



GENEVA CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
ADVANCEMENT AND GLOBAL DIALOGUE

UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

High Commissioner's Oral Update on Ukraine

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PRESENTATION OF THE ORAL UPDATE

Mr. Volker TÜRK, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

The High Commissioner (HC) explains that recent weeks have seen intense activity around a possible ceasefire in Ukraine which would be very welcome. The discussions and reported commitments on freedom of navigation on the Black Sea announced this week will be an important step for global food security. Yet, in parallel with these talks, fighting in Ukraine has intensified and is killing and injuring even more civilians. Casualty figures in the first three months of this year were 30 percent higher than the same period last year. OHCHR verified that **413 civilians have been killed and more than 2 000 injured** since the beginning of the year. More than 30 civilians were killed and 200 injured in just one week during March and the actual number is likely higher. In one recent attack on 7 March, Russian armed forces attacked the town of Dobropillia with a ballistic missile, cluster munitions and drones. OHCHR visited the site and verified at least 11 civilians killed and 48 injured.



Since the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022, OHCHR has verified that more than 12 700 civilians have been killed and more than 30 000 have been injured. Again, the actual figures are almost certainly much higher. Every single one of those deaths is a tragedy, a life cut short, a grieving family, a lost future. The HC will never forget the Ukrainians he met as they sheltered together from Russian bombardment when the HC visited Kiev two years ago, or the woman who showed me her apartment block which had been reduced to rubble.

The vast majority of civilian casualties in this war are Ukrainians killed and injured by Russian forces. Three years into the war, the Russia continues to use powerful **explosive weapons in populated areas** despite unacceptably high levels of civilian casualties. Running counter to international humanitarian law (IHL), Russia's long-range missiles drones and aerial glide bombs were responsible for 40 percent of casualties this year. The HC is alarmed by the increasing use of **short-range combat drones** by both parties to the conflict these new devices have killed and injured more civilians than any other weapon since December. The HC is also concerned by the killing of civilians in Russian occupied territory of Ukraine. Six people including three journalists, were reportedly killed by a Ukrainian rocket strike in Luhansk region earlier this week.

OHCHR's report published on 21 March provides details of the suffering of millions of Ukrainian children. Since Russia launched its full-scale invasion, OHCHR verified that between the beginning of the full-scale invasion and the end of 2024, some 669 Ukrainian children were killed and 1833 injured. Again, the actual numbers are likely much higher. Beyond death life-changing injuries and psychological trauma, the conflict has **disrupted education and health care for children** on a massive scale, forced more than 2.4 million children from their homes, separated children from their parents, and undermined their rights to health, housing, education, family life, and an adequate standard of living.

Landmines and explosive remnants of war pose long-term risks to children's lives and safety in Russian occupied territory of Ukraine. The report provides disturbing details of children facing serious violence, including summary executions. OHCHR verified that **five boys and two girls were summarily executed** in 2022 and 2023. Children were also subjected to arbitrary detention, torture and ill treatment, including sexual violence. OHCHR has documented that at least 200 children have been transferred within Russian occupied territory or to the Russian Federation schools in occupied territory, where they teach the Russian curriculum in the Russian language and children are not allowed to speak Ukrainian. Children are compelled to participate in pro-Russian patriotic and military training, deepening social divisions and creating intergenerational tensions. These policies violate IHL.

More broadly, there is continued coercive pressure on residents of occupied territory to obtain **Russian citizenship in order to access basic services**. On 1 January, the occupying authorities in several regions stopped paying social benefits to people who do not have Russian passports. Last week, a new Russian decree stated that Ukrainian citizens in the Russian Federation and in the occupied territory of Ukraine must leave by 10 September unless they have legalised their presence under Russian law. The occupying authorities continue to prosecute Ukrainians for criticising the occupation, using Ukrainian symbols or expressing pro-Ukrainian sentiments.

The HC is also appalled by the **crackdown and repression against those opposing the war** within the Russian Federation itself. Thousands of anti-war protesters have been prosecuted



under new laws that criminalise criticism of the war. Credible reports indicate a sharp increase in prosecutions convictions and long sentences of people who participated in peaceful anti-war resistance including social media posts.

Executions of Ukrainian soldiers captured by the Russian Federation have increased dramatically since August 2024. OHCHR recorded 27 such executions in which a total of 84 soldiers were killed as credible prisoners of war. Civilian detainees held by the Russian Federation are subjected to dire conditions. OHCHR continues to receive allegations of widespread and systematic torture and ill-treatment, including sexual violence. The HC is also disturbed by an apparent policy to prosecute Ukrainian soldiers captured on the territory of the Russian Federation for 'terrorist activities'. OHCHR has recorded dozens of such convictions in which Ukrainian prisoners have been sentenced to 15 to 17 years in prison.

The deeply concerned by the **atmosphere of impunity and dehumanisation** that prevails over the widespread violations described. Under IHL, prisoners of war must not be tortured executed or prosecuted merely for taking part in hostilities no matter who they are or where they fought. While the war continues to rage, the HC calls again for an end to attacks on civilians and to the use of explosive weapons in populated areas. All precautions must be taken to avoid harm to civilians. Summary executions, torture and mistreatment of prisoners of war must end. The HC call on the Russian Federation to respect the human rights of people in areas under its occupation and urges the international community to use its influence to ensure full respect to IHRL and IHL. **Limited ceasefires** that protect shipping lanes and infrastructure are a welcome step forward. What is most needed now is an end to the horrific suffering being inflicted daily in Ukraine. Peace in line with general assembly resolutions, the United Nations Charter and international law is more urgent than ever. It must be anchored in human rights.

Peace based on human rights means the meaningful participation of women and young people in peace processes. It means the return of all prisoners of war, the release of civilians detained arbitrarily, including those in Russia who opposed the war, and the return of children transferred by the Russian Federation. It means an end to discrimination based on nationality or language. It means full respect for freedom of expression, language, culture and religion. It means people are able to move freely again across all parts of Ukraine and to get on with their lives wherever they want to live. House, land and property rights need to be restored. Peace based on human rights means protecting people, including through demining, full and unhindered access to humanitarian aid, and independent human rights monitoring. It is known from experience that truth-telling transitional justice and accountability are essential to sustainable peace.

OHCHR has been in Ukraine since 2014 documenting, monitoring, and reporting on human rights violations. OHCHR remains at the disposal of both parties and the international community to keep human rights and the Ukrainian people at the centre of all discussions around peace.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Mr. Volker TÜRK extends its gratitude to all the delegations who have taken the floor to contribute to the important discussion on the human rights situation in Ukraine. If there is any doubt that has been raised about the importance of this discussion within the UNHRC, the High Commissioner reaffirms that human rights are a matter of international concern and in particular



when it comes to these massive violations. This particular report has focused on the rights of children. There is a very strong emphasis on the children's rights, at least because we also know how much children are affected. When it comes to children, it is also about **intergenerational issues** and it is about the future of a country.

On **accountability**, it is known from experience that justice and accountability for human rights violations and war crimes committed in Ukraine can bring lasting peace. **Accountability and peace are intrinsically linked**. Accountability also includes the issue of reparations for all violations. It includes support for both domestic and international accountability mechanisms that need to be strong. It includes a comprehensive approach to accountability support to, in particular, the authorities in Ukraine.

