



GENEVA CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS  
ADVANCEMENT AND GLOBAL DIALOGUE

## UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

### Interactive Dialogue with the Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine

#HRC58 • 19 March 2025



## PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT

### Mr. Erik MØSE, Chair of the Commission of Inquiry (COI) on Ukraine

The Chair of the COI provides an update to the UNHRC on the findings of the Independent International Commission of Enquiry on Ukraine at the end of its third mandate. The armed conflict initiated by the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine has led to over 12,000 killed and more than 29,000 injured civilians, large-scale destruction and damage of civilian dwellings and infrastructure.

For three years, the COI has gathered evidence of grave violations of international human rights law (IHRL), international humanitarian law (IHL), as well as corresponding crimes. During this mandate, the COI has already concluded that Russian authorities have committed **crimes against humanity of torture**. In the present report, the COI has also found that the Russian authorities committed **crimes against humanity of enforced disappearances**.



These crimes were carried out as part of a **widespread and systematic attack against the civilian population** in all provinces of Ukraine where areas came under Russian control and in the Russian Federation. They were perpetrated pursuant to a coordinated state policy and targeted categories of persons that Russian authorities perceived as a threat to their military objectives in Ukraine. The COI has interviewed a total of almost 1,800 persons, including victims and witnesses of violations and crimes.

All aspects of its work are guided by the principles of independence, impartiality, integrity and a victim-centred approach. The UN liquidity crisis has severely affected the staffing of the COI's Secretariat and its ability to travel during the current mandate. Yet, the COI has continued our work applying the established standard of proof. The COI reiterates its gratitude to all those who shared valuable information. It appreciates the cooperation by the Government of Ukraine. The Russian Federation has not responded to any of our 31 communications, including requests for information about incidents where the alleged victims were Russian.

The Russian authorities have committed **widespread and forced disappearances of civilians as well as of prisoners of war**. Large numbers of civilians were detained and subsequently transferred to detention facilities in occupied areas of Ukraine or deported to the Russian Federation. They were subjected to additional grave violations and crimes, including torture and sexual violence. Many of the victims have disappeared for months or years. Some have died. Russian authorities at different levels have systematically failed to provide information on the detainees, their fate and whereabouts to family members, leaving them in agonising uncertainty. Response letters from the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation, even when acknowledging the detention of some of the disappeared persons, did not disclose their whereabouts, invoking confidentiality. This deprived the victims of the protection of the law and rendered them vulnerable to further violations and crimes.

The COI concluded that the Russian authorities have committed **enforced disappearances as crimes against humanity**. The denial of information about those missing has violated the family's right to know the truth. Many undertook considerable search efforts at great risk but often to no avail and shared their deep feelings of anguish and deportation. A woman, whose family members have been missing since March 2022, told the COI - 'I just want the Russians to release and return my husband and son. They have ruined our lives. I can't bear to think about their mental and physical health after more than two years in captivity.'

As regards **torture as a crime against humanity**, the COI's recent investigations further confirmed that the Federal Security Service exercised the highest authority when present in detention facilities. They routinely committed or ordered torture at various stages of detention, particularly during interrogations where some of the most brutal treatment was inflicted. A former detainee described how FSB officers subjected her to repeated electric shocks during questioning. Dissatisfied with her answers, they stated - 'If you will continue to deny, your brother will suffer and do not forget that we can also bring your daughters here.'

The COI has previously concluded that Russian authorities systematically perpetrated **sexual violence as a form of torture** during detention. Most victims were men. The COI has now documented new cases of rape and sexual violence used as forms of torture against female detainees who were subjected to humiliating and degrading treatment. Some women were raped



during interrogations as a means to coerce, intimidate or punish them. Others were subjected to forced nudity in the presence of male guards. This illustrates the gendered dimension of sexual violence in detention. A victim of rape told the COI – ‘I can’t describe all of it. Those drunk, stinking men tearing my clothes, treating me like I was a rubber doll. It was unbearable.’

The COI has further investigated an increasing number of incidents in which Russian armed forces killed or wounded Ukrainian soldiers who were captured or attempted to surrender. This constitutes **war crimes**. Its investigators have been able to interview soldiers who deserted from the Russian armed forces. Several of them told the COI that they had received **orders not to take prisoners but kill them** instead, which points to a coordinated policy in this regard. For instance, one soldier heard how a battalion commander stated - ‘We don’t take prisoners. Those Nazis should not be taken in captivity. They should be killed.’

The COI also found that both parties to the armed conflict using drones killed or wounded visibly injured soldiers or the compartment. This constitutes **war crimes**. Finally, the COI documented some cases in which Ukrainian authorities committed human rights violations against persons they suspected of collaboration with Russian authorities.

The wide array of violations and crimes committed during three years have caused unspeakable suffering. Victims were often subjected to a complex range of violations and crimes involving extreme forms of physical and psychological violence and deprivation of basic rights. Family members had to cope with the death of loved ones or prolonged separation. The COI stresses the importance of **judicial and non-judicial accountability** in all its forms to support the recovery, rehabilitation and reintegration in society of the victims. Judicial accountability remains key to ensuring that perpetrators of violations and crimes are identified and held responsible for their acts and to end the cycle of impunity. Both forms of accountability contribute to the sustainability of peace processes.

### CONCLUDING REMARKS

In order to **foster accountability**, **Mr. Pablo DE GREIFF, member of the COI, points out that the latter is** not permanently present on the ground, which imposes some limitations. Nevertheless, the COI tries to make its contribution by reminding parties of their international obligations, including obligations towards the treatment of persons under their authority, to remind them also about their obligations under IHRL and IHL. The COI recalls that it has always advocated for a **broad notion of accountability** that includes both judicial and non-judicial measures. This serves as a useful reminder in the context of the dynamics of a peace process. Different elements of that comprehensive notion of accountability will be salient at different points. At some point, it will be crucial to attend to the needs of victims and reconstruction. At different points, it will be crucial to attend to more judicial elements of accountability.

On issues regarding sexual violence, **Ms. Vrinda GROVER, member of the COI** explains that the Commissioners have documented both in previous reports and now has been perpetrated systematically as a form of torture. The COI’s earlier reports had focused on men in detention and as the facts show there is a larger number of men in detention. Therefore, there was documentation of the sexual violence perpetrated against them. The COI points out the report does not make reference to a rise in **sexual violence against women**, but it is just documenting



the phenomenon. With respect to children, it continues to remain a challenging and complex issue for the COI to both document and investigate, both for reasons of access and numbers, as well as the liquidity crisis which has impacted the COI's work. On accountability, particularly for victims of sexual violence, there is not only a right to justice, but also the recovery process itself which is very deeply interconnected to securing justice. Psychosocial support will enable and equip them navigate and access the judicial accountability.

Turning to **criminal accountability**, **Mr. Erik MØSE, Chair of the COI**, reiterates that the COI is cooperating and coordinating with other entities in the international field which have related tasks to us and which ultimately serves to lead to accountability. These accountability measures are both international and regional, and the COI is regular contact with the ICC. When it comes to criminal **accountability and investigations at the regional level**, the COI has followed the work of the OSCE over the years. The COI and the OSCE have not reached a different conclusion, but in a way they supplemented each other. The COI also notes with pleasure that the OSCE's approach has been more focussed on specific aspects, whereas the COI has more general overviews and then a step-by-step on specific aspects. Over the years, the Council of Europe has made a tremendous contribution with respect to human rights work in general, notably in relation to Ukraine, and the Court's case-law as well. However, this is all about human rights in general. On criminal accountability, there is nowhere in the world a single regional criminal accountability mechanism. Should such an institution be established, then an exchange of information could be possible. **Accountability at the national level** is really the essential issue. In this regard, the COI notes the valuable work of the Ukrainian Prosecutor. While stressing the need for resources for the national criminal accountability efforts, this have to be allocated in a way that does not duplicate the other efforts. Other states that envisage accountability proceedings can already at this stage approach the COI.

