



Омбудсман України
Ombudsman of Ukraine

Strengthening international ties to return all Ukrainians home!

Visit of the Turkish delegation to Ukraine



What was
the visit like?
Watch the video

№2
2024



THE CHIEF OMBUDSMAN OF TÜRKİYE IS VISITING UKRAINE!

On March 25, a Turkish delegation, including **Chief Ombudsman of Turkey Şeref Malkoç** and **Turkish Ombudsman Sadettin Kalkan**, arrived in Ukraine.

The delegation visited Odesa. They visited grain elevators and places destroyed by Russia. Russia attacks both civilian infrastructure and **seaports**. At the end of the day, **the delegations joined Iftar**. The event was opened by President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

The **Ombudsman of Ukraine** and international guests also worked in Kyiv. Several meetings were held:

- at the **Ombudsman’s Office**, Dmytro Lubinets explained how the institution works under martial law;
- a large meeting with **the families of Ukraine’s defenders and civilians was held**;
- the delegations **joined the meeting of the IDP Council under Kyiv City Military Administration** to discuss the possibility of providing housing for IDPs in Kyiv;
- a meeting was held with **the Leader of the Crimean Tatar People Mustafa Dzhemilev, the Chairman of the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar People Refat Chubarov** and members of the Mejlis;
- later, the delegation also **met with UNICEF at the Child Protection Centre**.

In addition, Dmytro Lubinets and Şeref Malkoç **signed official documents related to the protection of the rights of Ukrainian children.**

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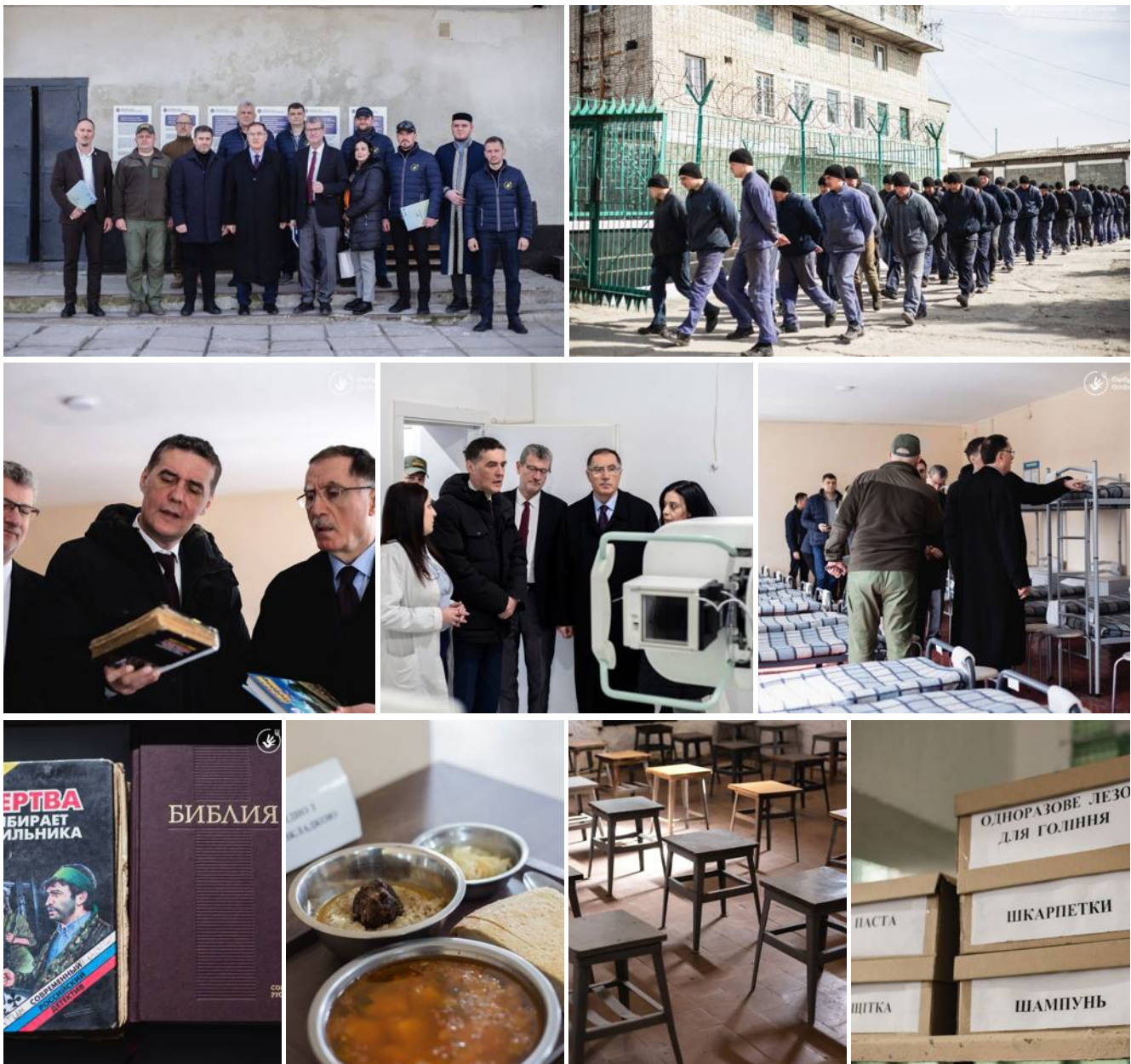
The rights of Ukrainian prisoners of war in the Russian Federation must be respected as Ukraine respects the rights of Russian prisoners of war!



