



Омбудсман України  
Ombudsman of Ukraine

# JUSTICE WINS WHEN FREEDOM HAS A VOICE







# THE PAIN OF KRYVVI RIH IS THE COMMON PAIN OF ALL OF UKRAINE

On April 4, Russia launched a missile attack on the civilian infrastructure of Kryvyi Rih. **19 people were killed, including 9 children. More than 70 people were injured.** The missile hit an ordinary street, close to residential buildings, a playground, a restaurant and a store.



#RussiasATerroristState

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Mr. Volker Türk reacts to the missile attack on Kryvyi Rih.



*This is a principled and extremely important position of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, which actually recognizes that the attack of the Russian armed forces on Kryvyi Rih may constitute a war crime, so the actions of the Russian Federation must be urgently investigated,” said Mr. Dmytro Lubinets.*





# ■ THAT DAY, A RUSSIAN MISSILE TOOK THE LIVES OF 9 INNOCENT CHILDREN



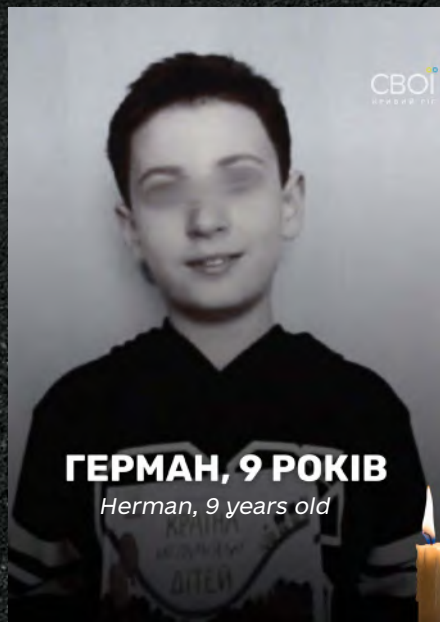
**ТИМОФІЙ, 3 РОКІВ**  
*Tymofiy, 3 years old*



**РАДИСЛАВ, 7 РОКІВ**  
*Radyslav, 7 years old*



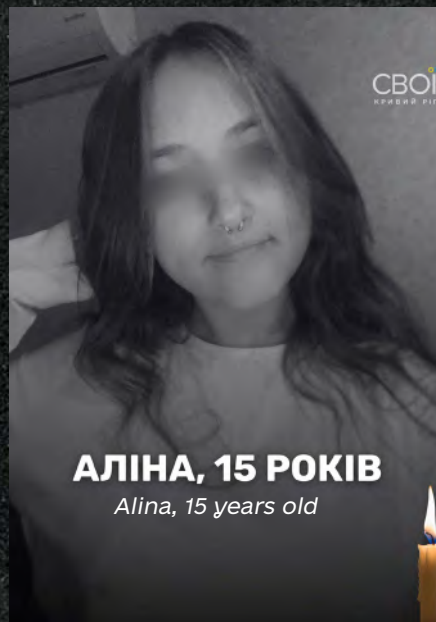
**АРІНА, 7 РОКІВ**  
*Arina, 7 years old*



**ГЕРМАН, 9 РОКІВ**  
*Herman, 9 years old*



**ДАНИЛО, 15 РОКІВ**  
*Danylo, 15 years old*



**АЛІНА, 15 РОКІВ**  
*Alina, 15 years old*



**МИКУТА, 15 РОКІВ**  
*Mykyta, 15 years old*



**КОСТЯНТИН, 16 РОКІВ**  
*Kostiantyn, 16 years old*



**НІКІТА, 17 РОКІВ**  
*Nikita, 17 years old*





## RETURNING HOME AFTER CAPTIVITY

On 19 March, the 62nd exchange of prisoners of war took place. **Thanks to Ukraine's efforts, 197 defenders were released: 175 as part of the exchange and 22 as part of a separate operation.**

Among those released are soldiers of the Armed Forces, Navy, National Guard, Territorial Defence Forces and Border Guard Service. They defended Ukraine in different areas: in Mariupol, including Azovstal, in Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson, Kharkiv, Mykolaiv, Zaporizhzhia, Sumy and Kursk regions.



The Ombudsman's Office was present at the exchange site to record the condition in which the released prisoners returned to Ukraine.

