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Sexual violence in the context of the Russian Federation full-scale armed attack against Ukraine

24 February 2022-31 July 2026*

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

* The information contained in the present report should inform the oral update of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to be presented to the Human Rights Council at its sixty-third session, pursuant to Council resolution 59/22.

I. Executive summary

1. This thematic report by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) provides an analysis of data, trends and patterns of conflict-related sexual violence[1] perpetrated in the context of the Russian Federation's full-scale armed attack against Ukraine. It is based on the findings of OHCHR's Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine[2] (HRMMU), during the period from 24 February 2022 through 31 July 2026.[3] It builds upon OHCHR's monitoring, documentation and public reporting of sexual violence in Ukraine since 2014.[4] Its findings are assessed against the applicable international human rights law framework.[5]

2. During the reporting period, OHCHR documented 1004[6] cases[7] of sexual violence perpetrated in both detention and non-detention contexts. These findings, while representative, are not intended as a comprehensive account of sexual violence, which in Ukraine, as in other contexts, is underreported. The patterns observed indicate that sexual violence has been used as a method of torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment against prisoners of war (POWs) and civilians

3. The majority of these cases verified by OHCHR - 89 per cent - are attributed to Russian Federation authorities, including members of the Russian armed forces, the Federal Penitentiary Service (FSIN), and the Federal Security Service (FSB). Eleven per cent of the verified cases are attributed to Ukrainian authorities, including members of the Ukrainian armed forces, the State Penitentiary Service, and the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU).

4. In occupied territory of Ukraine and in the Russian Federation, Russian Federation authorities perpetrated acts of sexual violence against Ukrainian POWs and retained medical personnel and detained Ukrainian civilians, including men and women, on a widespread basis. Violations occurred across the full cycle of internment or detention, respectively: upon capture or arrest, during transfer, during admission to internment and detention facilities or places, during interrogation, throughout internment or detention, including during cell searches and showers, and immediately prior to exchange or release. Violations included gang rape, rape, attempted rape, genital mutilation, sexual assault, electric shocks to genitals, beating of genitals, forced nudity, electric shocks or beatings to the body while nude, degrading treatment of a sexual nature, threats of sexual violence, and other forms of sexual violence. Outside the context of detention, in areas under Russian occupation, primarily women and girls were subjected to rape, including gang rape, attempted rape, and sexual assault. They also endured forced nudity, threats of sexual violence, and other forms of sexual violence, mainly in residential settings.

5. The Russian Federation has failed to take any discernible steps to prevent, investigate, or prosecute sexual violence committed by its personnel. It has enacted legal provisions that

[1] See Methodology for details concerning the forms of sexual violence covered in this report.

[2] OHCHR deployed the HRMMU on 14 March 2014 to monitor and report on the human rights situation throughout Ukraine, with particular attention to the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, eastern and southern regions of Ukraine, and to propose recommendations to the Government and other actors to address human rights concerns. For more information, see A/HRC/27/75, paras. 7-8.

[3] The data, trends and patterns set out in this report are also reflected in the Secretary General's annual reports on conflict-related sexual violence. See S/2026/321, 21 April 2026; S/2025/389, 15 July 2025; S/2024/292, 4 April 2024; S/2023/413, 22 June 2023.

[4] See OHCHR, *Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Ukraine*, 17 February 2017.

[5] See para. 15 infra.

[6] This includes 984 cases perpetrated during the reporting period and 20 cases which occurred prior to 2022 but were previously unreported by OHCHR. See paras. 32 and 42 and footnotes 30 and 37 infra.

[7] Many survivors interviewed by OHCHR were unable to quantify the number of sexual violence incidents they experienced. For example, some civilian women were subjected to multiple rapes over time, and many POWs faced repeated forced nudity or beatings or electric shocks to the genitals, sometimes in different places of internment. Accordingly, this report does not provide a total number of incidents. Instead, OHCHR reports the number of cases, with each case representing a single survivor and potentially involving multiple incidents.

provide broad impunity for crimes, including sexual violence, committed during military service and has not engaged with OHCHR on the matter of sexual violence.

6. In Government-controlled territory, almost half of the violations by Ukrainian authorities against Russian and third-country national POWs and conflict-related detainees[8] comprised exclusively threats of sexual violence. Violations also included attempted rape, sexual assault, electric shocks to genitals, beating of genitals, forced nudity, electric shocks or beatings to the body while nude, and degrading treatment of a sexual nature, largely perpetrated during the initial stages of captivity.

7. OHCHR notes that the Government of Ukraine has taken a number of concrete steps to prevent and address such violations by its personnel, including through legal reforms, command-level directives, and regular cooperation with OHCHR and other monitoring mechanisms. However, steps toward accountability remain limited: OHCHR is not aware of any cases moving beyond the investigative stage.

8. This document aims to support national and international efforts to ensure truth, justice, and reparation for survivors, and to prevent recurrence. It sets out concrete recommendations to the parties to the conflict, competent national authorities, and international partners to strengthen prevention, protection, accountability, and survivor-centred support.

II. Methodology

9. The findings in this report are primarily based on confidential interviews conducted by OHCHR between 24 February 2022 and 31 July 2026 with survivors[9] of sexual violence perpetrated since the start of the full-scale armed attack by the Russian Federation against Ukraine. The report also draws from court documents, official records, and other relevant material, including open sources.

10. The Government of Ukraine provided OHCHR with full access to territory under its control, including unfettered and confidential access to Russian and third-country national POWs and conflict-related detainees in official places of internment and detention. OHCHR interviewed approximately 10 per cent of released Ukrainian POWs and a corresponding number of Russian POWs held in Ukrainian internment facilities. OHCHR interviewed civilian detainees following their release from facilities controlled by the Russian Federation and arrival to Government-controlled territory. In most cases, OHCHR interviewed Ukrainian civilian survivors from non-detention contexts after they had left occupied territory for Government-controlled territory. Despite repeated requests, the Russian Federation has not granted OHCHR access to territory of Ukraine which it occupies, to Ukrainian POWs it has interned or to civilian detainees it holds. Moreover, people living in occupied territory are hesitant to share accounts via telephone or messaging services out of concern that conversations may be overheard or intercepted. Consequently, the figures in this report significantly underrepresent the actual number of survivors. They reflect survivors whom OHCHR was able to interview and should therefore be regarded as representative of broader patterns documented by OHCHR rather than comprehensive.

11. Findings are included in the report where they meet the “reasonable grounds to believe” standard: namely where, based on a body of verified information, an ordinarily prudent observer would have reasonable grounds to believe that the facts took place as described, and where legal conclusions are drawn, that these facts meet all the elements of a violation.

12. This report includes only cases in which sources gave OHCHR informed consent to use their information publicly. It therefore does not include all cases of sexual violence

[8] The term “conflict-related detainee” refers to civilians detained under charges set out in articles 109 to 114-2, 258 to 258-6, 260, and 436 to 442 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine, including such crimes as treason, sabotage and collaboration activities.

[9] In this report, the term “survivor” refers to individuals who have been subjected to sexual violence. In circumstances in which the individual did not survive the violence, the term “victim” is used.

verified by OHCHR. Details have been omitted to prevent identification of survivors and witnesses. At all stages, OHCHR strictly adhered to its guiding principle of "do no harm" and took all appropriate measures to prevent re-traumatization and protect individuals.

13. OHCHR engagement with survivors, survivor networks, civil society organizations, Government representatives, and international actors in Ukraine, including service providers, confirms that sexual violence in Ukraine, as in other contexts, is underreported. Barriers to reporting include: trauma; feelings of shame; fear of social and cultural stigma, including around gender norms, breach of confidentiality, or being accused of collaboration with occupying forces; mistrust of law enforcement; fear of retaliation; doubts about achieving justice; and lack of awareness of the scope of violations that constitute sexual violence. These factors are compounded by barriers to documentation pertaining to specific contexts as elaborated below. Consequently, the scope of documentation should be seen as indicative rather than comprehensive.

