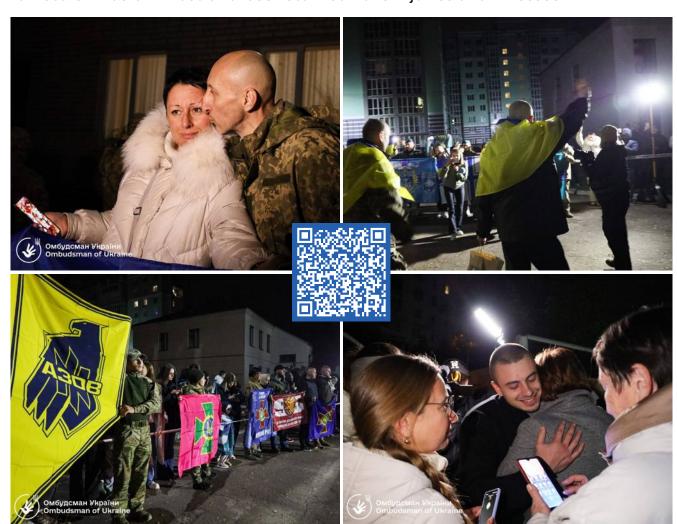




RETURNING OUR PEOPLE HOME!

On 18 October, the 58th exchange of prisoners of war took place. 95 Ukrainians returned home. These are the defenders of Mariupol and Azovstal, Donetsk, Luhansk, Kharkiv, Kyiv, Chernihiv and Kherson regions.

Most of the prisoners of war were held captive by Russia from the first days of the full-scale invasion. Most of those returned have injuries and illnesses.



Employees of the Office of the Ombudsman of Ukraine were present at the exchange site to monitor the observance of human rights in accordance with international humanitarian law and the Geneva Conventions.

Upon returning to Ukraine, the defenders are provided with food, clean clothes, medical check-ups, and the necessary treatment and rehabilitation.

3,767 UKRAINIANS

have returned home since the start of the full-scale invasion!



What do Russian prisoners of war say before the exchange? Exclusive communication of the Ombudsman's Office staff with them.

FAMILIES LEAVING TOTS FOR UKRAINE-CONTROLLED TERRITORIES



Another 13 children returned to the territory controlled by Ukraine. They lived with their families in Kherson, Zaporizhzhia, Luhansk regions and Crimea.

These families were forced to obey the harsh conditions of the occupiers — to obtain Russian passports, send their children to Russian schools where they were taught false history and even forced to try on the uniform of the invaders. Every day was a challenge: fear of armed searches, interrogations, pressure from threats of deprivation of parental rights and removal of children, the decline of their own business and lack of decent earnings. Now these families are free again. They have returned to Ukraine — to their homeland, where their mother tongue is spoken and their children can be just children again. Ukraine and its partners are providing them with the necessary assistance.





The Ombudsman's Office also managed to organise the evacuation of three women from the TOTs. One of them was illegally detained by the Russian Federation for a long time. After that, she underwent treatment and recovery. The Ukrainian women were provided with medical support during the transfer. Now they have been reunited with their families.





PACE RESOLUTION:

Russia must comply with international humanitarian law

The Ombudsman of Ukraine Dmytro Lubinets spoke at the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. The main topic was the violation of international humanitarian law by Russia in relation to Ukrainian prisoners of war. He urged PACE members to adopt a resolution on the observance of IHL norms in relation to Ukrainian prisoners of war held by the Russian Federation in the TOTs of Ukraine and on the territory of Russia.

He stressed that:

- Ukrainian prisoners of war are held in unsanitary conditions, overcrowded cells, tortured and ill-treated; the terrorist attack in Olenivka was named a crime committed by Russia;
- the Russian Federation fully violates all the norms of the Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War in particular, by not granting ICRC representatives access to Ukrainian prisoners;
- Ukrainian prisoners are convicted and charged with falsified charges. Ukraine is also aware of numerous cases of deaths of persons in captivity from torture and acquired diseases.



Subsequently, the PACE adopted a resolution that for the first time raised the issue of the treatment of prisoners of war in Russian captivity and illegally detained civilians. The decision was adopted unanimously — by 74 votes!