**4,306 UKRAINIANS**

**returned from enemy captivity as of 31 March 2025**



**What do Russian prisoners of war say before the exchange?**  
*Communication of the Ombudsman's Office staff with them.*









## FIVE UKRAINIAN CHILDREN ARE HOME AND REUNITED WITH THEIR FAMILIES!

On 28 March, five Ukrainian children were returned from the temporarily occupied territories (hereinafter – TOT) of Ukraine. The children are between the ages of 11 and 16. This happened with the mediation of our constant partner, the State of Qatar. The return was carried out as part of the implementation of the approved action plan of the President of Ukraine **Bring Kids Back UA**.

Among those returned was a boy from the TOT who lived with his father but was systematically subjected to abuse by him. Despite the facts of physical violence against the child, 'local' social services were in no hurry to help the child. **The mother tried to take the boy away on her own, but her attempts were unsuccessful.** It was only after contacting our Office and the involvement of a permanent intermediary, the State of Qatar, **that the mother and her son were reunited.**



#RussiasATerroristState

## FAMILIES LEAVE TOT FOR UKRAINIAN GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED TERRITORY

Another seven children were returned from the TOT of Ukraine and the Russian Federation. This was done as part of the implementation of the approved action plan of the President of Ukraine **Bring Kids Back UA**. Each of the return stories is unique, but all are united by a common desire for security and freedom. **Some families left the occupied territories because of political persecution,** others so that their children could receive a Ukrainian education, and some were simply looking for a way to escape.





## MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP on the Protection of Civilians' Rights and Freedoms

The Ombudsman's Office hosted a **meeting of the Working Group on Protection of Civilians' Rights and Freedoms**, during which participants discussed possible ways to return civilians who were illegally deprived of their personal liberty as a result of armed aggression.

In addition, they considered algorithms for recording data on this category of persons, which will be used in future work.

**Work on improving the mechanisms for the release of all civilians illegally detained by Russia will continue!**



## MEETINGS WITH FAMILIES of Prisoners of War and Missing Persons in Special Circumstances

The Ombudsman's Office **regularly meets with families of captured and missing servicemen**. In March, such a meeting was held with family members of the defenders from the 72nd separate mechanised brigade.

**Relatives were provided with information** on the verification of Ukrainian servicemen held in captivity, the process of their return, and the formation of lists, including those who went missing.

**Ukraine continues to do everything possible to bring home all its citizens from Russian captivity, using all available diplomatic and international mechanisms.**



**Yuriy Kovbasa**

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## MEETING OF THE EXPERT COUNCIL under the Representative of the Commissioner for the Rights of the Child

The Child Rights Protection Center hosted a meeting of the Expert Council under the **Representative (Deputy) of the Commissioner for the Rights of the Child, Iryna Suslova.**

**The members of the Expert Council**, which includes representatives of international organisations, civil society, experts in education, healthcare and law, **discussed key challenges in the field of child protection and identified priority areas of work for the coming period.**

The agenda included issues that directly affect the rights and well-being of children in Ukraine.



## MEETING WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF NORWAY: Discussing Challenges in Child Return

Representative of the Commissioner for International Cooperation and European Integration Mykhailo Spasov and Representative of the Commissioner for the Rights of the Child Iryna Suslova held a working meeting with **representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Norway Mari Skåre and Sigvald Hauge.**

They discussed the challenges in the process of returning our citizens home, including children, and stressed the need for further international assistance in this matter.



**Iryna Suslova**

Representative (Deputy) of the Commissioner  
for the Rights of the Child

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# ENSURING EDUCATION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE FROM THE TOT

The Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights, Dmytro Lubinets, presented a **Special Report on Access to Education for Children and Youth from the Temporarily Occupied Territories (TOT) of Ukraine** to the Verkhovna Rada Committee on Human Rights, Deoccupation and Reintegration of TOT, National Minorities and Interethnic Relations.

**This is the first Special Report that not only outlines the main problems, but also contains specific indicators of achievement and expected results of the recommendations.**

**The Special Report consists of 7 chapters, which provide 29 recommendations to the central executive authorities to address the urgent problems.**

In particular, they include the establishment of educational centres, improvement of distance learning practices, simplification of entry to the government-controlled territory of Ukraine, approval of the procedure for recognising educational results and other important initiatives to support young people from the TOT.