14. In accordance with the United Nations definition of conflict-related sexual violence, the term "sexual violence" as used in this report refers to "rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, forced abortion, enforced sterilization, forced marriage, and any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity[10] perpetrated against women, men, girls or boys that is directly or indirectly linked to a conflict. This link may become evident through the profile of the perpetrator, who may often be affiliated with a State or non-State armed group, including those designated as terrorist groups by the Security Council; through the profile of the victim, who may frequently be an actual or perceived member of a persecuted political, ethnic or religious minority, or targeted on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity; or through other existing circumstances, such as a climate of impunity; cross-border consequences, such as displacement or trafficking; and/or violations of the provisions of a ceasefire agreement. The term also encompasses trafficking in persons for the purpose of sexual violence and/or exploitation, when committed in situations of armed conflict." [11]

15. International human rights law recognizes rape and other forms of sexual violence as a form of conduct that may amount to torture.[12] The UN Committee against Torture "considers that torture is practised systematically when it is apparent that the torture cases reported have not occurred fortuitously in a particular place or at a particular time, but are seen to be habitual, widespread and deliberate in at least a considerable part of the territory of the country in question. […] Inadequate legislation which in practice allows room for the use of torture may also add to the systematic nature of this practice".[13]

III. Documented contexts of sexual violence in conflict

A. Sexual violence perpetrated by Russian Federation authorities

General findings

16. In total, during the reporting period, OHCHR verified 892 cases of sexual violence (against 725 men, 151 women, 14 girls and 2 boys) perpetrated by Russian Federation

[10] Examples of "other forms of sexual violence" described in this report include genital mutilation, attempted rape, sexual assault, electric shocks to genitals, beating of genitals, forced nudity, electric shocks or beatings to the body while nude, forced witnessing of sexual violence, degrading treatment of a sexual nature, and threats of sexual violence.

[11] See *The Handbook for United Nations Field Missions on Preventing and Responding to Conflict-Related Sexual Violence*, section 1, p. 5; Conflict-related sexual violence, Report of the Secretary-General, 21 April 2026, S/2026/321, para. 4.

[12] See Committee against Torture, *General Comment No. 2: Implementation of Article 2 by States Parties*, CAT/C/GC/2, 24 January 2008, para. 22.

[13] See UN General Assembly, *Report: Addendum, Summary Account of the Results of the Proceedings Concerning the Inquiry on Turkey,* 15 November 1993, A/48/44/Add.1, para. 39.

authorities, primarily by members of the Russian armed forces,[14] FSIN[15] , and FSB.[16] Russian Federation authorities perpetrated sexual violence in three main contexts: (1) against Ukrainian POWs and retained medical personnel during captivity in territory of Ukraine occupied or controlled by the Russian Federation and in the Russian Federation; (2) against Ukrainian civilians in detention in territory of Ukraine occupied or controlled by the Russian Federation and in the Russian Federation; and (3) against civilians outside detention in residential areas of territory of Ukraine occupied or controlled by the Russian Federation.

1. Sexual violence against Ukrainian POWs and retained medical personnel[17] during captivity in territory of Ukraine occupied or controlled by the Russian Federation and in the Russian Federation

17. Russian Federation authorities have subjected Ukrainian POWs and retained medical personnel they have held in territory of Ukraine occupied or controlled by the Russian Federation and in the Russian Federation to sexual violence in a widespread manner.[18] From 24 February 2022 through 31 July 2026, OHCHR conducted confidential interviews with 915 Ukrainian POWs and retained medical personnel (879 men and 36 women) after their release from captivity. In total, 572 (63 per cent) POWs and retained medical personnel[19] (545 men and 27 women) gave consistent and detailed accounts of sexual violence. Violations documented by OHCHR occurred from February 2022 through June 2026.[20]

Forms of sexual violence

18. Ukrainian POWs and retained medical personnel described being subjected to a wide range of forms of sexual violence. Eight men and three women were subjected to rape. Of these, one woman was gang raped. Seven men were subjected to attempted rape. Other forms of sexual violence included genital mutilation; sexual assault; electric shocks to genitals; beating of genitals; forced nudity[21]; electric shocks or beatings to the body while nude;

[14] In this report the term Russian armed forces is used to encompass the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, including the Main Directorate of the General Staff and Military Police, National Guard, and other actors fighting on behalf of the Russian Federation, including former affiliated armed groups from the self-proclaimed "Donetsk people's republic" ("DPR") and self-proclaimed "Luhansk people's republic," ("LPR") as well as Wagner Group military and security contractors under Russian Federation control.

[15] In this report, the term FSIN is used to encompass persons from the "DPR" and "LPR" penitentiary service.

[16] In this report, the term FSB is used to encompass persons from the so-called "ministries of state security" of the "DPR" and "LPR" (MGB). OHCHR also documented cases by the Russian Investigative Committee, Russian Federation Police, and Prosecutor's Office of the Russian Federation. The term Russian Federation police is used to encompass officers from the "DPR" and "LPR" police.

[17] Retained medical personnel are not POWs. Under international humanitarian law, unlike POWs, they may not be interned until the end of hostilities because they do not pose a threat. They may only be retained in certain limited circumstances (e.g. when the Detaining Power requires their services for the sick and wounded). If retained, they are entitled, at a minimum, to the same benefits and protections as POWs (e.g. regarding quarters, food, medical care, and disciplinary immunity). See Geneva Convention III, art. 33, which provides that medical personnel "while retained by the Detaining Power … shall not be considered as prisoners of war." See also, OHCHR, *Treatment of Prisoners of War and Update on the Human Rights Situation in Ukraine, 1 June to 31 August 2024*.

[18] See paragraph 15 supra. More broadly, OHCHR has found that Russian Federation authorities have subjected Ukrainian POWs to torture and ill-treatment in a widespread and systematic manner, with 95 per cent of POWs interviewed by OHCHR having been tortured. See OHCHR, *Treatment of Prisoners of War and Update on the Human Rights Situation in Ukraine, 1 June 2024 – 31 August 2024*, 1 October 2024, paras. 28-30.

[19] This figure includes 562 POWs (538 men and 24 women) and 10 retained medical personnel (7 men and 3 women).

[20] Some survivors were unable to specify the precise date(s) on which they were subjected to sexual violence.

[21] For example, OHCHR documented various cases in which women POWs were paraded nude in front of groups of men and subjected to vulgarities. In one case, a male POW was forced to stand nude in the snow and recite Russian poetry.

unjustified cavity searches; degrading treatment of a sexual nature; being forced to use the toilet or shower in front of members of the opposite sex; sexual harassment; threats of gang rape, rape, castration or other forms of sexual violence; and other forms of sexual violence.

19. The application of electric shocks to genitals with a "tapik" [22] or taser was a common form of sexual violence used against Ukrainian POWs and retained medical personnel, with 155 (27 per cent) having endured this form at least once. In 246 (43 per cent) cases, POWs were beaten in the genitals. In 372 (65 per cent) cases, POWs were subjected to forced nudity, and in 348 (61 per cent) cases, they were beaten or subjected to electric shocks to their bodies while nude. In 38 (7 per cent) cases, sexual violence against POWs comprised exclusively threats.

20. In 428 (75 per cent) cases, Ukrainian POWs and retained medical personnel were subjected to multiple forms of sexual violence. For example, in one case, a military medic was subjected to seven different forms over the course of a year. Members of the Russian armed forces beat him in the genitals shortly after capture. During eight months of captivity in the last place of internment, FSIN personnel subjected him to attempted rape, as well as repeated forced nudity, beatings while nude, beatings of genitals, and sexually degrading treatment. Prior to his release in 2023, six FSIN employees, one of whom held a senior position, raped him with a police baton. After this incident, he bled for over a week.

