

Request for the Initiation of an Inquiry under Article 20 of the Convention Against Torture

**Concerning the Systematic Practice of Torture in the Occupied
Territories of Ukraine by the Russian Federation**

June 2025



Submitting Organisations:

The World Organization Against Torture (OMCT)

OMCT International Secretariat
P.O. Box 21
8, Rue du Vieux-Billard
1211 Geneva 8, Switzerland
Tel: +41 22 809 49 39
Email: omct@omct.org

Media Initiative for Human Rights (MIHR)

13 Derevlanska Street
04119 Kyiv, Ukraine
Tel: +38 095 415 95 46
Email: info@mipl.org.ua

Human Rights Centre ZMINA

33B Yaroslaviv Val Street, 3rd Floor
01054 Kyiv, Ukraine
Tel: +38 067 502 08 01
Email: info@zmina.ua

Ukrainian Legal Advisory Group (ULAG)

Office 304
45 Vozdvyzhenska Street
04071 Kyiv, Ukraine
Email: info@ulag.org.ua

Table of Contents

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS	5
II. INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY	9
III. CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND	13
IV. THE FACTS	16
A. Torture and other ill-treatment of civilians in Russian-controlled territories of Ukraine after the full-scale invasion.....	16
1. Reasons for victimisation	16
a) Digital content or symbols indicating potential pro-Ukrainian sympathies.....	17
b) Use of the Ukrainian language as “suspicious behaviour”	19
c) Participation in pro-Ukrainian activities, demonstrations and distributing leaflets	19
d) Demonstrated lack of support for the Russian invasion.....	19
e) Refusal to cooperate with the head or members of local authorities or to implement Russian standards at work	20
f) Former servicemen of the Ukrainian Armed Forces or civilian police officers.....	21
g) Living near or crossing targeted Russian military areas	21
h) Ownership of hunting weapons as a resistance indicator.....	22
2. Circumstances of torture: arrest, interrogation, prison ritual and detention conditions	22
i) Circumstances and treatment during arrest	22
ii) Conditions of detention	25
iii) Interrogation and release	28
3. The purpose of torture	32
a) Obtaining information or a confession.....	32
b) Punishment	33
4. Torture and Ill-treatment Methods	35
a) Physical torture and ill-treatment	35
i. Severe, prolonged beatings	35
ii. Positional torture and prolonged use of restraint devices	36
iii. Electric shocks, application of hot objects and chemical substances	38
iv. Asphyxiation, e.g., wet and dry methods, head immersion, suffocation	40
v. Deprivation of basic needs.....	40
vi. Denial of medical health care and treatment.....	40
vii. Conditions of detention	41
b) Psychological torture and ill-treatment.....	44
i. Incommunicado detention (denial of contact with the outside world)	44
ii. Behavioural coercion and forcing victims to witness torture or atrocities being inflicted on others	44
iii. Humiliation, verbal and other psychological abuse.....	45

iv. Threats, including to harm family members	46
c) Sexual and gender-based violence	46
5. Consequences of torture	49
a) Physical Consequences.....	49
b) Psychological Consequences.....	50
6. Perpetrators.....	51
V. THE LAW.....	53
A. Jurisdiction.....	53
B. Torture.....	55
1. Severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental	55
2. Inflicted intentionally	55
3. Purpose	56
4. Involvement of officials.....	56
5. Systematic: habitual, widespread and deliberate	56
VI. ANNEX “LIST OF THE PLACES OF DETENTION”	58

I. Executive Summary and Recommendations

This communication presents evidence of the torture and other ill-treatment of civilians by Russian forces in Ukrainian territories occupied since the full-scale invasion in February 2022. Based on 92 in-depth interviews with survivors and witnesses, this submission presents well-founded indications of a systematic pattern of abuse amounting to torture as defined under the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, committed with the involvement or acquiescence of public officials of Russian Federation, that is neither random nor isolated, but indicative of a deliberate or tolerated practice.

These violations occurred in nearly all documented cases of conflict-related detention across occupied regions of Ukraine, where the authors of this communication conducted their documentation. This includes eight out of the nine Ukrainian territories occupied by Russia since the full-scale invasion.

The evidence gathered demonstrates a deliberate and systematic targeting of civilians, who were detained based on real or perceived pro-Ukrainian views or affiliations. Russian forces applied a broad and arbitrary framework to identify “suspicious” individuals, including those who used the Ukrainian language, displayed national symbols, possessed Ukrainian digital content, or failed to express support for the occupation. Victims included local officials, humanitarian volunteers, and relatives of Ukrainian servicemen, as well as bystanders and other ordinary civilians.

Torture and ill-treatment were documented at all stages of detention; during arrest, transportation, interrogation, and throughout incarceration. Victims were subjected to physical and psychological torture, including severe and prolonged beatings, electric shocks, asphyxiation, sexual and gender-based violence, deprivation of basic needs, denial of medical care, incommunicado detention, mock executions, and other forms of coercion and humiliation. Many victims reported regularly witnessing other detainees being tortured. The overcrowded and unsanitary detention facilities alone may also amount to torture.

This report finds that the systematic practice of detaining and torturing civilians across occupied territories reflects a calculated effort to enforce compliance, punish dissent and instil fear to secure total control over the population under occupation. Russian forces used torture to extract information about civilians suspected of disloyalty to the occupation. Other purposes included forcing confessions of alleged support for the Ukrainian armed forces, punishing individuals for their political opinions, identity or affiliations.

Multiple branches of the Russian state were involved, including military units controlled by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation, the Main Directorate of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation (GRU), the military

units of the so-called “DPR” and “LPR” operating under the effective control of the Russian Federation,¹ the Federal Security Service (FSB), the National Guard of Russia (Rosgvardia) and the Russian Federal Penitentiary Service.

Violations were committed in 87 detention facilities across eight regions of Ukraine and, in some cases, Russia, and reflect a structured and coordinated approach rather than isolated acts or spontaneous violence. The evidence indicates a systematic identification of civilian targets; consistent sequences of events from the time of arrest to release or death resulting from torture or forced transfer to detention facilities; uniform arrest procedures; repeated use of the same types of detention sites, often near Russian command centres or filtration facilities; a clear and consistent chain of command; standardised interrogation methods and objectives; and the use of similar torture techniques and equipment.

Survivors and indirect victims suffer long-term physical and psychological consequences, along with economic hardship due to their inability to work and the high costs of medical care. The widespread use of torture and ill-treatment in Russian-occupied territories has created an environment in which the local population lives in constant fear of arbitrary arrest and abuse, whether for expressing loyalty to Ukraine or simply failing to demonstrate allegiance to the occupying force. Even those not directly subjected to violence experience a pervasive sense of vulnerability, contributing to widespread psychological trauma within communities.

In light of the evidence presented, the submission concludes that torture in Russian-occupied territories of Ukraine and against civilians transferred from the occupied territories to Russia is not sporadic but constitutes a systematic, state-endorsed policy. The scale, repetition and organized nature of the violations meet the threshold set out under Article 20 of the Convention.

The submitting organisations therefore respectfully urge the Committee Against Torture to:

- Initiate a confidential inquiry under Article 20 of the Convention, given the systematic nature of the violations.
- Engage directly with the State party concerned, including offering technical assistance and urging full cooperation with the inquiry process.
- Liaise with other relevant UN bodies and mechanisms, such as the Special Rapporteur on Torture, Special Rapporteur on Russia, Special Rapporteur on on extra-judicial summary or arbitrary executions, The Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine, the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, and the experts of OSCE Moscow Mechanism to coordinate findings and reinforce advocacy and

¹ ECHR. [‘Eastern Ukraine and Flight MH17 Case Declared Partly Admissible’](#). ECHR 026 (2023). January 25, 2023.

accountability efforts.

- Request access to all places of detention, including those in occupied territories and locations under de facto state control.
- Encourage the State party to invite relevant UN special procedures, and to grant them unfettered access to detention facilities and individuals deprived of their liberty.
- Issue concrete recommendations to the State party based on the outcome of the inquiry, including time-bound steps for investigation, redress for victims, prosecution of perpetrators, and guarantees of non-repetition.

In addition, we encourage the Committee against Torture to make the following recommendations to the relevant State authorities of the Russian Federation:

- Stop any policy of systematic international human rights and humanitarian law violations against civilians in the territories of Ukraine, in particular, the practices of torture and ill-treatment, enforced disappearances, unlawful killings and unlawful detentions.
- Immediately publish the lists of detained and abducted Ukrainian civilians, provide their families with all the information about their whereabouts and health status, release all civilians who have been subjected to enforced disappearance, arbitrary detention or unlawful deprivation of liberty during the full-scale invasion of Ukraine and guarantee freedom from torture and inhuman or degrading treatment.
- Ensure unimpeded access of the International Committee of the Red Cross and other international organisations to Ukrainian civilian detainees.
- Conduct effective investigations into cases of torture and ill-treatment and other serious human rights violations of civilians in the occupied territories of Ukraine by the relevant State authorities of the Russian Federation, and ensure that those responsible for these crimes are brought to justice and that victims are provided rehabilitation and reparations,
- Ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and bring domestic legislation into full compliance with all obligations under the Rome Statute.
- Ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, abolish national legislation that provides for refusal to execute judgments of the European Court of Human Rights issued before the denunciation by the Russian Federation of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, and renew cooperation with the Council of Europe and all its bodies.
- Fully cooperate with the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or

Degrading Treatment or Punishment; the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions; the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Russian Federation; the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances; issue an invitation and grant them access to Ukrainian civilian detainees under Russian control and provide reliable information on their requests.

- Ensure effective cooperation with all human rights treaty bodies, including the UN Committee against Torture and the UN Human Rights Committee, as well as the Independent International Commission of Inquiry in Ukraine and other UN mechanisms mandated to address cases of torture and ill-treatment.
- Ensure full compliance with the 1949 Convention (IV) relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and the 1977 Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions.
- Comply with the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and uphold the absolute prohibition of torture and other ill-treatment.

II. Introduction and Methodology

1. In October 2024,² the UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine concluded that the use of torture by Russian authorities constituted crimes against humanity.³ Similarly, in its July 2023 report, the second OSCE Moscow Mechanism fact-finding mission found *credible evidence* that torture and other inhuman treatment committed by Russian forces in occupied areas of Ukraine were *widespread and systematic*, and concluded that such violations *could amount to crimes against humanity*, depending on the identification of those responsible.⁴ Following her visit to Ukraine in 2023, the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture further determined that the use of torture by Russian forces appears to be systematic, widespread and State-endorsed.⁵
2. The purpose of this submission is to trigger an inquiry procedure under Article 20 of the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment by providing further evidence to demonstrate that the use of torture against civilians in the territories of Ukraine occupied by Russian forces since 24 February 2022, in conjunction with other related human rights violations, constitutes a deliberate, state-endorsed policy of systematic abuse against civilians. This submission identifies patterns in how torture is being carried out and provides an analysis of how this behaviour may constitute a violation of international human rights law.
3. This joint submission was prepared by the non-governmental organisations (NGOs) Media Initiative for Human Rights (MIHR), Ukrainian Legal Advisory Group (ULAG), and the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT), in cooperation with the Human Rights Centre ZMINA (ZMINA). It is based on 92 in-depth interviews (60 men and 32 women) conducted by MIHR and ZMINA between November 2022 and December 2023. Fifty-four (54) cases amount to torture, while thirty-eight (38) constitute other forms of cruel or degrading treatment.
4. Due to the security risks and potential repercussions, the names and identifying details of victims whose testimonies have been included are not disclosed in this submission. However, should the Committee have specific requests, further details can be made available through a secure channel.
5. The reported incidents of torture and ill-treatment occurred between February 2022 and November 2023 in 87 places of detention in:

² [Report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine](#), 24 October 2024.

³ OMCT, Human Rights Centre ZMINA, the Media Initiative for Human Rights, [“You’re Loyal To Ukraine — Are You a Nazi?”, Torture and other violations as crimes against humanity— by the Russian army in Ukraine](#), 18 July 2024.

⁴ OSCE Moscow Mechanism, [‘Report on Violations of International Humanitarian and Human Rights Law, War Crimes and Crimes Against Humanity Committed in Ukraine \(1 December 2022 – 30 April 2023\)’](#), 11 July 2023, para. 128.

⁵ UN Human Rights Council, [‘Visit to Ukraine – Report of the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment’](#), Alice Jill Edwards, [UN Doc. A/HRC/55/52/Add.1](#), 15 February 2024, para. 50.

- Territories that have remained under the control of the Russian Federation since February 2022 (parts of the Luhansk and Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions of Ukraine);
 - Territories that were later liberated in 2022-2023 (parts of the Kyiv, Chernihiv, Sumy, Kharkiv, Zaporizhzhia, and Kherson regions of Ukraine)
 - The so-called “Luhansk People’s Republic” (LPR) and “Donetsk People’s Republic” (DPR), which have been under the effective control of Russia since May 11, 2014⁶, where victims were transferred after being arrested in territories occupied during the full-scale invasion. This communication covers only torture, ill-treatment, and other violations that such individuals have been subjected to following the full-scale invasion;
 - The territory of the Russian Federation, where twelve (12) victims were transferred from occupied Ukrainian territories to official detention facilities and continued to be subjected to torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment;
 - A filtration camp located in Belarus, where four (4) victims were reportedly held for several days before being transferred to detention in Russia.
6. Some victims were transferred between various detention sites and locations across these areas, with forty-one (41) victims held close to the frontline. At least eight (8) victims were still in Russian detention and on trial at the time of the writing.
7. Among those interviewed were 85 direct victims and 7 relatives of torture survivors who remained in detention as of May 2025. The victims were arrested in eight (8) regions of Ukraine: five (5) from Kyiv region,⁷ eight (8) from Chernihiv region,⁸ eight (8) from Sumy region,⁹ seven (7) from Kharkiv region,¹⁰ three (3) from Luhansk region,¹¹ five (5) from Donetsk region,¹² fourteen (14)

⁶ [Ukraine and the Netherlands v. Russia \(dec.\) \[GC\] - 43800/14, 8019/16 and 28525/20 Decision 30.11.2022 \[GC\]](#)

⁷ Interview 1, Kyiv region; Interview 2, Kyiv region; Interview 3, Kyiv region; Interview 4, Kyiv region; Interview 5, Kyiv region.

⁸ Interview 1, Chernihiv region; Interview 2, Chernihiv region; Interview 3, Chernihiv region; Interview 4, Chernihiv region; Interview 5, Chernihiv region; Interview 6, Chernihiv region; Interview 7, Chernihiv region; Interview 8, Chernihiv region.

⁹ Interview 1, Sumy region; Interview 2, Sumy region; Interview 3, Sumy region; Interview 4, Sumy region; Interview 5, Sumy region; Interview 6, Sumy region; Interview 7, Sumy region; Interview 8, Sumy region.

¹⁰ Interview 1, Kharkiv region; Interview 2, Kharkiv region; Interview 3, Kharkiv region; Interview 4, Kharkiv region; Interview 5, Kharkiv region; Interview 6, Kharkiv region; Interview 7, Kharkiv region.

¹¹ Interview 1, Luhansk region; Interview 2, Luhansk region; Interview 3, Luhansk region.

¹² Interview 1, Donetsk region; Interview 2, Donetsk region; Interview 3, Donetsk region; Interview 4, Donetsk region; Interview 5, Donetsk region.

from Zaporizhzhia region,¹³ and forty-two (42) from Kherson region¹⁴ territories of which have been or still are under Russian occupation. At the time of detention, the youngest victim was 22 years old and the oldest was 65. Twenty (20) of the interviewees were in their 50s, and fifteen (15) were in their 60s. At least two (2) victims had a disability at the time of arrest: a woman from the Donetsk region¹⁵ and a man from the Sumy region.¹⁶

8. Fifteen (15) civilians told OMCT partner organisations that they had joined self-organised defence groups¹⁷ and/or cooperated with the Ukrainian Armed Forces or Ukrainian law enforcement, mostly by providing information to them on, for instance, the location of Russian forces,¹⁸ leading to their arrest. By sharing information with Ukrainian forces, these civilians may have directly participated in hostilities,¹⁹ temporarily losing their protected status under international humanitarian law. However, as the cases of torture in this submission are considered within the framework of international human rights law, these incidents were not excluded from the submission.
9. MIHR and ZMINA used a methodology designed by the OMCT specifically for Ukrainian NGOs to conduct in-depth interviews with torture survivors in the context of armed conflict.²⁰ It is harmonised with the Manual on the Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and

¹³ Interview 1, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 2, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 3, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 4, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 5, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 6, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 7, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 8, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 9, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 10, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 11, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 12, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 13, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 43, Kherson region, Zaporizhzhia region.

¹⁴ Interview 1, Kherson region; Interview 2, Kherson region; Interview 3, Kherson region; Interview 4, Kherson region; Interview 5, Kherson region; Interview 6, Kherson region; Interview 7, Kherson region; Interview 8, Kherson region; Interview 9, Kherson region; Interview 10, Kherson region; Interview 11, Kherson region; Interview 12, Kherson region; Interview 13, Kherson region; Interview 14, Kherson region; Interview 16, Kherson region; Interview 17, Kherson region; Interview 18, Kherson region; Interview 20, Kherson region; Interview 21, Kherson region; Interview 22, Kherson region; Interview 23, Kherson region; Interview 24, Kherson region; Interview 25, Kherson region; Interview 26, Kherson region; Interview 27, Kherson region; Interview 28, Kherson region; Interview 29, Kherson region; Interview 30, Kherson region; Interview 31, Kherson region; Interview 32, Kherson region; Interview 34, Kherson region; Interview 35, Kherson region; Interview 36, Kherson region; Interview 37, Kherson region; Interview 38, Kherson region; Interview 39, Kherson region; Interview 40, Kherson region; Interview 41, Kherson region; Interview 42, Kherson region; Interview 44, Kherson region.

¹⁵ Interview 3, Donetsk region.

¹⁶ Interview 7, Sumy region.

¹⁷ Interview 6, Chernihiv region; Interview 3, Kharkiv region; Interview 12, Kherson region; Interview 14, Kherson region.

¹⁸ Interview 5, Kyiv region; Interview 8, Kherson region; Interview 9, Kherson region; Interview 2, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 9, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 6, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 8, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 5, Kyiv region; Interview 4, Kharkiv region; Interview 37, Kherson region; Interview 40, Kherson region.

¹⁹ ICRC, *Interpretive Guidance on the Notion of Direct Participation in Hostilities under International Humanitarian Law.* May 2009.

²⁰ OMCT, *Methodology For Interviewing Survivors And Witnesses Of Torture And Other Ill-Treatment*, March 2025.

Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Istanbul Protocol)²¹, the OHCHR Training Manual on Human Rights Monitoring²², and relevant international human rights and international humanitarian law standards. It is contextualised to enable the documentation of torture and other ill-treatment during the Russian Federation’s invasion of Ukraine, taking into account the local socio-political and cultural context. The OMCT provided MIHR and ZMINA with detailed questionnaires and a roadmap designed for the structural investigation of torture as an international crime during the Russian aggression against Ukraine.²³ In addition, OMCT delivered a series of in-person and online training and mentoring sessions on the documentation and structural investigation of these crimes to MIHR and ZMINA human rights officers. Additionally, MIHR and ZMINA human rights officers were trained by a qualified psychologist on ways to reduce the risks of re-traumatisation during interviews with victims and ensure a victim-centred approach.

10. This submission consists of two sections. The first section outlines the facts and patterns of violations, including reasons for victimisation, circumstances and purpose of torture, torture equipment and methods, consequences of torture for survivors, and a list of identified places of detention and perpetrators involved. The second section establishes jurisdiction of the UN Committee Against Torture over violations committed by the Russian Federation in the occupied territories of Ukraine and provides an analysis of why the described violations are systematic in nature and constitute torture as defined in the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

²¹ United Nations, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. *[‘Istanbul Protocol: Manual on the Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment’](#)* Rev. ed., United Nations, 2022.

²² Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, *[‘Manual on Human Rights Monitoring’](#)* Revised ed., UN Human Rights Office, 2011.

²³ OMCT, *[Roadmap for the Investigation of Crimes Against Humanity Committed by Russian Forces in Ukraine in the Context of the Full-Scale Invasion](#)*, June, 2025.

III. Contextual Background

11. The Russian Federation's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022 was the culmination of a series of military and political events that triggered the current armed conflict and led to the patterns of torture and related crimes against civilians analysed in this submission.
12. Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, Ukraine, like many former Soviet republics, remained under Russia's political, economic and cultural influence. For more than a decade, political power in Ukraine remained in the hands of Russian-allied political and business groups, which ensured the dominance of Russia's interests in key State affairs.
13. A turning point came in November 2013, when a brutal crackdown on peaceful protests advocating for Ukraine's integration into the European Union escalated into violent confrontations between protesters and security forces. Three months of unrest ensued, in which more than 100 people were killed and several thousand were injured, most of whom were protesters. These severe human rights violations provoked a political crisis, which resulted in the removal of pro-Russian President Viktor Yanukovich and many other pro-Russian politicians from State power. The new political leadership introduced policies oriented towards Euro-Atlantic integration.
14. Several days after these events, in February 2014, the Russian Federation invaded the Autonomous Republic of Crimea in southern Ukraine, subsequently occupying parts of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions in Eastern Ukraine (the so-called DPR/LPR).
15. Immediately after gaining effective control over these territories, Russian authorities started to commit gross and systematic violations of international humanitarian and human rights law against specific groups of civilians who opposed the Russian invasion (civic activists, journalists, local government officials, Crimean Tatars²⁴ among others).²⁵ Members of these groups were subjected to enforced disappearances, arbitrary detention, torture and other ill-treatment, extrajudicial killings and denial of the right to a fair trial.²⁶
16. Russian authorities failed to properly investigate cases of torture and related violations against Ukrainian victims in the context of the armed conflict prior to the full-scale invasion, and denied them access to domestic remedies.²⁷ They also failed to cooperate with regional and international

²⁴ PACE, Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination. *'The Situation of Crimean Tatars.'* Doc. 15305. June 4, 2021.

²⁵ OHCHR, *'Human Rights Situation in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the City of Sevastopol, Ukraine.'* March 6, 2020.

²⁶ OHCHR, *'Human Rights Situation in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the City of Sevastopol, Ukraine.'* March 6, 2020.

²⁷ PACE, Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, *'Legal Remedies for Human Rights Violations in the Ukrainian Territories Outside the Control of the Ukrainian Authorities.'* Doc. 14139. September 26, 2016.

human rights bodies in connection with these allegations.²⁸ International organisations' monitoring mechanisms have been denied access to Crimea since its occupation.²⁹ Access to the so-called DPR/LPR has been severely restricted, including a ban on access to places of detention under the control of Russian forces.³⁰ Members of monitoring missions have faced arbitrary detention and other forms of pressure while carrying out their mandates.³¹

17. On February 24, 2022, at 4.50 am, Russian President Vladimir Putin declared the beginning of what he called a 'special military operation' in Ukraine, marking the launch of Russia's full-scale invasion. Russian propaganda justified the invasion as necessary to protect Russian interests in Ukraine from 'Nazis'; a term used to refer to individuals who support Ukraine's independence and integration with the EU. Ukrainian cities, military facilities and infrastructure across the country were struck by missiles, while columns of Russian troops crossed into Ukrainian territory from the Russian Federation, Belarus, Russian-occupied Crimea and the so-called DPR/LPR. This massive attack led to the occupation of Ukrainian territories in the regions of Kyiv, Chernihiv, Sumy, Kharkiv, Kherson, Luhansk, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, Zhytomyr and Mykolaiv.
18. In the occupied territories of Ukraine, Russian troops and special services deployed an unprecedented system of identification and segregation of anyone suspected of opposing the Russian invasion, whether openly or covertly. These measures included:
 - Setting up and managing a network of filtration facilities, including multiple interconnected, well-organised checkpoints and detention facilities.³² At the checkpoints, pedestrians or people in vehicles were required to stop and present their documents, phones and other personal belongings. The military could also inspect individuals for tattoos and take them to a specially constructed room for questioning or to further verify information found on their phones. Civilians who raised suspicion among Russian military personnel were detained and transferred to detention facilities for subsequent rounds of vetting and further detention.
 - Conducting raids on residential buildings, including searches of private living areas and inspections of identification documents and electronic devices, accessing photo and video files, reviewing content from social media, messaging and banking applications.

²⁸ Atlantic Council, ['Ukraine Scores Court Victory in Long Quest for Justice Over Russia's Crimean Crimes.'](#) February 4, 2021.

²⁹ Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty, ['Council of Europe's Rights Chief Decries Abuses, Says Russia "Only Country Not Cooperating.'](#) September 27, 2017.

³⁰ OHCHR, ['Report on the Human Rights Situation in Ukraine 1 August 2020 - 31 January 2021.'](#) para 6.

³¹ France 24, ['OSCE Observers Held in Ukraine Released by Separatists.'](#) May 3, 2014.

³² MIHR, ['Filtration" as a Series of War Crimes of Russia: From Collecting Personal Data to Torturing.'](#) 2022.

- Using filtration points to inspect vehicles, personal belongings, identification documents and electronic devices. Civilians were questioned, their biometric data was collected, and they were forced to undergo body checks, including strip searches.
 - Obtaining information through interrogation with the use of torture, including coercing victims to gather further information and denounce others who may be disloyal to the Russian occupation.
 - Encouraging local residents to denounce members of the persecuted group to Russian troops.
 - Tapping the mobile phones of local residents and monitoring social media and messenger chats.³³
 - Illegally accessing databases of State and local government bodies, as well as databases of educational, medical and administrative institutions.³⁴
19. Those identified as potentially opposing the Russian occupation have been deliberately subjected to enforced disappearances, arbitrary detention, extrajudicial killings, torture and other ill-treatment, sexual violence, deportations and other gross violations of international humanitarian and human rights law. The Media Initiative for Human Rights has identified at least 92 places of detention in the occupied territories of Ukraine and 72 on the territory of the Russian Federation where civilian detainees are being held.³⁵

³³ ZMINA, '[Enforced Disappearances in Newly Occupied Territories and Use of New Technologies.](#)' 2022.

³⁴ Freerights Association, '[Protection of Personal Data during Wartime.](#)' 2023.

³⁵ MIHR, '[Map with the places of detention](#), 2025.

IV. THE FACTS

A. Torture and other ill-treatment of civilians in Russian-controlled territories of Ukraine after the full-scale invasion

1. Reasons for victimisation

20. In some cases, it was not possible to definitively establish all the factors that contribute to the victimisation of civilians, as the perpetrators did not explicitly disclose their motives to the victims. In these situations, the authors of this submission examined the circumstances preceding the arrest and subsequent torture and considered potential reasons for victimisation as identified by the victims themselves.
21. In some cases, individuals may have been detained to be used in future prisoner-of-war exchanges. For instance, four (4) men detained in the Kyiv region shortly after the invasion were promptly transferred to Belarus, then to the Russian Federation and eventually to the occupied Crimea, from where they were already exchanged in April-May 2022.³⁶ However, the extremely limited number of civilian detainees released through such exchanges as of March 2025 suggests that this motive did not represent a consistent or systematic pattern behind the detentions and subsequent acts of torture.
22. The vast majority of documented evidence indicates that Russian forces employed the filtration measures³⁷ introduced in the previous section with the primary aim of identifying and targeting civilians perceived as loyal to Ukraine, opposed to the occupation, or harbouring negative views toward Russian troops, political leadership and the ideology of the so-called “Russian world.”³⁸ This included both individuals who openly expressed such views and those merely suspected of holding them.
23. Russian authorities appeared to presume that these individuals were likely sharing militarily relevant information or otherwise cooperating with Ukrainian armed forces, security services or law enforcement, as well as those perceived to hold pro-Ukrainian views or identities. The targeting sometimes appeared punitive or aimed at deterring broader civilian support for Ukraine. Engagement with Ukrainian content or actors, however minimal, was frequently treated as sufficient grounds for suspicion of collaboration or support for Ukraine’s defence efforts. The Russian actors also detained and tortured some victims with the purpose of revenge and punishment for their views or actual previous engagement with Ukrainian state bodies.

³⁶ Interview 3, Kyiv region; Interview 4, Kyiv region.

³⁷ see para 18.

³⁸ Połoński, Mariusz. *“[Russkiy Mir \(Russian World\): An Exemplification.](#)”* Biblioteka Nauki, Oct. 2025.

24. According to information available to OMCT and its partners, for those suspected in the actual cooperation with the Ukrainian army, Russian forces made little to no effort to determine individuals' actual status under international humanitarian law or to distinguish those who had lost protected status through direct participation in hostilities. Instead, they appeared to apply a broad and indiscriminate approach, presuming engagement with Ukrainian state bodies in nearly all cases where any pro-Ukrainian sympathies were detected or inferred. It can be concluded that Russian forces were aware that their overly broad interpretation of "suspicious behaviour" resulted in the arrest and subsequent torture of civilians who were not taking direct participation in hostilities and did not pose a military threat.
25. And, in many cases, individuals were arrested not because they were suspected of active cooperation, but simply for holding or expressing pro-Ukrainian views or as part of broader efforts to extract information, intimidate or exert control over the civilian population. This indicates that Russian forces deliberately targeted the civilians not only for suspected cooperation, but also based on perceived loyalties, affiliations or as a means to intimidate and control the wider population.
26. Initially, Russian forces targeted individuals with clear pro-Ukrainian affiliations, such as local government officials,³⁹ activists,⁴⁰ and military veterans⁴¹ known for opposing the occupation. However, the scope of targeting soon expanded. Indicators of "disloyalty" were interpreted increasingly broadly, encompassing civilians who simply displayed Ukrainian national symbols, communicated with known pro-Ukrainian individuals or failed to demonstrate active support for the occupation.⁴²
27. Russian authorities employed an extensive and vague set of markers to identify "suspicious" individuals, including those who had never openly expressed dissent but were nevertheless viewed as potentially opposing the occupation.

a) Digital content or symbols indicating potential pro-Ukrainian sympathies

28. A number of victims were detained after Russian forces found pro-Ukrainian digital content on their electronic devices. Such content included subscriptions and hyperlinks to Ukrainian channels on messaging platforms such as Telegram, as well as posts and information disseminated through

³⁹ Interview 3, Chernihiv region; Interview 1, Luhansk region.

⁴⁰ Interview 6, Chernihiv region.

⁴¹ Interview 1, Sumy region.

⁴² Interview 1, Kherson region; Interview 8, Kherson region; Interview 12, Kherson region; Interview 13, Kherson region; Interview 14, Kherson region; Interview 22, Kherson region; Interview 23, Kherson region; Interview 25, Kherson region; Interview 26, Kherson region; Interview 27, Kherson region; Interview 29, Kherson region; Interview 35, Kherson region; Interview 10, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 8, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 6, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 5, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 4, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 2, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 1, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 3, Donetsk region; Interview 2, Kharkiv region; Interview 3, Kharkiv region; Interview 4, Kharkiv region; Interview 5, Donetsk region.

various social media networks. The materials found consisted of photographs, videos, audio recordings and other digital files perceived as supportive of Ukraine and used for sharing news, organising support and raising awareness about the Ukrainian Armed Forces' activities and incidents occurring during the occupation.⁴³

29. Another type of digital content that aroused suspicion among Russian forces and led to arrests included photographs or videos depicting damage caused by hostilities, such as images of destruction or smoke.⁴⁴ For example, in one case, an individual was detained for possessing a video showing a car on fire, in which he stated that “Russia was setting Ukraine on fire”.⁴⁵
30. Some victims were detained because their devices contained contact information and, occasionally, recent chats with relatives, neighbours or acquaintances serving in the Ukrainian Armed Forces or law enforcement agencies.⁴⁶ For instance, a victim from the Zaporizhzhia region was arrested during filtration while attempting to leave the occupied territory. At the checkpoint, Russian special forces conducted an interview with him and subsequently arrested him on the pretext of having found the contact details of his friend — a former Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) employee — on his mobile phone.⁴⁷ Another victim was arrested during the filtration after Russian forces saw on his phone a photo of his son, who was serving in the National Guard of Ukraine.⁴⁸
31. In one case, Russian authorities at a checkpoint arrested a volunteer who had been collecting funds to purchase a vehicle for evacuating civilians from Mariupol. The arrest followed the discovery of financial transactions from the Netherlands and the United States in her banking history, which was accessed through her mobile phone.⁴⁹ In another case, a group of volunteers was detained for using funds transferred from Ukraine-controlled territories to distribute humanitarian aid to pensioners, specifically those not receiving Russian pensions.⁵⁰
32. In several instances, the absence of information on victims' electronic devices was viewed by Russian forces as an indication of deliberate data concealment.⁵¹ In one such case, a victim briefly communicated via WhatsApp with his nephew, who is affiliated with the Ukrainian authorities, and immediately deleted the messages. Shortly thereafter, he was stopped and subjected to a

⁴³ Interview 1, Chernihiv region; Interview 4, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 9, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 10, Kherson region; Interview 34, Kherson region; Interview 40, Kherson region; Interview 42, Kherson region.

⁴⁴ Interview 2, Kyiv region; Interview 43, Kherson region.

⁴⁵ Interview 43, Kherson region.

⁴⁶ Interview 7, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 10, Kherson region; Interview 24, Kherson region; Interview 29, Kherson region; Interview 30, Kherson region; Interview 34, Kherson region; Interview 36, Kherson region; Interview 3, Luhansk region; Interview 1, Kharkiv region; Interview 5, Kharkiv region; Interview 41, Kherson region.

⁴⁷ Interview 7, Zaporizhzhia region.

⁴⁸ Interview 34, Kherson region.

⁴⁹ Interview 2, Donetsk region.

⁵⁰ Interview 40, Kherson region.

⁵¹ Interview 1, Kyiv region; Interview 42, Kherson region; Interview 7, Chernihiv region.

search by Russian military personnel. The recent deletion of a message aroused their suspicion, ultimately leading to his detention. It remains unclear whether the Russian servicemen were aware of the nephew's official affiliation with the Ukrainian government.⁵²

33. One victim believes that the reason for her arrest was the fact that she used to display the Ukrainian flag on her house and listened to Ukrainian songs, which irritated her neighbours.⁵³ Another victim was arrested by Russian forces after they found a Ukrainian military patch with the emblem of the national flag during a search of his house.⁵⁴ Three civilians who were eventually detained had been walking around carrying Ukrainian flags, which they believe was the reason for their arrest.⁵⁵

b) Use of the Ukrainian language as “suspicious behaviour”

34. At least one individual was detained immediately after two armed Russian-speaking men overheard him speaking Ukrainian at a hairdresser in occupied Kherson. When the victim was brought to the Suvorov District Police Department, the officer on duty was informed that the reason for the detention was “speaking Ukrainian.”⁵⁶

c) Participation in pro-Ukrainian activities, demonstrations and distributing leaflets

35. Russian forces detained civilians who participated in various pro-Ukrainian activities,⁵⁷ including an organiser of pro-Ukrainian meetings in Berdiansk, Zaporizhzhia region,⁵⁸ and a participant of such meetings in Nova Kakhovka, Kherson region.⁵⁹ A couple—a woman and a man—were arrested while putting up pro-Ukrainian flyers in the Zaporizhzhia region.⁶⁰

d) Demonstrated lack of support for the Russian invasion

36. Based on the evidence collected, the Russian forces allegedly gathered information on individuals perceived as supportive of Ukraine through several channels, including: (1) local informants: locals aligned with Russian authorities, or individuals in the community sympathetic to Russian control, provided information to Russian forces on those openly supporting Ukraine;⁶¹ (2)

⁵² Interview 42, Kherson region.

⁵³ Interview 3, Donetsk region.

⁵⁴ Interview 5, Kharkiv region

⁵⁵ Interview 11, Kherson region; Interview 1, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 5, Zaporizhzhia region.

⁵⁶ Interview 20, Kherson region.

⁵⁷ Interview 1, Kherson region; Interview 20, Kherson region; Interview 27, Kherson region; Interview 40, Kherson region.

⁵⁸ Interview 10, Zaporizhzhia region.

⁵⁹ Interview 11, Kherson region.

⁶⁰ Interview 1, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 5, Zaporizhzhia region.

⁶¹ Interview 2, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 11, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 12, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 37, Kherson region; Interview 30, Kherson region; Interview 31, Kherson region; Interview 21, Kherson region; Interview 1, Luhansk region; Interview 24, Kherson region; Interview 20, Kherson region; Interview 3, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 4, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 4, Zaporizhzhia region.

interrogations with other detainees: in some cases, information has emerged during the questioning of other detainees, who might have been pressured to disclose names of community members perceived as pro-Ukrainian;⁶² and (3) monitoring social and digital activity: Russian forces have gathered information on individuals supporting Ukraine by reviewing social media activity or digital content from devices collected in detention.⁶³

37. Another category of individuals suspected by Russian authorities of cooperating with or supporting the Ukrainian government included relatives of those serving in the Ukrainian Armed Forces or other units of the Security and Defence Forces of Ukraine, as well as relatives of those employed in government bodies or local administrations. OMCT and its partners documented at least five (5) cases in which victims were detained due to their family connections.⁶⁴
38. In late March 2022, a month after the full-scale invasion started, at least three (3) volunteers involved in assisting civilians to leave occupied Mariupol—an area subjected to intense shelling—for government-controlled territories were detained. Russian authorities appeared to interpret such efforts as acts of support for the Ukrainian cause.⁶⁵
39. Two (2) victims were detained after they failed to express support for the Russian invasion during private conversations.⁶⁶ Three (3) victims had a reputation in their community for supporting Ukrainian independence.⁶⁷
40. One victim cheered and shouted “Hooray!” when a Russian military aircraft, shot down by the Ukrainian Armed Forces, crashed onto his property. His neighbours overheard this and reported him to the Russian military, allegedly due to an ongoing land dispute with him.⁶⁸

e) Refusal to cooperate with the head or members of local authorities or to implement Russian standards at work

41. Eight (8) representatives of local authorities were detained for refusing to cooperate with Russian authorities, their pro-Ukrainian views, or being perceived as affiliated with Ukrainian security

⁶² Interview 14, Kherson region; Interview 16, Kherson region; Interview 17, Kherson region; Interview 12, Kherson region; Interview 13, Kherson region; Interview 23, Kherson region; Interview 22, Kherson region; Interview 35, Kherson region; Interview 32, Kherson region; Interview 33, Kherson region.

