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Report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine*

Summary

In the present report, the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine presents its latest findings on crimes and violations committed during the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation.

The Commission has continued its investigations concerning the deportation or transfer of children by Russian authorities to the Russian Federation or to Russian-occupied areas in Ukraine. Compelling evidence concerning the deportation and transfer of a total of 1,205 children from five oblasts in Ukraine, verified by the Commission, has led it to conclude that these acts amount to crimes against humanity and war crimes of deportation and forcible transfer of children.

The Russian authorities have systematically failed to disclose the whereabouts of the children to parents or legal guardians and have kept them in coercive environments, obstructing their return. Instead of establishing a system facilitating the return of the children, the authorities have sought their long-term placement with families or in institutions in the Russian Federation. Throughout 2022, Russian authorities declared that adoption was their preferred option for the placement of these children. The Commission has therefore also concluded that Russian authorities have committed the crime against humanity of enforced disappearance of the children deported or transferred from Ukraine, and the war crime of unjustifiable delay in their repatriation.

From the cases investigated by the Commission, 80 per cent of the children have not yet been returned. Those who managed to organize returns encountered obstacles, delays and security risks. Many parents and legal guardians remain unaware of the fate and whereabouts of their children and are still searching for them. Children suffered from trauma and anxiety. One child who managed to return to Ukraine stated: "I was sad, I was scared. I worried that I would have to live in the Russian Federation."

The Commission has also investigated the conduct of trials by courts in the Russian Federation and in Russian-occupied areas of Ukraine. Civilians and prisoners of war from Ukraine were mainly charged with terrorism, espionage and violent seizure of power. The Commission finds that these courts have deprived the accused persons of fundamental fair

* The present report was submitted to the conference services for processing after the deadline so as to include the most recent information.

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trial guarantees and have therefore committed grave breaches of international humanitarian law, which constitute war crimes.

Russian authorities have systematically used evidence that they fabricated or obtained by means of torture or ill-treatment to incriminate the accused. The courts have disregarded the fair trial guarantees concerning the presumption of innocence, the non-retroactivity of laws, the right not to be compelled to confess guilt, the right to public proceedings and the right to defence. The evidence of the Commission points to a lack of independence and impartiality of the courts, with predetermined verdicts and the guilt of the accused assumed from the outset.

Furthermore, the Commission has investigated the circumstances of nationals from 17 countries recruited to fight with the Russian armed forces in Ukraine. Many had been deceived and lured from abroad through promises of civilian employment or other lucrative arrangements. They were coerced to sign contracts written in Russian, which they did not understand, and assigned dangerous tasks on the front lines.

In addition, the Commission interviewed 85 soldiers who had served in the Russian armed forces in connection with the hostilities in Ukraine and had since deserted. Most of them testified about violent practices used by commanders against soldiers. These included shooting soldiers on the spot, beating them, detaining them in a pit and tying them to a tree, as a punishment for refusing to participate in military assaults that would lead to certain death or for withdrawing from the front line when injured or lacking supplies. The accounts demonstrate a total disregard for human life and dignity and suggest that the use of violence against subordinates is widespread and systematic within the Russian armed forces.

Regarding Ukraine, the Commission recalls that that the overly broad definition of the crime of “collaborative activities” in the country’s Criminal Code has led to prevailing legal uncertainty. The Commission highlights that activities that do not endanger national security may also be interpreted as falling within the scope of that crime. On analysing rulings of the Supreme Court of Ukraine on this issue, the Commission found that when delineating activities considered lawful, the Supreme Court failed to consider applicable international humanitarian law, which obliges the occupying Power to ensure that essential services in territories under its control continue to be provided to the civilian population.

Finally, the Commission documented reports of violations perpetrated during mobilization for the Ukrainian armed forces. Such violations include irregular administrative detention, lack of access to a lawyer and hurried examinations by military medical commissions that disregard possible underlying medical issues. Instances of violence have been recorded against conscientious objectors who were taken by force to recruitment centres and military bases, regardless of any expressed readiness to carry out alternative civil service.

I. Introduction

1. The Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine submits the present report to the Human Rights Council pursuant to Council resolution 58/24. This comprehensive report reflects the Commission's findings of its fourth mandate. The Commission is composed of Erik Møse (Chair), Pablo de Greiff and Vrinda Grover.

2. The principles of independence, impartiality, objectivity and integrity and a victim-centred approach guide all aspects of the Commission's work.[1]

3. Since its establishment, the Commission has interviewed 2,433 persons (women, men and children) and examined documents and open-source material. It has travelled to Ukraine 27 times. The liquidity crisis at the United Nations has continued to severely affect the staffing of the secretariat of the Commission.

4. The Commission extends its deep gratitude to victims and witnesses for sharing experiences and to organizations for the information provided.

5. It appreciates the cooperation of the Government of Ukraine. The Russian Federation continued not to recognize the Commission, and 39 written requests for access, information and meetings remained unanswered.

II. Violations of international law

6. Four years of armed conflict in Ukraine have had a devastating impact on civilians. According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, as of February 2026, over 15,000 civilians had been killed, and over 41,000 civilians injured, since the Russian Federation launched its full-scale invasion in 2022.[2] The Commission has continued to collect evidence concerning a wide range of crimes and violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law committed in the context of the ongoing armed conflict, which have a severe and long-lasting impact on women, men, girls and boys. In the present report, the Commission concludes that Russian authorities have committed the crimes against humanity of deportation and forcible transfer and of enforced disappearance, both targeting children. The Commission has also found evidence of war crimes and other violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law.

A. Violations committed by Russian authorities

1. Deportation and transfer of children

7. During its previous mandates, the Commission investigated situations in which Russian authorities unlawfully deported children from Russian-occupied areas in Ukraine to the Russian Federation or transferred them to other Russian-occupied areas in Ukraine. The Commission has established that these acts amount to war crimes and that Russian authorities violated their obligation under international law to facilitate in every possible way the reunification of families dispersed as a result of armed conflict.[3] Under the current mandate, the Commission has investigated additional cases concerning such deportations and transfers by Russian authorities. The present report includes a summary of those investigations, while

[1] Conference room paper of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine, available at https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2023-08/A_HRC_52_CRP.4_En%20%28003%29.pdf, paras. 7–25.

[2] "Four years since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine: key facts and findings", February 2026.

