



Омбудсман України
Ombudsman of Ukraine

STRENGTH IN ACTION:

creating life amid the sirens



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Photo
Libkos



UKRAINIAN CHILDREN ARE HOME AGAIN!

As part of the President of Ukraine's Bring Kids Back UA initiative, and through the efforts of the Commissioner's Secretariat, **Ukrainian children from the temporarily occupied territories and those deported to Russia by the aggressor have been brought back home.**

The first successful return involved children from the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine aged 8 to 17, who were reunited with their families: parents and guardians. Among them was a boy whose father had been killed in Bakhmut while defending Ukraine. He is now safely back with his mother. Another child, a minor who wished to leave the occupied territory, reached out independently to the Commissioner's Secretariat and has now returned home as well.



In the second case, the children were deported to Russia during the occupation of Snihurivka and later were able to leave for Georgia. **They are pupils of the Novopetrivka Special School in Mykolaiv region.**



International partners and Ukrainian government authorities were involved in the return of the children. The Ombudsman of Ukraine, Dmytro Lubinets, expresses gratitude to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, the Embassy of Ukraine in Georgia, the Embassy of Ukraine in Moldova, UNICEF, and AVE Copiii for their support in this process.





ANOTHER 205 UKRAINIANS ARE HOME!

On 2 October, the **69th combined** exchange took place under the Istanbul agreements, resulting in the return of **185 prisoners of war and 20 civilian citizens to Ukraine**.

! Notably, almost all of those released had been in captivity since 2022.

Regarding the military personnel: They are members of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, including the Navy, Ground Forces, Territorial Defence, Airborne Forces, as well as the National Guard of Ukraine and the State Border Guard Service. Many of them are defenders of Mariupol. The oldest released military personnel is 59 years old, and the youngest is 26.

Civilian citizens who were unlawfully detained during the early months of the full-scale invasion **were also returned**. Many were **arbitrarily taken from their own homes**. The youngest returning civilian is 25 years old, and the oldest is 60.



#RussiansATerroristState

The return was made possible thanks to the persistent efforts of Ukrainian state bodies that are part of the Coordinating Headquarters for the Treatment of Prisoners of War, acting under the mandate of the President of Ukraine. **Staff from the Commissioner's Secretariat were consistently present at the exchange site.**

6,235 UKRAINIANS

have been returned from Russian captivity, including 372 civilians, since the beginning of the full-scale invasion, as of 4 November 2025

MEETINGS WITH MILITARY FAMILIES – A STEP TOWARDS ENSURING THEIR RIGHTS

Meetings with the families of Ukrainian prisoners of war and missing persons are regularly held at the Secretariat of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights. In particular, one such meeting took place with the relatives of prisoners held in Mordovia and in Pre-trial Detention Centre No. 3 in Mariinsk.



The meeting was chaired by Yuriy Kovbasa, the Representative (Deputy) of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights in the System of Bodies in the Security and Defence Sector. The meeting was also attended by representatives of the Coordination Headquarters for the Treatment of Prisoners of War, the Joint Centre under the Security Service of Ukraine, the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine, the Central Directorate of the Civil-Military Cooperation of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

During the meeting, **issues related** to the exchange of prisoners, improvement of detention conditions, and rehabilitation measures were discussed. The relatives also raised questions to the Representative of the Secretariat of the Commissioner regarding humanitarian communication with the Russian Commissioner for Human Rights, in particular concerning the exchange of letters.

Over the entire period, a mutual exchange of around 1,200 letters from prisoners of war and about 3,000 letters from their relatives has been carried out. This process is ongoing. All letters received by the Secretariat of the Commissioner are delivered to the families of the defenders.

In the regions of Ukraine, **meetings of the Regional Working Group of the Coordination Headquarters for the Treatment of Prisoners of War** are held under the chairmanship of the Representatives of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights. In October, such meetings took place in the Poltava, Zhytomyr, Chernivtsi, Khmelnytskyi, and Ternopil regions.



We are working to ensure that the rights of our prisoners of war and their loved ones are protected!



FOR THE FIRST TIME IN ALMOST 70 YEARS: the ICRC Has Added a New Commentary on the Protection of Children in War to the Fourth Geneva Convention

A historic step — for the first time in 67 years, the ICRC has added a **new commentary** to Article 50 of the Fourth Geneva Convention. **It concerns the protection of children.**

The commentary clearly explains the obligations of the occupying power, in particular:

- the occupying power must facilitate the proper functioning of all institutions providing care, education and social protection for children;
- they must facilitate the identification of children and the registration of their origin, must not change their personal status and must not involve them in formations or organisations subordinate to the occupying authorities;
- if there are no appropriate local institutions, the occupying power must take care of the maintenance and upbringing of orphans and children separated from their parents, preferably by persons of the same nationality, language and religion;
- the occupying power shall not interfere with the provision of food, medical care and protection from the effects of war to children, pregnant women and mothers with small children.