⁶³ Interview 9, Kherson region; Interview 10, Kherson region; Interview 25, Kherson region; Interview 29, Kherson region; Interview 34, Kherson region; Interview 42, Kherson region; Interview 43, Kherson region

⁶⁴ Interview 36, Kherson region; Interview 24, Kherson region; Interview 34, Kherson region; Interview 3, Luhansk region; Interview 3, Zaporizhzhia region.

⁶⁵ Interview 4, Donetsk region; Interview 2, Donetsk region; Interview 1, Donetsk region.

⁶⁶ Interview 6, Kharkiv region; Interview 26, Kherson region.

⁶⁷ Interview 2, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 3, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 4, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 21, Kherson region; Interview 16, Kherson region; Interview 32, Kherson region; Interview 33, Kherson region.

⁶⁸ Interview 6, Kharkiv region.

forces.⁶⁹ In one of these cases, Russian forces detained both a regional council deputy and his daughter. They released the daughter after eight (8) days of captivity but kept her father in detention.⁷⁰

42. Another victim was arrested for refusing to implement Russian approaches to education in the school where she worked in the occupied territory. During the arrest, FSB representatives told her that she was “ruining the education system of the Russian Federation”.⁷¹

f) Former servicemen of the Ukrainian Armed Forces or civilian police officers

43. Russian forces also arrested former servicemen of the Ukrainian Armed Forces; those who were no longer in service at the time of the full-scale invasion on 24 February 2022.⁷² Another detainee, head of a village administration, told the OMCT partner organisation that Russian forces were looking for the lists of veterans,⁷³ likely due to suspicions that they still supported the Ukrainian Armed Forces or to punish them for presumed pro-Ukrainian views. Russian forces also detained those who had worked for the Ukrainian police at the time of the invasion.⁷⁴

g) Living near or crossing targeted Russian military areas

44. Russian forces detained twenty (20) victims on suspicion of military reconnaissance for the Ukrainian army based on their residence near Russian military positions that had been shelled by the Ukrainian army, or the victim’s presence along the routes used by Russian military movement.⁷⁵ For instance, one victim was walking near a train station where Russian military positions were located. This aroused suspicion among Russian soldiers, who then arrested him.⁷⁶ Another victim had accidentally found himself near Russian military positions while travelling from Kyiv toward Chernihiv and was therefore arrested.⁷⁷

⁶⁹ Interview 3, Chernihiv region; Interview 7, Chernihiv region; Interview 1, Kharkiv region; Interview 7, Kharkiv region; Interview 21, Kherson region; Interview 28, Kherson region; Interview 32, Kherson region; Interview 3, Sumy region.

⁷⁰ Interview 32, Kherson region.

⁷¹ Interview 18, Kherson region.

⁷² Interview 2, Kherson region; Interview 5, Donetsk region; Interview 1, Donetsk region; Interview 1, Sumy region.

⁷³ Government of Ukraine forces during the armed conflict in eastern Ukraine in 2014 – 2018; Interview 7, Kharkiv region.

⁷⁴ Interview 13, Kherson region; Interview 14, Kherson region; Interview 22, Kherson region.

⁷⁵ Interview 1, Kyiv region; Interview 3, Kyiv region; Interview 5, Kyiv region; Interview 2, Chernihiv region; Interview 4, Chernihiv region; Interview 5, Chernihiv region; Interview 6, Chernihiv region; Interview 2, Sumy region; Interview 3, Sumy region; Interview 5, Sumy region; Interview 6, Sumy region; Interview 7, Sumy region; Interview 4, Sumy region; Interview 8, Sumy region; Interview 1, Donetsk region; Interview 4, Donetsk region; Interview 42, Kherson region; Interview 5, Donetsk region.

⁷⁶ Interview 43, Kherson region.

⁷⁷ Interview 2, Chernihiv region.

h) Ownership of hunting weapons as a resistance indicator

45. Two victims who owned hunting weapons were arrested by Russian authorities, who perceived this as a sign of potential armed resistance.⁷⁸
46. These cases demonstrate that Russian forces targeted a broad range of civilians. Individuals were victimised not only for suspected cooperation with Ukrainian state bodies, but also for a wide range of perceived affiliations or behaviours, including symbolic expressions of pro-Ukrainian views, refusal to comply with occupation demands, previous service in Ukrainian state structures, or mere proximity to areas of military interest. This broad pattern of targeting, based on inferred loyalties or identity markers, highlights the systematic and widespread nature of these violations and the intent to suppress any form of real or perceived dissent within the civilian population.

2. Circumstances of torture: arrest, interrogation, prison ritual and detention conditions

47. Based on the evidence gathered, physical and/or psychological violence, as well as inhuman conditions of detention, were documented at every stage of captivity, from the moment of arrest to the moment of release.
48. This treatment most frequently met the threshold for torture, particularly during victims' arrest, interrogations, transfers between places of detention and so-called "prison rituals," such as "welcoming beatings" inflicted upon arrival at a detention facility. In most cases, the detention conditions themselves, including extreme overcrowding, lack of medical care and prolonged isolation, along with sustained psychological abuse, may independently meet the threshold of torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. While detention conditions often form part of the broader environment of abuse, their role as direct methods of torture, along with illustrative cases, is examined in detail under the chapter on *Methods of Torture* (see para 95-107).
49. The patterns documented across cases suggest a deliberate use of violence and coercion at each stage of the detention cycle. This section illustrates how these practices manifested during arrest, interrogation, prison rituals and detention.

i) Circumstances and treatment during arrest

50. Russian forces arrested victims at their residences, workplaces or during filtration procedures. Some were arrested while in the vicinity of Russian military positions.

⁷⁸ Interview 4, Kyiv region; Interview 8, Chernihiv region.

51. Fifty-eight (58) victims were arrested at their places of residence or work. These arrests were carried out by groups of three (3) to fifteen (15) Russian servicemen or members of the security services. During the arrests, Russian forces searched the victims' homes or workplaces and confiscated documents and electronic devices. In these cases, Russian military or security services deliberately tracked down and detained individuals from the persecuted groups described above, identified earlier through reports, monitoring of social media activity or unauthorised access to local government databases, among other cases.⁷⁹
52. Those arrested during filtration procedures were arrested either during Russian forces' raids on settlements or at Russian army checkpoints. In the north, arrests during filtration mostly involved victims arrested during raids on residential areas, where Russian soldiers patrolled the settlements and checked the phones of residents hiding in basements.⁸⁰ In eastern and southern regions, most victims were arrested at checkpoints, often while attempting to leave occupied territory or while moving back and forth as volunteers.⁸¹
53. Some victims were arrested on the street on suspicion of transferring information or cooperating with the Ukrainian Armed Forces in other ways, mostly due to being in the vicinity of Russian military activity.⁸² Some of those detained were indeed residents who cooperated with the Ukrainian Armed Forces⁸³ or participated in self-organised territorial defence⁸⁴. Others had put up pro-Ukrainian posters⁸⁵ or participated in pro-Ukrainian meetings.⁸⁶ One victim was sent by

⁷⁹ Interview 5, Chernihiv region; Interview 7, Chernihiv region; Interview 8, Chernihiv region; Interview 3, Donetsk region; Interview 2, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 2, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 3, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 4, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 6, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 8, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 9, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 10, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 11, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 12, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 13, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 1, Kherson region; Interview 2, Kherson region; Interview 3, Kherson region; Interview 5, Kherson region; Interview 6, Kherson region; Interview 4, Kherson region; Interview 7, Kherson region; Interview 8, Kherson region; Interview 12, Kherson region; Interview 13, Kherson region; Interview 14, Kherson region; Interview 16, Kherson region; Interview 17, Kherson region; Interview 30, Kherson region; Interview 31, Kherson region; Interview 32, Kherson region; Interview 18, Kherson region; Interview 20, Kherson region; Interview 21, Kherson region; Interview 22, Kherson region; Interview 23, Kherson region; Interview 24, Kherson region; Interview 25, Kherson region; Interview 26, Kherson region; Interview 27, Kherson region; Interview 34, Kherson region; Interview 35, Kherson region; Interview 36, Kherson region; Interview 37, Kherson region; Interview 39, Kherson region; Interview 43, Kherson region; Interview 40, Kherson region; Interview 41, Kherson region; Interview 1, Luhansk region; Interview 2, Luhansk region; Interview 3, Luhansk region; Interview 1, Kharkiv region; Interview 3, Kharkiv region; Interview 3, Kharkiv region; Interview 5, Kharkiv region; Interview 6, Kharkiv region; Interview 7, Kharkiv region.

⁸⁰ Interview 2, Kyiv region; Interview 4, Kyiv region; Interview 1, Chernihiv region.

⁸¹ Interview 1, Donetsk region; Interview 2, Donetsk region; Interview 4, Donetsk region; Interview 7, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 9, Kherson region; Interview 10, Kherson region; Interview 28, Kherson region; Interview 38, Kherson region; Interview 29, Kherson region.

⁸² Interview 1, Kyiv region; Interview 3, Kyiv region; Interview 2, Chernihiv region; Interview 4, Chernihiv region.

⁸³ Interview 5, Kyiv region

⁸⁴ Interview 6, Chernihiv region.

⁸⁵ Interview 1, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 5, Zaporizhzhia region.

⁸⁶ Interview 11, Kherson region.

his community as a representative to talk with Russian forces and express his community's opposition to their entry into the village.⁸⁷

54. Russian servicemen carrying out the arrests were mostly in uniform and wore masks.⁸⁸ One victim was detained by armed individuals in balaclavas and tactical gloves, dressed in civilian clothing.⁸⁹
55. In all cases documented by OMCT and its partners, victims, and occasionally their relatives, were subjected to inhuman or degrading treatment during the arrests, and, in some cases, torture. Russian forces carrying out the arrests often threatened victims with weapons.⁹⁰ At times, the violence escalated to the use of machine guns and other firearms fired into the air to subdue or incapacitate victims for the purpose of intimidation.⁹¹ In several cases, mock executions were also carried out.⁹² In one case, a Russian soldier entered the house of a victim and fired a rifle inside the room to wake the victim up.⁹³ Many victims were verbally insulted during the arrest.⁹⁴ One victim was called a Nazi by the arresting personnel.⁹⁵
56. During the arrests and subsequent transportation, many victims were subjected to physical assaults, including beatings, kicking and electric shocks.⁹⁶

⁸⁷ Interview 3, Chernihiv village

⁸⁸ Interview 35, Kherson region; Interview 1, Kharkiv region; Interview 25, Kherson region; Interview 30, Kherson region; Interview 31, Kherson region; Interview 32, Kherson region.

⁸⁹ Interview 36, Kherson region.

⁹⁰ Interview 1, Kyiv region; Interview 2, Kyiv region; Interview 3, Kyiv region; Interview 5, Kyiv region; Interview 5, Chernihiv region; Interview 3, Sumy region; Interview 4, Sumy region; Interview 6, Sumy region; Interview 8, Sumy region; Interview 7, Sumy region; Interview 1, Donetsk region; Interview 1, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 2, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 5, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 4, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 3, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 11, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 12, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 11, Kherson region; Interview 10, Kherson region; Interview 9, Kherson region; Interview 8, Kherson region; Interview 7, Kherson region; Interview 3, Kherson region; Interview 6, Kherson region; Interview 2, Kherson region; Interview 1, Kherson region; Interview 12, Kherson region; Interview 13, Kherson region; Interview 14, Kherson region; Interview 16, Kherson region; Interview 17, Kherson region; Interview 18, Kherson region; Interview 1, Kharkiv region; Interview 3, Kharkiv region; Interview 2, Kharkiv region; Interview 4, Kharkiv region; Interview 7, Kharkiv region; Interview 30, Kherson region; Interview 31, Kherson region; Interview 37, Kherson region; Interview 39, Kherson region; Interview 42, Kherson region; Interview 41, Kherson region; Interview 43, Kherson region.

⁹¹ Interview 5, Kyiv region; Interview 2, Chernihiv region; Interview 5, Chernihiv region; Interview 8, Sumy region; Interview 37, Kherson region; Interview 22, Kherson region.

⁹² Interview 5, Kyiv region; Interview 5, Chernihiv region; Interview 22, Kherson region; Interview 8, Kherson region; Interview 10, Kherson region; Interview 5, Chernihiv region.

⁹³ Interview 7, Kharkiv region.

⁹⁴ Interview 1, Kyiv region; Interview 3, Kyiv region; Interview 5, Kyiv region; Interview 3, Chernihiv region; Interview 5, Chernihiv region; Interview 3, Sumy region; Interview 4, Sumy region; Interview 6, Sumy region; Interview 8, Sumy region; Interview 2, Donetsk region; Interview 5, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 6, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 4, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 9, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 7, Kherson region; Interview 14, Kherson region; Interview 1, Luhansk region; Interview 2, Luhansk region; Interview 1, Kharkiv region; Interview 3, Kharkiv region; Interview 4, Kharkiv region; Interview 43, Kherson region; Interview 42, Kherson region; Interview 41, Kherson region; Interview 30, Kherson region; Interview 31; Kherson region.

⁹⁵ Interview 7, Kherson region

⁹⁶ Interview 1, Kyiv region; Interview 3, Kyiv region; Interview 5, Kyiv region; Interview 2, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 14, Kherson region; Interview 1, Luhansk region; Interview 16, Kherson region; Interview 17, Kherson

57. Many victims were subjected to prolonged use of restraint devices after their arrest, which sometimes continued in detention facilities, during transportation between locations and on the way to interrogation rooms.⁹⁷ In one case, the victim's hands were cuffed for 24 hours during transportation.⁹⁸ One victim was transported in the trunk of a car while handcuffed.⁹⁹ Victims were blindfolded, mostly with a hat or a bag placed over their heads, to prevent them from seeing what was happening, often causing them to feel suffocated.¹⁰⁰ In one case, the bag remained over the victim's head for two days.¹⁰¹ In another case, while arresting a couple, Russian forces removed their son's T-shirt and wrapped it around his mother's eyes. They drove her around the village with the wet T-shirt over her face before bringing her to a local farm and placing her in a cowshed.¹⁰² One victim also had his mouth taped.¹⁰³
58. OMCT and its partners documented other elaborate methods in which Russian forces deliberately aggravated the suffering of the detainees during or immediately after arrest. In one case, they tied the victim's hands with plastic zip ties so tightly that they cut off blood circulation to his wrists, placed a bag over his head and left him outdoors overnight in early March 2022, with nighttime temperatures around 0 to -5 degrees Celsius.¹⁰⁴ In another case, they ordered a victim to crawl on his stomach and started shooting over his head with automatic weapons.¹⁰⁵ During an arrest in the Zaporizhzhia region, they forced a 54-year-old woman and her 67-year-old husband to keep their hands raised above their heads for around 30 minutes before allowing them to lower them.¹⁰⁶

ii) Conditions of detention

59. Facilities used by Russian authorities for the detention of civilians allegedly varied depending on the period of detention. Russian forces frequently relied on improvised, temporary sites such as pits near military positions, seized school basements, train station premises, garages, storage

region; Interview 20, Kherson region, Interview 3, Kharkiv region; Interview 22, Kherson region; Interview 22, Kherson region.

⁹⁷ Interview 3, Chernihiv region; Interview 2, Kyiv region; Interview 5, Chernihiv region; Interview 20, Kherson region; Interview 17, Kherson region; Interview 4, Kherson region, and Interview 7, Kherson region; Interview 3, Kherson region; Interview 5, Kherson region; Interview 6, Kherson region; Interview 2, Sumy region; Interview 12, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 26, Kherson region; Interview 3, Donetsk region; Interview 8, Kherson region; Interview 8, Sumy region.

⁹⁸ Interview 4, Luhansk region.

⁹⁹ Interview 5, Kherson region

¹⁰⁰ Interview 2, Kyiv region; Interview 5, Chernihiv region; Interview 22, Kherson region; Interview 17, Kherson region; Interview 2, Sumy region; Interview 14, Kherson region; Interview 23, Kherson region, Interview 8, Zaporizhzhia region, and Interview 10, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 7, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 12, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 26, Kherson region; Interview 3, Donetsk region; Interview 21, Kherson region; Interview 5, Zaporizhzhia; Interview 8, Kherson region; Interview 8, Sumy region.

¹⁰¹ Interview 21, Kherson region

¹⁰² Interview 37, Kherson region.

¹⁰³ Interview 17, Kherson region

¹⁰⁴ Interview 2, Kyiv region

¹⁰⁵ Interview 5, Chernihiv region

¹⁰⁶ Interview 4, Zaporizhzhia region

rooms, residential buildings¹⁰⁷ and their basements, utility areas, and cowshed¹⁰⁸ — often located within commercial, private, or infrastructure buildings.¹⁰⁹ These locations were commonly used as short-term detention facilities for periods ranging from two (2) days to one (1) month¹¹⁰. The conditions of detention in such makeshift sites exposed detainees to harsh, unsanitary, and unpredictable conditions, in violation of international standards.¹¹¹

60. Russian forces used existing penal colonies¹¹² and pre-trial detention centres¹¹³ as long-term detention facilities, where detainees would be held for weeks and years.¹¹⁴ Detainees in such facilities were subjected to prolonged and systematic interrogation involving the use of torture. One witness was held in a psychiatric hospital.¹¹⁵

¹⁰⁷ Interview 42, Kherson region

¹⁰⁸ Interview 37, Kherson region

¹⁰⁹ Interview 3, Kyiv region; Interview 2, Sumy region; Interview 7, Sumy region; Interview 8, Sumy region; Interview 3, Donetsk region; Interview 14, Kherson region.