[3] Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, art. 8 (2) (a) (vii); and Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I), art. 74. See also A/HRC/52/62, paras. 95–102; conference room paper of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine, available at https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2023-08/A_HRC_52_CRP.4_En%20%28003%29.pdf, paras. 715–772; A/78/540, paras. 90–102; and A/HRC/55/66, paras. 95–97.

detailed findings on this issue can be found in a conference room paper[4] posted by the Commission in March 2026.

8. The Commission has documented cases concerning the deportation or transfer of a total of 1,205 children, including the cases previously reported. In its recent investigations, it has verified the deportation of 995 children from 11 institutions in the so-called Donetsk People's Republic and the so-called Luhansk People's Republic that took place shortly before the launch of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022. Russian authorities claimed that this was an evacuation justified by an imminent security risk emanating from the Government of Ukraine, at a time when Russian armed forces themselves had massed personnel and military equipment at the country's borders.

9. Most of the deportations and transfers of children investigated by the Commission have not been temporary as required by law in the case of evacuation. On the contrary, Russian authorities at the highest levels of government have coordinated actions to facilitate the long-term placement of the children in the Russian Federation. Russian authorities first relocated the children to temporary transit centres in the Russian Federation or in Russian-occupied areas of Ukraine. They further gradually deported or transferred most of the children to various locations in 21 regions of the Russian Federation, and placed them indefinitely with families or in institutions. Children were given Russian citizenship and their profiles appeared on adoption or foster-placement databases.

10. In public statements, Russian authorities referred to adoptions as the preferred option for placement of the deported children and provided updates on legislative and administrative measures they undertook to make that possible. Some of the placements the Commission has documented appear, indeed, to be adoptions. However, around the time of the issuance of warrants of arrest by the International Criminal Court in March 2023, Russian authorities backtracked on those statements, denied that adoptions had been taking place and emphasized instead foster placement in their public declarations. Long-term placements with families have continued.

11. Four years on, the Commission has found that of the cases of deportations and transfers it has documented, 80 per cent of the children have not yet been returned. Many parents and legal guardians[5] remained unaware of the children's fate and whereabouts, months or years after the initial deportations or transfers. This has led to prolonged family separations.

12. In most cases examined, Russian authorities did not establish a system to facilitate the return of the children to their families or country. Children, and parents and other relatives, carried out their own efforts to locate each other. Returns that could be organized took place only after a series of obstacles, delays and security risks. In this regard, children in institutions, and in particular younger children or those with disabilities, have almost no chance of returning.

13. Deportations or transfers of children, their disappearance and the ensuing prolonged separation with families have been highly traumatic for all those involved. A mother who has not managed to find her daughter, who had been placed in an unidentified institution in the Russian Federation, stated: "I am still looking for my daughter, and I am terribly afraid of what she might think of me and how she survives there, where many people hate Ukrainians."

Concluding observations

14. Russian authorities have deported or transferred thousands of children from Ukraine, stating that these were evacuations necessitated by the armed conflict. These relocations have not been temporary, as mandated under international humanitarian law. Compelling health, medical treatment or safety reasons – the only legally justifiable reasons for temporary evacuation of children – were not the principal motivating factor. Russian authorities did not

[4] Available at https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/hrbodies/hrcouncil/sessions-regular/session61/a-hrc-61-crp-8.pdf.

[5] Under Ukrainian law, the concept of a legal guardian may differ from its meaning in international law. In Ukraine, the term "legal representative" is more commonly used for the concept of legal guardian.

seek the consent of parents, legal guardians or the Ukrainian authorities, as required by law. The removal of children from Ukraine can thus not be qualified as "evacuation" within the meaning of international humanitarian law. The Commission therefore reaffirms its previous finding that unlawful deportations and transfers of children from Ukraine by the Russian authorities amount to war crimes.[6]

15. Furthermore, the Russian authorities did not establish a system to facilitate the repatriation of the children[7] and the majority of the children have not returned. The burden to locate each other was placed entirely on the children and their families or guardians. This confirms that the Russian authorities continued to violate their obligation under international humanitarian law to facilitate in every possibly way the reunion of families separated during the armed conflict,[8] which amounts to the war crime of unjustifiable delay in the repatriation of civilians.[9]

16. The deportations and transfers have originated from various locations across a wide geographical area in Russian-occupied areas in Ukraine, following a well-established pattern of conduct, indicating that these acts have been widespread and systematic. Russian authorities at the highest levels – including the President, Vladimir Putin, and entities directly answerable to him – have coordinated practical modalities to carry out these deportations and transfers and to further relocate the children in the Russian Federation. The Russian authorities have committed these acts following a consistent and carefully organized plan and modus operandi, initiated even before the full-scale invasion of Ukraine. This demonstrates the existence of a pre-established policy, conceived at the highest level of the Russian State, and leads the Commission to conclude that Russian authorities have carried out deportations and forcible transfers of children also as a crime against humanity.[10]

17. In most cases investigated, the Russian authorities have not informed the parents or other relatives, legal guardians or the Ukrainian authorities of the deportation or transfer of the children and of their fate and whereabouts. Consequently, many of those searching remained unaware of the fate and whereabouts of children for months or years. The removal of the children from their families and country, without the consent of parents, legal guardians or the Ukrainian authorities, also constitutes an abduction.[11] Given the coercive environment surrounding the deportations or transfers, the indefinite nature of the placements in the Russian Federation and the considerable difficulties faced in finding their family and travelling back to Ukraine, the situation of the children in the Russian Federation amounts to deprivation of liberty.[12] Moreover, adoption has far-reaching implications for a child and drastically diminishes the prospect for children to return and reunite with their family. Russian authorities have thus committed acts of enforced disappearance against the deported or transferred children, which have been widespread and systematic and perpetrated pursuant to policy and thus amount to a crime against humanity.[13] The acts also constitute human rights violations.[14]

18. The Commission also found that the actions of the Russian authorities, as described in the present report, were contrary to several other provisions of international humanitarian law and international human rights law.

[6] Rome Statute, art. 8 (2) (a) (vii); and https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2023-08/A_HRC_52_CRP.4_En%20%28003%29.pdf, paras. 724 and 728.
[7] Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions of 1949, art. 78 (3).
[8] Ibid., art. 74.
[9] Ibid., art. 85 (4) (b) and (5).
[10] Rome Statute, art. 7 (1) (d).
[11] International Criminal Court, *Elements of Crimes* (2013), art. 7 (1) (i).
[12] European Court of Human Rights, *Ukraine and the Netherlands v. Russia*, Applications Nos. 8019/16, 43800/14, 28525/20 and 11055/22, Judgment, 9 July 2025, para. 1596.
[13] Rome Statute, arts. 7 (1) (i) and (2) (i) and 21 (3).
[14] Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, art. 2.

