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**The situation in the temporarily occupied territories  
of Ukraine**

**Promotion and protection of the rights of children**

**Letter dated 20 July 2022 from the Permanent Representative of  
Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General**

I have the honour to enclose herewith the information on grave violations against children committed by the Russian Federation in Ukraine as at 15 July 2022 (see annex).

I would appreciate your kind assistance in having the present letter and its annex distributed as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 67 and 70, and of the Security Council.

*(Signed)* **Sergiy Kyslytsya**  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative



## **Annex to the letter dated 20 July 2022 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General**

### **Grave violations against children committed by the Russian Federation in Ukraine**

Russia's military aggression against Ukraine in 2014, including its full-scale phase, which started on 24 February 2022, affected 7 million children in Ukraine, including 163,000 with disabilities. Three million children inside Ukraine and over 2.2 million children in refugee-hosting countries (UNICEF press release of 31 May 2022) are now in need of humanitarian assistance. Almost two out of every three children have been displaced by fighting.

To date, more than 1,260 cases of war crimes committed by the Russian military against our children are being investigated by the Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine.

#### **Killing and maiming of children**

According to the juvenile prosecutors, at least 1,027 children were wounded, 352 of them died, 675 were injured, a significant part of which were severe injuries, due to which the children lost their legs and arms. The figures are not final, as work is continuing to establish them in the areas where active military actions are under way, in the areas temporarily occupied by the Russian Federation and in the territories liberated by Ukraine. The highest numbers of affected children are in Donetsk oblast – 348; Kharkiv oblast – 190; Kyiv oblast – 116; Chernihiv oblast – 68; Luhansk oblast – 61; Mykolaiv oblast – 53; Kherson oblast – 52; Zaporizhzhia oblast – 31.

#### **Rape and other forms of sexual violence against children**

To date, five such cases have been recorded regarding children by the Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine. The investigation in the temporary occupied territories of Ukraine is currently complicated. It is also necessary to take into account that the Russian occupiers persist in “removing traces” by burning the bodies of tortured and raped civilians.

#### **Recruitment and use of children**

Three cases of use of children in the armed conflict by the Russian military are being investigated by the Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine. There are also cases of recruitment for informing about the positions of Ukrainian forces, spread of Russian propaganda, and forcing the construction of defence facilities for the invaders, which constitutes the forced exploitation of children, prohibited by the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

#### **Attacks on schools and hospitals**

According to the available official information, the bombardment and shelling by the Russian armed forces damaged 2,116 educational institutions, of which 216 were destroyed. In addition, more than 50 children's health-care facilities and more than 130 houses for orphans and children deprived of parental care were affected. Such facilities in Kharkiv, Donetsk, Luhansk, Chernihiv and Kyiv oblasts have been most severely damaged.

At least 31 cases of using schools and kindergartens for military purposes by the Russian invaders were documented by the Office of the Prosecutor General of

Ukraine. The headquarters are being set up in schools to store ammunition, treat the wounded and even arrange burials on the territory.

### **Abduction of children**

As of today, 317 children are missing during hostilities. There are cases of child abduction for ransom and blackmail of local authorities.

The situation of forced deportation of Ukrainian children to Russia, Belarus, as well as to the temporarily occupied parts of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, and the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol is of great concern.

According to Russia's Ministry of Defence, as of 12 July, 2,497,432 persons from Ukraine have been transferred to various regions of Russia, including 392,890 children. Of these, more than 2,000 children are orphans or deprived of parental care. The children's location, living conditions and state of health remain unknown as Russia refuses to provide any information about them to the Ukrainian authorities or international organizations.

As of 30 June, the Ukrainian authorities have identified 5,097 children deported to the Russian Federation or territories of Ukraine temporarily occupied by Russia. Special attention is paid to orphans and children deprived of parental care. There are also cases when children, whose parents have been killed during the war, were transferred by the occupiers to their territory.

To date, 28 criminal proceedings were registered by the Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine. Some of them are combined into one proceeding, based on the facts of the transfer of more than 5,000 children.

The Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine provides procedural guidance in a pretrial investigation in criminal proceedings on the fact of the forced imposition of citizenship of the Russian Federation on orphans and children deprived of parental care.

The decision of the Russian Federation of 30 May, to simplify the procedures for obtaining Russian citizenship for Ukrainian orphans or children left without parental care forcibly removed from Ukraine is regarded as an attempt by the Kremlin to legalize the illegal displacement of Ukrainian children to the territory of the Russian Federation from Ukraine's territories temporarily occupied by Russian forces, that could be considered as the abduction of children from Ukraine.

These changes were made to "legalize" any actions with children from social care institutions of Ukraine, including their adoption by citizens of the Russian Federation.

All the above-mentioned Russia's actions grossly violate the Fourth Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, which obliges the occupying Power not to change the civil status of children, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Under international law, Russia's actions can also be qualified as genocide, including imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group and forcibly transferring children of the group to another group (paras. (d) and (e) of art. 6 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court of 17 July 1998).

### **Denial of humanitarian access**

There have been recorded child deaths due to failure to provide timely medical aid because of massive shelling, in particular, in Kharkiv region. In Kyiv region, in particular, ambulances could not reach children and provide timely medical assistance to save their lives. During Russia's occupation of the town of Hostomel, a child was injured and the Russian military denied him access to medical care. As a result of complications from the injury, the child lost his arm.