



REPORT

Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine

War Crimes

(18 months)



International Human Rights Agency
WEST SUPPORT

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Introduction

In response to the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, the International Human Rights Agency WEST SUPPORT established an Independent Special Monitoring Mission (Mission) on April 1, 2022. The Mission mandate is to document all alleged violations and abuses of human rights and violations of international humanitarian law, as well as related crimes, in the context of the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine.

The Mission's mandate is rooted in its commitment to independence and impartiality. It assesses whether the situation in Ukraine constitutes an act of "aggression against Ukraine by the Russian Federation," as specified in resolution 49/1. Guided by the definition of aggression outlined in General Assembly Resolution 3314 (XXIX), the Mission has found reasonable grounds to conclude that the invasion and attacks by Russian armed forces on Ukrainian territory qualify as acts of aggression against Ukraine.

The Mission has conducted extensive fieldwork, traveling to territories of Ukraine liberated from occupation by Russian troops and visiting numerous localities for documentation purposes.

The Mission has conducted 32 expeditions to territories liberated from Russian occupation, visiting 62 localities for documentation

purposes. It surveyed 7,000 square kilometers across the Kyiv, Kharkiv, Kherson, and Mykolaiv regions, encompassing 85 occupied settlements, including Bucha, Irpin, Borodyanka, and Izyum. The Mission's 35 members interviewed over 31,000 individuals and conducted 14 exhumations of the bodies of those tortured and killed. They examined sites of destruction, burial, detention, and torture; analyzed weapon remnants; and studied documents, photographs, satellite images, and videos. As a result of their efforts, a total of 3,965 cases of war crimes have been documented, including 2,339 cases of unlawful deprivation of liberty, 76 cases of sexual assault, 588 cases of civilian killings, and 973 cases of torture.

The Mission's work is guided by principles of independence, impartiality, objectivity, and integrity. It adopts a victim-centered approach and is committed to the principle of "do no harm."

The Mission has concluded that there are reasonable grounds to believe that the invasion and attacks by Russian armed forces on the territory of Ukraine qualify as acts of aggression against Ukraine. The Mission has also documented numerous violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, including killings, torture, and enforced disappearance.

The Mission expresses gratitude for the access and written responses to requests received from Ukrainian officials. However, it regrets that its attempts to establish constructive communication with the Russian Federation have been unsuccessful, as its notes, verbales, and letters have gone unanswered.

Owing to the vast number of events involved, security and logistical challenges, and the particular difficulties associated with investigating certain issues, the Mission has focused on sample allegations and cases illustrating specific patterns of crimes against humanity.

Legal framework

The Special Monitoring Mission of the International Human Rights Agency, WEST SOPPORT, is a neutral humanitarian organization. It operates in Ukraine in accordance with the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 and its First Additional Protocol, which provide for the protection of civilians and other persons not taking part in hostilities.

In particular, the Fourth Geneva Convention:

Article 10 allows other neutral humanitarian organizations to offer their assistance with the consent of the parties to the conflict.

Article 81 of the First Additional Protocol permits neutral humanitarian organizations to carry out their activities in the territory of the parties to the conflict, provided they obtain the necessary authorization from competent authorities.

Ukraine and the Russian Federation are party to seven out of eight United Nations core international human rights instruments, respectively. They are also bound by various international humanitarian law instruments,

including the four Geneva Conventions of 1949. The situation in Ukraine is an international armed conflict pursuant to Article 2 of the Conventions.

Neither Ukraine nor the Russian Federation are State Parties to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC). However, the ICC has jurisdiction in Ukraine, pursuant to two declarations lodged by Ukraine and referrals by State Parties. The Rome Statute and its Elements of Crimes provide detailed elements of alleged crimes. Where the ICC was found to lack jurisdiction, the Mission applied the elements of crimes within the Rome Statute so long as they reflected customary international law.

The Fourth Geneva Convention and the First Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions established the rights of civilians and other persons not taking part in hostilities to receive humanitarian assistance. The Mission works with neutral humanitarian organizations to provide assistance to those affected by the armed conflict in Ukraine.