2. Violation of fair trial guarantees and fabrication of evidence by Russian authorities

(a) Overview

19. The Commission has investigated the conduct of trials by Russian Federation courts in the context of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation. The Commission relied on 128 interviews, 218 documents, 28 videos and 1,216 open-source references. The Commission focused on a sample of 72 trials by four courts in the Russian Federation and eight "courts" in Russian-occupied territories of Ukraine, concerning 68 civilians and 60 prisoners of war from Ukraine. Of these, 69 trials led to convictions and 3 are still ongoing. The accused were charged under Russian criminal law, mostly for crimes related to terrorism, espionage or violent seizure of power, and most were sentenced to imprisonment ranging from 8 to 25 years; some have been sentenced to life imprisonment.

20. In the cases documented, the Commission found that the courts had violated fair trial guarantees set out in international human rights law and international humanitarian law, notably the principles of the presumption of innocence, the non-retroactivity of laws, the right not to be compelled to testify against oneself or to confess guilt and the right to be judged by an independent and impartial tribunal.[15] Russian authorities have deported civilians to try them in the Russian Federation, contrary to international humanitarian law.[16] They have refused to recognize the status of prisoners of war for combatants from Ukraine, depriving them of fair trial guarantees recognized by international humanitarian law. Russian criminal legislation was imposed in the Russian-occupied areas of Ukraine and the jurisdiction of the Russian Federation was extended to those areas, contrary to international humanitarian law.[17]

21. Russian authorities have systematically fabricated evidence they presented in the trials. Numerous testimonies, documents and videos obtained by the Commission demonstrate that Russian investigators used torture and ill-treatment to extract confessions, record false statements and force signature of documents, which they presented in trials and shared with the media for propaganda purposes. During long periods of detention, Russian authorities committed a wide range of violations and crimes against the accused, consistent with the Commission's past reports.

22. Witnesses described the trials before courts in the Russian Federation and in Russian-occupied areas of Ukraine as seriously vitiated by bias and unfairness, with predetermined verdicts. Judges systematically disregarded the rights of the accused and arguments advanced by them or on their behalf. One person tried and convicted in a Russian court, recalling her trial, stated: "This was a theatre of farce, where we were mere observers. It was a one-sided game. We couldn't even speak. All petitions raised by our lawyers were dismissed." Lastly, prior to and during the trials the accused were vilified in the eyes of the public through propaganda spread in the Russian pro-government media, creating prejudice against them.

(b) Persons subjected to trials in violation of international rules

23. In the cases investigated by the Commission, the accused facing trial were men and women between the ages of 18 and 74 at the time of their arrest, as well as three 16-year-old boys and one 17-year-old girl. Most of the accused were men. They were prosecuted for acts committed in Russian-occupied areas of six oblasts of Ukraine, in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, also in Ukraine, and the Kursk Oblast of the Russian Federation. The accused included persons who were specifically targeted by Russian authorities, such as employees of the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, former members of the anti-terrorist operation,[18]

[15] International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, arts. 14 and 15; Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War (Fourth Geneva Convention), art. 5; and Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War (Third Geneva Convention), arts. 84 and 105.

[16] Fourth Geneva Convention, art. 66.

[17] Ibid., art. 64.

[18] The anti-terrorist operation was launched by the Government of Ukraine in 2014, to operate in the eastern part of the country, and ran until 2018.

relatives of members of the Ukrainian armed forces, and prisoners of war of specific military units of Ukraine.

24. Russian courts refused to recognize the status of prisoners of war for combatants from Ukraine, holding that the Russian Federation was only conducting a "special military operation". This deprived those persons of fair trial guarantees applicable to prisoners of war, which they are entitled to under international humanitarian law.[19] In the cases investigated, courts convicted prisoners of war from the Azov, Aidar and Donbas military units of Ukraine and sentenced them to severe criminal penalties solely for their membership in those units, ignoring that combatants participating in hostilities as part of the armed forces of their country cannot be criminally punished for that reason alone.[20]

25. Furthermore, Russian authorities deported civilians and tried them in courts in the Russian Federation, including in military courts, raising concern for the respect of their fair trial guarantees.[21] International humanitarian law requires the occupying Power to try civilians in the occupied territory; deporting civilians is a war crime.[22]

26. In all the trials examined by the Commission, the courts applied Russian criminal law to acts committed in occupied territories of Ukraine, contrary to international humanitarian law. "Courts" in occupied areas of Ukraine delivered judgments "on behalf of the Russian Federation", thereby extending the jurisdiction of the Russian Federation to the occupied territories, which is also against international humanitarian law.[23]

(c) Fabrication of evidence, and crimes and violations committed against the accused

27. The trials occurred in an environment that was coercive for the accused at all stages of the proceedings. During the pretrial investigations and the trials themselves, and after the delivery of the verdicts, Russian authorities committed a wide range of crimes and violations. The accused were held in detention facilities where the Commission had previously established extensive use of torture.[24] Russian authorities subjected them to unlawful confinement, deportation or transfer to detention facilities in the Russian Federation or in Russian-occupied areas of Ukraine; enforced disappearance; torture; sexual violence, including rape; ill-treatment; and inhuman or degrading treatment.[25] According to testimonies, Russian authorities resorted to torture and ill-treatment while the trials were ongoing, during transportation and in the court premises. Visible signs of violence on the accused were ignored and overlooked by judges and prosecutors.

28. Personnel of the Federal Security Service, of the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation and others have systematically used torture or ill-treatment to fabricate evidence produced in courts. They have made video recordings of staged arrests and crime scenes, coercively extracted self-incriminating statements and testimonies incriminating others, and forced the signature of documents. Such material was presented during trials and was disseminated in Russian pro-government media.

29. In some cases, the dates of arrest listed in official documents were not consistent with the actual dates. The accused spent periods of time in detention without any official record and their whereabouts were unknown. During that time, Russian authorities obtained and recorded evidence against them, which was accepted by the courts. In some cases, witnesses pointed to inconsistencies in the facts of the cases and stated that the accused could not have committed the alleged acts because they were not present in the place, or even oblast, concerned at the time the incriminated action occurred.

