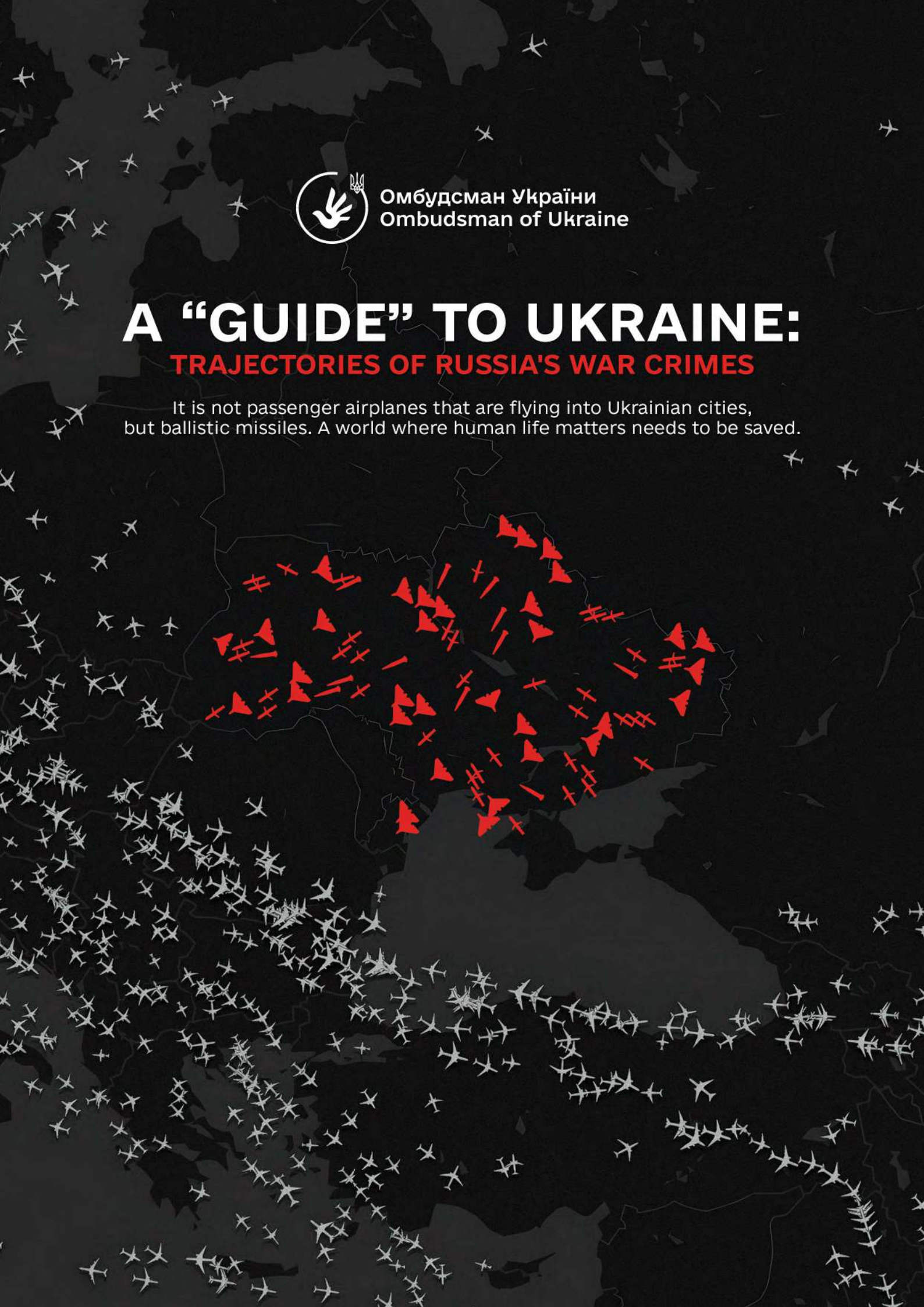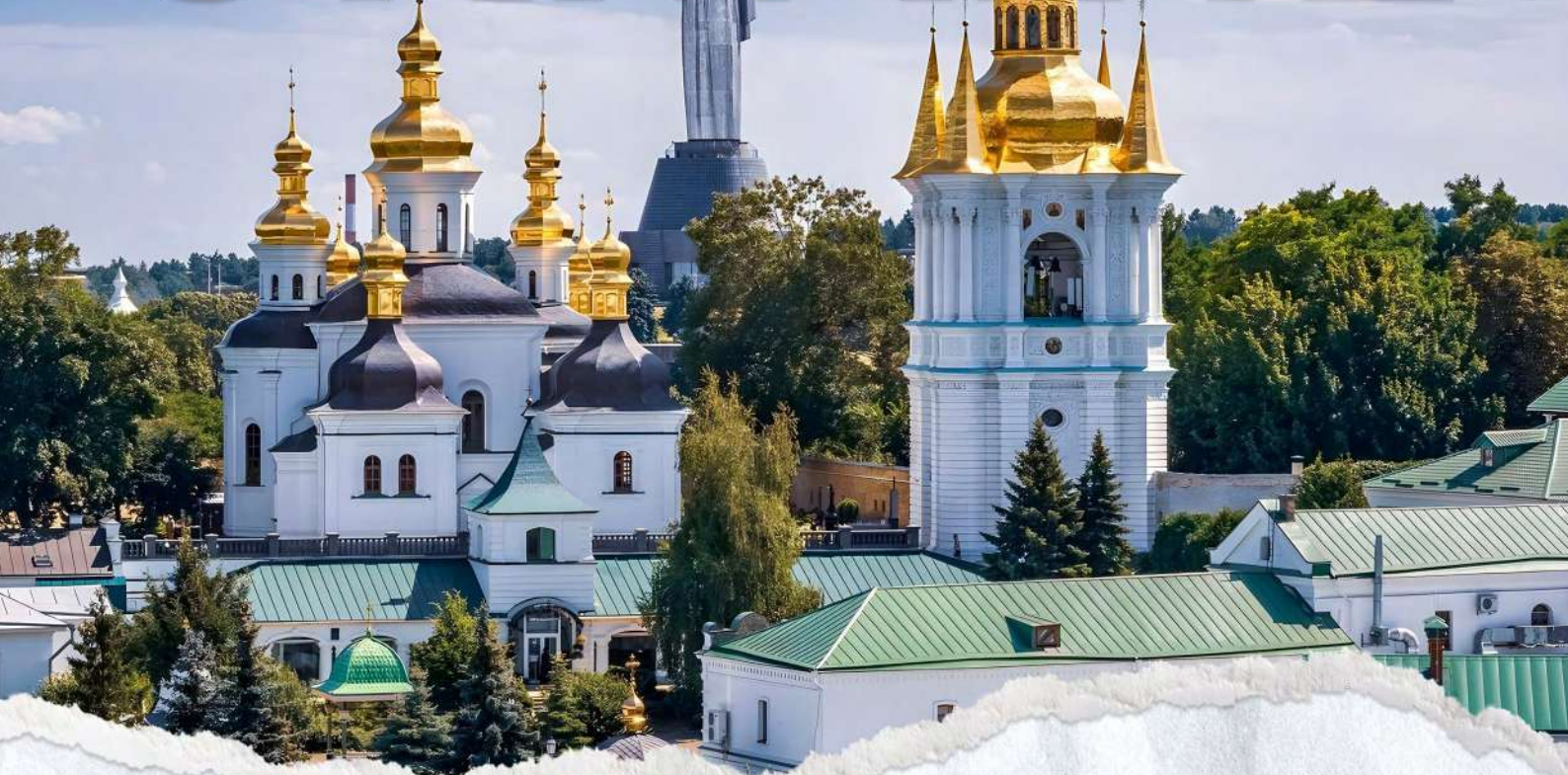Омбудсман України
Ombudsman of Ukraine