*Only consolidation of efforts will allow Ukrainians from the temporarily occupied territories to freely receive quality education and successfully adapt to the territory controlled by Ukraine!"* said **Dmytro Lubinets**.



## 25 RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE AUTHORITIES:

### How to Support Ukrainians Abroad And Facilitate Their Return

Only 25% of Ukrainians who were forced to move abroad would like to return to their homeland in the future. The rest either have no definite opinion, plan to stay abroad, or want to live between two countries. **These findings were presented in the analytical report 'Forced Displacement Abroad'**, prepared by the Office of the Ombudsman of Ukraine in partnership with the Council of Europe Office in Ukraine and the Cedos think tank.





**The report reflects the challenges** faced by Ukrainians abroad and **contains recommendations** on how to support our citizens and create conditions for their return.

**Based on the analytical report, 25 recommendations were developed for the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine and nine relevant ministries.**



## UKRAINE'S OMBUDSMAN PRESENTS SPECIAL REPORT ON THE SITUATION IN THE TOT

This is the only large-scale and thorough study to date that systemises everything that is happening in the TOT of Ukraine. **The report does not just record individual violations** – it provides a specific description of the stages and methods of occupation and the tactics and goals behind them. This is an actual exposure of Russia's genocidal policy.

**The document contains specific recommendations for both Ukrainian state institutions and international partners.** Dmytro Lubinets called on all relevant authorities to carefully consider the recommendations and ensure their implementation. **The Ombudsman of Ukraine will personally monitor the implementation of this document!**



**Olga Altunina**

Representative (Deputy) of the Commissioner for the Rights of Citizens who are Victims of Armed Aggression against Ukraine

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# UKRAINE AND DENMARK STRENGTHEN COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN RIGHTS PROTECTION

The Representative (Deputy) of the Commissioner for Social and Economic Rights **Olena Kolobrodova** met with the delegation of the Danish Institute for Human Rights.

She spoke about the work of the Ombudsman's Office in the field of social and economic rights protection, paying special attention to the problems of people with mental health problems. The monitoring revealed the need to update the current legislation on guardianship and custody in line with international standards.



Olena Kolobrodova noted that **the recommendations of the Ukrainian Ombudsman were taken** into account in the Strategy for Reforming Psychoneurological and Other Residential Institutions and Deinstitutionalisation of Care for Adults with Disabilities and Older People until 2034, approved by the Government of Ukraine.

Experts from the Danish Institute for Human Rights **emphasised the importance of mental health, social protection and labour law reforms.**

**Together, we strive to create an effective system of protection for the most vulnerable categories of citizens.**



*This meeting highlights the importance of international cooperation in the field of human rights, particularly in the context of protecting the rights of persons with mental health conditions and other vulnerable groups. This not only helps improve living conditions for the most vulnerable groups of the population but also strengthens the foundation of human rights in Ukraine,”* stated **Dmytro Lubinets**.



**Olena Kolobrodova**

Representative (Deputy) of the Commissioner for Social and Economic Rights

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# WORKING IN THE INTERNATIONAL AREA



The Ombudsman addressed the European Parliament delegation in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. Dmytro Lubinets informed the MPs about the activities of the Ombudsman's Office in Ukraine's European integration processes, in particular, participation in the work on certain draft laws on the way to EU accession and joining bilateral (negotiating) meetings between Ukraine and the EU as part of the official screening of Ukrainian legislation with EU law.

Dmytro Lubinets also raised the issue of the return of all Ukrainians from Russian captivity and deportation. **In this regard, he appealed to the members of the European Parliament to:**

- use all means to put pressure on Russia to release Ukrainians from captivity;
- support Ukraine at all levels, including in the field of human rights protection;
- increase pressure and sanctions against Russia and its officials involved in crimes against Ukrainians.



Ukraine defends not only its independence, but also fights for the freedom and future of the whole of Europe,” summed up **the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights Dmytro Lubinets**.

**Ombudsman of Ukraine Dmytro Lubinets:**

## While working in Geneva:

- Took part in the Annual Meeting of **the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI)**.
- Held a meeting with **ICRC President Mirjana Spoljaric Egger** to discuss the issue of Ukrainian citizens in Russian captivity and systemic violations of Ukrainians' rights by the Russian Federation.
- Signed a Memorandum of Cooperation between the Office of the Ombudsman of Ukraine and **the Danish Institute for Human Rights** (together with the Head of ENNHRI Louise Holk).
- Participated in **the General Assembly of GANHRI**, where he was officially approved as a member of **the Bureau of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI)**.