[19] See, inter alia, Third Geneva Convention, art. 99.
[20] Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions of 1949, art. 43 (2).
[21] Human Rights Committee, general comment No. 32 (2007), para. 22.
[22] Rome Statute, art. 8 (2) (a) (vii); and Fourth Geneva Convention, art. 66.
[23] Fourth Geneva Convention, art. 64.
[24] A/HRC/58/67, annex III.
[25] See for example, https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2023-08/A_HRC_52_CRP.4_En%20%28003%29.pdf, paras. 482–566; A/79/549, paras. 33–85; and A/HRC/58/67, paras. 8–55.

30. Some of the testimonies against the accused were given by co-detainees after they had themselves been subjected to violence or significant duress, by individuals whom the accused had never met or by anonymous witnesses. A civilian woman was convicted by a court for the murder of a man she said she had never met. After the trial, the main witness against the accused woman confessed to her that she had been directed to testify by the Federal Security Service.

31. Russian authorities also compelled relatives of accused persons to contribute to the fabrication of evidence, through testimonies against their loved ones. To exert pressure on the relatives, Russian authorities detained them, intimidated them and placed menacing telephone calls. Authorities threatened to harm the accused if the relatives failed to cooperate.

32. Courts usually did not take into consideration the arguments raised by the accused or on their behalf, including that their statements had been obtained by torture. In one judgment, a court relied on the testimonies of law enforcement personnel involved in the pretrial investigation of the case to reject the defence of the accused that the incriminating evidence had been obtained through torture.

(d) Violation of fundamental fair trial guarantees

33. Courts in the Russian Federation and in Russian-occupied areas in Ukraine have systematically violated a range of fair trial guarantees during criminal proceedings against civilians and prisoners of war from Ukraine. The judges have not acted with independence and impartiality, nor have they respected the principles of presumption of innocence, individual responsibility of the accused and non-retroactivity of the law. Judgments have often been written in a manner that, from the outset, presumed the guilt of the accused. Judges usually adopted the arguments of the prosecution, while ignoring the defence, and aligned with the propaganda circulated in the media. One person who was tried and convicted by a Russian court stated: “For them – the so-called justice system in the Russian Federation – the decision to accuse and sentence us was predetermined. I don’t understand why they bothered with this farcical performance with unskilled actors. They did what they were ordered to do. For us, though, these decisions and proceedings would change our lives and the lives of our families.”

34. A pre-existing bias and reliance on narratives commonly used in the Russian Federation are visible in the consideration of the cases. For instance, in almost identical judgments against prisoners of war from the Azov brigade, the court noted that the main ideology of Azov was neo-Nazism and that the members of the brigade fulfilled the criminal objectives of the organization. In another judgment, the court stressed: “The fact that the participants in the Azov battalion have been committing crimes of a terrorist character is well-known”, in its reasoning concluding that the accused had joined the military unit with the intention of participating in terrorist activity.

35. In cases concerning prisoners of war prosecuted for terrorism-related charges, courts convicted them to severe penal sentences merely for belonging to military units of Ukraine, without substantiating their individual criminal responsibility.[26] In the case of prisoners of war from the Azov brigade, the courts relied on a June 2016 decision of the “Supreme Court” of the so-called Donetsk People’s Republic that recognized the Azov brigade as a terrorist organization. However, the independence claims of the so-called Donetsk People’s Republic have been declared unlawful internationally. Decisions of organs of the so-called republic[27] thus have no legal applicability in relation to Ukrainian citizens. The courts further relied on a decision of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation of August 2022, which declared the Azov brigade to be a terrorist organization. This extends the jurisdiction of the occupying Power to the occupied territories, contrary to international humanitarian law. Moreover, the August 2022 decision has often been invoked by Russian courts with respect to facts that occurred between February and May 2022, in violation of the principle of non-retroactivity.

[26] Third Geneva Convention, art. 99.

[27] See https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2023-08/A_HRC_52_CRP.4_En%20%28003%29.pdf, para. 62.

36. Trials, in whole or in part, were regularly conducted behind closed doors. Russian authorities denied some of the accused the right to be defended by a lawyer or forced them to waive their right to legal representation under duress. Some of the State-appointed lawyers did not provide an effective defence for the accused and sided with the prosecution.

(e) Media coverage and propaganda

37. From the time of the arrests, the media and social media channels that are closely affiliated with the Government of the Russian Federation disseminated the version of the investigators without raising questions. Prior to the trials, the accused were vilified and convicted in the eyes of the public through propaganda. This media campaign created prejudice against the accused and undermined their chances of receiving a fair trial.

38. The accused were referred to as "Nazis" and presented as persons capable of plotting heinous acts without remorse. In one case, after the arrest of a young prisoner of war, a message was posted on a Russian Telegram channel stating: "Our troops got their hands on … a Nazi and a serviceman of the Azov battalion (a terrorist organization banned in the Russian Federation). This jerk is 18 years old, and he has already been brainwashed and serves in a terrorist organization." The post further adds that there is hope he will get the longest possible sentence.

(f) Impact

39. Being accused in criminal proceedings with no fair opportunity to defend themselves has taken a deep toll on those prosecuted and convicted, and on their families. In its previous reports, the Commission has emphasized the severe impact of prolonged confinement, enforced disappearance, deportation, transfer and torture, as well as of sexual violence. In addition, convictions that carry lengthy prison terms leave the accused and their families with an unbearable uncertainty as to when, or even whether, they will see each other again. A woman who saw photos of her son in court said that she could not stop crying. She had never seen him like that: he had lost significant weight and looked exhausted and scared. A small number of those convicted have managed to return as part of prisoner swaps. A mother whose son has been sentenced and is imprisoned in the Russian Federation stated: "Every time there are exchanges, I want to go – but I fear my heart wouldn't survive the pain of not seeing my son among those returned."

40. The gendered impact of these cases highlights the suffering of families, most often women left behind in occupied areas, who face the emotional and economic fallout of the absence of those accused or convicted. Those who manage to return suffer from deep physical and psychological consequences. If they are from occupied areas, they are usually unable to return to their residences owing to security risks, and are thus separated from family members and face challenges relating to reintegration into society, notably concerning work and housing.