But beyond criminal accountability, there is also the issue of **measures to promote truth, justice and reparations** and to rebuild communities to facilitate the reintegration of persons who lived under the occupation and to foster social cohesion. These are particularly important points as we understand and as there are discussions around peace and ceasefire. When it comes to reparations plans, whether they are domestic or international, they need to be based on broad and inclusive consultations and they need to be victim-centred because it is known again from experience that if they are not responding to the rights, needs and aspirations of victims, reparations will not work very much and there needs to be attention given to this.

As regards the **protection and well-being of children**, what is most urgently needed is a ceasefire because it protects the lives of civilians and, in particular, the lives of children because children cannot be protected sufficiently against the widespread effects of explosive weapons. Even if all these measures are there - bomb shelters, air alerts, evacuations and online education – it is clear that children need peaceful skies under which they can study, play and rest. This is not the reality of children in Ukraine as we speak.

When it comes to **children living under occupation**, they must receive the full protection that is due to them under international law and it's clear. The Russian Federation has clear obligations in this regard and these obligations need to be abided by which include, for example, that the Russian Federation must cease all compulsion of Ukrainian children to swear allegiance to Russia. The latter needs to halt its military patriotic training for Ukrainian children and education that is aimed at facilitating such children's future enlistment in the Russian armed forces.

Turning to **cultural rights**, Russia has obligations as an Occupying Power under both IHL and IHRL when it comes to the protection of cultural rights of Ukrainians that are residing in the territories under their control. It has the obligation to safeguard and preserve their cultural property and it needs to refrain from further actions which restrict the rights of children in this regard.

On **children's mental health**, it is clear that there is not one single child who has in one form or another experienced this war and as a result has suffered in terms of psychological health, so it will be very important that as one looks at rehabilitation and reconstruction, especially of the health system, that it is taken into account the mental health impact that war has, in particular on children. This is definitely an area that needs to be integrated into the ongoing discussions.

Turning to **forcibly transferred and deported children**, to facilitate the return of all Ukrainian children to their families and communities, it is crucial that the Russian Federation submits



information to the Central Tracing Agency about all children that were evacuated from occupied territory to the Russian Federation, then followed by various measures to make sure that children that are returned to Ukraine, that they are in family-based care arrangements, that they get the support services, that any change of personal status is reversed and related issues. However, this process must start with the delivery of names to Central Tracing Agency.

When it comes to cooperation more generally with the Russian Federation, OHCHR has made repeated requests to access Ukrainian territory that is currently occupied. Unfortunately, **OHCHR has not been granted access**. Nonetheless, according to its standard methodology, OHCHR is able to undertake substantial monitoring of the human rights situation, which is why OHCHR is able to prepare these reports according to its very rigorous methodology and standards. The High Commissioner stresses that OHCHR shares its reporting with both Ukraine and Russia according to its standard methodology, and it includes violations that we have been able to verify.

INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE

Views Expressed by the State Concerned

The delegation of the **Russian Federation** does not wish to take the floor.

Ukraine expresses its deep gratitude to HC for his update and to the HRMMU for documenting ongoing human rights violations in Ukraine due to Russia's brutal aggression since Russia's full-scale invasion. At least 669 Ukrainian children have been killed and 1833 injured. These are not mere statistics, but young lives stolen, dreams extinguished, and future lost. Indiscriminate attacks including artillery strikes, air raids and missile barrages have reduced homes, schools and hospitals to ruins. Ukraine is now one of the most heavily mined countries in the world, endangering children for years to come. Beyond physical harm, the psychological toll on Ukrainian children is devastating. Thousands suffer from post-traumatic stress disease, depression and emotional distress due to displacement, loss of family members, and exposure to violence. Even more horrific are documented cases of sexual violence committed by Russian forces against Ukrainian children, leaving lasting physical and psychological scars.

Russia's war has also deprived millions of Ukrainian children of their right to education more than 1600 educational facilities have been destroyed or severely damaged and over 420 000 children must rely on online learning only, often disrupted by attacks on critical infrastructure. One of the most outrageous crimes is the forced deportation of Ukrainian children to Russia and Belarus. Stripped of their identity, many are illegally adopted by Russians forced to forget their language and heritage and even given new names. This is not just a blatant violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention and the UN Convention of the rights of the child, it is a deliberate attempt to erase an entire generation of Ukrainians in occupied territories. Ukrainian children are subjected to systematic Russification. The Ukrainian language is banned from schools replaced with Russian propaganda. Children are forced into so-called patriotic Russian military training pressured to renounce their Ukrainian identity and threatened with punishment if they resist. Parents seeking to provide Ukrainian language education face persecution.

Russia's atrocities continue. Just recently, on 24 March, a missile attack injured 106 people including 23 children and damaged 73 buildings. On 25 March, Russian strike on playground in



Donetsk killed a three-year-old girl and her mother. The day before yesterday in Kharkiv 11 people were injured including a 14-year-old girl. This is a grim reality Ukrainian families are facing every day. Despite these atrocities, Ukraine remains resilient. Ukraine is committed to ensuring every child has access to education and psychological support to heal from the traumas of war. Schools are being rebuilt and special rehabilitation programmes have been launched to help children recover. Ukraine is not just reconstructing building, it is rebuilding lives. The Brings Kids Back Initiative is a national effort to locate, return and rehabilitate children forcibly taken by Russia. Every child matters and every child must be brought home.

Ukraine urges the international community to join the International Coalition for the Return of Ukrainian Children and to pressure Russia to release abducted children and reunite families torn apart by war. Ukraine demands that Russia immediately return all Ukrainian children, cease its systematic indoctrination and forced crucifixion, and grant international organisations unrestricted access to investigate war crimes against them. One cannot bring back those lost, but one can fight for those who remain. Every child deserves to grow up in safety, to dream without fear, to live without war. Ukraine will never stop fighting for its children. Their suffering must not become another forgotten tragedy. Their voices must be heard. Justice must prevail. The aggressor must be held accountable.

Views Expressed by State Delegations

Taking the floor on behalf of a group of 36 countries, **Poland** thanks the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine (HRMMU) as well as OHCHR for its report. The group is deeply alarmed by the devastating impact of Russia's aggression on children across Ukraine, in particular in the temporarily occupied territories. The HC's report concludes that the full-scale invasion by the Russian Federation has caused significant harm to millions of children in Ukraine. The situation is so severe that in his report on children and armed conflict, the UN Secretary-General has listed Russia's army and the affiliated armed groups as responsible for committing grave violations against children in Ukraine. The group calls for the immediate cessation of all attacks utilising explosive weapons with wide area effects in populated areas, and also urges the Russian Federation to immediately cease all attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure. Russia must also stop unlawful deportation and transfer of Ukrainian children, provide full information on the whereabouts of those forcibly transferred or deported, refrain from making any changes to their personal status, and facilitate their reunification with family. Compelling Ukrainian children to swear allegiance to Russia and follow military training and indoctrination is unacceptable. Russia must also end discrimination against Ukrainian children who have not taken Russian citizenship and ensure equal access to education and health services.

