

Eurasian Ombudsman Alliance Meeting

April 29, 2020

The III meeting of the EOA was attended by heads of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights in **Armenia, Iran, Kyrgyzstan, Serbia, Tajikistan, Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Mongolia** and others.

During the meeting, the Eurasian NHRIs shared their **best practices during the COVID-19 pandemic and discussed the issues of the protection of the right to historical memory** in the context of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the End of World War II.

The large-scale coronavirus infection has had an exponential impact on the socio-economic situation of the States and the functioning of their authorities, enterprises and institutions. Important areas of the life of society and the well-being of citizens have been heavily affected. In this regard, the effective interaction and sharing of the experience of ombudsmen are essential to provide rapid assistance to people and improve public responses to support citizens.

The participants of the meeting **called upon States to adopt new legislative mechanisms** to guarantee human rights under special circumstances and to provide additional assistance to citizens from the most vulnerable groups - older persons, poor families and families with small children, as well as persons with disabilities.

The ombudsmen **drew the attention of the Governments of their countries, business communities and employers to the inadmissibility of the labour rights violations**, including unjustified dismissal, coercive measures on the part of the employer to force staff to work, putting their health at risk, or place personnel on leave without pay.

The participants of the EOA meeting **called upon their Governments and international human rights bodies to consider the elaboration of an**

international legal instrument regulating human rights and freedoms in the context of a pandemic. The heads of Eurasian NHRIs deemed it appropriate to include in such an instrument the following provisions: the legal status of restrictive regimes; introduction of additional human rights safeguards; issues relating to the protection of personal data, protection of the rights of persons with disabilities and individuals held in places of detention; issues of amnesty and extradition.

Having considered **the question of the protection of the right to historical memory in the context of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the end of the Second World War**, the EOA members expressed their support to the **provisions of the United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/74/136 of 18 December 2019** «Combating glorification of Nazism, neo-Nazism and other practices that contribute to fuelling contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance».

The ombudsmen emphasized that the international humanitarian legal consequences of the Second World War, including the **establishment of the United Nations and the international system for the protection of human rights** at the universal and regional levels, are civilizational achievements and a value for the entire world community.

The EOA considered **any attempts to revise the outcome of the Second World War as a threat to the international system and principles for the protection of human rights** that have emerged from the bitter experience of the Second World War.

The ombudsmen called upon the Governments to pay special attention to the **social safety nets** regarding veterans of the Second World War and the elderly.

Slava Tolmachev

Secretary of the EOA
Counsellor to the Commissioner for Human Rights
in the Russian Federation