Perpetrators

21. Ukrainian POWs and retained medical personnel who endured sexual violence identified several Russian Federation authorities as having been responsible. In the majority of cases, sexual violence was perpetrated by FSIN staff, including during admission processes and daily routines in official internment facilities. FSIN staff also used sexual violence during interrogations of Ukrainian POWs. Members of the Russian armed forces committed sexual violence against Ukrainian POWs during initial stages of captivity, predominantly in unofficial or transit locations. Other Russian Federation authorities that perpetrated sexual violence against Ukrainian POWs include members of the FSB, Russian Investigative Committee, Russian Federation police and Prosecutor's Office of the Russian Federation. In some instances, survivors were unable to identify the affiliation of the Russian Federation authority responsible. Many cases involved multiple perpetrators, including from different entities.

Frequency

22. Of the 572 Ukrainian POWs and retained medical personnel who gave accounts of sexual violence, 413 (72 per cent) reported having been subjected to multiple incidents of sexual violence. For example, a woman POW reported that in one place of internment, from May through July 2022, she was subjected to repeated acts of rape by FSB staff nearly every day in order to elicit information. A male Ukrainian POW was subjected to multiple incidents of sexual violence while interned in a Russian Federation penal colony between April 2022 and May 2025. Upon admission, FSIN personnel simultaneously raped him and subjected him to electric shocks in the anus with a taser. They later raped him with cell keys and then forced him to lick the keys. During cell inspections, personnel mocked and humiliated him by forcing him to dance with other detainees and forcing him and other detainees to kiss one another. On multiple occasions, while made to stand facing a wall with his legs spread, he was beaten on the genitals and raped with a rubber baton.

23. In 274 (48 per cent) cases, Ukrainian POWs and retained medical personnel were subjected to sexual violence in multiple places of internment, underscoring the frequent and systemic nature of the violations. For example, one POW man endured sexual violence in two different places of internment by different perpetrator groups over a three-year period. In April 2022, he was captured from the battlefield and taken to an unknown building where a Russian soldier raped him during interrogation by stabbing him in the buttocks through his pants, penetrating and injuring his anus. In October 2022, during admission to an official

[22] A TA-57 Soviet era military field telephone designed for tactical communication over wire lines rather than radio.

facility, FSIN guards ordered him to strip naked in the shower, lie on his stomach, and propel himself forward. He was then given a jacket and ordered to put on pants. When he objected that he had no pants, he was beaten and tasered while nude. At the same facility, from October 2022 up until March 2025, FSIN guards tasered and beat him in the genitals and beat him while nude in the shower numerous times. During one beating to his genitals, the guard stated his intent to prevent [homophobic slur] like him from having children.

Circumstances

24. Russian Federation authorities perpetrated sexual violence against Ukrainian POWs and retained medical personnel during all stages of captivity. POWs reported sexual violence during capture and transit from the battlefield. In one case, in September 2023, after capturing a group of Ukrainian POWs, members of the Russian armed forces ordered four of them to strip naked, filmed the group sitting in a small trench, and published the video online. One of the Russian soldiers then interrogated the POWs individually. Expressing he was not satisfied with one of the POW's answers, the soldier tortured him in the presence of the other POWs using multiple methods and instruments, including through sexual violence such as burning the POW's buttocks with a gas burner and inserting a gun into and shooting him through his anus. The POW was then executed. [23] In another case, shortly after capture in January 2024, a group of Ukrainian POWs were brought to a basement. One POW disclosed that, on the first day, a guard kicked him hard in his genitals. As a result, he experienced difficulty urinating for three days and developed ongoing urological and prostate-related health issues.

25. Ukrainian POWs and retained medical personnel also consistently reported sexual violence upon arrival at internment facilities, such as forced nudity of entire groups and electric shocks or beatings to the body while nude, including to genitals, during the intake process. For example, in February 2023, upon admission to an internment facility over a two-hour period, FSIN staff ordered a group of POW men to strip naked and shout "Glory to Russia! Glory to Spetsnaz!" [24] They forced the POWs to stand close together so that their nude bodies touched and to hold bags of prison clothes with their teeth, while they beat and tasered them. During admission to another internment facility in January 2024, FSIN staff ordered a group of POWs to take off their clothes, blindfolded them, beat and kicked them while they were nude, and forced them to crawl across the room to a female staff member, who registered their personal information.

26. Sexual violence was commonly perpetrated during interrogations. A Ukrainian POW man reported that in one facility between October 2022 and April 2024, he was severely beaten with batons and fists and kicked, including in the genitals, on a regular basis during interrogations. On one occasion, he was beaten with a baton and kicked in the genitals particularly hard by an interrogator, who said it was to prevent him from having children, specifically, from "producing creatures like you". In another case, during an interrogation in 2022, a POW man was subjected to electric shocks to his genitals and threatened with sexual violence against his wife in order to coerce his confession to alleged war crimes, for which he was subsequently convicted.

27. Groups of Ukrainian POWs and retained medical personnel were also frequently subjected to sexual violence and humiliation, including forced nudity, beatings or electric shocks to their genitals, and degrading treatment of a sexual nature, during routine inspections in cells and movements within the facility. For example, FSIN staff gave POW men female names, and ordered them to kiss, lick, hug and dance with each other, touch each other's genitals or buttocks, masturbate in front of them or each other, bite each other's ears, imitate moaning sounds, act as if they were women in labour, and imitate oral sex on police batons or demonstrate how they would perform oral sex on their wives. One POW described how, while in captivity between 2023 and 2024, during a walk, FSIN staff ordered a group

[23] This case involving execution, torture, mutilation, and sexual violence is not typical of patterns of sexual violence by Russian authorities documented by OHCHR.

[24] "Spetsnaz" is a Russian term for FSIN Special Forces units.

of POWs to "[expletive] the fence like your wives", after which the POWs were forced to imitate sexual intercourse on the fence for roughly thirty minutes.

28. Sexual violence was also perpetrated against Ukrainian POWs and retained medical personnel in the final stages of internment. For example, a group of women POWs, before being exchanged, were forced to remove their clothes and remain nude during examinations that took place in the presence of male FSIN guards. Some of the women described their particularly acute humiliation given that they were menstruating.

29. Ukrainian POWs and retained medical personnel interviewed frequently reported sexual violence being committed in common spaces such as cells, corridors, shower rooms and prison yards, in front of supervisors or internal video cameras, or perpetrated by or in the presence of representatives of different Russian Federation authorities. For example, one POW man described how, while interned at a pre-trial detention facility in the Russian Federation in 2024, a guard repeatedly kicked him in the genitals in the corridor for approximately two minutes at a rate of roughly one kick per second.

Locations

30. OHCHR findings show that Ukrainian POWs and retained medical personnel were subjected to sexual violence in 83 official facilities[25] and 81 unofficial or transit locations[26] in territory of Ukraine occupied or controlled by the Russian Federation in six regions of Ukraine and in twenty-five regions in the Russian Federation. POW accounts demonstrated that similar patterns of sexual violence occurred across facilities. In 64 official facilities, OHCHR documented two or more cases of sexual violence. In 26 official facilities, OHCHR documented ten or more cases of sexual violence. For example, 52 POWs disclosed that they were subjected to sexual violence in a specific facility in the Russian Federation between December 2022 and June 2026, including rape; genital mutilation; electric shocks and beatings to genitals; forced nudity; electric shocks or beatings to the body while nude; degrading treatment of a sexual nature; and threats of gang rape, rape and castration. In a different facility, 81 POWs were subjected to sexual violence between June 2022 and January 2024, including electric shocks and beatings to genitals; forced nudity; electric shocks or beatings to the body while nude; degrading treatment of a sexual nature; and threats of rape and castration.