The resolution also demands that Russia comply with international humanitarian law. This is an important step! It will help to find and release prisoners of war and illegally detained civilians from Russian captivity, as well as to bring those responsible for crimes to justice.

MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP OF POINT 4 OF UKRAINE'S PEACE FORMULA

The meeting was attended by **40 representatives of different nations and international organisations.** The meeting was held jointly with the co-chairs of the Working Group, the Ambassadors of Canada and Norway to Ukraine.

The main topic of the meeting was the presentation of the Action Plan for paragraph 4 of the Ukrainian Formula for Peace. This document contains specific actionable steps based on the results of consultations with the Ukrainian authorities, international and civil society organisations.

Russia systematically violates international humanitarian law and commits war crimes. The cases of executions of Ukrainian prisoners of war by Russians, for instance, have recently become more frequent. This is their new strategy, and we must find a solution to put an end to it. This is a challenge not only for Ukraine, but for all democratic countries," noted **Dmytro Lubinets.**



MEETINGS WITH FAMILIES

of POWs and Persons Missing Under Special Circumstances

The Ombudsman's Office holds weekly meetings with families of servicemen who are currently in enemy captivity or are considered missing.

Recently, such meetings were held with family members of convicted prisoners of war and civilian hostages, family members of the defenders of the 47th and 55th Separate Mechanised Brigades and Military Unit 3017 of the National Guard of Ukraine.



Relatives of the servicemen asked questions about the return of the Defenders of Ukraine, including those convicted, the transfer of parcels and letters to Ukrainian prisoners in the Russian Federation, the activities of international organisations, social protection and the involvement of international organisations and third countries in the process of returning our people home.

The joint meetings help coordinate the actions of families, organisations and government agencies in a joint effort to bring our soldiers home.











Ukrainian journalist Viktoriia Roshchyna, who disappeared on August 3, 2023 in the temporarily occupied territory, **died in illegal detention in Russia.** Her body has not yet been returned to Ukraine by the Russians. Her stay in Russia was confirmed by the ICRC.

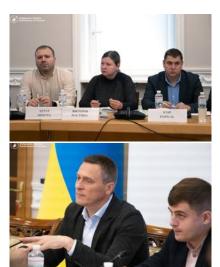
Ukraine is also aware of more than 100 prisoners of war executed by terrorist Russia. There is information about Russians killing civilians in the town of Selidove (Donetsk region).

MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP

on the Protection of Rights and Freedoms of Civilians

The Ombudsman's Office hosted a meeting of the Working Group on the Protection of Civilians' Rights and Freedoms. The key issue was ensuring the rights of civilians held in places of detention in the TOTs of Ukraine as well as in the Russian Federation.

In course of the meeting, it was proposed to amend the resolutions of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on social support for the released persons. Amendments to the Laws of Ukraine regarding the postponement of military service during the mobilisation of civilians released from Russian illegal detention were discussed. The legislative amendments discussed at the meeting will be drafted into the relevant legal acts and submitted to the central executive authorities for consideration.





Yuriy Kovbasa

Representative of the Commissioner for Human Rights in the System of Bodies in the Security and Defence Sector



RUSSIA DELIBERATELY IMPEDES

the Process of Returning Ukrainian Children

The Third Plenary Meeting of the International Coalition for the Return of Ukrainian Children was held, attended by representatives of the Coalition's member states, Ukrainian authorities, international organisations and other key partners.



Ukraine is independently searching for and verifying the whereabouts of children, tracing their relatives and engaging family-based forms of care in this process. Our country is also working to improve legal mechanisms and cooperation between government agencies to protect the rights of children and their return. In particular, two key resolutions, which are important steps in establishing internal processes aimed at returning deported Ukrainian children and ensuring their rights upon return, were adopted.

During the meeting, the Coalition summed up the results of its work over the past 6 months, outlined plans, and issued a Joint Statement defining the main principles of child return:

- transparency of data on children,
- access to children for international missions,
- support for Ukraine's humanitarian efforts,
- long-term support for reintegration,
- ensuring children's access to justice and fairness.