In closing, **Mr. Erik MØSE** stresses the COI has felt the **repercussions of the liquidity crisis** during this last third mandate. As previously mentioned, Commissioners could not travel. The COI has allocated all its resources to investigators to make sure to get as much evidence as possible. The COI has resorted more to video conferences, which is not the same as visiting the country. The COI has been severely affected, but it has maintained the standard and hopes it will not be affected more.

## INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE

### Views Expressed by the Countries Concerned

The delegation of the **Russian Federation** is not present.

Taking the floor through Mr. Oleksiy Khomenko, **Interim Prosecutor General, Ukraine** expresses its deep gratitude to the COI for its unwavering dedication to the violations of IHRL and IHL. It is particularly important that the COI continues to focus on widespread and systematic violations that are being committed by Russia against Ukrainian prisoners of war and civilians. These include the use of torture, enforced disappearance, wilful killings and sexual violence as a method of warfare. These actions, as part of a coordinated state policy, have one clear objective to terrorise the Ukrainian population and eliminate any resistance in occupied territories. The other deliberate practises of Russia's policy are the forced deportation of thousands of Ukrainian



children and attacks on critical civilian infrastructure. It has been a third winter with mass waves of attacks targeting Ukrainian energy-related infrastructure. These attacks, which continue to intensify, are not only aimed at military targets but are part of a deliberate strategy to intimidate and create unbearable living conditions for millions of innocent Ukrainians. These brutal actions only serve to further demonstrate the depth of Russia's commitment to its violent campaign. At the national level, Ukraine is also investigating these crimes as it strives to ensure justice for the victims and hold the perpetrators accountable. This national effort is part of our broader commitment to ensuring that the law is upheld and that justice prevails. The Prosecutor General's Office is profoundly grateful for the work the COI is doing to call attention to the violations committed by Russian armed forces in Ukraine. The perpetrators must pay justice for their actions and the international community must come together to support initiatives aimed at ensuring Russia's accountability. It is only through such collective action that we can ensure that justice is served and that these crimes are never allowed to go unpunished.

In its concluding remarks, the **delegation of Ukraine** highly commends the COI's efforts in investigating human rights violations and war crimes resulting from Russia's war against Ukraine. This is the fourth year of the Russia's full-scale invasion, and 11 years since the beginning of its aggression, including the occupation of Crimea and parts of Donbass. Over the past decade, Russia has committed unspeakable atrocities, wilful killings, indiscriminate attacks, torture, enforced disappearances, and the abduction of Ukrainian children. This war is the war against human rights, violating the fundamental rights to life, safety, and dignity. Justice must prevail. The arrest warrants issued by the ICC for Vladimir Putin, Maria Lvova-Belova, and top Russian commanders, mark the first step towards accountability. Ukraine appreciates the 'Register of Damage for Ukraine' and ongoing efforts to establish a Claims Commission and a Special Tribunal for the crime of aggression. The COI has gathered extensive evidence of Russia's violations, many of which constitute war crimes and crimes against humanity. Ukraine counts on its continued focus on the human rights impact of Russia's systematic attacks on crimes such as unlawful detention, torture, and forced transfers of children. Russia must be held accountable. Ukraine calls on all UNHRC members to support the extension of the COI's mandate. The victims in Ukraine, including those suffering under Russian occupation, deserve justice.

### **Views Expressed by State Delegations**

**Estonia jointly with the Nordic-Baltic countries** thank the COI for its valuable work and the latest report. More than three years ago, Russia launched its full-scale war of aggression against Ukraine and to this day has shown no willingness to pursue peace. Russia continues to launch missile attacks and attack drones over Ukrainian cities, causing numerous civilian casualties, immense destruction and deep psychological distress. Large-scale and targeted attacks on civilian infrastructure persist. The COI's report states that Russian authorities have committed torture and enforced disappearances as crimes against humanity. Thousands of Ukrainians, both military personnel and civilians, are being held in captivity in Russia and in occupied territories. The deportation of Ukrainian children constitutes a particularly heinous crime. Russia must cease these widespread violations and uphold its obligations, including by granting independent monitors full access to all detention facilities. To achieve comprehensive, just and lasting peace, accountability remains a session. The day will come when Russia bears full responsibility for the damage and suffering it has caused.





Speaking on behalf of **35 European states, Poland** expresses deep concern over the latest findings by the COI. Three years into Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, the evidence gathered led the COI to conclude that Russia is committing crimes against humanity and war crimes in the context of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine. The report documents how Russia commits widespread and forced disappearances against civilians and prisoners of war and widely and systematically uses the most brutal forms of torture against both male and female detainees, including rape and other forms of sexual violence. Importantly, the COI concludes that these crimes are perpetrated pursuant to a coordinated state policy. Russian armed forces continue to wilfully wound or execute Ukrainian soldiers who were captured or attempted to surrender. They remain deeply concerned about the fate of all Ukrainian children forcibly transferred or unlawfully deported. These atrocities must not go unpunished. Russia, the aggressor, must be held accountable. Russia must immediately halt its war of aggression, including the dreadful atrocities recounted in the report and its unrelenting strikes against Ukraine's civilian and civilian infrastructure. Strongly reaffirming their support for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity, they reiterate their call on Russia to end the unlawful practise of deportation and forcible transfer of Ukrainian children and their illegal adoption, and to ensure their immediate and safe return to Ukraine.

On behalf of the **Group of Friends of Accountability** following the aggression against Ukraine, **Moldova** explains that last month marked the grim third anniversary of Russia's illegal and provoked full-scale invasion of Ukraine. We are alarmed by the findings in the latest report regarding alleged crimes against humanity in the form of enforced disappearances and torture perpetrated by the Russian authorities pursuant to a coordinated state policy. The Group calls on Russia to inform families of the fate and whereabouts of all persons in their custody and provide access to justice. The Group also calls on Russia to return all forcibly transferred Ukrainian children. The Group is also deeply concerned about reports of Russian authorities' systemic use of sexual violence as a form of torture and urge Russia to take all possible measures to prevent sexual and gender-based violence. The Group recalls the absolute prohibition of torture and inhuman treatment under international law. The Group of Friends reiterates its unwavering commitment to supporting efforts aimed at bringing perpetrators to justice and preventing further crimes, and will continue to work to secure accountability, safeguard human rights, and ensure justice and lasting peace for Ukraine.

**Switzerland** thanks the COI for its report and reiterates its support to it. Switzerland strongly condemns enforced disappearances and all uses of torture. It is deeply concerned about the systematic and widespread nature of these practises, which, according to the COI, amount to crimes against humanity. These acts inflict unbearable suffering to victims and their loved ones. Switzerland also condemns the resort to sexual violence and sexual and gender-based violence as a method of torture designed to humiliate, break, and dehumanise victims. The Russian authorities must immediately end these inhumane practises. Switzerland stresses its concerns about the war crimes observed by the COI as a result of incidents where Russian commanders have ordered that captured or surrendered soldiers be executed in violation of IHL. Switzerland calls upon all parties for confidence and respect their IHRL and IHL obligations. All perpetrators of violations must be held accountable. Perpetrators must be prosecuted and victims must obtain truth, justice, and reparation.



