



53rd Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council

Item 4: ID on oral presentation of HC on Ukraine (res. 47/22) and interim report of SG on human rights in Crimea (GA res. 77/229)

12 July 2023

Joint Oral Statement

The International Bar Association's Human Rights Institute and the International Commission of Jurists deplore the widespread human rights and IHL violations amounting to war crimes and crimes against humanity in the course of the Russian aggression against Ukraine, also confirmed by the latest report of the COI on Ukraine. These include direct attacks on civilians and civilian objects, use of explosive weapons in populated areas, abduction of children, collective expulsion of Ukrainians from occupied territories to Russia, systematic torture and ill-treatment, including sexual violence.

The massive disruption to Ukraine's civilian administration caused by the hostilities has extended to Ukraine's justice system with unprecedented challenges. Official reports reveal that since February 2022, nearly 10% of court infrastructure has been damaged, and some 20% of courts were closed.

The war affected the justice system; yet it shows resilience despite decline in funding, and disruptions to regular proceedings. While we commend efforts to justice reform and the attention paid to fight corruption which unfortunately persists, ensuring independence of the judiciary is critical at all times. This includes guaranteeing the independence and security of lawyers, the functional independence of prosecutors and removing their power to extend detention.

We call on UN institutions and Member States through international cooperation to provide robust support to the Ukraine justice reform process and assist in effective investigation and prosecution of international crimes, in accordance with fair trial guarantees.

Thank you.

This statement was delivered by:

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