



**Permanent Mission of Ukraine**  
to the International Organizations in Vienna

**Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine  
on the occasion of the International Day of the Victims  
of Enforced Disappearances**

As delivered by Ambassador Yevhenii Tsymbaliuk,  
Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna,  
to the 1387<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Permanent Council,

01 September 2022

**Mr. Chairperson,**

On the occasion of the International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances the Delegation of Ukraine wishes to draw again the attention to the fate of people who went missing or were abducted as a result of russia's aggression against Ukraine.

At the outset, let me remind that the enforced disappearance is a serious crime and, in certain circumstances defined in international law, a crime against humanity.

Remarkably, what constitutes a serious crime for the civilized world, has already become a routine practice and one of the instruments of warfare for the russian authorities in the course of their aggressive war against Ukraine.

In fact, this is how the russian aggression started in 2014. Already in the first days of invasion of Crimea by the russian armed forces Rishat Ametov, who went out on 3 March 2014 into the main square of Simferopol to protest against russian invasion of the peninsula, was kidnapped in broad daylight and his body with signs of torture was found on the outskirts of Simferopol ten days later.

Overall, under the Russian occupation since 2014, there have been at least 45 victims of enforced disappearances in the temporarily occupied Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol. 6 of them were later found dead, and the fate of 15 persons is still unknown. The vast majority of these people are pro-Ukrainian activists who openly opposed the russian occupation. According to the OHCHR, the russian occupation administration does not effectively investigate any of the committed crimes.

Hundreds of people are considered missing in the temporarily occupied territories of Donetsk and Luhansk regions.

As documented by both OSCE Moscow Mechanism reports on russian aggression against Ukraine and ODIHR's interim report, since the beginning of the full-scale invasion on 24 February 2022 russia has continued the practice of enforced disappearances and abductions in the newly invaded territories, including the temporarily occupied parts of the Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions, as well as the territories of Kyiv and Chernihiv regions, which were under the russian occupation until the end of March 2022.

There are numerous cases of abduction by the russian occupiers of heads of local authorities, pro-Ukrainian activists opposing the russian occupation, school principals who refuse to switch to russian curricula, as well as businessmen, journalists, community leaders, human rights defenders and ordinary Ukrainian citizens who refuse to cooperate with the russians.

The disappearances are often followed by a refusal to provide information about the fate or location of the abducted. It is difficult to establish the exact number of victims, but according to various international reports there are thousands of missing persons and hundreds of enforced disappearances.

We demand that the russian federation fulfils its obligations as an occupying power in accordance with international humanitarian law and international human rights law, including with regard to the guarantee of the right to life, liberty and security of persons, as well as provides information on all persons subjected to enforced disappearance.

Ukraine calls upon the OSCE Chairpersonship, institutions and participating States to increase efforts in order to hold russia to account for its acts of aggression and human rights abuses, and release all Ukrainian citizens it has unlawfully detained.

**Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.**