
**SEVENTH PERIODIC REPORT OF UKRAINE
ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION
AGAINST TORTURE AND OTHER CRUEL,
INHUMAN OR DEGRADING TREATMENT
OR PUNISHMENT**



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ЩО ПРИНИЖУЄ ГІДНІСТЬ,
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SEVENTH PERIODIC REPORT OF UKRAINE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION AGAINST TORTURE AND OTHER CRUEL, INHUMAN OR DEGRADING TREATMENT OR PUNISHMENT

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ABBREVIATIONS/GLOSSARY

AFU	Armed Forces of Ukraine
ART	Antiretroviral therapy
ATO	Anti-Terrorist Operation
CAP	Code of Administrative Procedure of Ukraine
CC	Criminal Code of Ukraine
CGS	Court Guard Service of Ukraine
CEC	Criminal Executive Code of Ukraine
CP	Criminal proceeding
CPC	Criminal Procedure Code of Ukraine
CPT	European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
Crimea	Autonomous Republic of Crimea and Sevastopol
Donbas	Donetsk and Luhansk regions
ECtHR	European Court of Human Rights
FLA	Free legal aid
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
JFO	Joint Forces Operation
KHPG	Civil organization “Kharkiv Human Rights Protection Group”
MoD	Ministry of Defence of Ukraine
MoIA	Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine
MoJ	Ministry of Justice of Ukraine
MoH	Ministry of Healthcare of Ukraine
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
PG	Prosecutor-General of Ukraine
PI	Penitentiary Institution
PC	Penal Colony
PTDC	Pre-Trial Detention Centre
RONP	Regional Office of National Police
SBGS	State Border Guard Service of Ukraine
SBI	State Investigation Bureau of Ukraine
SCES	State Criminal Enforcement Service of Ukraine
SIHC	State Institution “SCES Health Centre”
SMS	State Migration Service of Ukraine
SCU	Supreme Court of Ukraine
SCJ	Supreme Council of Justice
SPT	United Nations Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
SSU	Security Service of Ukraine
THC	Temporary Holding Centre for Foreign Nationals and Stateless Persons of the SMS
THF	Temporary Holding Facility
TOT	Temporarily Occupied Territory

INTRODUCTION

In the second half of July 2020, the UN Committee against Torture (hereinafter — the Committee) should consider the Seventh Periodic Report of Ukraine on implementation of the provisions of the UN Convention against Torture and Cruel Treatment. We recall that the previous Sixth Periodic Report of Ukraine was considered by the Committee in November 2014 and the periodic reports are provided once in four years.

In early 2017, the Committee provided a list of 42 issues completely covering the problems of torture and ill-treatment to the Government of Ukraine. In November 2018 the Government had prepared a draft of the Seventh Periodic Report. The draft is posted on the website of the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine for discussion and it is available at https://minjust.gov.ua/news/announcement/gromadski-obgovorennya-proektu-periodichnoi-dopovidi-ukraini-pro-vikonannya-polojen-konventsii-oon-proti-katuvan?fbclid=IwAR18NrKG6QsgGcRe_ti02XGCs26mkeWlQwPhwv4rtbLnnfHr0j7TwYjM5Pw.

This draft was prepared ahead of many important amendments in legislation and practice which took place in 2015 — 2018. However, the Kharkiv Human Rights Protection Group (KHPG) has prepared the Shadow Report to the draft report of the Government and offers it to the reader. We hope that it will be useful for the governmental experts. The KHPG continues the tradition of commenting the periodic reports of the Government on implementation of the UN Convention against Torture. In 1997, 2001, 2007 and 2014 the KHPG prepared and published its Shadow Reports to the Third, Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Reports respectively. The Shadow Report of the KHPG represents the answers to almost all 42 issues of the UN Committee against Torture. It covers a variety of issues of the respect of the Convention during November 2014 — August 2019 and it was prepared on the basis of its own information and the information got from the partner organizations and state authorities. The Shadow Report of the KHPG is submitted to the UN Committee against Torture and it aims at comprehensive coverage of the issues of respect of the rights enshrined in the Convention and attraction of the attention of the Committee's experts to the most actual problems in the sphere of their implementation which in our opinion are not reflected or which are incompletely covered in the draft report of the Government of Ukraine.

We admit that during the past five years there have been positive changes and trends in Ukraine. However, we set a goal to present our position regarding the situation with torture and other forms of ill-treatment in the most problematic areas of human rights protection in our country in order to assist the Committee's experts to get the fullest possible understanding of the problems in this area. In particular, our concern is the problems of impunity in the cases of torture, conflict of the prosecution functions which makes it difficult to effectively investigate the cases of torture, routine practice of violation of the rights to liberty and other rights of detainees, practice of mass violence in penal institutions, and the lack of adequate medical care for the persons deprived of liberty.

When preparing the Shadow Report, we used the materials of monitoring of the situation of torture carried out in 2014 — 2019 in all regions of Ukraine by the Coalition of human rights organizations «Against Torture», results of the activity of the KHPG Strategic Litigation Center (SLC), and analysis and observations provided by other Ukrainian NGOs. For more information, please refer to the Kharkiv Human Rights Protection Group at khpg@ukr.net.

