

117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. 1443

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives to condemn the atrocities, war crimes, and crimes against humanity being perpetrated against Ukrainian children by the Government of Russia.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 21, 2022

Ms. SPEIER (for herself and Ms. KAPTUR) submitted the following resolution;
which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives to condemn the atrocities, war crimes, and crimes against humanity being perpetrated against Ukrainian children by the Government of Russia.

Whereas, on February 24, 2022, Russia began a further military invasion of Ukraine's sovereign territory, that in addition to causing tens of thousands of Ukrainian civilian casualties has uniquely impacted the safety, health, education, and human rights of Ukrainian children;

Whereas Russia's unprovoked invasion has caused over 7,200,000 refugees and 6,900,000 internally displaced migrants, approximately 90 percent of whom are women and children, to flee the country as of September 13, 2022;

Whereas the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine found that Russia committed war crimes in Ukraine including the rape, torture, and unlawful confinement of children as young as 4;

Whereas at the height of the conflict nearly two-thirds of all Ukrainian children were displaced either internally or internationally and 379 children have been killed in the conflict as of September 19, 2022;

Whereas during the bombardment of Mariupol on March 9, 2022, the Russian military targeted and destroyed a hospital maternity ward, killing at least 3 people, including one newborn, and wounding at least 17 others;

Whereas, on March 16, 2022, a Russian airstrike targeted a theater in Mariupol that was being used as a civilian bomb shelter and which had the word “CHILDREN” written in large lettering visible on satellite images, killing up to 600 civilians, including a large number of children who had been sheltering inside;

Whereas Ukraine has accused Russian forces of using Ukrainian children as “human shields” while retreating from Bucha, Ukraine, and taking children hostage in multiple conflict zones across the country in order to prevent locals from cooperating with the Ukrainian military;

Whereas 16 children were among the hundreds of civilians killed by Russian troops during Russia’s occupation of Bucha;

Whereas, on May 2, 2022, a Russian missile strike on a dormitory in Odesa, Ukraine, killed a 14-year-old boy and wounded a 17-year-old girl;

Whereas there have been multiple reports of Ukrainian parents writing the contact information of extended family

members in permanent marker on the bodies of their small children so they may be united with family if the parent is killed;

Whereas prior to Russia's further invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, approximately 4,230,000 children had been enrolled in Ukrainian schools, and the resulting conflict has caused a disruption in education for over half of those students;

Whereas more than 2,400 education facilities have been damaged and more than 200 destroyed as of September 5, 2022;

Whereas Russian military forces have attacked numerous civilian buildings that primarily serve women and children, including, as of May 10, 2022, approximately 200 health care facilities and an average of 22 schools a day since the beginning of the war;

Whereas attacks near or on schools is in direct opposition to United Nations Security Council Resolution 2601 adopted in 2021, which condemns attacks on schools and calls for all necessary safeguards to protect the right to education;

Whereas more than 1 in 6 UNICEF-supported "safe schools" in eastern Ukraine, which pledge to remain open and keep students and staff safe during times of war, have been damaged or destroyed by Russian forces during the conflict;

Whereas there is evidence of refugees fleeing the conflict being subject to human-trafficking activities, which disproportionately target women, children, those travelling alone, and undocumented people;

Whereas an April 2022 survey conducted by the International Rescue Committee at Ukrainian refugee camps in Poland found that 28 percent of refugees felt they were at risk of human trafficking and 19 percent said they had already experienced some form of sexual abuse;

Whereas the Department of State asserts that more than 260,000 children have been deported to Russia to be forcibly adopted by Russian families;

Whereas the mass deportation of people during conflict is classified as a war crime under international law, and the forcible transfer of children out of a group of people is classified as genocide under the 1948 Genocide Convention;

Whereas, prior to February 24, Ukraine's orphanages, boarding schools, and other similar institutions housed over 91,000 children, one of the largest number of institutionalized children of any European country, over half of whom are disabled, require specialized care, or are otherwise vulnerable, and who now face heightened risk of trafficking, abuse, and other exploitation as a result of Russia's invasion;

Whereas according to UNICEF, the conflict in Ukraine will have a significant psychological impact on Ukrainian children, likely requiring intensive psychological support;

Whereas children who experience war or conflict are at heightened risk of developing anxiety disorders, depression, and long-term psychological trauma, and that these risks can increase the longer a child is displaced from his or her home, family members, school, friends, and/or normal routine;

Whereas, as of May 6, 2022, UNICEF reported that 140,000 Ukrainian children and their caregivers had sought mental health and psychosocial services; and

Whereas the United Nations Child Rights Committee has demanded that Russia immediately cease its aggression and military actions and uphold its obligations to protect children from physical and psychological violence as enshrined by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) condemns Russia’s unprovoked invasion of
3 Ukraine, its peaceful neighbor, which has caused
4 horrific loss of life, injury, and suffering to the chil-
5 dren of Ukraine;

6 (2) demands an investigation into atrocities,
7 war crimes, and crimes against humanity per-
8 petrated against Ukrainian civilians by Russian mili-
9 tary forces and military contractors, and particularly
10 against children, that holds Russian servicemembers,
11 military contractors, and leaders responsible for such
12 actions; and

13 (3) urges the President of the United States—

14 (A) to take all available actions to mitigate
15 the physical and psychological harm being done
16 to children in Ukraine;

17 (B) to urge international parties to fully
18 investigate atrocities and war crimes committed

1 by Russia against children in Ukraine, includ-
2 ing, but not limited to, allegations of murder,
3 torture, kidnapping, and bombing of schools
4 and other civilian areas where children are
5 present, in violation of international law; and

6 (C) to use interagency partnerships and
7 existing authorities, including the Global
8 Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act,
9 to impose further targeted sanctions against in-
10 dividuals and entities responsible for perpe-
11 trating crimes against children in Ukraine or
12 contributing to further harm against Ukrainian
13 children.

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