



Ref: CommHR/DMsf 072-2018

**Mr Sergey LAVROV**  
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation

Strasbourg, 9 August 2018

Dear Minister,

Further to our exchanges, I am writing to you concerning the situation of several persons who have been detained/imprisoned by the respective authorities in the Russian Federation and Ukraine since 2014. It is my firm belief that effectively safeguarding the human rights of those persons requires undertaking all necessary efforts aimed towards a satisfactory resolution of their situation, including through their release on humanitarian grounds. I understand that the situation of some of these individuals is particularly alarming and requires urgent action due to serious concerns related to their health and other issues.

According to my understanding there was a phone communication between the two Presidents (9 June 2018) and an agreement was reached to involve the national Ombudspersons with a view to jointly resolving the above-mentioned issues of concern in a spirit of co-operation. On my part, I fully welcomed such co-operation between the Ombudspersons, and offered, during my recent contacts with each of them, to provide any possible assistance to support their joint work.

I have continued to follow the situation closely and I regret to note a lack of any progress when it comes to addressing the most urgent and compelling humanitarian needs of the prisoners and detainees concerned. As the situation of some of those persons continues to deteriorate, it is critical to achieve meaningful progress in the resolution of those cases.

As a matter of urgency, I would like to ask you and your authorities to do the utmost and everything necessary in order to avoid any further damage and threats to the life of prisoners and detainees. It is my firm belief that if this issue is not resolved and not urgently dealt with between Ukraine and the Russian Federation, the consequences could be irreversible.

As the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, I would therefore like to once again confirm my willingness to offer my good offices to assist with overcoming the existing impasse. I am available to discuss, at your earliest convenience, the possible modalities for such an engagement on my part which could entail, if necessary and appropriate, the continued involvement of the national human rights structures.

Please, note that a similar communication has been sent to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine.

I look forward to your support in this important endeavour.

Yours sincerely,

Dunja Mijatović