Background

Political and military context

On February 24, 2022, Russian President Vladimir Putin launched a "special military operation" in Ukraine, aiming to "demilitarize and de-Nazify" the country. Russian forces crossed various border points into Ukraine, including through Belarus, and initiated attacks on land, air, and sea.

The invasion was met with swift and strong condemnation by international and regional bodies and states, leading to the imposition of far-reaching economic sanctions on Russia. Concerns were raised regarding the potential escalation of the conflict and the "unacceptable nuclear rhetoric" employed by Russian officials. Belarus was also criticized for allowing Russia to use its territory and infrastructure for military operations in Ukraine.

Ukrainian cities and localities became battlegrounds, with heavy fighting causing widespread destruction and hindering humanitarian relief. Mariupol and Bakhmut were among the worst-hit cities, with significant civilian casualties and extensive damage. Attacks on critical infrastructure have affected the entire country, even in areas far from the frontlines.

Populations under Russian occupation have reported grave human rights violations. Following the atrocities in the Bucha and Kyiv regions, the UN General Assembly passed a resolution suspending Russia from the Human Rights Council.

In September 2022, Russian authorities in the occupied regions of Donetsk, Kherson, Luhansk, and Zaporizhzhia conducted so-called "referendums" on their integration into the Russian Federation. On September 30, 2022, President Putin and the de facto authorities of these four regions signed "treaties" claiming their "accession" to the Russian Federation. The UN General Assembly deemed this attempted annexation illegal and called for an immediate reversal.

On October 10, 2022, President Putin announced a series of attacks on Ukrainian energy infrastructure. Since then, successive waves of missile and drone attacks have affected Ukraine's gas, heat, and electricity facilities. The situation at the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant has raised concerns, as it remains under Russian control, with military personnel and assets deployed nearby, potentially increasing the risk of a nuclear accident due to shelling in close proximity.

Efforts to engage Russia and Ukraine in meaningful negotiations encountered obstacles, with each party rejecting the conditions proposed by the other. The conflict continues to rage, causing immense suffering and destruction, and the prospects for peaceful resolution remain uncertain.

Impact on the civilian population

Armed conflict in Ukraine has led to numerous war crimes and humanitarian crises.

As of July 19, 2023, the Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine registered 23,268 cases of

war crimes committed by Russian forces in Ukraine. Of these, 12,525 cases involved violations of the laws and customs of war, 7,514 cases involved genocide, and 2,229 cases involved crimes against humanity.

Armed conflict has also led to a humanitarian crisis unseen in Europe since World War II. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, as of February 21, 2023, there were approximately eight million refugees from Ukraine in Europe, of whom about 90% were women and children. In addition, an

estimated 5.4 million people are currently internally displaced in Ukraine.

Approximately 18 million people in Ukraine need humanitarian assistance, and they face especially harsh conditions during the winter months. This conflict has severely impacted people's access to basic rights, including healthcare, education, housing, food, and water. Vulnerable groups such as the elderly, children, people with disabilities, and minorities have been disproportionately affected. No region in the country has escaped the devastating consequences of the conflict.

Violations of International Law

The Mission was to conduct a comprehensive investigation of human rights and international humanitarian law violations in Ukraine and the Russian Federation. It focused on investigating violations of personal integrity, including summary executions, torture, ill treatment, detention, and sexual and gender-based violence. The Mission also investigated violations of the laws of occupation and the transfer of children.

In all the cases examined, the Mission sought to identify individual perpetrators of violations and crimes, the units deployed in the concerned areas, and their chain of command. It attempted to determine whether crimes were committed at the behest of orders or policies at a higher level. The Mission compiled a list of identified perpetrators and military units responsible for crime and violations.

Personal integrity violations

1. Personal integrity violations committed by Russian authorities

The Mission has documented patterns of deliberate killings, illegal detentions, torture, sexual violence, and unjust transfers of detainees

in areas under the control of the Russian authorities in Ukraine. Violations were also committed against individuals who were deported from the Ukraine to the Russian Federation.

