



Омбудсман України
Ombudsman of Ukraine

For 10 years Ukrainians have been living targets for Russia: the struggle for the right to life continues



The film "ABSOLUTE EVIL"
terrible war crimes of
Russia's military in Ukraine

№1
2024

Photo
Libkos



EXPLOSIONS MURDERS DEPORTATIONS TORTURE:

Russia's war against Ukraine continues

For 10 years Russia has been trying to seize not only the territory but also the fate of Ukrainians under its control. **It does not distinguish between military and civilians, children and adults: Russia is sowing evil and death everywhere.**

During 10 years of war Ukrainians lost their families, houses, cars, business. Some have already moved several times from the East to the West of Ukraine and started life over again. Someone did not succeed, because Russian drones and missiles reach every corner of our (and not only) country.

Here is a funnel from a missile from North Korea launched by Russia on February 15. It is located in the Kyiv Region and is about 10 and 8 meters wide and deep, respectively. There is also burned vegetation within a radius of about 40 meters. The settlement is very close. The houses suffered from broken windows and damaged facades.

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Ukrainian rescuers found three people under the rubble in Donetsk Region – a child with his mother and a pregnant woman. Russians launched four missile attacks on the town of Selidove. A direct hit destroyed a five-story building and a hospital building. The Russians hit the medical facility with two missiles, the main impact was on the maternity ward.





On February 9, in Kharkov, as a result of Russian shahed drones strikes on gas stations, more than 15 private houses burned down due to the spread of flames. **The whole family burned down – parents and their three young children. In total, seven people died in the city.**

“ It is impossible to identify the body of the infant on the spot... We assume that the mother was holding the children, hugging and pressing them to her chest,” said the Head of the Kharkiv Police Investigation Department.

This Russian crime resulted in about 3 thousand tons of oil leaking into the Udy, Lopan, Nemyshlya, and Kharkiv rivers. The approximate area of the contaminated water surface is 780 thousand square meters.



And these photos show almost whole shahed drones of Iranian origin. They are being demonstrated by the National Police. **These unmanned aerial vehicles were miraculously landed without the kamikaze warheads being activated.**



Horrific footage of Russian crimes on the territory of Ukraine has been circulating around the world for years, but Russia still feels impunity and continues the war!

The Russian war has caused Ukraine \$486 billion in losses.

(according to the third Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment (RDNA3) conducted by the World Bank, the European Commission, the UN and the Ukrainian government)

The Russian war has killed 10,378 civilians in Ukraine and wounded 19,632 others.

(according to the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission)

The Russian war in Ukraine continues! And the defense of Ukraine is the defense of the world. We must not allow evil to become omnipotent and spread across countries! —



UKRAINE NEEDS HELP AT ALL LEVELS: WORKING IN WASHINGTON

While working in Washington, the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights Dmytro Lubinets met with **Representatives of several powerful U.S. think tanks, government agencies and non-governmental organizations (CEPA, ATLANTIC COUNCIL, USAID, Creative Associates International).**



In addition, he spoke at **the International Religious Freedom Summit, dedicated to the topic “Violations of religious freedom in war and conflict zones.”** The Ombudsman of Ukraine said that for 10 years there have been cases of religious persecution of people for belonging to different confessions. He also told the stories of church members who were abducted and later found dead. Russia is extending its repressive measures to the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine. Arbitrary arrests and detentions are accompanied by torture, attempted rape, and real threats of murder. Russia constantly uses the topic of religion in its information propaganda campaigns to achieve its own goals, despite the fact that it itself commits gross violations of religious freedom in Ukraine.





While working in Washington, Dmytro Lubinets also took part in the work of **the U.S. Congressional Helsinki Commission**. He delivered a statement to Representatives of the U.S. Congress, chaired by Member of the House of Representatives of the US Congress Joe Wilson. The main focus of the speech was the return home of deported children, civilians and prisoners of war. He emphasized the Point 4 of the Peace Formula.



In addition to the speeches, the Ombudsman of Ukraine had a number of meetings at the U.S. Department of State. In particular, with:

- Anne Witkowski is the Assistant Secretary of State in the U.S. Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations;
- Julieta Valls Noyes is the Assistant Secretary of State in the U.S. Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration;
- Dan Bischofor is the Acting Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs;
- Nicole Chulik is the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State in the U.S. Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor.

He met with Ambassador William Taylor at the United States Institute of Peace and spoke at a panel at Georgetown University. He also joined the Ukrainian Prayer Breakfast. The meetings covered a variety of topics, all related to the protection of Ukrainians' rights.



In total, during his visit to Washington, he held more than 40 meetings with Representatives of U.S. government agencies, think tanks, and non-governmental organizations and gave more than 10 public speeches.

Without a doubt, the main focus is on the war in Ukraine and the return of all our citizens home.

At all meetings, we discussed support for the Ukrainian peace formula. I called on US representatives to join the return of deported children, civilians and prisoners of war to Ukraine!



