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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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Stop the militarisation of children – children are victims of war, not soldiers

Written declaration No. 758

This written declaration does not reflect the position of the Assembly; only of those members that have signed it. It will not be considered further by the Assembly.

We, the undersigned, declare the following:

In the 2000s, Russia began the formation of a "military-patriotic" education system. In 2022 the number of members of the paramilitary youth movement Yunarmia exceeded 1 million people. In the Ukrainian territories under Russia's effective control, mandatory "military-patriotic" lessons, military training courses, and meetings with Russian soldiers have been introduced. Victims of militarisation are children aged 4 to 18.

"Military-patriotic" education aims to indoctrinate children to join the Russian army. Russian government-backed armed groups recruit child soldiers. Children are used in propaganda actions. Teachers who oppose the militarisation of education are prosecuted. Disloyal parents are threatened with sending their children to military boarding schools. During the summer season, more than 7 000 children from the temporarily occupied territories passed through militarised camps. Children are involved in the area of the so-called special military operation in Mariupol in full combat gear.

The militarisation of education in the territories under Russia's effective control violating the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Geneva Convention IV.

Therefore, we call on the Council of Europe member States to address emerging challenges resulting from the militarisation of education in the territories under Russia's effective control.

Signed (see overleaf)

Signed[1]*:*

MEZENTSEVA Mariia, Ukraine, EPP/CD
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WIECHEL Markus, Sweden, EC/DA
YASKO Yelyzaveta, Ukraine, EPP/CD

Total = 22

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1. ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EC/DA: European Conservatives Group and Democratic Alliance
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
SOC: Socialists, Democrats and Greens Group