**Liechtenstein** thanks the COI for its report and its crucial work in investigating and documenting breaches of IHL as well as systematic and widespread violations and abuses of IHRL some of which may amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity. Liechtenstein strongly condemns the numerous abhorrent crimes committed by the Russian Federation and stresses the need to hold perpetrators to account both for the crime of aggression, which is a leadership crime as well as the subsequent crimes it resulted in. It expresses its heartfelt sympathy and solidarity with Ukraine and the Ukrainian people who bear the brunt of these crimes and who face regular systematic attacks against them. It reiterates its strong support for Ukraine's sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity.

**Portugal** is extremely concerned by the COI's findings on the extent of Russia's violations of IHRL and IHL, resulting from its brutal, unjustified, and unprovoked war of aggression against Ukraine. According to the evidence collected, the Russian Federation has used in-forces appearances and torture as part of a widespread and systematic attack against civilians. Russian authorities have also failed to comply with its international obligations on the treatment of prisoners of war and detainees, with many being subjected to torture and sexual violence. These are heinous acts, and the resulting physical and psychological toll on the victims can never be erased. Preserving the evidence is a crucial first step. Accountability must follow suit. Portugal remains steadfast in its support for the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of Ukraine and fully supports the renewal of the COI's mandate, as it is key to ensuring that perpetrators are held to account and that Ukrainians can finally have justice. Peace must prevail, and for peace to be comprehensive, just, and lasting, Ukraine must be at the centre stage of any and all dialogue.

**Czechia** is extremely worried about the latest findings by the COI which confirms the horrific acts committed by Russia against Ukrainian civilians, prisoners of war, and soldiers. In the context of Russian war against Ukraine, grave violations of international human rights and humanitarian law and crimes against humanity, such as enforced disappearances and torture, have been documented. The systematic use of violence, including rape and sexual violence, against both male and female detainees is a blatant fact. The most brutal forms of torture have been committed by different Russian state authorities, including Russian Federal Security Services. There is a calling for accountability for all committed crimes. Czechia draws international attention to the issue of women in Russian captivity, notably women deprived of liberty due to politically motivated persecution in the occupied Crimea, among them Oksana Sonechuk, Lyudmila Kolesnikova, and Anna Yeltsova.

**Spain** reiterates its support to the Government of the people of Ukraine. As the High Commissioner said here on 4 March, the war is the definitive violation of human rights, and we observe with sadness how human rights remain systematically violated in Ukraine. In Russia's unjustified, unprovoked, and unlawful war of aggression, the COI has been able to verify and document numerous violations, which attests the importance of international efforts to investigate human rights violations, so that there can be true accountability and that the perpetrators be brought to justice. Spain recalls that systematic enforced disappearances amount to a crime against humanity, and that when you deny legal protection to detainees or war prisoners, that is also an enforced disappearance, especially when you conceal the fate and whereabouts. IHRL is one of the pillars of civilisation, and as such must be respected, which is



why Spain demands the end of killing of surrendering prisoners and an end of the repression in occupied areas, and that Russia puts an end to this unlawful and unjust war.

**Luxembourg** thanks the COI for its crucial work. While the war of aggression conducted by Russia against Ukraine is in its fourth year, serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law continue to become more and more frequent at an alarming scale. Luxembourg is deeply concerned by the evidence presented by the COI demonstrating forced disappearances and acts of torture against the civilian population organised by the Russian authorities. These are crimes against humanity. The refusal by Russian authorities to provide information about the fate of a person forced to disappear or serious psychological suffering to the families of the victims. The families have the right to know the truth about where their loved ones are. Luxembourg is shocked by new evidence of new forms of torture of the most brutal types, which we see in the report, including rape and sexual violence against detained women. Luxembourg affirms its inexhaustible support for Ukraine and calls for an immediate cessation of all acts of violence and violations of IHL and IHLR.

**Canada** reiterates its gratitude to the COI for its tireless work and detailed reporting on the situation in Ukraine in the context of Russia's aggression. Over three years, the COI has documented an alarming scale and scope of violations of IHL and IHLR in the context of Russia's full-scale invasion. In its most recent report, the COI has concluded that Russian authorities engaged in torture and enforced disappearances that amount to crimes against humanity. These Russian violations were perpetrated as part of a widespread and systematic attack against the civilian population as part of a coordinated state policy, and they must stop. Canada implores all parties to respect their international law obligations. Ending impunity and pursuing accountability is an essential step towards justice and a just, sustainable, and comprehensive peace, one that fully upholds Ukraine's sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity.

**Türkiye** states that international law must be upheld and civilians must be protected at all times. As the war has entered its fourth year, approaches based on diplomacy, dialogue, and negotiations have gained momentum. Since the beginning, Türkiye has voiced its strong support for a negotiated and diplomatic end to the conflict, with the ultimate goal of ending humanitarian suffering. Therefore, it welcomes this new dynamic towards the end of the hostilities. The ceasefire proposal discussed in Jeddah was a positive and important development. A constructive response to this step will accelerate the efforts towards the establishment of the much-needed peace. Stopping hostilities, even for 30 days, could lead to a longer-term peace agreement, which should constitute the ultimate target. A just and lasting peace cannot be achieved without the involvement of both parties. We should maintain close contact with both sides and show our support to the process. Türkiye is in a position to contribute to the multidimensional efforts towards a diplomatic solution, and it will continue to support constructive initiatives to find a diplomatic solution to this war, with the ultimate goal of ending humanitarian suffering.

**Slovenia** describes the findings of the COI as deeply troubling, documenting Russia's violations of international humanitarian and human rights law and concluding that crimes against humanity and war crimes are being committed by Russian authorities in the context of their armed aggression against Ukraine. Systematic failure to disclose information about the fate or whereabouts of detained civilians and military personnel, along with widespread and systematic





use of torture, including sexual violence, is deplorable. Slovenia remains committed to truth, justice and accountability for the crimes committed and therefore supports fully the COI's work alongside the OHCHR monitoring mission in investigating, documenting and collecting evidence of these violations. Slovenia's support for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders remains unwavering. All efforts for a just and lasting peace must respect the principles of UN Charter and international law.

For the last three years, **North Macedonia** has stood alongside the people of Ukraine in solidarity and will continue to do that for as long as it takes. It strongly condemns the wilful killings, enforced disappearances, attacks on civilians, lawful confinement, rape and sexual violence, phones transfer and deportation of children, indiscriminate and disproportionate attacks on medical and educational facilities and energy infrastructure, as well as destruction or transfer of cultural objects. The total number of civilian casualties for the past three years is 42,505 and at least 12,737 killed, from which more than 650 children. North Macedonia stresses the importance of collecting, preserving and analysing evidence and welcomes the work of COI, renewing the mandate of the COI is its priority. Violations of IHL and IHRL must be thoroughly investigated and profiteers must be held accountable under international law. North Macedonia calls upon all sides to engage constructively and bring an end to the war.

**Japan** appreciates the investigation being conducted by COI on Ukraine. The work of COI is important in identifying cases of violations or abuses of human rights to hold those responsible accountable. More than three years have passed since Russia launched its aggression against Ukraine, which Japan reiterates is a clear violation of international law and shakes the very foundation of international order. During this period, many innocent civilians have lost their lives and many more have been injured by Russia's ruthless attacks on critical infrastructure, including hospitals, schools and power plants. Japan expresses utmost respect for the courage and perseverance of the people of Ukraine, who have been standing up in defence for the freedom and independence of the country for three years. Japan will continue its diplomatic efforts and stand firmly with Ukraine and its international community until a comprehensive, just and lasting peace is achieved in Ukraine.