Denmark jointly with the Nordic-Baltic countries notes that this February marked three years since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Three years of blatant violations of the UN Charter, IHLR and IHL. Three years of indiscriminate attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructures, leaving a country in immense suffering, but with the courage and resilience that inspire all. The Nordic-Baltic countries are appalled by the latest reports published by OHCHR and the Commission of Inquiry documenting that Russian authorities have committed war crimes, including by forcefully transferring and deporting Ukrainian children. Appalled that every Ukrainian child has endured consequences of Russia's war, the Nordic-Baltic countries call on



Russia to cease these widespread violations of international law and to uphold its international obligations. We must all ensure a future where every Ukrainian child can enjoy their rights identity and security.

Switzerland notes that since February 2022, Russia's military aggression against Ukraine has had a devastating impact on the population as duly testified to by the credible and trustworthy documentation of flagrant violations of international law. However, this crisis does not date back merely to 2022. Rather, it finds its roots in the annexation of the Crimea 11 years ago and the loss of control over certain parts of Donbass. Various reports today document serious abuses and violations as well as systematic abuses and violations in Russian occupied territory. Arrests and arbitrary detentions, torture and ill treatment, deportations and forced disappearances. Certain of these crimes may very well be tantamount to crimes against humanity. Focussing on the specific issue of serious violations of the rights of children, Switzerland urges Russia to put an end to its discriminatory policies such as the forced issuance of Russian citizenship and the militarisation of the educational curriculum; and to immediately repatriate children forcibly transferred and deported in line with international law. Switzerland remains deeply concerned by the systematic and of these practises and condemns them in the strongest possible terms. Switzerland calls for the immediate cessation of violence and respect for international law, including the provisions of the UN Charter, the basis for a comprehensive just and lasting peace in Ukraine.

After thanking the HC for his oral updates, **Lichtenstein** states it is appalled by the widespread suffering of children caused by the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine. The use of explosive weapons in populated areas is unacceptable and must be condemned in the strongest terms. Millions of ukrainian children have been displaced internally due to the war. With little chance of a return to normalcy, children growing up in Ukraine face reduced educational attainment, lower lifetime earnings, and a poorer mental and physical health. This abhorrent development is intolerable and can only be reversed if Russia ceases its use of force against Ukraine and ends the occupation of Ukraine's sovereign territory. The future of Ukraine rests upon its children's well-being and safety. The international community cannot let an entire generation slide into despair and uncertainty. Moreover, the Russian Federation's attempt to erase Ukrainian identity by abducting Ukrainian children and Russifying them. This must stop. Liechtenstein urges the Russian Federation to immediately provide full information about Ukrainian children forcibly transferred to Russian-controlled territory or Belarus and ensure their immediate return and reunification with their families. This egregious practise constitutes a war crime and must be put to an end without delay. Liechtenstein continues to stand by the Ukrainian people in these trying times and calls on the international community to do the same.

Czechia appreciates the HC's update and the important work of HRMMU. For three years, Russia has continued its brutal war of aggression against Ukraine, deliberately targeting civilians and systematically violating children's rights. Following the same patterns as in Crimea since 2014, Russia has imposed a new system of governance in the occupied territories, forcing children to obtain Russian citizenship or to follow military training. Evidence of conflict-related killings, summary executions, torture and sexual violence against children are horrifying as well as attacks on medical and educational facilities across Ukraine. Millions of Ukrainian children are suffering from shelling, are subjected to unlawful deportations or forced transfers. The



destruction of their identities this is not only appalling, but as the report documents, it constitutes war crimes. Czechia calls on Russia to release all detained prisoners of war and civilians, including children, and most notably these brave women Halina Dovopola, Irina Danilovich and Irina Horovsk Horovskova.

Spain thanks the HC for his oral update on his Office's work in Ukraine since 2014. Spain condemns the systematic violations of human rights committed by the Russian armed forces in the areas under their control. Spain deeply deplores those violations targeting children and adolescents. Following the invasion, the Russian armed forces have been following a practise of arbitrary detentions, murdering of children when they seek to flee from their grasp, and deportation of children from the occupied territory to the territory of the Russian Federation. Spain is particularly concerned by the plight of children in the occupied territories and recalls that IHL requires all Occupying Powers - wherever they may be occupying land including in Ukraine - to protect children including Ukraine, allow them to maintain their identity and ensure the continuity of their education and culture. Spain calls upon Russia to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders. It further calls upon Russia to withdraw from Ukraine immediately and to do so on a complete and unconditional basis. Spain also call upon Russia to respect and uphold IHL and to support the regional international mechanisms for the monitoring and oversight of human rights.

Luxembourg is gravely concerned at the conclusions of the report on the devastating impact of the conflict and occupation on the rights of children in Ukraine. Since the start of the unprovoked illegal war of aggression by Russia in February 2022, over 600 children have been killed, over 1400 have been injured, 737 000 have been internally displaced and 1.7 million have become refugees. Many separated from parents. Luxembourg strongly condemns violations of the rights of the child, summary executions, arbitrary detentions, sexual violence and forced transfers of children to Russia and occupied territories as well as the imposition of Russian citizenship, the imposition of the school curriculum, restrictions on Ukrainian language in education, the prioritisation of military and patriotic education. This violates IHL which requires the Occupying Power to protect children, respect their identity, and provide continuity in education and culture. As a member of the international coalition for the return of Ukrainian children, Luxembourg reaffirms its unflagging support for children of Ukraine especially those forcibly deported. The return of Ukrainian children and their reunification with families is a major challenge.

Germany thanks the HC for his newest update. In the meanwhile, relentless Russian attacks on civilians in Ukraine are continuing unabated. Once more, Ukrainian children are worst of it all. Hundreds of children have been killed, hundreds of thousands have been displaced or had to flee the country, leaving behind their homes and family members. Russian attacks against civilian targets and infrastructure further risk the lives of children growing up amid bombs, destruction and violence. They are separated from family deported, losing loved ones. Their schools are targeted by air attacks. They are forced to speak the Russian language and indoctrinated with war propaganda. There is no feeling of safety for Ukrainian children and these traumatic experiences will shape them for a lifetime. Germany asks the HC how to protect the children of Ukraine from losing their lives, their future, their families, their identity, their education and their culture.



Türkiye emphasizes that the situation of children continues to be adversely and disproportionately affected by armed conflicts around the world. Türkiye is deeply concerned by the rise of grave violations committed against children in armed conflicts as demonstrated by the recent reports of the SRSG for Children in Armed Conflict. IHL and IHRL must be upheld equally everywhere and all children must be protected. The war in Ukraine has entered a new phase where negotiations and dialogue are prioritised. Türkiye welcomes this new dynamic. Despite the ongoing negotiations battles continue to inflict devastating effect on Ukrainians, since the beginning Türkiye tried to eliminate the negative humanitarian impact of war on civilians, including children, women and the elderly. Türkiye has hosted 2'000 Ukrainian children and their caregivers and has taken a number of measures to meet the needs of these children regarding accommodation, healthcare, education and psychological support. Türkiye's Ombudsman had contacts with necessary authorities in the past to facilitate the return of Ukrainian children in Russia to their families. Türkiye will continue to support constructive initiatives to find a diplomatic solution to this war, with the ultimate goal of ending humanitarian suffering.

