

UN Human Rights Council 51: Statement for the Interactive Dialogue on the High Commissioner's Oral Update on Ukraine

Thank you Mr President.

Thank you Director for your admirably objective update.

Two weeks ago the Commission of Inquiry confirmed that war crimes have indeed been committed in Ukraine, days after the liberation of areas in Kharkiv oblast revealed yet more Russian atrocities.

Last week, President Putin purported to annex four regions of Ukraine – a blatant violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity and of international law – and then used Russia's veto to try to avoid the scorn of the Security Council.

Today, you have made clear the horrors and the scope of Putin's violations of human rights law and international law in the course of his war of aggression.

Hospitals, schools, places of worship destroyed. Millions denied their basic rights to health, education and religion or belief.

Sexual violence and rape, including of children. Civilians shot dead in the street trying to gather fuel, food or medicine.

There are apparently no limits to Putin's disregard for International Law, or to the Ukrainian people's unspeakable suffering. And in Russia, those enough to protest the war and mobilisation face arrest and abuse in detention. Aggression abroad, repression at home.

There is one simple way to end the suffering in Ukraine. President Putin: bring your troops home. End the war. Respect the law.

Director,

Faced with Russia's continued flouting of international law, how can the OHCHR minimise the devastating impact on ordinary people.