The Shadow Report was prepared by the lawyers of the KHPG Gennadiy Tokarev (§§1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 16, 33, 34, 42), Hanna Ovdienko (§§6, 7, 9, 12, 13, 17, 30, 31), Maksym Reviakin (§§8, 14, 19, 35, 39), Ihor Soson-skyi (§§20, 24-3, 40), Tamara Horbachevska (§§14, 29, 32, 36), Tamila Bospala (§§10, 11, 15, 18, 23, 27, 28), Dmytro Mazurok (§§22, 37, 38) and Vasyl Melnichuk (§§20, 24-1, 24-2). General editing was performed by Yevgeniy Zakharov and Gennadiy Tokarev.

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Yevgeniy Zakharov

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS REPORTING CYCLE

Question 1. *With reference to the Committee's previous recommendation to the State party to guarantee that all detained persons are afforded, in law and in practice, all the fundamental legal safeguards against torture and ill-treatment from the very outset of their deprivation of liberty (see CAT/C/UKR/CO/6, para. 9), and in the light of the follow-up information provided by the State party, please provide additional information on whether all persons detained in special institutions and detention centres of the internal affairs agencies and in pretrial detention facilities are entitled to all fundamental legal safeguards, including being informed of and understanding their rights; being informed of the charges against them; having prompt access to a lawyer or legal aid; undergoing a medical examination by an independent doctor; notifying a member of their family or another appropriate person of their own choice of their detention and whereabouts; and having their detention registered.*

ANSWER TO QUESTION No. 1

In its reply to question no. 1, the Government provided information on the legislative and regulatory framework for the fundamental legal safeguards afforded to detainees, which is indeed largely in line with international human rights standards. At the same time, the adoption and implementation in 2012 of the CPC and the appropriate by-laws mentioned by the Government has not fundamentally changed the issues with the observance of the rights of detainees.

In 2014–2015, with the support of the MoIA, a study of the observance of the rights of persons detained by the police was conducted, in accordance with a concept and methodology jointly developed with the Maastricht University, with its field stage involving direct monitoring of the daily work of investigators, law enforcement officers and lawyers in criminal cases in 5 regions of Ukraine, including interviews with these persons as well as with the detainees¹. The study was aimed at determining compliance with legal safeguards in the daily practices of law enforcement and revealed a number of problems when it comes to the actual exercising of each of the procedural rights guaranteed to detainees.

The study yielded the following key takeaways:

- there is no practice of properly registering the outset of detention by the police;
- a significant number of detentions take place without a court order after prolonged periods of time (several days or even months) after the crime was committed, despite the fact that Article 29 of the Constitution of Ukraine and Article 210 CPC allow arrests without a court order only during or immediately after the commission of a crime. The police keep no separate records of arrests on suspicion of murder authorized by courts. One can conclude that the constitutional guarantee against arbitrary detention does not work in Ukraine;
- detainees are not properly informed of their rights during apprehension: only in 1% of monitored cases was information about their rights provided to them at the place of apprehension, in 8% of cases — shortly after it, and in 35% such information was never provided to the detainees at all. In 27% of cases this information was provided during the preparation of a detention protocol, or during interrogation (15%) or notification of suspicion (6%) — that is, a long time after the outset of physical detention. In most cases, the provision of this information was perfunctory; the detainees are often not given the full list of safeguards provided by law or a proper explanation of such safeguards;
- highly widespread are cases when free secondary legal aid centres are not notified of detentions in time;

¹ Human rights behind closed doors. Report on the results of the study “Procedural safeguards for detained persons”, Kyiv — 2015, http://ulaf.org.ua/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/UA_Inside_Police_Custody_in_Ukrainian.pdf, pp. 9–11.

- another widespread practice involves having a “conversation” with a detainee without registering this conversation as interrogation. Law enforcement officers often carry out so-called “operative interrogations” of detainees without registering these actions (drawing up a protocol) and consequently without explaining the procedural nature of such actions to the detainees, or their rights;
- yet another common practice involves conducting the first interrogation without allowing a person to meet with their lawyer first. Thus, lawyers were absent during the initial interrogations in 46% of monitored cases;
- the notification of the right to remain silent is perfunctory and law enforcement officers often try to induce detainees not to exercise it by mentioning it in a manner that makes it likely for a suspect to ignore it. It is evident that law enforcement officers lack understanding of this right as well as respect for it;
- the conditions for confidential meetings between lawyers and their clients are not provided; they are often forced to meet in corridors or at the office of the investigating officer;
- there are no rooms specially equipped for interrogations, with the latter often conducted in the offices of investigating officers. Interrogations are often attended by outsiders, usually in order to pressure the detainees, which is not mentioned in the interrogation protocols;
- questioning a suspect as a witness is also a common practice. Even though the CPC does not allow using this as evidence in court, it still makes it possible for the investigators to obtain the necessary information;
- there are no special mechanisms that would allow detainees belonging to vulnerable groups to exercise additional safeguards;
- there is no effective mechanism that would allow detainees who do not speak Ukrainian to have an interpreter present. Translation must be provided at the discretion and expense of the investigating officers. Detainees are also not guaranteed that an interpreter will be present during meetings with their lawyers;
- there are cases when free legal aid lawyers have been neglectful in their duties, such as failing to arrive on call, failing to meet with their client or holding a very brief meeting, or being present during interrogations for show only.