### While working in the United States:

- Delivered a speech at the event **‘Protecting the Rights and Dignity of Women in Conflict: The Role of the Ombudsman in Combating Violations Against Women Prisoners of War and Civilian Hostages’**.
- Participated in **the presentation of the documentary film ‘Men of Steel’** about the defence of Mariupol and Azovstal.
- Held a series of meetings with **UN representatives** and participated in a thematic event at the **69th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women**.
- Met with **UNICEF Director for Child Protection and Migration Sheema SenGupta** to discuss the return and reintegration of deported Ukrainian children.



## UKRAINE AND THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE: Joint Efforts to Protect Human Rights and Combat Discrimination

A meeting was held with the Council of Europe delegation headed by **Hallvard Gorseth**, Head of the Anti-Discrimination Department, and chaired by **Mykhailo Spasov**, Representative of the Commissioner for International Cooperation and European Integration.

The main topic of the discussion was the challenges of ensuring equality, combating discrimination and protecting vulnerable groups of the population that Ukraine faces under martial law.



- **Respect for the rights of everyone, equality and non-discrimination remain fundamental principles of a democratic society.**



**Mykhailo Spasov**

Representative (Deputy) of the Commissioner  
for International Cooperation and European Integration  
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## THIRD DIALOGUE OF NATIONAL MINORITIES (COMMUNITIES): Cooperation for an Equal Society

On March 12, the Third National Minorities (Communities) Dialogue 'Strengthening the Protection of the Rights of National Minorities (Communities)' was held with the support of the Ombudsman's Office.

The event became an important platform for dialogue with the diplomatic corps on the development of cooperation in the field of protection of the rights of national minorities (communities) and indigenous peoples of Ukraine in the context of war and on the path to European integration.

Representative (Deputy) of the Commissioner Oleksandr Osipov **emphasized the role of the Ombudsman's Office in monitoring, analyzing and responding to cases of discrimination.**

He paid special attention **to cases of hate speech**, in particular, on social media. He also emphasized **the need for coordinated action by state institutions**, including law enforcement officials, to eradicate discriminatory practices in all spheres of public life.



## INTERNATIONAL ROUND TABLE MEETING



On March 4, at the initiative of Business Woman magazine and the public association "World Ukrainians," with the support of the Ombudsman's Office, **an international round table was held on the topic: "Domestic Violence: Legal Protection of Women in Ukraine and Abroad."** The event took place in a hybrid format at the Ombudsman's Office, bringing together over 60 participants from 12 countries.

Oleksandr Osipov, Representative of the Commissioner for Equal Rights and Freedoms, Rights of National Minorities, Political and Religious Beliefs, **outlined the main areas of work of the Ombudsman's Office in protecting individuals who have suffered from domestic violence.**

He also emphasized the issues in the field of prevention and combating violence, as well as highlighted deficiencies in the interaction of responsible structures identified during parliamentary oversight.



**Oleksandr Osipov**

Representative (Deputy) of the Commissioner for Equal Rights and Freedoms, National Minorities, Political and Religious Beliefs

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## STRENGTHENING CONTROL over the Observance of Human Rights in Places of Detention

The Ombudsman's Office **hosted a roundtable discussion** chaired by Vitalii Nikulin, Representative (Deputy) of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights in Places of Detention.

**The main topic of discussion** was the problematic issues and prospects for the implementation of two pilot projects: 'Organization of Interaction of the Secretariat of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights with the Observation Commissions of Regional and District State (Military) Administrations' and 'Regional Groups of the NPM'.

**Interaction between representatives of civil society, public authorities and the Ombudsman's Office creates new tools for monitoring human rights and preventing ill-treatment in places of detention.**

## HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS in Medical Institutions in Places of Detention

In 2024, **within the framework of the National Preventive Mechanism (NPM), the staff of the Secretariat of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights conducted 543 monitoring visits.**

The inspections revealed **serious violations in medical institutions of the State Institution "Health Care Center of the State Criminal Executive Service of Ukraine"** and health care facilities that provide inpatient psychiatric care.