2. Sexual violence against Ukrainian civilians in detention in territory of Ukraine occupied or controlled by the Russian Federation and in the Russian Federation

31. Russian Federation authorities have subjected civilians they detained in territory of Ukraine occupied or controlled by the Russian Federation and in the Russian Federation to sexual violence in a widespread manner.[27] OHCHR verified 205[28] credible and reliable accounts of sexual violence perpetrated during the reporting period against civilians in detention (156 men, 48 women and 1 boy). The documented violations occurred between March 2022 and June 2026.[29]

32. In addition, during the reporting period, OHCHR documented 19 cases of sexual violence against civilians (16 men and 3 women) that occurred in the context of detention

[25] Official facilities included pre-trial detention facilities, penal colonies, police stations, tent camps, and military bases and offices. In eight cases, the POW could not identify at least one of the official facilities in which he was interned.

[26] Unofficial or transit locations included basements, garages, private houses, vehicles, Russian armed forces trenches or barracks, fields, and sites of capture.

[27] See paragraph 15 supra. More broadly, OHCHR recalls its findings that Russian Federation authorities have subjected Ukrainian civilian detainees to widespread and systematic torture and ill-treatment in occupied territory and the Russian Federation. See OHCHR, *Treatment of civilians deprived of their liberty in the context of the armed attack by the Russian Federation against Ukraine*, 23 September 2025.

[28] This figure includes 10 cases in which the survivor was subjected to sexual violence both prior to and following the full-scale armed attack.

[29] Some survivors were unable to specify the precise date(s) on which they were subjected to sexual violence.

prior to the reporting period, between March 2014 and February 2022, with most survivors detained for prolonged periods and able to report the sexual violence only after their release. Perpetrators included members of the so-called "ministry of state security", police, armed groups and penitentiary service of the self-proclaimed "Donetsk people's republic", as well as the so-called "ministry of state security" of the self-proclaimed "Luhansk people's republic," and the FSB. These cases are consistent with documented patterns of sexual violence by Russian Federation authorities and affiliated actors that occurred thereafter, as detailed below, illustrating a continuity in the use of such violence.[30]

Forms of sexual violence

33. During the reporting period, 13 civilian detainees (nine women and four men) were raped, including two women who were gang raped. Four men were subjected to attempted rape. Additional forms of sexual violence included genital mutilation; sexual assault; the application of electric shocks to genitals or nipples; beating of genitals; forced nudity; electric shocks or beatings to the body while nude; unjustified cavity searches; degrading treatment of a sexual nature; forced witnessing of sexual violence; being forced to use the toilet or shower in front of members of the opposite sex; sexual harassment; threats of rape, castration, or other forms of sexual violence; threats of rape or other forms of sexual violence against others; and other forms of sexual violence.

34. In 50 (25 per cent) cases, civilian detainees endured electric shocks to genitals with a "tapik" or taser at least once. In 40 (20 per cent) cases, they were beaten on the genitals. In addition, 76 (37 per cent) civilian detainees were subjected to forced nudity, and 35 (17 per cent) experienced electric shocks or beatings to their bodies while nude. In 50 (24 per cent) cases, sexual violence against civilian detainees comprised exclusively threats.

35. Ninety-eight (48 per cent) civilian detainees were subjected to more than one form of sexual violence. For example, a civilian man was detained for over four years between March 2022 and April 2026 in a pre-trial detention facility[31] and penal colony in the Russian Federation. FSIN staff subjected him to sexual violence during admission, cell searches, and while showering, including forced nudity, beatings while nude, the application of electric shocks and beatings to his genitals, and sexually degrading treatment. On one occasion, he was forced to take off his clothes and imitate oral sex on his hands and knees. In 2026, he was repeatedly forced to strip naked and exercise during cell searches along with other detainees.

Perpetrators

36. Civilian detainees who had been subjected to sexual violence identified members of different State entities as having been involved. The entities identified most frequently were the Russian armed forces, the FSIN, the FSB, the National Guard of the Russian Federation (Rosgvardia) and the Russian Federation police. In some instances, survivors were unable to identify the affiliation of the Russian Federation authority responsible. Many cases involved multiple perpetrators, including from different entities. Interviewees also reported that in some cases Ukrainian "collaborators" worked with those entities.

Frequency

37. Of the 205 civilian detainees who reported sexual violence, 95 (46 per cent) were subjected to multiple incidents. Forty-five (22 per cent) civilian detainees experienced sexual violence in two or more different places of detention, underscoring the frequent and systemic nature of the violations.

[30] For further information on patterns of sexual violence perpetrated against Ukrainian civilians prior to the full-scale armed attack, see OHCHR, *Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Ukraine*, 17 February 2017. The analysis that follows regarding civilian detainees is based on the 205 cases in which sexual violence was perpetrated during the reporting period.

[31] In Ukraine a pre-trial detention facility is referred to as a "SIZO".

Circumstances

38. In many instances, sexual violence against civilian detainees was perpetrated during interrogations to obtain information, elicit confessions or compel them to cooperate. In one case, members of the FSB in Kherson region repeatedly subjected a detained man to electric shocks, including to his genitals, and threatened to castrate him after his apprehension in 2022. During the interrogation, they also raped the man anally with a metal object and simultaneously administered electric shocks to his anus and genitals. In spring of 2023, during the interrogation of a detained woman in Kherson region, two Russian soldiers held the woman down while a third soldier raped her orally. In February 2023, Russian Federation police questioned a civilian man who had been taken from occupied Kherson region and detained in an official facility in Crimea. They instructed him to sign incriminating documents, and when he refused, they beat him all over his body, including on his genitals.

39. Sexual violence was also perpetrated against civilian detainees during apprehension, admission, or at subsequent stages of detention, in order to punish or humiliate them. For example, in October 2022 in Kherson region, after torturing a man during interrogation and compelling a confession, FSB members brought him to a field, subjected him to mock execution, removed his pants, and extinguished two cigarettes on his buttock. After they brought him back to the detention facility, they took off his pants again and carved "RF" for "Russian Federation" in large letters on his other buttock, resulting in a large scar. On multiple occasions at a penal colony between autumn 2022 and autumn 2024, FSIN guards made male civilian detainees act like animals in a sexualized manner.[32] In the autumn of 2025, FSIN guards in one facility ordered a male civilian detainee and his cellmates to undress, pair up, and dance nude together to a well-known romantic song. On several occasions, including in 2026, guards struck him on the genitals with a baton.

40. Civilian detainees interviewed frequently reported sexual violence being committed in common spaces such as cells, showers and bathrooms, in front of internal video cameras, or perpetrated by or in the presence of representatives of different Russian Federation authorities.

Locations

41. Civilians were subjected to sexual violence in 85 official facilities[33] and 65 unofficial and transit locations[34] in territory of Ukraine occupied or controlled by the Russian Federation in ten regions of Ukraine and in 20 regions in the Russian Federation.

3. Sexual violence outside detention against civilians in residential areas of territory of Ukraine occupied or controlled by the Russian Federation

42. Sexual violence was documented outside detention in residential areas of territory of Ukraine occupied or controlled by the Russian Federation where Russian armed forces were stationed. In this context, OHCHR documented sexual violence, primarily by members of the Russian armed forces, perpetrated against 95 civilians (72 women,[35] 8 men, 14 girls and 1 boy) during the reporting period. These cases occurred between March 2022 and December 2025.[36] OHCHR documented one additional case of sexual violence perpetrated by armed groups of the self-proclaimed "Donetsk people's republic" against a civilian woman at a checkpoint in Donetsk region that occurred prior to the reporting period.[37]

[32] Details omitted to prevent identification of survivors.

[33] Official facilities included temporary detention facilities, penal colonies, pre-trial detention facilities, and police stations. In two cases, the civilian detainees could not identify the official facility in which they were detained.

[34] Unofficial and transit locations included basements, garages, unidentified buildings, premises of industrial plants, and private houses.

[35] This figure includes one case of transphobia-motivated sexual violence against a transgender woman.