The study allowed us to draw the following conclusions:

- despite significant positive changes in legislation, it has failed, in part or, in some cases, utterly, to change the practices of law enforcement, whose actions, from apprehension onward, are usually guided by old habits;
- all procedural safeguards that were the subject of the study are enshrined in the law, yet a comprehensive mechanism for exercising them only exists in regard to the provision of legal aid to detainees. As for the mechanisms for exercising the right to translation, medical care or safeguards for vulnerable groups, they have yet to be developed and implemented in legislation;
- there is no uniform mechanism and procedures for official recording of everything that happens to a person after apprehension and in the course of detention;
- there is no practice of holding law enforcement officers responsible for violating the rights of detainees, and this impunity causes further violations during detention.

In regard to one of the most important procedural safeguards — the right to free legal aid (FLA) for those who lack the means to hire a lawyer, in 2016 the Council of Europe Office in Ukraine studied the work of the Ukrainian FLA system. When interviewed during the field stage of the study, FLA lawyers complained that police officers put pressure on detainees prior to the arrival of their lawyer, which takes many forms — from deception and threats to physical abuse (and this is one of the reasons for the delays in informing free legal aid centres of the arrests) — in order to force them to waive their right to FLA by dropping their appointed lawyer. In this case, the detainee is supposed to inform their lawyer during a confidential meeting that they would like to use their own lawyer, even though they don’t have one. This allows the police to deprive the detainee of legal counsel, at least during the initial stage of the proceedings².

² Report on the results of the study “Assessment of the system of free secondary legal aid in Ukraine in light of the standards and best practices of the Council of Europe”, Council of Europe, Kyiv — 2016, <https://rm.coe.int/16806aab13>, pp. 45–46.

In regard to the right to medical care, it is provided by an emergency medical team and only when the detainee's life is in immediate danger or if they are suffering from serious injury. These teams as well as doctors of medical institutions are often neglectful in their duties when examining a detainee to determine whether they can be safely held at their place of detention, with these decisions often made under the influence of law enforcement officers. If a detainee has chronic illnesses and/or requires regular medication, they face problems with obtaining and storing the medicines as well as with taking them according to prescribed schedule. The option of using an independent doctor for the provision of medical care at a person's request provided for by para. 6, part 3, Art. 212 CPC, is only available to VIPs. The positions of those responsible for supervising the conditions of detention, which must be present in every pre-trial investigation institution in accordance with Art. 212 CPC, are perfunctory and do not perform their functions on ensuring the observance of the rights of detainees; in fact, as of 2017, there were no such positions at all in half of these institutions.³

According to the National Police of Ukraine, the number of arrests made on suspicion of murder (Art. 208 CPC) is declining; specifically, in 2016 compared to 2013, the number of the arrests decreased by more than 30%. However, the main reason for this is that law enforcement officers simply do not register all cases of arrests.⁴

As for the right to notify a family member or other person of one's detention and whereabouts, according to the study, in 52 rayon police departments in 7 regions of Ukraine, almost 90% of them had no information that the detainees had been given the opportunity to notify close relatives, family members or other persons of their detention and whereabouts, and in 11.9% of cases, law enforcement officers performed such notifications themselves.⁵

Question 3. *Please indicate whether, as previously recommended by the Committee (para. 9), the State party has established a single national register of detention, including all temporary detention facilities, that includes the exact time, date and place of detention from the very outset of deprivation of liberty and not from the time of the writing of the protocol of detention, as well as information regarding transfers. Please also provide information on steps taken to ensure the accuracy of the information included in the detention register, and indicate if any official was disciplined or prosecuted during the reporting period for falsifying information in a detention protocol or detention register.*

Question 4. *Please indicate whether the information concerning the identity and location of all persons detained in the context of the "anti-terrorist operations" in the country's east is available in a detention register that is accessible to the family members and lawyers of those detained.*

Question 16. *With reference to the Committee's previous concluding observations (para. 12), expressing concern about the continued use of administrative detention, please provide information on any measures taken by the State party to reduce the period during which persons suspected of terrorism can be held in preventive detention from the current allowance of 30 days and to permit administrative detainees the right to appeal against their deprivation of liberty.*

ANSWER TO QUESTIONS Nos. 3, 4, 16

In response to these questions, the Government provided information on the implementation of the information system entitled Custody Records (para. 12 of the Report), which is currently a subsystem integrated into criminal records but not a national register of detentions that can provide up-to-date information about the detention of any person from the moment of apprehension. For one, information is only entered in this system once a person is admitted to a THF, while detention may last from several hours to several days (in case of delays in detention registration) up to that point. Secondly, the system is used so far only by 4 THFs, with plans to extend it to another four, but all this is being done as a pilot project.

³ Analytical report on the results of the study "Assessment of the efficiency of the institute of officials responsible for monitoring conditions of detainees as a mechanism for preventing misconduct in police work", Council of Europe – 2017 <http://ecpl.com.ua/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Sluzhbovi-osoby-vidpovidalni-za-zatrymanyach-1.pdf>, p. 44.

⁴ Ibid, p. 16.

⁵ Ibid, p. 51.

Information from the system installed at the THFs is not used as grounds for launching criminal investigations. The Human Rights Department of the National Police is not using it as a tool for monitoring the observance of detainees' rights. A new legislative act (Manual on the Use of THF Custody Records) has not been developed, and without it implementing the system in all of Ukraine's THFs is impossible. The funding for the acquisition of equipment necessary for the system's operation, which was provided by donors during the pilot project, now has to come from regional police departments, and this process has hit a wall. Also, the idea to extend the system to rayon police departments, allowing the officials responsible for monitoring conditions of detention there to make use of the system as well, remains a very distant prospect.

