



United States Mission to the OSCE

The Russian Federation's Ongoing Aggression Against Ukraine

As delivered by Chargé d'Affaires Katherine Brucker
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
October 24, 2024

"I was... taken out for execution about five times... They would make you kneel, grab you by the collar, your hands tied behind your back, hit you under the knees... They would point a gun to your head, pull the trigger, shooting near your ear. Then, they would lift you up and take you back to your cell. Not everyone got fake shots... You stepped out and didn't know if you would come back."

A Ukrainian civilian, P.B., who survived the Kremlin's persecution and torture gave this account to Media Initiative for Human Rights, or MIHR. MIHR presented this testimony, along with those from 142 other survivors and witnesses in a report at the Warsaw Human Dimension Conference. It was just one of numerous, credible compilations of evidence of Russia's atrocities presented by civil society organizations.

These accounts reinforce the appalling pattern the OSCE's April Moscow Mechanism Experts Mission found in shocking detail: Members of Russian forces and other occupation authorities subjected the Ukrainian civilians they detained to torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment, sexual violence, extrajudicial killings, and other forms of serious mistreatment.

The United States government has determined that members of Russia's forces have committed war crimes throughout Ukraine. It has also determined that members of Russia's forces and other Russian government officials have committed crimes against humanity – certain acts that are committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against the civilian population. And the Kremlin continues to do so.

Madam Chair, the United States is resolved to holding the Kremlin to account for its atrocities and to ensuring justice for the Ukrainian people. The Office of Global Criminal Justice at the Department of State alone has provided more than \$30 million to support justice and accountability efforts for Ukraine.

This funding supports the Register of Damage for Ukraine, the International Center for the Prosecution of the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine, and capacity building for Ukrainian government authorities through the Atrocity Crimes Advisory Group for Ukraine. It also funds civil society organizations that pursue accountability and justice for Russia's atrocities.

On October 18, the United States announced further funding for reparative justice for Ukrainians. This initiative will help Ukrainian policy makers and civil society develop domestic reparations mechanisms for direct compensation and support to victims and survivors of the Kremlin's crimes, laying the groundwork for Ukrainians to unlock justice at the earliest opportunity.

This complements broader funding from the United States, including from other bureaus at the State Department and from USAID, to support justice for the international crimes committed in the context of Russia's war.

P.B., and the many Ukrainians who have suffered unconscionable human rights abuses, including torture and other ill-treatment, at the hands of Russia's forces, deserve justice. We will continue to support accountability efforts in pursuit of a just and lasting peace based on the principles of the Helsinki Final Act and the UN Charter.

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