The Mission noted common elements in the various identified violation patterns:

In cases of summary executions and torture, perpetrators frequently targeted individuals for any form of real or perceived support for Ukrainian armed forces, or actions against Russian armed forces.

During the initial control of localities in Ukraine by Russian armed forces, many deliberate killings, unlawful detentions, rapes, and sexual violence occurred in the context of house-to-house searches aimed at identifying supporters of Ukrainian armed forces or locating weapons.

Furthermore, as Russian authorities extended their control over the areas for longer durations, they established dedicated detention facilities, used various torture methods, and targeted individuals who refused to cooperate. A wider range of perpetrators was involved in unlawful detentions, torture, and sexual and gender-based violence, including the Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation, the National Guard of Russia and its subordinate units, and Russian-aligned armed groups from the so-called Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics.

Summary Executions

The evidence collected revealed a widespread pattern of summary executions in areas controlled by Russian armed forces in 51 localities across the Chernihiv, Kharkiv, Kyiv, Kherson, Mykolaiv, and Sumy regions, with the highest number of cases in the Kyiv region, including the town of Bucha. The Mission confirmed the execution of 542 men, 21 women, and 25 children.

In most of the documented cases, victims were last seen in the custody of the Russian armed forces. In a few instances, eyewitnesses directly observed the Russian armed forces carrying out these executions. In these situations, the Mission concluded that the Russian armed forces were responsible. In other cases, victims' bodies were discovered at or near locations used by the Russian armed forces as bases. In such instances, the Mission inferred that Russian armed forces were likely responsible.

Detention, interrogation, torture, or ill treatment often precede execution. Some victims were found to have their hands or feet tied. The most common method of killing, as indicated by medical records and photographs, is a close-range gunshot of the head.

The Mission concluded that Russian armed forces have committed deliberate killings of civilians or persons to combat in areas under their control, constituting war crimes and violations of the right to life.

Attacks Against Civilians on the Move

The Mission has identified a pattern of attacks against civilians on the move in the Kharkiv, Kyiv, and Sumy regions when they were under the Russian armed forces' control. It documented 28 such cases in February and March 2022, resulting in the death of 16 men, 9 women, and 3 children, with 17 other civilians injured. Most of these attacks have occurred in the Kyiv region. In many instances, there was sufficient evidence to conclude that Russian armed forces were responsible for these attacks.

The attacks occurred when civilians attempted to evacuate or engage in routine activities. In all cases, the victims wore civilian clothing, were unarmed, and were traveling in civilian vehicles, some with "children" signs on the windows.

The Mission interviewed survivors of these attacks as well as witnesses and relatives of the deceased. It also reviewed footage showing additional damaged vehicles on the same highway. These attacks were not isolated, indicating that some military units were responsible for the multiple incidents. Some attacks appeared deliberate, such as when soldiers fired on civilian vehicles that posed no threat because they had stopped or were driving away. In other cases, there were no indications that the attackers had taken steps to confirm that the target was a military objective.

Unlawful Detention

The Mission established a pattern of widespread unlawful detentions in areas controlled by the Russian armed forces, affecting various categories of individuals. The victims included men, women of all ages, and children. The Mission identified detention facilities where Russian authorities held significant numbers of people for extended periods in the Chernihiv, Donetsk, Kharkiv, Kherson, Kyiv, and Zaporizhzhia regions in Ukraine, as well as in the Russian Federation. This study focuses on 16 locations. Procedural requirements for detention were disregarded, and detention conditions were consistently inhumane. In numerous instances, detentions were prolonged, with the longest duration exceeding 11 months. Relatives were

not informed, and the reasons for detention were not adequately communicated.

Russian authorities detained individuals from various backgrounds, primarily young or middle-aged men, including former Ukrainian armed forces members, local officials, government personnel, current and former law enforcement personnel, activists, journalists, educators, Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant employees, and volunteers evacuating civilians. They also detained individuals with influence in their communities from exerting pressure on them and local residents to cooperate. Some detainees were held with their relatives, including their children, or as a group.