Indeed, the system allows entering information on the actual time and place of apprehension and the law enforcement officers that carried out the actual detaining (apprehension) of a person, but detention protocols, which are usually written by the investigating officer, name the investigating officer's office as the place of apprehension, the time of the detention protocol's preparation as the time of apprehension, and the investigating officer as the arresting officer. Thus, Art. 209 CPC, according to which a person is considered detained when he or she, by force or obeying an order, is forced to remain by the side of an authorized official or in a room indicated by the latter, is essentially ineffectual.

The system is supposed to monitor the observance of the rights of detainees, to prevent torture and other kinds of physical and psychological violence against detainees, to ensure prompt responses to such incidents, including by receiving and registering complaints of detainees and by automatically forwarding them to the bodies responsible for ensuring the observance of the rights of detainees, as well as to provide further action following such complaints. The idea was to place CCTV cameras in virtually every room, thus drastically reducing the number of violations of the rights of detainees, including through physical violence at the hands of law enforcement officers. In practice, however, many cameras quickly stopped working or turned out to be defective from the start.

As for the reference to the adoption by the MoJ of the Procedure for the Establishment and Maintenance of the Single Register of Convicted and Detained Persons (para. 13 of the Report), this system has no relation to a National Register of Detentions, as it only concerns registration/records of those regarding whom a decision on their detention for the duration of criminal proceedings has been adopted, or those already sentenced by courts, as well as those on probation. Moreover, even this register is still not openly accessible, while the subsystem of online services on medical care for convicts and detainees is scheduled for launch on January 1, 2021.

In para. 16 of the Report, the Government states that no official faced criminal or even disciplinary liability for the falsification of detention protocols over the reporting period. In light of systematic violations of the rights of detainees, including through entry of inaccurate information on the time and place of actual detention as well as on the arresting officer, the obvious conclusion here is that the State party is making no effort to address violations of human rights committed by the police in the course of detentions.

Question 2. *Please provide additional information on efforts by the General Prosecutor's Office to monitor effectively the provision of safeguards to persons held in the temporary detention facilities maintained by the Security Service of Ukraine, as described in the State party's follow-up report (para. 10). Please provide data on the number of complaints received concerning the failure by law enforcement or penitentiary officers to provide such safeguards to persons in detention. Please provide data on any cases during the reporting period in which personnel of the Security Service or State Penitentiary Service of Ukraine were found to have failed to afford the above-mentioned fundamental safeguards to a person in their custody, and indicate the remedial action taken in any such case.*

Question 5. *Please indicate whether the State party has taken steps to ensure that all persons held in administrative detention, including those detained in the context of the "anti-terrorist operations", are entitled to the above-mentioned safeguards, including the right to free legal aid, promptly following their deprivation of liberty and throughout the period of their detention. Please also provide information on the measures taken by the State party in response to allegations, including those identified in the reports of the Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCR), that officers of the Security Service of Ukraine have deprived persons of their liberty and held them in unacknowledged places of detention and in incommunicado detention, including at the Security Service facility in Kharkiv. Please indicate if any member of the Security Service has been investigated, disciplined or prosecuted for maintaining unofficial places of detention, and the outcomes. Please also describe any progress made in investigations concerning the*

following individuals who were allegedly held in secret detention at the Kharkiv facility during 2016: Vladimir Alekseevich Bezobrazov; Vyctor Olekeevych Ashkhin (released on 25 July 2016 and previously subjected to torture by Security Service officers at a facility in Kramatorsk); and Mykola Mykolaevych Vakaruk (released on 25 July 2016 and previously subjected to torture by Security Service officers at a facility in Chervonoarmyisk/Pokrovsk).

ANSWER TO QUESTIONS Nos. 2, 5

According to the Government, in the course of the ATO, instead of preventive detentions provided for by Art. 15-1 of the Law of Ukraine “On Combating Terrorism”, criminal procedure detentions, which allow for a number of procedural rights for detainees, were used.

In this regard, it should be noted that, firstly, only the SSU has this information while, according to the National Police, “the National Police of Ukraine does not keep separate records of aggregate data and does not produce statistical data on the basis of such data”. Secondly, the existence of procedural safeguards alone is no guarantee against violations of the rights of detainees (see comment to question no. 1). Such types of violations as unlawful detention, delayed registration of detention, detention under a false pretext or administrative detention for the purpose of having a person on hand for criminal proceedings, which we had brought up in our commentary to Ukraine’s sixth periodic report, are still being committed.

Between 2014 and 2019, the ECtHR delivered a number of judgements in cases against Ukraine, finding violations of Art. 5 ECHR in the following cases: *Anatoliy Rudenko v. Ukraine*, *Belousov v. Ukraine*, *Voykin and others v. Ukraine*, *Korniychuk v. Ukraine*, *Kotiy v. Ukraine*, *Kushnir v. Ukraine*, *Livada v. Ukraine*, *Malyk v. Ukraine*, *Semenenko v. Ukraine*, *Temchenko v. Ukraine*, *Makarenko v. Ukraine*, *Beley v. Ukraine*.

In its judgement in the case *Belousov v. Ukraine* (no. 4494/07, 7/11/2013), the ECtHR found a violation of Art. 5 ECHR due to the delay between the registration of detention and the moment of apprehension, this delay being 24 hours. In the judgement, the ECtHR stated that the absence of a record on detention should in itself be considered a serious violation, as the Court’s established case law considers unrecognised detention a breach of the fundamental safeguards provided for in Art. 5 of the Convention and a serious violation of this provision⁶.