International humanitarian law must evolve in line with reality. It is a difficult process, but we see that change is necessary. The ICRC's comments are one response to the challenges.



The Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights, Dmytro Lubinets, discussed this issue with the newly appointed Head of the ICRC Delegation in Ukraine, Juan-Pedro Schaerer.

International attention to Ukrainian children

Swedish Member of Parliament Carina Ödebrink has been appointed **Special Envoy on Russian Abductions and Deportations of Ukrainian Children.**

This is a very important decision that highlights the international community's attention to this issue. Ukraine's goal is to bring every child home.



*The future lives
in the eyes of our children*

SHELTERS SHOULD SAVE LIVES, NOT CREATE AN ILLUSION OF SAFETY!



On the initiative of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights, Dmytro Lubinets, since the second half of this year, **the Secretariat of the Commissioner has been conducting systematic monitoring checks of shelters throughout the country.**

510 monitoring visits
were carried out in 23 regions of Ukraine.

2,124 recommendations
were provided to the authorities.

The situation is critical:

- **11.5%** of shelters do not have barrier-free access.
- **10.6%** are not equipped with first aid supplies.
- **8.8%** do not have drinking water supplies.
- In **37** cases, shelters marked on official maps do not actually exist or are not functioning.

For example, 24 inspections were conducted in Bukovina. During inspections in the village of Krasnoilsk, serious violations of shelter arrangements were discovered: in preschool No. 2, a kitchen had been set up instead of a shelter.



A similar situation is in other regions. In Ivano-Frankivsk region, 23 monitoring activities revealed systemic inconsistencies in information about protective structures. Some of the data published in the regional register turned out to be outdated, improperly formatted, or unreliable.

Such violations are not isolated cases, but systematic. That is why, based on the results of all inspections, the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights will formulate recommendations to the Government to improve the civil protection system and ensure that people have a real right to safe shelter.

In total, 1,000 inspections are planned by the end of the year, the results of which will form the basis for the first analytical reports.



THE NUCLEAR SHADOW OF WAR:

What the Occupation of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant Means

The Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant is the largest nuclear power plant in Europe, located near the city of Enerhodar.

In 2022, the station came under the control of Russian troops. Since the beginning of its occupation, international organisations have warned of serious risks to nuclear safety due to Russia's military presence at the facility.

In the event of fatal consequences, not only Ukrainian territory could be affected. The zone of radioactive contamination could spread to Romania, Bulgaria, Central European countries, and the northern part of the Middle East, including almost the entire territory of Türkiye. The consequences of a potential accident in the centre of Europe would be felt by more than one generation of humanity.



#RussiansATerroristState

In September 2025, **the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant experienced its tenth blackout** since the Russian occupation of the plant began. The ZNPP lost power for its own needs from the Ukrainian power grid, which violates its operating standards and threatens to cause an accident.

At the 69th General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), a resolution was adopted calling on Russia to immediately de-occupy the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant. The document was supported by 62 member states.

The resolution contains a direct call for the immediate withdrawal of all unauthorised military and other personnel from the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant and recalls the Russian strikes on the Chernobyl zone and the damage to the New Safe Confinement, which poses risks to international nuclear safety.

The occupation of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant poses a nuclear threat to all of Europe. Restoring Ukraine's control over the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant is a vital measure to avoid disaster!

RESULTS OF THE GENDER AUDIT IN THE OMBUDSMAN'S OFFICE: A NEW STAGE OF SYSTEMIC CHANGE

The results of the gender audit of the Secretariat of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights were presented. It confirmed that the institution has a solid foundation: **gender principles have become part of every management decision.**

The Secretariat of the Commissioner has created conditions in which employees can balance their professional and family lives, provided childcare facilities in 16 rooms in the central and regional offices of the Secretariat, appointed gender equality coordinators, and is developing a balance of representation between women and men.

73 employees of the Secretariat completed advanced training on gender equality issues this year.