North Macedonia thanks the HC for the update on Ukraine and reaffirms its unwavering support for its sovereignty and territorial integrity. Russia's ongoing aggression continues to cause immense civilian suffering. Indiscriminate attacks on infrastructure, arbitrary detentions and reports of conflict-related sexual violence are deeply alarming. The targeting of energy facilities and essential services has left millions vulnerable, worsening the humanitarian crisis. North Macedonia strongly condemns violations of IHRL and IHL. Accountability is paramount and those responsible for war crimes must face justice through impartial investigations. The international community must remain steadfast in its commitment to justice and redress for victims. In occupied territories, civilians endure repression, forced deportations and severe restrictions on fundamental freedoms. North Macedonia calls for continued monitoring and documentation efforts to ensure accountability. It stands in solidarity with the people of Ukraine and commends their resilience. The renewal of international efforts is crucial in addressing these grave violations and securing lasting justice.

Japan thanks the HC for his oral update and appreciates the continuous OHCHR's efforts deployed to address the dire human rights situation in Ukraine 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. Just last month, the General Assembly demanded the early end to this war aggression and a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in Ukraine. In line with the UN Charter, it also reiterates the urgent need to end the war this year and to redouble diplomatic efforts to achieve peace. In this regard, Japan appreciates the various ongoing diplomatic efforts and hopes those efforts lead to a breakthrough in the situation. Japan will continue its diplomatic efforts and stands firmly with Ukraine and the international community until a comprehensive, just and lasting peace is achieved in Ukraine.

Bulgaria welcomes the oral update of the HC and his report on the impact of the armed conflict and occupation on children's rights. The numbers of children killed and injured in Ukraine from 24 February 2022 through 31 December 2024 is deeply alarming. Bulgaria is horrified that 89



percent of these child casualties were caused by explosive weapons with wide-scale effects in populated areas. Bulgaria is outraged by the forced relocation and deportation of Ukrainian children to the Russian federation and Belarus or to the territories of Ukraine temporarily occupied by the Russian federation we are deeply concerned that following the illegal annexation of her son. Zaporizhya, Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine in 2022 the Russian Federation imposed its legal and administrative systems in those regions which has adverse consequences for children at every level from birth registration to education and eligibility for military conscription. Bulgaria calls for the cessation of all military operations using explosive weapons with wide area effects in populated areas. It demands an end to forced relocation and deportation of Ukrainian children and the fulfilment by the Russian Federation of its obligations under IHL to maintain the existing legal and administrative system of the temporarily occupied territories.

Malta thanks the HC for the oral update on Ukraine. It remains very concerned that Ukrainian citizens continue to face arbitrary detention, forced disappearances, torture and other inhumane treatment, including sexual and gender-based violence. These violations have persisted since the onset of Russia's war of aggression more than three years ago. The HC's report highlights the severe impact on children, including unlawful deportations, forced transfers and coercive policies aimed at erasing their Ukrainian identity. The destruction of schools and healthcare facilities has further undermined their rights and well-being. Accountability is paramount. Those responsible for alleged war crimes and other serious violations committed in connection with Russia's war of aggression must be brought to justice. Malta calls for Russia to immediately cease all military actions against Ukraine; withdraw from all occupied territories within Ukraine's internationally recognised borders; and respect Ukraine sovereignty and territorial integrity. Furthermore, Malta urges Russia to ensure the swift and safe return of all forcibly displaced persons including children who have been unlawfully deported to their families.

Albania thanks High Commissioner for the update and reaffirms its full support to his Office and his work. Albania is deeply concerned about the widespread violation of children rights due to the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russia. The conflict has impacted children's physical and mental health and severely disrupted education with many schools damaged and destroyed. In the occupied territories there are numerous documented cases of summary execution, arbitrary detention, forced transfer or deported of the children in Russia and other discriminatory policies. Albania strongly condemns Russia's continuous human rights violations in these occupied territories including any deportation or forced transfer of children. Albania strongly condemns the ongoing human rights abuses in Ukraine including the multiple abuses against children and demands that all perpetrators must be held accountable. Respecting IHL, stopping attacks against civilians and protecting and caring for children remain an obligation for everyone.

Eritrea reaffirms the importance of technical assistance in advancing human rights. However, such efforts must be impartial and free from political bias. Unfortunately, the selective and one-sided approach to this particular agenda item disregards the full scope of human rights concerns. It is unacceptable to subject Crimea, a part of Russia, to scrutiny within another country's context. Eritrea deeply regrets that this agenda item continues to be exploited for ulterior motives, undermining Russia's territorial integrity and sovereignty. Initiatives driven by political motivations, selectivity and double standards, trends that regularly afflict this Council do not contribute to human rights protection. Instead, they perpetuate divisions and hinder genuine



progress. The misuse of human rights mechanisms for geopolitical purposes must be condemned. Eritrea reiterates the need to uphold universal, indivisible and interdependent human rights through constructive dialogue and cooperation. It calls for the full respect of UN Charter and an end to biased narrative targeting Russia under the pretext of human rights. A depoliticised approach is essential for meaningful and effective human rights engagement.

Colombia thanks the HC for the oral update and reiterates its full support to the work by the Office on the ground in Ukraine, including in severely adverse conditions close to the combat lines. It recognises the unflagging work of the Monitoring Mission, which has been essential to document violations and support accountability and human rights. Colombia also welcomes the work interceding with the parties to protect civilians and provide justice and reparation, as well as technical support to the national authorities to harmonise laws and policies with international standards and coordination of human rights work within the United Nations system in Ukraine. This is particularly valuable to protect the most vulnerable, as shown by the most recent report on the rights of children, which clearly details the devastating effects of the war on their lives, mental health, education and physical integrity. Colombia is particularly concerned by the accounts of displaced children separated from their families or indoctrinated in the occupied territories. Colombia encourages the parties to continue moving forward in dialogue and hopes that the recent partial ceasefire in the Black Sea can be maintained and open the way to a broader dialogue that can lead to a lasting ceasefire.

China notes the HC's report regarding the human rights situation in Ukraine. The Ukraine crisis has persisted for over three years, with complex and multifaceted root causes. Despite differences in positions of various parties, there is a shared hope for a fair, lasting and abiding peace agreement accepted by all parties concerned. This is a valuable consensus that should be pursued collectively. Discussions within the UNHRC should uphold objectivity and fairness. Agenda Item 10 should be focussed on how to better provide technical assistance and capacity-building for the parties involved and how to play a positive role in promoting constructive dialogue among the countries concerned. Only by expressing calm and balanced views can we create conditions for resolving the crisis, building consensus and truly contributing to the promoting and protecting of human rights. Since the very first day of the crisis, China has advocated for dialogue and negotiations, working for a political solution, pursuing peace and promoting talks. In accordance with the will of the parties involved, China is willing to continue playing a constructive role together with the international community to ultimately resolve this crisis and achieve lasting peace.

Romania appreciates the focus of the HC's latest report on the human rights situation in Ukraine, depicting the profound impact of Russia's aggression against Ukraine on children's rights in Ukraine. The HC's report details severe violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. With more than hundreds of children dead, hundreds of thousands displaced, more than 200 forcibly transferred to Russia or Russian-occupied territories - actions that may constitute war crimes - the need for accountability is urgent. The extensive use of explosive weapons in populated areas targeting schools, hospitals, homes has a devastating impact on the lives and minds of young children. Their protection, safety and well-being must be a priority in any circumstance, and much more so during conflicts. Romania stands in solidarity with Ukraine. It reaffirm its commitment to upholding the rights and dignity of all children affected by this conflict,



and calls on all parties to implement the recommendations retained in the HC's report. Expressing express profound concern over the report's findings and the number of casualties identified, Romania calls on Russia to put an end to the attacks on schools and to remove forced military propaganda from school curricula.

