructure due to the war in the east of Ukraine"](#) was published by the Kharkiv Human Rights Group, in cooperation with the "Mirny Bereg" NGO (*text in Ukrainian*)
- The report on the [violations of the rights of IDPs](#) and those affected by the conflict in August 2018 has been prepared by the "Right to Protection" NGO (*text in [Ukrainian](#) and [English](#)*)
- Luhansk regional human rights center "Alternative" released a report ["Survival Test: Everyday life of housing and utilities infrastructure for civilian population in the conflict zone"](#) (*text in [English](#) and [Ukrainian](#)*)
- The report ["Face to Face with War: The Impact of Armed Conflict on the Rights of the Elderly"](#) is published, written by Luhansk Regional Human Rights Center "Alternative" in partnership with the Human Rights Center for Public Studies (*text in [English](#), [Russian](#) and [Ukrainian](#)*)
- The Documentation Center of the Ukrainian Helsinki Union for Human Rights published a [brochure on the history of the conflict in city Maryinka](#). The Brochure was published as part of a series on the historiography of the hybrid conflict in Ukraine on examples of the cities of Donbass (*text in Ukrainian*)

4. Assistance to internally displaced persons (IDPs), refugees and affected civilians

- On "Media Initiative for Human Rights'" [investigation about the murder of a civilian in Volnovakha](#), where the commander of the "Kyiv-2" battalion of the special police patrol service was probably involved (*text in Ukrainian*)
- "East-SOS" Charitable Foundation on the 49th [humanitarian visit](#) to the liberated area of Donbass (*text in Russian*)
- The International Committee of the Red Cross states that more than 1500 people have been missing since the beginning of the war. According to the SBU, the number is [294](#) persons. Experts [claim that the search is organized badly](#) and there are legal obstacles faced by the relatives of the persons (*text in Ukrainian*)
- According to "Civil Assistance" NGO (Russia), more Ukrainian citizens [don't obtain the extensions for the provisional asylum status in Russia](#) recently. The same is valid for those from other countries (*text in Russian*)
- On the situation with the [pension payments for IDPs - here](#). On September 4, the Supreme Court of Ukraine [decided](#) that the suspension of the pension payments for IDPs is illegal, setting a precedent in this area. See the full text of the decision [here](#) (*text in Russian and Ukrainian*)

5. Interviews and opinions

- Journalists and researchers have managed to [identify the name of a military official](#) who could have coordinated the actions of separatists in Eastern Ukraine and is probably related to the crash of Boeing MH17 - it turned out to be Oleg Ivannikov, an officer of the GRU (Russia) (*text in Russian*)
- An analysis of [power mechanisms used by Russia in various conflicts](#) was published in the "Europe-Asia Studies" journal (*text in English*)
- In a publication from the Carnegie Center, [Mikhail Minakov reflects on whether a lasting peace in Eastern Europe is possible](#) and what should be done to stop ongoing conflicts and prevent new ones (*text in Russian*)
- A presentation of the [book "Work, exhaustion and success: industrial monocities of Donbass"](#) (*text in Russian*)
- Interviews with Ukrainian [members of the LGBT community who took part in the ATO](#) in Anton Shebetko's [project](#) (*text in Russian*)
- About the possibility of an [environmental disaster in Donbass due to the destruction of industrial objects by shelling](#), in a publication on the "Obozrevatel" website (*text in Ukrainian*)
- A series of reports about eastern Ukrainian cities in ["The Future of Donbass" project](#) on the "Zaborona" website (*text in Russian*)
- [Updates to the "LPR" educational system](#) - in the publication of "Informator" website (*text in Russian*)

Supported by the government of Germany as a part of the DRA project "Dialogue for mutual understanding and rule of law: European NGOs together to overcome the Donbass conflict".

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