WE WORK TO FREE EVERY UKRAINIAN FROM PRISONS, TORTURE CHAMBERS AND ENEMY CAMPS!

Three prisoner exchanges took place in January and February. Among the returned defenders of Ukraine are wounded. The soldiers will undergo rehabilitation.

**So far, 3,135 Ukrainians have been returned to Ukraine!
A total of 51 exchanges have been made.**



How soldiers released from enemy captivity are welcomed in Ukraine

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Unfortunately, **Russia does not include Azov fighters in the exchanges**, and in its propaganda videos calls these fighters the biggest criminals.

Every time the repatriation is carried out, our Secretariat is present at the place of repatriation to monitor the observance of human rights in accordance with international humanitarian law and the Geneva Conventions. Also, to record and show the world community what kind of prisoners of war (healthy, well-fed, not tortured) held in Ukraine are sent to Russia. And also, how weak Ukrainian defenders return from Russian captivity.



Ukrainian Ombudsman Dmytro Lubinets talks to Russian prisoners of war before the exchange. **The Russians confirm that Ukraine strictly adheres to the Geneva Conventions.**

Ukraine is taking all possible steps to bring its citizens home. It also asks all countries of the world for help in returning Ukrainians home.





EACH REPATRIATION IS THE RESULT OF HARD WORK!



The reaction of a Ukrainian defender returned from captivity after he tasted candy that he had not eaten for about 2 years

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COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILIES OF PRISONERS OF WAR AND MISSING PERSONS

The Office of the Ukrainian Parliamentary Commissioner for Human Rights holds weekly meetings with the families of the military who were captured by Russia. Families ask frank questions that concern them the most, clarify the details of negotiations with the enemy on the repatriation of Ukrainian soldiers and inquire about the fate of those currently held by the Russians near the combat zone.

For example, a meeting was recently held with family members of captured and missing servicemen of the Ukrainian Navy who defended the city of Mariupol and the 95th Separate Air Assault Brigade.





During this meeting, many questions concerned the activities of the ICRC, in particular, the fact that the organization does not provide information to families, does not visit Ukrainian prisoners in the Russian Federation. Unfortunately, no specific answers were received from the ICRC representative.

The relatives voiced that, in their opinion, **there is a need to supplement the Geneva Conventions and create punishment mechanisms for those countries that do not comply with them.**

After this meeting, the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights, Dmytro Lubinets, **sent an official letter to the ICRC President in Geneva.**

OBSERVANCE OF THE RIGHT TO HEALTHCARE, PROPER MEDICAL CARE AND FOLLOW-UP SUPPORT FOR MILITARY PERSONNEL

The Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights receives appeals from family members of active servicemen and those returned from captivity. They ask for help in providing wounded Heroes with specialized medical supplies and improving the level of medical support.



After conducting a thorough analysis and collecting relevant information, the Ombudsman's Office facilitated the transfer of a batch of specialized wheelchairs to medical institutions where servicemen who were injured during the fighting are undergoing treatment and rehabilitation. The wheelchairs, which were specially selected to meet the needs of the wounded, will help to increase mobility and comfort during recovery.

“ I urge all citizens and organizations to continue supporting the military who are defending our country. Together, we can achieve significant changes on the path to peace and recovery,” emphasized Dmytro Lubinets. —



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WAR CANNOT BE ON A CERTAIN TERRITORY, IF IT COMES,

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**IT IS A DISASTER
FOR EVERYONE.**

Andrii
Kuzmenko



YOU CANNOT BE NEUTRAL.





UNITED BY A COMMON GOAL: THE RETURN OF DEPORTED CHILDREN

In Riga, Representative of the Commissioner for the Rights of Child Iryna Suslova took part in the international conference “Russia’s War on Children”. The topic of the conference is the deportation of Ukrainian children by Russians as a crime of genocide, just responsibility and steps to prevent it from happening in the future, joint solutions to bring children home and their social support.



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In her speech, Iryna Suslova noted that the return is taking place in pursuance of the Presidential Action Plan “Bring Kids Back UA”, within the framework of point 4 of the Presidential Peace Formula, for which the Ombudsman of Ukraine is responsible.

Each return is like a special operation.

And the experience of the Ombudsman’s Office shows that each case is delicate and requires a separate approach.

BOY RETURNED FROM TEMPORARILY OCCUPIED KHERSON REGION



The elder sister of the child asked the Office of the Ombudsman to remove him from the occupation. The boy lived with his grandmother in TOT because his mother died in the summer of 2022.

During the occupation, they experienced all the “advantages of the Russian world”: intimidation, psychological pressure, and visits from representatives of the occupation authorities. The boy was threatened to be taken away from his grandmother and placed in an orphanage, as he was left without a legal representative.