Austria thanks the HC for his presentation and reiterates its full support of OHCHR's work in Ukraine. The HC's report highlights widespread violations of the rights of the child in the context of prolonged hostilities and occupation following the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russia. No child should be subject to indoctrination and military training by an Occupying Power. No child should be coerced to change citizenship to have access to education. No one should be forced to fight their own people. Every aspect in a child's life is affected by the fundamental changes in society in the temporarily occupied territories, the suppressive governance that has been instituted by Russia in direct violation of international law, or the threats of Russia's unrelenting attacks with explosive weapons in populated areas throughout Ukraine. Austria calls on Russia to immediately and unconditionally cease the use of force against Ukraine and withdraw all military forces from the territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders.

Russia notes with regret that the situation with promotion and protection of human rights in Ukraine is highly unsatisfactory, with gross violations of basic rights and freedoms systematically. The level of rabid Russophobia in Ukraine is off the scale. The Russian language is essentially prohibited in all walks of life. Millions of people, for whom it is their mother tongue, are suffering severe discrimination and against its own citizens with connections with Russia or thought to support Russia. The authorities of Ukraine are bringing rubber stamps of criminal cases on collaboration and treason. Any alternative position is harshly oppressed. In June last year, there was a prohibition of the 19th Opposition Party. Its leadership suffered criminal harassment and property, finances and other assets were confiscated for the state. There are no more independent media in Ukraine, with total censorship, including at the legislative level. During this session, several times Russia raised the issue of the cynical campaign by Kyiv against the canonical Ukrainian Orthodox Church, and Russia calls on the HC and its Office to drop the double standards and stop covering up the Kyiv regime instead, decisively condemning its gross and large-scale violations of its international legal obligations on human rights.

Ireland reiterates its condemnation of Russia's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine. Ireland is gravely concerned by OHCHR's report on the devastating impact of this invasion and war on children's rights. Russia's systematic human rights violations have caused untold suffering. Death, injury and lasting family separation are amongst the traumatic events suffered by children. The vast number of internally displaced children within Ukraine is deeply concerning. Ireland is appalled by the extremely detrimental impact of the full-scale invasion on children's psychological well-being and on their education. It is horrifying to note that between 24 February 2022 and 31 December 2024, 669 children were killed and 1,833 injured, many as a result of the extensive use of explosive weapons in populated areas. There have been many further killings of children since. The unlawful deportation and transfer of civilians, including children, and ongoing efforts to deprive them of their national identity, including through forced adoption, is truly appalling. Any peaceful resolution to Russia's full-scale invasion must involve the return of all such persons, including children. There must be accountability for violations of international law,



and Ireland calls on Russia to immediately cease its widespread violations of human rights in Ukraine, including against children, by ending its illegal war of aggression.

Moldova once again witness the unbearable suffering that Russia's war of aggression has been causing. Moldova condemns the reported high civilian casualties, including among the first responders. While welcoming recent announcements on the limited ceasefire for energy sector, Moldova notes that most of the infrastructure has already been damaged or destroyed. It is appalled by the reported cases of executions of Ukrainian servicepersons, as well as reports of systemic and widespread use of torture and ill treatment, including sexual violence of Ukrainian prisoners of war. The findings of the impact on children in Ukraine are devastating. The deaths and injuries among children, one of the most vulnerable groups, are unacceptable. Moldova deeply condemns the reported cases of summary executions of children and conflict-related sexual violence against them. The large-scale displacement of children, destruction of civilian infrastructure, has hindered children's enjoyment of several rights, including to the inadequate standard of living, health, education, and affected their psychological well-being. Moldova condemns the military training of children in the occupied territories of Ukraine and calls for the return of forcibly transferred children. Moldova reiterates its call on the Russian Federation to withdraw its troops from the entire internationally recognised territory of Ukraine. A just and lasting peace must prevail.

Belarus believes that under Agenda Item 10 the UNHRC should discuss the contribution of OHCHR through technical assistance to Ukraine in promoting and protecting human rights and freedoms for all persons under Ukraine's jurisdiction. Belarus asks how OHCHR is supporting the abrogation of the legislation that runs counter to the ICCPR on religious freedom. There are other examples of violations of human rights by the Ukrainian authorities which lead to impunity and arbitrariness. For example, Ukrainian prisons are holding thousands of dissenters as regards the rights of children in Ukraine and the conflict's impact. There is clear manipulation of the information and one-sided statements upholding the most vocal critics of Belarus and Russia. Belarus takes Ukrainian children for health improvement and recuperation from the conflict, and that involves all ethnic groups, not just Ukrainians. They stay together, they have a shared cultural and recreational programme, their parents and guardians are informed of it. Once their stay ends, they are sent back to their place of permanent residence. Any statement to the contrary is false.

Thanking the HC for the update, **Georgia** states that recent reports illustrate severe impact of Russia's full-scale military aggression against Ukraine and provides evidence of systematic and flagrant violations of IHL and IHRL committed by Russia and Ukraine. Four years in a row, Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine continues to generate suffering, death and injury of innocent civilians, and the forced displacement undermines children's enjoyment of their rights to health, housing, education, family life, and an adequate standard of living. As report states, forcible transfer of Ukrainian children within the occupied territories and their deportation to Russia constitute war crimes. It also refers to cases of imposing Russian citizenship on those children. Georgia strongly condemns recent large-scale indiscriminate strikes against Ukrainian cities and towns which, apart from human casualties, cause damage and destruction of civilian infrastructure. Georgia recognises the importance of OHCHR's work along with other relevant human rights mechanisms in documenting of gross violations and contributing to ensuring of accountability. To conclude, Georgia reaffirms its unwavering support of independence,



sovereignty, and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders extending to its territorial waters.

Venezuela argues that Agenda Item 10 of the agenda was designed to address technical assistance and capacity-building to improve the human rights situation in concerned countries with their agreements and through genuine dialogue and cooperation. It is regrettable that under Item 10 there are initiatives that are politicised against third countries while the situation in Ukraine is worsening every day. Venezuela reiterates that initiatives based on political motivation, selectivity, and double standards bring nothing to the promotion and protection of human rights. It is regrettable that Ukraine is an instrument for the expansion of NATO to drive aggression against the rights of the people of the region. It is crucial to address the conflict. It is important to revise the history of European wars against Russia, and that might lead countries to resume the path of peace and respect the Minsk agreements as their best guarantee. Venezuela, a strong defender of the principles of the UN Charter, will always advocate for dialogue to guarantee peace.

Montenegro thanks the HC for the report which sheds further light on the unimaginable suffering of millions of children across Ukraine and the erosion of the full spectrum of their human rights in the last three years of the full-scale invasion by the Russian Federation. It remains deeply troubled by the report's findings on the devastating impact of Russian aggression on Ukrainian children. This is evidenced by the number of children killed and injured, including those with life-changing injuries, mass displacement, lasting family separation and loss of homes, among others. Yet the full extent of the toll, particularly that resulting from policies of discrimination and occupation, remains unspeakable. This includes forcible transfer and unlawful deportation of Ukrainian children and their exposure to illegal adoption and unlawful change of their identity, the imposition of Russian citizenship and the Russian school curriculum, military patriotic education and training, and other harsh forms of Russian indoctrination and propaganda. The cumulative effect of all the grave violations is a grim testament of the cruelty and the crimes committed in the context of relentless hostilities and occupation of parts of Ukraine by the Russian Federation.