[36] Some survivors were unable to specify the precise date(s) on which they were subjected to sexual violence.

[37] For further information on patterns of sexual violence perpetrated against Ukrainian civilians prior to the full-scale armed attack, see OHCHR, *Conflict-Related Sexual Violence in Ukraine*, 17 February

Forms of sexual violence

43. Fifty-seven survivors (46 women, 1 man and 10 girls) gave detailed accounts of rape by Russian military personnel. Of these, 15 survivors (11 women and 4 girls) were gang raped by two or more soldiers. The oldest victim of rape was 82 years old. The youngest survivor of rape was four years old.[38] Three women had children born of rape.[39] Two women and two girls were subjected to attempted rape.

44. Sexual violence against women also included sexual assault; electric shocks to breasts; forced nudity; beatings while nude; forced witnessing of sexual violence; being forced to use the toilet or shower in front of members of the opposite sex; degrading treatment of a sexual nature; sexual harassment; threats of gang rape and rape; and other forms of sexual violence. Sexual violence against girls also included sexual assault; forced nudity; forced witnessing of sexual violence; degrading treatment of a sexual nature; sexual harassment; threats of gang rape; and other forms of sexual violence.

45. Sexual violence against men included rape, and being forced to commit sexual assault and to witness rape and other forms of sexual violence against loved ones. For example, in September 2022 in Kherson region, three Russian soldiers abducted a 60-year-old man from his home, put a sack over his head, and tortured him for over six hours. They first drove him to the yard of a destroyed house, where they applied electric shocks to his thumbs, beat him on the head with spiked gloves, and tried to suffocate him. They then put him in the trunk of the car, moved him to another yard, forced him to the ground face down, stripped him, and raped him with the handle of a shovel. Upon releasing him, they threatened that if he left home, they would do the same to his mother. In March 2022 in Kyiv region, two Russian soldiers broke into a home and forced a man to watch as they gang raped his wife, who was menstruating, orally and vaginally. Following the gang rape, the soldiers forced the husband to expose his genitals, making jokes about their size, and then to lick his wife's genitals while they watched and laughed. One of the soldiers undressed and orally raped the couple's four-year-old daughter in an adjacent room, from where she had viewed the violence against her parents.

46. Sexual violence against men also included sexual assault, forced nudity, beatings while nude, threats of rape, threats of castration, threats of rape or other forms of sexual violence against others, and sexual harassment. For example, in Kherson in March 2022, a group of Russian soldiers stopped a gay man on the street. One soldier sexually assaulted him by putting his hand inside the man's underwear, groping his buttocks, and threatening him with gang rape.[40] Sexual violence against a three-year-old boy involved witnessing the attempted rape of his mother by a Russian soldier, who entered a private home in Chernihiv region in March 2022.

47. Of the 95 civilians who reported sexual violence, 42 (44 per cent) were subjected to more than one form.

2017. The analysis that follows regarding sexual violence outside detention against civilians in residential areas of territory of Ukraine occupied or controlled by the Russian Federation is based on the 95 cases in which sexual violence was perpetrated during the reporting period.

[38] See para. 45 supra.

[39] These three children were not included in the statistics regarding children subjected to sexual violence by Russian armed forces.

[40] OHCHR has documented two cases of homophobia-motivated sexual violence against gay men (in detention and outside detention) and one case of transphobia-motivated CRSV against a transgender woman (outside detention) perpetrated by Russian Federation authorities. OHCHR has received reports with further allegations of sexual violence targeting LGBTQI+ persons in the occupied territory but has not yet been able to verify them. For more information on the three documented cases, see OHCHR, *Report on the Human Rights Situation in Ukraine, 1 February to 31 July 2023*, 4 October 2023, para. 56; and OHCHR, *Treatment of Prisoners of War and Update on the Human Rights Situation in Ukraine, 1 June 2024 – 31 August 2024*, 1 October 2024, para. 102.

Perpetrators

48. Members of the Russian armed forces perpetrated the vast majority of the cases of sexual violence against civilians outside detention. Russian Federation police officers and FSB staff also perpetrated some cases.

Frequency

49. Of the 95 civilians who reported sexual violence, 32 (34 per cent) were subjected to multiple incidents. For example, between May and June 2022 in Zaporizhzhia region, a Russian soldier moved into a private home and raped a woman several times per week over the course of a month, promising her that her detained husband, who had been severely tortured, would receive better treatment in exchange.

Circumstances

50. OHCHR received detailed accounts of members of the Russian armed forces entering homes, taking them over for prolonged periods without the residents' consent, and subjecting the residents to sexual violence. Women residing alone were particularly vulnerable. In one case, from April through August 2022, a Russian soldier stayed at a house in Kherson region where a woman lived with her nine-year-old son. During this period, he raped her every night, repeatedly threatened her with gang rape, and forced her to cook for him and wash his clothes.

51. In family homes, members of the Russian armed forces sometimes took measures to restrain, incapacitate or kill the male household members before raping women. For example, in March 2022 in Kyiv region, two Russian soldiers broke into a house where a woman resided with her family. They shot and killed her husband and then gang raped her, with her four-year-old son nearby, and threatened to shoot her in front of him if she resisted. In a separate case, in March 2022, a Russian soldier broke into a couple's home, took the wife at gunpoint to a nearby house, ordered her to take off her clothes and raped her. When her husband tried to defend her, the soldier shot him in the stomach. He died two days later.

52. Survivors described members of the Russian armed forces subjecting them to sexual violence during house searches or after abducting them from their homes and taking them to other locations. Members of the Russian armed forces also committed sexual violence against civilians they seized from locations where they sought shelter from hostilities, the street, or other public places. For example, in July 2022, in Kharkiv region, as a woman cycled home from work, a column of Russian military vehicles drove past her. One vehicle stopped and a Russian soldier opened the door, ordering her to perform oral sex on him. When the woman refused, the soldier jumped out of the vehicle, beat her, dragged her into a forest strip and raped her. The woman escaped by running through a minefield, while the soldier shot at her. As a result of the beatings, the woman received a concussion and her nose was broken. Thereafter, she was afraid to travel to work and had to quit her job. In another case, a woman in a village in Donetsk region moved into a basement for shelter from ongoing hostilities. Russian soldiers took over the basement to use as their base and started living in it. Between October and December 2025, over a two-month period, a Russian solder raped her multiple times per day, threatening to kill her if she resisted. The violence only ended when Ukrainian soldiers entered the basement and captured him.

53. In March 2024, in Kherson region, a car with two Russian soldiers inside stopped near a 17-year-old girl, while she was walking in her village. They asked her for the time, and when she took out her phone to check, dragged her into the car, where they gang raped her. They then brought her to an abandoned house they had taken over and gang raped her again. In the middle of the night, they dropped her near her home and threatened her not to tell anyone. Afterwards, the girl was unable to see a gynaecologist because she did not have a Russian passport, which was necessary to access medical services. A few months later, while still in occupied territory, she managed to see a woman gynaecologist, who asked her why she did not want to date a Russian soldier.

54. Women were also subjected to sexual violence during filtration.[41] In May 2022, a woman was taken to a filtration camp in Donetsk region, where she was forced to undress along with other men and women and subjected to a vaginal search in front of everyone.

Locations

55. Russian armed forces subjected civilians to sexual violence in territory of Ukraine occupied or controlled by the Russian Federation in eight regions across Ukraine.[42] For example, in March 2022, in Kyiv region, Russian soldiers moved into an apartment in a building where a widow lived with her two children and mother. One evening, one of the soldiers entered her apartment and tried to force her to drink alcohol with him. When her child entered the room, the soldier told her to put him to bed, threatening to otherwise cut off the hands and feet of both her children and her mother. The soldier then dragged her to another room, forced her to undress, choked her, and raped her.