On January 1, 2024, they finally found themselves in the government-controlled territory. So the first day of the new year symbolically became the first day of a new life for this family. The return was made possible by joint efforts of the Ombudsman’s Office and the Ukrainian Child Rights Network.

PACE ADOPTED A RESOLUTION CALLING ON MEMBER STATES TO RECOGNIZE THAT RUSSIA’S DEPORTATION OF UKRAINIAN CHILDREN IS GENOCIDE OF THE UKRAINIAN PEOPLE!

This is a historic decision and historic statements! Ukraine worked internationally, including the Office of the Ombudsman of Ukraine, emphasizing that Russia is committing genocide against the Ukrainian people by deporting our children.



The Ombudsman's Office contributed to drafting the resolution and processing amendments to ensure the rights of children and their best interests. The Office's activities are recognized at a high level by an international organization that is a leader in the field of human rights!

PACE in the resolution:

- noted Ukraine's efforts to return deported or forcibly displaced children, including the implementation of the Bring Kids Back UA action plan and the creation of the International Coalition of Countries for the Return of Ukrainian Children, in accordance with the President's Peace Formula;
- recognizes Ukraine's commitment to protecting the rights of vulnerable children, in particular through the establishment of the Center for the Protection of Children's Rights, which we opened on the initiative of the President of Ukraine. It also recognizes that Ukraine is addressing issues related to the documentation of crimes against children abducted by Russia, and is assessing the needs of children and taking measures aimed at their reintegration.

Every deported and forcibly transferred child, every arbitrarily detained civilian by the Russian Federation, every prisoner of war, all our citizens must return home!

RUSSIA IS PREPARING UKRAINIAN CHILDREN FOR WAR AGAINST THEIR HOMELAND

The aggressor country is seizing Ukrainian land, appropriating Ukrainian children and training them for combat. Russia is inciting hatred towards the Motherland for the war it brought to Ukrainian homes. Russia is forcing people to renounce their native language, culture and history. Russia is actively "re-educating" those who identify themselves as Ukrainians.



The militarisation of children continues in the temporarily occupied territories. It has become known from open sources that in Melitopol, there are plans to create the first "Centre for Youth Training" in the TOT. There, children will be taught drill, UAV operation, first aid on the battlefield, and how to use the means necessary to restore combat capability in case of injury. The basis of militarisation is compulsory participation in propaganda activities.

Dmytro Lubinets emphasises that Russia's militarisation of education and imposition of its ideology on Ukrainian children in the temporarily occupied territories is a violation of international humanitarian law. This is another war crime of the Russian Federation for which there must be a fair punishment!

World, Ukrainian children need to be saved from the bloody hands of the aggressor! —



Iryna Suslova

Representative of the Commissioner for the Rights of the Child

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RUSSIAN OCCUPIERS CONTINUE FORCED PASSPORTISATION IN THE TEMPORARILY OCCUPIED TERRITORIES OF UKRAINE

If Ukrainians in the TOT refuse to receive Russian passports, their homes are searched, they face constant psychological and moral pressure, and threats to their lives and health. Also, since January, people have been deprived of medical care and the Internet, the only means of communication with their relatives living in government-controlled territory.

Adults without a Russian passport:

- are not allowed to work;
- not provided with medical care;
- may be deprived of the opportunity to register ownership of real estate.

Under the threat of deprivation of parental rights, parents are forced to issue Russian documents for their children.



Russians come directly to the homes of residents of the temporarily occupied territories and force them to take Russian passports

A woman from the city of Enerhodar appealed to the Ombudsman's Office and reported the fact of her mother's forced passport issue. Appeals to our institution on recording the facts of forced passportisation in TOT are not uncommon. In December last year, there were 40 of them.

The Ombudsman of Ukraine Dmytro Lubinets condemns the policy and actions of the aggressor state authorities regarding the forced passportisation of Ukrainian citizens. This contradicts international law and is a violation of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War.

Forced passportisation is an element of systemic pressure on Ukrainian citizens who are forced to live under occupation.

At the same time, I remind you that passports issued by the occupation authorities are not recognised in Ukraine. Citizens who received them by force do not bear criminal responsibility and are not deprived of Ukrainian citizenship!

FOR SPEAKING UKRAINIAN IN THE TOT, THEY ARE THROWN TO THE "BASEMENT" AND BEATEN!

Recently, a civilian couple managed to leave the temporarily occupied territory of Kherson region. They had been on the TOT of Ukraine for almost 2 years and were subjected to cruel treatment by the occupiers.

The woman was twice taken to the "basement" and severely beaten because she spoke Ukrainian. It is hard to imagine what people are forced to go through...

Three times the man and woman tried to leave for the territory controlled by Ukraine: the first time, an evacuation vehicle was shot at in front of them, and the second time, the Ukrainians were beaten. Only the third attempt was successful.



With the assistance of the Ombudsman's Office, an evacuation route was developed and psychological support was provided to the couple.