(g) Concluding observations

41. The Commission's investigations show that, in the context of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, trials carried out by Russian courts or by "courts" run on their behalf in Russian-occupied territories in Ukraine have not respected fundamental fair trial guarantees outlined in international human rights law. The courts have disregarded the guarantees concerning the presumption of innocence, the non-retroactivity of laws, the right not to be compelled to confess guilt, the right to public proceedings and the right to defence. The verdicts aligned with the case of the prosecution, as the guilt of the accused was assumed from the outset, demonstrating a lack of independence and impartiality of the courts.

42. In addition, the Russian authorities have not respected the obligations regarding fair trial that they bear as an occupying Power. Russian criminal law was applied to occupied areas in Ukraine, and Russian Federation jurisdiction was extended to those areas. Russian authorities have deported civilians to the Russian Federation, which is a war crime, and have subjected them to trials in military courts. Russian authorities have systematically used evidence that they fabricated by means of torture or ill-treatment and ignored the arguments of the defence. By depriving civilians and prisoners of war of the right to a fair trial, Russian

authorities have committed grave breaches of international humanitarian law that constitute war crimes.[28]

43. The violations of fair trial guarantees and the crimes and violations committed during pretrial investigations have followed a well-established pattern, demonstrating that they have been systematic.[29] The recurrence and open commission of such violations for four years, and their wide public coverage, demonstrates that this modus operandi is commonly accepted by the Government of the Russian Federation. This raises serious concern regarding the fate of civilians and prisoners of war who have already been convicted, and that of those awaiting trial in Russian courts.

3. Sexual and gender-based violence

44. The Commission continued to investigate incidents of sexual and gender-based violence committed since 2022 in areas that then came under Russian control in the Chernihiv, Donetsk, Kharkiv, Luhansk, Mykolaiv and Zaporizhzhia Oblasts of Ukraine. In previous reports, the Commission covered cases of sexual violence committed in the context of the Russian occupation.[30] Consistent with previously documented patterns, Russian authorities have committed sexual violence against women and girls during break-ins into civilian houses, have assaulted women and girls in occupied villages and have committed sexual violence against men and women in detention.

45. The cases documented demonstrate the particular vulnerability of the victims to sexual and gender-based violence during military occupation. The acts of abuse were perpetrated in a context in which large numbers of military personnel were deployed and took control of recently captured localities, conducted systematic searches, imposed curfews, established checkpoints and were searching for a place to live, food and supplies for themselves. Sexual violence was perpetrated along with other violations and crimes. Its use as a tool of domination and torture highlights its gendered dimension. The new cases illustrate the continued cruelty inflicted by the perpetrators against victims. In cases recently investigated by the Commission, the victims were civilian women and girls, one civilian man, and women prisoners of war; their ages ranged from 13 to 52 years.

46. In one case, in April 2022, in a village of Kherson Oblast, Russian armed forces twice detained a 26-year-old man who was a former contract soldier for the Ukrainian armed forces. They interrogated him and held him in inhuman conditions in improvised detention facilities, including in a basement and in a cage. He was subjected to severe torture, consisting of repeated beatings, mock executions, strangulation, and sexual violence by penetration with the handle of a shovel. This caused grievous physical injury and required surgery. He stated: “They tortured me and left me to die. It’s a miracle I’m still alive. Those weeks changed my life and my family’s forever. Nothing can make me strong and healthy again. I can never forgive them.”

47. In November 2022, in a village of Mykolaiv Oblast, Russian soldiers grabbed two girls, then aged 13 and 15 years, as they were walking in a street. The soldiers placed bags over the girls’ heads, forced them into a car and kept them for three days in an apartment. There, the soldiers compelled the girls to consume alcohol, raped them and beat one of them.

48. In most cases, the perpetrators were military personnel from the Russian armed forces. Several among them have been identified by name, unit and call sign. In June 2025, in an occupied settlement in Zaporizhzhia Oblast, one perpetrator even admitted in an interview

[28] Rome Statute, art. 8 (2) (a) (vi); Protocol I to Geneva Conventions, art. 85 (4) (e) and (5); and Third Geneva Convention, art. 130.

[29] For earlier occurrences, see Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, “Situation of human rights in the temporarily occupied Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol (Ukraine)”, 2017. Available at https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Countries/UA/Crimea2014_2017_EN.pdf.

[30] See for example, https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2023-08/A_HRC_52_CRP.4_En%20%28003%29.pdf, paras. 567–644; A/HRC/55/66, paras. 85–94; and A/HRC/58/67, paras. 48–55.

with a journalist to sexual intercourse with two girls. The Commission established that the girls were 14 and 15 years old at the time.

49. In another case, attempts by the victim to report the situation to the military superiors were met with denials, threats and cover-ups. In yet another incident, perpetrators were briefly detained and then released. The Commission is not aware of any judicial prosecution by Russian authorities concerning such cases.

50. Sexual violence has led to multifaceted harms. Victims suffered physical injuries – some long-term or permanent – often requiring surgery and medical treatment, as well as deep psychological trauma, including suicidal thoughts. Families have been shattered; victims faced shame, stigmatization and family separations. Some no longer felt safe in their homes and felt compelled to move, leaving their former lives behind.

51. Such incidents have had a particular impact on girls, as victims, or on children, where the mother was a victim of sexual violence. One woman relocated multiple times after she was violently assaulted and repeatedly raped. Another victim became pregnant and has a child as a result of the rape. Now, as she raises the child with love and strives to shield him from trauma or knowledge of the circumstances of his birth, she faces the dilemma of reporting the case to seek justice, but fears this could reopen wounds for herself and the child. The Commission also examined reports concerning survival sex with Russian soldiers, for perceived protection, food or money.

52. The trauma experienced by the victims is compounded by systemic shortcomings in protection, training of investigators and reparations. Victims have many acute needs, which may include housing, medical care and psychological support. In all those areas, survivor-centred and child and gender-sensitive support mechanisms are key to providing much-needed assistance and relief for victims and their families.

4. Violations committed during mobilization and against soldiers of the Russian armed forces

(a) Violence committed during mobilization

53. The Commission has investigated the situation of nationals from 17 countries who were recruited, voluntarily or through deception, to fight together with the Russian armed forces in Ukraine. They include men from Azerbaijan, Belarus, Brazil, Cuba, Egypt, Ghana, India, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Nepal, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Türkiye, Uganda and Yemen. The Commission collected their testimonies or those of family members. They were recruited into the Russian armed forces under various circumstances, after being approached by Russian authorities or civilian persons on the authorities' behalf. Most of the men had no military experience and did not understand the Russian language. After training, usually lasting between one week and 30 days, they were forced to serve on front lines in Ukraine, and often were assigned extremely dangerous duties. The men were interviewed by the Commission after being captured by or having surrendered to Ukrainian armed forces. Some had appealed to their embassies in Ukraine, but most received no assistance.