**Mexico** is grateful for the victim-oriented work of the COI. It attests to the need to strengthen protection of human rights and respect for IHL in conflict situations. It deplores the fact that crimes against humanity have been committed in Ukraine, in particular the coordinated and widespread practise of torture and forced disappearances in affected areas. The COI documented cases of rape and sexual violence which amount to torture and this against detained women whose lives have been devastated. Mexico highlights the importance, therefore, of triggering measures to prevent, address and sanction these kinds of gender-based violence. Mexico also notes with concern the unlawful detention of civilians, lockdowns and transfers, as well as the deportations of civilians, including minors, which also amount to war crimes. It is imperative that the aggression be brought to an end and all acts of violence brought to an end. Perpetrators of these crimes must be identified and brought to justice. Mexico reiterates its support to the International Criminal Court as the competent body for accountability for crimes against humanity and other serious violations of international law committed in Ukraine. It supports the efforts made to find a peaceful and negotiated solution to this conflict.



**Australia** thanks the COI for its update. Russia's ongoing illegal and immoral invasion of Ukraine continues to have devastating impacts on the human rights of all Ukrainians. Australia is profoundly concerned by Russia's reported grave violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law, including widespread and systematic attacks against the civilian population. It is also appalled by reports of Russia's widespread and systematic use of torture, including sexual violence and rapist forms of torture, and the COI's findings that Russian authorities have committed the crime against humanity of enforced disappearances and torture. Australia is deeply concerned by reports of Russia's attacks on critical energy infrastructure, which have left many Ukrainians without electricity, access to water or heating during the winter months and risk causing a catastrophic nuclear incident. It condemns the inhumane, degrading and unsanitary conditions so many detainees endure and call on Russia to treat all detainees, including prisoners of war, with dignity and in accordance with international humanitarian law. Every day that Russia refuses to agree a ceasefire prolongs human suffering. Australia again calls on Russia to immediately withdraw from Ukraine and end this senseless war.

**Bulgaria** thanks the COI for the last report. Three years have passed since the beginning of the military aggression by Russia against Ukraine. Sadly, we continue to see a horrific escalation of violations of human rights and humanitarian law. On the international level, deplorable cases of forced disappearances, systematic torture, including sexual violence and extrajudicial executions have continued. The Russian Federation has targeted civilians. This is a set of crimes against humanity. Bulgaria strongly condemns the forced transfer of children from the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine into Russia. Bulgaria is a part of the international partnership to bring back those children home. Bulgaria has condemned a number of times and as firmly as possible the unprovoked, unjustified, illegal aggression by Russia against Ukraine. Bulgaria is tirelessly supporting Ukraine, its sovereignty and its independence, as well as territorial integrity.

Expressing its appreciation for the work of the COI, the **Netherlands** remains deeply concerned about the ongoing violations of IHRL and IHL following Russia's illegal, unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression against Ukraine. The Netherlands is shocked by the presented conclusions that Russia has committed to crimes against humanity of enforced disappearances and torture of civilians and prisoners of war. We cannot let immunity for these heinous crimes prevail. We need to ensure full accountability. The Netherlands reiterates its unwavering support to Ukraine in their efforts to bring the perpetrators of international crimes to justice, because without justice for international crimes there cannot be a lasting and just peace. It commends the COI as well as the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine (HRMMU) for their crucial work in documenting human rights violations and violations of IHL. The Netherlands will continue to support their work and encourages future recommendations to the international community on measures to end impunity and ensure access to justice for victims, especially in light of possible peace negotiations.

**Iran** states that unilateral action disregard for the rule of law and violation of international obligation has severely undermined the effectiveness of international organisations and institutions. These bodies, which were established to foster global cooperation, are increasingly being exploited as political tools by certain governments. In such a challenging environment, the need for genuine cooperation and a renewed commitment to multilateralism has never been



more urgent. In this context, Iran firmly opposes the political agenda of imposing countries with specific resolutions and mechanisms within the UNHRC. Such approaches not only undermine the credibility of the UNHRC, but also risk diverting its core mission. At the same time, we call on Ukraine to focus on peaceful measures to address human rights concerns within its territories and to refrain from making unfounded security allegations against others to garner support for its activities. The instrumentalization of human rights using these principles to advance political or unrelated agendas does not serve the cause of promoting and protecting human rights. Instead, it undermines the integrity of international organisations and institutions.

**Albania** thanks the COI on Ukraine for the presentation of its third report. Since day one, Albania has strongly condemned Russia's unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression against Ukraine. This war continues to inflict suffering on the civilian population, who have paid and continue to pay a high price with thousands of deaths and the destruction of homes and the social infrastructure. The findings of this latest report highlighted violations of IHRL and IHL committed by Russian authorities. The COI also found that the Russian authorities committed acts of torture as a crime against humanity. The COI rightly emphasises the need for justice to be served and for those responsible for violations and crimes to be held accountable. Albania calls on judicial and non-judicial accountability mechanisms to coordinate to achieve meaningful results. The victims of this aggression have the right to justice. As we enter the fourth year of the war, it is crucial that the international community continue its efforts to ensure accountability, justice and to achieve a comprehensive, just and lasting peace, which must be based on the UN Charter and international law. In this regard, Albania welcomes progress made following discussions on a possible 30-day ceasefire. Finally, Albania reiterates its support for Ukraine in its struggle for freedom, dignity and peace that respects Ukraine's national sovereignty and territorial integrity.

**Belgium** states that three years have passed since Russia launched its full scale war, an unjustified illegal war against Ukraine, a war of aggression resulting in immense pain and suffering, widespread destruction and a humanitarian crisis that continues to unfold. Belgium is gravely concerned by the flagrant increase in violations of IHRL and IHL, as highlighted by the findings of the COI. Enforced disappearances of large numbers of civilians and prisoners of war are deeply alarming. Belgium is appalled by the widespread use of torture, including rape and sexual violence. It strongly condemns the killing and wounding by the Russian Federation of surrendering soldiers. The systematic, widespread nature of these violations is unacceptable. Belgium urges all parties to comply with their international obligations under international law. These crimes underscore the urgent need for accountability. Justice must be done for the victims and their families. War crimes, crimes against humanity and other atrocities must not go unpunished, anywhere or ever.

**Ghana** thanks the members of the COI on Ukraine for their briefing. At this time, when the voices of peace are growing louder, Ghana renews its unequivocal call for the immediate cessation of hostilities and the return to the path of dialogue and diplomacy. This is necessary to bring about an early improvement in the human rights and the humanitarian situation in Ukraine. Ghana remains concerned about the continuing attacks on civilian populated areas and is worried about the trauma their situation is causing, especially to the aged, women and children. It notes with regret the loss of lives, the displacement of people and the overall suffering of the Ukrainian people from this war. Ghana urges compliance with all commitments under IHL and IHRL, in



particular the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 relative to the civilian persons in the time of war. Lastly, Ghana notes with satisfaction recent positive statements by the parties to a ceasefire and hope that they will follow through with their commitments in the spirit of constructive dialogue aimed at a pathway for resolving the crisis.