As a result, the Ukrainians are now relatively safe. The woman says that when she got to the territory controlled by Ukraine, she got down on her knees and kissed the ground. In the future, our Office will work to help the family.

People returning home must understand that we are all united and must support each other!

A LONG WAY TO RELATIVES: 80-YEAR-OLD WOMAN EVACUATED FROM TOT

The Ombudsman of Ukraine received a complaint from a citizen who had been unable to take her elderly mother out of the temporarily occupied village in Donetsk region for a long time. Her mother, in a serious condition, was unable to move on her own, so she was unable to evacuate. She had no relatives or friends nearby who could take care of her. Due to the refusal to obtain a Russian passport, the woman was in a difficult financial situation, as her "pension" was not paid and she had no other means of subsistence.

Understanding the complexity of the situation, the Ombudsman's Office staff together with the NGO that evacuates people studied various options for leaving the TOT. Everything was organised so that it was possible to accompany the woman throughout the entire time, taking into account the risks that could arise when crossing the borders.

On 24 January, Antonina left her home and began a difficult journey. The woman's route took her through the temporarily occupied territory of Donetsk region and the territories of Russia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland. At each stage, Antonina was accompanied by volunteers who bought her a wheelchair and a walker.



Despite all the difficulties, on 4 February Antonina finally met her daughter in Lviv. **After many months of separation, they are now together!**



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PRESENTED A SPECIAL REPORT

on the state of observance of social and economic rights of adults in need of guardianship and care under the legal regime of martial law



The Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights, Dmytro Lubinets, presented a special report to the Committee on Human Rights, De-occupation and Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories of Ukraine, National Minorities and Interethnic Relations on the state of observance of social and economic rights of adults in need of guardianship and care under the martial law regime. Olena Kolobrodova, Representative on Social and Economic Rights, also joined the presentation. **This is the first Special Report in this area of work.**

In the course of preparing the Special Report, the Ombudsman's Office conducted 17 monitoring visits to state institutions. In addition, they studied the functioning of guardianship and trusteeship bodies based on data from 1,348 territorial communities. **The Specialised Committee recommended that the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine include the issue of consideration of this Special Report in the Parliament.**

THE RIGHT OF 175 RESIDENTS

of Kherson to assign compensation to individuals who provide social care services on a non-professional basis has been renewed

A resident of the city of Kherson appealed to the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights regarding the violation by the Kherson City Council of her right for the assignment of compensation to individuals who provide social care services on a non-professional basis. Based on this appeal, the Commissioner initiated proceedings, and, accordingly, sent recommendations to the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine, the Kherson City Military Administration regarding taking measures to assign compensation to the applicant.

The following facts were established:

- in April 2023, the applicant applied to the Department of Labor and Social Protection of the Population of the Dnipro District Council of the City of Kherson with an application and the necessary documents for awarding her compensation;
- assignment and payment of compensation at the level of territorial communities from April 2023 is carried out under a special program complex;
- no compensation was assigned or paid to 174 residents of the city of Kherson, in particular to the applicant.

As a result of the Commissioner's response measures taken in the period from January to December 2023, compensation was assigned to **175 residents of Kherson and funds were paid in the total amount of UAH 2,302,777.91, including the applicant for 9 months, starting from April 2023, in the amount of UAH 17,271.** —



Olena Kolobrodova

Representative of the Commissioner for Social and Economic Rights

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WORK IN THE INTERNATIONAL ARENA



The Ombudsman's Office staff and Dmytro Lubinets are active in the international arena, aimed at sending all possible assistance to Ukraine, especially in the issues of returning citizens from deportation and captivity.

The work is also aimed at informing the international community about the human rights violations committed by Russia and bringing the perpetrators to justice for their crimes against the people of Ukraine.



In particular, the following events took place in January and February:

- a meeting with the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the State of Qatar to Ukraine, **Hadi Al-Hajri**. Issues related to the return of Ukrainians home were discussed;
- a meeting with the EU Ambassador to Ukraine, Head of the EU Delegation to Ukraine, **Ms Katarína Mathernová**. Discussed how Ukraine is implementing a number of European integration processes even during the war and is using all opportunities to join the European family, which shares common values with us;
- a joint meeting with the ambassadors of two countries: Canada's **Natalka Cmoc** and Norway's **Helene Sand Andersen**. Specific steps to implement point 4 of the Peace Formula were discussed. After all, these countries are co-chairs of the working group on the implementation of this point (co-chair country);
- Meeting with **Mark Simakowsky**, the representative of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The parties discussed increasing Russia's responsibility for human rights violations in Ukraine;
- meeting with the Ambassador of Germany to Ukraine **Martin Jaeger**. Discussed the implementation of the Ukrainian Peace Formula, in particular point 4, human rights in Ukraine in various areas, including human rights in the security and defence sector and children's rights;



