

Photo: Associated Press

WAR IN UKRAINE. VIOLATIONS OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW:

DIGEST OF EVENTS FOR THE PERIOD FROM 14 TO 25 MARCH 2022

On February 24, 2022, Russia, with the support of Belarus, launched a new phase of the war against Ukraine, carrying out an unprecedented large-scale invasion of our country.

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THE EASTERN UKRAINIAN CENTER FOR CIVIC INITIATIVES



The team of the **Eastern Ukrainian Center for Civic Initiatives (EUCCI)** continues the work it began in 2014 to collect and document violations of international humanitarian law (IHL) during the ongoing armed conflict, with a view to further submitting relevant materials to the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC), the Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine, the international commissions of inquiry, whose mandates cover the collection, documentation and preparation for legal proceedings relating to human rights violations and war crimes, as well as to other international organizations concerned with safeguarding fundamental rights.

We anticipate that the results of our work and the information shared will also be of use to representatives of international organizations, journalists and a wide range of citizens interested in the course of the armed conflict and with a concern to establish the facts of violations of human rights law and IHL.

Both sides of the international armed conflict must comply with the Geneva Conventions of 1949, Additional Protocol I from 1977 to the Geneva Conventions of 1949, the Hague Convention on the Laws and Customs of Land Warfare of 1907, customary international law (including customary IHL), and their obligations under international human rights law. At the same time, not all acts committed by the parties to the conflict are violations of international law and / or war crimes or crimes against humanity. In order to inform the interested public as to the crimes committed, and to clarify the legal grounds on the basis of which a particular act should be considered a violation of international law, we publish this digest.

VIOLATION OF THE PRINCIPLE OF DISTINCTION: CIVILIANS AND COMBATANTS; CIVILIAN TARGETS AND MILITARY TARGETS. INDISCRIMINATE ATTACKS

Over the past two weeks, the Russian armed forces have continued to ignore IHL and, in violation of the principle of distinction, have attacked both civilians and civilian objects. The number of indiscriminate attacks has remained extremely high.

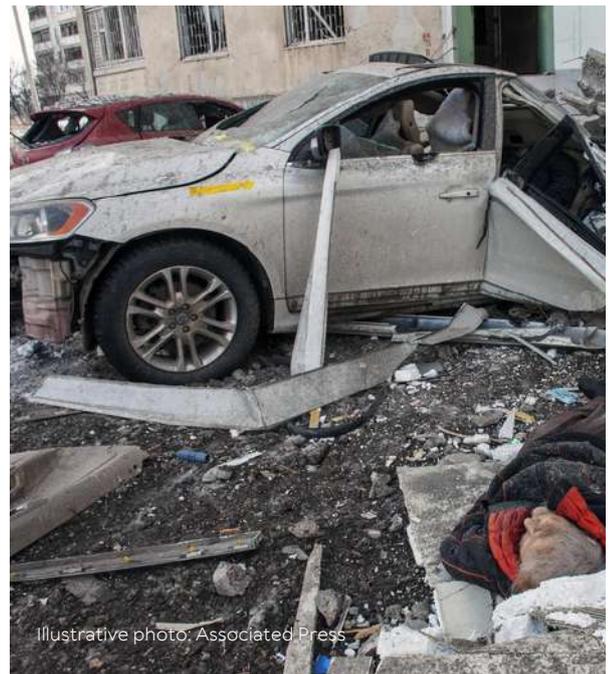
EXAMPLES:

On March 14, it was reported that the well-known Ukrainian physicist, Vasyi Kladko, was unlawfully killed in Vorzel, Kyiv region.

On March 15, a civilian evacuation convoy from Hostomel came under fire. At least 1 person was killed.

On March 15, the shelling of a civilian evacuation bus from Rubizhne (Luhansk region) took place. There were no casualties. In addition, in the city of Rubizhne a boarding school for the visually impaired, a hospital and other three schools were attacked more or less simultaneously. In total, 4 people died in these attacks.

On March 15, the Fox News photojournalist Pierre Zakrzewski was killed in Gorenka, Kyiv region. Along with him, Ukrainian Oleksandra Kuvshinova, who accompanied the film crew, also died. Another person was injured in the attack.



On March 16, Russian troops launched an artillery strike on a convoy of civilians heading along a designated humanitarian corridor from Mariupol to Zaporizhia. Five people were reported injured, including one child left in a critical condition.