A "GUIDE" TO UKRAINE:
TRAJECTORIES OF RUSSIA'S WAR CRIMES

It is not passenger airplanes that are flying into Ukrainian cities,
but ballistic missiles. A world where human life matters needs to be saved.

UKRAINE

■ UKRAINE IS THE LARGEST COUNTRY IN EUROPE AT THE EPICENTRE OF THE WAR

Ukraine is a land with a long history, hospitable and courageous people for whom freedom is the highest value. This unites us with many democratic countries.

One of the first constitutions in the world was written by a Ukrainian, **Pylyp Orlyk, back in 1710,** which underscores Ukraine's long democratic traditions.

Foreigners can find a lot in common with our cities: the Sakura trees in **Uzhhorod** resemble the flowering alleys of **Kyoto,** the ancient churches of **Chernihiv** have the flavour of **Prague,** and **Mariupol** before the war was like the Greek city of **Volos,** a city with a cozy embankment and port life.
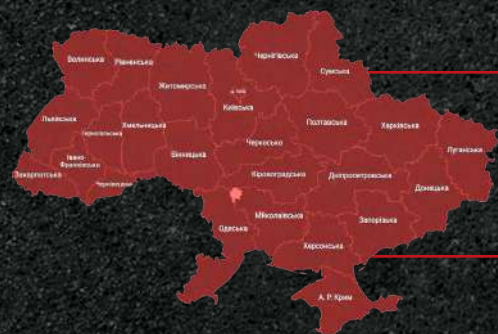
However, Ukrainians were destined to become an outpost of the struggle for freedom of the entire democratic world in the XXI century.