While welcoming ceasefire talks with the involvement of Ukraine, **Croatia** strongly supports a just and lasting peace based on the principles of the UN Charter and international law as the only acceptable outcome for Ukraine and Europe. Any solution without respect for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity would create a dangerous precedent, rewarding aggressor and fostering further expansionist tendencies and global instability. In the context of the HC's recent report on the impact of the armed conflict and violations of children's rights in Ukraine, Croatia remains deeply concerned by the scale of violations of IHL and IHRL. Russian armed forces continue conducting unlawful attacks with explosive weapons in populated areas of Ukraine. Together with wide-scale destruction of civilian infrastructure, this contributes to the unnecessary suffering of civilians, particularly children. Croatia reiterates its concern over the forceful deportations and transfer of children to areas under Russian control, where they are compelled to swear allegiance to their occupiers and punished if they use their mother tongue.

The **Democratic People's Republic of Korea** states that Agenda Item 10 was conceived to address the contributions of technical assistance and capacity building for countries concerned, in line with the principles of constructive dialogue and cooperation, and taking into account national needs and priorities. However, this duplicated debate and related resolution distorted



the essential mandate of technical assistance and capacity building and reduced increasingly in establishing a scenario of instrumentalisation of the geopolitical interests of the pacific group. It has demonstrated a biased approach, focussing on collecting and spreading one-sided and non-verified information, as well as positioning itself as a judge to punish the sovereign state. This is an obvious manifestation of politicisation and double standards. This selective and discriminatory practise and misuse of agenda Item 10 should be discontinued. Politically motivated initiatives or unbalanced and biased approaches are not conducive but counterproductive to the dialogue and cooperation for promotion and protection of human rights.

Italy thanks the HC for his oral update and the latest report of the HRMMU. Italy reaffirmed its continued and unwavering support for Ukraine's independent sovereignty and territorial integrity. Italy is appalled by the documented grave violations of IHRL and IHL committed by Russian authorities. Italy is also alarmed by the evidence of the devastating impact of Russia's attack on the civilian population and infrastructure. Italy expresses its deep concern about the fate of the large number of detained Ukrainian civilians and the forced transfer or unlawful deportation of children. In this context, Italy welcomes the recent detainee exchange and support any further steps towards the release of civilians and the return of all Ukrainian children, as well as other civilians unlawfully deported. Italy remains firmly committed to safeguarding human rights and ensuring full accountability for all international crimes and human rights violations and abuses stemming from the Russian war of aggression. Italy stands committed and ready to contribute to a just, lasting and comprehensive peace for Ukraine based on the principle of the UN Charter and international law. Italy welcomes all efforts toward achieving such a peace, including the proposal for a ceasefire, humanitarian initiative and other confidence-building measures

Cyprus and thanks the High Commissioner for his latest report. The findings of the report are deeply alarming. The report highlights extensive use of explosive weapons in populated areas and against civilian targets. It further highlights severe violations of children's rights, including injury, family separation and displacement. Over 600 children were killed since Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, and at least 737,000 were internally displaced, with an additional 1.7 million becoming refugees. In the occupied territories, children faced arbitrary detention, torture and ill-treatment in violation of IHRL and IHL. The documented and lawful deportation and transfer of at least 200 children to Russia may constitute war crimes. Cyprus reiterates the importance of the work done by OHCHR and the need for unfettered access to all areas of the Ukrainian territory to facilitate comprehensive monitoring, which is critical to ensuring accountability. Cyprus, itself victim of foreign aggression and continued occupation, reaffirms its unwavering support for Ukraine, its people and its independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

France thanks the HC for his presentation and for the remarkable work being undertaken by his team working in Ukraine. The HC's report painstakingly documents the multiple violations of IHRL and IHL of which children in Ukraine have been victims since the outbreak of the war of aggression led by Russia. In the front line of attacks deliberately perpetrated against civilian populations, many of these children have been killed or injured by explicit devices fired from Russia, whereas others have fallen foul of the mass destruction of housing, hospitals, schools and energy infrastructure. In the regions occupied by Russia, the HC's report demonstrates that children have been victims of sexual violence, of torture, of arbitrary disappearances and even of



summary execution. France condemns these serious violations, as well as the measures beheaded by Russia aimed at indoctrinating or enlisting these children, which is a blatant attempt to erase over the long-term their cultural and linguistic identity. It is in the name of an unjustified war that Russia is violating the rights of these children and compromising their future. The deportation and illegal transfer of Ukrainian children to Russia are war crimes. The International Criminal Court has issued two arrest warrants and the UN Secretary-General has included Russia on the black list of countries that violate children's rights. France supports the HC's work in documenting and record-keeping, which is a first step in the fight against impunity. France will stand alongside Ukraine and the Ukrainian people as long as is necessary.

The **United Kingdom** underscores that the HC's update lays bare the toll this war has taken, bringing death, injury and lasting family separation to innocent children of Ukraine. It is almost impossible to read the HC's report or listen to his update without shock or dismay. Toddlers sexually assaulted. Other children summarily executed by Russian troops. Over 600 dead. Thousands forcibly separated and deported to Russia. Children in occupied territories are also particularly vulnerable. Multiple reports lay bare the systematic indoctrination and militarisation of children in these areas. Of the 20,000 children reported to have been deported to Russia, only a handful have returned. Forced passportization and punishment for speaking Ukrainian and studying the Ukrainian school syllabus are widely documented. A callous Russian attempt to erode Ukraine's future by trying to reshape the identities of its youngest citizens and wipe out Ukrainian culture, language and identity. The Russian state must be held fully accountable for its actions. Ukrainian children are entitled to a childhood in which their rights are safeguarded and a future which is free from war.

The **Netherlands** expresses its appreciation for the crucial work of HRMMU, as well as for the bravery and resilience of all victims and survivors of human rights violations and abuses who have provided critical information to the HRMMU. The Netherlands is in awe of their resilience and their dignity. The findings regarding the devastating impact Russia's war of aggression has on children across Ukraine are alarming, and the devastation continues. Just last week, a five-year-old child was killed in Kiev due to a Russian drone attack. The Netherlands is profoundly concerned about the picture that the report of the High Commissioner paints of children in the occupied territories. They are forcibly being Russified and deprived of their Ukrainian identity. Moreover, these children are systematically exposed to military patriotic education, posing a serious risk of undermining post-war reconciliation efforts. We cannot let those responsible for these crimes go unpunished. The Netherlands remains committed to ensure full accountability and justice for the people of Ukraine, to ensure a just, comprehensive and lasting peace.

Cabo Verde thanks the HC for his report on the impact of the armed conflict in Ukraine on children's rights. The report shed light on the persistent and serious nature of the humanitarian situation and the systematic and serious violations of human rights, particularly those of children who are exposed to extreme dangers, to forced displacement and to multiple privations of their rights. The conflict and the ongoing occupation are a major and lasting threat to international peace and security, with deep-rooted repercussions at the humanitarian, social and economic level. Millions of people have been forcibly displaced and essential civilian infrastructure, particularly healthcare and educational facilities, have been severely and adversely impacted. Cabo Verde reiterates its full support for the recommendations contained in the report and calls



for their effective and immediate implementation by all parties concerned. It also underscores the importance of bolstering the collective action of the international community in order to guarantee the protection of the rights of children and to promote a lasting peace based on the respect for international law and human rights. Cabo Verde also pays tribute to OHCHR, as well as international partners, for their commitment to addressing this issue and encourages them to pursue their action to bring about an end to hostilities and to restore human dignity.