On March 16, the Drama Theater building in besieged Mariupol was subject to an airstrike. At the time of the attack, the theatre's bomb shelter was sheltering civilians (mostly women, children and the elderly). The theatre building was almost completely destroyed. According to the Mariupol city administration, about 300 people were killed. There is no information yet about the number of dead and injured.

On March 16, the Russian military launched a missile and bomb attack on the recently renovated Neptune Swimming Pool building in Mariupol, which was used as a shelter by the city's civilian population. The building of the swimming pool is almost completely destroyed, and the number of dead and injured is still unknown.

On March 16, ten (and according to other sources, fourteen) civilians waiting in line for bread were killed in a probable rocket attack in the Chernihiv residential district.

On March 17, a shelter for mothers with children was shelled in Severodonetsk, Luhansk Region. According to preliminary information on the attack, there were no casualties.

It was reported on **March 18** that earlier in the month, on March 1, tanks of the Russian armed forces deliberately fired on cars carrying civilians (including women and children). This incident took place on the Zhytomyr highway. Two women were seriously injured. There were also seven children in the car (whether they were injured or unharmed has not been reported to date).



Illustrative photo: Pavel Dorogoy

On March 18, it was reported that on March 11, in the town of Kreminna in the Luhansk region, a tank of the Russian military opened fire on a nursing home, leading to the death of 56 people at the scene. Another 15 survived and, according to certain reports, were relocated by the Russian military to the occupied town of Svatove in the Luhansk region, where a regional geriatric care facility was located before the large-scale Russian invasion.

On March 19, the Russian military launched a rocket attack on the building of the Art School No. 12 in Mariupol, which was being used by residents as a shelter. The school building was destroyed, and the number of dead and wounded is still unknown.



On March 21, in Severodonetsk the armed forces of the Russian Federation opened fire on a children's hospital. Rescuers from the State Emergency Service of Ukraine promptly evacuated 7 children and 15 adults, including 8 doctors.

On March 22, the Russian military carried out the indiscriminate shelling of Severodonetsk. One of the shells launched hit a queue of people lining up for products as a local grocery store. According to preliminary data, at least 1 person died immediately, whilst more than 10 with injuries of varying severity remain in hospital.

On March 24, the Russian armed forces fired long-range weapons at a residential area in Kharkiv. A shell hit a queue of people wanted near one of the city's newly established posts for distributing humanitarian aid. According to preliminary data, 6 people were killed and 15 others were injured.

There have been cases of the Russian armed forces using the presence of civilians to protect themselves from hostilities.

EXAMPLE:

On March 15, the Russian military set up positions in the building of the Regional Intensive Care Hospital in Mariupol. At that time, doctors, patients and residents of nearby houses were in the hospital and were forbidden to leave the hospital by the Russian forces.



EXPLANATORY NOTE ON VIOLATIONS

Violations concerning the distinction between civil objects and military objects (Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, Articles 48, 52, Customary IHL, Norms 1, 7).

The protection of civilian objects ceases when these objects are used for military purposes. Precautions in the event of an attack include, but are not limited to, those planning or deciding to carry out the attack should do everything possible to ensure that the targets of the attack are neither civilians nor civilian objects and are not subject to special protection, but are military objects (Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, Article 57, Customary IHL, Rule 16).

Non-selective attacks, in particular attacks that are not aimed at a specific military purpose, or attacks that use methods or means of warfare that cannot be aimed at a specific military purpose, are prohibited.

In case of doubt as to whether an object normally used for civilian purposes, such as places of worship, housing, school, is not used for effective support of hostilities, it is assumed that such object is used for civilian purposes (Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions of August 12, 1949, Article 52).

Intentional attacks on the civilian population or on individual civilians, intentional attacks on civilian objects, the use of the presence of a civilian to protect against hostilities, and certain other related acts committed during an international armed conflict are war crimes within the meaning of Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC Statute, Article 8).



* **FURTHER NOTE**

As of March 19, 2022, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) has information on 2,361 victims in Ukraine: numbering 902 dead, and 1,459 wounded. The dead include 179 men, 134 women, 11 girls and 25 boys, as well as 39 children and 514 adults whose gender is still unknown. 156 men, 117 women, 22 girls and 16 boys, as well as 60 children and 1,088 adults, whose gender is still unknown, were injured.

OHCHR notes that the actual numbers of victims are higher, but the relevant information needs to be verified.