### The main problems:

- Improper storage of medicines.
- Violation of the temperature and humidity conditions in the air where medicines are stored.
- Lack of checking of measuring devices.
- Insufficient number of necessary equipment: refrigerators, shelves, cabinets.
- Identification of expired medicines and medical devices.
- Lack of medicines according to the National List of Essential Medicines.

In addition, **at the initiative of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights**, in 2024 the State Service of Ukraine on Medicines and Drugs Control conducted unscheduled inspections of compliance with the quality requirements for medicines in places of detention.



*Medical care should be accessible and of high quality for everyone, regardless of status. Healthcare is not a privilege, but a basic right that must be ensured at all times and everywhere," summarized the Ombudsman of Ukraine Dmytro Lubinets.*



**Vitalii Nikulin**

Representative (Deputy) of the Commissioner  
for Human Rights in Places of Detention

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# REFORMING THE PERSONAL DATA PROTECTION SYSTEM:

## What are the Main Steps Taken?

Two years have passed since the representatives of the Ombudsman's Office took part in the International Data Protection Conference in Warsaw, where they discussed **the need to reform the Ukrainian legislation in the field of personal data protection** together with EU experts, representatives of the business community and Ukrainian government agencies.

During this time, the Secretariat of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights has made significant steps in implementing European standards and strengthening personal data protection of Ukrainian citizens.



### What has been done over the past two years?

- **Developed updated legislation:** The draft law “On the Protection of Personal Data” № 8153, which complies with GDPR standards and Convention 108+, received positive assessments from international experts.
- **Expanded international cooperation:** The Ombudsman's Office actively participates in meetings of the Consultative Committee of Convention 108, the European Data Protection Board (EDPB), and annual CEEDPA meetings, presenting Ukraine's achievements in reforming the personal data protection sector.
- **Strengthened oversight of personal data processing:** Regular monitoring of compliance with personal data protection legislation is conducted among government bodies and businesses.
- **Increased awareness among citizens and businesses:** A national campaign continues to inform citizens about their rights in the field of personal data. In cooperation with the Council of Europe and EdEra, an online course titled “Personal Data Protection” was created. A series of trainings was held for civil servants, businesses, law enforcement agencies, and judges on compliance with GDPR and national legislation.

**We continue our work and cooperation to implement European standards of personal data protection in Ukraine.**



**Yuliia Derkachenko**

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for Information Rights

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## **PAYMENT FOR FORCED ABSENTEEISM:** **Court Decision Enforced**

**A citizen appealed** to the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights for assistance in proper enforcement of a court decision on payment of average earnings for forced absenteeism.

**In order to restore the applicant's right** to proper enforcement of the court decision, inquiries were sent to the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine, the Left Bank Administration of the Dnipro City Council.

As a result, the Left Bank Administration of the Dnipro City Council **informed the applicant that it would pay the balance of over UAH 469 thousand** for forced absenteeism based on the court decision of the Dnipro Court of Appeal.

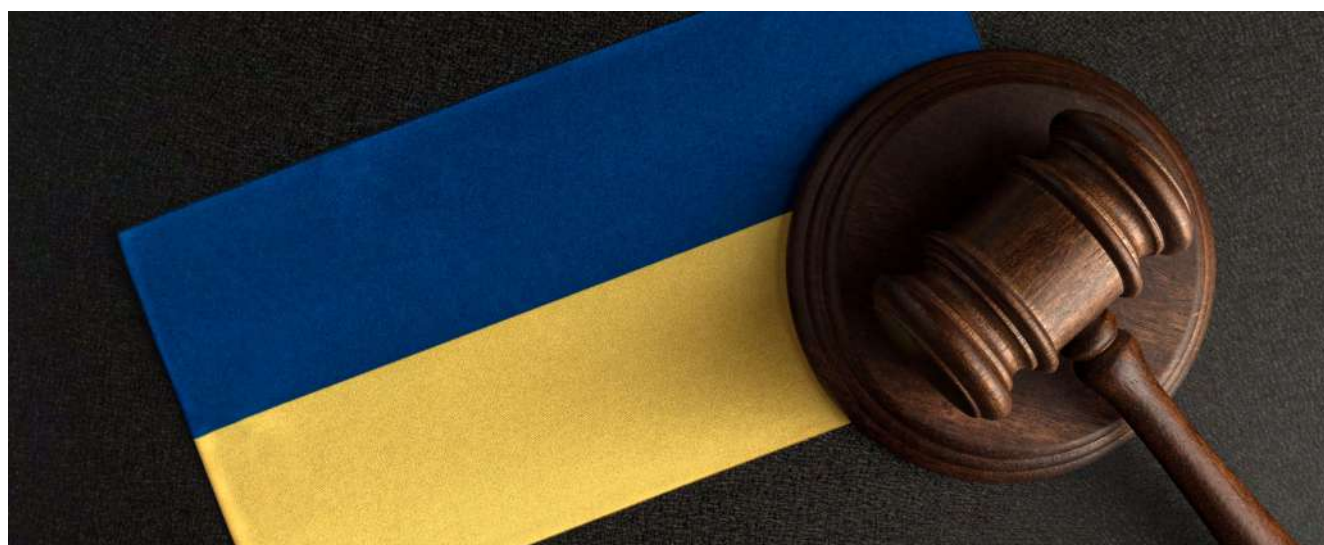
## **THE PRISONER'S RIGHT TO PENSION WAS RESTORED**