Poland thanks the UN Monitoring Mission and OHCHR for the report, despite the very grim picture it painted regarding the situation of children affected by the war in Ukraine caused by Russia's aggression. Poland strongly condemns the severe violations of children's rights caused by the Russian aggression. Since the escalation of the war in 2022, hundreds of children have been killed, thousands injured, separated from their families, and many forced to flee across the border, including to Poland. Across Ukraine, children live in constant fear of violence and loss. The war has devastated Ukraine's education system, destroying thousands of schools and disrupting learning due to air raids and power blackouts. This threatens children's mental health and emotional development. Attacks on health facilities leave children with no safe place and limited access to medical care. Poland condemns Russia's forced deportation of Ukrainian children and attempts to destroy Ukrainian nationality and cultural identity. Russia is fully responsible for the pain and suffering caused. It urges Russia's authorities to provide the office with safe and meaningful access to Russia and the territories it occupies, to allow for full monitoring of the human rights situation

Views Expressed by Intergovernmental Organizations

The **Sovereign Order of Malta** thanks the HC for his update on the situation in Ukraine. Since more than three years, we witness the ongoing war in Ukraine and the immense suffering the people have endured. The Order of Malta has repeatedly appealed to all parties to the conflict to respect IHL and IHLR. With hundreds of volunteers in more than 60 centres throughout Ukraine, the Order of Malta provided humanitarian assistance in terms of material, psychological and spiritual support to affected people as well as to the refugees in neighbouring countries. Its humanitarian action in the country will be pursued as long as necessary. As a politically neutral institution, the Order of Malta prays that trust - which is an essential condition for common understanding and ultimately for peace - can be reinitiated and comforted among actors with the assistance and support of the international community. This is the only way in which to ensure that reconstruction of a devastated sovereign country and a long lasting peace becomes possible and acceptable to all parties. In this spirit, the Order of Malta supports all peace building efforts.

UNICEF welcomes this oral update and the important HC's report on the impact of the conflict on occupation and children's rights. As the report makes crystal clear, children in Ukraine have suffered immeasurably since the conflict escalated in 2022. From the daily threat of explosive weapons in populated areas to prolonged displacement and disrupted education, every aspect of childhood in Ukraine has been impacted. Children in occupied territories of Ukraine remain out of reach of humanitarian actors due to constrained humanitarian access despite their acute needs. Even as ceasefire talks continue, nowhere in Ukraine is safe. Just this week, attacks across the country resulted in reports of child casualties as close to the front line as Sumy city and as far away as Kiev. In Sumy alone, reports indicate that at least 23 children were injured when an attack



impacted a residential area, including homes, schools, and other civilian objects. In Kiev, a five-year-old girl and her father were reportedly killed in an overnight attack. This must stop. Ukraine's children urgently need a real and sustained peace. UNICEF calls urgently and unequivocally for grave violations against children to end. This includes the killing and maiming of children and attacks on schools and hospitals. Humanitarian access to all affected areas, including occupied territories of Ukraine, must be granted to humanitarian actors, including in the case of a ceasefire agreement.

Views Expressed by National Human Rights Institutions

The **Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights** expresses his gratitude to the OHCHR and the HRMMU for their work and latest reports. Russia has been systematically violating human rights in Ukraine for 11 years. Killings, arbitrary detentions and executions, torture, sexual violence against civilians and prisoners of war are crimes of a massive scale. Impunity for the aggressor only fuels its appetite. Children who suffer cruelty under occupation are particularly hard hit. Many of them are forcibly relocated or deported. Russians deliberately target civilian infrastructure and attack Ukrainian cities and villages. As one example, on February 16 this year, they damaged a thermal power plant in Nikolaev. 46,000 people were left without heat supply when the temperature outside was minus nine degrees. Fleeing attacks, Ukrainians seek temporary shelter. More than 11 million Ukrainian citizens remain in a state of forced displacement. The Commissioner urges the UNHRC to continue its work to strengthen the protection of human rights in Ukraine. He calls on the international community to step up its response to these particularly grave crimes to bring perpetrators to justice.

Views Expressed by Non-Governmental Organizations

Every Casualty Worldwide explains that in Ukraine, the Russians demonstratively executed two teenagers through judicial executions. After a European Parliament resolution demanding that the process against these children should be stopped in June 2023, the bodies of two boys with the traces of several tortures were not delivered to the relatives. The NGO recorded in its network over 10,000 deaths, including at least one and a half thousand civilians. But the deaths continue international tension wanes. Civil society organisations (CSOs) face several funding cuts from international donors, threatening the ability to continue investigating and documenting civilian deaths. The message from the NGO is clear. Justice requires evidence, and evidence requires resources. The HRMMU and CSOs need sustained international support to continue their work. The HRMMU also requires also support from CSOs to make accountability possible.

War Resisters International (WRI) thanks the High Commissioner for the report. WRI stands in solidarity with the people of Ukraine suffering from the Russian aggression and calls on the international community for a concrete, genuine support to stop this war. WRI voices concern at the forced conscription in the occupied territories and the imprisonment and torture of objectors reported by the Commission of Inquiry. It is also concerned for the de facto non-recognition of the human right to conscientious objection to military service in Ukraine. Prisoners of conscience should be immediately released, as well as conscientious objectors detained in military units. WRI is also concerned by the prison sentencing of objectors. WRI welcomes the response from the Venice Commission to the Ukrainian Constitutional Court request clarifying that conscientious objection has to be provided for even in times of war and thus conscientious



objectors should not be compelled to bear or use arms. It is concerning that conscientious objectors are denied public trials and that the Parliament is about to adopt in a second reading a draft bill making the judgments in their case secret. WRI shares the concern of the Ukrainian Parliament Human Rights Commissioner regarding systemic human rights violations by military critics during mobilisation. WRI urges Russia to withdraw its troops from Ukraine and calls on Ukraine to fully implement the human right to conscientious objection to military service, stop the persecution of objectors, and human rights defenders who support them.

Conscience and Peace Tax International (CPTI) joins all the criticisms of Russian violations in Ukraine and their impact on children. However, ICPT must also raise the issue of respect for conscientious objection in the Ukrainian response, but on a positive note. To its credit, the Ukrainian Constitutional Court has now requested and received an amicus brief from the Council of Europe's Venice Commission to assist its consideration of a constitutional complaint brought by imprisoned Seventh-day Adventist conscientious objector Dmitry Zelensky. The amicus brief concludes that the very nature of conscientious objection implies that it cannot be fully excluded in time of war. As this refutes the specific premise on which rests not only Zelensky's conviction, but all prosecutions of conscientious objectors for their refusal of military service since the mobilisation, CPTI hopes that this will be sufficient to cause the Ukrainian courts to reconsider all such cases, beginning with those which are currently underway. Meanwhile, CPTI welcomes the report that in October an Interdepartmental Working Group began work on drafting amendments to allow for civilian alternative service. It hopes the outcome will bring Ukraine's provisions into complete conformity with the best international standards.