Unlawful detention typically begins at checkpoints or filtration points staffed by Russian armed forces or in public spaces. Russian authorities also detained individuals during home searches or at their workplaces. Detention often precedes torture and execution of tasks.

Perpetrators commonly accused detainees of actual or perceived support for Ukrainian armed forces or found reasons they deemed suspicious during phone search. In numerous cases, Russian authorities detained individuals without valid grounds, such as having relatives in Ukrainian security or law enforcement agencies, refusal to cooperate, participation in protests against the occupation, holding pro-Ukrainian views, or having specific types of tattoos.

Among the detention facilities identified by the Mission, some were improvised, particularly during the early weeks of the occupation. Others were established in permanent structures such as

police stations and psychiatric hospitals. Substandard conditions prevailed throughout this study. The cells were overcrowded, and individuals were forced to sleep on the floor or in shifts.

Men, women, and children were sometimes held together. Inadequate lighting and ventilation, breathing difficulties, and a lack of heating at freezing temperatures have been reported. Sanitary conditions were substandard, with instances of using buckets or bottles as toilets, and limited or no access to washing facilities. In one case, ten elderly individuals died due to inhumane conditions in a school basement, while other detainees, including children, were forced to share space with the deceased.

Such detention conditions disproportionately affect individuals based on their gender. Some women restricted their water and food intake owing to a lack of privacy when using the toilet. There was no privacy when water was available.

Numerous individuals detained in areas under Russian control remained unaccounted for. Family members who reached out to Russian authorities often received no response or were not informed about the victims' whereabouts. Based on the large number of documented cases (2339 cases), the Mission concluded that Russian authorities have unlawfully detained a wide range of civilians and other protected individuals, often without valid reasons and without regard for procedural requirements. The detention conditions were consistent with those of inhumane. Such detentions constitute war crimes and are violations of the right to liberty and security of persons.

Unlawful Transfers and Deportations of Detainees

The Mission has examined situations in which the Russian armed forces transported detainees within Ukraine or forcibly relocated them to the Russian Federation. The victims were both men and women. In the Russian Federation, some detainees were held in pre-trial facilities in the Kursk and Bryansk regions, where a significant number of Ukrainians were detained. While Russian authorities initially classified some of these detainees as prisoners of war, the Mission's investigations revealed that they should still be regarded as civilians.

The investigations identified several instances of transfers and deportations in March, 2022. In two cases, the victims were initially apprehended in makeshift detention facilities in Dymir village, and later moved to another similar facility at the Hostomel aerodrome, both located in the Kyiv region. Subsequently, along with the other detainees, they were transported through Belarus to a detention facility in the Bryansk region of Russia. In another case, ten individuals were first detained in a psychiatric hospital in Snrileche village, Kharkiv region, and then deported alongside other detainees to a detention facility in the Rostov region, Russia. These ten victims were subjected to interrogation, accused of supporting the Ukrainian armed forces, and subjected to torture. In two other cases, men were initially held in a makeshift detention facility in Boromlia village, Sumy region, and were later deported with other detainees to the Russian Federation not far from the border.

The Mission concluded that Russian authorities had committed unlawful transfers and deportations of civilians and other protected individuals within Ukraine or to the Russian Federation, constituting a war crime.

Torture and Inhuman Treatment

The Mission has uncovered a widespread pattern of torture and inhuman treatment carried out by Russian authorities against individuals detained in the Chernihiv, Kharkiv, Kherson, Kyiv, Sumy, Mykolaiv, and Zaporizhzhia regions in Ukraine, as well as in the Russian Federation. Torture is prevalent, with men comprising the majority of the victims. Both civilians and prisoners of war have experienced torture. As Russian authorities solidified their control over specific regions, the Mission observed the systematic use of diverse but similar torture methods in detention facilities administered across various parts of Ukraine.

Torture was especially severe when inflicted upon current or former members of the Ukrainian armed forces and related individuals along with their relatives. Local officials, law enforcement personnel, Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant employees, and civilians holding pro-Ukrainian views were also subject to torture.