Ukrainian Ombudsman Dmytro Lubinets, Turkish Chief Ombudsman Şeref Malkoç and Turkish Ombudsman Sadettin Kalkan **visited the Zakhid-1 (West-1) camp where Russian prisoners of war are held.** The Turkish representatives made sure that the Russians are being held in accordance with the provisions of the Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War, in particular:

- the detention of prisoners of war in the camp begins with their reception in an appropriate room, which is equipped with two isolation cells with benches and a bathroom, a room for a search and initial examination by a medical professional;
- the camp has an approved daily routine. It provides for eight hours of sleep for prisoners of war, roll call checks, three meals a day, work, religious, intellectual and physical activities;
- the facility has a shop, a church, a stadium, a library, and a TV room;
- Russian prisoners of war have the opportunity to contact their relatives via IP telephony.

Ukraine wants the international community to have access to places where Ukrainian prisoners of war are held in Russia.





9 UKRAINIAN CHILDREN WERE RETURNED TO THE MOTHERLAND!



Four of them were returned from the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine, five more – as part of the implementation of the Bring Kids Back UA Action Plan of the President of Ukraine.

On March 22, employees of the Ombudsman's Office met 3-year-old sisters, a 6-year-old boy and a 10-year-old girl from orphanages. Regarding their return, guardians and relatives appealed to the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights. The Office of the Ombudsman also helped reunite a mother with her 12-year-old daughter. All of them are already on the territory of Ukraine.



The other four children returned earlier from the temporarily occupied territories. They have already visited the Child Rights Protection Center and told that some had been forced to attend a Russian school. Also, one of the girls with a disability had not had an opportunity to receive full-fledged medical care, so now she will finally receive proper assistance in the territory controlled by Ukraine.

The return of Ukrainian children who were deported or forcibly relocated by the Russian Federation is a joint effort of the Office of the Ombudsman, state authorities and was made possible through the mediation of the State of Qatar and cooperation with UNICEF.



Ukraine is ready for everyone's return and will provide basic humanitarian, medical, psychological and social assistance. And the law enforcement officers will record all the crimes of Russians, of which children have become witnesses or victims, so that the criminals and those who give criminal orders are justly punished!”, – Dmytro Lubinets, the Ombudsman of Ukraine, noted.



We continue to work and spare no effort so that every Ukrainian child returns to his native land and has a happy childhood!

Also, Ukrainian families are trying to leave the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine on their own in order to protect their children from the crimes of the Russians.

On March 12, **five Ukrainian children left the temporarily occupied territory of the Kherson region and went to the territory controlled by Ukraine.** These are four brothers and sisters and a 17-year-old boy. The mother of 4 children noted that the Russians had beaten the father in front of the children. And now one of her daughters needs to work with a psychologist, because the girl cries in her sleep. A 17-year-old boy left the occupation on his own. Because of his age, he had been hiding from the Russians, as he could have been forced to join the Russian army.



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Our Office, partners and state structures **will help children** with the preparation of necessary documents and placement in educational institutions. Also, specialists will work with the children to provide the necessary medical, psychological, humanitarian and social assistance, and the relevant state authorities will record the facts of the Russian crimes, which the children witnessed or of which they became victims, from their own words.



This is happening at the Child Rights Protection Center, the purpose of which is to assess the needs of returned children and consolidate efforts to help these children and their families.

Also, **three more families with children who left the temporarily occupied territories of Zaporizhzhia and Donetsk regions visited the Center.** Each family has its own story.



WE MAINTAIN CONTACT WITH THE FAMILIES OF DEFENDERS OF UKRAINE AND CIVILIANS!

Throughout March, the Secretariat of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights **organized a number of meetings with families of Ukrainian soldiers and relatives of civilians.**

In particular, a meeting **with family members of fallen servicemen (“Sertse Nazovni” (“Hearts Outward”) NGO)** was held within the walls of the Ombudsman’s Office. The Commissioner’s Secretariat invited representatives of state bodies to communicate, find out the reasons and discuss ways that can speed up the term of identification of unidentified bodies of defenders.



According to the Minister of Health Viktor Liashko, who joined the meeting, **more than 2,800 bodies and fragments were identified.** Also, the representatives of state bodies noted that relatives cannot find the bodies of their loved ones, as those have not yet been handed over to the Ukrainian side. However, the process of repatriation of bodies is taking place. This is reported publicly.

Ukraine is most interested in returning the bodies of fallen soldiers. Relatives have every right to pay tribute to the defenders!





Also, during the visit of the Chief Ombudsman of Türkiye, Şeref Malkoç, and Ombudsman of Türkiye, Sadettin Kalkan, to Ukraine, **a large meeting was held with the families of Ukrainian prisoners of war and illegally detained civilians, as well as missing Ukrainians. Almost 800 people joined it.**

During the meeting, Dmytro Lubinets drew attention to the fact that Türkiye and the Chief Ombudsman have repeatedly assisted Ukraine in communicating with the Russian side regarding the return of Ukrainians home, in particular, the transfer of lists. As the Ombudsman of Ukraine noted, Ukraine wants the Turkish side to raise the issue of mixed medical commissions. Ukraine established them already and wants such commissions to be established in the Russian Federation as well.