¹¹⁰ Interview 2, Kyiv region; Interview 4, Kyiv region; Interview 2, Chernihiv region; Interview 3, Chernihiv region; Interview 4, Chernihiv region; Interview 5, Chernihiv region; Interview 3, Sumy region; Interview 4, Sumy region; Interview 6, Sumy region; Interview 1, Luhansk region; Interview 5, Kharkiv region; Interview 6, Kharkiv region; Interview 7, Kharkiv region; Interview 38, Kherson region, Interview 43, Kherson region, Interview 42, Kherson region, Interview 2, Kherson region.

¹¹¹ See para 99-102 for more illustrative cases concerning conditions of makeshift detention places.

¹¹² Interview 1, Donetsk region; Interview 3, Donetsk region; Interview 4, Donetsk region; Interview 5, Donetsk region; Interview 4, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 10, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 11, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 12, Zaporizhzhia region.

¹¹³ Interview 1, Kyiv region; Interview 2, Kyiv region; Interview 3, Kyiv region; Interview 4, Kyiv region; Interview 1, Chernihiv region; Interview 2, Chernihiv region; Interview 2, Sumy region; Interview 1, Donetsk region; Interview 2, Donetsk region; Interview 4, Donetsk region; Interview 5, Donetsk region; Interview 7, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 11, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 12, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 3, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 1, Kherson region; Interview 3, Kherson region; Interview 7, Kherson region; Interview 4, Kherson region; Interview 5, Kherson region; Interview 6, Kherson region; Interview 8, Kherson region; Interview 9, Kherson region; Interview 12, Kherson region; Interview 13, Kherson region; Interview 14, Kherson region; Interview 22, Kherson region; Interview 23, Kherson region; Interview 24, Kherson region; Interview 27, Kherson region; Interview 28, Kherson region; Interview 29, Kherson region; Interview 30, Kherson region; Interview 35, Kherson region; Interview 3, Luhansk region; Interview 2, Luhansk region; Interview 3, Kharkiv region; Interview 4, Kharkiv region; Interview 38, Kherson region; Interview 39, Kherson region; Interview 44, Kherson region; Interview 40, Kherson region; Interview 41, Kherson region; Interview 36, Kherson region.

¹¹⁴ Interview 3, Kherson region; Interview 4, Kherson region; Interview 5, Kherson region; Interview 6, Kherson region; Interview 7, Kherson region; Interview 14, Kherson region; Interview 17, Kherson region; Interview 31, Kherson region; Interview 34, Kherson region; Interview 35, Kherson region; Interview 7, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 11, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 13, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 3, Donetsk region; Interview 5, Donetsk region; Interview 5, Kyiv region.

¹¹⁵ Interview 3, Donetsk region.

61. In many documented cases, detention facilities were situated in close proximity to Russian military command centres, including headquarters¹¹⁶ and commandant's offices.¹¹⁷ Given this proximity, it is reasonable to conclude that commanding officers were aware — or should have been aware — of the detention of civilians at these sites.¹¹⁸
62. The conditions of detention in all identified facilities were not compliant with international humanitarian and human rights law standards and amounted to cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment and/or torture. Victims were subjected to extreme overcrowding, exposure to extreme temperatures, denial of medical care, unhygienic conditions, lack of access to toilet facilities, and irregular or contaminated food, among other abusive conditions.¹¹⁹ Detainees were frequently subjected to physical assaults by guards, including beatings with hands, feet, rubber or wooden batons, or the butts of firearms.¹²⁰ Guards and other representatives of the detaining authorities often used different techniques of beating detainees, accompanied by threats of further violence, degrading language, insults, and mockery during cell checks, searches, outdoor walks, showers, and toilet breaks.¹²¹ In the Sumy and the Kherson regions, guards unleashed service dogs on prisoners, holding them on leashes without muzzles, allowing the dogs to jump on, bite, and scratch the detainees.¹²²
63. Torture was systematically employed during civilians' detention, extending beyond arrest and interrogation to include so-called "prison rituals." A victim arrested in the Kyiv region and then held in the detention centre in the Russian Federation said that those who would not get up at 6 a.m. with the Russian anthem or who would not sing Russian songs were forbidden from sleeping at night, which was enforced by the guards.¹²³

¹¹⁶ Interview 2, Chernihiv region; Interview 3, Chernihiv region; Interview 4, Chernihiv region; Interview 5, Chernihiv region; Interview 6, Chernihiv region; Interview 7, Chernihiv region; Interview 8, Chernihiv region; Interview 2, Sumy region; Interview 2, Donetsk region; Interview 1, Donetsk region; Interview 3, Donetsk region; Interview 4, Donetsk region; Interview 1, Luhansk region; Interview 3, Kharkiv region; Interview 4, Kharkiv region; Interview 5, Donetsk region.

¹¹⁷ Interview 4, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 3, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 2, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 1, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 5, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 9, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 11, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 12, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 13, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 11, Kherson region; Interview 12, Kherson region; Interview 13, Kherson region; Interview 18, Kherson region; Interview 20, Kherson region; Interview 22, Kherson region; Interview 23, Kherson region; Interview 24, Kherson region; Interview 26, Kherson region; Interview 27, Kherson region; Interview 30, Kherson region; Interview 31, Kherson region; Interview 35, Kherson region; Interview 36, Kherson region.

¹¹⁸ Interview 8, Zaporizhzhia region.

¹¹⁹ See paragraphs 98–110 for additional illustrative cases concerning conditions of detention used as methods of torture.

¹²⁰ Interview 2, Kherson region; Interview 7, Sumy region; Interview 3, Kherson region.

¹²¹ Interview 37, Kherson region; Interview 3, Luhansk region; Interview 13, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 40, Kherson region

¹²² Interview 2, Sumy region; Interview 14, Kherson region; Interview 3, Kherson region.

¹²³ Interview 2, Kyiv region.

64. “Prison rituals” are also documented in the OMCT report “You’re Loyal to Ukraine — Are You a Nazi?” *Torture and Other Violations as Crimes Against Humanity by the Russian Army in Ukraine*, which follows the same documentation methodology as this submission. For instance, a witness detained in the Kherson pre-trial detention centre reported a recurring collective ‘torture ritual’ orchestrated by the administration where male civilian detainees were forced to chant slogans glorifying the Russian military and political leadership each time guards opened their cells. Refusal to comply resulted in beatings and electric shocks. In another example, detainees held in penal colony No. 120 in Olenivka in the Donetsk region, described a ‘welcome beating’: a severe physical assault upon arrival during which they were punched, kicked and beaten with truncheons.¹²⁴

iii) Interrogation and release

65. Documented cases show that nearly all the victims endured severe and prolonged torture or cruel and inhuman treatment in detention, including sexual and gender-based violence, during interrogation sessions. Interrogation rooms were set up in most of the identified detention sites. In all instances, the first interrogation took place within the first few hours or days after arrest, lasting anywhere from a few minutes to several hours, and were typically accompanied by physical and psychological violence. The interrogations were aimed at either obtaining information or forcing detainees to “confess” to transferring information or cooperating in any way with Ukrainian authorities.
66. Several victims reported that the interrogators were well-prepared, possessing detailed knowledge of the victims past civic activities, personal details and information about their relatives.¹²⁵ Many survivors described that at least two persons carried out the interrogation; one asked the questions, while another inflicted the torture. A third person might have held the victim in place.

¹²⁴ OMCT, ‘[You’re Loyal to Ukraine — Are You a Nazi?](#)’ *Torture and Other Violations as Crimes Against Humanity by the Russian Army in Ukraine*,’ August 2024, p. 34.

¹²⁵ Interview 3, Chernihiv region.

67. Based on the cases documented to date, Russian forces have used the following interrogation techniques: “rapid fire”.¹²⁶ “preventive beating”,¹²⁷ “we know all”,¹²⁸ “emotional futility”,¹²⁹ and “good cop, bad cop”.¹³⁰

*“I was cross-examined. They beat me — both on the head and in the chest. I was sitting on a chair and getting hit. They hit me with their hands and fists. Before I had time to answer a question, another one was asked. Before I could answer, they hit me in the head and chest. And then, when I started screaming that you were not giving me time to answer, they started lifting me by the handcuffs that were behind my arms, twisting my arms. It was hellish pain.”*¹³¹ (This seems to be a rapid-fire interrogation technique.)

68. During interrogations, victims were often blindfolded, mostly with a bag or hat on their head pulled down to cover the eyes,¹³² and handcuffed.¹³³ They were beaten all over the body, including in the genitals¹³⁴, using hands, rubber batons and sometimes a hammer.¹³⁵ Russian forces often

¹²⁶ ‘This approach may be used by one, two, or more collectors to question the source. In employing this technique, the collectors ask a series of questions in such a manner that the source does not have time to answer a question completely before the next one is asked. This confuses the source, and he will tend to contradict himself as he has little time to formulate his answers. The collectors then confront the source with the inconsistencies causing further contradictions. In many instances, the source will begin to talk freely in an attempt to explain himself and deny the collector’s claims of inconsistencies. In this attempt, the source is likely to reveal more than he intends, thus creating additional leads for further exploitation.’ Headquarters. Department of the Army. ‘Human Intelligence Collector Operations.’ FM2-22.3 (FM 34-52). September 6, 2006. p. 8-16.

¹²⁷ Victims were severely beaten during one or more of the initial interrogations, in which they were not asked any important questions. The Russian military started asking sensitive questions from the second or third interrogation, once the victim had been ‘prepared’ through previous beatings.

¹²⁸ ‘In the “we know all” approach technique, a collector subtly convinces the source that his questioning of the source is perfunctory because any information that the source has is already known. A collector must first become thoroughly familiar with available data concerning the source and the current situation. To begin the collection effort, a collector asks questions based on this known data.’ Headquarters. Department of the Army. ‘Human Intelligence Collector Operations.’ FM2-22.3 (FM 34-52). September 6, 2006. p. 8-14.

¹²⁹ ‘In the emotional-futility approach, a collector convinces the source that resistance to questioning is futile. This engenders a feeling of hopelessness and helplessness on the part of the source. A collector gives the source a “way out” of the helpless situation. For example, “it is hopeless for your forces to continue fighting because they can no longer get supplies, but you can help end the war and their suffering.” When employing this technique, a collector must have factual information. A collector presents these facts in a persuasive, logical manner. He should be aware of and able to exploit the source’s psychological and moral weaknesses, as well as weaknesses inherent in his society.’ Headquarters. Department of the Army. ‘Human Intelligence Collector Operations.’ FM2-22.3 (FM 34-52). September 6, 2006. p. 8-13.

¹³⁰ The goal of this technique is to make the source identify with one of the interrogators and thereby establish rapport and cooperation. Use of this technique requires two experienced collectors who are convincing actors. The two collectors will display opposing personalities and attitudes toward the source.’ Headquarters. Department of the Army. ‘Human Intelligence Collector Operations’. FM2-22.3 (FM 34-52). September 6, 2006. p. 8-17.

¹³¹ Interview 3, Luhansk region.

¹³² Interview 25, Kherson region; Interview 24, Kherson region; Interview 4, Chernihiv region; Interview 6, Chernihiv region; Interview 8, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 22, Kherson region; Interview 40, Kherson region.

¹³³ Interview 8, Zaporizhzhia region.

¹³⁴ Interview 43, Kherson region.

¹³⁵ Interview 4, Chernihiv region; Interview 6, Chernihiv region; Interview 4, Chernihiv region; Interview 6, Chernihiv region; Interview 8, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 22, Kherson region; Interview 5, Kharkiv region; Interview 6,

used electric shocks during interrogations.¹³⁶ One female victim was repeatedly subjected to electric shocks and raped during interrogations.¹³⁷ At least one victim was waterboarded, which was also filmed by the perpetrators.¹³⁸ In another case, the victim was subjected to mock executions during interrogation as part of the torture inflicted on him.¹³⁹

“I twitched a bit, like a frog in a biology experiment, and that’s it... My body kept shaking loose. They tied me up again, but the tape just snapped off me. It just happened physically, that’s all.” “He grabs your, for example, tied-up leg, and starts tapping on your knee, gently but repeatedly in the same spot. I’m talking to you, and it’s happening. Then suddenly, they switch on the shock. Electric shocks from above. It’s intense... That’s it. By the third time, they just tossed me around like a sack. I was flying around, chairs scattered underneath me.”¹⁴⁰

69. Following interrogations, Russian forces kept the detainees in custody without formal charges and subjected them to periodic re-interrogation.¹⁴¹ Some were released upon accepting certain conditions, mostly cooperation, such as administrating a Russian propaganda Telegram channel (adding members and sharing propaganda),¹⁴² staying in touch with the Russian military via Telegram to inform them about anything important happening around,¹⁴³ working as an official in the local administration,¹⁴⁴ writing commissioned historical articles and restoring Russian cultural monuments to promote Russian ideological narrative.¹⁴⁵ Russian forces released one victim after she showed them her son’s apartment, who is a Ukrainian serviceman, and let them

Kharkiv region; Interview 38, Kherson region; Interview 3, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 43, Kherson region; Interview 4, Chernihiv region.

¹³⁶ See para 90-93 for more illustrative cases.

¹³⁷ Interview 37, Kherson region.

¹³⁸ Interview 13, Kherson region

¹³⁹ Interview 3, Kyiv region.

¹⁴⁰ Interview 41, Kherson region

¹⁴¹ Interview 1, Kyiv region; Interview 2, Kyiv region; Interview 3, Kyiv region; Interview 4, Kyiv region; Interview 5, Kyiv region; Interview 1, Chernihiv region; Interview 2, Chernihiv region; Interview 3, Chernihiv region; Interview 5, Chernihiv region; Interview 8, Sumy region; Interview 7, Sumy region; Interview 6, Sumy region; Interview 5, Sumy region; Interview 4, Sumy region; Interview 3, Sumy region; Interview 2, Sumy region; Interview 2, Donetsk region; Interview 3, Donetsk region; Interview 11, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 12, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 7, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 8, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 4, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 13, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 1, Kherson region; Interview 8, Kherson region; Interview 12, Kherson region; Interview 14, Kherson region; Interview 21, Kherson region; Interview 22, Kherson region; Interview 24, Kherson region; Interview 25, Kherson region; Interview 28, Kherson region; Interview 29, Kherson region; Interview 34, Kherson region; Interview 35, Kherson region; Interview 3, Kharkiv region; Interview 4, Kharkiv region; Interview 5, Kharkiv region; Interview 6, Kharkiv region; Interview 7, Kharkiv region; Interview 37, Kherson region; Interview 38, Kherson region; Interview 39, Kherson region; Interview 43, Kherson region; Interview 44, Kherson region; Interview 40, Kherson region; Interview 41, Kherson region, Interview 42, Kherson region; and Interview 36, Kherson region.

¹⁴² Interview 10, Kherson region.

¹⁴³ Interview 23, Kherson region.

¹⁴⁴ Interview 3, Luhansk region.

¹⁴⁵ Interview 26, Kherson region.

search it.¹⁴⁶ Another victim was released on the condition that she would report information on her neighbours, but she escaped the village the following morning. While she was in detention, Russian forces had seized her car and told her husband that she had been killed.¹⁴⁷

70. At least two victims reported that the interrogators forced them to sign documents accusing them of espionage and discrediting the Russian army. However, they were unaware of any further proceedings based on these documents and were eventually released.¹⁴⁸ One victim was charged under the Russian Criminal Code with weapons possession but released after 14 weeks of detention without any trial.¹⁴⁹
71. Another victim received an official warning a month before his release, stating that he acknowledged the harm he could have caused the Russian Federation and pledged not to engage in such activities again. Russian authorities never informed him of any legal proceedings against him.¹⁵⁰ In another case, prior to release, Russian forces gave a victim a document to read and sign stating that he had refused to cooperate with the Russian authorities and did not know the answers to most of the questions posed to him.¹⁵¹ Some victims received a document certifying the release issued by the General Prosecutor's Office of the so-called Donetsk People's Republic.¹⁵²
72. One (1) victim was offered the option to stay in Russia and obtain Russian citizenship or to be "deported" from "the territory of the Russian Federation".¹⁵³ Seven (7) victims were taken to the frontline, made to read a statement regarding their deportation and ordered to walk towards Ukrainian-controlled areas under the threat of being shot if they turned back.¹⁵⁴ Before such releases at the frontline, one female victim was threatened with rape,¹⁵⁵ and another with execution.¹⁵⁶ Another female victim was informed of an "expulsion" order near the frontline in the Zaporizhzhia region, after which she was taken to Russian military positions for forced labour. Russian forces compelled her to dig trenches and perform support tasks for their troops stationed in the village, including cleaning, laundry, and cooking. She was held there from January to March 2023 and forced to work from 5 a.m. until 8 or 9 p.m. in severe winter and early spring conditions. A Russian soldier also raped her during this time.¹⁵⁷

¹⁴⁶ Interview 1, Kharkiv region.

¹⁴⁷ Interview 1, Luhansk region.

¹⁴⁸ Interview 27, Kherson region; Interview 3, Zaporizhzhia region.

¹⁴⁹ Interview 13, Kherson region.

¹⁵⁰ Interview 9, Kherson region.

¹⁵¹ Interview 7, Kharkiv region.

¹⁵² Interview 4, Donetsk region.

¹⁵³ Interview 5, Donetsk region.

¹⁵⁴ Interview 1, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 2, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 5, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 6, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 4, Kharkiv region; Interview 9, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 40, Kherson region.

¹⁵⁵ Interview 1, Zaporizhzhia region

¹⁵⁶ Interview 2, Zaporizhzhia region

¹⁵⁷ Interview 13, Zaporizhzhia region

73. Several victims were released not only without ever being brought before a judicial authority, but also without any explanation.¹⁵⁸ The frequent release of victims without explanation, charges or due process reinforces the arbitrary nature of the detentions.
74. Some victims were released as Russian forces were preparing to withdraw from occupied territories, mostly in Kherson and Kharkiv, at the end of the summer and into fall 2022, in anticipation of the advance of the Ukrainian Armed Forces.¹⁵⁹ Two victims from the Kharkiv region freed themselves from the detention cells after Russian authorities had withdrawn from that area.¹⁶⁰

3. The purpose of torture

75. The documented patterns indicate that the use of torture was not incidental, but rather systematic and aimed at serving specific and recurring purposes. Two primary purposes emerged from the evidence: first, to extract information or compel confessions; and second, to punish individuals for actual or alleged actions, opinions or affiliations. In many cases, multiple purposes of torture were pursued simultaneously. These practices appeared intended to exert control over the population and identify individuals perceived as disloyal to the occupying authorities.

a) Obtaining information or a confession

76. In 39 out of 54 (72%) cases of torture, torture during interrogations was used to obtain confessions or specific information. Russian forces tortured detainees to make them “confess” to (i) alleged

¹⁵⁸ Interview 1, Kyiv region; Interview 2, Kyiv region; Interview 3, Kyiv region; Interview 4, Kyiv region; Interview 5, Kyiv region; Interview 1, Chernihiv region; Interview 2, Chernihiv region; Interview 3, Chernihiv region; Interview 5, Chernihiv region; Interview 8, Sumy region; Interview 7, Sumy region; Interview 6, Sumy region; Interview 4, Sumy region; Interview 3, Sumy region; Interview 2, Sumy region; Interview 2, Donetsk region; Interview 3, Donetsk region; Interview 11, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 12, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 7, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 4, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 13, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 1, Kherson region; Interview 8, Kherson region; Interview 12, Kherson region; Interview 14, Kherson region; Interview 21, Kherson region; Interview 22, Kherson region; Interview 24, Kherson region; Interview 25, Kherson region; Interview 27, Kherson region; Interview 28, Kherson region; Interview 29, Kherson region; Interview 30, Kherson region; Interview 31, Kherson region; Interview 34, Kherson region; Interview 35, Kherson region; Interview 5, Kharkiv region; Interview 6, Kharkiv region; Interview 7, Kharkiv region; Interview 37, Kherson region; Interview 38, Kherson region; Interview 39, Kherson region; Interview 43, Kherson region; Interview 44, Kherson region; Interview 40, Kherson region; Interview 41, Kherson region; Interview 42, Kherson region; Interview 36, Kherson region.