Risk of further incidents

56. Most cases of sexual violence documented by OHCHR against civilians outside of detention in residential areas of occupied territory took place between March and November 2022. Due to a lack of access to occupied territory for independent monitors, interviews with survivors primarily took place after territory was de-occupied or survivors reached territory controlled by Ukraine. The concentration of documented cases during this period largely reflects the de-occupation of the territory concerned, creating the possibility to interview survivors. Nevertheless, although reporting was frequently delayed, OHCHR has continued to document incidents of sexual violence that occurred in residential areas, including in 2025. Since Russian armed forces are still stationed in these areas, particularly in frontline communities or newly occupied territory, civilians, especially women and girls, remain at risk of rape and other forms of sexual violence.

4. Measures to detect, prevent, and address sexual violence

57. OHCHR is not aware of any action taken by the Russian Federation to investigate, prosecute or otherwise address sexual violence committed by Russian Federation authorities. On the contrary, in June 2023, the Russian Federation adopted a law exempting servicepersons from criminal liability for crimes of any severity if they have received a State decoration or completed their military service because of age, injury or the end of martial law or mobilization.[43] In March 2024, the Russian Federation expanded the exemption to persons under investigation for crimes committed before they entered military service, active military servicemen and those who were serving criminal sentences before entering military service. While the new law includes some limitations on exemption in relation to persons under investigation for crimes committed before entering military service, including for sexual crimes involving minors, there are no limitations on exemption from accountability for

[41] A process of security checks and personal data collection during which many civilians were arbitrarily detained for periods ranging from several days to several months. See OHCHR, *Detention of civilians in the context of the armed attack by the Russian Federation against Ukraine, 24 February 2022 to 23 May 2023*, June 2023.

[42] This includes all areas of Ukraine that were or are currently occupied or controlled by the Russian Federation since the full-scale invasion in February 2022, including areas in Donetsk, Luhansk, Kharkiv, Zaporizhzhia, Kherson, Chernihiv, and Mykolaiv regions, and areas surrounding Kyiv (such as Bucha and Irpin), apart from Sumy.

[43] Federal Law No. 270-FZ of 24 June 2023 "On Peculiarities of Criminal Liability of Individuals Participating in the Special Military Operation". Additionally, criminal investigations against such servicepersons may be suspended upon their commander's request. The law also exempts individuals serving, or willing to serve, in the Russian armed forces during mobilization or martial law, from criminal liability for minor or medium gravity crimes committed prior to the date of the entry of the law into force. The law also retroactively applies to individuals prosecuted for criminal offences committed in Russian-occupied areas of Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions before 30 September 2022 (prior to Russia's unlawful purported annexation of this territory). See OHCHR, *Report on the Human Rights Situation in Ukraine, 1 February to 31 July 2023*, 4 October 2023, paras. 128-129.

crimes committed while in military service.[44] In addition to not taking steps itself to investigate sexual violence, the Russian Federation continues to deny OHCHR access to conduct monitoring visits in occupied territory of Ukraine or in the Russian Federation, despite repeated requests.

58. With respect to sexual violence against POWs, in facilities where Ukrainian POWs are interned, procedural safeguards and minimum standards, which play a crucial role in preventing torture and ill-treatment, including sexual violence, were frequently either not implemented or were ineffective. POWs' access to the outside world, including communication with family members, was severely restricted. While medical examinations were sometimes conducted upon arrival at a new facility, they were generally not aimed at addressing or recording signs of torture or ill-treatment. Some interviewees even reported that doctors participated in mistreatment or ignored it when happening in front of them. For example, OHCHR documented cases where doctors were present during admission procedures and saw that POWs were subjected to forced nudity and beatings while nude or the application of electric shocks while nude. In the few cases in which monitoring visits by officials of the Russian Federation took place.[45] POWs were mostly unable to hold confidential interviews with monitors and feared repercussions should they complain.[46]

59. OHCHR has observed similar patterns with regard to civilian detainees, who are often held in the same detention facilities as Ukrainian POWs in territory of Ukraine occupied by the Russian Federation and in the Russian Federation.[47]

B. Sexual violence perpetrated by Ukrainian authorities

General findings

60. In total, during the reporting period, OHCHR verified 112 cases of sexual violence (98 men and 14 women) perpetrated by Ukrainian authorities in territory controlled by the Government of Ukraine, including members of the Ukrainian armed forces,[48] Security Service of Ukraine (SBU), State Penitentiary Service of Ukraine, and National Police of Ukraine. OHCHR has not documented any cases of sexual violence perpetrated by Ukrainian authorities against children. Sexual violence occurred in two contexts: (1) against Russian and third-country national POWs, primarily in the initial stages of captivity; and (2) against conflict-related detainees.[49] Almost half (48 per cent) of the documented cases were exclusively threats of sexual violence.

1. Sexual violence against Russian and third-country national POWs

61. Between 24 February 2022 and 31 July 2026, OHCHR conducted interviews with 881 Russian and third-country national POWs held by Ukraine (880 men and 1 woman). Of these, 63 (7 per cent) (all men) gave credible and reliable accounts of having been subjected to sexual violence. Sexual violence occurred between February 2022 and April 2026.[50]

[44] Federal Law No. 64-FZ of 23 March 2024 "On Amending the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation and the Criminal Procedure Code of the Russian Federation". See OHCHR, *Report on the Human Rights Situation in Ukraine, 1 March to 31 May 2024*, 3 July 2024, para. 81.

[45] Monitoring visits were conducted by, inter alia, representatives of the Ombudsperson's office and prosecutors.

[46] See OHCHR, *Treatment of Prisoners of War and Update on the Human Rights Situation in Ukraine, 1 June 2024 – 31 August 2024*, 1 October 2024, paras. 46 – 48.

[47] See OHCHR, *Treatment of civilians deprived of their liberty in the context of the armed attack by the Russian Federation against Ukraine*, 23 September 2025, paras. 65-66 and 70.

[48] The term Ukrainian armed forces comprises all actors fighting on behalf of Ukraine, namely the Armed Forces of Ukraine (including units of the Territorial Defense), National Guard of Ukraine and State Border Guard Service of Ukraine.

[49] For definition of "conflict-related detainee", see fn. 8 supra.

[50] Some survivors were unable to specify the precise date(s) on which they were subjected to sexual violence.

Forms of sexual violence

62. OHCHR did not document any cases of rape or attempted rape against Russian and third-country national POWs by Ukrainian authorities. Forms of sexual violence included electric shocks to genitals; beating of genitals; forced nudity; electric shocks or beatings to the body while nude; degrading treatment of a sexual nature; threats of rape, castration, or other forms of sexual violence; and other forms of sexual violence.

63. The application of electric shocks to genitals with a "tapik" or taser was used against Russian and third-country national POWs in 19 (30 per cent) cases, all of which occurred in unofficial or transit locations. In 7 (11 per cent) cases, POWs were beaten in the genitals. In 27 (43 per cent) cases, POWs were subjected to forced nudity, and in 14 (22 per cent) cases, they were beaten or subjected to electric shocks to their bodies while nude. In 20 (32 per cent) cases, sexual violence against POWs comprised exclusively threats. For example, in June 2023, members of the Ukrainian armed forces captured a Russian POW in Zaporizhzhia region, held him in a basement, and threatened him with castration during interrogation.

64. In 28 (44 per cent) cases, Russian and third-country national POWs were subjected to more than one form of sexual violence. For example, in June 2024, shortly after capture, members of the Ukrainian armed forces took a Russian POW to a garage, forced him to undress, and subjected him to electric shocks to his genitals during interrogation.

Perpetrators

65. Members of the Ukrainian armed forces, State Penitentiary Service personnel, and SBU staff carried out acts of sexual violence against Russian and third-country national POWs. In some instances, survivors were unable to identify the affiliation of the Ukrainian authority responsible. Some cases involved multiple perpetrators, including from different entities.