*We are fighting for each and every one who remains in the captivity of the Russian Federation. We are always looking for new approaches and specific actions! I hope that this meeting and the words that relatives delivered to Şeref Malkoç will lead to a tangible result!”, - Ombudsman **Dmytro Lubinets** stressed.*





CIVILIANS ILLEGALLY DETAINED AND CONVICTED BY RUSSIA SHOULD BE HOME!

Recently, changes were made to the resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 257 “On the Establishment of the Coordination Headquarters for the Treatment of Prisoners of War”, which provided that **the Coordination Headquarters will officially have powers to deal with issues of civilians who were deprived of their personal freedom as a result of the armed aggression of the Russian Federation.**



Oleksandr Kononenko, the Representative of the Commissioner for Human Rights in the System of Security and Defense Sector Bodies, was appointed as the head of the thematic working group. This happened within the framework of the constituent meeting chaired by the Secretary of the Coordination Staff, Dmytro Usov, regarding the strategy for the release of Ukrainian civilians from Russian captivity. During this meeting, representatives of state authorities and the public sector (non-governmental organizations) were present.

The participants determined the main directions of the group’s work and **the first steps to intensify the work on the return of civilians** who were deprived of their personal freedom as a result of the armed aggression of Russia – to establish the places and conditions of detention of Ukrainians who are illegally detained by the aggressor country.

Furthermore, during another meeting with representatives of the Moscow Mechanism of the OSCE in the Office of the Ombudsman, Oleksandr Kononenko stressed that **of all the civilians illegally detained and convicted by the Russian Federation, about 1,600 people have been verified.**

The Representative of the Commissioner also noted that currently **almost 30,000 people are considered missing under special circumstances and illegally deprived of their personal freedom as a result of the armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine.** Three categories are included in the figure: children, civilians and prisoners of war.



The Commissioner’s Secretariat works to protect the rights of civilians illegally detained and convicted by the Russian Federation. Ukraine needs this glaring problem to be heard at the international level!



Oleksandr Kononenko

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UKRAINE NEEDS SPECIFIC ACTIONS!

The Ombudsman of Ukraine, Dmytro Lubinets, together with First Lady Olena Zelenska, met with the Secretary General of the Council of Europe Marija Pejčinović Burić and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Education and Sports of Liechtenstein, President of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, Dominique Hasler, at the Child Rights Protection Center.



The Commissioner informed the partners about the deportation of Ukrainian children by Russia and Ukraine's steps to return them home. During the meeting, Dmytro Lubinets **called on the Council of Europe:**

- promote the joining of new countries to the International Coalition for the Return of Ukrainian Children;
- participate in expert support of the coalition's activities;
- promote the joining of new countries to bring home Ukrainian civilians. And to adopt Council of Europe resolutions on the immediate and unconditional release of civilians;
- to consider Russia's violation of the Geneva Conventions, in particular on the treatment of prisoners of war, and the fact that for 10 years of aggression, Russia has not allowed the ICRC to visit places of detention of Ukrainian citizens.

WE CONTINUE TO WORK TO BRING ALL THE CHILDREN HOME!

Already **33 countries** are members of the **International Coalition for the Return of Ukrainian Children!** Among them: Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, Poland, Austria, Estonia, the Netherlands, Norway and others. All countries are making joint efforts to reunite Ukrainian children with their families and ensure their reintegration into families and communities.

The Coalition was launched in Kyiv on 2 February 2024. It is a joint initiative of Ukraine and Canada. **The main goal of the Coalition** is to coordinate mutual efforts and intensify cooperation between Canada, Ukraine and partner countries to address the problem of illegal deportation and forced displacement of Ukrainian children by Russia. Currently, **19,546 children have been kidnapped by Russia**, but the number could be much higher. Russia does not just deport Ukrainian children, but also erases their identity and re-educates them.

The establishment of the Coalition is part of the Point 4 of the President's Peace Formula.



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PEOPLE AFFECTED BY RUSSIAN AGGRESSION MUST RECEIVE COMPENSATION!

The Ombudsman's Office has created a working group to prepare proposals for compensation to people affected by the armed aggression against Ukraine. The goal is to develop a vision for providing reparations to victims of Russia's aggression.



During the second meeting of the group, the participants discussed the following issues:

- implementation of the International Register of Damages and synchronisation of national legislation and the international reparations mechanism;
- the main conclusions and recommendations of the Council of Europe's Expert Report on Remedies and Reparations Mechanisms for Victims of the War in Ukraine;
- key components for the development and implementation of comprehensive and effective national and international reparations mechanisms focused on victims.

According to the results of the second meeting, the Office of the Ombudsman will summarize all the developments. The relevant document should become a kind of **road map for the state's movement towards the implementation of reparations mechanisms.**

The offsite meeting of the working group was organised with the support of the Council of Europe Project "Strengthening judicial and non-judicial remedies for the protection of the rights of victims of the war in Ukraine".

THE WORLD SHOULD KNOW THE STORIES OF THOSE WHO AFFECTED FROM RUSSIAN AGGRESSION

Olga Altunina, Representative of the Commissioner for the Rights of Citizens Affected by the Armed Aggression against Ukraine, presented the achievements of the Commissioner's Office during the roundtable on compensation for damages, losses and injuries caused by the Russian aggression against Ukraine, held in Warsaw.