¹⁵⁹ Interview 40, Kherson region

¹⁶⁰ Interview 2, Kharkiv region; Interview 3, Kharkiv region.

cooperation with the Ukrainian Armed Forces;¹⁶¹ (ii) being a “nazi”¹⁶² or having pro-Ukrainian views;¹⁶³ (iii) participating in the AZOV¹⁶⁴ regiment.¹⁶⁵

77. Some victims reported being forced to participate in the recording of propaganda videos. In such videos, they were forced to “confess” that they were collaborating with the Ukrainian Armed Forces. In some cases, release was conditioned upon recording such a video “confession”, filmed just before the victim was released.¹⁶⁶
78. Russian forces also used torture to obtain information on (i) the military positions of Ukrainian forces;¹⁶⁷ (ii) other civilians who are Ukrainian military veterans or opposing the occupation;¹⁶⁸ (iii) territorial self-defence units, “saboteurs,” Security Service of Ukraine representatives;¹⁶⁹ (iv) the exact location of ammunition stocks¹⁷⁰ and Ukrainian weapons.¹⁷¹

b) Punishment

79. Aside from trying to obtain information or making victims confess during interrogations, all other forms of ill-treatment appear to have been inflicted on the victims as a punishment for their pro-Ukrainian views and/or perceived or actual cooperation with the Ukrainian army.¹⁷² In many cases, during acts of torture or severe ill-treatment, Russian forces explicitly stated that the victim deserved the abuse because of their support for an independent Ukrainian State.¹⁷³ One victim, who was involved in the organisation of peaceful demonstrations against the Russian occupation, was arrested twice and tortured because of her support for Ukraine. During the interrogation,

¹⁶¹ Interview 8, Kherson region; Interview 30, Kherson region; Interview 31, Kherson region; Interview 34, Kherson region; Interview 37, Kherson region; Interview 41, Kherson region; Interview 4, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 4, Sumy region; Interview 6, Sumy region.

¹⁶² A term used by Russian forces to refer to individuals who support Ukraine’s independence and integration with the EU. Interview 1, Kherson region; Interview 31, Kherson region.

¹⁶³ Interview 3, Luhansk region; Interview 5, Zaporizhzhia region.

¹⁶⁴ The 12th Special Forces Brigade Azov is a professional military formation within the National Guard of Ukraine, established on May 5, 2014. Since its inception, Azov has been dedicated to protecting Ukraine’s territorial integrity, upholding its laws and constitutional order, and playing an active role in repelling Russia’s aggression on Ukrainian soil.

¹⁶⁵ Interview 5, Donetsk region.

¹⁶⁶ Interview 17, Kherson region.

¹⁶⁷ Interview 5, Kyiv region; Interview 7, Chernihiv region.

¹⁶⁸ Interview 3, Chernihiv region; Interview 4, Chernihiv region; Interview 5, Chernihiv region; Interview 6, Chernihiv region; Interview 4, Kyiv region; Interview 8, Sumy region; Interview 13, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 2, Kherson region; Interview 17, Kherson region; Interview 21, Kherson region.

¹⁶⁹ Interview 8, Sumy region; Interview 5, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 10, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 11, Kherson region; Interview 13, Kherson region; Interview 21, Kherson region; Interview 41, Kherson region, Interview 42, Kherson region.

¹⁷⁰ Interview 2, Kherson region; Interview 6, Kherson region; Interview 21, Kherson region; Interview 12, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 1, Luhansk region; Interview 3, Kharkiv region; Interview 4, Kharkiv region.

¹⁷¹ Interview 1, Kyiv region.

¹⁷² Interview 2, Kyiv region; Interview 5, Donetsk region; Interview 3, Sumy region; Interview 7, Sumy region.

¹⁷³ Interview 5, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 10, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 24, Kherson region; Interview 3, Donetsk region; Interview 3, Luhansk region.

Russian soldiers repeatedly asked her after each blow: “Are you still Ukrainian?” and “Do you still consider yourself Ukrainian?”.¹⁷⁴

80. In cases which Russian authorities identified multiple “markers”, as described in chapter ‘*Reasons for victimisation*’ above, in relation to one single person, the severity of torture and ill-treatment appeared to increase.¹⁷⁵ When three (3) or more markers were identified, the degree of torture was notably higher.¹⁷⁶ This escalation may have been motivated by the perception that individuals exhibiting several such indicators were stronger supporters of Ukraine. MIHR interviewed a female victim from the Kherson region who had worked at a local social security department, was known for her pro-Ukrainian views, and whose nephew served in the Ukrainian Armed Forces. While in detention, she was subjected to electric shocks and beatings, denied sleep, medical care, and parcels from outside, and threatened that her son’s bones would be broken. She ultimately suffered a heart attack while in detention.¹⁷⁷
81. Beyond the individual acts of retribution, torture was also used to instil broader fear. Some victims described being told that the punishment was intended to serve as a warning to others. Punishment was thus not only a response to alleged conduct but also a pre-emptive measure aimed at deterring future resistance and reinforcing control through fear.
82. In some cases, in addition to punishment, torture and other inhuman treatment appeared to provide a perverse sense of satisfaction to Russian forces. One victim reported that Russian special forces would severely beat him and other detainees whenever there was a failure of the Russian army on the battlefield.¹⁷⁸ Four victims claimed that Russian forces had severely beaten and tortured them for personal satisfaction.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁴ Interview 10, Zaporizhzhia region.

¹⁷⁵ Interview 1, Chernihiv region; Interview 3, Sumy region; Interview 3, Donetsk region; Interview 6, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 9, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 9, Kherson region; Interview 10, Kherson region; Interview 25, Kherson region; Interview 34, Kherson region; Interview 35, Kherson region; Interview 1, Kyiv region; Interview 7, Chernihiv region; Interview 24, Kherson region; Interview 13, Kherson region; Interview 28, Kherson region; Interview 2, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 10, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 2, Chernihiv region; Interview 7, Sumy region; Interview 1, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 5, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 11, Kherson region; Interview 21, Kherson region; Interview 23, Kherson region; Interview 32, Kherson region; Interview 26, Kherson region; Interview 6, Sumy region; Interview 3, Luhansk region; Interview 4, Sumy region.

¹⁷⁶ Interview 4, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 30, Kherson region; Interview 31, Kherson region; Interview 22, Kherson region; Interview 20, Kherson region; Interview 40, Kherson region; Interview 1, Luhansk region.

¹⁷⁷ Interview 31, Kherson region.

¹⁷⁸ Interview 3, Kyiv region.

¹⁷⁹ Interview 2, Kyiv region; Interview 4, Chernihiv region; Interview 1, Donetsk region; Interview 5; Donetsk region.

4. Torture and Ill-treatment Methods

a) *Physical torture and ill-treatment*

83. As described above, the most severe forms of torture generally occurred during interrogation and typically lasted between 10 minutes and 1,5 hours at a time. The identified torture methods and equipment suggest that Russian forces did not necessarily intend to kill or permanently injure victims, but rather to instil fear, extract information, or punish them by inflicting pain. However, due to the prolonged and severe nature of the torture, some victims died in detention or shortly after their release while others suffered disabilities and other long-term health consequences, which are presented in the chapter ‘*Consequences of torture*’ (see para. 130-136).

i. Severe, prolonged beatings

84. In 47 out of 54 (87%) cases of torture, Russian forces subjected victims to severe beatings, using their hands, feet,¹⁸⁰ sticks,¹⁸¹ clubs,¹⁸² belts,¹⁸³ hammers,¹⁸⁴ or other improvised equipment.¹⁸⁵ In some cases, books were used to strike victims, and, in one case, a fire extinguisher was used to replace a baton.¹⁸⁶ One victim reported having his head hit against the wall during an interrogation.¹⁸⁷

“In one-and-a-half, you sit down, but not completely. Hands behind your back, head down, and not fully squatting. It was their favourite pastime to put you in the one-and-a-half position and go around hitting your legs with a baton - the pelvis, the pain points. They

¹⁸⁰ Interview 1, Kherson region; Interview 2, Kherson region; Interview 3, Kherson region; Interview 5, Kherson region; Interview 6, Kherson region; Interview 7, Kherson region; Interview 8, Kherson region; Interview 9, Kherson region; Interview 17, Kherson region; Interview 20, Kherson region; Interview 22, Kherson region; Interview 25, Kherson region; Interview 30, Kherson region; Interview 31, Kherson region; Interview 38, Kherson region; Interview 39, Kherson region; Interview 40, Kherson region; Interview 41, Kherson region; Interview 42, Kherson region; Interview 43, Kherson region; Interview 5, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 6, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 10, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 14, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 1, Donetsk region; Interview 5, Donetsk region; Interview 1, Luhansk region; Interview 3, Luhansk region; Interview 3, Sumy region; Interview 4, Sumy region; Interview 7, Sumy region; Interview 8, Sumy region; Interview 3, Chernihiv region; Interview 4, Chernihiv region; Interview 6, Chernihiv region; Interview 1, Kyiv region; Interview 2, Kyiv region; Interview 3, Kyiv region; Interview 5, Kyiv region; Interview 3, Kharkiv region; Interview 5, Kharkiv region; Interview 6, Kharkiv region.

¹⁸¹ Interview 1, Luhansk region; Interview 3, Kyiv region; Interview 22, Kherson region.

¹⁸² Interview 3, Kharkiv region; Interview 5, Donetsk region; Interview 1, Kherson region; Interview 3, Kherson region; Interview 8, Kherson region; Interview 30, Kherson region; Interview 38, Kherson region; Interview 41, Kherson region; Interview 43, Kherson region; Interview 22, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 3, Kyiv region.

¹⁸³ Interview 12, Zaporizhzhia region.

¹⁸⁴ Interview 2, Kherson region; Interview 5, Kherson region; Interview 4, Chernihiv region.

¹⁸⁵ Interview 5, Kyiv region; Interview 3, Kharkiv region; Interview 5, Zaporizhzhia region.

¹⁸⁶ Interview 1, Kherson region.

¹⁸⁷ Interview 1, Donetsk region.

would beat me so hard that my legs would turn black. Then the swelling went down, and it was awful.”¹⁸⁸

85. The intensity of the beatings varied, ranging from a few strong blows combined with other torture methods to prolonged beatings lasting up to one (1) hour¹⁸⁹ at a time with at least 100 blows.¹⁹⁰ Beatings were sometimes repeated over several consecutive days, combined with interrogations or carried out separately as what Russian forces referred to as a “disciplinary act”¹⁹¹ or as punishment for speaking the Ukrainian language.¹⁹² These practices further exacerbated the victims’ physical suffering. Perpetrators targeted various parts of the body, including the head, face, liver, kidneys, ribs, pelvis, back and chest, buttocks, back, arms, fingers, legs, knees and heels.¹⁹³
86. In some cases, Russian forces beat the victims on the back of the head and on their heels, possibly to avoid leaving visible bruises.¹⁹⁴ One victim described a technique where Russian servicemen struck both of his ears simultaneously using books.¹⁹⁵

ii. Positional torture and prolonged use of restraint devices

87. There are documented cases of victims being held in stress positions for hours at a time.¹⁹⁶ The most commonly used appears to be the ‘swallow pose’, which involves standing on one foot while holding the other leg up behind, with arms wide open and leaning forward.¹⁹⁷ One victim recalls that, during transportation, Russian soldiers sat on him and other detainees.¹⁹⁸ Another victim said

¹⁸⁸ Interview 5, Donetsk region.

¹⁸⁹ Interview 17, Kherson region; Interview 4, Sumy region.

¹⁹⁰ Interview 5, Kherson region.

¹⁹¹ Interview 5, Donetsk region; Interview 1, Kyiv region; Interview 6, Kherson region.

¹⁹² Interview 2, Kyiv region; Interview 5, Donetsk region; Interview 3, Sumy region; Interview 7, Sumy region.

¹⁹³ Interview 3, Kherson region; Interview 5, Kherson region; Interview 6, Kherson region; Interview 7, Kherson region; Interview 8, Kherson region; Interview 20, Kherson region; Interview 40, Kherson region; Interview 42, Kherson region; Interview 43, Kherson region; Interview 5, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 6, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 10, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 12, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 13, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 14, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 1, Donetsk region; Interview 5, Donetsk region; Interview 1, Luhansk region; Interview 3, Luhansk region; Interview 3, Sumy region; Interview 4, Sumy region; Interview 7, Sumy region; Interview 8, Sumy region; Interview 3, Chernihiv region; Interview 4, Chernihiv region; Interview 5, Chernihiv region; Interview 6, Chernihiv region; Interview 1, Kyiv region; Interview 2, Kyiv region; Interview 3, Kyiv region; Interview 5, Kyiv region; Interview 3, Kharkiv region; Interview 5, Kharkiv region; Interview 6, Kharkiv region..

¹⁹⁴ Interview 6, Zaporizhzhia region.

¹⁹⁵ Interview 10, Zaporizhzhia region.

¹⁹⁶ Interview 8, Kherson region; Interview 3, Kherson region; Interview 5, Kherson region; Interview 2, Kyiv region; Interview 5, Donetsk region; Interview 3, Sumy region; Interview 7, Sumy region.

¹⁹⁷ Interview 3, Kherson region; Interview 5, Kherson region; Interview 2, Kyiv region; Interview 5, Donetsk region; Interview 3, Sumy region; Interview 7, Sumy region.

¹⁹⁸ Interview 2, Kyiv region.

that he had been forced to squat with his heels lifted and hands behind his head for several hours, and if he moved, he was kicked.¹⁹⁹

88. Similar practices of positional torture have also been documented in the OMCT report.²⁰⁰ It describes victims being subjected to “stress positions” for hours, including overnight, such as squatting, or staying on all fours. Other reported methods included being forced to sleep while standing, being strapped overnight to a cold radiator in low temperatures to prevent them from movement or warmth.

“They put me in a fetal position on the floor, with his knees pressed against the body, and handcuffed my hands under my knees. A stick was placed between the legs and arms, under the knees. It turns out that this stick locks the arms in place, and you are suspended on a stick in this fetal position. The body weight presses on the stick and bones, and the handcuffs add pressure on the bones. They asked me questions during this. After that, I was shaken and struck in the head with a book. When the Russians got bored, they started using the stun gun.”²⁰¹

89. The prolonged use of restraint devices was also commonly employed by Russian forces. Many victims had their hands tied with metal handcuffs, plastic zip ties, ropes, tape, belts or other improvised restraints immediately after their arrest, which sometimes continued in detention facilities, during transportation between locations and on the way to interrogation rooms.²⁰² One victim reported being transported handcuffed in the trunk of a car.²⁰³ In many cases, victims had their hands tied with plastic cable ties during transportation for days, which restricted blood flow to their palms²⁰⁴ and caused their hands to turn dark blue.²⁰⁵

¹⁹⁹ Interview 4, Donetsk region.

²⁰⁰ “You’re Loyal to Ukraine — Are You a Nazi?” Torture and Other Violations as Crimes Against Humanity by the Russian Army in Ukraine, August 2024, p. 44–45. Available at: <https://www.omct.org/en/resources/reports/ukraine-new-report-reveals-deliberate-torture-policy-by-russian-forces-and-potential-crimes-against-humanity>

²⁰¹ Interview 5, Donetsk region.

²⁰² Interview 3, Chernihiv region; Interview 2, Kyiv region; Interview 5, Chernihiv region; Interview 20, Kherson region; Interview 17, Kherson region; Interview 4, Kherson region, and Interview 7, Kherson region; Interview 3, Kherson region; Interview 5, Kherson region; Interview 6, Kherson region; Interview 2, Sumy region; Interview 12, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 26, Kherson region; Interview 3, Donetsk region; Interview 8, Kherson region; Interview 8, Sumy region.

²⁰³ Interview 5, Kherson region

²⁰⁴ Interview 2, Kherson region; Interview 2, Kyiv region.

²⁰⁵ Interview 3, Luhansk region; Interview 3, Kyiv region; Interview 5, Donetsk region.

iii. Electric shocks, application of hot objects and chemical substances

90. Of the 54 torture victims identified, 34 (64%) were subjected to electric shocks.²⁰⁶ In most cases, interrogations involving electric shocks lasted approximately 20 to 40 minutes.²⁰⁷ However, in one instance, the session extended to one hour.²⁰⁸ In two other cases, during the session, the electric shocks were administered in intervals lasting between 15²⁰⁹ to 30²¹⁰ seconds. Russian servicemen employed both high²¹¹ and low-voltage direct-contact devices to deliver multiple and prolonged electric shocks. These included stun guns,²¹² cattle prods,²¹³ and a so-called “dynamo machine,”²¹⁴ which generates electrical current, battery clamps and a modified military field telephone TA-57 (also known as ‘tapik’).²¹⁵ Shocks were inflicted on various parts of the body, including the shoulder blades,²¹⁶ limbs, hands, ears, head,²¹⁷ fingers,²¹⁸ feet,²¹⁹ genitals,²²⁰ and near or to their scrotum²²¹ or genitals.²²² In two cases involving female victims, shocks were also administered to the nipples²²³ amounting to sexual violence. In many cases, water was used to

²⁰⁶ Interview 1, Kherson region; Interview 2, Kherson region; Interview 6, Kherson region; Interview 8, Kherson region; Interview 10, Kherson region; Interview 13, Kherson region; Interview 17, Kherson region; Interview 21, Kherson region; Interview 22, Kherson region; Interview 25, Kherson region; Interview 30, Kherson region; Interview 31, Kherson region; Interview 34, Kherson region; Interview 37, Kherson region; Interview 38, Kherson region; Interview 39, Kherson region; Interview 40, Kherson region; Interview 41, Kherson region; Interview 42, Kherson region; Interview 3, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 4, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 5, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 10, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 12, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 1, Donetsk region; Interview 5, Donetsk region; Interview 1, Luhansk region; Interview 2, Luhansk region; Interview 3, Luhansk region; Interview 2, Kyiv region; Interview 4, Kyiv region; Interview 5, Kyiv region; Interview 3, Kharkiv region; Interview 4, Kharkiv region.