Frequency

66. Eleven (17 per cent) of the 63 Russian and third-country national POWs held by Ukraine who reported sexual violence were subjected to multiple incidents of sexual violence. Six (10 per cent) POWs were subjected to sexual violence in multiple places of internment. For example, in August 2023, shortly after capture, members of the Ukrainian armed forces held a Russian POW in a basement, where they beat him during interrogation while blindfolded and nude. A month later, during a subsequent interrogation at a pre-trial detention facility, a member of the SBU threatened him with sexual violence, stating they would place him in a cell with men they described as "homosexual", where he would be raped.

Circumstances

67. In the vast majority of cases (45 or 71 per cent), Russian and third-country national POWs held by Ukraine were subjected to sexual violence shortly after capture and transit from the battlefield, while in unofficial or transit locations. In these places, POWs most often reported being subjected to sexual violence during interrogations to obtain information or elicit confessions. For example, in July 2024 in Donetsk region, shortly after capturing a Russian soldier, members of the Ukrainian armed forces forced him to fully undress and took him to a garage, where they applied electric shocks simultaneously to his ears, fingers, nipples and genitals during interrogation. Afterwards, they put a plastic bag over his head and tried to suffocate him. Some POWs endured sexual violence upon arrival to unofficial locations, during the official facility admission procedure, or at different stages of internment in order to humiliate them.

Locations

68. OHCHR findings show that Russian and third-country national POWs were subjected to sexual violence in 10 official facilities[51] and 55 unofficial or transit locations[52] located in eleven regions of Ukraine. Sixteen POWs provided consistent accounts of a specific transit location controlled by the Ukrainian armed forces, where they were subjected to the application of electric shocks to the genitals, forced nudity, beatings while nude, and the threat of rape.

2. Sexual violence against conflict-related detainees

69. Since 24 February 2022, OHCHR has conducted confidential interviews with 656 conflict-related detainees (413 men, 216 women, 24 boys, and 3 girls). Of these, 49 (7 per cent) reported that they had been subjected to sexual violence (35 men and 14 women). Sexual violence occurred between February 2022 and January 2026.[53] Most cases (32) occurred in 2022.

Forms of sexual violence

71. OHCHR did not document any cases of rape against conflict-related detainees. Violations included beatings of genitals; forced nudity; beatings while nude; sexual harassment; threats of gang rape, rape, or castration; or threats of rape or other forms of sexual violence against others. Violations also included two cases of attempted rape, as well as two cases of sexual assault. For example, upon arrival at a temporary detention facility, a civilian woman was put in a cell, after which an official from the facility told her to undress. When she protested, he started to undress her and to grope her in the view of men, who were in the corridor.

72. Threats of sexual violence were the most common form of sexual violence against conflict-related detainees, including 34 (69 per cent) cases comprising exclusively threats. For example, in July 2022 in Mykolaiv region, members of the SBU threatened a man with rape during a house search before detaining him. In 10 (20 per cent) cases, conflict-related detainees were subjected to forced nudity, and in 5 (10 per cent) cases, they were beaten or subjected to electric shocks to their bodies while nude. In 3 (6 per cent) cases, conflict-related detainees endured beating in the genitals. OHCHR did not document any cases against conflict-related detainees involving the application of electric shocks to the genitals.

73. In nine (18 per cent) cases, conflict-related detainees were subjected to more than one form of sexual violence. For example, in August 2022, in Kharkiv region, police officers brought a civilian man into the assembly hall of a police department, where they stripped off his shorts and beat him in the genitals, which was visible to passers-by.

Perpetrators

70. Staff from the SBU, officers from the National Police of Ukraine, personnel from the State Penitentiary Service, and members of the Ukrainian armed forces were responsible for acts of sexual violence. In some instances, survivors were unable to identify the affiliation of the Ukrainian authority responsible. Additionally, there were cases in which sexual violence was committed by multiple perpetrators, including from more than one entity.

Frequency

74. Seven (14 per cent) of the 49 conflict-related detainees who reported sexual violence were subjected to multiple incidents of sexual violence. Six (12 per cent) were subjected to sexual violence in multiple places of detention.

[51] Official facilities included pre-trial detention facilities, POW camps, and penal colonies.

[52] Unofficial or transit locations included basements, garages, and private houses.

[53] Some survivors were unable to specify the precise date(s) on which they were subjected to sexual violence.

Circumstances

75. In many cases, sexual violence was perpetrated immediately following apprehension and prior to being detained in an official pre-trial detention facility. Civilians were also subjected to sexual violence during interrogations to elicit information or confessions, upon arrival at official facilities or during the official facility admission procedure. For example, in one case, in May 2022, during interrogation at a police station in Donetsk region, police officers threatened a woman by saying they would bring her to a checkpoint where she would be raped.

Locations

76. Conflict-related detainees were subjected to sexual violence in 24 officials[54] facilities and 11 unofficial and transit locations[55] in 13 regions of Ukraine.

3. Measures to detect, prevent, and address sexual violence

77. The Ukrainian Government continues to grant OHCHR regular and unimpeded access to Russian and third-country national POWs in official places of internment in Government-controlled territory, as well as to conflict-related detainees held in pre-trial detention facilities and penal colonies.

78. In official places of internment of Russian and third-country national POWs in Government-controlled territory, procedural safeguards and minimum standards, which play a crucial role in preventing torture and ill-treatment, including sexual violence, were generally adhered to, including possibilities for POWs to contact their families, access to lawyers in criminal cases against POWs, regular visits by international and national monitors, including arrangements for confidential interviews, medical examinations upon arrivals to pre-trial detention facilities and ongoing access to medical services.[56] Such safeguards also applied to conflict-related detainees in pre-trial detention facilities and penal colonies.

79. Since the beginning of the armed conflict in Ukraine in 2014, the Ministry of Defence and the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine have issued instructions on compliance with international humanitarian law (IHL) by servicepersons of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. [57] A procedure is in place regarding internal investigations for alleged violations.[58] The Ministry of Defence has printed and distributed plastic cards to servicepersons with a list of IHL standards and their obligations under it.

80. Ukrainian authorities have taken some steps to investigate reports of sexual violence committed against Russian and third-country national POWs. Following OHCHR's reporting about torture of Russian POWs in a specific facility, including 16 who were subjected to sexual violence as described above,[59] the Office of the Prosecutor General launched a criminal investigation into this case in 2024. OHCHR has not received any further reports of sexual violence at this location in 2025 or 2026. However, as of July 2026, OHCHR is not aware of the issuance of any notices of suspicion in the case, or in other cases involving sexual violence against Russian or third-country national POWs.

81. The Government of Ukraine has also taken several concrete steps enabling the detection, prevention, and response to sexual violence carried out against Ukrainian POWs and civilians. On 3 May 2022, the Government of Ukraine signed an agreement with the

[54] Official facilities included police stations, temporary detention facilities, pre-trial detention facilities, and SBU premises. In two cases, the conflict-related detainee could not identify the facility in which they were detained.

[55] Unofficial and transit locations included basements, vehicles, and private houses.

[56] See OHCHR, *Treatment of Prisoners of War and Update on the Human Rights Situation in Ukraine, 1 June 2024 – 31 August 2024*, 1 October 2024, paras. 66 – 67.

[57] For example, in 2017, the Ministry of Defence issued the order, "On approval of the instruction on the procedure for implementation of the norms of international humanitarian law in the Armed Forces of Ukraine", Order No. 164 of 23 March 2017.

[58] Ministry of Defence, "On Approval of the Procedure for Conducting an Internal Investigation in the Armed Forces of Ukraine", Order No. 608 of 21 November 2017.

[59] See para. 68 supra.