**Uruguay** thanks the COI for the update and the third report and voices its deep concern about the serious violations of IHRL and IHL, the humanitarian situation, rapes and crimes committed in Ukraine. We are concerned about the observations and conclusions of the COI with regards to the fact that crimes against humanity have been committed, the process of separation and torture, which were perpetrated as part of a widespread and systematic attack against the civilians fulfilling a coordinated state policy. Uruguay condemns the use of sexual and gender-based violence committed as a form of torture in the detention centres. It is crucial to guarantee accountability for serious human rights crimes committed in Ukraine as well as extradition mechanisms for accountability, including measures to provide reparation and guarantees of non-reoccurrence. Uruguay reiterates its firm support to Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty within internationally recognised borders and our appeal to the Federation of Russia to put an end to hostilities and fulfil its international obligations pursuant to international law.

**Eritrea** categorically rejects the continued use of the UNHRC as a platform for politicised attacks against Russia under the guise of human rights. The narrative of this report follows a pattern of bias that disregards the complex realities of the situation in Ukraine. The ongoing crisis cannot be assessed in isolation from its broader geopolitical context. The failure of diplomatic agreements, the expansionist policies of NATO and the systematic discrimination against Russian-speaking populations in Ukraine have all contributed to the current conflict. Ignoring these realities undermines any genuine effort toward peace and reconciliation. It is also deeply concerning that some states, while calling for accountability, continue to supply weapons and financial support to prolong hostilities, exacerbating civilian suffering. The UNHRC must uphold its mandate with impartiality, ensuring that human rights are not exploited as a pretext for political and military escalation. Eritrea strongly denounces the selective approach of the COI, which serves not to uphold human rights but to justify continued aggression against Russia through sanctions, economic warfare and military escalation. True justice cannot be dictated by those who have an interest in perpetuating conflict.

**China** takes note of the report of the COI on Ukraine. The crisis in Ukraine has dragged on for over three years due to a variety of complex reasons. In spite of different positions, all parties hope to reach a fair, lasting and binding peace agreement that is acceptable to all. This is a hard-won consensus and an object that requires our concerted efforts to achieve. Relevant discussions in the UNHRC should be guided by the principle of objectivity and impartiality and should play a positive role in facilitating constructive dialogue between the countries concerned. Only with calm and balanced voices could we create conditions and foster a consensus for the settlement of crisis and could we truly contribute to human rights. Since the outbreak of the crisis, China has been appealing for dialogue and negotiation, seeking political solutions and working hard for peace and peace talks. Respecting the will of the parties concerned, China stands ready to work with the international community and will continue to play a constructive role in seeking solutions to the crisis and seeking lasting peace.



The **Republic of Korea** appreciates the COI on Ukraine's unwavering efforts in documenting human rights violations and abuses over the past three years as the war of aggression continues to inflict immense suffering. It is deeply alarmed by the COI's latest findings of crimes against humanity, including enforced disappearances and torture, as part of a widespread and systematic attack against the civilian population. Reports of the use of sexual violence as a form of torture and the killing or wounding of persons old or young are also regularly troubling. As the COI notes, the physical and psychological harm suffered by victims and their families is profound and often irreparable. It is therefore crucial for the international community to continue its efforts to ensure justice for victims, end the cycle of impunity, and to provide redress for survivors. The Republic of Korea reaffirms its solidarity to supporting diplomatic efforts to end this war, as well as working collectively to protect human rights, uphold accountability, and ensure sustainable peace for Ukraine.

**Greece** thanks the COI for its report and we express our deep concern about its findings. Widespread violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law have been documented, committed by Russia in the framework of its war of aggression against Ukraine. As highlighted by the COI, large numbers of civilians and military personnel have disappeared, while Russian authorities detain numerous civilians in localities of Ukraine they have taken control of, providing no information on their fate or whereabouts to their families. Moreover, deeply worrying are the findings of the report that Russian authorities have used torture pursuant to a coordinated state policy in well-established detention facilities in Russian-occupied areas of Ukraine and in the Russian Federation. The COI also highlights, among others, cases of rape and sexual violence aimed at humiliating and degrading women in detention, showcasing the gendered manifestations of violence in detention. Greece is particularly concerned about the fate of the members of the Greek community in the city of Mariupol and the nearby villages affected by the war. Finally, it reiterates its support for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders and for a comprehensive, just, and lasting peace, in line with the principles of the UN Charter and international law.

**Romania** thanks the COI for its report further shedding light on human rights violations perpetrated by Russia and Ukraine during its ongoing war of aggression, highlighting continuing patterns of torture against civilians and detainees. Widespread and forced disappearances as part of a coordinated state policy targeting civilians perceived as threats, torture during interrogations, and the brutal treatment of female detainees are continuous violations of human rights and international humanitarian law by Russia in blunt disregard of its international obligations. Romania deplores the devastating impact the conflict continues to have on the civilian population, leading to loss of life, displacement, and severe psychological trauma, necessitating comprehensive support for recovery and reintegration. There is need for accountability for all perpetrators of violations, and Romania will continue to support fully the investigation of all great crimes committed in and against Ukraine, as well as all independent monitoring mandates that seek to document and investigate human rights violations and to promote justice for victims.

**Poland** states that when the world is in turmoil, it is important to have a firm understanding of the facts. Documenting human rights violations and presenting us with the grim reality of the Russian





war of aggression is the essence of the COI's work. The findings of its report are alarming. It is abundantly clear that Russia has committed crimes against humanity and of enforced disappearances and torture, both perpetrated pursuant to a coordinated state policy. Russian authorities have persistently used sexual violence in detention facilities as a form of torture. The sole aim of beatings, rape and forced nudity was to humiliate and degrade the detainees. Those horrific acts will scare the victims, their families and communities for years to come. In the words of Elie Wiesel, silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented. This is why Poland will keep demanding that Russia's violations do not go unpunished. There can be no lasting peace without justice.

**Slovakia** thanks the COI for its report and stresses that in times of war, civilians and prisoners of war should be treated with dignity and in line with the relevant norms of international law. Those responsible for grave violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law must be held accountable. Slovakia fully supports any international efforts paving the way for ending this war through diplomatic solutions. Solutions based on the key principles of the UN Charter, including the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders. This conflict has taken too many lives, left thousands wounded and caused immense destruction and suffering. Ukraine deserves just and lasting peace, and Slovakia believe there cannot be a peace without justice and accountability.

**Austria** condemns in the strongest possible terms Russia's unprovoked war of aggression against Ukraine. Russia's unrelenting attacks with explosive weapons in populated areas have led to countless civilian deaths and injuries, as well as seriously damaged critical infrastructure, including hospitals, schools and energy infrastructure, thereby putting the security and safety of nuclear power plants at tremendous risk. Austria calls on Russia to stop these dangerous attacks immediately. It also urges Russian authorities to immediately return all forcibly transferred Ukrainian children. Austria is alarmed by the findings of the COI that Russian authorities committed enforced disappearances and torture as part of a widespread and systematic attack against the civilian population and pursuant to a coordinated state policy amounting to crimes against humanity. It is also very concerned by the reported additional evidence that Russian authorities have systematically used torture, including sexual violence, against certain categories of detainees to extract information, coerce and intimidate. Austria underlines the importance of the continued independent and impartial reporting of the COI and confirms its support to all efforts to seek full accountability for these violations and crimes under international law.

**Ireland** reiterates her condemnation of Russia's continuing illegal aggression against Ukraine. Over the past three years, the full-scale invasion has had devastating impacts and caused irreparable losses for the civilian population. Ireland is greatly concerned at the COI's conclusion that Russia has carried out enforced disappearances in Ukraine, which, as the COI notes, may amount to crimes against humanity. It deplores refusals by Russian authorities to disclose the whereabouts of detained persons, including children, to their families. Ireland condemns the forced transfer of children from Ukraine. Ireland is appalled by the reported systematic use of torture by Russia, including sexual violence against detained persons. Ireland calls for an immediate end to the use of torture and mistreatment of detained persons. It calls for all the human rights of prisoners of war and civilian detainees to be upheld in accordance with IHL and IHRL. Ireland is alarmed by the COI's findings regarding the killing or wounding of persons or their



combat, which is an egregious violation of IHL. The targeting of wounded persons is particularly contemptible. Ireland calls for these practises to cease immediately.