ATTACKS ON OBJECTS UNDER SPECIAL PROTECTION: HIGH-RISK FACILITIES AND INSTALLATIONS

Over the past two weeks, the Russian armed forces have continued to threaten high-risk facilities and installations.

EXAMPLES:

On March 14, the power line that supplied the Chernobyl nuclear power plant was damaged. In addition, close to the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant's Unit 1 (NPP), the Russian military detonated mines that did not explode during the fighting.

On March 16, the Russian military made an unsuccessful advance in the direction of the South Ukraine Nuclear Power Plant.

On March 21, the chemical products facility PJSC Sumykhimprom was shelled and a storage tank containing ammonia was damaged. This led to a subsequent leak of ammonia at the facility.



Illustrative photo: Erem Lukatsky



Illustrative photo: Felipe Dana

EXPLANATORY NOTE ON VIOLATIONS

According to international humanitarian law (IHL), installations and structures containing dangerous forces, such as dams and nuclear power plants, should not be attacked if such an attack could cause the release of dangerous forces and subsequently lead to heavy casualties among the civilian population. Attacks are prohibited even if such facilities are military facilities (Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, Art. 56). During attacks on high-risk structures and installations, special attention should be paid to avoiding the release of dangerous forces and excessive casualties among the civilian population during such attacks (Customary IHL, Rule 42).



Illustrative photo: Evgeniy Maloletka

At the same time, the ban on attacks on these objects is not absolute. For example, special protection against an attack on a nuclear power plant is terminated if the nuclear power plant generates electricity for regular substantial and direct support of military operations and if such an attack is the only practical means by which to stop such support.

It is clear that Ukrainian nuclear power plants are purely civilian in status and are not supporting military activities. There are no military facilities within the vicinity of the NPP in Zaporizhzhia. The consequences of hostilities near such power stations, inducing the risk of damage to their infrastructure, is in most cases highly unpredictable and thus poses an exceptional danger.

A deliberate attack on a nuclear power plant committed during an international armed conflict is a war crime within the meaning of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC Statute, Article 8, paragraph 2 (b) (ii), (iv)).



Illustrative photo: Emilio Morenatti



Photo: Felipe Dana

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DESTRUCTION AND SEIZURE OF PROPERTY, LOOTING

Numerous reports of destruction, seizure and/or looting of civilian property continue in almost all of the settlements currently occupied. Regarding these incidents, several examples are given below.

EXAMPLES:

On March 14, it was reported that Russian forces were responsible for looting of artefacts from the Vasylivka Historical and Architectural Museum-Reserve (also known as the "Popov Manor House") in Vasyliv district of the Zaporizhia region. Before the looting, the museum had been shelled.

On March 21, it was reported that five grain-laden ships had disappeared from the Berdyansk sea trade port. It was reported that they had been observed being removed to an unknown destination by Russian tug boats.



EXPLANATORY NOTE ON VIOLATIONS

IHL rules prohibit such acts of theft and robbery. Any destruction by the Occupying Power of real or personal property belonging individually or collectively to private persons, or to the State, or to other public authorities, or to social or cooperative organizations, is prohibited, except where such destruction is rendered absolutely necessary by military operations. (Fourth Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949, Art. 53, Customary IHL, Norms 49-51).

Illegal, senseless or large-scale destruction and misappropriation of property not required by military necessity, looting of settlements, as well as other related acts committed during international armed conflict constitute war crimes within the meaning of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. 8).

HUNGER AND RESTRICTIONS ON ACCESS TO HUMANITARIAN AID

The blockade of Mariupol by Russian troops continues, which continues to be inhabited by a civilian population of around 300-400,000 people. Despite the fact that the Russian forces have begun to allow part of the population to leave by their own transport in the direction of Berdyansk-Zaporozhye, a large number of residents still cannot leave the city. Humanitarian cargo and buses for the organized evacuation of people to the city are not allowed. The city has no centralized water supply (including drinking water), nor electricity or heating. It is no longer possible to purchase food. The situation in the city is therefore critical, with reports circulating that the civilian population risks famine. As such, the reported behaviour of the armed forces of the Russian Federation gives grounds to claim that there are signs of the use of hunger among the civilian population as a method of warfare.

Other defending towns and cities are in a similar situation: for example, in Chernihiv, Sumy, Izyum. There exists a critical humanitarian situation in Slavutych (Kyiv region), and in the communities of other occupied settlements such as Ivankiv, Dymersk, Polissya (and indeed in many other settlements where humanitarian aid has not been permitted).

