

# **EARLY WARNING SYSTEM**

## **Towards Effective Prevention of Ethnic Conflict in Crimea**

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### *PROPOSAL*

**Programme:** Crimea Integration and Development Programme

**Activity Title:** Prevention of Ethnic Conflict in Crimea (Early Warning System)

**Location:** Autonomous Republic of Crimea, Ukraine

**Duration:** 48 months

**Implementing Partners:** Office of the Vice-prime-minister of Ukraine, Crimean Republican Committee on Nationalities and Deported Peoples.

#### **Context and Justification:**

The past decade has seen a dramatic increase in the number of intra state conflict, around which can be detected three major phenomena: exclusion, inequality and indignity. The former two are often accompanied by the struggle for the maintenance of group identity, traditional values, roles and institutions. However, such state of affairs does not necessarily lead to violence. Conflicts can be prevented to serve societal good. However, lack of capacity to avoid conflicts is often at the heart of the problems, especially if they [conflicts] are accompanied by structural factors such as lack of political rights, weak state institutions, partial judiciary, biased or controlled media, weak civil society, and social and economic inequalities that can lead to frustration, anger and ultimately the eruption of violence.

Ukraine, in its 10<sup>th</sup> year of political, economic and social transformations, faces many of the structural problems mentioned above. The young state has inherited a fragile social capital with presently a rocky political situation. It also continues to battle bureaucracy impregnated with corruption. Crimean Tatars, who make up twelve percent of the Crimean population, continue to remain outside the realms of decision-making, both in the Crimean Parliament and in the Council of Ministers. This situation, both at the central and local levels, does not address the root causes of ethnic tensions. Social and economic inequality and inequity have placed Formerly Deported Peoples (FDPs) on the brink of Ukraine's poorest.

The danger of inter-ethnic conflagration in Crimea has never been disputed. Both government and non-government sources, as well as local and international actors, confirm the existence of this threat in the Autonomous Republic. While the violent clashes of the early 1990s between Crimean Tatars and authorities subsided due to some short-term compromises, it marked the beginning of protracted social tensions not only between Crimean Tatars and authorities, but also between Crimean Tatars and the rest of the population in Crimea. Over the past year, disputes over land allocation and places of worship, which turned violent in some cases, only testify to the volatility of ethnic

relations on the Peninsula and question the capacity of authorities to effectively manage the situation.

The extent to which exclusion based on ethnicity threatens Ukrainian/Crimean society has never been measured. In addition, there is no monitoring system in place to measure the dynamics of inter-ethnic tensions in Crimea, whether these tensions are increasing or decreasing, and the factors to which they may be positively or negatively correlated. As a result, neither the government nor the international community has an appropriate tool, which could provide the signals for taking additional preventive action should the need arise.

In order to avoid further escalation of tensions in Crimea, it is proposed to set up an Early Warning System –a tool to analyze and monitor the root causes of potential ethnic conflict based on key political, social and economic indicators, which would inform all stakeholders, including the government and the international community, on the need for appropriate action. Regions/countries that have been described as “hotspots” on the globe where Early Warning Systems have already been introduced would be used as examples for setting up such a mechanism in Crimea. Special reference is made to countries in the Balkans and Romania.

An Early Warning System (EWS) would not only act as a monitoring mechanism for taking preventive action, but would also inform government officials, politicians and civil society of the consequences of their actions and/or non-actions vis-à-vis ethnic relations. It would build local capacity and expertise to collect and analyze information, and compile reports for key actors to respond in a timely manner to prevent an undesirable situation from occurring. It would also provide the basis for seeking international support should the need arise.

### **Objectives and Outputs:**

The overall objective of the project is to avert ethnic conflict in Crimea through regular monitoring and recommendations for policy making and action. The more immediate objectives are: firstly, to establish a mechanism for the monitoring and analysis on a quarterly basis of the potential risk factors engendering ethnic tensions in Crimea; and secondly, to advise on possible measures to deal with the root causes undermining ethnic and social cohesion in Crimea.

#### **Immediate Objective 1**

To establish and refine over time a simple yet effective mechanism for monitoring and analysis on a quarterly basis of potential risk factors engendering ethnic tensions in Crimea.

Output 1.1: Early Warning System as the mechanism for collection and objective analysis of information, and production of quarterly reports.

Output 1.2: Early Warning System as a mechanism for timely dissemination of information, which impact on ethnic relations in Crimea. It is envisaged that this will facilitate effective prevention in case of rising tensions.

Immediate Objective 2

To advise on possible measures to deal with the root causes undermining ethnic and social cohesion in Crimea.

Output 2.1: A matrix underlining the root causes of ethnic conflict in Crimea

Output 2.2: Recommendations for policy reform and action for the purpose of crisis aversion and long-term structural changes.

**Implementation Strategy:**

1. The EWS will dovetail with all of the other CIDP activities (social infrastructure, income generation, sound governance, etc) in a cohesive programme effort to prevent conflict. The EWS will be a monitor to determine how the whole effort is having impact.
2. The EWS will determine the root causes of ethnic conflict in Crimea, identify risk factors and possible triggers, and develop detailed indicators for measuring such risks.
3. Local experts working together with UNDP/CIDP and an EWS international expertise will select a group of risk factors and indicators through a prioritizing process. This selection will be based on an analysis of which factors are likely to have a higher impact on ethnic relations in Crimea. Indicators are subject to change depending on changes within the country.
4. Local experts and institutions will conduct surveys and polls, while available (but reliable) statistics will also be tapped. Where local capacity is lacking, international experts will be invited to provide training and advise. The aim will be to build local capacity and establish monitoring systems in order to allow the project to continue without foreign support.
5. Indicators are to be developed based on priority areas chosen. These areas could include:
  - Attitudes and opinions about inter-ethnic relations
  - Opinions as expressed in the media
  - Social Identity
  - Political Rights and Freedoms
  - Economic and Social Equality and Equity
  - Ethnic and religious intolerance
  - Ethnic distance
  - Opinions about Crimean Tatars as “indigenous people”

- Opinions about Crimean Tatars as “national minority”
- Opinions about impartiality of political and legal institutions
- Attitudes to power structures
- Opinions of Crimean Tatars about Russian population and vice-versa
- Territorial autonomy vs. national autonomy

Special surveys can be done in any area of major concern. For example, the current land distribution process in Crimea is an issue, which could escalate into full scale clashes unless appropriate measures are not taken. The size and scope of the EWS can be changed as deemed necessary during project implementation.

6. EWS reports will be produced on a quarterly basis, with recommendations for policy changes. In the event of special circumstances, immediate ad hoc reports will be prepared and the periodicity of regular reports made more frequent.
7. Beneficiaries: The most important beneficiary of this project will be Ukrainian and Crimean authorities, partner international organizations and NGOs, and Crimean citizens who will have a better chance to avoid conflict and advance on human development.
8. Capacity Building: During the last year life span of the initiating capacities of local institutions and individuals will be developed. At the mid point of the effort, a partner will be identified to carry forward the work after the project ends. This may be a local academic institution and will be determined based on objectivity and performance during the early phases of the project.

**Inputs:**

- a) National Project Manager (NPM)
- b) Support to Project Team (4 persons, excluding NPM) – salaries and training
- c) Sub-contracting of polling agencies
- d) Support the publication of reports and dissemination of information including national decision makers; transparent communication of activities on this component of CIDP will be essential
- e) Holding of round tables and brainstorming sessions
- f) International support
- g) Equipment (computers and accessories)
- h) Overhead, communication and transportation costs