The **World Federation of Ukrainian Women's Organisations** addresses grave violations of Ukrainian children's rights resulting from Russia's full-scale invasion. Three years of war has stolen childhoods, torn families apart, and inflicted physical and psychological harm. Ukrainian children have endured abduction, forced deportation, and violence, all clear violations of international law. As of March 10, 2025, at least 599 children have been killed, 1,788 wounded, 2,057 reported missing, and 16 sexually abused. Over 19,000 children have been forcibly deported to Russia and Belarus, stripped of their Ukrainian identity and subjected to forced adaptations and indoctrination. Despite international efforts, only a small fraction has been returned. Russia's relentless attack on civilian infrastructure, targeting schools, hospitals, energy facilities, have killed and maimed thousands. Child casualties increased by over 50% in 2024, and one in five Ukrainian children has lost a close relative or a friend. Millions suffer from severe trauma, with calls to the national child hotline reaching over 167,000 in 2024 alone. The Federation urges the Council to demand an immediate return of all abducted Ukrainian children and hold Russia accountable for war crimes. It calls for supporting ICC arrest warrants for those responsible for crimes against children. The forced displacement and targeting of Ukrainian children are crimes, and justice must be served.

Human Rights House Foundation welcomes the High Commissioner's reporting on the plight of children in Ukraine. This is consistent with the findings of their Ukrainian partners. A recent report by the Centre for Civil Education Almenda focused on the eradication of children's identities in the occupied territories of Ukraine. Almenda's report describes how Russia is systematically targeting Ukrainian children with forced Russification, indoctrination, and militarisation across all occupied territories, repeating patterns observed for more than a decade in Crimea. The report

provides evidence of the near-complete elimination of Ukrainian language education for hundreds of thousands of children, alongside indoctrination that can potentially and more easily facilitate Russia deploying them on the battlefield against their own people. President, according to the Crimean Human Rights Group, at least 250 Ukrainian civilians remain imprisoned by the Russian Federation in occupied Crimea for political reasons, many of them Crimean Tatars. Its civil society partners also report a rise in the number of women detained for political reasons. The Foundation continues to call for the release of Emir- Hussein Kuku, Vladislav Yesypenko, Irina Danilovich, and Bohdan Ziza, among many others.

Public Organization ‘Public Advocacy’ takes the floor through a resident of the city of Cherkasy who explains that today a real genocide is taking place in Ukraine based on a religious affiliation against the largest Christian denomination, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. Here is just one of many outrageous facts. On 17 October 2024, a large group of armed militants seized the cathedral of the city by force. The militants beat the prisoners of the cathedral, shot them poisoned with tear gas, broke their arms, legs, and teeth. The speaker personally suffered a concussion from being stuck on the head of the club. At the request of local authorities, the militants looted the cathedral, stole icons, money, and much more. The cathedral is still occupied. Criminals are not punished. Today there is a faint hope that peace and the rule of law will return to Ukraine. In this situation, the return of the cathedral in Cherkasy to its rightful owner, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, would be the first sign of the end of a religious genocide in Ukraine and the country’s respect to international law and human rights. On behalf of tens of thousands of Christians of the Cherkasy diocese, the speaker ask the United Nations Special Rapporteurs and other mandate holders to take concrete steps for the real protection of human rights on the example of this particular case.

Juventum states that the ongoing human rights and humanitarian crisis in Ukraine remains a grave concern. Juventum appreciates the High Commissioner’s update on the immense suffering. It also appreciates the Commission of Inquiry and other experts reporting the violations and advocating for justice. Ukraine’s nuclear facilities, particularly the Polynesian nuclear power plant, require urgent attention. Located in an active conflict zone, the risks of a nuclear disaster, whether through deliberate attack or unintentional damage, are alarming. The consequences of such disasters will extend far beyond Ukraine’s borders, with devastating implications for generations to come. These inherent vulnerabilities of nuclear power reaffirm the need to transition to safer and more sustainable energy alternatives. Several nations consider withdrawing from key agreements such as the Mine Ban Treaty and the Convention on Cluster Munitions. These treaties are vital for protecting civilians and upholding human dignity, and their erosion will escalate the suffering of civilians. Juventum calls for concerted global efforts to secure peace, protect human rights, and ensure accountability.

Amnesty International states that Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine has been characterised by war crimes and crimes against humanity. The High Commissioner’s report shows that Ukraine’s most vulnerable citizens continue to pay the heaviest price of the conflict. Children have been particularly affected both by indiscriminate attacks and by attacks that apparently deliberately target them. Beyond the immediate physical effects, the destruction of housing, schools, hospitals, and other civilian infrastructure can have devastating long-term effects on children. In the occupied regions, children and their families have faced threats and



reprisals for attempts to take part in Ukrainian education online. Children have been compelled to study the Russian curriculum, and in so doing have been exposed to indoctrination in violation of their right to quality education. At the same time, Ukrainian teachers effectively have been subjected to forced labour by the occupying Russian authorities to force them to work in schools and teach the Russian curriculum against their will. Russia has continued to suppress Ukrainian and Crimean Tatar identities and culture in Crimea as it seeks to change the region's demographics, its blueprint for other territories it has occupied. Russia has imposed wholesale its laws on the territories it occupies and applies its abusive law enforcement practises and criminal justice proceedings to the civilian population. In the context of Russia's wider attacks against Ukrainian people, this amounts to crimes against humanity. Amnesty asks the HC how the international community can ensure that all victims of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine have full and effective reparation, including effective guarantees of non-repetition.

The **Human Rights Research League** remains deeply concerned by the Russian Federation's continuing flagrant violations of IHRL and IHL in the context of its war of aggression against Ukraine, as comprehensively documented by OHCHR and the Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine. The League is particularly outraged by the treatment accorded to Ukrainian servicemen and women who are to combat. Prisoners of war and retained medical personnel who have been systematically and in a widespread manner subjected to torture, including sexual violence, by the Russian authorities. It is further appalled by Russia's expansion of its activities of indoctrinating Ukrainian children in Russian-occupied territory and enrolling them in military training for service to the Russian state. Compelling this fashion of allegiance to an occupying power is contrary to both IHL and IHRL. The sum of the atrocities committed against and policies enforced upon Ukrainians by Russia in its war of aggression against Ukraine have caused tremendous physical and psychological harm to the people of Ukraine.

Human Rights Protection takes the floor through a journalist who sat in the largest Ukrainian prison, accused of high treason for almost two years. This carries a sentence of up to 15 years and that dozens of people are being held for that, mostly believers of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church Moscow Patriarchate. They say there are being changes made to criminal law. Instead of the usual understanding of subversion as blowing up bridges, the use of freedom of speech is falling into that category, which is against the rulings of the European Court of Human Rights. A norm can only be a norm of law when it is set out clearly enough that citizens can follow it and see the consequences. There is linguistic assessments being carried out on sermons, on statements by human rights defenders and on journalists' articles. These assessments are not impartial. They lead to investigations. Linguists are concluding that people are breaking the legislation. This is then bringing about charges of high treason with carrying a sentence of up to 15 years. The speaker calls on the states to protect basic rights of citizens in Ukraine.

FACTS & FIGURES ON ID PARTICIPATION

36 State Delegations

2 Inter-Governmental Organizations and UN Agencies

1 National Human Rights Institution

10 Non-Governmental Organizations