Olga Altunina spoke about the Ombudsman's activities in this area, in particular:

- preparation of a Special Report on Persons Affected by Armed Aggression;
- advocating for the development and adoption of a draft law on victims of armed aggression and their social guarantees;
- the activities of the working group established by the Ombudsman to prepare proposals for compensation to victims.



*We are the voice of those whose voices have been silenced by the war. We carry their stories to the world so that no one is forgotten. We will talk until the whole world hears. We will act until justice is done. We will fight until peace is built and the perpetrators are brought to justice,” said **Olga Altunina** in her speech.*

THE PROBLEM OF PROVIDING HOUSING FOR INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (IDPS) IS BECOMING MORE AND MORE ACUTE

The first open meeting of the Council for Internally Displaced Persons under the Kyiv Regional Military Administration was held in Kyiv. The event brought together **over 200 participants** to discuss the possibilities of providing housing for IDPs living in the capital. Among them were People's Deputies of Ukraine, Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights Dmytro Lubinets, Chief Ombudsman of Türkiye Şeref Malkoç, Representatives of government agencies and the public.



The participants agreed that the problem of providing IDPs with housing is becoming increasingly acute. This requires the development of new policies as soon as possible. A number of developments in this area were presented at the meeting. In particular, Olga Altunina, Head of the Council for Internally Displaced Persons at the Kyiv Regional Military Administration, presented the results of a survey of IDPs in Kyiv, highlighting their main needs. The presentation was followed by a panel discussion with representatives of government agencies and the public on the possibilities of providing housing for IDPs in Kyiv and a question and answer session.

Such events make the problems of social protection visible and initiate the development of new solutions to overcome the social and demographic crisis caused by the war.



Olga Altunina

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THE DRAFT LABOUR CODE OF UKRAINE REQUIRES SIGNIFICANT REVISION

The Ombudsman’s Office hosted a **meeting of the Expert Council under the Representative of the Commissioner for Social and Economic Rights**. Olena Kolobrodova informed about changes in the Expert Council and welcomed its new members. The meeting also unanimously approved the Expert Council’s Work Plan for 2024.

The main issue during the meeting was the **discussion of the draft Labour Code of Ukraine**, the main developer of which is the Ministry of Economy of Ukraine. The representative of the Commissioner informed that the said draft Labour Code was being processed by the Commissioner’s Secretariat, and the Commissioner’s position was sent to the Ministry of Economy of Ukraine.



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At the end of the meeting, Olena Kolobrodova supported the thesis that preparations for the post-war period should be made now, rather than waiting until the war is over, and that this requires an appropriate legal framework. She emphasised that **Ukrainian society deserves the dominance of European labour values, social peace, cohesion, and social responsibility, the implementation of which is vital for Ukraine.**

The **Expert Council decided not to support the draft Labour Code in its proposed version** as one that requires significant revision and to send comments to the Ministry of Economy of Ukraine for consideration.

CITIZENS’ APPEALS ARE AN OPPORTUNITY TO IMPROVE REGULATIONS IN VARIOUS AREAS

The Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights received numerous appeals from citizens regarding the violation of the right of working women to postpone the start of maternity leave, as provided for by the Law of Ukraine No. 3238-IX of 13.07.2023.



During the review of the appeals, it was found that there were discrepancies between the departmental regulatory act of the Ministry of Health and the Law of Ukraine No. 3238-IX. Therefore, pursuant to the recommendations of the Commissioner, the Ministry of Health issued an order regulating the mechanism for exercising the right of pregnant women to transfer and use maternity leave in part or in full.

As a result, the right of working women has been restored. It is known that as of 29 January, according to information received from the Ministry of Health, **1683 women have exercised the right to transfer part of their maternity leave to the postpartum period.**

DAMAGES IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL SPHERE CAN AMOUNT TO TRILLIONS OF HRYVNIA

Due to the armed aggression of the Russian Federation, the environment in Ukraine suffered a lot, which has an impact on the entire global ecosystem. **Currently, the damage caused to the environment is estimated at almost 2.4 trillion hryvnias.** In particular, the following losses are estimated:

- atmospheric air – UAH 1.2 billion;
- land resources – UAH 1.1 billion;
- nature reserve fund – UAH 86.7 million;
- water resources – UAH 83.5 million;
- forests – UAH 1.3 million.

Furthermore, the destruction of 57,000 units of equipment of the occupying forces resulted in 951,000 tons of waste and 90,900 tons of emissions. **The estimated amount of damage caused to the environment as a result of the explosion of the dam of the Kakhovka HPP, is 146.4 billion hryvnias.** As a consequence of the explosion, the state lost almost 14.4 cubic km of fresh water, 1,144 households were affected, and 63,400 hectares of forests were flooded.

THE RIGHT TO A SAFE ENVIRONMENT MUST BE ENSURED!

As part of our Office's work, **the right to a safe environment and proper living conditions of 54 residents of the Klavdiievo-Tarasove village in the Kyiv region was renewed based on their collective appeals.** Pursuant to the recommendations of the Commissioner, a commission was formed and an inspection of the territory where 3 enterprises are functioning is carried out was carried out. As a result, a number of violations in the field of environmental protection and sanitary legislation were discovered. Prescriptions for the elimination of detected violations were provided for the heads of enterprises. They are currently completed.