**A prisoner** held in custody in one of the pre-trial detention facilities in Zakarpattia region **appealed** to the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights.

The applicant reported that since 2005 he had been registered with the Main Department of the Pension Fund of Ukraine in Kyiv region and received a pension through JSC "Ukrposhta". At the same time, the applicant noted that since December 2023, the payment of his pension payment had been suspended.

**Pursuant to the request** of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights **to restore the right to pension benefits**, the Pension Fund of Ukraine resumed his pension payments in March 2025, with additional payments of the difference from the date of termination of these payments.

**Following the response of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights, the prisoner's right to a pension was restored.**



**Andrii Ovsienko**

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# EXPANDING OUR WORK IN THE REGIONS OF UKRAINE

The first regional center for the Protection of Children's Rights in Ukraine was opened in Rivne region

The Center was opened with the **assistance of the Republic of Korea and the Korea International Cooperation Agency**. Ambassador of Korea to Ukraine Mr. Park Kichang personally joined the event.

The Child Rights Protection Center in Rivne region is **a barrier-free and accessible space aimed at supporting children**, which operates on the Barnahus model, which will allow for more effective protection and assistance to children.



In addition to the children's space, **there are areas for working with the public, a reception area and workplaces for the regional office staff**. A separate area has been created for the Office's international partners who are on a business trip to Rivne region. **The space will become a platform for cooperation with the public.**





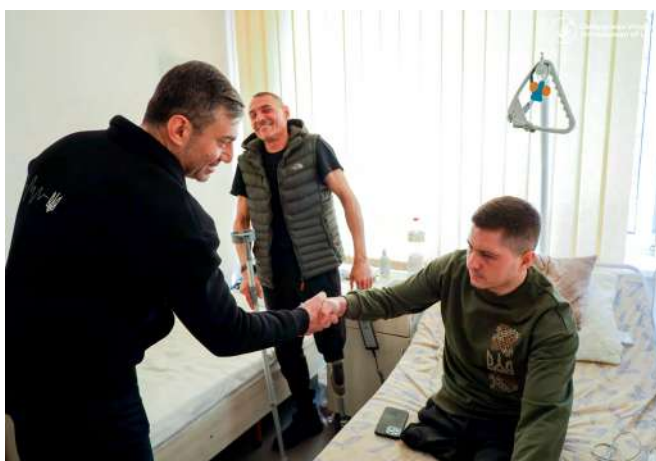
While working in Rivne region, Ombudsman of Ukraine Mr. Dmytro Lubinets also visited the Regional Military Hospital and familiarized himself with the conditions in which servicemen, including released prisoners of war, are treated.



*Civilians will also receive help here. This is one of the leading medical institutions in Ukraine specializing in the treatment of neurotrauma, musculoskeletal disorders and rehabilitation after traumatic brain injuries,” said the Ombudsman of Ukraine.*

**Mr. Dmytro Lubinets talked to the hospital’s management and doctors who fight for the health of our defenders every day, as well as to the Defenders themselves.**

The hospital is actively introducing modern rehabilitation techniques: robotic simulators and even virtual reality. Patients are also prepared for life after rehabilitation.







## UKRAINE UNDER FIRE: Russian Crimes

The enemy is mercilessly attacking Ukrainian cities and villages, killing civilians and children, destroying homes and critical infrastructure.