The primary objectives of torture were to extract information about Ukrainian armed forces, obtain confessions, compel victims to cooperate, or impose punitive measures. Torture typically involves extended interrogation sessions, with victims often having their hands tied or handcuffed, their legs bound, their eyes blindfolded with hoods or tape, or their heads covered with clothes or bags. Some former detainees reported that Russian authorities

referred to them as "Nazis," "fascists," and "terrorists," forcing them to undergo "denazification sessions," which consisted of severe beatings.

Perpetrators subject victims to both physical and psychological torment. During the initial weeks of the armed conflict and within makeshift detention facilities in Ukraine, victims experienced beatings with rifle butts or batons, electric shocks from tasers, rape, and prolonged exposure to the cold. In some instances, torture was followed by execution.

In areas with extended Russian control and permanent detention facilities, additional torture methods were applied. One such method involves electrocution using a military phone, known as TA-57, connected to an electric cable with clips applied to the feet, fingers, or male genitals. Perpetrators referred to this as a "call to Lenin" or a "call to Putin." Other methods include hanging detainees from the ceiling with their hands bound, known as the "parrot position," strangulation with cables, suffocation with plastic bags or gas masks, rape, and other forms of sexual violence. Victims often witnessed the death of their fellow detainees following severe torture.

In the Russian Federation, the detention process sometimes began with an abusive "acceptance procedure." The victims reported electric shocks from tasers, beatings with batons, suffocation with plastic bags, and forced nudity in front of others. A former detainee mentioned being beaten as a "punishment for speaking Ukrainian." One woman recounted losing

consciousness several times due to beatings, but the perpetrators revived her to continue abuse.

Following the unlawful detention of Ukrainian citizens, they were often transferred to detention facilities within Russian territory. Our mission interviewed 27 individuals who had been detained in the Belgorod, Bryansk, Kursk, and Tula regions of Russia. Ukrainian detainees held in the Tula correctional facility were primarily not from the occupied territories of Ukraine, but were transferred from other prisons where they had been detained since the beginning of their captivity. For example, five individuals were transferred from detention center №2 in the Belgorod region located in Starom Oskol. Two others were transferred from detention center №1 to Kursk. These individuals were detained as civilians in the Kyiv, Kherson, and Kharkiv regions between March and June of 2022.

The Tula facility employed various forms of torture and inhumane treatment, including forcing detainees to sleep outdoors on concrete floors and beating them with sticks, batons, and electric shockers. Witnesses also reported severe beating on admission. Daily cell searches involve taking prisoners into the corridor and subjecting them to beatings. Detainees were allowed to shower for only 2-3 minutes once a week and were woken up at night, forcing them to stand for two hours. Such nighttime awakenings could occur several times. They were permitted no more than five hours of sleep per day. Medical assistance was not provided, and many detainees contracted tuberculosis, with eight individuals affected.

Kursk facility: Witnesses also reported severe beatings during the admission process by the Russian penitentiary system's Special Forces. Subsequently, they were rushed to the shower, where they were beaten again, all in a highly tense and panicked atmosphere. Detainees were allowed to shower for 2-3 minutes once a week and were awakened at night and forced to stand for two hours. Such nighttime awakenings could occur several times. They were permitted no more than 5 hours of sleep per day. Medical assistance was not provided, and eight individuals contracted tuberculosis.

Based on the documented cases, the Mission has concluded that Russian authorities have committed torture and cruel or inhuman treatment, constituting war crimes and violations of the prohibition against torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment. Moreover, the specific targeting of various categories of individuals and the consistent use of similar torture methods across multiple regions under Russian control in Ukraine for extended periods of time have led the Mission to systematically and extensively determine that Russian authorities employed torture. These circumstances, along with indications of planning and available resources, suggest that Russian authorities may have perpetrated torture as a crime against humanity. The Mission recommends further investigations to establish whether torture, as committed by Russian authorities in detention facilities in Ukraine and against detainees deported from Ukraine to the Russian Federation, was carried out in accordance with a specific policy in this regard.