In order to ensure the right to a safe environment, the Representative of the Commissioner for Social and Economic Rights, **Olena Kolobrodova, held 3 online meetings with representatives of international organizations** that carry out activities in the field of protecting the right to access to water and environmental issues: People in Need, the Ukrainian Water Association and the Regional Office of the UNICEF WASH Cluster.



Olena Kolobrodova

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WORKING IN THE INTERNATIONAL ARENA

In March, the Ombudsman of Ukraine, Dmytro Lubinets, took part in the **Forum on Fundamental Rights in Vienna, Austria**. At the Forum, he participated in a number of events.

1. He spoke to foreign journalists during the thematic session. Dmytro Lubinets proposed to create a document that would help protect the rights of journalists and urged them to come to Ukraine to show the world the truth.



What is important! The Ukrainian film “20 Days in Mariupol”, directed by Mstyslav Chernov, won the Academy Award for Best Feature Documentary. The journalists showed the truth about the war in Ukraine, and it was appreciated at the highest level!



2. Sessions on “**Rights in action: Respecting Human Rights for the Future of Europe**”. The Ombudsman of Ukraine stressed that the future of Europe is being decided on Ukrainian soil.

In Vienna, Dmytro Lubinets also had a number of meetings:

- with US Ambassador to the OSCE Michael Carpenter and OSCE Secretary General Helga Schmid;
- with the Chairman of the Human Rights Committee of the Austrian Parliament, Nikolaus Scherak, members of the Parliament Harold Roch, Georg Bürstmeier and Ambassador of Ukraine to Austria Vasyi Khymynets;
- with the Director of the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), Sirpa Rautio.

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UKRAINE STRENGTHENS ITS PARTNERSHIP



The Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights Dmytro Lubinets met with **the British Ambassador to Ukraine Martin Harris**. The Ukrainian Ombudsman thanked the UK for the support and assistance provided since the beginning of the full-scale Russian invasion.

Dmytro Lubinets also expressed his gratitude to the British side for participating in the launch of the International Platform for the Release of Civilians Arbitrarily Detained by the Russian Federation and for participating in the Working Group within the framework of the implementation of Point 4 of the Peace Formula.



Thanks to joint efforts and commitment to the process, I am confident that together we will bring every citizen of Ukraine home!" said **Dmytro Lubinets**.



Dmytro Lubinets also met with the **Ambassador of Ireland to Ukraine, Therese Healy**. Dmytro Lubinets told Therese Healy about the activities of the Ombudsman's Office, its main areas of work, and the institution's regional network. The parties discussed in detail the following issues: deportation of Ukrainian children by Russia and their return home; prisoner of war exchanges and return of civilians arbitrarily detained by Russia; national minorities (communities) in Ukraine and others.

Therese Healy took a deep interest in the work of the Commissioner's Office and the above-mentioned topics. She expressed her hope that Ukraine will soon be able to become an EU member and assured her that Ireland stands with the Ukrainian people.



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A GENDER APPROACH SHOULD BE APPLIED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF ALL POLICIES

Representative of the Commissioner for Equal Rights and Freedoms, National Minorities, Political Views and Religious Beliefs Mykhailo Spasov participated in the **68th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW, the Commission)** as a member of the Ukrainian delegation.



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The priority theme is to **accelerate the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls** through poverty reduction, strengthening institutions and financing taking into account the gender approach.

During the CSW, Mykhailo Spasov participated in a number of events, including the event **“UKRAINE’S POST-WAR RECOVERY: gender mainstreaming for women’s empowerment”**, and at the invitation of the Estonian Commissioner for Gender Equality and Equal Treatment, Christian Veske, he spoke at a special event **“Equality bodies in times of crisis: guarding equality legislation in difficult times”**.





WE MONITOR LIVING CONDITIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN ROMA SETTLEMENTS

A monitoring visit to the Roma settlement in Uzhhorod, Zakarpattia, was conducted. The settlement has 48 dwellings and almost 180 residents.

During the visit, a number of egregious human rights violations were revealed. One of the biggest is the **lack of access to drinking water.** The settlement has unsatisfactory living conditions, and there are no restrooms both inside and outside the buildings. The monitors found that the Roma settlement is isolated from public and community services, including a landfill. This is harmful to life, health and the environment.



The number of people living in one house of 10 to 50 square metres can be up to 20.

During the cold season, the buildings are heated with firewood using stoves, which are also used for cooking. The members of the monitoring group witnessed not only firewood being burned in homemade stoves, but also various items such as clothes, rubber, and garbage. This affects the health of adults and children who are constantly breathing chemicals from the burning of various harmful materials.

We would like to draw your attention to the fact that the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine approved the Strategy for Promoting the Rights and Opportunities of Persons Belonging to the Roma National Minority in Ukrainian Society for the Period up to 2030 by the Resolution No. 866-r dated 28.07.2021.

The purpose of monitoring visits is to promote human rights!



Mykhailo Spasov

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HUMAN RIGHTS IN PLACES OF DETENTION MUST BE RESPECTED!