54. At the time of their recruitment, most of the men were already present in the Russian Federation. They joined the Russian armed forces voluntarily in the hope of regularizing their stay and to receive a salary. Others were recruited while they were serving sentences in Russian detention facilities, including after significant coercion. An inmate who had attempted to resist recruitment stated that a recruiting officer had told him: "I will do everything so that you end up in the special military operation."

55. Others found themselves in the Russian armed forces after having been deceived and lured from abroad through promises of civilian employment or other lucrative arrangements. Their travel to the Russian Federation had been arranged by recruiters. They had been met at a Russian airport by military personnel, brought to military bases and pressured into signing contracts written in Russian, which they did not understand. One man recruited in this manner enquired about the civilian company that he thought had hired him, but was told: "No, it's a mistake, in this place you are going to fight, you are going to the war – I can see your documents, your signature, your contract with the Russian army."

(b) Violence committed during deployment

56. The Commission interviewed 85 soldiers who had deserted from the Russian armed forces. Most of them had been deployed across front-line areas in seven oblasts in Ukraine and in the Kursk Oblast of the Russian Federation, where they had served between a few days to over three years. Of these soldiers, 61 had experienced or witnessed, or knew of, various forms of violent, cruel and inhuman treatment or deprivation of liberty practised or ordered by commanders against their subordinates, leading to death, serious injury and trauma. The Commission also collected 82 open-source documents demonstrating a similar pattern of violations.

57. The testimonies analysed show that military commanders arbitrarily imposed, practised or tolerated extreme violence and coercion against soldiers as punishment for refusing to participate in military operations that meant almost certain death, and for withdrawing from the front line, even when this was justified by injury, lack of ammunition or lack of food and water. Punishment was also inflicted on those who dared to speak up against such practices or attempted to desert, and even for small infractions. Soldiers described being treated like "cannon fodder" or "disposable material", sent on so-called "meat assaults" without training, preparation, necessary equipment, artillery support or an evacuation plan, and forced to advance at all costs. They also reported the practice, ordered by the commanders, of shooting on the spot soldiers who withdrew without permission; sometimes by fellow soldiers.

58. Other forms of punishment included mock executions, shooting in or around legs and severe beatings. A former soldier recounted that a man from his unit had been beaten to death when he refused to go on a military assault; his body was left at the entrance of the building for three days, for everyone to see what happened to those who refused to obey orders.

59. Many interviewees reported that soldiers were detained in basements, pits dug in the ground, containers or cages, in inhuman, completely unhygienic conditions, without food or water for long periods. Several interviewees described the practice of tying soldiers to a tree. Deprivation of liberty was accompanied by violent treatment, threats and forced nudity. There are also reports about commanders extorting money from soldiers, using violence and threats.

(c) Concluding observations

60. The culture of violence and the absence of oversight within the Russian armed forces had already been widely documented before the full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Arbitrarily imposed violent practices have continued and appear to be common in Russian armed forces units deployed in different oblasts in Ukraine. The evidence collected demonstrates abusive behaviour, cruelty, humiliation, inhuman treatment and a total disregard for human life and dignity, perpetrated with a sense of impunity. The soldiers interviewed by the Commission described strikingly similar forms of ill-treatment, suggesting that the practice of using violence against subordinates in the Russian armed forces is widespread and systematic. This contributes to a further consolidation of the culture of violence that is bound to affect civilians.

B. Violations committed by Ukrainian authorities

1. Judicial consideration of the crime of collaboration

61. The Commission has previously found that Ukrainian authorities committed violations of human rights against persons alleged to have collaborated with Russian authorities. It has documented instances of arbitrary arrest and detention, torture, ill-treatment, and enforced disappearance occurring prior to trial proceedings. [31] The Commission has further noted the prevailing legal uncertainty surrounding the definition of "collaborative activities" in article 111-1 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine, has considered it

[31] A/HRC/52/62, paras. 87–89; A/HRC/55/66, paras. 82–84; and A/HRC/58/67, paras. 69–72.

overly broad and has recommended that the legislative framework be harmonized with international standards.[32]

62. As at 17 February 2026, the Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine had registered 24,365 cases concerning crimes against national security, the majority (10,777) for collaborative activities. In 2025 alone, courts convicted 1,115 individuals for collaborative activities.[33]

63. Article 111-1 lists seven different types of "collaborative activities". Under the current mandate, the Commission has examined Supreme Court rulings to assess to what extent the Court has addressed previously expressed concerns. The Commission has analysed all 33 relevant Supreme Court rulings and reviewed more than 100 decisions from courts of first and second instance.

64. The Commission underscores the need for clarification of article 111-1, especially its definitional elements, to avoid legal uncertainty and address its overly broad scope. Notably, activities that do not in any way endanger national security may also fall within its scope. For instance, human rights organizations have pointed out that Ukrainian courts found a violation of article 111-1 in cases of persons acting as a street representative[34] or a security guard for a law-enforcement building.[35]

65. In articulating the scope of "collaborative activities", it is essential to ensure conformity with the international humanitarian law framework applicable in situations of occupation, obliging the occupying Power to ensure that essential services in territories under its control continue to be provided to the civilian population, such as medical services, public health or care and education of children.[36] The occupying Power must cooperate with national and local authorities, and may also compel civilians under occupation to do work which is necessary either for the needs of the army of occupation, or for the public utility services, or for the feeding, sheltering, clothing, transportation or health of the population of the occupied country. However, the occupying Power shall not force protected persons to serve in its armed or auxiliary forces.[37]

66. The role of the Supreme Court of Ukraine is limited to assessing whether first and second instances correctly applied substantive and procedural law; whether any significant procedural violations occurred; and whether the punishment imposed is disproportionate.[38] The Supreme Court cannot re-examine evidence, reassess the reliability of evidence or establish new facts.

67. The Commission has analysed whether the Supreme Court has relied on international law when interpreting article 111-1 of the Criminal Code. Overall, the Court did not invoke relevant international humanitarian law applicable to occupied territories. On the other hand, in some cases it made reference to the case law of the European Court of Human Rights, mainly concerning procedural matters, such as the conditions for handing down judgments in absentia.