United Nations establishing a Framework of Cooperation on the Prevention and Response to Sexual Violence. The Government subsequently adopted a detailed implementation plan which translates the objectives of the Framework of Cooperation into specific time-bound actions focusing on anti-trafficking measures, the provision of assistance to survivors, access to justice and reparations, and strengthening the capacity of the security and defence sector on preventing and combating sexual violence. Since 2022, a specialized unit in the Office of the Prosecutor General has been investigating sexual violence perpetrated by Russian Federation authorities. In August 2024, the Government of Ukraine ratified the Rome Statute,[60] and in October 2024, amended the Criminal Code of Ukraine to introduce command responsibility and crimes against humanity.[61] In November 2024, the Ukrainian Parliament adopted a law which grants survivors of sexual violence urgent interim reparations, including monetary compensation, support services such as legal aid, psychosocial support, medical aid, and temporary shelter, and official recognition as a survivor of sexual violence.[62] In June 2026, the Government adopted implementing by-laws establishing the application procedure and the amount of monetary compensation.[63]

IV. Recommendations

82. Sexual violence, including rape and all other forms of sexual violence, constitutes a violation of IHL and international human rights law (IHRL).[64] In the context of the full-scale armed attack of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, such violence has been used as a means of torture and ill-treatment, punishment, coercion, humiliation, and intimidation against civilian detainees, civilians living under occupation outside detention, and POWs, with the vast majority of incidents perpetrated by Russian Federation authorities. There is an urgent need for robust preventive measures, accountability mechanisms, and survivor-centered responses.

83. Survivors of sexual violence, including women, men, girls, boys, and persons of diverse sexual orientation and gender identities, continue to face stigma, trauma, and significant barriers to justice, while essential medical, psychosocial, and legal services often remain inaccessible, fragmented, ad hoc, insufficiently tailored to gender and age-specific needs, or under-resourced. In response, survivor networks in Ukraine have organized to provide peer support and to advocate for public recognition, the reduction of stigma, survivor-centred approaches to the delivery of services, and accountability.

84. The following recommendations are made with a view to ensuring compliance with legal obligations, strengthening accountability, preventing further violations, and upholding the rights of survivors to truth, justice, and reparation:

85. **To all parties to the conflict:**

[60] Law of Ukraine "On Ratification of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and Amendments Thereto", No. 3909-IX, 21 August 2024. The Rome Statute entered into force on 1 January 2025.

[61] Law of Ukraine "On Amendments to the Criminal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure of Ukraine in connection with the ratification of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and amendments thereto", No. 4012-IX, 9 October 2024.

[62] The Law covers persons subjected to sexual violence from 20 February 2014 onwards as well as children born as a result of such crimes. Law of Ukraine "On Legal and Social Protection of Persons Affected by Sexual Violence related to the Armed Aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine and Providing them with Urgent Interim Reparations", No. 4067-IX, adopted on 20 November 2024 and entered into force on 18 June 2025.

[63] In May 2026, amendments to the Law of Ukraine on Free Legal Aid entered into force, expanding the list of persons eligible for free legal aid to persons recognized as victims of sexual violence as defined under the law on urgent interim reparations.

[64] Sexual violence may also constitute crimes under international criminal law, including war crimes, crimes against humanity, and acts of genocide if the contextual elements of these crimes are met. See Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, Arts. 7(1)(g), 8(2)(b)(xxii), and 6; ICRC Study on Customary International Humanitarian Law, rule 156 (see listed war crimes).

(a) End the use of all forms of sexual violence in all circumstances, whether employed as a form of torture, ill-treatment, punishment, coercion, intimidation, and/or humiliation;

(b) Implement comprehensive action plans effectively to prevent all forms of sexual violence, including by conducting risk assessments, establishing early warning mechanisms, and implementing oversight and disciplinary frameworks within the armed forces, security forces, as well as law enforcement and penitentiary systems;

(c) Conduct prompt, thorough and impartial investigations into all alleged cases of sexual violence, utilizing a survivor-centered, trauma-informed approach, and ensure that perpetrators, including members of the armed forces, security forces, law enforcement and penitentiary systems, and persons in positions of command, are held to account, commensurate with the seriousness of their conduct;

(d) Ensure that survivors of sexual violence have timely access to effective legal remedies, including access to justice and reparations, such as restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, and satisfaction, including judicial and administrative sanctions against persons liable for the violations, and guarantees of non-repetition, in line with IHRL;

(e) Provide confidential, timely, accessible, holistic, survivor-centered medical, psychological, social and legal services tailored to the specific needs of men, women, boys, girls, persons of diverse sexual orientation and gender identities, and their family members, across age groups, including ongoing support as needed, through a country-wide and consistently implemented system of services.

86. **To the Russian Federation**

(f) Immediately, completely and unconditionally cease the use of force against Ukraine and withdraw all military forces from the territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders, in line with United Nations General Assembly Resolutions ES-11/1 (2022) and ES-11/4 (2022), thereby ending the occupation of Ukrainian territory;

(g) Immediately cease and publicly condemn sexual violence against POWs, civilian detainees and civilians in residential areas of occupied territory;

(h) End all unlawful practices relating to internment and detention, and ensure that POWs and civilian detainees are treated in full compliance with IHL and IHRL;

(i) Identify risk factors for sexual violence within places of deprivation of liberty and ensure effective functioning of procedural safeguards and minimum standards, including access to medical care and increased contact with the outside world;

(j) Provide OHCHR and other relevant organisations with full and regular access to all places where Ukrainian POWs and civilian detainees are held, including the possibility to conduct confidential interviews;

(k) Strengthen cooperation and dialogue with OHCHR, including by providing OHCHR meaningful access to the occupied territory of Ukraine;

(l) Repeal provisions in the Criminal Code exempting persons enlisting in the Russian armed forces and serving Russian military personnel from criminal liability for serious human rights violations, including all forms of sexual violence;

87. To Ukraine

(m) Ensure that POWs are treated in full compliance with IHL and IHRL, in particular by protecting them from torture or ill-treatment, including sexual violence, at the initial stage of captivity, and transfer POWs to official places of internment with minimal delay;

(n) Protect conflict-related civilian detainees from sexual violence at all stages of deprivation of liberty, in full compliance with IHL and IHRL;

(o) Facilitate the participation of survivors in the planning, implementation and evaluation of all public services for survivors to ensure that services are responsive to their specific needs and are delivered effectively, sensitively and appropriately;

(p) Continue efforts to operationalize the Law of Ukraine "On Legal and Social Protection of Persons Affected by Sexual Violence Related to the Armed Aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine and Providing them with Urgent Interim Reparations" by ensuring the allocation of adequate financial, institutional and technical resources to enable its effective implementation, ensuring survivors have timely, accessible and non-discriminatory access to the reparative measures provided under the Law, in consultation with survivors and civil society, while integrating implementation into broader national recovery planning and financing mechanisms

88. To the international community:

(q) Continue to urge the Russian Federation and Ukraine to take all available measures to prevent sexual violence in the current conflict, and to ensure accountability for all acts thereof;

(r) Request access for independent monitors, including OHCHR, to POWs and civilian detainees in the hands of the Russian Federation;

(s) Call for OHCHR and other independent monitors to have the fullest possible access to all areas of Ukraine occupied by the Russian Federation, in order to facilitate comprehensive monitoring; (t) Provide financial, technical and other assistance to actors providing support to victims and survivors of gross human rights violations, including sexual and gender-based violence, with attention to the respective specific needs of women, girls, men and boys;

(s) Provide adequate financial, technical and other assistance to actors, including survivor networks, providing medical, legal, social and psychological services, as well as other types of support, to survivors of sexual violence, with attention to the respective needs of women, girls, men, boys, persons of diverse sexual orientation and gender identities, and their family members;

(s) Provide full support to the Government of Ukraine in its efforts to mobilize funding for urgent interim reparations under the Law of Ukraine "On Legal and Social Protection of Persons Affected by Sexual Violence Related to the Armed Aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine and Providing them with Urgent Interim Reparations".