A convict serving a sentence in one of the penitentiary facilities of Dnipropetrovsk region appealed to the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights regarding a possible violation of his right to proper medical care due to the long delay in undergoing an MRI scan.

As a result of the measures taken, the convict underwent an MRI scan and documents are being prepared for his further referral for treatment.

MONITORING VISITS BY THE NPM HELP TO IDENTIFY HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

The NPM group visited **the Sokyryanska Penal Colony (No. 67)**. On the day of the visit, 674 convicts were held in the facility.

In accordance with the requirements of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights, following the results of the previous visit to this colony, the administration of the facility took a number of measures to bring certain premises into proper condition: the divisions of the social and psychological service; cells of the sector for detainees; the bakery and canteen of the facility, etc.

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At the same time, the visits revealed a number of violations of the rights of the convicts:

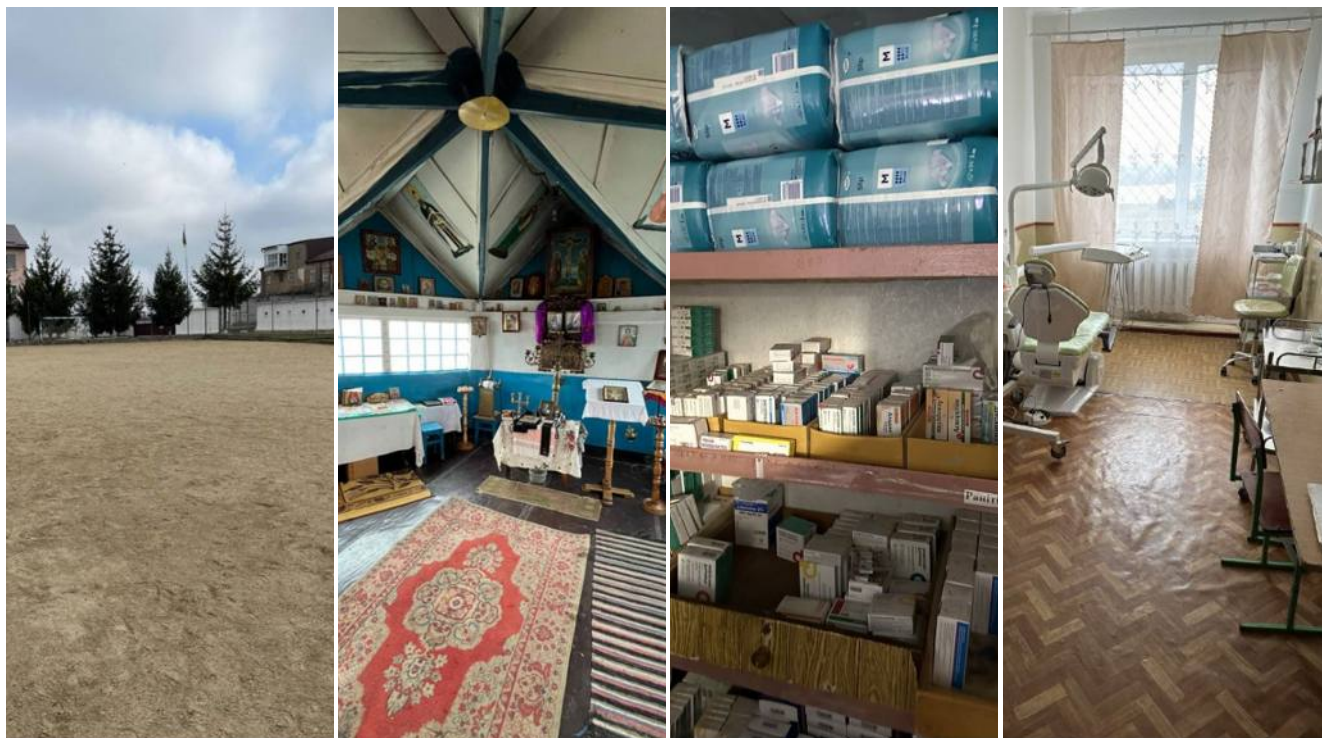
- violation of the established norm of living space per convict, which in some cases is less than 4 square metres;
- violation of the right to decent conditions of detention;
- violation of the right to protection from torture and other forms of ill-treatment;
- violation of the right to life;
- violation of the right to health care and medical assistance;
- violation of the procedure for organising video surveillance.

In order to eliminate and prevent such violations in the future, the Commissioner will take all measures provided for by law.

RUSSIAN MILITARY PERSONNEL ARE HELD IN UKRAINE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE GENEVA CONVENTIONS

Staff of the Secretariat of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights together with representatives of the public visited the State Institution “Zakhid 2” (West-2) prisoner of war camp.

The NPM group conducted a survey of prisoners of war: no complaints were received from Russians about the conditions of detention, torture, or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.



The camp is working to create proper living and sanitary conditions for prisoners of war. In accordance with the requirements of the Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War, the camp administration ensured the right of prisoners of war to engage in sports, educational and recreational activities. The prisoners of war are engaged in paid work, and the issue of creating new jobs is currently being considered.

Since November 2023, the prisoners of war have made 314 phone calls to their relatives and friends, and sent more than 200 letters with the ICRC’s assistance.

The Russians in the camp also have access to medical care and can fulfil their religious needs. There is a shop in the camp, and prisoners of war are allowed to use the literature available in the camp’s library, as well as newspapers and magazines.