- a meeting with representatives of the Political Action Network for Sustainable Development, the Centre for Law and Democracy, the Brazilian Centre for International Relations and other representatives of the civil, political, religious and academic **communities of Brazil**. We hope that this meeting will give impetus to the ways of cooperation between the two countries to protect human rights and help Ukraine in its fight against the terrorist state;
- meeting with the Minister of Social Protection of Estonia **Signe Riisalo**. The parties discussed the assistance of the Government of Estonia in the reconstruction of Ukraine, in particular, focusing on the Zhytomyr region and assistance in opening a Human Rights Protection Centre in Zhytomyr;
- Meeting with the delegation of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Special Committee “Parliamentary Support Group for Ukraine”, headed by the President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly **Pia Kauma**. Participants discussed Ukrainian children and the cynical war crimes committed by Russia against them. The delegation was told stories of adoptions of Ukrainian children by Russian public figures and stressed that Russians are not afraid to do so, even in public, because they feel impunity;
- a meeting with the UN Resident Coordinator in Ukraine, **Denise Brown**, and the Head of the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine, **Danielle Bell**. We discussed in detail Ukraine’s efforts to return arbitrarily detained civilians by Russia.

The Office of the Ombudsman of Ukraine will continue to inform international organisations, governments and communities about human rights violations by the Russian Federation! **Evil must be punished!**

■ VISIT OF THE OMBUDSMAN OF UKRAINE TO SWITZERLAND

The Ombudsman of Ukraine Dmytro Lubinets joined the Fourth Meeting of the National Security Advisers on the Ukrainian Peace Formula. He called on the countries of the world to join the urgent solution of the issue of returning all Ukrainians home!

Dmytro Lubinets also moderated the panel “Humanitarian dimension of the Ukrainian Peace Formula: the fight for the return of victims of forcible displacement, including deported children and prisoners of war” at the Fourth Meeting of the Advisors on the Implementation of the Peace Formula in Davos. In his speech, he emphasised that there are currently **518 children and 3,135 adults back home, including only 150 civilians**. Ukraine’s task is to return everyone! Therefore, the international community must immediately consolidate its efforts in this direction!

In Davos, our country’s partners heard the voices of Ukrainian children who have been returned home, relatives of arbitrarily detained civilians by the Russian Federation. They were shocked by what they heard.



They also raised the issue of the return of Ukrainian prisoners of war and violations of IHL in relation to them: inhumane conditions of detention, torture, and executions.

In total, 81 countries and international organisations took part in the Davos meeting. These are countries from Europe, Asia, Africa, South and North America, and Oceania. **The work in Davos is an important step towards bringing our people home and helping Ukraine.**

THE OMBUDSMAN OF UKRAINE BECAME A MEMBER OF THE EUROPEAN BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE INTERNATIONAL OMBUDSMAN INSTITUTE (IOI)

For the first time in history, a representative of Ukraine has joined the Board of Directors of the European region of the IOI. This involves participation in the coordination of the activities of ombudsmen around the world and in making joint decisions.

“For me, this is an additional opportunity to inform the international community about the situation in our country and how the Russian Federation violates the rights of our citizens!” said Dmytro Lubinets.

Later, the International Ombudsman Institute (IOI) met with the newly elected members of its Board of Directors. The Ombudsman of Ukraine addressed his colleagues and stressed that Ukraine is now at the forefront of countering Russia's blatant attack on the democratic world order, and called for unity to protect human rights. He expressed hope that together we can build the strongest human rights system that will help protect the rights of everyone in all IOI member states.



QATAR PLAYS AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE RETURN OF UKRAINIANS

The Ombudsman of Ukraine Dmytro Lubinets met with the Minister of State for International Cooperation of Qatar, Lolwah Al-Khater.

Qatar is the first country to help us return Ukrainian children. However, today we discussed the possibility of returning other categories of citizens from the territory of the Russian Federation. And the possible involvement of Qatar in this process.

We discussed in detail the implementation of point 4 of the Peace Formula and further steps. In addition, we raised the issue of implementing many other humanitarian tracks, which will be announced later.



Each visit is aimed at ensuring that we have concrete results in the future. **Supporting our partners means helping to protect human and child rights!** —



Olga Strepochenko

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UKRAINE HAS ZERO TOLERANCE TO TORTURE AND ILL-TREATMENT

Vitalii Nikulin, Representative of the Commissioner for Human Rights in Places of Detention, took part in the annual exchange of views with UN representatives with the participation of experts from the capitals within the framework of the 1488th meeting of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe at the level of Permanent Representatives. The thematic discussion concerned the issues of torture and ill-treatment.

Vitaly Nikulin thanked the **UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, Alice Jill Edwards**, for the thorough report prepared based on the results of her visit to Ukraine.

During the speech, he once again testified to Ukraine's commitment to international obligations to prevent torture and other forms of ill-treatment. To that end, in 2023 the Office of the Ombudsman conducted 538 visits to places of detention.