FOR OVER 11 YEARS, UKRAINIANS HAVE BEEN FIGHTING AGAINST THE ARMED AGGRESSION OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

In 2014, Russia unlawfully annexed Crimea, launched an armed aggression in eastern Ukraine, and occupied parts of Donetsk and Luhansk regions.

Photo: LIbkos

Photo: Kai Pfaffenbach

Photo: Thomas Peter

On February 24, 2022, Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine: missiles simultaneously hit Kyiv, Kharkiv, Odesa, Lviv, Mariupol, and other cities.

Over the past three years, at least **55 484** air raid alerts have been declared in all regions of Ukraine.

Russia is waging a genocidal war against Ukraine in flagrant violation of international humanitarian law. **There are 159 thousand war crimes committed by Russia.**

- **4.6 million** people became internally displaced persons (IDPs). **6.86 million** Ukrainians have fled abroad in search of refuge.

- **12,737** civilians have been killed and **29,768** injured *(according to the UN since the beginning of the full-scale invasion).*

- **620** children have been killed and **1901** injured *(according to the Office of the Prosecutor General).*

In this guide, we will tell you about several Ukrainian cities. Their stories are individual fragments of the great tragedy that the whole country is experiencing.

KRYVYI RIH

Kryvyi Rih is the industrial heart of Ukraine and the longest city in Europe. It is the eighth most populous city in Ukraine. It is similar to **Stuttgart** in terms of population and **Vilnius** in terms of area.

🇺🇦 *Kryvyi Rih*

🇱🇹 *Vilnius (Lithuania)*

Among the twin cities:

🇵🇱 Lublin *(Poland)*

🇫🇮 Espoo *(Finland)*

🇩🇪 Duisburg *(Germany)*

🇸🇰 Kosice *(Slovakia)*

🇬🇪 Rustavi *(Georgia)*

THE DEADLIEST ATTACK ON CHILDREN SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE FULL-SCALE INVASION

Contrary to the Geneva Conventions, Russia is constantly terrorizing Kryvyi Rih. On April 4, 2025, the Russians launched a ballistic missile with a cluster warhead that exploded in the middle of a residential area near a playground.

As a result, 20 people died, including 9 children. More than 70 people were injured, including at least 12 children.

People bring flowers and toys to the site of the tragedy

A memory corner with photographs of the dead students was opened in the local gymnasium

On that day, the Russian Defence Ministry acknowledged the missile strike and claimed that they had successfully hit military and foreign instructors in Kryvyi Rih.
This is a cynical lie.

This shelling was the deadliest for children since February 2022, *according to the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine.*

The youngest child, a boy named Tymofii, was only three years old.

The father of the deceased boy, Danylo, appealed to world leaders to provide Ukraine with air defence systems so that other Ukrainian children could be protected.

ТИМОФІЙ, 3 РОКИ
Tymofiy, 3 years old

РАДИСЛАВ, 7 РОКІВ
Radyslav, 7 years old

АРІНА, 7 РОКІВ
Arina, 7 years old

ГЕРМАН, 9 РОКІВ
Herman, 9 years old

ДАНИЛО, 15 РОКІВ
Danylo, 15 years old

АЛІНА, 15 РОКІВ
Alina, 15 years old

МИКИТА, 15 РОКІВ
Mykyta, 15 years old

КОСТЯНТИН, 16 РОКІВ
Kostiantyn, 16 years old

НІКІТА, 17 РОКІВ
Nikita, 17 years old

SUMY

Sumy **is a cozy city in northeastern Ukraine. In terms of population,** it is similar to the American city of **Madison,** Wisconsin, and in terms of area — to Spokane Valley, **Washington.**

🇺🇦 *Sumy*

🇺🇸 *Madison (USA)*

Among the twin cities:

🇺🇸 Sacramento *(USA)*

🇵🇱 Zamość *(Poland)*

🇱🇹 Mazeikiai *(Lithuania)*

🇨🇿 Ostrava *(Czech Republic)*

🇩🇪 Celle *(Germany)*

TERROR ON PALM SUNDAY: RUSSIANS KILLED 35 PEOPLE IN SUMY

On April 13, 2025, during a major religious holiday, the Russian Federation fired ballistic missiles at the city's main street. People were returning from church and walking with their families on their day off.