The **United Kingdom** states that COI's reporting has made clear that for as long as Russia pursues its aggression against Ukraine, the Ukrainian people will be subject to immense suffering. The UK is shocked by your latest report, which lays bare Russia's brutal treatment of detainees. The COI concludes that Russia has committed torture, including sexual violence, and for the first time that enforced disappearances committed by Russia amount to a crime against humanity. The UK is deeply disturbed by the systematic use of sexual violence against male detainees and by new evidence of the war crimes of rape and sexual violence perpetrated against female detainees. Detainees are subject to abuses and tragically some have died and their families are understandably in anguish. This mistreatment is directed from the highest levels pursued to a coordinated Russian state policy and evidence shows that Russian commanders gave orders to kill rather than take prisoners. Justice must be done. The UK encourages Ukraine to fully investigate into allegations against its authorities and armed forces. There is no equivalence between Russia and Ukraine. It is a direct result of Russia's aggression that Ukrainians across the country have faced violations and abuses of their right to life. Russia must be held to account and the UK will stand with Ukraine for as long as it takes.

**Moldova** is alarmed by the latest reports and the conclusions stating that Russian authorities appear to be committing and forced disappearances and torture as a coordinated state policy and as crimes against humanity. Moldova condemns the reported detention of civilians and calls on Russian authorities to provide families with complete information regarding the status and location of those detained and guarantee their right to justice. It further strongly condemns the reported most brutal forms of torture during interrogations and detentions. Moldova is appalled by the documented cases of the use of sexual violence, of male detainees, wilful killings, unlawful confinement and transfers. Attacks on civilian infrastructure are another cruel and illegal act. This must stop immediately. Accountability for violations of human rights and of international humanitarian law must be ensured. Moldova reiterates its support to the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders. Moldova welcomes the efforts aimed at bringing justice and sustainable peace to Ukraine alongside the strong security guarantees.

**Belarus** states that the UNHRC has been presented with a new report by the COI which, like previous ones, it considers to be biased. Ultimately, it serves the political interests of one party to the conflict. It is being used as a tool of punishment of the sovereign state, not of cooperation. In Belarus' opinion, the COI is unknowingly ignoring the outrageous violations of the rights of the Russian language, Russian-speaking population and many other Ukrainian violations. Belarus supports initiatives aimed at reducing military and political tension and building trust. It welcomes the new dialogue to resolve the conflict. The plans to continue the mandate of the COI is a part of the logic of continuing the confrontation, not moving towards peace. Belarus condemns the practise of abusing the human rights tools of the HRC. It calls on countries in their acts to prove the declared commitment that they supposedly have to peace and efforts to stop the conflict.

**Georgia** states that the findings of the report yet again illustrate the systematic and flagrant violations of IHRL and IHL committed by Russia and Ukraine. Based on the conclusions by the



COI, most of these grave violations perpetrated in a widespread and systematic manner amount to crimes against humanity and war crimes. It is fourth year now that Russia's aggression against Ukraine continues to take heavy toll on civilian lives. Georgia reiterates its strong condemnation of widespread and systematic attacks by Russia against the civilian population of Ukraine as well as continuous large-scale indiscriminate strikes on its critical infrastructure. It reaffirms the importance of the work of the COI along with OHCHR and relevant human rights mechanisms in documenting all gross violations and contributing to ensuring the accountability. In conclusion, Georgia reaffirms its unwavering support of independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders, extending to its territorial waters.

**New Zealand** has consistently denounced the illegal full-scale invasion of Ukraine, which was a grave breach of international law, including the UN Charter. New Zealand remains committed to upholding the UN Charter and international law, including international humanitarian law. New Zealand strongly supports the mandate of the COI and thanks it for its latest report. Russia's conduct over the last three years has underlined the necessity of close international scrutiny of the human rights situation in Ukraine, while that country remains subject to attack and occupation. As the COI's report clearly demonstrates, this war has had a horrific human cost. It has caused immense suffering to the people of Ukraine, as well as significantly impacting regional and global stability. Credible reports of widespread systematic acts targeting civilians and prisoners of war including unlawful killings, arbitrary detention, torture, rape and other sexual violence, as well as of the unlawful transfer and deportation of children and other civilians, are shocking and disgracing. Indications that such acts may represent deliberate and coordinated state policy by Russia are particularly concerning. It also condemn Russia's attacks on educational, health and cultural facilities. It strongly supports efforts to end impunity for such acts and to ensure that all perpetrators of human rights violations are held fully accountable.

**Venezuela** voices its concern over the conflict in Ukraine, the result of years of violations of human rights in Donbass, with numerous loss of life because of the Minsk agreements breakdown, because of the US, the NATO going towards the East. Today, before the possible ceasefire and heading towards peace, Europe is insisting on maintaining the conflict alive, increasing its defences and risking conflict with Russia. Look at history, we should learn from those lessons. Peace is the pathway. Respecting Minsk is a guarantee. Venezuela is a firm defender of the UN Charter and reiterates the appeal for understanding between parties, waging for peace, life and human rights in the region.

**France** thanks the COI for its report highlighting widespread violations of international law in Ukraine. For the last three years, France has supported the renewal of this mandate. Enforced disappearances, sexual violence and deportations show us how high the price is for Russian armed civilians. Torture and infamous widespread. Some executions of prisoners have got worse in the last few months. Attesting to a deliberate determination of Russians to terrorise Ukraine, France condemns all of the violations of international law in Ukraine. The crimes of Russia must be documented so that its officers do not remain unpunished. There will be no lasting peace in Ukraine without any justice. The unlawful deportation of children is a war crime. France will continue our efforts to coordinate within the International Coalition for the Return of Ukrainian Children, which will stand side by side with the Ukrainian people as long as it takes.



**Montenegro** stresses the COI's main findings that the Russian authorities committed crimes against humanity of torture and enforced disappearances, including their most brutal forms. Montenegro is profoundly concerned about the fate of unlawfully deported or forcibly transferred Ukrainian children and their illegal adoption, militarisation and indoctrination. It reiterates its call on Russia to end these unlawful practises and to ensure their immediate and safe return to Ukraine. Against this backdrop, the establishment of comprehensive accountability in all its dimensions for all human rights violations and crimes stemming from the Russian war of aggression is vital. Montenegro has stood decisively by Ukraine since the beginning of the Russian invasion, together with its European and Euro-Atlantic allies, in defence of the fundamental principles of the UN Charter and international law. It reaffirms its unwavering support for a comprehensive, just and lasting peace based on the principles of the UN Charter and international law. To that end, it welcomes the joint statement by the United States and Ukraine following their talks in Jeddah, including the proposal for a 30-day ceasefire as a step towards establishing a lasting peace that provides for Ukraine's long-term security.

