

The seminar succeeded in achieving its major goals: to provide the Ukrainian audience with insights into the policies and practices which have helped to ensure relatively stable inter-ethnic relations in Canada and other liberal-democratic states; and to promote a productive dialogue among the representatives of groups and institutions which rarely have an opportunity to meet and interact in a non-conflictual setting.

The Canadian team's activities in Crimea differed substantially from those in Kyiv. The main purpose of the Crimean programme was to allow the members of this team to become fully acquainted with the distinctive situation in this region, so that they could then suggest ways in which governmental and non-governmental organizations in Canada could provide expertise and assistance to deal with some of the problems faced by Crimea.

All assessments of developments in Crimea agree that this region remains one of the most significant "hot spots" of potential conflict not only within Ukraine but in the entire Black Sea region because of the distinctive ethnic composition of Crimea's population, and continuing separatist demands in Crimea which are supported by some nationalist circles in Moscow. Recent developments in Ukrainian-Russian relations have helped reduce some of the tensions in Crimea. However, Russia has succeeded in maintaining a strong naval presence in the port of Sevastopol, and the strategic location of this city provides Russia with a convenient means of influencing developments throughout the entire Black Sea region.

Russia is determined to maintain its presence in Crimea because it regards the Black Sea region as part of its sphere of influence, and also because of the large volumes of oil and gas, from Azerbaijan and Central Asia, which will be transported across, under, or around the Black Sea. Since nationalist rhetoric from Moscow will continue to fuel separatist tendencies in Crimea, it will remain a troubled area for several years to come, and it is essential that initiatives be taken quickly to help maintain peace and stability in this peninsula. To date Canada has not devoted much attention to Crimea. However, the members of the Canadian team feel that even modest Canadian initiatives in this region could bring considerable long-term benefits.

The Canadian team took a special interest in the plight of the Crimean Tatars, who were deported en masse from their homeland in 1944 and have only recently begun to return to Crimea, where they currently comprise ten percent of the population. Given their vulnerable status as recent returnees who have encountered considerable discrimination the Crimean Tatars, with little economic clout, are the greatest victims of the stagnant and heavily criminalized socio-economic situation in Crimea. In addition, the Crimean Tatars have ended up as pawns in a political tug-of-war between the central Ukrainian authorities and the local authorities in Crimea.

Because of the high level of cohesion and discipline within the Crimean Tatar community and the moderate stance of its leaders, to date its grievances have generally been expressed in a peaceful fashion. However, the community has already demonstrated that when provoked, it can easily mobilize its membership to engage in mass protests. In