! The missile attack killed 35 people, including two children. About 117 were injured.

Photo: LIbkos

These three coffins belong to the Martynenko family: Natalia, Mykola and their 11-year-old son Maksym. They were together during the Russian attack and died at the same time.

The Regional Human Rights Protection Center — Representative Office of the Commissioner in Sumy region — was also at the epicentre of the attack.

The enemy destroys life and civilization wherever it can reach with missiles or the hands of its troops.

ZAPORIZHZHIA

Zaporizhzhia is a city of Cossacks and industrial development. By population, it is the 6th largest city in the country, comparable to the population of the Canadian city of **Winnipeg.**

🇺🇦 *Zaporizhzhia*

🇨🇦 *Winnipeg (Canada)*

Among the twin cities:

🇫🇮 Lahti *(Finland)*

🇫🇷 Belfort *(France)*

🇬🇧 Birmingham *(UK)*

🇦🇹 Linz *(Austria)*

🇩🇪 Magdeburg *(Germany)*

🇮🇱 Ashdod *(Israel)*

WAR CRIME IN ZAPORIZHZHIA — RUSSIANS KILLED 15 PEOPLE

On January 8, 2025, the Russian army launched 2 strikes with guided aerial bombs in Zaporizhzhia. At a time when people were returning home from work. **The attack killed 15 people** and injured 127.

Doctors note that such a large number of complex injuries **requiring amputation of limbs** has never been seen since the beginning of the full-scale invasion.

The 34-year-old man recalls: *"I was lying on the ground, looking at my leg, and it was just torn off. My emotions at that moment are indescribable, I started screaming."* For the first five days, the pain was so unbearable that the man could not sleep.

The debris hit a tram and a minibus with passengers. Multi-storey buildings, an industrial facility and other infrastructure of the city were destroyed. Private cars were damaged and burnt to ashes.

The shelling of civilians is a war crime for which the perpetrators must be held accountable in international courts.

KHARKIV

Kharkiv is the second largest city in Ukraine and the student capital of the country. Kharkiv is similar to **Daejeon** in South Korea: both cities are scientific centers with a population of about one and a half million people.

🇺🇦 *Kharkiv*

🇰🇷 *Daejeon (South Korea)*

Among the twin cities:

🇰🇷 Daejeon *(South Korea)*

🇵🇱 Warsaw *(Poland)*

🇹🇷 Ankara *(Turkey)*

🇺🇸 Dallas *(USA)*

🇮🇹 Bologna *(Italy)*

🇱🇻 Daugavpils *(Latvia)*

RUSSIAN MADNESS: FOUR AIR STRIKES ON KHARKIV IN ONE DAY

Kharkiv is located a few dozen kilometers from the border with Russia and is constantly under attack from the aggressor country. Another such attack took place on May 25, 2024.

In the morning, the Russian army hit a lyceum, and later a construction hypermarket and Central Park. In the evening, a residential quarter was attacked. A huge fire broke out in the hypermarket, and people were burned alive.

19 people died, including a 12-year-old girl and a 17-year-old boy. 54 people were injured, including a 13-year-old boy in serious condition.

The bodies of the victims were searched for around the clock among the ashes. Relatives of the missing people took DNA tests for examination.

Among the dead were a woman, Irina, and her 12-year-old daughter, Mariia. She and her husband, Yurii, had gone to a hypermarket to do some shopping. The man was injured.

The Russian media recognized the strike on Kharkiv, claiming that the hypermarket was allegedly a "military depot." The aggressor country uses such lies to justify its war crimes all the time.

KHERSON

Kherson **is a southern city of Ukraine, a sea trade and river port.** It is similar to **Norrkoping** in Sweden: both are old port cities whose development is linked to river routes.

🇺🇦 *Kherson*

🇸🇪 *Norrkoping (Sweden)*

Among the twin cities:

🇵🇱 Rzeszów *(Poland)*

🇭🇺 Zalaegerszeg *(Hungary)*

🇧🇬 Shumen *(Bulgaria)*

🇺🇸 Kent *(USA)*

🇹🇷 Zonguldak *(Turkey)*

🇸🇪 Norrkoping *(Sweden)*

During the Russian occupation, the city experienced repression, abductions, and a humanitarian crisis. After its liberation in November 2022, the city has been systematically shelled by the enemy.

RUSSIA IS ORGANIZING A "SAFARI" FOR PEOPLE, CHASING AND KILLING THEM WITH DRONES

On January 6, 2025, the army of the aggressor country attacked a shuttle bus from a drone. Two people died and 9 were injured. Among the dead, Volodymyr Shum was the only environmentalist who physically worked in the Kherson community.