**Croatia** thanks the COI for the report that documented continued grave violations of IHRL and IHL in the context of Russia's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine. Commissioners concluded that Russian authorities committed crimes against humanity, of enforced disappearances and of torture. These crimes are being done as part of widespread and systematic attacks against the civilian population. The prohibition of torture is a peremptory norm in international law. It is forbidden in all situations and all circumstances and no derogation is permitted. Yet, evidence in the report indicated as a regular practise of the Russian Federation. Deliberately attacking civilians, killing surrendering soldiers, torturing Ukrainian prisoners of war and civilians detainees in Russian captivity, using sexual violence, all committed in a systematic manner as reported by the COI, show that Russia uses inhuman methods in contravention of cardinal principles of humanity and its international law obligations. Croatia calls on Russian authorities to inform the families of the fate and whereabouts of all persons in their custody and to cease its aggression and all acts of violence committed against civilians and prisoners of war in violation of IHRL and IHL.

Thanking the COI for its report, **Malta** states that the report, once again, lists various grave violations of human rights. Ukrainian citizens continue to be arbitrarily detained, forcibly disappeared, subjected to torture and other inhumane treatment. Including sexual and gender-based violence on the basis that they are Ukrainians living in those territories and those regions under Russian occupation since the start of the war of aggression more than three years ago. The COI's report also includes information about the direct involvement of Russian state institutions as perpetrators, aiders and debaters in these crimes. Malta reminds the Russian Federation that it is responsible for its actions under IHRL and IHL by virtue of its obligations freely undertaken. Malta once again urges Russia to seize all military activity against Ukraine, withdraw from all occupied territories within Ukraine's internationally recognised borders and ensure Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. It also urges the Russian Federation to allow all forcibly displaced persons, including children illegally deported, to return to their families without delay.

**Germany** reaffirms its unwavering commitment to supporting Ukraine, its independence, its sovereignty, its territorial integrity and, most of all, its people. It commends the work done by the COI and is deeply shocked by the findings in its latest report. The report provides further



substantial evidence of Russia committing crimes against humanity and war crimes in Ukraine. These horrifying findings demonstrate the necessity to extend the mandate of the COI to enable it to continue its comprehensive work in the pursuit of accountability and of justice. Germany therefore supports the renewal of the resolution put forward by Ukraine on the human rights situation in Ukraine stemming from the Russian aggression. It encourages all other members of the UNHRC to do the same. Russia must end its war crimes and human rights violations against Ukraine and Ukrainians. The reported crimes are the worst kind and cannot go unpunished. Perpetrators must be held accountable. There can be no sustainable peace without justice.

In the **DPRK's** view, the COI is reduced to a one-sided and politicised mechanism, which demonstrates no balance whatsoever in its activities, reports and statements. It has demonstrated a biased approach, focussing on collecting and spreading one-sided and non-verified information, as well as wilfully positioning itself as a judge to punish sovereign states. The COI ignores atrocities and abuses of human rights committed by Ukraine, including killing of innocent civilians, torture, and the elimination of prisoners of war and so-called collaborators, and systematic oppression of Russian minorities. Furthermore, its activity continues inducing the outrageous stigmatisation and discrimination of Russian nationals, as well as bans of Russian-speaking media and prohibition of Russian culture in many Western countries. The DPRK firmly rejects such a politicised approach, which has nothing to do with the promotion and protection of the human rights and any attempts to manipulate the UNHRC in its own geopolitical interests and hegemony.

#### Views Expressed by National Human Rights Institutions

The **Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights** thanks the COI for its important work in investigating violations of IHRL, IHL and related crimes committed by the Russian Federation during its armed aggression against Ukraine, including the latest reports. Russian Federation continues to commit large-scale and systematic violations in Ukraine. Since the beginning of the full-scale invasion, at least 12,654 civilians have been killed and more than 29,000 have been injured. According to the Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine, at least 599 children have died. These numbers are growing daily. Russian occupiers systematically commit intentional killings, torture and sexual violence against men and women, prisoners of war and civilians, and use that as a weapon of war and intimidation. These brutal actions not only cause immense suffering but also aim to break the will of the Ukrainian people and undermine the fundamental principles of human dignity and international law. Repressions continue in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine. The aggressor state is fostering a climate of fear by employing violence, pressure and threatening of civilians. For the third year in a row, Russian Federation is not giving up attempts to completely destroy energy system of Ukraine and leave civilian population without electricity, heating and water in winter. The Commissioner urges decision-makers to extend the mandate of the COI and allocate the necessary resources and support to ensure the COI can fulfil its mandate, including conducting essential visits to Ukraine. The Commissioner stands ready to assist the COI in its investigations in Ukraine and calls on parties concerned to cooperate effectively with the COI to bring justice closer.





### Views Expressed by Non-Governmental Organizations

**Physicians for Human Rights** states that Russia's systematic attacks on Ukraine's energy infrastructure have directly harmed healthcare, jeopardising patient safety and the functioning of hospitals. Physicians for Human Rights research found that 66% of surveyed healthcare workers reported disruptions to medical procedures due to power outages caused by these attacks. These disruptions force evacuations, delay surgeries and shut down life-saving equipment. Health workers reported serious health-related harms and deaths due to power outages. These attacks are yet another way Russia weaponizes healthcare, destroying hospitals, detaining and torturing healthcare workers and denying medical services to civilians without Russian nationality. Since Russia's full-scale invasion, Ukraine's healthcare workforce has shrunk by 20% while mortality rates are rising, birth rates are declining and entire communities are losing access to essential care. The continued lack of accountability leaves Ukraine's health system exposed to further attacks.

**Minority Rights Group** thanks the COI for its continued reporting and support its findings on crimes against humanity. It reiterates that while the physical and psychological harms caused to victims are in many cases irreparable, formal reparations remain essential. Since 2014, it has documented a high number of cases of arbitrary detention of civilians, often accompanied by sexual violence and torture and enforced disappearance in areas of Russian occupation or control. Ukraine has taken steps to provide social protection for former civilian detainees. However, serious gaps remain in state assistance, particularly for those released outside official prisoners' exchanges, and many are left to manage their suffering on their own. In acknowledging victims' needs and rights, Minority Rights Group pointed to the COI's recommendation to strengthen support for accountability mechanisms that include measures of truth, reparations and guarantees of non-repetition. It calls on the international community to support legal pathways to hold Russia accountable for aggression against Ukraine and make reparations for civilian harm a priority in discussions on countermeasures and in negotiations to end the war. An effective national compensation or provisional reparations network for civilian harm must be developed and implemented in consultations with civil society and affected communities.

**VšĮ "Žmogaus teisių apsauga"** takes the floor through an inhabitant of the city of Cherkasy. On October 17 of last year, several hundred armed militants seized the Ukrainian Orthodox Church cathedral in the city. During the seizure, parishioners of the cathedral were brutally beaten. They were shot at with traumatic weapons, attacked with tear gas, had their arms and legs broken, and their teeth gnawed out. The speaker personally suffered a concussion from a baton strike to the head and burns to his both eyes. The cathedral, the diocesan administration, and safes were looted by the militants with the complete inaction of the police. Money, icons, and many other valuables were stolen. Information about this crime was included in the 2024 OHCHR. Today, there is a little hope that peace and the rule of law will return to Ukraine. In this regard, he calls on the international community to ensure the immediate return of our property. The return of the cathedral with a rightful owner would serve as a sign of Ukraine's return to democracy and respect for the law. On behalf of tens of thousands of Christians in the Cherkasy diocese, he asks the UNHRC and Special Procedures to take concrete and effective steps for genuine protection of human rights using this particular case as an example.