On the night of March 23, Kyiv suffered one of the most insidious attacks: for 5 hours, the enemy targeted residential areas while the city was sleeping. **Three people were killed.** Another 10 people were injured, the youngest of whom was only 11 months old.



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In the photo, Nicol and Oleksandr Haiaranski are a father and daughter whose lives were cut short by the Russian attack on Kyiv on March 23, 2025.

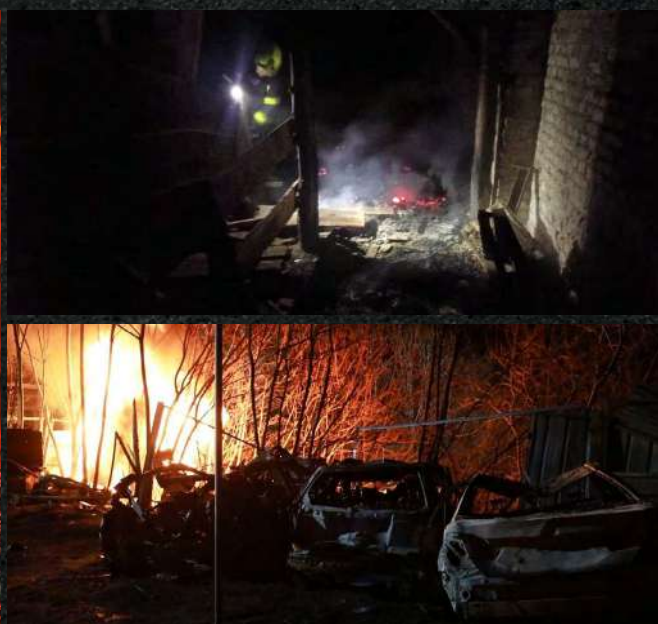
Fleeing the war, the family moved to Kyiv from Zaporizhzhia region.

On March 24, a Russian strike on Sumy City injured more than 90 people, including 23 children. Residential buildings and a school were damaged.





On March 26-27, Russia launched a massive attack on peaceful Ukrainian cities. **At least 12 people were injured in Kharkiv alone!** Residential buildings, businesses, educational and cultural institutions were damaged.



Cherkasy, Kherson, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, Dnipro, Sumy, Kharkiv – all of them have been hit by Russian bombs, drones, and artillery. Civilians are suffering every day.



Issue No.3, 2025

Russian aggression leads to the deaths of not only people but also a huge number of animals. The flora and fauna of Ukraine is systematically affected.

For example, on the night of March 3, animals died as a result of a Russian drone strike **on the Feldman – Ecopark near Kharkiv.**







[moscowconvention.com](http://moscowconvention.com)





# PEOPLE ARE THE MOST VALUABLE THING!

Russia violates human rights in Ukraine on a large scale!



**4,306**

people released  
from Russian  
captivity

including →

**171**

civilians

**≈ 63,000**

people missing under  
special circumstances

\*Data from the Register of Persons Missing in Special Circumstances

**12,654**

civilians  
killed

**29,392**

civilians  
wounded

\*According to the UN Human Rights  
Monitoring Mission in Ukraine

**606**

children killed

**1,846**

children wounded

**2,071**

missing children

\*According to the Children of War information portal

**1,256**

children  
returned  
by Ukraine  
(including from TOT)

including →

**388**

deported children,  
according to the  
Children of War  
information platform

**4.6  
million**

people  
became IDPs

**6.5  
million**

people sought  
refuge abroad

Issue No.3, 2025

## SHELLING OF CIVILIAN INFRASTRUCTURE

Russia destroys residential buildings, educational and medical institutions

**3,798**

destroyed  
and damaged  
educational facilities

including →

**1,313**

destroyed  
and damaged  
kindergartens

\*According to saveschools.in.ua

**1,984**

destroyed  
and damaged  
destroyed  
healthcare facilities

including →

**428**

hospitals

**352**

ambulatories

**645**

destroyed  
religious  
buildings

**2,205**

destroyed  
cultural  
objects

**≈ 250,000**

destroyed or  
damaged houses

**≈ 139 thousand  
square kilometers**

of Ukraine's territory are  
considered potentially mined

\*Data as of the late  
March 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**



## Dmytro LUBINETS

**Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner  
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