An ambulance that was attacked by Russians with a drone on April 17, 2025. The driver and a doctor were injured.

RUSSIANS BLOW UP THE KAKHOVKA HYDROELECTRIC POWER STATION:
Europe's Largest Man-Made Disaster in Decades

Russia's explosion of the Kakhovka hydroelectric power plant in Kherson region on June 6, 2023, was one of the worst ecocides in modern history. About **16,000 people** were displaced in the disaster zone and about **80 settlements** were flooded as a result of the terrorist attack.

! **According to international law, the destruction of dams is a war crime, as it is expressly prohibited.**

The terrorist attack led to widespread flooding in the southern regions of Ukraine, which flooded **more than 4,300 homes** and killed at least **34 people.** The estimated amount of the environmental damage is **over UAH 55 billion.**

Photo: LIbkos

Photo: Danylo Pavlov

Photo: Stas Kozliuk

Photo: LIbkos

Photo: LIbkos

DNIPRO

Dnipro is one of the largest Ukrainian cities located on the banks of the river of the same name. It is known as the "space capital" of Ukraine. It is similar in size and population to the German city of **Cologne.**

🇺🇦 *Dnipro*　　　　　　🇩🇪 *Cologne (Germany)*

Among the twin cities:

🇩🇪 Cologne *(Germany)*

🇬🇷 Thessaloniki *(Greece)*

🇺🇸 Grand Rapids *(USA)*

🇯🇵 Osaka *(Japan)*

🇨🇿 Ostrava *(Czech Republic)*

🇧🇬 Naples *(Italy)*

Due to its proximity to the frontline, Dnipro accommodates a large number of wounded and internally displaced persons. At the same time, the city suffers from constant Russian attacks.

46 STOLEN LIVES:
A RUSSIAN MISSILE HIT A HOUSE

One of the most tragic days in the city's history was January 14, 2023. On that day, the Russian army carried out **a missile attack on a multi-storey building in a residential area of Dnipro.**

! **46 people were killed, including 6 children.** 79 people were injured, including 16 children.

Rescuers and residents of Dnipro are trying to save people under the rubble.

Anastasia, 24, miraculously survived the destruction of her apartment. Her parents died from the attack: Natalia and Maksym were 46 years old. Arsen Dzodzaiev

"I have no words, I have no emotions, I feel nothing except a huge emptiness inside," the girl wrote after the tragedy.

The family of Mykhailo, a boxing coach who was killed by the enemy attack, lived in this apartment.

There was no military target there. Not only was the entrance to the building destroyed, but also people's destinies.

UKRAINIANS ARE ALWAYS HAPPY TO WELCOME GUESTS — BUT NOT THOSE WHO COME WITH WAR

These tragedies in Ukrainian cities are only small parts of the large-scale terror waged by Russia. Kyiv, Odesa, Mykolaiv, Chernihiv, Mariupol, Pokrovsk, Izium, Bucha, Donetsk, Luhansk, Simferopol, and hundreds of other villages and cities have fallen victim to Russian armed aggression or occupation.

Since February 24, 2022, the Russian Federation has called for horrific destruction in Ukrainian cities and villages. **Damaged or destroyed:**

- about **236,000** housing units;
- **1,554** health care facilities;
- about **4,000** educational institutions;
- **2,205** cultural heritage sites;
- **645** religious sites.

Photo: Ricardo Moraes

Photo: Ricardo Moraes

Photo: LIbkos

Photo: LIbkos

A NUMBER OF UKRAINIAN CITIES AND VILLAGES HAVE BEEN REDUCED TO SILHOUETTES

Bakhmut

Avdiivka

Photo: REUTERS

Virnopillia

Photo: Yevhen Tytarenko

INEVITABLE PUNISHMENT MUST BE IMPOSED FOR WAR CRIMES

We urge to:
- recognize Russia's actions as genocide of the Ukrainian nation;
- join in documenting the facts of Russia's crimes;
- increase comprehensive pressure on Russia to stop the terror;
- contribute to the defence of Ukraine against armed aggression;
- facilitate the return of deported children, unlawfully detained civilians and prisoners of war;
- promote the establishment of a special international tribunal to bring to justice those responsible for war crimes.

Today, Ukraine is a shield that protects the world from the victory of dictatorship.

We are grateful to all the states that stick to the trajectory of justice and help us to make our way to peace.

moscowconvention.com

Омбудсман України
Ombudsman of Ukraine