EXAMPLE:

On March 14, Russian forces bombed a water utility company's pumping stations in Chernihiv. Four people were reported killed.



Illustrative photo: Evgeniy Maloletka



Illustrative photo: Lynsey Addario

EXPLANATORY NOTE ON VIOLATIONS

The parties to the conflict must authorize and facilitate the rapid and unhindered flow of humanitarian assistance to civilians in need, provided that such assistance is provided, is impartial, carried out without discrimination and is subject to control by the parties to the conflict (Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, Article 54, Customary IHL, Rules 53-56).

Deliberately starving civilians as a means of waging war by depriving them of their necessities for survival, including intentionally obstructing assistance as provided for in the Geneva Conventions, is a war crime within the meaning of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ISS Statute, Article 8).





Illustrative photo: Petros Giannakouris

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DEPORTATION AND FORCIBLE TRANSFER OF CIVILIANS TO THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

Over the past two weeks, the first reports of Ukrainian civilians being moved out of Russian-occupied territory have begun to appear on the Internet. Some of these reports are currently difficult to verify, but the likelihood of such developments appears to be quite high.

EXAMPLES:

On March 18, a photo of a list of people allegedly taken from a military camp in Hostomel, Kyiv region, to the Republic of Belarus appeared.

On March 19, the Mariupol City Council reported that several thousand Mariupol residents had been deported by the Russian military to Russia in the past week (from the Russian-controlled Left Bank district of the city).



Illustrative photo: Andriy Dubchak

On March 21, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine issued a statement on the illegal deportation of Ukrainian children to Russia. The statement said that on March 19, Russian occupation forces deported 2,389 children to the Russian Federation who had been in the temporarily occupied districts of Donetsk and Luhansk regions.



Illustrative photo: Associated Press

EXPLANATORY NOTE ON VIOLATIONS

It is prohibited, regardless of the motives, to carry out forced individual or mass resettlement or deportation of protected persons from the occupied territory to the territory of the occupying state or to the territory of any other state, regardless of whether it is occupied or not. However, the occupying Power may carry out a general or partial evacuation from a certain territory if this is necessary to ensure the safety of the population or for particularly compelling military reasons. Such evacuations may not involve the movement of protected persons outside the occupied territory, except for material reasons (the Fourth Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949, Article 49, Customary IHL, Rule 129).

Deliberate deportation or relocation of all or part of the population of the occupied territory within or outside the territory in violation of Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention is considered a serious violation of international humanitarian law (Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, Art. 85) and war crime within the meaning of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC Statute, Article 8, paragraph 2 (b) (viii)).

SEXUAL VIOLENCE

The first reports of sexual violence by combatants are beginning to appear.

EXAMPLES:

On March 18, the media published a letter from the Representative of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights, dated 18 March 2022, stating that since the beginning of Russia's armed aggression (apparently referring to the period from February 24, 2022), the Ombudsperson's 24-hour hotline for violent crimes had received reports pertaining to violations committed by servicemen of the Russian armed forces, in particular, sexual violence. The details within the letter have not to date been reported.

On March 22, the Prosecutor General of Ukraine, Iryna Venediktova, stated that Ukrainian law enforcement had reported the first allegation of raping a woman by a Russian serviceman. Members of the Russian military reportedly killed an unarmed man and raped his wife. The crime was committed in one of the villages of Brovary district (Kyiv region).

✦ CONTEXT RELATING TO SUCH VIOLATIONS

Women shall be especially protected against any attack on their honour, in particular against rape, enforced prostitution, or any form of indecent assault. (IV Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949, Art. 27). Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, Art. 76).

In Resolution 3318 (XXIX) of 14 December 1974, the UN General Assembly proclaimed the Declaration on the Protection of Women and Children in Emergencies and Armed Conflict, calling on UN Member States to make every effort to protect women and children from the devastating effects of war, seek to ban measures such as torture, degrading treatment and violence.

The widespread or systematic practice of rape and any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity is a crime against humanity as defined in Article 7 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC Statute, Article 7, paragraph 1 (g)).

Rape is also considered a war crime according to the Rome Statute (ICC Statute, Article 8, paragraph 2 (b) (xxii)).

Sexual violence in the context of the armed conflict has been widespread in various forms since 2014, from the very beginning of Russia's armed aggression against Ukraine, as **EUCCI** has repeatedly **reported** in its publications, research and other materials. See, for example, the report "**War without Rules: Gender-Based Violence in the Context of the Armed Conflict in Eastern Ukraine**". For further information, see also: <https://totalaction.org.ua/books>.