In addition, a presentation of the White Paper #2 'Reintegration of Children Survivors of Deportation and Forced Displacement: International Standards and Best Practices for Ukraine' took place. This document, prepared by the International Expert Group Bring Kids Back UA, is an important step towards bringing our children back home and their further reintegration.



In turn, the European Network of Ombudspersons for Children (ENOC) unanimously supported the statement on the urgent protection of the rights of Ukrainian children affected by the armed aggression of the Russian Federation. It also reaffirmed its solidarity with Ukraine and condemned Russia's massive violations of children's rights.

■ This statement shows that the Network recognizes the critical importance of protecting children's rights and stands united with Ukraine in the fight against
■ Russian evil!

For Ukraine, international support is vital, and Ombudsman Dmytro Lubinets calls on partners to continue working together and increase pressure on Russia.



Iryna Suslova

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WORK ON THE SPECIAL REPORT OF THE OMBUDSMAN



on the Situation in the TOTs of Ukraine is Underway

The Special Report is a key document describing the chronology, methods and mechanisms of occupation used by Russia during its invasion of Ukraine. The report is being drafted by experts from the Ombudsman's Office, government agencies and civil society organisations. The report will be the first official document to detail the tools used by Russia for the occupation.

The document is intended to demonstrate the facts of Russian aggression and warn neighbouring countries of threats. The report will also include testimonies of more than 200 people who survived the occupation. ■

MEETINGS OF THE EXPERT COUNCIL

with the Representative of the Commissioner for the Rights of Citizens Affected by the Armed Aggression Against Ukraine

Under the chairmanship of the Ombudsman's Representative Olha Altunina, the Expert Council discussed the protection of property rights of victims of aggression against Ukraine. Attention was paid to the following issues:

- introduction of the registration of real estate over which control has been lost in the occupied territories;
- submission of reports through the Diia portal on property damaged or destroyed from February 19, 2014 to February 24, 2022;
- keeping records of immovable and movable property damaged as a result of Russian armed aggression;
- submission of damage reports to the International Register of Damage for Ukraine.

Based on the results of the discussion, **recommendations** were developed to address these issues.

At the next meeting of the expert council, the participants summed up the results of the 2024 admission campaign and discussed support for young people from the temporarily occupied territories (TOT) in 2025.

Olha Altunina noted that thanks to the cooperation of NGOs and the Ombudsman's Office, the number of applicants from the TOTs increased from 1,608 in 2023 to 11,325 in 2024.

A number of universities were also awarded for actively supporting students in their enrolment.









Olga Altunina

Representative of the Commissioner for the Rights of Citizens who are Victims of Armed Aggression against Ukraine

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RUSSIA HAS COMMITTED MORE THAN 4,700 ENVIRONMENTAL CRIMES IN UKRAINE AMOUNTING TO \$64 BILLION

This was stated by the Ombudsman of Ukraine Dmytro Lubinets at the International Baku Forum of Ombudsmen on Climate Change and Human Rights.

Russia has committed more than 4,700 environmental crimes in Ukraine, which has led to soil, water, and air pollution and damaged Ukraine's nature reserve fund.



- as a result of Russian armed aggression,
 Ukraine is the most mined country in the world;
- according to the UN, this endangers the lives and health of more than 6 million people;
- since February 24, 2022 alone, **309 people have been killed** by mines and explosives;
- nearly **144,000 km²** are considered potentially mined. For comparison, after the war in Croatia, 13,000 km² were considered potentially mined. Since 1996, the process of demining this territory has not yet been completed!

Currently, 2,149 mine action operators are involved in demining. The biggest need for Ukraine is to provide specialists with proper equipment and supplies.



In addition, the Zaporizhzhia NPP remains mined both around

the perimeter and inside.

The IAEA Director General noted that the situation with nuclear safety and security at ZNPP is extremely concerning. The loss of the Kakhovka Reservoir was a catastrophe for the region as a whole and added serious difficulties for the nuclear power plant.

The longer the occupiers remain in Ukraine, the faster the climate of the entire planet will change, as wars cause irreparable damage to the environment," said **Dmytro Lubinets.**



Olena Kolobrodova

Representative of the Commissioner for Social and Economic Rights

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WORK ON AN INTERNATIONAL ARENA



Dmytro Lubinets, the Ombudsman of Ukraine, spoke at the UN Human Rights Council session in course of an interactive dialogue with **the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk** on Ukraine.