2. Violations of Personal Integrity by Ukrainian Authorities

Torture and Injury of Prisoners of War

As previously mentioned, the Mission reported two incidents that occurred in the Mali Prokhoda and Tsirkuny, the Kharkiv region. These incidents involved Ukrainian armed forces or affiliated groups shooting, injuring, and subjecting captured Russian armed force soldiers to torture. In response to these incidents, the Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine initiated pretrial investigations. It should be noted that at that time, no conclusive evidence implicating Ukrainian military personnel had been established, but the investigations are ongoing. The Mission's findings indicate that the individuals responsible for these violations were either officially part of the Ukrainian armed forces or closely collaborated with them during the incidents. It is essential to emphasize that military command is actively addressing these issues, and it is important to recognize that such crimes are not part of a systemic pattern.

Alleged Torture and Mistreatment of Collaborators

Since February 24, 2022, Ukrainian authorities have initiated numerous investigations into allegations of collaboration and treason within the context of armed conflict. The Mission has gathered multiple accounts from lawyers, former detainees, and the relatives of detainees concerning arrests made on charges of high treason, collaboration, and support for the aggressor state. These allegations suggest that during detention, Ukrainian authorities may have subjected detainees to ill-treatment, violated their procedural rights, and detained them in substandard conditions.

Witnesses have reported incidents of physical abuse, mock execution, and threats against detainees and their families. In certain instances, there were purportedly no arrest warrants, and some detainees were held incommunicado, at times for several days. These accounts also included claims of sleep deprivation and inadequate access to food.

The Mission acknowledges these concerns. However, at the time of preparing this report, it was not possible to independently verify these allegations. Therefore, the Mission recommends further investigations to establish the veracity of these claims.

Violations of Occupation Laws

The Mission has thoroughly examined the circumstances surrounding the so-called referendums held by Russian authorities between

September 23 and September 27, 2022, in the occupied regions of Donetsk, Kherson, Luhansk, and Zaporizhzhia, with the aim of annexing them

to the Russian Federation. It is evident that the conduct of these so-called referendums disregarded the provisions of the Ukrainian Constitution, which governs the organization of referendums in Ukraine. This constitutes a breach of international humanitarian law, which stipulates that an occupying power must uphold laws prevailing in the occupied territory. Furthermore, the Mission unequivocally concludes that the annexation of these four regions is unlawful, as international law dictates that "[n]o territorial acquisition resulting from the threat or use of force shall be recognized as legal."

In addition, the Mission uncovered that the process of conducting these so-called referendums unfolded in an atmosphere of fear and coercion. Some individuals reported that, prior to the vote, Russian authorities conducted visits to private residences to inquire about people's intentions regarding the referendum. On voting days, witnesses observed "electoral staff," accompanied by armed personnel going from house to house with ballot boxes.

In accordance with the so-called annexation "agreements" between the Russian Federation and the four occupied regions, Russian citizenship was extended to residents in these areas. The Mission received accounts of local residents who felt compelled to apply for Russian passport. This pressure was particularly notable among retirees who applied for Russian passports based on messages from representatives of the Russian authorities,

insinuating that having a Russian passport was necessary to receive or continue receiving pensions. Civil servants and other government employees who wished to maintain their positions under the Russian administration were obliged to apply for Russian passports as a prerequisite.

According to testimonies, Russian authorities detained local officials and employees in occupied regions to coerce them into compliance. In March 2022, the Mayor of Melitopol in the Zaporizhzhia region was detained at the Palace of Culture of Melitopol. Moreover, in August 2022, the head of a rural community in the Kherson region was detained by Russian armed forces, who forcibly entered their homes. The Mission obtained a list of 27 heads of territorial communities in the Kherson region, who were reportedly detained by Russian authorities. There were also instances of detaining, mistreating, and expelling school principals and teachers from their hometowns to pressure them to adopt Russian curricula in schools. Threatening and intimidating messages were sent to parents to compel them to enroll their children in schools operating under the Russian system in occupied regions.