At the same time, Vitaliy Nikulin emphasized the problem of the systematic practice of torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, which Russia applies to Ukrainian prisoners of war, civilians and even Ukrainian children.

Addressing the international community, the Representative of the Commissioner called for joint efforts to eventually force Russia to comply with the norms of international humanitarian law, as well as to bring all those responsible to justice.

OBSERVANCE OF THE RIGHTS OF FOREIGNERS AND STATELESS PERSONS

The NPM monitoring group **visited the Volyn temporary accommodation center for foreigners and stateless persons illegally staying in Ukraine of the State Migration Service of Ukraine.** The main goal of the monitoring group was to communicate with the foreigners staying there and find out the state of compliance with their rights in the course of the stay. It was possible to conduct an interview with 5 people.

During the interview, the facts of the impossibility of obtaining free legal aid for foreigners were established. Some of the detention protocols did not have a signature of familiarization. In addition, during confidential interviews with foreigners and stateless persons, numerous complaints were received that the information about the actual time of their detention, which is included in the protocols on administrative detention, does not correspond to reality.

According to the facts of these violations, response acts were directed to the relevant authorities, in particular the law enforcement ones.



Vitalii Nikulin

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PROTECTION OF PERSONAL DATA: MODERN SCENARIO AND PERSPECTIVES

Accession to the EU and NATO (Articles 2 and 15 of the Association Agreement with the EU) is impossible without ensuring basic human rights. One of the fundamental human rights is the right to privacy.

According to Art. 11 of the Agreement on Cooperation between Ukraine and the European Organization for Justice (ratified in 2017), Ukraine undertook to guarantee the level of protection of personal data.

The adoption of Draft Laws № 8153 “On the Protection of Personal Data” of October 25, 2022, and № 6177 “On the National Commission for Personal Data Protection and Access to Public Information” of October 18, 2021 is a mandatory condition on Ukraine’s path towards a integration into the European Union. Currently, the authority to verify compliance with the legislation on personal data protection is vested in the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights.

According to the report of the European Commission, the Commissioner does not possess the necessary resources to do this effectively and cannot perform this function, mainly in terms of imposing fines for violations of personal data protection legislation.

The draft laws, being interconnected, implement the standards of personal data protection provided for by Convention 108+ and by GDPR.

The European Commission will assess the effectiveness of the personal data protection system, including regulatory acts, the ability of the independent supervisory body to perform the functions assigned to it, as well as the effectiveness of the mechanism for challenging the decisions of the supervisory body in court. That is why Ukraine needs new legislation and a new effective regulatory body in this area.





EU4DIGITALUA, THE OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN AND THE MINISTRY OF DIGITAL AFFAIRS PRESENTED RECOMMENDATIONS ON ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Many Ukrainians, companies and state bodies use artificial intelligence, because it allows them to optimize working processes and to enhance the quality of the work outcomes. However, the safety of the person and their data must remain in the first place.

Therefore, the Office of the Ombudsman of Ukraine, in cooperation with the Ministry of Digital Transformation of Ukraine and the EU4DigitalUA project, developed recommendations on the observance of human rights and processing of personal data in the field of AI.

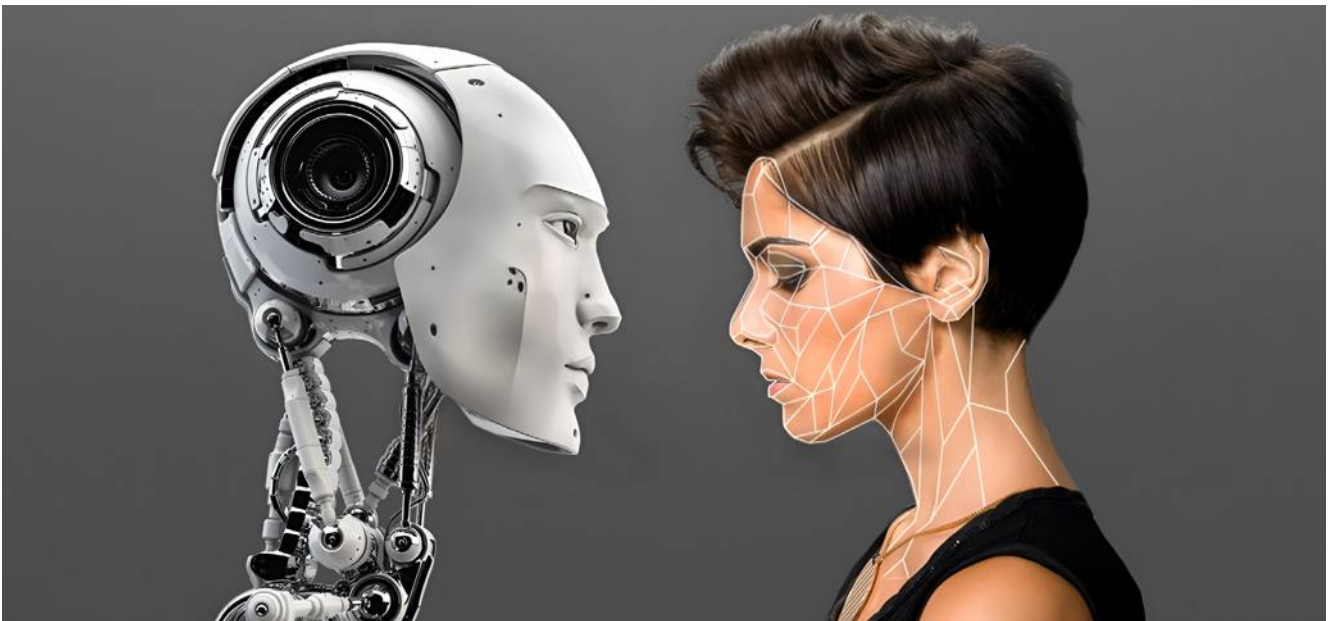
“Understanding the principles by which developers and companies working with artificial intelligence should be guided are important for strengthening trust in electronic services in Ukraine. Recommendations in the field of personal data protection will help to strengthen awareness and prevent violations of the right to privacy,” said Yulia Derkachenko, Representative of the Commissioner for Information Rights.