In particular, he noted that:

- in the TOTs of Ukraine, Russia carries out illegal detentions, torture, abductions of civilians, murders, and creates conditions for forced deportation;
- thousands of Ukrainian children have been deported and forcibly transferred to the territory of Russia – this is not just a violation of international law, it is an act of genocide:
- in the occupied territories, Russia is setting up filtration camps where civilians are subjected to interrogation and torture, many of them are held in inhumane conditions.

Dmytro Lubinets also met with:

- representatives of Atrocity Crimes Advisory Group (ACA) for Ukraine lead coordinator **Clinton Williamson** and its regional director in Ukraine, **Thomas Osorio**;
- the delegation of the Argentine Parliament including **Lilia Leymone**, a member of the Chamber of Deputies of the National Congress of Argentina, and **Ivan Dubois**, a representative of Argentina in the Parliament of the Southern Common Market (PARLASUR);
- **Jean-Noël Barrot,** Minister of Foreign Affairs of the French Republic, and representatives of UNICEF;
- Norwegian delegation headed by Espen Barth Eide, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Norway;
- Uzra Zea, U.S. Under Secretary of State for Civilian Security, Democracy and Human Rights;
- Lolwah Rashid Al-Khater, State Minister for International Cooperation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar







In addition, Ombudsman joined events held **in Azerbaijan.** In particular, he spoke at the international conference 'Solving the Problem of Missing Persons: Defending the "Right to Know" for Families' and at the International Baku Forum of Ombudsmen on Climate Change and Human Rights.

In Canada, he joined the Ministerial Conference on the Human Dimension of the Peace Formula. It is aimed at the practical implementation of Point 4 of the Peace Formula. The event was attended by representatives of more than 70 countries and international organisations.

The aim of the conference was to develop a roadmap with effective solutions for the return of Ukrainian prisoners of war, illegally detained civilians and deported children. The event was attended by representatives of Ukraine's partner countries and experts from international organisations.



During the conference, Ombudsman:

- presented, together with the co-chairs of Working Group of the Point 4 of the Peace Formula, Canada and Norway, the results of the Group's work and action plan;
- spoke at the session 'Fair and humane treatment', noting that Russia's tactics are genocide of the Ukrainian people. That is why the occupiers deport our children, create torture chambers on the TOTs, kidnap civilians, and torture prisoners of war.

Recently, the Ombudsman received a letter from the relatives of Ukraine's defenders asking to inform the international community about the situation with prisoners of war, missing Ukrainian defenders and violations of IHL by Russia — so he raised this issue to the whole world and called on the UN and international organisations to record all war crimes committed by Russians, including torture of Ukrainians, and to cover them in their special reports.

Only by taking concrete steps can we look into the eyes of the people forcibly held and tortured by Russia. Only then can we shake hands with them upon their release and know that we have done our best," **Lubinets** concluded.

PARTICIPATION IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE EUROPEAN NETWORK OF NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS

The General Assembly of the European Network of National Human Rights Institutions and the event dedicated to the roles and functions of national human rights institutions working in armed conflicts took place in Brussels.

Mykhailo Spasov, Representative of the Commissioner for International Cooperation and European Integration took part in these events and delivered a report on war crimes committed by the Russian Federation on the territory of Ukraine.

He also noted the current problems that exist in the context of Russia's full-scale armed aggression against our country. The purpose of the events was to present the international human rights agenda and discuss the challenges faced by national human rights institutions during armed conflicts of various kinds.



Representative The also held bilateral meetings with the heads of national human rights institutions of other countries deepen cooperation and strengthen the protection of the rights and freedoms of Ukrainian citizens.



Mykhailo Spasov

Representative of the Commissioner for International Cooperation and European Integration

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FIGHTING DISCRIMINATION



is a Matter of Justice and National Development

On October 21, the Forum 'Combating Discrimination and Hate Crimes: European Standards of Human Rights Protection' was held in cooperation with the Office of the Ombudsman of Ukraine, the Council of Europe and the NGO Gender Stream.