The **World Federation of Ukrainian Women's Organisations** thanks the COI for its report. Thousands of women, men, and children in Ukraine have suffered from sexual violence inflicted on them by Russian military. With over 340 cases registered with prosecution offices, according to humanitarian organisations working on the ground and prosecutors, sexual assault of Ukrainian women in Russian occupation is widespread. Not all women are able to speak about it openly or testify to the police, especially in rural areas, and it might take years for more of them to speak. But there is no chance to get real numbers from Russian-occupied territories. As soon as the territories returned under the Ukrainian control in cases of survivors of sexual violence who escaped from Russian occupation, new crimes have been reported, including witness accounts of particularly brutal sexual violence cases in Russian occupation, with torture beatings resulting in grave injuries and psychological trauma. The Federation appreciates the attention of the COI to the use of sexual violence as a means of torture in detention facilities in the recent reports. It would welcome the COI's practical recommendations about how to ensure and support reparation and justice for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence. The Federation believes that registration of such claims with the International Register of Damage will help rehabilitation of victims. It supports Ukraine's pilot project where testimonies of victims are verified by legal experts and prepared in a way that they can be presented as evidence in future trials. The Russian authorities and all perpetrators of sexual violence must be held accountable for the war crimes of sexual violence that has been used as a weapon of war by Russian forces.

**Human Rights Research League** remains profoundly concerned by Russia's continuing grave violations of IHRL and IHL in the context of its war of aggression against Ukraine, as also thoroughly documented by the COI's latest report. The League is deeply troubled by the display of total disregard for human life as demonstrated by Russia's systematic and widespread use of torture, including rape and other modes of sexual violence, and of enforced disappearances against military personnel as well as civilians, both of which amounting to crimes against humanity. It also notes the appalling reports of the Russian Federation's apparent policy of instructing their armed forces that no quarters will be given, indicating that even soldiers who surrender shall be killed rather than taken prisoner, a flagrant violation of IHL and a war crime punishable also under the Rome Statute of the ICC. Considering the massive combined physical and psychological harm that Russia's war of aggression has caused the people of Ukraine, the immediate victims but also their families, it reiterates the need for holding the perpetrators of these crimes to account, and thus asks the UNHRC to renew the COI's mandate and provide it with the resources needed to continue fulfilling its important task.

Welcoming the report of the COI, the **International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute (IBAHRI)** commends its excellent work. IBAHRI is shocked at its findings and keeps condemning the ongoing widespread violations of IHRL and IHL amounting to war crimes and crimes against humanity in the course of the Russian aggression against Ukraine. It condemns ongoing attacks on civilians and civilian objects, discriminatory use of explosive weapons in densely populated areas, forced deportation, coordinated widespread and systematic use of torture, incommunicado detention and forced disappearances by Russian forces. Once again, IBAHRI condemns the forcible transfer of Ukrainian children to Russia or Russian occupied territories or to third countries and the subsequent indoctrination and militarisation. It recalls that in March 2023 the International Criminal Court issued an arrest warrant against President of the Russian Federation, finding reasonable grounds to believe that he bears individual criminal responsibility



for crimes under Articles 25.3a and 28b of the rule stated in connection with Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. IBAHRI urges all States parties to the Rome Statute to fulfil their obligations under the Statute and to support the International Criminal Court in ensuring accountability for atrocity crimes committed in Ukraine by Russia. Lastly, it urges the UNHRC to support the renewal of the mandate of the COI.

**Human Rights House Foundation** is deeply troubled by the COI's new findings that Russian authorities have perpetrated enforced disappearances and torture that amount to crimes against humanity carried out as part of a widespread and systematic attack against the civilian population. Serious and systematic violations including deportations, sexual violence and the torture of detainees underscore the urgent need to ensure accountability, secure evidence and support survivors. There have been more than 150,000 criminal proceedings registered with the Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine relating to alleged war crimes. Human Rights Centre's Amina says this is an overwhelming number. They further say that it is an avalanche of atrocities that no law enforcement system even in the most developed country could handle alone. It therefore calls on all parties to fully cooperate with the COI and for the international community to continue its vital support to victims and survivors. Ensuring accountability for these international crimes is essential and not only for the sake of justice and redress for victims but also for fostering any future peace grounded in respect for human rights and the rule of law.

According to **Amnesty International**, the COI's harrowing findings reflect the human cost of Russia's war of aggression. Russia's treatment of Ukrainian prisoners of war and civilian detainees amounts to war crimes and crimes against humanity. Its use of torture is systematic and widespread against both civilian detainees and prisoners of war. A recent Amnesty report found that Russia is holding both civilians and a significant majority of prisoners of war incommunicado. Many of these cases amount to enforced disappearance, a strategy long employed by Russia and Ukraine, tearing apart thousands of families and leaving countless persons beyond any protection by law. Russia uses these tactics as matters of state policy to coalesce the civilian population into acquiescence with the occupying authorities as part of Russia's wider attack on the civilian population. Russia denies many prisoners of war adequate medical care, leaving them wounded and in agony. In some cases, prisoners of war have died through lack of adequate care, violating the most basic tenets of the Geneva Conventions. Russia must end its aggression against Ukraine, cease the practise of incommunicado detention, torture and ill-treatment, and comply with its obligations under international law. It must immediately free all civilian detainees being held unlawfully. Amnesty call on the UNHRC to renew the mandate of the COI and calls on states to pursue every option for accountability for all crimes under international law committed during the conflict, including through the ICC and the use of universal jurisdiction.

**Conscience and Peace Tax International (CPTI)** draws the UNHRC's attention to the plight of conscientious objectors who had no choice but to desert to avoid or escape deployment in the illegal Russian military action against Ukraine, and possible implication in the commission of war crimes and crimes against humanity. Hundreds have crossed to Armenia, Georgia or Kazakhstan and are now trapped in these countries which are unable to offer permanent refuge to Russians. Even those with passports find it hard to obtain visas for onwards travel, and even when all travel and entry documents are in order, some have, without refund, been refused boarding by airlines



on unspecified security grounds. On return to Russia, they face not only unduly long imprisonment for desertion, but lifelong persecution as by their actions they have declared themselves opponents of government policy. While duly sceptical of those seeking to avoid mobilisation, states have proved more sympathetic to asylum claims from actual deserters. CPTI calls on them to give preliminary consideration to all claims for refugee protection while the deserters are still in third countries so that they may be granted humanitarian visas to enable them to travel to safety.

The **International Federation for Human Rights Leagues** welcomes the COI's report which establishes additional international crimes committed by Russia's armed forces following Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. These findings are consistent with and drawn those of Ukrainian CSOs, which have documented more than 19,000 instances of violence that may amount to international crimes. Many of these abuses occur in places of detention located in Russia-occupied territories of Ukraine and inside Russia itself. It has documented over 600 cases of torture against detained Ukrainian civilians who have managed to find their way back to Ukraine, with thousands more remaining in Russian prisons, while reports indicate that nearly all detained prisoners of war endure similar mistreatment. As peace negotiations approach with nearly 20% of Ukraine's territory currently under Russian occupation, serious human rights violations of impunity in these areas are likely to persist beyond the cessation of active hostilities should they remain in Russia's effective control. FIDH and its member organisations in Ukraine therefore call on states to place human rights at the heart of any peace negotiations by calling for the immediate release and repatriation of all prisoners of war held by all parties to the conflict, as well as all Ukrainian civilians detained by Russia, and to ensure justice by supporting all ongoing accountability efforts at the national and international level, including investigations by the ICC, ongoing investigations based on extraterritorial jurisdiction, and the establishment of a special tribunal for the crime of aggression against Ukraine.

#### **FACTS & FIGURES ON ID PARTICIPATION**

##### **45** State Delegations

##### **1** National Human Rights Institution

##### **10** Non-Governmental Organizations