The document contains clear and practical advice for companies and government institutions. The instruction will help to avoid violations of human rights.

The recommendations touch upon the following issues:

- how artificial intelligence affects human rights;
- approaches to the regulation of this influence in the EU and the USA;
- in what way companies can ethically work with data when developing AI-based systems;
- how to manage artificial intelligence in accordance with legislation. —

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ROMA INTEGRATION CENTRE OPENED IN UKRAINE

The official opening of the Roma-led community centre (Roma Integration Centre) in the city of Mukachevo was held with the participation of the representative of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights in Zakarpattia region Andrii Kriuchkov, UN Resident Coordinator in Ukraine Denise Brown, UN Women representative in Ukraine Sabine Freizer Gunes, representatives of UNHCR in Ukraine and the charity fund “Region of the Carpathians “NEEKA”, as well as representatives of local authorities, partners and Roma organisations.

During a visit to Zakarpattia, the UN Resident Coordinator in Ukraine and the Representative of the Commissioner visited a Roma settlement in Uzhhorod, where they saw the disastrous living conditions of Roma families.

The Ombudsman of Ukraine Dmytro Lubinets together with the Council of Europe works to improve the observance of the rights of the Roma national minority (community) of Ukraine, which is part of Ukraine’s European integration commitments, and constantly draws attention of the executive authorities and local self-government to this.

In order to organise and carry out consistent work aimed at combating discriminatory attitudes towards Roma by public authorities, enterprises, institutions, organisations and individuals, the Office of the Ombudsman of Ukraine has established a relevant structural unit, which is coordinated by the Representative of the Commissioner for Equal Rights and Freedoms, National Minorities, Political and Religious Beliefs Mykhailo Spasov.

The Office of the Ombudsman of Ukraine congratulates the UN representatives for drawing the attention of the international community to the state of ensuring the rights and freedoms of the Roma national minority (community) in Ukraine and, for its part, will continue to work consistently to protect the rights and freedoms of all members of national minorities (communities) in Ukraine.





WE NEED TO CREATE CONDITIONS, NOT BARRIERS



The Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights, Dmytro Lubinets, together with the Representative on Equal Rights and Freedoms, National Minorities, Political and Religious Beliefs, Mykhailo Spasov, took part in a meeting of the Commission on Coordination of Interaction of Executive Authorities on Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men: “On the results of the implementation of the state gender policy in 2023”.

In his speech, Dmytro Lubinets said that the Ombudsman’s Office maintains a gender balance, as there are 12 men and 12 women among the 24 representatives of the Commissioner.

Understanding the enormous contribution of women to our struggle and victory, the Ombudsman stressed the need to apply a gender approach to the development of all policies at the national and local levels.

“Ukraine is consistently taking steps to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and implement the European Commission’s recommendation to accelerate the EU accession process,” Dmytro Lubinets concluded. —

#RussiasATerroristState



Mykhailo Spasov

Representative of the Commissioner for Equal Rights and Freedoms, National Minorities, Political and Religious Beliefs
spasov@ombudsman.gov.ua

IT IS IMPORTANT NOT TO LOSE TRUST!

Every month, Dmytro Lubinets, the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights, holds a personal reception for citizens who seek help in restoring their violated rights.

Citizens address with different appeals, each of which is considered individually by the Ombudsman of Ukraine and the responsible representative. Together, they thoroughly analyze the materials and develop concrete steps within their powers.

“I am grateful to the people for trusting our institution! We are working to ensure compliance with the rights of citizens,” said Dmytro Lubinets.