Illustrative photo: Vadim Ghirda

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FORCED DISAPPEARANCES AND ARBITRARY IMPRISONMENT

The practice of illegal detentions of the Russian armed forces and the detention of civilians, including journalists in connection with their professional activities, is becoming more widespread. The following are examples of detentions known to us.

✱ The dates of the detentions, the names of the victims and the circumstances of the detentions may be inaccurate.

EXAMPLES:

On March 14, Russian forces in the occupied city of Berdyansk detained a priest of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine, Oleh Nikolaev. His house was searched.

On March 15, Russian forces in Berdyansk detained journalist Victoria Roshchina. According to Hromadske, a digital broadcasting station in Ukraine, they lost contact with their correspondent on March 12, a day after the journalist is thought to have travelled from Zaporizhia towards Mariupol.

On March 15, there were reports of mass detentions of civilians in occupied Boromlya and Trostyanets (Sumy region) by Russian forces.

On March 15, the village head of Chulakivka (Kherson region), Oleksandr Musienko, stated that the Russian military was holding him hostage in the village council building.

On March 15, public activist Vitaliy Shevchenko was detained after a rally in Berdyansk. Several other activists, whose names are not yet known, were also detained by Russian forces.

On March 15, the Russian military detained six staff members and volunteers at the Bucha City Council, including Dmitry Gapchenko, the city council's chief of staff.

On March 15, Maksym Negrov, a public figure from Kherson and director of the business Tavriya Park, was detained by Russian forces.



On March 16, the Russian military detained Oleksandr Yakovlev, the mayor of occupied Skadovsk, and his deputy, Yuri Palyukh.

On March 17, the Russian military detained the head of the Velykoburlutsky community (Kharkiv region), Viktor Tereshchenko. The man was detained at the local police station.

On March 18, it was reported that Russians forces had detained Novaya Kakhovka City Council Secretary Dmitry Vasiliev. According to his wife, the man has been detained for more than two days in the basement of a local police station used by Russians as a "commandant's office."

On March 20, the Russian forces detained the first deputy mayor of Enerhodar, Ivan Samoidyuk.

On March 20, in the village of Andriivka, Mykhailo-Kotsyubynska community (Chernihiv region), the Russian military detained village head Mykola Budalovsky and local deputy school principal Tetyana Bezlyudna. There were also reports regarding the detention of the head of the village Gremyach (Novgorod-Siverskaya community), who it is thought was deported to Russia. In the village of Nova Basan, the community has reported the abduction of two local government employees (this information may be inaccurate).

On March 20, the Russian military detained a civilian, Roman Shulga, in the building of the EcoSpace Hotel (Tolokun village, Vyshhorod district, Kyiv region).

Oleksandr Ponomarev, a businessman and People's Deputy of Ukraine, was abducted by Russian troops between **March 20 and 23** in Berdyansk. According to preliminary data, the man took part in the work of the humanitarian headquarters in Berdyansk, and as of March 20, any contact with him has been lost.

On March 21, in the Kharkiv region, Russians forces detained Mykola Sikalenko, head of the village of Tsyrykuny. In Melitopol, the journalists Yulia Olkhovska and Lyubov Chaika, publisher Mykhailo Kumko and his wife, and Melitopolski Vedomosti editor Yevhen Boryan, were also detained.

On March 21, the director of the Chornyansky Lyceum school, Viktor Kudlay, was abducted from his home by the Russian military in the Tavriya community (Kherson region).



Illustrative photo: Felipe Dana



Illustrative photo: Associated Press

On March 21 (approximate date) in the Holoprystanska community (Kherson region) the head of the village disappeared without trace. Stara Zbur'ivka Marunyak resident, Viktor Marunyak and a local resident of the village of Nova Zbur'ivka (name not reported) also went missing.

On March 21, it was reported that on 19 March 19 the Russian military detained Berislav's mayor, Oleksandr Shapovalov, and also an unnamed local activist. Kherson Regional State Administration has noted that information regarding the detention and abduction of government officials, activists, and other public figures is being made available to the administration from all over the region, and on a daily basis.

On March 22, the Russian military abducted a resident of Kakhovka, Mykola Shakhayev, born in 1985, from his own apartment.

On March 22, the Russian military detained Igor Prusayev, born in 1999, of Kakhovka.