The camp staff fully ensured compliance with the requirements of the Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War.



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THE OMBUDSMAN'S OFFICE WORKS TO PROTECT CITIZENS' INFORMATION RIGHTS!

In March, the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights **received 225 appeals regarding alleged violations of information rights**. The Ombudsman **opened 79 proceedings on them**. We managed to **restore the information rights of 38 citizens** and processed 51 draft legal acts.

For instance, a citizen's appeal regarding violation of the right to access public information by Vyshhorod City Council was filed. A report on an administrative offence was drawn up against the mayor. Later, the court found the official guilty, which provides for an administrative penalty – a fine.

DRAFT LAW OF UKRAINE "ON APPEALS" REGISTERED IN THE PARLIAMENT

Based on the results of discussions at the meetings of the working (expert) group on preparing proposals for the implementation of the Law of Ukraine "On Administrative Procedure", the draft Law of Ukraine "On Appeals" was registered in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. Representatives of the Ombudsman's Office, government agencies and the public took part in the discussions.

THE RIGHT TO ACCESS PUBLIC INFORMATION UNDER MARTIAL LAW MUST BE RESPECTED!

To ensure effective work in the field of information rights, the Commissioner's Secretariat staff took part in a number of events.



A training was held for military administrations in Kherson region on how to handle information requests. The speakers emphasised that the right to access public information under martial law must be respected.



Representative of the Commissioner for Information Rights Yuliia Derkachenko **took part in the 22nd Annual Meeting of Central and Eastern European Data Protection Authorities (CEEDPA)**, organised with the support of the Personal Data Protection Service of Georgia. Yuliia Derkachenko delivered a speech and presented the methodological material **"Human Rights in the Age of Artificial Intelligence: Challenges and Legal Regulation"**, published by the Ombudsman's Office and the Ministry of Digital Transformation of Ukraine, with the support of the EU4DigitalUA project.

Yuliia Derkachenko also took part in **Open Data Day 2024**. They discussed approaches to the formation of open data in Ukraine.



In addition, from 12 to 16 February, the delegation of the Commissioner's Office together with representatives of data protection authorities from the Eastern Partnership countries visited Tallinn, Estonia, **to improve their skills and exchange experience.**

As a result of participation in the event, the Ombudsman's Office staff **met with representatives of the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ).** Among the initiatives of cooperation with GIZ is a project on implementation of universal certified courses on personal data protection for students of higher education institutions, employees of the security and defence sector; for advanced training of local government officials, critical infrastructure operators, and the financial sector.



As part of one of the Council of Europe's projects, **a forum was held on Personal Data Protection: Current Scenario and Future Prospects.** The Ombudsman of Ukraine joined the event. The event focused on the need **to implement the provisions and principles of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Convention 108+ into national legislation.**



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WE ENSURED A CITIZEN'S RIGHT TO A FAIR TRIAL

A citizen appealed to the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights and **reported a raider seizure by unknown persons of real estate (apartment) owned by her and her family members.** The applicant informed that she had appealed to the judiciary.

However, as a result of the preliminary examination of the appeal, its content revealed facts that gave grounds to assume that there had been a violation of human and **civil rights and freedoms.** In this regard, the Ombudsman took a decision to open proceedings on the said appeal.

In addition, the citizen's appeal, among other things, referred to circumstances that could possibly have an impact on the course of the trial. Therefore, the Ombudsman also decided to ensure monitoring of court hearings in order to prevent violations of the procedural rights of the applicant and her family members. After all, compliance with the principle of a fair and impartial trial was crucial in the process of restoring the violated right to free possession and use of real estate.

Thus, **the representatives of the Ombudsman's Office ensured continuous monitoring of court hearings for more than a year.** The systematic monitoring of the observance of procedural rights of the citizen and her family members resulted in a decision in favour of the citizen and her family members.

PROFESSIONAL LEGAL AID TO CITIZENS – PILOT PROJECT LAUNCHED IN FIVE REGIONS OF UKRAINE

Within the framework of the Memorandum of Cooperation between the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights and the Ukrainian National Bar Association, **a pilot project was launched in Zakarpattia, Dnipro, Ivano-Frankivsk, Rivne and Khmelnytskyi regions.**

The goal is to provide professional legal aid to citizens by lawyers along with receiving consultations during the reception of the Commissioner's representatives in the regions.

Indeed, there are cases when applicants need professional legal assistance from lawyers (drafting claims, lawyer's requests, etc.), but, for various objective reasons, cannot use free secondary legal aid.

Now, in order to ensure the right to professional legal aid guaranteed by Article 59 of the Constitution of Ukraine, the Bar Councils in Zakarpattia, Dnipro, Ivano-Frankivsk, Rivne and Khmelnytskyi regions, with the UNBA's approval, **will help restore the violated rights of citizens who apply to the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights** – they will provide highly professional explanations and, in some cases, professional legal aid.



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REPRESENTATIVES OF THE OMBUDSMAN'S OFFICE ARE WORKING IN THE REGIONS OF UKRAINE!

In March, the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights Dmytro Lubinets **visited a number of regions of Ukraine**, where he met with regional authorities, families of Ukrainian defenders and introduced his representatives. All events were held at universities, except for Chernihiv region.

