



## **61<sup>st</sup> regular session of the Human Rights Council**

### ***Item 4: Interactive dialogue with the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the situation of human rights in Ukraine stemming from the Russian aggression***

12 March 2026

#### **Oral Statement**

The International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute and the Ukrainian Bar Association commend the continued work of the Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine.

Russia's aggression against Ukraine began in 2014. The full-scale invasion, just entered its fourth year, is marked by documented widespread violations of international human rights and humanitarian law, many amounting to war crimes and crimes against humanity. Indiscriminate attacks, including through the use of missiles, drones and other explosive weapons in populated areas, continue to cause civilian casualties and extensive destruction of civilian objects and critical infrastructure.

We continue to condemn documented patterns of arbitrary detention, enforced disappearances, torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment against civilians and prisoners in Russia's occupied territories. Thousands of Ukrainian civilians remain unlawfully detained, many held incommunicado and subjected to severe abuses.

We reiterate our grave concern over the forcible transfer and deportation of Ukrainian children by Russian authorities. Ensuring the reunification with their families and communities, with full respect for their best interest, must remain a priority for the international community.

We urge this Council to continue to support international accountability efforts, including the work of the COI, the International Criminal Court, universal jurisdiction and the current establishment of the Special Tribunal for the crime of aggression against Ukraine.

*This statement was delivered by:*

*Francesca Restifo*

*Senior Human Rights Lawyer – UN Representative*

*International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute*

[Francesca.Restifo@int-bar.org](mailto:Francesca.Restifo@int-bar.org)