



Doc. 15790

05 June 2023

Call on the International Committee of the Red Cross and the international community to demand that the Russian Federation fully complies with the international humanitarian law concerning the Ukrainian prisoners of war

Written declaration No. 778

We, the undersigned, declare the following:

The Russian war of aggression against Ukraine is absolutely brutal and Russia breaches all imaginable rules of international law. Disrespect towards international humanitarian law, in particular decent treatment of the prisoners of war (PoWs), is another systemic failure of Russian Federation to fulfil its international law obligations.

Russia systemically denies access to the PoWs to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) that has a clear mandate under international law to visit them and to monitor their treatment, and ensure that their rights are protected. The case of 27 military musicians, who never participated in combat, captured during the siege of Mariupol is illustrative of Russian disrespect towards international law – their location and status are not confirmed, there is no data neither on conditions of their detention, nor their state of health. The death of the 23 y.o. military musician from 36th Marine Brigade, whose body was handed over to Ukraine on April, 14 hints towards inhumane treatment of musicians detained by Russia.

We urge the Russian Federation to respect and facilitate the ICRC's access to PoWs. While we appreciate the efforts invested by the ICRC to get access to Ukrainian PoWs, the current negotiating strategy did not bring necessary results. Therefore, we call upon the ICRC to re-consider its confidentiality policy, to mobilize third parties and, eventually, to denounce publicly the facts of international humanitarian law violation by the Russian Federation. There must be objective limits when it becomes apparent that silence does not bring benefits anymore.

Collective efforts shall lead us to identification of all the detention centres and their locations, to access to every PoW and effective monitoring of treatment conditions.

We stand in solidarity with all prisoners of war, their families, and loved ones, and we call on the international community to work towards ensuring that their rights and dignity are fully respected and upheld.

Signed (see overleaf)



Signed¹:

KHOMENKO Olena, Ukraine, EC/DA
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Total = 20

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
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left
NR: Representatives not belonging to a Political Group