Illustrative photo: Emilio Morenatti

On March 23, the Russian military abducted Oleksandr Knyga, director general of the Kherson Regional Music Drama Theatre, president of the Melpomene Tavria International Theater Festival, and chairman of the Eurasian Theatre Association.

On March 23, the Russian military abducted 75-year-old Yosyp Zalizetsky, the father of Melitopol journalist and editor-in-chief of the newspaper "Glavnya Gazeta Melitopolya" Svitlana Zalizetskaya.

On March 24, in the village of Staraya Zbur'ivka, Holoprystanska community (Kherson region), the Russian military detained several villagers, including a doctor at a local outpatient clinic. The names of the detainees are not reported.

Earlier it was reported that Zaporizhzhya regional council deputy Leyla Ibragimova, Melitopol mayor Ivan Fedorov, Kakhovka journalist Oleh Baturin, Melitopol public activist Olga Haisumova, Melitopol district council chairman Serhiy Priymi, Dniprorudny mayor Yevhen Matveyev, and Ivankovo mayor Tetyana Sviridenko, rescuer Oleksiy Danchenko, resident of Vorzel Dmytro Samoktal, and the activist from Nova Kakhovka Serhiy Tsygip were detained and/or kidnapped.

Some of all the people listed above were later released, the whereabouts of others are unknown.



EXPLANATORY NOTE ON VIOLATIONS

Forced disappearance and arbitrary imprisonment (Customary IHL, norms 98, 99), directed against civilians, are prohibited.

The IHL considers journalists as civilians and thus they enjoy the protection of the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 and the Additional Protocols thereto, provided that such persons do not take any action incompatible with their status as civilians (subject to the right of military correspondents for the status of prisoners of war). They have the right, in particular, but not exclusively, in all circumstances, to respect for their identity, honour, family rights and the right to humane treatment, in particular, they must be protected from any acts of violence or intimidation. The widespread or systematic practice of enforced disappearances, imprisonment or other cruel deprivation of liberty in violation of fundamental international law is a crime against humanity as defined in Article 7 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC Statute, Art. 7, para. 1 (e), (i)).

Unlawful deprivation of liberty, hostage-taking and certain other related acts are also considered a war crime within the meaning of the Rome Statute (ICC Statute, Article 8, paragraph 2 (a) (vii) (viii)).

The practice of illegal detention and detention of civilians, including journalists, in connection with their professional activities has been widespread since 2014, from the very beginning of Russia's armed aggression against Ukraine, as **reported** by **EUCCI** and other human rights organizations in their publications, research and other materials. See, for example, **EUCCI's** website and reports: <https://totalaction.org.ua/books>.

On March 20, it was announced that a National Information Bureau had been set up in Ukraine to deal with prisoners of war, the dead, missing persons and abducted civilians. The Bureau's website should be fully operational in the near future (see further: <https://nib.gov.ua/uk/>). Thus far, only basic information can be found on the website, in particular, the contact telephone numbers of the Bureau.

Nothing is known for sure about the creation/functioning of a similar organization in Russia.

Related information to the establishment of the Bureau: *the Convention for the Treatment of Prisoners of War and the Convention for the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War (Third Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949, Art. 122, and Fourth Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949, Art. 136, p. 136, respectively) provide that, from the outset of the conflict and in all cases of occupation, each of the parties to the conflict shall establish a formal Bureau of Help (1) for prisoners of war under its authority; (2) to be entrusted with the collection and transmission of information on persons under its auspices and under its authority. Ukraine has therefore made efforts to fulfil its obligations under the Geneva Conventions and would appear to expect compliance with the relevant convention requirements by the Russian authorities.*

REFERENCES/NOTES

Since 2014, **EUCCI** has been documenting human rights violations committed during the war in Ukraine. The **EUCCI** team underwent a series of specialized training, where they learned how to properly collect, process and store testimonies of victims. During 2014-2021, the **EUCCI's** interviewers visited almost every city in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts (in the government-controlled areas) to gather hundreds of first-hand reports of human rights violations. **EUCCI** collected information on gross human rights violations caused by the armed conflict, including:

- illegal detention and detention;
- inhuman treatment;
- torture;
- involvement of minors in organized armed groups
- sexual and gender-based violence.

EUCCI offers victims free legal aid in the form of consultations and support in court cases.

Despite the new challenges posed by the large-scale Russian invasion, we continue our human rights work. We urge all victims and witnesses of human rights violations and/or IHL to report such violations to us:

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