In his video address, Dmytro Lubinets, the Ombudsman of Ukraine, stressed the importance of strengthening Ukraine's legal framework on non-discrimination in the context of European integration processes.

It is in our common interest to go this way as soon as possible. The issue of equality is one of the main principles on which the European Union relies," said the **Ombudsman of Ukraine.**

In course of the panel discussions, the participants, including members of the Ukrainian Parliament, representatives of state authorities, civil society, media and diplomatic missions, discussed key challenges for the adoption and implementation of the draft law, which aims to improve anti-discrimination legislation, as well as the role of state institutions and civil society in the fight for equality. Oleksandr Osipov, Representative of the Commissioner for Equal Rights and Freedoms, National Minorities, Political and Religious Views, spoke about the work of the Ombudsman's Office in handling complaints of discrimination, hate speech and hate crimes.

This year, we have already received more than 700 reports of discrimination in various areas. This is more than in the previous year as a whole," said **Oleksandr Osipov.**

During the discussions, the participants exchanged views and plans on advocacy strategies to support the draft law.



Oleksandr Osipov

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



On the territories of the de-occupied areas, 107 places where Russians illegally detained and tortured citizens were identified. Most of these places are in Kharkiv region — 31, Zaporizhzhia region — 29, and Kherson region — 23.



TACKLING THE PROBLEM

of Medical Waste in Places of Detention

In accordance with international practice, medical waste from healthcare facilities is classified as hazardous waste, which is regulated by the Basel Convention. Hazardous waste includes sharps, infectious and anatomical waste, expired pharmaceuticals and other materials that pose a threat to human health and the environment.

Despite the legal requirements in Ukraine, there is insufficient control over the storage, sorting, transportation and disposal of medical waste in places of detention. According to the results of visits by the **National Preventive Mechanism** (**NPM**), violations of environmental legislation were found in the medical units of the State Penitentiary Service of Ukraine and psychiatric institutions! Category B medical waste is often stored in non-compliant premises: it is not separated, has no ventilation, and can be accessed by unauthorised persons!

To address this problem, Ombudsman Dmytro Lubinets appealed to the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine to take measures to monitor compliance with environmental legislation in the relevant institutions. Competent services and inspections are already conducting unannounced inspections.



MONITORING VISIT

to the Veselivske Psychoneurological Institution in Zaporizhzhia





During the monitoring, the staff of the Secretariat of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights found that there is a grocery store on the territory of the institution, where the residents can make purchases on their own. To ensure privacy during sanitary and hygienic procedures, screens are used for bedridden patients. To meet religious needs, a church is being built on the territory of the institution.

At the same time, during the visit of the NPM group, shortcomings were identified that lead to violations of the rights of the wards, in particular

- the right to an adequate standard of living, including adequate food, clothing, and housing;
- the right to privacy;
- the right to health care and medical care, etc.

Based on the results of the visit, relevant letters and recommendations were sent to the competent authorities to eliminate the identified violations and prevent them in the future activities of the institution.



Vitalii Nikulin

Representative of the Commissioner for Human Rights in Places of Detention

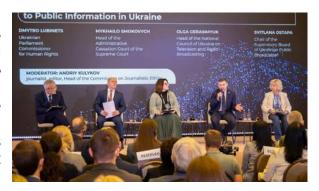
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RIGHT TO ACCESS INFORMATION



as a Critical Factor of Trust between the State and Citizens

Dmytro Lubinets, the Ombudsman of Ukraine, spoke at the international conference 'Balancing Access to Information and National Security — Lessons from Ukraine during Armed Conflicts'. In times of war, government agencies are forced to impose certain restrictions on access to information to protect national security. However, it is important that such restrictions are not excessive.



Lubinets noted that, with the support of UNDP, Ukraine has been able to conduct all-Ukrainian monitoring of the right to access information under martial law for the third year in a row. The results show a slight but steady progress in ensuring information rights.

Thus, this year, the situation with the publication of publicly important information on official websites by public administrators has improved by 26%.



Throughout October, Russia carried out attacks with kamikaze drones on a nightly basis, and in frontline settlements with guided aerial bombs and high-explosive aerial bombs.