In the case *Makarenko v. Ukraine* (no. 622/11, 30/01/2018), the Court found a violation of Art. 5 ECHR, as the applicant had been deprived of liberty for 3 hours and 20 minutes without any required procedural documents⁷.

In the case *Livada v. Ukraine* (no. 21262/06, 26/06/2014), the Court once again found a violation of Art. 5 ECHR due to administrative detention of the applicant in order to make him available for further criminal proceedings against the applicant. In the judgement, the ECtHR stated that the application of administrative detention to make a person available for further criminal proceedings constitutes arbitrary detention⁸.

In the case *Semenenko v. Ukraine* (no. 52819/08, 20/10/2016), the Court also found a violation of Art. 5 ECHR due to administrative detention of the applicant for questioning within the framework of a criminal investigation and for subsequent notification of suspicion.

Detaining a person suspected of committing a crime without registering such detention, detaining a person under a false pretext for the purpose of making a person available for criminal proceedings have become business as usual during the ATO for the SSU and other law enforcement agencies. If we consider detention-related cases that people are contacting us with for legal aid, every single one of them involves unlawful detentions or abductions accompanied by violations of all procedural rights of the detainees prior to official registration of detention, as well as torture.

In its Report and official responses to inquiries, the Government denies the existence of unofficial detention facilities as well as the use of unlawful detention and torture against detainees; the SSU, in its turn, replied to our inquiry that no representative of the SSU had thus far faced disciplinary action or had been charged with unlawful detention of persons in unofficial detention facilities.

International organizations in their reports have repeatedly brought up the existence of these unlawful detention facilities and the systematic violations of law taking place there.

⁶ <https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng#%7B%22itemid%22:%5B%22001-127813%22%5D%7D>

⁷ <https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng#%7B%22itemid%22:%5B%22001-180496%22%5D%7D>

⁸ <https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng#%7B%22itemid%22:%5B%22001-145012%22%5D%7D>

The information about SSU's secret prisons first appeared in the UN "Report on the human rights situation in Ukraine, 16 November 2015 – 15 February 2016"⁹. This information later also appeared in numerous OHCHR reports.

On May 26, 2016, SPT's delegation had to suspend its visit to Ukraine after the SSU refused to give them access to places which the UN suspected to hold SSU's detainees¹⁰.

On June 3, 2016, the British Times and UN Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights Ivan Šimonović reported that the SSU had been detaining people in large numbers and systematically torturing them¹¹. Information on unlawful detentions, torture and placement of people in unofficial detention facilities practised by the SSU was supplemented by another UN report¹².

On July 29, 2016, Kostiantyn Bezkorovaynyi, Kostiantynivka City Council member, Donetsk Region, spoke about torture and beatings taking place in "SSU's secret prisons"¹³.

On March 15, 2018, journalists of the Hromadske media outlet published the results of their investigation of "SSU's secret prisons", which revealed signs of life and recent renovations at the SSU detention centre in Kharkiv, which had not been operational since the Soviet era¹⁴.

Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International also made several reports about unlawful detentions in SSU's secret prisons.¹⁵

In regard to the unlawful detention of V. Bezobrazov, V. Ashykhmin and M. Vakaruk at the SSU Kharkiv department during 2016, there is no information on whether criminal proceedings against them have been opened or about their results, since PG does not consider this information public.

Systematic violations of the detention procedure and denial of such violations by the Government inevitably lead to impunity among those responsible for violating legal safeguards, first and foremost of the right to free legal aid.

Question 6. *Please provide updated information on the status of the draft law "on prevention of disappearance of people and facilitation in tracing missing persons", and indicate whether the State party has established a dedicated, independent entity responsible for tracing missing persons.*

ANSWER TO QUESTION No. 6

The draft law of Ukraine "On Prevention of Disappearance of People and Facilitation in Tracing Missing Persons" was not adopted by the Ukrainian Parliament. Instead, on July 12, 2018, the Parliament passed an alternative draft law "On the Legal Status of Missing Persons"¹⁶. This law provides for a number of rights for missing persons and their families, the legal consequences of the status of missing person, the search procedure, etc.

Article 10 of the Law provides for the establishment of a special body tasked with tracing missing persons. The body is known as "Commission on Persons Gone Missing under Special Circumstances" (hereinafter – "Commission"). It is a full-time advisory unit of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine (CMU). In accordance with the adopted law, the Commission was to be established by November 2018. However, this still has not been done.

⁹ https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/UA/Ukraine_13th_HRMMU_Report_3March2016_ru.pdf

¹⁰ <https://news.un.org/en/story/2016/05/530272-citing-obstruction-un-torture-prevention-panel-suspends-ukraine-visit#.V8OW-CgrKUI>

¹¹ <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/world/kyiv-allows-torture-and-runs-secret-jails-says-un-vwlcprsjn>

¹² https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/UA/Ukraine_14th_HRMMU_Report_RUSSIAN.pdf

¹³ <https://korrespondent.net/ukraine/3724312-deputat-rasskazal-o-15-mesiatsakh-v-plenu-sbu>

¹⁴ <https://hromadske.ua/posts/hromadske-ziasuvalo-chy-isnuvaly-taiemni-tiurmy-sbu>

¹⁵ <https://www.hrw.org/ru/news/2016/08/28/293434>,

https://amnesty.org.ru/pdf/Ukraine-report_RUS.pdf,

<https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/POL1067002018UKRAINIAN.PDF>,

<https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/POL1067002018ENGLISH.PDF>

¹⁶ <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2505-19>

It is only on April 10, 2019 (with a delay of at least five months) that the CMU, with its Order no. 248-r¹⁷, approved the Commission's composition. However, as of June 2019, the Commission did not begin its work. So far, records on missing persons have been maintained by the Search Department of the MoD's Office of Civil-Military Cooperation. According to available information, this body's records of missing persons are incomplete and inaccurate and contain numerous errors. The International Committee of the Red Cross has its own records, but the state authorities have not established cooperation with them in this regard.