²⁰⁷ Interview 5, Donetsk region; Interview 21, Kherson region; Interview 30, Kherson region; Interview 4, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 5, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 12, Zaporizhzhia region.

²⁰⁸ Interview 3, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 3, Kharkiv region.

²⁰⁹ Interview 8, Kherson region

²¹⁰ Interview 39, Kherson region

²¹¹ Interview 22, Kherson region.

²¹² Interview 1, Kherson region; Interview 5, Donetsk region; Interview 2, Kherson region; Interview 13, Kherson region; Interview 17, Kherson region; Interview 38, Kherson region; Interview 41, Kherson region; Interview 5, Donetsk region; Interview 2, Kyiv region; Interview 5, Kyiv region.

²¹³ An electric cattle prod is a stick with electrodes on the end which is used to make cattle move via a relatively high-voltage, low-current electric shock.

²¹⁴ A dynamo is an electrical generator that creates direct current using a commutator.

²¹⁵ Interview 4, Kharkiv region; Interview 2, Kherson region; Interview 17, Kherson region; Interview 40, Kherson region.

²¹⁶ Interview 17, Kherson region; Interview 38, Kherson region; Interview 1, Luhansk region.

²¹⁷ Interview 17, Kherson region; Interview 30, Kherson region; Interview 39, Kherson region; Interview 4, Kharkiv region; Interview 2, Luhansk region; Interview 3, Luhansk region; Interview 5, Donetsk region.

²¹⁸ Interview 17, Kherson region; Interview 25, Kherson region; Interview 37, Kherson region; Interview 38, Kherson region; Interview 1, Luhansk region; Interview 3, Kharkiv region; Interview 4, Kharkiv region.

²¹⁹ Interview 13, Kherson region; Interview 37, Kherson region; Interview 38, Kherson region; Interview 3, Kharkiv region.

²²⁰ Interview 3, Kharkiv region; Interview 1, Donetsk region; Interview 5, Donetsk region.

²²¹ Interview 4, Kharkiv region

²²² Interview 8, Kherson region; Interview 1, Donetsk region; Interview 41, Kherson region.

²²³ Interview 37, Kherson region; Interview 40, Kherson region

intensify the effect of the electric shocks.²²⁴ In one case, the perpetrators told the victim, whom they were subjecting to electric shocks using a modified military field phone, that they were ‘calling’ Vladimir Vladimirovich, a reference to President Putin.²²⁵

91. One of the survivors described the pain caused by the electric shocks as 10 out of 10,²²⁶ and another one described the feeling like his head was in a vacuum during torture sessions.²²⁷ During the electric shocks, the victims would often start salivating,²²⁸ and their noses would start bleeding.²²⁹ Many fell to the ground²³⁰ and lost consciousness due to the severe pain.²³¹ One victim wet herself because she was not allowed to use the toilet.²³² Another victim described that a layer of her skin came off under the burns.²³³

“And I screamed when he was already electrocuting me; it was excruciating; I was bending straight, and I had the impression that I was going to explode.”²³⁴

“It felt like your brain was going to twist in your head, and you were ready to just roll with it. It was so painful.”²³⁵

92. One victim was bound with zip ties, seated in a chair, and subjected to electric shocks five (5) to six (6) times for 15 seconds, each with electrodes applied to his fingers, genitals and ears, while being doused with water to enhance conductivity. This torture continued for five consecutive days, during which he was also beaten with fists, feet, and knuckled gloves. The victim repeatedly fell off the chair, was drenched in water and the torture continued.²³⁶
93. Other reported methods of physical torture include putting out cigarettes against the body of the victim, causing burns.²³⁷ One victim said that he and another detainee had been doused with gasoline, which caused burns on their bodies.²³⁸

²²⁴ Interview 17, Kherson region; Interview 21, Kherson region; Interview 37, Kherson region; Interview 5, Donetsk region; Interview 1, Luhansk region; Interview 3, Luhansk region; Interview 5, Donetsk region; Interview 3, Kharkiv region; Interview 4, Kharkiv region.

²²⁵ Interview 4, Kharkiv region.

²²⁶ Interview 1, Luhansk region.

²²⁷ Interview 3, Donetsk region.

²²⁸ Interview 2, Luhansk region; Interview 3, Luhansk region; Interview 3, Kharkiv region.

²²⁹ Interview 3, Kherson region; Interview 2, Luhansk region; Interview 1, Kharkiv region.

²³⁰ Interview 8, Kherson region; Interview 17, Kherson region; Interview 3, Zaporizhzhia region.

²³¹ Interview 31, Kherson region; Interview 5, Donetsk region.

²³² Interview 31, Kherson region.

²³³ Interview 4, Kharkiv region.

²³⁴ Interview 1, Luhansk region.

²³⁵ Interview 3, Kharkiv region.

²³⁶ Interview 8, Kherson region.

²³⁷ Interview 7, Sumy region; Interview 43, Kherson region.

²³⁸ Interview 5, Kyiv region.

iv. Asphyxiation, e.g., wet and dry methods, head immersion, suffocation

94. In 10 out of 54 cases (19%) of torture, Russian forces used asphyxiation during interrogations. In some cases, they waterboarded the victims by pouring water into their mouths through a piece of cloth, usually a T-shirt.²³⁹ In other cases, victims were strangled with a lace or a cable,²⁴⁰ coupled with a severe beating.²⁴¹ Four victims reported that they had been suffocated with a plastic bag over their heads, which cut off their access to oxygen.²⁴² During transportation, many victims had a plastic or some other bag on their heads, which obstructed their breathing.²⁴³

“After that, they turned him on his back, took the bag off his head, threw the victim’s T-shirt over his head, and began to drown him, pouring water from bottles. This lasted for several hours. They poured water and, at the same time, beat him again with a stun gun.”
244

v. Deprivation of basic needs

95. In the Kherson region, to force a victim to confess to cooperating with the Ukrainian Armed Forces, Russian forces forbade him from sleeping and forced him to stand with his arms raised against the wall until the morning, after beating him in the evening.²⁴⁵ Another victim was starved for six days until he agreed to cooperate with Russian forces.

vi. Denial of medical health care and treatment

96. In almost all documented cases, Russian forces denied or provided minimal medical aid to the detainees.²⁴⁶ One victim had his toes amputated, and another one had his legs amputated after both of them had been held barefoot in a field in winter in -15 degrees Celsius and had received no medical aid afterward.²⁴⁷ At least two victims suffered from diabetes, and while in detention, they did not have proper nutrition or and medication.²⁴⁸

²³⁹ Interview 8, Kherson region; Interview 13, Kherson region; Interview 22, Kherson region.

²⁴⁰ Interview 42, Kherson region; Interview 13, Zaporizhzhia region.

²⁴¹ Interview 6, Kherson region.

²⁴² Interview 13, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 14, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 2, Kyiv region; Interview 3, Kyiv region.

²⁴³ Interview 2, Kyiv region; Interview 5, Chernihiv region; Interview 22, Kherson region; Interview 17, Kherson region; Interview 2, Sumy region; Interview 14, Kherson region; Interview 23, Kherson region, Interview 8, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 10, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 7, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 12, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 26, Kherson region; Interview 3, Donetsk region; Interview 21, Kherson region; Interview 5, Zaporizhzhia; Interview 8, Kherson region; Interview 8, Sumy region.

²⁴⁴ Interview 22, Kherson region.

²⁴⁵ Interview 8, Kherson region.

²⁴⁶ Interview 5, Donetsk region.

²⁴⁷ Interview 4, Kyiv region.

²⁴⁸ Interview 1, Kyiv region; Interview 3, Kyiv region.

97. In another case, a victim who had sustained a head injury as a result of torture and was feeling nauseous and dizzy all the time was denied medical assistance despite repeatedly asking for it. Russian forces eventually called an ambulance only when the victim started to lose consciousness.²⁴⁹

vii. Conditions of detention

98. Building on the overview provided in the chapter on Circumstances of Torture²⁵⁰ which outlined the broader context in which victims were detained, this section details conditions of detention as methods of torture in themselves, presenting specific patterns and illustrative cases. These include placement in small or overcrowded cells, unhygienic conditions, lack of access to toilet facilities, irregular or contaminated food and water, exposure to extremes of temperature, denial of privacy and instances of forced nudity.

99. In the Kyiv region, many victims were held outdoors, such as in pits in the ground. They were kept there in March, when the outside temperature was -15 degrees Celsius. In this weather, Russian servicemen poured water into the shoes of the victims, which made their legs swell and rot.²⁵¹

100. In one documented case from early March 2022 in the Kyiv region, a victim was initially held in a dugout near combat positions and later transferred to a former cold storage room in an industrial facility, which lacked both light and windows.²⁵² In another case from the same region and time period, a detainee spent the first day bound and transported in an armoured vehicle without being confined to a designated detention site. He was subsequently held overnight in a dugout and, the following day, was placed in a cold storage room at an industrial facility under similar conditions.²⁵³

101. In the Kharkiv region, Russian forces kept moving another victim near the front line for a week, keeping him at night in cellars, unheated utility rooms or detention cells, which caused him to feel as though “*my muscles were separating from my bones.*”²⁵⁴

102. Two victims from the Kherson region were held in metal containers, including one who was held there in summer and had to endure extreme heat during the day and cold at night.²⁵⁵

²⁴⁹ Interview 13, Zaporizhzhia region.

²⁵⁰ See the chapter “Circumstances of Torture: arrest, interrogation, prison ritual and detention conditions,” paras. 47-74.

²⁵¹ Interview 5, Kyiv region.

²⁵² Interview 1, Kyiv region

²⁵³ Interview 2, Kyiv region

²⁵⁴ Interview 7, Kharkiv region

²⁵⁵ Interview 10, Kherson region; Interview 25, Kherson region.

103. While some places of detention may have been cold due to their makeshift nature, it appears that even in official places of detention, Russian forces would sometimes prohibit victims from closing windows, despite the absence of heating or blankets.²⁵⁶ This appears to have served no purpose other than inflicting additional suffering on the detainees.
104. Detainees were often held in either cold²⁵⁷ or very hot,²⁵⁸ stifling and overcrowded cells,²⁵⁹ often infested with mold and insects (such as bedbugs and fleas) and rodents (such as rats and mice).²⁶⁰ One victim was held for several days in a cold storage room at an industrial facility in early March 2022.²⁶¹ Two other victims were forced to spend an entire night naked in a pit, covering themselves with corpses at the beginning of March 2022, when nighttime temperatures ranged between 0 and -5 degrees Celsius, and were later also kept for several days in a cold storage room at an industrial facility.²⁶² In one case, detainees slept on the floor on pieces of cardboard, huddling together for warmth, as nighttime temperatures in the unheated cell in October dropped to approximately 2-5 degrees Celsius.²⁶³
105. In the Olenivka penal colony, Donetsk region, 42 people were simultaneously held in a 15 square metre cell.²⁶⁴ At the temporary detention centre on Teploenergetykyv Street in Kherson, which was frequently used in the Kherson region, detainees were also held in overcrowded cells, often eight (8) people confined to cells intended for two (2) to four (4) people.²⁶⁵ Makeshift places of detention, such as containers and garages, were also used, often holding 16 to 20 people.²⁶⁶ In the Zaporizhzhia region, up to 9 detainees were held in cells meant for 2 persons.²⁶⁷ In the Kharkiv region, up to 20 people were held at the same time in one cell designed for four persons.²⁶⁸
106. In most cases, food was either not provided or offered in minimal portions, often of poor quality or spoiled.²⁶⁹ Detainees could go stay without any food for up to five days.²⁷⁰

²⁵⁶ Interview 10, Zaporizhzhia.

²⁵⁷ Interview 7, Kharkiv region; Interview 3, Kyiv region and Interview 1, Kyiv region; Interview 3, Sumy region, Interview 4, Sumy region; Interview 6, Sumy region; Interview 13, Zaporizhzhia region.

²⁵⁸ Interview 3, Kharkiv region; Interview 4, Kharkiv region

²⁵⁹ Interview 4, Donetsk region; Interview 3, Kyiv region.

²⁶⁰ Interview 13, Zaporizhzhia region.

²⁶¹ Interview 2, Kyiv region.

²⁶² Interview 3, Kyiv region; Interview 1, Kyiv region.

²⁶³ Interview 40, Kherson region.

²⁶⁴ Interview 4, Donetsk region.

²⁶⁵ Interview 1, Kherson region; Interview 12, Kherson region; Interview 13, Kherson region; Interview 24, Kherson region; Interview 35, Kherson region

²⁶⁶ Interview 25, Kherson region; Interview 5, Zaporizhzhia region.

²⁶⁷ Interview 3, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 4, Zaporizhzhia region.

²⁶⁸ Interview 4, Kharkiv region.

²⁶⁹ Interview 18, Kherson region; Interview 37, Kherson region; Interview 3, Luhansk region.

²⁷⁰ Interview 17, Kherson region

107. Detention facilities also lacked proper sleeping arrangements, forcing detainees to sleep on tables, or wooden pallets, or pieces of linoleum, or straw.²⁷¹ Lighting was either absent or very dim. Outdoor walks, if allowed, were limited to a few times a week or for just a few minutes.²⁷²
108. Hygiene supplies were either not provided or severely limited, with detainees being allowed to wash themselves only once a week or even less frequently.²⁷³ At the temporary detention centre on Teploenergetykyv Street in Kherson, detainees were allowed to take a shower only after 19 days in detention.²⁷⁴ In some cases, detainees made improvised showers using bottles with water inside the cell.²⁷⁵ In one case, a victim took his shower for the first time only after two months in detention.²⁷⁶ In pre-trial detention centres in Starobilsk and Luhansk, women were denied the opportunity to shower, change or wash their clothes for three months. They were not provided with personal hygiene supplies either, forcing them to stand over a sink during menstruation.²⁷⁷
109. In many cases, the absence of toilets or running water forced detainees to relieve themselves inside their cells using plastic bags, bottles, or buckets, further exacerbating the already degrading conditions.²⁷⁸ In one case, a 36-year-old woman from the Kherson region was detained for 24 days in a cell shared with three (3) men aged between 20 and 30 and one (1) 20 year-old woman. The cell lacked both a toilet and access to running water. Detainees were compelled to use plastic bags or a bucket to relieve themselves, turning away from each other to maintain a semblance of privacy. No hygiene products were provided. The female victim reported that she was forced to use the only T-shirt she had — worn at the time of her arrest — to manage menstruation. Throughout the entire period of detention, authorities did not permit any washing or bathing.²⁷⁹
110. Despite having already established control and taken over detention facilities in 2023, Russian forces held two women in a cowshed in the Kherson region for at least two (2) weeks. In the cowshed, the floor was covered with hay and straw. The women were not allowed to use a toilet or wash themselves during the entire two (2) weeks and had to use straw from the floor for personal hygiene. They had to relieve themselves in the corner of the stable. The women were taken out only to be raped or interrogated. Throughout the two weeks, one of the women sat just silently in the corner of the stable in what appeared to be a state of shock.²⁸⁰

²⁷¹ Interview 37, Kherson region; Interview 40, Kherson region.

²⁷² Interview 3, Luhansk region.

²⁷³ Interview 3, Luhansk region; Interview 4, Donetsk region; Interview 30, Kherson region.

²⁷⁴ Interview 16, Kherson region.

²⁷⁵ Interview 7, Kherson region; Interview 22, Kherson region; Interview 30, Kherson region.

²⁷⁶ Interview 1, Donetsk region.

²⁷⁷ Interview 3, Luhansk region.

²⁷⁸ Interview 6, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 2, Donetsk region; Interview 7, Sumy region; Interview 22, Kherson region.

²⁷⁹ Interview 40, Kherson region.

²⁸⁰ Interview 37, Kherson region.

b) Psychological torture and ill-treatment

111. In addition to physical torture, Russian forces inflicted severe psychological harm on detainees. Victims were held incommunicado, denied contact with the outside world and kept in prolonged states of fear and uncertainty. Many were forced to witness or hear the torture of others; an intentional tactic to instil terror and compel compliance.
112. Detainees were also subjected to verbal abuse, humiliation and threats, including against their family members. These practices formed a deliberate pattern of psychological torture aimed at breaking down individuals through fear, isolation and degradation.

i. Incommunicado detention (denial of contact with the outside world)

113. In almost all documented cases, victims were held incommunicado for different periods of time, ranging from a few days to several months. They had no contact with the outside world, including their relatives.
114. In the detention centres located at the Dnipro Department of the State Migration Service in Kherson and at Police Station No. 2 in the town of Prymorsk, Zaporizhzhia region, detainees' only source of food was food parcels from relatives, which were only granted to victims after some time in detention.²⁸¹ The situation was different in the northern regions of Ukraine, where victims had no possibility to communicate with relatives until they were transferred to the territory of the Russian Federation. Only in one detention facility in the Russian Federation (Men's Correctional Facility of General Regime No. 12 in the Rostov region) were some victims permitted to send letters.²⁸²

ii. Behavioural coercion and forcing victims to witness torture or atrocities being inflicted on others

115. Interviewees often either witnessed the ill-treatment of other detainees or heard screams which they understood to be torture of other detainees, including their relatives or people they knew.²⁸³

²⁸¹ Interview 1, Kherson region; Interview 2, Kherson region; Interview 3, Kherson region; Interview 4, Kherson region; Interview 5, Kherson region; Interview 6, Kherson region; Interview 7, Kherson region; Interview 8, Kherson region; Interview 9, Kherson region; Interview 13, Kherson region; Interview 17, Kherson region; Interview 18, Kherson region; Interview 22, Kherson region; Interview 23, Kherson region; Interview 24, Kherson region; Interview 31, Kherson region; Interview 34, Kherson region; Interview 2, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 3, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 11, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 12, Zaporizhzhia region.

²⁸² Interview 2, Chernihiv region.