In Chernivtsi region, the Ombudsman met with Ruslan Zaparaniuk, Head of the Chernivtsi Regional Military Administration, and Vasyl Balukh, Acting Rector of Yuriy Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University. The Ombudsman introduced his representative in the region, **Iryna Isopenko**. Later, he met with the families of Ukrainian defenders, which was attended by **over 300 people**.



In Cherkasy region, Dmytro Lubinets met with the Head of Cherkasy Regional Military Administration Ihor Taburets, the Head of Cherkasy Regional Council Anatolii Pidhornyi and the Rector of Cherkasy State Technological University Oleh Hryhor. The Ombudsman introduced his representative in Cherkasy region, **Maksym Teptiuk**. Also in **Cherkasy**, Dmytro Lubinets spoke to **more than 100 relatives** of military servicemen.





In Kirovohrad region, the Ombudsman met with the Head of Kirovohrad Regional Military Administration Andrii Raikovykh and the Head of Kirovohrad Regional Council Yurii Drozd. The Ombudsman introduced his representative in Kirovohrad region, **Halyna Luhova**. **More than 200 people** came to the meeting with the families of defenders in Kropyvnytskyi.



#RussiasATerroristState

In Chernihiv region, Dmytro Lubinets met with the head of the Chernihiv Regional Military Administration Viacheslav Chaus. The Ombudsman introduced his representative in Chernihiv region, **Larysa Shumna**. He also met with the families of the defenders.





RUSSIA'S TARGETS ARE NOT IMAGINARY TARGETS, BUT REAL PEOPLE IN UKRAINE!

In March 2024, more than 1,700 air raid alerts were sounded in Ukraine. In total, they lasted almost 120 days. Every day, the Russian Federation shelled the regions of Ukraine. The attacks with missiles and other means affected Odesa, Kharkiv, Kherson, Donetsk, Sumy, Dnipro, Zaporizhzhia, Kyiv regions, the city of Kyiv and other regions.

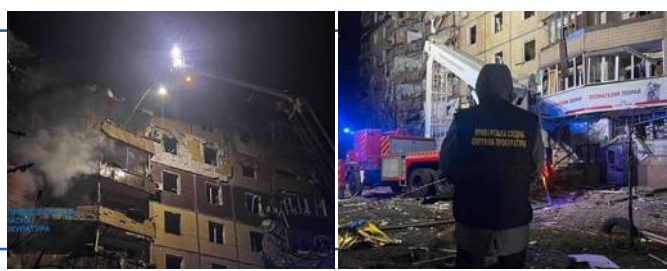


Trajectory of Russian air targets during one of the attacks on Ukraine. That night, a Russian missile entered the territory of Poland.

On March 2, an enemy attack on a high-rise building in a residential area of Odesa killed 12 people, including 5 children, and injured 20 others. Among them, a mother was found under the rubble trying to hide her 8-month-old baby. They were found in an embrace.



On 12 March, the Russian Federation attacked a multi-storey building in Kryvyi Rih, Dnipro region. The missile strike killed 5 people and injured 43 others.



On March 15, Russia shelled Odesa once again. At first, there was one missile attack, and when emergency services arrived, the enemy struck again. The attacks killed 21 people and injured 73. Among the dead were an employee of the State Emergency Service and a paramedic. Civilian infrastructure was damaged, including residential buildings, outbuildings and vehicles.



On March 20, Russia attacked Kharkiv: 5 people were killed and 9 others were injured.





On March 21, Kyiv region and the city of Kyiv suffered from shelling by the aggressor country. In the Kyiv region, **4 people were injured** and more than 60 private houses were damaged. In Kyiv, **13 people were injured as a result of a rocket attack.**



On March 22, the enemy launched a massive shelling of Ukraine: a number of regions were affected. In particular, Russia shelled Zaporizhzhia, **killing three people and injuring 29.** 10 private houses were destroyed, and another 400 were damaged. Among the victims were a father with an 8-year-old child and a trolleybus driver. **The largest hydroelectric power station in Ukraine, namely the Dnipro hydroelectric power station, was damaged. One of the power lines supplying Zaporizhzhia NPP was cut off.**



#RussiasATerroristState

On the same day, the Russian Federation attacked Khmelnytskyi, **killing two people and injuring eight.**



On March 25, the Russian Federation attacked the capital of Ukraine. As a result, **7 people were injured.** It happened in the morning – the occupiers deliberately targeted civilian infrastructure.



The aggression of the Russian Federation is a threat to the lives of civilians. Russia not only wants to seize the territory of Ukraine. Russia wants to destroy the Ukrainian nation and identity!

Despite this, Ukraine is fighting and defending its independence. All this is done by people: military and civilians. Our international partners are also helping us.

The Ombudsman's Office works to protect human rights!

HUMAN RIGHTS IN UKRAINE

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



3 135

people were released from Russian captivity

including →

147

civilians

≈ 30 000

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

529

children Ukraine returned

including →

388

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

10 675

killed civilians

20 080

injured civilians

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

537

killed children

1 269

injured children

2 067

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

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

4.8 million

people now identified as IDPs

8.2 million

people receiving temporary shelter in other countries

1 759

destroyed healthcare facilities

including →

426

hospitals

352

ambulatories

3 951

destroyed educational institutions

including →

1 286

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

1 946

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 March 28, 2024



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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