It should be noted that the law adopted by the Parliament contains only general provisions on the Commission's goals, tasks and principles, failing to detail its day-to-day activities and the actual mechanisms for tracing missing persons. This was supposed to be done in one of the CMU's by-laws (namely, the Regulations on the Commission, as provided for in Article 10 of the Law). However, as of June 2019, these Regulations were not adopted and were not even at the stage of consideration by the CMU. Moreover, the adopted law does not even specify the Commission's powers, making the body's authority unclear, and this shortcoming cannot be corrected with a by-law.

The Law also provides for the creation of special search teams to conduct "humanitarian searches" yet fails to specify how the information obtained by these teams is to be used by law enforcement and courts in criminal investigations into people's disappearance/death¹⁸.

Ukrainian courts granted the missing person status: in 2014 – in 1,318 cases, in 2015 – in 1,500 cases, in 2016 – in 1,508 cases, in 2017 – in 1,618 cases, in 2018 – in 1,806 cases¹⁹. The State Judicial Administration of Ukraine has no separate statistics on persons gone missing in the TOT, even though such information could shed light on the magnitude of the problem and the number of potential victims of crimes.

Question 7. *Please indicate whether the State party has taken steps to ensure that the identities and whereabouts of all persons eligible for prisoner exchanges with armed groups is shared with the Parliamentary Commissioner for Human Rights and that the process is subject to judicial oversight.*

ANSWER TO QUESTION No. 7

Replying to our inquiry, the Commissioner said that she is not involved in the process of identification, verification and location of captives (other than the persons captured in the Azov Sea on November 25, 2018).²⁰

The Commissioner only takes part in the transfer of convicts from the TOT to other regions of Ukraine. In particular, with the MoJ and SCES largely remaining idle (even though they are required by law to protect the rights of prisoners), the Commissioner negotiates with terrorist groups on behalf of Ukraine to arrange exchanges of convicts. The Commissioner's Secretariat also keeps lists of those who wish to be transferred to the Government-controlled territory. There are currently over 800 names on these lists.

Since December 2015 until September 2019, 223 prisoners have been transferred from Donetsk Region and 135 prisoners from the temporarily occupied settlements of Luhansk Region with the Commissioner's support. However, there is a number of negative aspects in the transfer process²¹.

In particular, there is still no single register of persons that were in the TOT when the ATO began (April 7, 2014). Thus, it is unknown how many people remain imprisoned under the control of illegal armed groups and how many of them have already been released after serving their sentence. According to the MoJ, as of January 1, 2017, 17,495 detained and convicted persons were held in 12 PIs and 17 PTDCs located in the TOT. Of these, 1,947 persons were at the stage of pre-trial investigation and 8,312 persons were at the trial stage (before sentencing)²². However, it is a list of names of those remaining in the TOT, not statistics, that is required for identification and verification of convicts.

Secondly, the identification and verification of convicts remaining in the custody of illegal armed groups began almost a year after the occupation of the respective settlements. Prisoner transfers and negotiations

¹⁷ <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/248-2019-%D1%80>

¹⁸ <https://helsinki.org.ua/articles/pravozahysna-hrupa-sich-analiz-zakonu-pro-pravovyj-status-znyklyh-bezvisty/>

¹⁹ Reply of the State Judicial Administration of Ukraine to KHPG's inquiry

²⁰ Reply of the Parliamentary Commissioner for Human Rights to KHPG's inquiry

²¹ <http://www.univ.kiev.ua/content/upload/2019/-697223196.pdf>

²² <http://khpg.org/files/docs/1539109440.pdf>

regarding them only began in December 2015. It should also be noted that the prisoners were left under the control of illegal armed groups due to MoJ's inaction. Since the conflict in eastern Ukraine began in April 2014 and the active shelling of settlements started in June 2014, public authorities should have realized the danger and should have evacuated the convicts in time. This option had been open until November 2014, and in some cases until February 2015, yet it was never taken. The availability of this course of action is also indicated by the fact that convicts from one PI (Chervonopartyzanska PI no. 68) were successfully transferred from the TOT.

At present, it is only possible to transfer convicts in small groups (20-50 people). Given their total numbers (about 16,000) and the delays in the evacuation process (transfers are carried out every two to three months on average), at the present rate it would take about 10 years to transfer all the convicts. In addition, such transfers are only available to those convicts that were put on the Commissioner's lists of persons wishing to serve their sentence in the Government-controlled territory. They make up only 5.6% of the total number, even though the numbers of those interested are much greater (about 70% according to our information).

Due to the absence of mail communications between the Government-controlled territory of Ukraine and the TOT, not everyone is able to mail a request to the Commissioner to be put on the lists. Since January 2018, the TOT has also been experiencing problems with telephone communications due to damage sustained by the lines of local operators²³. Moreover, members of illegal armed groups in many PIs do not allow phone calls for convicts. In light of this, we can conclude that the majority of those wishing to be transferred to the Government-controlled territory are not on the Commissioner's lists and thus are not taken into account during negotiations. At the same time, the SSU does not take part in the transfers or exchanges of convicts from the TOT on the grounds that these persons are not hostages.