The Mission concluded that Russian authorities employed both physical and psychological coercion against civilians in occupied areas, constituting a breach of international humanitarian law. Furthermore, they engaged in unlawful detention amounting to war crimes.

Accountability Measures

The International Criminal Court (ICC) actively investigates allegations of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide in Ukraine. It is important to note that the ICC does not possess the jurisdiction to address the crime of aggression in the context of Ukraine. There have been proposals to establish a dedicated tribunals to address issues related to aggression, should the need arise. If created, such a tribunal would have to work in close coordination with the ICC. Furthermore, it is crucial for the tribunal to obtain the necessary international legitimacy, both in its establishment and operational aspects. As discussions about potential tribunal progress, efforts should also be made to align the ICC Statute, ensuring that its jurisdiction over aggression mirrors that of the other three crimes.

In addition to legal and judicial measures, accountability encompasses other critical dimensions, including truth-seeking, reparations, and ensuring non-recurrence. While the

complete satisfaction of victim rights may depend on the cessation of hostility, proactive measures can be implemented to contribute to the eventual fulfillment of these rights. A top priority should be to establish a comprehensive victim registry and provide institutional support, particularly in the realms of mental health and psychosocial services.

The Mission strongly advocates for enhanced coordination among numerous national and international entities involved in accountability efforts. This coordination should aim to minimize redundancy, prevent the re-traumatization of victims, and optimize the efficient utilization of resources. Practical steps include mapping the various organizations engaged in investigations, potentially leading to the creation of a shared evidence index.

Mission's Conclusions

The Mission's extensive investigation, based on the information provided and duly noted, does not warrant the classification of the identified transgressions as genocides. The rationale for this determination is rooted in the strict criteria set forth by the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 260 (III) on December 9, 1948, in Paris. Upon rigorous examination, it

becomes evident that the documented offenses do not align with specific elements that constitute genocide under international law.

Instead, the Mission firmly categorizes documented acts as war crimes and, in a broader legal context, as crimes against humanity. These designations underscore the gravity of the offenses at hand, acknowledging their severe and systematic nature as well as the profound harm inflicted on victims and affected communities.

It is important to underscore that the Mission operates within its prescribed mandate, with the recognition that it does not possess the adjudicatory authority of a court. Consequently, the Mission refrains from rendering final judgments regarding the comprehensive culpability of individuals involved in these crimes.

Nonetheless, it is essential to highlight the prevailing pattern based on the overwhelming accounts provided by victims and witnesses. In a significant majority of the cases, these crimes were perpetrated by individuals who either held official positions within the Russian armed forces or operated in close collaboration with them during the commission of these incidents. This pattern underscores the gravity of this situation and its profound impact on the affected population.

The Mission's findings highlight a multitude of documented crimes, including unlawful transfers and deportations of civilians and other protected individuals, widespread torture and inhumane treatment, violations of personal integrity, and breaches of occupational laws. These actions collectively constitute an affront to international humanitarian law, the principles of human rights, and the dignity of the affected individuals.

In conclusion, the Mission reiterates its commitment to pursuing accountability for these

heinous crimes through legal and judicial channels. The International Criminal Court (ICC) is actively investigating allegations of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide in Ukraine. While the ICC does not possess jurisdiction to address the crime of aggression in the context of Ukraine, proposals have been made to establish a dedicated tribunal to address such issues should the need arise. If created, this tribunal would work in close coordination with the ICC and would require the necessary international legitimacy.

Furthermore, the Mission underscores the need to consider other dimensions of accountability beyond the legal realm, including truth-seeking, reparations, and measures to ensure non-recurrence. It advocates enhanced coordination among national and international entities involved in accountability efforts to maximize efficiency and minimize the re-traumatization of victims.

The Mission remains steadfast in its commitment to upholding international law, protecting human rights, and ensuring that those responsible for these grave offenses are held accountable for their actions, consistent with the principles of justice and rights of the affected individuals.