

Kyiv, 15 April 2025

Statement by Missions in Ukraine: Call to End Violations Against Children in Armed Conflict

We call on the Russian Federation to immediately cease all actions that endanger the lives and well-being of children. We condemn in the strongest terms Russia's attack on Kryvyi Rih on April 4 which killed 20 civilians, including nine children and on Sumy on April 13. A future peace agreement should take into consideration the well-being of children and the reunification of families.

Thousands of Ukrainian children, in gross violation of international humanitarian law, have been unlawfully deported or forcibly transferred by Russia, separating them from their families and homes. These children are being subjected to indoctrination, aggressive Russification, and military-patriotic education. Some are placed in foster or adoptive families, illegally altering their personal status. These illegal practices are a clear attempt at destroying their national and cultural identity. Independent reports of international organizations indicate that Ukrainian children in Russia and in the temporarily occupied territories are subjected to psychological trauma and indoctrination. This exploitation violates their human rights, including the right to security and education, steals their childhood, and undermines their future. It may also amount to war crimes.

We welcome the Joint Prevention Plan between the Government of Ukraine and the United Nations to prevent grave violations against children, including preventing and ending the killing and maiming of children, attacks against schools or hospitals, recruitment and use, rape and other forms of sexual violence, abduction, and denial of humanitarian access. We urge Russia to engage constructively with the United Nations to end and prevent grave violations against children.

The international community stands in solidarity with Ukraine's children and calls for immediate return of children from Russia and accountability for those responsible for these violations. It also welcomes the arrest warrants issued by the International Criminal Court against Vladimir Putin and Maria Lvova-Belova.

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