68. Adding to legal uncertainty, in some cases first and second instance courts applied national security provisions of the Criminal Code, including those in article 111-1, retroactively[39] or failed to clearly establish the period during which the alleged offence took

[32] See https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2023-08/A_HRC_52_CRP.4_En%20%28003%29.pdf, paras. 855–857.

[33] Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine, "Collaborationism has consequences: 14 suspicions in a week and more than a thousand verdicts in 2025", 6 February 2026.

[34] A street representative is a community liaison who represents residents of a specific street in dealings with local authorities. See Criminal Court of Cassation of Ukraine, Case No. 202/3884/23, 29 January 2025. Available at https://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/124904191 (in Ukrainian).

[35] See Criminal Court of Cassation, Case No. 953/7182/23, 20 June 2024. Available at https://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/119961119 (in Ukrainian).

[36] Fourth Geneva Convention, arts. 50, 55, 56 and 60.

[37] Ibid., art. 51.

[38] Code of Criminal Procedure of Ukraine, arts. 433 (1) and 438 (1).

[39] For example, a person was convicted for a single repost, on the Odnoklassniki social network, of content from a Russian media source on 4 March 2022, before the entry into force of the legal

place. Although none of the cassation appeals examined explicitly raised the issue of retroactive application of the law, Ukrainian law requires the Supreme Court to pay particular attention to this matter.[40] In one case reviewed by the Supreme Court, both the first and second court judgments and the decision of the Supreme Court stated that the collaborative activity had begun on 24 February 2022, and that the circumstances and period of time of the activity had not been established. Because the alleged criminal conduct began prior to 15 March 2022 – the date on which the legislation establishing the crime entered into force – and continued for an undetermined period, this gives rise to uncertainty regarding the legislation's applicability overall.[41]

69. The Supreme Court has attempted to clarify which activities fall outside what is understood as "collaborative activity".[42] However, it has relied on an interpretation that fails to consider the applicable international humanitarian law mentioned above. When delineating activities considered lawful, the Supreme Court did not engage with the substantive nature of the acts as mentioned in international law but simply focused on the administrative and contractual framework, in particular formal employment with the occupying Power. In one case, the Supreme Court explicitly mentioned that "the specific nature or content of the work performed by [the accused] in this particular case does not affect the legal qualification of his conduct.[43] The Commission notes that, in a dissenting opinion in another case, one judge stressed that the court had failed to consider relevant international humanitarian provisions when evaluating the accused's actions, which were aimed at supplying the population of the occupied territory with solid fuel for stove heating.[44]

70. The interpretation of the Supreme Court likewise dominates the analysis of the existence of a coercive environment in cases where the accused assumed an official position considered as a "collaborative activity". In one situation, the accused became head of the social security department, performed organizational and administrative functions and received remuneration in currency of the Russian Federation. The Supreme Court held that this could not be regarded as a means of survival under occupation, ignoring evidence regarding threats against the nephew of the defendant and the broader contextual circumstance of the occupation, including the impossibility of gaining employment without satisfying conditions imposed by the occupying Power.[45]

71. The Commission noted a similar approach in several collaboration cases involving public denial of armed aggression, or online activity, for instance reposts, likes or comments, prohibited under article 111-1. In one such case, the Supreme Court upheld the conviction of a construction worker for denying the aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine and for sending a Viber message containing a similar opinion to a colleague.[46] The defence argued that private communication cannot be considered public denial, but the Supreme Court upheld the lower court's broad interpretation. In a dissenting opinion, one judge stressed that no evidence supported the offence and that a private message cannot be considered "public".[47]

72. The Supreme Court's approach when reviewing the cases brought before it has not been conducive to remedying the most significant shortcomings of article 111-1 of the

provision. See Zhovtnevy District Court, Case No. 212/3835/22, 9 August 2022. Available at https://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/105646959 (in Ukrainian).

40 Constitution, art. 58; Criminal Code, art. 5; and Code of Criminal Procedure, art. 433 (2).

41 See Criminal Court of Cassation, Case No. 948/1054/22, 2 October 2024. Available at https://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/122153711 (in Ukrainian).

42 See Criminal Court of Cassation, Case No. 953/7182/23, 20 June 2024. Available at https://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/119961119 (in Ukrainian).

43 Ibid.

44 See dissenting opinion in Criminal Court of Cassation, Case No. 202/3884/23, 29 January 2025. Available at https://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/125028818 (in Ukrainian).

45 See Criminal Court of Cassation, Case No. 83/426/23, 3 December 2024. Available at https://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/123659134 (in Ukrainian).

46 See Criminal Court of Cassation, Case No. 372/2744/22, 12 September 2024. Available at https://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/121626673 (in Ukrainian).

47 See dissenting opinion in Criminal Court of Cassation, Case No. 372/2744/22, 12 September 2024. Available at https://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/126843725 (in Ukrainian).

Criminal Code; the Commission also acknowledges that the Court must decide within the limits of its review mandate. This reinforces the Commission's view that amendments to unclear provisions related to crimes against national security are needed to ensure compliance with relevant international legal standards. Moreover, those provisions should be tailored to protect national security without imposing an impossible burden on civilians.

2. Violations committed during mobilization

73. The Commission has examined reports concerning violations committed during the mobilization process carried out by the Ukrainian armed forces in 14 oblasts of Ukraine. The Commission interviewed 75 persons, including men liable for military service, their relatives, witnesses, lawyers and military personnel.

74. In the situations examined, men had been apprehended by police and staff of territorial centres for recruitment. They were brought to a territorial centre for recruitment, held under administrative detention without regard to the applicable rules, then hastily sent to military units after examination by a military medical commission. The men reported that their telephones had been confiscated, their relatives and employers had not been informed, and they had not been given the opportunity to contact a lawyer. Relatives were unaware of the men's whereabouts and had faced difficulties in finding them.

75. Lawyers interviewed by the Commission consistently reported difficulties in gaining accessing to their clients in territorial centres for recruitment. This violates the right of individuals to legal assistance and opens the door to other violations. The Commission notes some efforts on the side of Ukrainian authorities to address this issue but information it has collected indicates that challenges remain.

76. In several instances, military medical commissions, which establish whether an individual is fit for military service, disregarded previous medical diagnoses that deemed the men unfit to serve. Testimonies also mentioned hurried medical examinations. In some documented instances, the disregarding of a person's medical condition apparently contributed to health deterioration.