*In the future, we plan to review all internal processes so that **the principle of equality becomes one of the key principles in our work.** It is important not only to implement changes, but also to feel that they are accepted by the team and society. Therefore, such audits and surveys will become our regular practice. Continuing on this path, we are confident that real change is only possible when each of us participates in it. I sincerely thank the UN Women team and especially their Representative in Ukraine, Ms. Sabine Freizer Gunes, for their cooperation in the report, support and partnership,” says Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights **Dmytro Lubinets.***





TENTH MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP ON HUMAN DIMENSION ISSUES

The meeting took place at the Secretariat of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights. **Representatives of 43 states, three Ukrainian state bodies and six international organisations took part in the meeting.** It was co-chaired, as usual, by the ambassadors of Canada and Norway: Natalka Cmoc and Lars Ragnar Hansen.



The main topic was the return of Ukrainians home: deported children, civilians unlawfully detained by Russia, and prisoners of war.

They also discussed updates to the Register of Information on Deported or Forcibly Displaced Children, the relaunch of the Interdepartmental Commission on the Application and Implementation of International Law, and the problem of access to places where Ukrainians are being held captive in Russia.



International support is crucial for us to rescue people as quickly as possible. I would like to thank all the countries and organisations that joined the meeting. Humanity is our common choice, which must be backed up by action,” said Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights **Dmytro Lubinets**.

UKRAINE STRENGTHENS INTERNATIONAL FIGHT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Throughout October, Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights Dmytro Lubinets worked in **Azerbaijan, France, and Belgium**, informing the international community about Russia's human rights violations in Ukraine.

- **In Azerbaijan**, he spoke at the International Conference on Resolving the Issue of Missing Persons within the framework of the Baku Dialogue. At the conference, the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights **proposed establishing a joint working group of Ukraine and Azerbaijan** with the participation of representatives of forensic medical institutions of the two countries.
- **In France**, he spoke at events dedicated to the protection of prisoners of war and strengthening the role of international humanitarian law.
- **In Belgium**, he opened the International Women's Forum 'Women's Leadership and Entrepreneurship in Challenging Times.' He also met with representatives and advisors of the Commissioner abroad.

KYIV PRE-TRIAL DETENTION CENTRE: MONITORING THAT REVEALED SYSTEMIC PROBLEMS IN A PLACE OF CONFINEMENT

From 1 November 2024 to 1 May 2025, the Secretariat of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights, in cooperation with the NGO Ukraine Without Torture, **implemented a pilot project entitled 'Systematic monitoring of human rights compliance in the Kyiv Detention Centre.'**

This institution is the largest in Ukraine and one of the largest in Europe: at the time of the project's implementation, it held more than 2,600 people!

After the project was completed, an analytical report was prepared containing the results of the analysis of approximately **70 monitoring visits** by groups from the national preventive mechanism. For the first time in history, visits took place not only during the day but also at night. In addition, confidential surveys of prisoners and detention centre staff were held.



Special attention is paid to the analysis of official documentation, procedures for applying disciplinary sanctions, recording cases of violence, and conditions of detention. An important area of focus was the assessment of access to medical services.

This made it possible to identify typical violations, including:

- discriminatory practices;
- failure to comply with labour and social rights;
- overcrowded cells and lack of space, lack of adequate separate detention;
- inadequate infrastructure for persons with disabilities;
- barriers to access to medical care and a number of other violations.

All this is the result of inaction and insufficient funding. In order to eliminate the violations identified, the Ombudsman of Ukraine, Dmytro Lubinets, has sent a series of response letters to the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine.



THE RIGHT TO APPEAL – A GUARANTEE OF DEMOCRACY AND THE RULE OF LAW

The right to appeal is one of the key guarantees for every citizen of Ukraine. It allows citizens to influence the work of government bodies, protect their own interests and defend justice. This **right is guaranteed** by the Constitution of Ukraine and the Law of Ukraine ‘On Citizens’ Appeals’.

Monitoring compliance with legislation in this area **is a key element in ensuring the rule of law**, accountability of public authorities and effective protection of human rights.

Thus, according to Article 28 of the Law of Ukraine “On Citizens’ Appeals”, **the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights is one of the entities responsible for monitoring compliance with requirements in the area of citizens’ appeals.**

Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights receives numerous appeals from citizens, including those that were originally addressed to the prosecution authorities. At the same time, in connection with the reform of the prosecutor’s office, in accordance with paragraph 33 of Section XII ‘Final Provisions’ of the Law of Ukraine ‘On the Prosecutor’s Office’, Article 29 of the Law of Ukraine ‘On Citizens’ Appeals’, which provided for prosecutorial supervision of compliance with this Law, was excluded. Therefore, **the prosecution authorities are not supervisory bodies in this area.**

In his work, the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights puts this right into practice every day by:

- reviewing complaints from people about violations of their rights;
- analysing systemic problems in the area of human rights;
- helping to restore justice and prevent repeat violations.

