



General Assembly

Distr.: General
13 June 2023

English only

Human Rights Council

Fifty-second session

27 February–31 March 2023

Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Written statement* submitted by Institute for Human Rights, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[6 February 2023]

* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



Children In Ukraine Are At Risk

Institute for Human Rights (IHR) warmly welcomes the annual report on children and armed conflict by the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children. The IHR highly evaluates and especially applauds the Special Representative's attention to the impact of the war on children.

The IHR is gravely concerned about the current compliance of children's rights with international norms during the ongoing war on the territory of Ukraine. While the essence of "childhood" is protected by a variety of declarations and conventions, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, UN Charter, Convention on the Rights of the Child, Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, etc; the world is currently witnessing the impudent and brutal act of aggression against the basic human rights and fundamental freedoms conducted by the Russian Federation since it waged unprovoked and unjustified war in Ukraine with the launch of a full-scale invasion on 24 February 2022. According to the report made by UNICEF on 24 March 2022, only during the first month of the war, 4.3 million children - more than half of the country's estimated 7.5 million child population - were forced to flee in order to escape Russian atrocities. The UNICEF Executive Director Catherine Russell said: "The war has caused one of the fastest large-scale displacements of children since World War II. This is a grim milestone that could have lasting consequences for generations to come. Children's safety, well-being, and access to essential services are all under threat from non-stop violence."

The IHR is deeply concerned about the scope of horrors that Ukrainian children have to face on a daily basis. The Russian Federation's continuing attacks on critical energy infrastructure in Ukraine in the period of major temperature drop have reached every child in the country, leaving them without sustained access to electricity, heating, and water. On its official website OHCHR provides weekly statistics of civilian casualties, stating that as of 30 January 2023, approximately 438 children were being killed as a result of Russian Forces' indiscriminate use of heavy weaponry, torture, and sexual harassment. On 12 December 2022, the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine (HRMMU) published an update on the situation in Ukraine, in which it has been mentioned that children in Ukraine are being the most vulnerable victims of the Russian Federation's conflict-related sexual violence acts of aggression, permanent targets of abduction and forced deportation. Moreover, since the beginning of the war of aggression waged by the Russian Federation against Ukraine, more than 501 educational facilities and 261 educational facilities were damaged or completely destroyed, having disrupted education for more than five million children and leaving those who require stable access to healthcare – children, women in need of perinatal care and persons with vulnerabilities - being particularly affected. In the report on the situation of human rights in Ukraine in the context of the armed attack by the Russian Federation, covering the events from 24 February to 15 May 2022, issued on 29 June 2022 OHCHR officially established the accountability of Russian troops for the air strike launched on 9 March, which led to the destruction of the Hospital No.3 and injuring of 17 civilians, one of whom was a woman at a very late stage of pregnancy.

The list of the Russian Federation war crimes is inexhaustible. The figures for civilian casualties have reached a number of 18,657. But what makes it more devastating is a comprehension that there is a personal story – someone's precious life being viciously torn apart behind each number.

With this being said, the IHR urges an immediate consideration of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on conducting urgent research on the grave violations of children's rights and the influence on the further minors' well-being.