Situation of conscientious objectors

77. The Commission documented the particular situation of conscientious objectors who refuse to join certain military activities due to their convictions. It interviewed men who were active members of four different religious groups long before the onset of the full-scale invasion. All of them have refused to carry out a military activity and have expressed readiness to carry out alternative civil service.

78. Conscientious objectors interviewed reported that regardless of their express refusal to carry out any military activity, they had been taken by force to a territorial centre for recruitment and further to a military camp. Several among them experienced or witnessed physical violence, including beatings by territorial centre for recruitment staff and military personnel. They reported that in the military camps they had been subjected to punishment and psychological pressure, such as mock executions, confinement for long periods in a pit dug in the ground, including in winter; threats of sexual violence; and denial of food.

3. Concluding observations

79. The rapid manner in which men are mobilized for recruitment by the authorities, with legitimate medical conditions or other impediments sometimes disregarded, combined with the lack of access to legal assistance, makes it difficult for them to challenge the legality of the process. It may be months before a court can rule on the legality of the mobilization, a period during which the person continues to serve in the armed forces. And even if the court decides that a person was mobilized illegally, the mobilization is generally considered irreversible. Reports regarding violent treatment of conscientious objectors during mobilization are a source of concern.

80. Although Ukraine is operating under martial law and facing an armed conflict, compliance with legal obligations in the context of mobilization remains essential to ensuring

an appropriate balance between citizens' rights and duties and to maintaining public trust in the authorities.

III. Conclusions and recommendations

81. **The Commission is concerned at the wide array of crimes and violations it has investigated, and at their effects on the victims and their families. Russian authorities have continued to commit numerous violations and crimes. In the present report, the Commission concludes that crimes against humanity and war crimes by Russian authorities have targeted children, who are among the most vulnerable victims. These crimes have irreversible consequences on those children's lives and their future. The Commission has found more cases of sexual violence that has led to physical and psychological trauma. It has also documented trials held by Russian courts in the context of the full-scale invasion that deprived the accused of fundamental fair trial guarantees and led to unfair convictions with long sentences of deprivation of liberty. Extreme violence committed within the Russian armed forces further illustrates the disregard for human life and dignity and contributes to a further consolidation of the culture of violence.**

82. **The Commission has emphasized the importance of a victim-centred approach. Victims have suffered physical and psychological trauma and have acute needs, including housing, medical care and psychological and reintegration support. In this regard, accountability – both judicial and non-judicial – is key to providing much-needed relief.**

83. **Concerning Ukraine, the Commission has underscored that the overly broad definition of the crime of "collaborative activities" in the Ukrainian Criminal Code has led to prevailing legal uncertainty. Rulings of the Ukrainian Supreme Court illustrate the risk that activities pertaining to essential services that must be provided to the population may fall within the scope of that provision. The Commission also documented violations reported during mobilization for the Ukrainian armed forces and against conscientious objectors.**

84. **The recommendations made in previous reports of the Commission remain relevant. Comprehensive recommendations relating to violations and crimes targeting children can be found in the conference room paper prepared by the Commission in the context of the sixty-first session of the Human Rights Council.[48] The Commission sets out below specific recommendations to address issues developed in the present report.**

85. **The Commission recommends that the Russian Federation:**

(a) **Cease the prosecution of prisoners of war for lawful acts stemming exclusively from their direct participation in hostilities;**

(b) **Uphold, at all stages of criminal proceedings, for all accused – both prisoners of war and civilians – all applicable guarantees for a fair trial, including the right to an independent and impartial court, presumption of innocence, protection against self-incrimination, the right to present a defence and to have effective legal representation, and non-retroactive application of the law;**

(c) **Put an end to all violations including torture, ill-treatment, inhuman or degrading treatment and sexual violence, committed during criminal proceedings, as methods of obtaining incriminating evidence;**

(d) **Respect international humanitarian law by discontinuing the application of Russian criminal law in the occupied territories of Ukraine and the extension of the jurisdiction of the Russian Federation over those territories;**

[48] Available at https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/hrc/iicihr-ukraine/reports/hrc61/crp8.

(e) **Ensure that reporting by State-owned or State-sponsored media is free from influence or any form of biased commentary and that it does not in any way prejudice trials;**

(f) **Take all measures possible to prevent sexual and gender-based violence and ensure the effective and impartial investigation, as well as prosecution and punishment, of such crimes and violations;**

(g) **Cease the recruitment of foreign nationals – whether residing abroad or within the territory of the Russian Federation – into the Russian armed forces, in particular recruitment through inducement, deception or any other means that vitiates free and informed consent;**

(h) **Cease any form of violence, ill-treatment or torture against members of its armed forces and ensure impartial investigation and effective prosecution of all such violations;**

86. **The Commission recommends that Ukraine:**

(a) **Give renewed consideration to amending overly broad criminal provisions related to collaborative activities, with a view to tailoring them specifically to the protection of national security and ensuring full compliance with relevant international legal standards;**

(b) **Pursue capacity-building for lawyers, prosecutors and judges on determining the scope of collaborative activities while adhering to international legal standards;**

(c) **Continue monitoring and reviewing the mobilization process for military service, paying particular attention to the initial stage carried out by territorial centres for recruitment, to ensure that all rights of mobilized persons, including the right to legal assistance and conscientious objection, are respected;**

(d) **Prevent and cease any form of violence during the mobilization and deployment process and ensure the effective and impartial investigation and prosecution of any violation.**

87. **The Commission recommends that the international community:**

(a) **Strengthen advocacy of and support for independent monitoring of the detention of and trial proceedings for Ukrainian civilian detainees and prisoners of war in the Russian Federation;**

(b) **Expand legal and humanitarian assistance to families in Ukraine of Ukrainian detainees under the authority of the Russian Federation;**

(c) **Provide technical and material resources for multidisciplinary and coordinated services – including legal, social, psychological, medical, rehabilitation and reintegration services, as well as livelihood support – for all civilian detainees and prisoners of war who have returned;**

(d) **Continue to support survivor-centred and gender-responsive programmes for victims of sexual and gender-based violence, ensuring confidential access to comprehensive healthcare (including sexual and reproductive services), trauma-informed psychosocial support, legal aid, safe shelters and livelihood assistance; and provide stigma-sensitive support to children born as a result of rape and their caregivers;**

(e) **Continue to build the capacity of lawyers, prosecutors and judges with respect to international legal standards.**