Each appeal is not just a letter. It is a testament to people’s trust in the institution of democracy and their belief in the rule of law.



HIGH-PROFILE CASE IN BEREHOVE, ZAKARPATTIA: ATTEMPTS TO DELAY THE TRIAL HAVE FAILED!

In Zakarpattia, there was a flagrant violation of human rights involving **the unlawful seizure of property belonging to a 72-year-old man and the detention of a Ukrainian citizen against his will**. Almost a year and a half has passed since the Secretariat of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights discovered the violation.

In August 2025, the case went to court. However, during the trial, there were repeated **attempts to deliberately delay the proceedings** – the defendant, trying to avoid responsibility, and his lawyer did not appear in court. Such actions indicate attempts to obstruct the establishment of the truth and underscore the need for constant monitoring of human rights compliance during court proceedings.

Andriy Kryuchkov, Representative of the Commissioner in Zakarpattia region, **monitored the court hearing to ascertain** whether the procedural rights of the parties were being observed. The visit confirmed that the trial had begun in earnest and that all representatives of the parties were currently participating in the proceedings. This is an important step forward.

The Commissioner emphasised that it was thanks to our actions that:

- official appeals to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Justice and the Office of the Prosecutor General have led to the **initiation of a pre-trial investigation** under Part 3 of Article 190 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine – fraud committed against a person in a vulnerable state.
- the victim's property has been seized.
- the victim was provided with free legal assistance by a lawyer.

This case shows that **even in difficult and, at first glance, hopeless situations, justice can be restored** – if you act consistently, persistently and within the law!





JOURNALISTS ARE BEING KILLED BY RUSSIA'S ATTACKS: Those Who Show the World the Truth



On 3 October, French journalist Antoni Lallican was killed by a Russian drone strike. Despite the 'Press' marking on his vest, the Russians attacked him anyway. He was in Donetsk region, carrying out his journalistic mission.

On 23 October, Ukrainian journalist Olena Hubanova and cameraman Yevhen Karmazin, both working for Freedom TV channel, were killed while on assignment in Kramatorsk. A special correspondent was also wounded.



Journalists are civilians and are protected by international humanitarian law. They were performing their professional duty — documenting the consequences of Russian aggression in Ukraine and bringing the truth to the world, despite the constant danger.

RUSSIAN STRIKES ARE A COMPLETE VIOLATION OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW

On 5 October, Russia launched a massive drone and missile attack on Ukraine. The main targets of the attack were Lviv and the Lviv region. Four people were killed, including a 15-year-old girl.

On 11 October, Russia launched a cynical attack on a church in Kostyantynivka, where civilians, including a child, were present. Two people are known to have been killed.

On 14 October, Russian troops in the Kherson region fired on trucks belonging to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. Four vehicles with official markings were carrying aid to civilians. One vehicle was burned down and another was seriously damaged. Two vehicles managed to escape the fire.

On 22 October, a Russian drone struck a nursery school in Kharkiv. Seven people were injured in the attack, sadly including one death. All the children were evacuated.





PEOPLE ARE THE GREATEST VALUE!

Russia systematically violates human rights in Ukraine!

6,235

people released
from Russian
captivity

including
→

372

civilians

≈ 80,000

people missing under
special circumstances

*Data from the Register of Persons Missing in Special Circumstances

14,383

civilians
killed

37,541

civilians
wounded

*According to the UN Human Rights
Monitoring Mission in Ukraine

664

children killed

2,224

children wounded

2,232

missing children

*According to the Children of War information portal

1,797

children returned by Ukraine
(including from TOT)

**4.6
million**

people
became IDPs

**5.7
million**

people sought
refuge abroad

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SHELLING OF CIVILIAN INFRASTRUCTURE

Russia is destroying residential buildings, educational and medical facilities!

4,358

destroyed
and damaged
educational facilities

including
→

1,313

destroyed
and damaged
kindergartens

*According to saveschools.in.ua

2,489

destroyed
and damaged
destroyed
healthcare facilities

including
→

428

hospitals

352

ambulatories

700

destroyed
religious
buildings

2,415

destroyed
cultural
objects

≈ 250,000

destroyed or
damaged houses

**≈ 174 thousand
square kilometers**

of Ukraine's territory are
considered potentially mined

*Data as of early
November 2025



Омбудсман України Ombudsman of Ukraine

2025 shall be the year of justice for Ukraine and the entire free world,
the year of bringing the Russian Federation to justice for war crimes.
We are thoroughly documenting every violation
so that the perpetrators are punished.

Peace for Ukraine must be just.

#StandWithUkraine



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