²⁸³ Interview 31, Kherson region; Interview 1, Kyiv region; Interview 2, Donetsk region; Interview 3, Donetsk region; Interview 4, Donetsk region; Interview 5, Donetsk region; Interview 1, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 3, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 4, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 6, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 8, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 10, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 13, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 1, Kherson region; Interview 2, Kherson region; Interview 4, Kherson region; Interview 7, Kherson region; Interview 8, Kherson region; Interview 9, Kherson region; Interview 10, Kherson region; Interview 11, Kherson region; Interview 13, Kherson region; Interview 14, Kherson region; Interview 16, Kherson region; Interview 17, Kherson region; Interview 18, Kherson region;

In one case, Russian forces brought the son of a female detainee and forced her to stand next to the room where he was subjected to electric shocks. The purpose was to extract information on the woman's nephew serving in the Ukrainian Armed Forces.²⁸⁴

iii. Humiliation, verbal and other psychological abuse

116. Russian forces employed other elaborate methods to humiliate detainees and inflict psychological suffering. In two (2) documented cases, Russian authorities — guards of a detention facility in one, and representatives of the National Guard of Russia in the other — forced detainees to shout phrases such as “Glory to Russia!”, “Glory to Putin!”, and “Glory to Shoigu!” (the former Minister of Defence of the Russian Federation). Those who refused to comply were subjected to electric shocks.²⁸⁵ In three (3) other cases, Russian forces compelled victims to memorise the Russian national anthem and sing it every morning. Failure to do so also resulted in electric shocks.²⁸⁶ Another victim was coerced into praising the Russian military and political leadership.²⁸⁷ In a separate case, Russian servicemen allowed detainees to use toilet facilities only once per day, after which they forced them to relieve themselves of Ukrainian military uniforms.²⁸⁸ Notably, these incidents took place in different detention facilities across three different occupied regions of Ukraine: Kharkiv, Chernihiv and Kherson.
117. In the Luhansk region, Russian forces held a woman blindfolded and chained to a radiator in a school gymnasium, while two (2) to three (3) Russian soldiers kicked a soccer ball nearby, striking it forcefully against the wall. The ball eventually hit the woman in the head, causing a concussion. As she sat there blindfolded, she feared that the next blow could drive her into the sharp corner of the metal radiator, potentially resulting in fatal injuries.²⁸⁹
118. In one case, Russian forces called the victim “a nazi” for the purpose of humiliation.²⁹⁰ One victim was called “khokhol” during the interrogation to be humiliated.²⁹¹

Interview 20, Kherson region; Interview 22, Kherson region; Interview 23, Kherson region; Interview 25, Kherson region; Interview 26, Kherson region; Interview 28, Kherson region; Interview 29, Kherson region; Interview 30, Kherson region; Interview 31, Kherson region; Interview 35, Kherson region; Interview 1, Luhansk region; Interview 3, Kharkiv region; Interview 37, Kherson region; Interview 40, Kherson region; Interview 36, Kherson region.

²⁸⁴ Interview 31, Kherson region.

²⁸⁵ Interview 8, Kherson region; Interview 22, Kherson region.

²⁸⁶ Interview 3, Kherson region; Interview 3, Kharkiv region; Interview 14, Kherson region.

²⁸⁷ Interview 6, Chernihiv region.

²⁸⁸ Interview 7, Kharkiv region.

²⁸⁹ Interview 1, Luhansk region.

²⁹⁰ Interview 7, Kherson region;

²⁹¹ Interview 12, Zaporizhzhia region.

iv. Threats, including to harm family members

119. Russian forces also inflicted mental suffering on detainees by threatening to detain or harm their relatives.²⁹² During interrogations and acts of torture, one victim was threatened that Russian forces would torture her mother to death.²⁹³ In another case, Russian officers told detainees that they would kill their whole family.²⁹⁴ For instance, a woman from the Zaporizhzhia region was told that they would bring her 15-year-old daughter and place her in a neighbouring cell.²⁹⁵ In another case, a man was threatened with rape, along with threats that his daughter and son would also be raped using rubber batons and a wooden mop.²⁹⁶
120. In one case, Russian forces verbally abused a village elder, accusing her of “working with the ‘ukry’” before detaining her.²⁹⁷ While torturing her and demanding information on the Ukrainian Armed Forces, weapons or any other useful information, they threatened to carry out a “second Bucha” in her village.²⁹⁸ Referencing the first “Bucha” incident suggests that they were aware of the atrocities being committed by the Russian Forces elsewhere and deliberately used this information to threaten and intimidate civilians.

c) *Sexual and gender-based violence*

*“It’s been a long time since we’ve had a blowjob, give us one”.*²⁹⁹

121. The evidence shows that Russian forces used sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) against both male and female detainees. The OMCT and its partners documented seventeen (17) cases of SGBV: nine (9) men and (8) women, including eleven (11) cases of SGBV amounting to torture against six (6) men and five (5) women. The youngest victim was 25 years old³⁰⁰ at the time of the violation, and the oldest was 61 years old.³⁰¹
122. These abuses included but were not limited to rape, electric shocks to the genitals and nipples, threats of sexual violence against detainees and their relatives, being forced to use the toilet in the

²⁹² Interview 6, Kherson region; Interview 8, Kherson region; Interview 13, Kherson region; Interview 31, Kherson region; Interview 4, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 12, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 14, Zaporizhzhia region.

²⁹³ Interview 6, Kherson region.

²⁹⁴ Interview 8, Kherson region.

²⁹⁵ Interview 8, Zaporizhzhia region.

²⁹⁶ Interview 43, Kherson region.

²⁹⁷ A term used by Russian forces to refer to individuals who support Ukraine’s independence and integration with the EU

²⁹⁸ Interview 1, Luhansk region. By the “second Bucha” perpetrators likely meant the atrocities, killings of civilians, rapes, torture and other war crimes committed by the armed forces of the Russian Federation in Bucha and surrounding areas that were discovered and documented after the liberation of the Kyiv region by the Ukrainian Armed Forces.

²⁹⁹ Interview 1, Zaporizhzhia region.

³⁰⁰ Interview 6, Chernihiv region.

³⁰¹ Interview 3, Kherson region.

presence of people of the other sex and forced nudity, including during body searches during transfers. In some instances, sexual violence appeared to be used strategically to extract information or humiliate detainees as part of a broader pattern of punishment.

123. Some female detainees became victims of opportunistic sexual violence by Russian servicemen, enabled by a climate of impunity and the absence of any clear mechanism for reporting such abuse.³⁰² Two cases from the Zaporizhzhia region illustrate situations where women became victims of what seemed to have been opportunistic sexual violence. In one case, a Russian officer exploited a situation in which the victim was unable to leave the location where she was being subjected to forced labour, and raped her.³⁰³ In another case, a Russian serviceman entered a woman's cell at night and attempted to rape her.³⁰⁴ In both cases, there were no attempts to extract a confession, obtain information or punish the victims.
124. At the pre-trial detention centre in Velyka Biloozerka village, Zaporizhzhia region, a local collaborator — identified as the police chief — forced a female detainee to undress completely during an interrogation. He then coerced her to sit on a police baton under the threat of being shot if she refused.³⁰⁵ He was intoxicated with alcohol at the time. The victim recounted: *“He summoned me to the interrogation room and ordered me to strip and sit on the baton. He said, ‘If you do, you’ll live. If not, we’ll shoot you.’ He intended for the baton to stand upright, stating that he would hold it while I sat on it. It’s a large baton; no person could realistically sit on it. He didn’t ask but rather yelled and threatened.”* Although the incident happened once, the threats continued frequently afterward.
125. A woman detained in the Zaporizhzhia region said that during her first interrogation, Russian soldiers threatened to rape her and forced her to undress. Later, while detained at the police department in Kamianka-Dniprovska town Zaporizhzhia region, the victim was held in a cell equipped with a surveillance camera positioned directly above the toilet. This constant monitoring by Russian personnel caused her significant psychological distress, as she was forced to use the facilities under continuous observation. Following her transfer to the pre-trial detention centre in Velyka Biloozerka village, Zaporizhzhia region, soldiers conducted a body search. She was ordered to fully undress so that her body could be inspected for tattoos. The search was carried out by male officers, further exacerbating the degrading and humiliating nature of the treatment.³⁰⁶

³⁰² Interview 10, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 13, Zaporizhzhia region.

³⁰³ Interview 13, Zaporizhzhia region.

³⁰⁴ Interview 10, Zaporizhzhia region.

³⁰⁵ Interview 13, Zaporizhzhia region.

³⁰⁶ Interview 13, Zaporizhzhia region.

126. Another 45-year-old female detainee, who suffers from epileptic seizures, was forced by male guards to use the toilet at gunpoint in their presence and to relieve herself into a plastic bag, causing her great shame and physical difficulty.³⁰⁷
127. During the electric shock torture, Russian forces frequently applied electric current to the genitals and nipples of both men³⁰⁸ and women.³⁰⁹ One female victim from the Kherson region had electrodes attached to her fingers and nipples, resulting in skin burns and suppuration of her nipples, for other two (2) weeks.³¹⁰
128. In one case, during an interrogation, a Russian serviceman applied electric current to a woman's thumbs and then ordered her to remove her T-shirt and bra. However, as soon as he began attaching clamps to her nipples, another officer intervened and prohibited him from proceeding, citing potentially fatal consequences for the woman, saying, "*Do you want her to drop dead here!?*". Despite this, the victim was not allowed to put her clothes back on until the interrogation was concluded.³¹¹
129. Another female detainee was subjected to repeated acts of rape by Russian soldiers during interrogations. These assaults occurred almost daily throughout her twelve-day detention in a cowshed in the Kherson region. During one of these rapes, they cut her hair, beat her in the face with it and threw it at her. The soldiers also knocked out her teeth to prevent her from injuring their genitals during forced oral sex. Eventually, a Russian officer released her, stating they were letting her go because "she did not betray her country," adding that they did not like traitors either.³¹²
130. Several victims, both men³¹³ and women³¹⁴, were threatened with rape during interrogations. One male victim was threatened with castration as a Russian soldier took a knife and approached him as the victim was standing fully naked.³¹⁵
131. In the Kherson region, Russian forces made 20-year-old male detainee wear women's leggings and a cardigan with a Ukrainian Armed Forces jacket on top. It was deeply humiliating for him, especially since he was held in a cell with both male and female detainees.³¹⁶

³⁰⁷ Interview 3, Donetsk region.

³⁰⁸ Interview 4, Kharkiv region; Interview 8, Kherson region; Interview 1, Donetsk region; Interview 41, Kherson region.

³⁰⁹ Interview 37, Kherson region; Interview 40, Kherson region.

³¹⁰ Interview 37, Kherson region.

³¹¹ Interview 40, Kherson region.

³¹² Interview 37, Kherson region.

³¹³ Interview 41, Kherson region; Interview 43, Kherson region.

³¹⁴ Interview 2, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 1, Zaporizhzhia region.

³¹⁵ Interview 5, Donetsk region.

³¹⁶ Interview 40, Kherson region.

132. Additionally, two former detainees reported first hearing what they believed were the rapes of male detainees while held at the temporary detention centre on Teploenergetykyv Street in Kherson.³¹⁷

5. Consequences of torture

133. Survivors report that at the time of the interview; they still suffered from the effects that the torture had on their physical and mental health. Interviews were conducted between a few months up to two years after the victims' release.

134. Relatives, as indirect victims of torture, also suffered an impact on their mental and physical health. The psychological trauma endured by victims' relatives during the incommunicado detention and torture of their loved ones contributed to the severe deterioration of their physical health and the onset of conditions including heart disease, high blood pressure and neurological diseases. These new physical ailments often exacerbated pre-existing chronic conditions, further compromising victims' relatives' overall health.

a) Physical Consequences

135. Victims reported severe trauma, including blunt trauma, muscle contraction,³¹⁸ scars, burns, extreme weight loss ranging between 10 and 21 kg, bone fractures, cardiovascular diseases, strokes, head injuries, nerve damage, mental disorders³¹⁹ and motor impairment.³²⁰ In some cases, fractures and tendons healed incorrectly.³²¹ Victims also reported having problems with their teeth,³²² and in one case, the survivor had hearing loss.³²³ In at least 11 cases, survivors reported that they sustained injuries such as twisted fingers,³²⁴ broken teeth,³²⁵ fingers or kneecaps³²⁶ as a result of the beatings. In some cases, victims needed surgery after they were released.

³¹⁷ Interview 12, Kherson region; Interview 24, Kherson region.

³¹⁸ Interview 1, Kherson region; Interview 31, Kherson region

³¹⁹ Interview 1, Kherson region; Interview 8, Sumy region; Interview 3, Kyiv region; Interview 4, Kharkiv region; Interview 5, Kharkiv region; Interview 5, Kharkiv region.

³²⁰ Interview 5, Kharkiv region; Interview 1, Kyiv region; Interview 3, Kyiv region; Interview 5, Kyiv region; Interview 7, Chernihiv region; Interview 4, Sumy region; Interview 8, Sumy region; Interview 13, Zaporizhzhia region.

³²¹ Interview 1, Kyiv region; Interview 4, Sumy region; Interview 8, Sumy region.

³²² Interview 1, Kyiv region; Interview 4, Sumy region; Interview 8, Sumy region.

³²³ Interview 17, Kherson region.

³²⁴ Interview 4, Kyiv region

³²⁵ Interview 1, Donetsk region

³²⁶ Interview 4, Chernihiv region.

136. Survivors described the following consequences of the electric shock torture: numb body,³²⁷ severe headaches,³²⁸ memory loss,³²⁹ hearing loss,³³⁰ and burns.³³¹ One male victim reportedly lost the ability to have an erection after being subjected to electric shocks to his genitals.³³²

b) Psychological Consequences

137. Most victims are suffering from psychological trauma due to the harsh detention conditions, torture and ill-treatment they experienced. Upon release, some victims were examined by a psychotherapist, who confirmed the adverse effects on mental health.³³³ One victim was treated in a psychiatric hospital after the release.³³⁴ In many cases, survivors reported memory loss, flashbacks, nightmares and hallucinations. In one case, a released detainee shared that he felt anxious at times but tried to control it.³³⁵

138. Several victims reported seeing or hearing other detainees die in detention, primarily as a result of torture or the worsening of chronic medical conditions due to the physical and psychological suffering inflicted upon them.³³⁶ One victim told MIHR that he had been held in a cell with a former Ukrainian serviceman who had been beaten so severely during interrogation that he had to crawl back into the cell as he was unable to walk. In another case, a man who suffered from diabetes was constantly unwell during his detention and unable to eat. He ultimately died in the same cell at the temporary detention centre on Teploenergetykyv Street in Kherson in August 2022.³³⁷

139. More broadly, the widespread, systematic violations that took place, including severe beatings, ill-treatment and torture, instilled an atmosphere of fear in the Russian-occupied territories of Ukraine and had a negative impact on local communities and society.

³²⁷ Interview 37, Kherson region.

³²⁸ Interview 5, Donetsk region.

³²⁹ Interview 3, Kharkiv region.

³³⁰ Interview 3, Luhansk region.

³³¹ Interview 22, Kherson region; Interview 4, Kharkiv region.

³³² Interview 41, Kherson region.

³³³ Interview 1, Kherson region; Interview 6, Chernihiv region; Interview 8, Sumy region; Interview 13, Zaporizhzhia region; Interview 1, Kyiv region; Interview; Interview 4, Kharkiv region; Interview 5, Kharkiv region; Interview 7, Kharkiv region.

³³⁴ Interview 8, Sumy region.

³³⁵ Interview 8, Sumy region.

³³⁶ Interview 1, Kherson region; Interview 9, Kherson region; Interview 1, Kherson region; Interview 9, Kherson region; Interview 12, Kherson region; Interview 16, Kherson region; Interview 17, Kherson region; Interview 22, Kherson region; Interview 23, Kherson region; Interview 24, Kherson region; Interview 1, Kyiv region.

³³⁷ Interview 1, Kherson region.

6. Perpetrators

140. Victims and witnesses indicate that the below units as well as some other unidentified Russian military units were involved in torturing and committing related violations in the occupied territories of Ukraine and against persons in detention in the Russian Federation:

- Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation (FSB); operates under the direct authority of the President.
- Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation:
 - Main Directorate of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation (GRU)
 - Special Operations Forces of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation
- Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation (MVD):
 - National Guard of Russia (Rosgvardiya)
 - Special Police Units (OMON) – operate under Rosgvardiya;
- Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation
 - Federal Penitentiary Service (FSIN)
 - Directors and guards of pre-trial detention services
- De facto authorities in occupied territories:
 - Military units of the so-called “Luhansk/Donetsk People’s Republics” (L/DPR) – not officially part of Russian state institutions but often coordinated or controlled by Russian military or intelligence (notably GRU or FSB).

141. In some cases, perpetrators mentioned they were part of a unit of the Makhachkala riot police of the National Guard of Russia in the Republic of Dagestan.³³⁸ Several survivors assumed affiliation to the exact service or unit by uniform or by the interrogation conducted. In many cases, interrogations with the use of torture were done by a group of servicemen or representatives of security services who came explicitly to conduct the interrogations. Some of the perpetrators identified themselves by name and claimed affiliation with the FSB. In other cases, victims assumed they were part of the FSB based on their clothing, manner of speaking and the structured approach they used during the interrogations. In one case, the survivor from the Luhansk region

³³⁸ Interview 13, Kherson region.

is participating in the criminal proceedings in Ukraine as a victim. The Security Service of Ukraine identified a perpetrator with the call sign “Lobzyk.” He turned out to be Olkhazur Yusupov who headed “Akhmat”, one of the rapid response units of the National Guard of Russia in the Chechen Republic.³³⁹

³³⁹ Interview 1, Luhansk region.

V. THE LAW

A. Jurisdiction

142. Article 20 of the Convention Against Torture states: “If the Committee receives reliable information which appears to it to contain well-founded indications that torture is being systematically practised in **the territory of** a State Party, the Committee shall invite that State Party to co-operate in the examination of the information and, to this end, to submit observations with regard to the information concerned.” While the article directly mentions only the territory of a State Party and, unlike other articles of the same Convention, does not mention territory under the jurisdiction of a State Party, OMCT argues that, based on article 31(1) of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties,³⁴⁰ the notion of territory in Article 20 should be interpreted in line with the interpretation of Article 2 and the jurisprudence of Committee against Torture and include the territory under effective control of the state party.
143. The principle of effective control doctrine – providing that human rights obligations of States extend to the territory that they control even if those are situated outside the territory of the State party itself — is well-established in international law and international human rights law and has been used by UN treaty bodies and regional human rights mechanisms to interpret the boundaries of their respective jurisdictions. For example, the European Court of Human Rights applied it in its jurisdiction in regard to the territories controlled by the Russian Federation in Georgia,³⁴¹ Ukraine,³⁴² and Moldova.³⁴³ The UN Human Rights Committee has likewise affirmed this principle in its jurisprudence, including in *General Comment No. 31*,³⁴⁴ and in individual communications such as *Lopez Burgos v. Uruguay*³⁴⁵ and *Celiberti de Casariego v. Uruguay*,³⁴⁶ confirming that States bear obligations under the ICCPR for acts committed in territories where they exercise effective control.
144. Article 2 of the Convention Against Torture stipulates that “each State Party shall take effective legislative, administrative, judicial or other measures to prevent acts of torture in any territory

³⁴⁰ Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, 23 May 1969, Article 31 (1): treaties should be interpreted “in good faith in accordance with the ordinary meaning to be given to the terms of the treaty in their context and in the light of its object and purpose”

³⁴¹ [Georgia v. Russia \(ii\)](#), European Court of Human Rights, 21 January 2021, paras. 138-140.