MONITORING OF COMPLIANCE WITH THE RIGHT TO A FAIR TRIAL AND PROCEDURAL RIGHTS

The Ombudsman received a **citizen's complaint regarding the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine's non-implementation of the decision of the Skole District Court of the Lviv Region dated April 11, 2023.**

In order to resolve the issues raised in the complaint, appropriate requests were sent to the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine for consideration and verification of the status of the execution of the decision of the Skole District Court of the Lviv Region, and, in the event of the non-implementation of that decision, – for taking measures aimed at the immediate implementation of the court decision, in particular, regarding the citizen's reinstatement at work and payment of the average salary for one month.

In course of the proceedings of the Commissioner, it was established that the Office of Corporate Policy of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine has, in order to implement the order of the Minister of Defense of Ukraine (on the heads of state-owned enterprises), prepared necessary documents regarding the renewal of a citizen in the position of director of the State Enterprise "Maheriv Military Forest Farm" and the conclusion of a contract with him.

In order to obtain complete and comprehensive information, an additional request letter from the Commissioner was sent to the Minister of Defense of Ukraine with a request to inform about the status of implementation of the decision of the Skole District Court of the Lviv Region. In response, the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine noted that by order of the Minister of Defense of Ukraine (on the heads of state-owned enterprises) of December 21, 2023, the citizen was reinstated as the director of the state-owned enterprise "Maheriv Military Forestry" and renewed the validity of the contract concluded with him on December 3, 2019.

In addition, the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine noted that the Ombudsman will be informed additionally about the results of the work carried out to pay the wage arrears.

Thus, with the assistance of the Commissioner, the violated right of a citizen to proper enforcement of court decisions was restored. —



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**RUSSIA
CAPTURED
AVDIIVKA
(WIPED
AVDIIVKA OFF
THE FACE OF
THE EARTH)**

Enemy forces had an advantage in manpower and aviation.

The defense of Avdiivka lasted for 9 years. The city was a kind of gateway to Donetsk. From the beginning of the full-scale invasion, the city was held by the incredible efforts of thousands of Ukrainian soldiers from infantry, assault and artillery brigades, various special service and special operations forces of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

This winter, as the Ukrainian army was experiencing a lack of shells, the enemy began to advance. In mid-February, Russia pulled all its reserves, in particular, from other directions of the front, for the assault on Avdiivka.

**Our honor to the Ukrainian defenders who defended the city.
Eternal memory to the fallen Ukrainian heroes!**



HUMAN RIGHTS IN UKRAINE

since the Beginning of Russia's Full-Scale Invasion of Ukraine



3 135

people were released from Russian captivity

including →

150

civilians

≈ 28 000

persons missing under special circumstances and illegally deprived of personal liberty as a result of Russia's armed aggression against Ukraine

*According to the information of the Director General of the International Commission on Missing Persons

518

children Ukraine returned

including →

388

deported children, according to the information platform «Children of War»

10 378

killed civilians

19 632

injured civilians

*According to the information of the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine

527

killed children

1 225

injured children

2 153

missing children

19 546

children deported to the Russian Federation and/or forcibly transferred from the TOT

*According to the information platform «Children of War»

1.4 million

people without access to water due to the destruction of infrastructure

4.6 million

people with limited access to water

≈ 700 thousand

people in Ukraine were left without drinking water due to the destruction of the Kakhovka hydroelectric power station

4.9 million

people now identified as IDPs

6.5 million

people receiving temporary shelter in other countries

1 721

destroyed healthcare facilities

including →

384

hospitals

352

ambulatories

3 951

destroyed educational institutions

including →

1 275

destroyed kindergartens

≈ 1 million

children affected by the war do not have safe and reliable access to further education

*According to the UN

500

destroyed religious buildings

1 938

destroyed objects of culture

≈ 250 000

destroyed or damaged houses

126

destroyed railway stations

346

destroyed bridges and bridge crossings

576

destroyed boiler houses

426

destroyed factories and businesses

≈ 174 thousand square kilometers

of the territory of Ukraine are considered potentially mined

*As on February 16, 2024



Dmytro LUBINETS

Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner
for Human Rights

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Commissioner for Human Rights **0 800 50 17 20**
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Омбудсман України
Ombudsman of Ukraine

The Russian Federation and all the war criminals it sent to Ukraine will bear the most serious responsibility for the evil they committed.

Ukraine meticulously documents every crime and every brutality.
All those who are guilty will undoubtedly be held accountable.

We will never forget or forgive. And so is the world.

#StandWithUkraine

«Ombudsman of Ukraine» chatbot

is an opportunity to get answers to important questions quickly and conveniently. It contains important information divided into 17 categories.

In particular, servicemen, internally displaced persons, and families with children can receive answers about their rights here. There is also a category for people who are in the temporarily occupied territory or were forcibly deported.

The chatbot is available at

@ukraine_ombudsman_bot