Until 2018, prisoner transfers had only been possible from the territory controlled by the "DPR", with negotiations on transfers from the "LPR"-controlled territory remaining unsuccessful. The situation has changed since then. Recently, three transfers from the "LPR"-controlled territory have taken place, while evacuation of convicts from the uncontrolled areas of Donetsk Region has been paused for almost a year.

The absence of judicial oversight over the identification and transfer of convicts from the TOT to other regions of Ukraine should also be noted. As per Art. 1 of the Law of Ukraine "On the Administration of Justice and Criminal Proceedings in Connection with the Anti-Terrorist Operation"²⁴, the work of all courts in the TOT was suspended. Moreover, as of November 7, 2014, the State Enterprise "Ukrposhta" (Ukrainian Post) stopped delivering correspondence to and from the TOT²⁵. As a result, convicts are unable to request the courts to confirm that they remain in the TOT, or to obtain other procedural documents, and neither can they submit an application with the courts online. Although in December 2017 amendments to the procedure Codes made it possible to communicate with courts via the internet, convicts are unable to take advantage of this, at the very least due to the inability to get a digital signature.

On July 5, 2018, draft law no. 8560 "On Regulation of the Legal Status of Persons Against Whom Criminal, Criminal Procedure and Criminal Executive Legislation of Ukraine Has Been Initiated as a Result of Armed Aggression, Armed Conflict or Temporary Occupation of Ukrainian Territory" was registered in the Parliament. The draft law is aimed at restoring the constitutional rights, freedoms and legitimate interests of convicts serving their sentence in the TOT, but so far it has not even been put on the Parliament's agenda. It is currently being examined by an appropriate Parliamentary Committee, but the Committee has not reached any conclusion yet. The latest developments regarding this bill took place on December 4, 2018²⁶. Now it would have to be examined all over again by the new Parliament.

Question 8. *With reference to the Committee's previous concluding observations (para. 10) expressing concern about the status of investigations into allegations of excessive use of force during popular protests at the Maidan in Kyiv from December 2013 to February 2014 and in Odessa and Mariupol in May 2014, and in the light of the follow-up information provided by the State party, please provide information on:*

a) Whether the investigations into the unlawful use of physical violence by law enforcement agencies and mass shootings in Kyiv have resulted in any criminal convictions and, if so, details on the resulting sen-

²³ https://censor.net.ua/ua/news/3043834/na_okupovaniyi_chastyni_donbasu_propav_mobilnyi_zvyazok_vodafone

²⁴ <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/1632-18>

²⁵ <https://ukrposhta.ua/robova-ukrposhti-v-doneckij-ta-luganskij-oblastyax/>

²⁶ http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=64360

- tences and verdicts. Please also provide specific information on the six proceedings on which courts had already reached decisions, as referenced in paragraph 87 of the State party's follow-up report;
- b) Specific information about the outcome of the criminal trial of "Berkut" police officers Serhiy Zinchenko and Pavlo Abroskin, accused of killing protesters on 20 February 2014, and information as to whether any other of the indicted members of the "Berkut" regiment have been apprehended and tried;
 - c) Specific information concerning progress in the trial of Oleksandr Yakimenko, former head of the Security Service of Ukraine, and his deputy, on charges of abuse of power, including with respect to the operation involving arson of the Federation of Trade Unions of Ukraine building, which resulted in the deaths of 17 people;
 - d) Whether the investigation into violence on 2 May 2014 in Odessa, which resulted in the deaths of 48 people (criminal case No. 12014160500003700 before the Malynovsky District Court) has resulted in any criminal convictions and, if so, details on the resulting sentences and verdicts; the status of the investigation into the House of Trade Unions fire and the failure of the fire brigade to respond; the investigation into the failure of the police to ensure public safety; and the outcome of the six criminal proceedings against 26 persons relating to events in Odessa referenced in the State party's follow-up report;
 - e) Information on measures taken by the State party to ensure the safety of judges and participants involved in all of the judicial proceedings related to the events in Odessa so as to ensure the effective and independent administration of justice, in the light of reports that the judges and accused in certain proceedings have been subjected to aggressive behaviour by activists and inadequately protected by police; (f) Whether the investigation into the events on 9 May 2014 in Mariupol (criminal case No. 222001050000000047) has resulted in any criminal convictions and, if so, details on the resulting sentences and verdicts.

ANSWER TO QUESTION No. 8

1) Investigation of the events that took place during the mass protests at the Maidan Nezalezhnosti Square in Kyiv between December 2013 and February 2014.

In its Report, the Government provides statistics on the number of notices of suspicion served, indictments sent to trial by the prosecutor's office as well as the number of convictions in connection with the crimes committed during the mass protests at the Maidan. These statistics are incapable of demonstrating the objective state of investigation of the highest-profile cases related to the protests, or the serious shortcomings of these investigations.

On December 8, 2014, the Department (renamed Office since June 2018) of Special Investigations (SIO) was established within the PG's office to investigate crimes committed during the Maidan protests.

The SIO will lose its investigative authority on November 20, 2019²⁷, and by February 20, 2020, all case files on Maidan events will be given to the SBI. The investigation of cases that are at the stage of pre-trial investigation will essentially start from scratch²⁸.