These strikes caused fires and destruction of houses and cars, and damaged a number of civilian administrative buildings, kindergartens, schools and hospitals. In particular, in Kharkiv, the Russians hit the Derzhprom, recognized as a national monument and a candidate for the UNESCO list.

THE PERSONAL DATA OF 10,000 PEOPLE WERE AT RISK:

Rapid Response from the Ombudsman's Office

Employees of the Ukrainian Ombudsman Office found that the official website of one of Ukraine's water supply companies published information containing personal data of debtors. In this regard, they sent a binding notice to remove the published personal data..

As a result, the right to personal data protection of more than 10,000 consumers of housing and communal services was restored.



Yuliia Derkachenko

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OMBUDSMAN OF UKRAINE PROPOSES LEGISLATIVE AMENDMENTS

on the Protection of Servicemen and Their Families



Open sources have revealed that law enforcement agencies have recorded 266 cases of arson attacks on military and volunteer vehicles since the beginning of the year. In total, about 300 vehicles were damaged in different regions of Ukraine.

Dmytro Lubinets believes that attacks on military personnel are not only an attack on the health and property of an individual, but also on the order of governance, the fundamental principles of the existence of any state, especially during martial law.

That is why he sent an initiative letter to the Committee on Law Enforcement of the Ukrainian Parliament with proposed amendments to the Criminal Code of Ukraine. He proposed the introduction of a special provision regarding a more severe criminal liability for attacks on the health or property of a serviceman or a member of their family in connection with the performance of their official duty as an aggravating circumstance.

THE CONSTITUTIONAL COURT OF UKRAINE

Considers the Constitutional Submission of the Commissioner



At the open part of the plenary session, the Constitutional Court of Ukraine considered the case on the constitutional petition of the Ombudsman of Ukraine in the form of written proceedings.



The plenary session was attended by Andrii Ovsiienko, Representative of the Commissioner in the Courts System, on the Right to Fair Trial and Representation in the Constitutional Court of Ukraine, Serhii Dembovskyy, Representative of the President of Ukraine in the Constitutional Court of Ukraine, as well as other citizens of Ukraine.

In course of the plenary session, Viktor Horodovenko, the judge-rapporteur in the case, reported on the essence of the constitutional submission and the grounds for opening constitutional proceedings in the case. The contested provisions of the Law concern the right to leave under martial law. Upon examining the case materials in the open part of the plenary session, the Court moved to the closed part of the plenary session to make a decision.



Andrii Ovsienko

Representative of the Commissioner in the Courts System and on the Right to Fair Trial and Representation in the Constitutional Court of Ukraine

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PEOPLE ARE THE MOST VALUABLE THING!



Russia violates human rights in Ukraine on a large scale!

3,767 people released from Russian

includina

168 civilians

≈ **59,000**

people are missing under special circumstances and are unlawfully deprived of their personal liberty as a results of Russia's armed aggression against Ukraine

*According to the Register of missing persons under special circumstances

11,973

civilians killed

captivity

25,943

civilians wounded

*According to the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine

children killed

1,662

children wounded

1,932

missina children 19,546

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

children returned by Ukraine (including from TOT) including

*According to the Children of War information portal

deported children, according to the Children of War information platform

people became IDPs 6.5

people sought refuge abroad



SHELLING OF CIVILIAN INFRASTRUCTURE

Russia destroys residential buildings, educational and medical institutions

including and damaged educational facilities

1,313

destroyed and damaged kindergartens

*According to saveschools.in.ua

including destroyed and damaged destroyed healthcare facilities

428 hospitals

352 ambulatories

destroyed religious buildings

2,093

destroved cultural objects

≈ **250,000**

destroyed or damaged houses

thousand square kilometers

of Ukraine's territory are considered potentially mined Data as of the beginning November 2024



Dmytro LUBINETS

Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights

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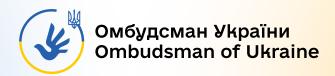












The Russian Federation and all the criminals it has sent to Ukraine will be held accountable in the most severe way for the evil they have committed.

Ukraine carefully documents every crime and every atrocity.

All those responsible will undoubtedly be punished.

We will never forget and we will never forgive. Neither will 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 aukraine_ombudsman_bot