³⁴² [Ukraine and the Netherlands v. Russia](#), Admissibility Decision, European Court of Human Rights, 30 November 2022, paras. 690-697.

³⁴³ [Ilascu and Others v. Moldova and Russia](#), European Court of Human Rights, 8 July 2004, paras. 327-330.

³⁴⁴ Human Rights Committee, General Comment No. 31, The Nature of the General Legal Obligation Imposed on States Parties to the Covenant, CCPR/C/21/Rev.1/Add.13, para. 10

³⁴⁵ *Lopez Burgos v. Uruguay*, [Communication No. 52/1979](#), UN Doc. CCPR/C/13/D/52/1979, 1981

³⁴⁶ *Celiberti de Casariego v. Uruguay*, [Communication No. 56/1979](#), UN Doc. CCPR/C/13/D/56/1979, 1981

under its jurisdiction.” In its General Comment No. 2, the Committee interpreted it in the light of effective control principle and stated that:

“Article 2, paragraph 1, requires that each State party shall take effective measures to prevent acts of torture not only in its sovereign territory but also “in any territory under its jurisdiction.” The Committee has recognised that “any territory” includes all areas where the State party exercises, directly or indirectly, in whole or in part, de jure or de facto effective control, in accordance with international law. The reference to “any territory” in article 2, like that in articles 5, 11, 12, 13 and 16, refers to prohibited acts committed [...] during military occupation or peacekeeping operations and in such places as embassies, military bases, detention facilities, or other areas over which a State exercises factual or effective control. [...] The Committee considers that the scope of “territory” under article 2 must also include situations where a State party exercises, directly or indirectly, de facto or de jure control over persons in detention.”³⁴⁷

145. The Committee Against Torture (CAT) has implemented this approach in its consideration of state parties reports, including in its concluding observations on the United States and the United Kingdom with regard to detention facilities in Guantanamo Bay, Iraq and Afghanistan.³⁴⁸ In its 2018 concluding observations on the sixth periodic report of the Russian Federation, the CAT noted that “Crimea is under the effective control of the Russian Federation and that the Russian Federation has the obligation to implement the Convention in Crimea.”³⁴⁹ As a result, the Committee invited the Russian Federation to ensure unimpeded access to Crimea for international human rights monitoring mechanisms.³⁵⁰
146. Also, in *Sonko v. Spain*, the CAT applied this interpretation and reaffirmed that states bear responsibility under the Convention when they exercise effective control over individuals beyond their sovereign territory, concluding that Spain exercised such control over Mr. Sonko while he was on the patrol boat and was therefore accountable for his treatment under the Convention.³⁵¹
147. Based on the absolute and non-derogable nature of prohibition of torture,³⁵² the intention sent in the preamble of the Convention Against Torture to make more effective the struggle against torture and inhuman treatment as well as the obligation of States Parties to prevent acts of torture in any territory under their jurisdiction,³⁵³ OMCT argues that the notion of territory in Article 20 of the Convention should be interpreted in a way that would minimise the possibility of loopholes

³⁴⁷ CAT Committee, General Comment No.2, 24 January 2008, UN Doc. CAT/C/GC/2, para. 16.

³⁴⁸ Concluding Observations on the US, (2006) UN Doc. CAT/C/USA/CO/2, para. 22; Concluding Observations on the UK, (2004) UN Doc. CAT/C/CR/33/3, paras. 3–5.

³⁴⁹ Concluding observations on the sixth periodic report of the Russian Federation, 28 August 2018, UN Doc. CAT/C/RUS/CO/6, para 48.

³⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, para 49.

³⁵¹ CAT, *Sonko v. Spain*, Communication No. 368/2008, CAT/C/47/D/368/2008, 25 November 2011.

³⁵² [Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment](#), 10 December 1984, Article 2.

³⁵³ [Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment](#), 10 December 1984, Article 2.

for States Parties to avoiding responsibility with regard to their obligations under the Convention. In other words, if the notion of territory in Article 20 were to be interpreted as only the territory of a State Party, it would limit the ability of CAT to look into the allegations of systematic torture in territories under control of State Party but outside its own territory. Non-application of Article 20 to occupied territories or any other territories under the effective control of State Parties would also effectively deprive residents of those territories of the protection mechanism established by Article 20 creating a situation where residents of different territories would have access to different recourses based solely on their place of residence.

148. Similarly, in line with the legal principle of effectiveness (*Ut Res Magis Valeat Quam Pereat*), treaties should be interpreted in a way that gives effect to its purpose and goals rather than in a way that would render it ineffective or meaningless. In this case, Article 20 would reach its full effect only if the notion of territory in Article 20 of the Convention included all territories under the State's jurisdiction or control.
149. OMCT has also examined the records of the preparatory work or *travaux préparatoires* of the Convention Against Torture and has not found any indication that the examination procedure was specifically intended to be applicable only with regard to the territory of a State Party and not any other territory under the State's control. It does not appear that "territory under its jurisdiction" was deliberately excluded from Article 20 at the preparatory stage.³⁵⁴

B. Torture

150. OMCT argues that the violations described above qualify as torture and inhumane treatment and satisfies all the elements of the definition set in Article 1 of the Convention against Torture, in particular:
1. Severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental
151. As described in the submission, victims experienced severe suffering, both physical and mental, as a result of how they were treated during arrest and detention that resulted in long-lasting harm to the health, well-being, economic and social situations.
2. Inflicted intentionally
152. It is evident from the witness testimonies described above that the conduct of Russian authorities was not a result of an accident or negligence – it was rather a carefully designed and executed

³⁵⁴<https://hr-travaux.law.virginia.edu/international-conventions/convention-against-torture-and-other-cruel-inhuman-or-degrading-treatment> ; <https://academic.oup.com/book/57891/chapter/471974777> .

plan to subdue Ukrainian civilians and create an atmosphere of fear in the Russian-occupied territories of Ukraine.

3. Purpose

153. Based on OMCT's partners' documentation, we conclude that Russian authorities inflicted torture on a wide portion of the Ukrainian civilians living in the occupied territories and being held in detention in Russian Federation with the purpose of obtaining information or confession or punish or revenge the victims for their pro-Ukrainian views. Russian authorities also detained and subjected to ill-treatment those Ukrainian civilians who had pro-Ukrainian political opinions, i.e. supporting Ukraine's political, geographical, economic and cultural independence from the Russian Federation, which also amounts to discrimination based on political opinion for the purpose of Article 1 of the Convention Against Torture.
154. It appears that Russian authorities assumed anyone who was overtly or covertly supportive of an independent Ukrainian state to be providing information to or cooperating in some other way with the Ukrainian Armed Forces, intelligence services, or other Ukrainian authorities.

4. Involvement of officials

155. Multiple witnesses identified perpetrators as agents of the Russian state, including Russian military, intelligence and penitentiary services.³⁵⁵
156. Twelve (12) victims were moved to official detention facilities in the Russian Federation, where they continued to endure torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, which is undisputable evidence of the involvement of Russian authorities.

5. Systematic: habitual, widespread and deliberate

157. OMCT's partners documented torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment in almost all the cases of conflict-related detention in all the fully or partially occupied regions of Ukraine where the NGOs conducted their documentation work, which also amounts to eight (8) out of the total of nine (9) regions Russia has occupied since the full-scale invasion.
158. Physical and psychological torture and other ill-treatment were used systematically during arrests, transfers between places of detention and in detention. Torture was a key instrument in extracting information from detainees, forcing cooperation and punishing victims.
159. Many victims report witnessing regular mass torture of other detainees. While many cases of torture and other serious human rights violations remain underreported, the analysis of documented cases, which are dispersed geographically and in time, has uncovered patterns that are replicated

³⁵⁵ For more details, please see section 6. Perpetrators, paras 40-41.

across 87 places of detention. The pattern in the detention centres concerned — including unofficial and official places of detention — includes the perpetrators' chain of command, interrogation scenarios, torture methods and equipment, as well as the circumstances of detainees' arrest and release. The patterns demonstrate a systematic and pre-planned nature of these violations.

VI. Annex “List of the places of detention”

In addition to the list of places of detention below, a table listing the interviews conducted, including the period and place of detention for each region, is attached to this submission as an annex.

Victims’ places of detention by region:

Kherson region

1. Kalanchak Police Station, 20 8 Berezhna St., Kalanchak, Kherson Oblast, Ukraine, 75800
2. Chaplynka District Police Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine in Kherson Oblast, 46 Hrushevskoho St., Chaplynka, Kherson Oblast, Ukraine, 75200
3. Temporary detention centre Teploenergetikiv Street, 3, Kherson, Kherson Oblast, Ukraine, 73009
4. Beryslav Machine-Building Plant, Beryslav, Kherson Oblast, Ukraine, 74300
5. Unofficial pre-trial detention centre, st. Tarasa Shevchenko, 66, Chongar, Kherson Oblast, Ukraine 75570
6. Temporary detention facility, 33 Proletarska St., Oleshky, Kherson Oblast, Ukraine 75100
7. Dnipro department of the city of Kherson of the State Migration Service of Ukraine, 29 Zalaegerseg street, Kherson, Kherson Oblast, Ukraine 73000
8. Novotroyitske Police Department, Bankova Street, Novotroyitske, Kherson region, Ukraine, 75301
9. Kherson detention centre, Perekopska street, 10, Kherson, Kherson region, Ukraine 73003
10. Kakhovka Police Department, 153 Melitopolska St., Kakhovka, Kherson region, Ukraine, 74800
11. Temporary detention centre 25 Gorky St., Hola Prystan, Kherson region, Ukraine, 75601
12. The coast of the Arabat Spit, Gengorka village, next to the Roksolana boarding house
13. Main Department of the National Police in Kherson Oblast, 4 Lutheranska St., Kherson, Kherson Oblast, Ukraine, 73000
14. Novokakhovka Police Department, 24 Dniprovskiy Ave, Nova Kakhovka, Kherson Oblast,

Ukraine, 74900

15. Suvorovsky Department of the Police of the Kherson City Department of the Umvs of Ukraine in the Kherson Region, 10 Mayakovsky Street, Kherson, Kherson Region, 73003

Zaporizhzhia region

1. Melitopol Police Department, 26 Chernyshevskoho St., Melitopol, Zaporizhzhia Oblast, Ukraine, 72300
2. Police Station 2, Tsentrakne (Lenin) Street 39, Prymorsk, Zaporizhzhia Oblast, Ukraine, 72100
3. Berdiansk District Police Department, 3 Hretska St., Berdiansk, Zaporizhzhia Oblast, Ukraine, 71100
4. Prymorska Correctional Facility No. 145 (formerly Berdiansk Correctional Colony No. 77), 1 Promyslova St., Berdiansk, Zaporizhzhia Oblast, Ukraine, 71100
5. Melitopol City Police Department, 37 Chernyshevskoho St., Melitopol, Zaporizhzhia Oblast, Ukraine, 72300
6. Police Department, 9 Travnia Avenue, 1, Kamianka-Dniprovska, Zaporizhzhia Oblast, Ukraine, 71300
7. Vasylivka Police Department, Vasylivka, 38 Shevchenka str, Zaporizhzhia Oblast, Ukraine.
8. The pre-trial detention centre next to the Primary Health Care Centre No. 1, Melitopol, 7 Ivan Alekseeva Street, Zaporizhzhia Oblast, Ukraine
9. Pre-trial detention centre in Velyka Biloozerka village, Zaporizhzhia Oblast, Ukraine
10. Verhnya Krynytsia village, Zaporizhzhia Oblast, Ukraine,
11. Melitopol District State Administration Melitopol, 5 Ivan Alekseeva Street, 72312, Zaporizhzhia Oblast, Ukraine

Donetsk region

1. Dokuchaevsk Police Department, 19, Nezalezhnosti Ukrainy Str., Dokuchaevsk, Donetsk Oblast, Ukraine, 85740
2. The pre-trial detention centre No. 5, Kobozeva Street, Donetsk, Donetsk Oblast, Ukraine, 83086

3. Makiivska Correctional Facility no. 32, 141 Kirova St., Makiivka, Donetsk Oblast, Ukraine, 86100
4. Nikolske Police Department, 92 Svobody str., Nikolske village, Donetsk Oblast, Ukraine, 87000
5. Correctional Facility no. 120 Olenivka, Molodizhne, Donetsk Oblast, Ukraine, 85710
6. Hospital No. 15, 1 Dzherelna Street, Donetsk, Donetsk Oblast, Ukraine, 83000
7. Municipal medical and preventive institution municipal psychiatric hospital no. 1 in donetsk, 268a Petrovskogo St., Donetsk, 83111, Ukraine
8. Volnovakha House of Culture is a municipal institution “Center for Cultural Services of Volnovakha City Hall”, located at 94 Tsentralna Street, Volnovakha, Donetsk Oblast.
9. Ronix Hotel Volodymyrivka: 85721, Ukraine, Donetsk region, Volnovakha district, Volodymyrivka urban-type settlement, 1/31 Myru Street, building 1/31.
10. Department for Countering Organised Crime, 5 Izyumivska St., Donetsk, Donetsk Oblast, Ukraine
11. Mangush Police Department, 63 Titova St., Mangush village, Donetsk region, 87400

Luhansk region

1. Makiivka Gymnasium of the Krasnorechensk Village Council of Svatove District, Luhansk Oblast, 1 Shkilna St., Makiivka, Luhansk Oblast, Ukraine
2. Police station in Troitske, 28 Molodizhnyi sq. Luhansk Oblast, Ukraine
3. The building of Svatove State Tax Inspectorate of the Main State Tax Service in Luhansk region at 10 Zlahody Square, Svatove, Luhansk Oblast, Ukraine
4. Building of the Svatove Police Department of the Main Directorate of the National Police in Luhansk Oblast, 11 Derzhavna St., Svatove, Luhansk Oblast, Ukraine
5. Starobilsk police department, Luhansk Oblast, Ukraine
6. Main Directorate of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine in Luhansk Oblast in Luhansk, 20, Aidarska St., Starobilsk, Luhansk Oblast, Ukraine
7. State Institution “Starobilsk Detention Centre”, 65 Monastyrska Street, Starobilsk, Luhansk Oblast, Ukraine

8. Luhansk SIZO, Luhansk, 24 Liniya St., 4.1 Luhansk Oblast, Ukraine

Sumy region

1. Railway station, 40th Army Square, 10, Trostianets, Sumy Oblast, Ukraine, 42602
2. Police Station, 34 Blahovishchenska St., Trostianets, Sumy Oblast, Ukraine, 42600
3. Service station, Boromlia village, highway H12, coordinates 50°36'56.7 "N 34°58'01.5 "E, Sumy Oblast, Ukraine 42621
4. SE 'Boromlyanskaya PMK 145', Kharkivska str: 13, Boromlya, Sumy region 42600. (The enterprise also had a sports club 'Olympiyets', which was also used as a detention facility)

Chernihiv region

1. School basement, Vyshneve, Chernihiv Oblast, Ukraine, 15070 51.770433, 31.217067
2. Woodworking enterprise Vyshneve, Chernihiv oblast, Ukraine, 15070
3. Horodnya Police Department of the Mena Police District, Chernihiv Oblast, Ukraine
4. Basement, Novyi Bykiv village Chernihiv Oblast, Ukraine
5. Premises on Nazarevycha Street 3, Nova Basan village, Chernihiv Oblast, Ukraine
6. A cellar on Shevchenko Street (approximately #80) Nova Basan village, Chernihiv Oblast, Ukraine
7. Premises on Nezalezhnosti Street, Nova Basan village, Chernihiv Oblast, Ukraine
12. The premises of the Nova Poshta, Nazar Nebozhynskoho Street, Nova Basan village, Chernihiv Oblast, Ukraine
13. Club in the village of Novyi Bykiv, Novyi Bykiv, 25a Tsentralna Street, Chernihiv Oblast, Ukraine

Kyiv region

1. Place of detention in the open-air 50°45'07.6"N 30°01'48.7"E in Kyiv oblast, Ukraine
2. At the position of the Russian army in Vorzel, Kyiv oblast, Ukraine
3. Hostomel airport, Kyiv oblast, Ukraine

Kharkiv region

1. Detention centre in the city of Kupyansk, Kharkiv Oblast, Ukraine
2. Basement, probably in the military commissariat in the village of Shevchenkove, Kharkiv Oblast, Ukraine
3. House in the village of Pisky-Radkivski, Kharkiv Oblast, Ukraine
4. Slavutych company, Tyshky village, Kharkiv Oblast, Ukraine
5. Village council in the village of Tsyркuny, Kharkiv Oblast, Ukraine
6. Tsyркuny basement in the house near the checkpoint, Kharkiv Oblast, Ukraine
7. Cold basement, Lyptsi village, Kharkiv Oblast, Ukraine

Crimea

1. The pre-trial detention centre No. 1, Simferopol, 3 Spera St., Simferopol, Ukraine
2. The pre-trial detention centre n°2, Elevatornyi provulok d 4, Simferopol, Crimea, Ukraine 295052
3. Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation building, Crimea, Ukraine 46.10559, 33.69011
4. Admiral F.F. Ushakov State Maritime University, building 8/22, 7, Geroyev Sevastopol St., Sevastopol, Ukraine
5. Pavlo Nakhimov Black Sea Higher Naval School of the Order of the Red Star, POW camp on the territory of the school, 1 Pavla Dybenko Street, Sevastopol, Ukraine

Belarus

1. Narovlya Filtration Facility, Belarus

Russian Federation

1. The pre-trial detention centre No. 2, 39 Sovetskaya St., Borisoglebsk, Voronezh Oblast, Russia, 397160
2. Pakino Correctional Facility, Vladimir region, Russia, 601960
3. Men's Correctional Facility of General Regime No. 12, 94 Morskaya St., Kamensk-

Shakhtinsky, Rostov Oblast, Russia, 347803

4. The pre-trial detention centre No. 2, 175 Lenina St., Taganrog, Rostov Region, Russia, 347910
5. The pre-trial detention centre No. 2, 7 Lenina St., Stary Oskol, Belgorod Oblast, Russia, 309514
6. A tent camp for Ukrainian prisoners of war and civilians, Glushkovo, Kursk region, Russia, 307450
7. Correctional Facility No.1, 1 Pirogova St., Kursk, Kursk Oblast, Russia, 394030
8. The pre-trial detention centre No. 2, 9 Krasnaya Square, Novozybkov, Bryansk Oblast, Russia, 243020
9. Correctional Facility No. 1, Komsomolsky district, 1 Dimitrova Ave, Donskoy, Tula region, Russia, 301780