The first killings at the Maidan that took place on January 22, 2014 — of Nigoyan, Zhyznevskiyi and Senyk — are still not solved, and the PG has no suspects in this case²⁹.

On February 19, 2019, the SIO head announced that 48 sentences had been delivered in the Maidan cases. However, only nine of these sentences were for actual imprisonment³⁰. Cases involving beatings of a large number of victims have had no convictions or even a finished pre-trial investigation³¹.

On February 1, 2019, Ukraine's PG Yuriy Lutsenko announced the completion of the pre-trial investigation against those who ordered the Maidan shootings, adding that he was expecting the Parliament to make an important decision that would allow for the case to be taken to trial³². On February 20, 2019, the

²⁷ Para. 3, part 1, Section X and part 1, Section XI of the CPC.

²⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/dbr.gov.ua/posts/1159586844196954>,
https://dt.ua/UKRAINE/yakscho-gpu-peredast-dbr-spravi-maydanu-to-yih-rozsliduvannya-bude-zablokovano-truba-301023_.html

²⁹ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/rus/news/2018/11/21/7198868/>

³⁰ https://zn.ua/UKRAINE/sudy-vynesli-pochti-50-prigovorov-po-delam-maydana-gpu-309428_.html

³¹ <https://www.rbc.ua/rus/news/prigovory-nebolshih-delah-maydana-vlyayutsya-1550565717.html>

³² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ags83drSj8&t=31s>

SIO head refuted the PG's statement³³; he also made numerous statements regarding the inefficiency of the investigation and attempts of obstruction, including by the police and the government³⁴.

Over 30 persons charged with Maidan-related crimes still work in law enforcement³⁵. The constant postponements and delays of Maidan trials are torture to the relatives of the dead and the injured. 17 parents of the Maidan victims have died over the past 5 years³⁶.

In Ukraine, it is impossible to prosecute for crimes committed by protesters against law enforcement officers due to a law that requires all criminal proceedings against the protesters suspected of committing certain crimes, particularly murder or attempted murder of police officers, to be closed and the information about them destroyed³⁷. Due to this law, certain Maidan activists and "third parties" have evaded prosecution. Thus, on April 3, 2018, one of the Maidan protesters was arrested on charges of intentional murder of two police officers on February 20, 2014³⁸. In a documentary of the Babylon 13 studio released on May 14, 2016³⁹, the suspect admits to killing two police officers with gunshots to the head in the morning of February 20 from the building of the Conservatory at the Maidan. His first arrest drew harsh condemnation from high officials, namely Parliament members, for violating the 2014 law⁴⁰, which freed protesters from prosecution for certain crimes committed during the Maidan protests. At least three MPs, including Volodymyr Parasyuk (a prominent figure during the Maidan protests, who, according to the suspect, was with him at the Conservatory building at the time), accused the Prosecutor of targeting "patriots" instead of investigating the killings of protesters⁴¹. On the same day, the PG made a statement that the acts for which the suspect was charged were incorrectly classified, and replaced the head of the prosecution team in this case with his deputy, who immediately dropped the charge of intentional murder⁴².

2) The trial of six former Berkut officers (Sergiy Zinchenko, Oleksandr Abroskin and others) accused of killing protesters on February 20, 2014.

In its Report, the Government mentions a large number of victims and witnesses questioned in court, yet the "Georgian snipers", who admitted to being involved in the Maidan killings, were never questioned⁴³. On December 19, 2017, the court granted the motion to question the "Georgian snipers" via videoconferencing⁴⁴, but this has not been done to this day. On April 18, 2019, the Svyatoshynskiyi Court, as part of the criminal case against the Berkut officers and contrary to its earlier decision, refused, without giving any explanations, to question the "Georgian snipers", who are potentially important witnesses in the Maidan shootings case⁴⁵.

³³ <https://nv.ua/ukraine/events/resheniy-ne-prinyato-gorbatyuk-o-zavershenii-sledstviya-po-chinovnikam-podozrevaemym-v-organizacii-rasstrelov-na-maydane-50007148.html>

³⁴ https://lb.ua/news/2017/05/28/367549_gorbatyuk_obvinil_matiosa.html,
<https://zn.ua/UKRAINE/gorbatyuk-o-rassledovanii-del-maydana-problemy-sozdavalis-na-vysshem-urovne-314970.html>,
https://censor.net.ua/news/3122438/prezident_vspomnil_o_problemah_v_rassledovanii_prestupleniyi_na_mayidane_tolko_v_period_predvybornoyi,

<https://news.liga.net/politics/news/podozrevaemye-esche-rabotayut-gpu-zayavila-o-sabotaje-del-maydana>, <https://strana.ua/articles/interview/107326-serhej-horbatjuk-rasskazal-o-svoej-otstavke-i-tsarjakh-vo-hlave-silovykh-struktur-ukrainy.html>

³⁵ <https://comments.ua/politics/641880-bolee-30-figurantov-del-maydana-sih.html>

³⁶ <https://gordonua.com/news/politics/syn-geroya-nebesnoy-sotni-za-pyat-let-umerli-17-roditeley-pogibshih-maydan-ovcev-ne-dozhdalis-spravedlivosti-753232.html>

³⁷ Law of Ukraine "On Preventing Prosecution and Punishment of Persons in Connection with Events that Occurred During Peaceful Demonstrations, and On Invalidating Certain Laws of Ukraine"

³⁸ https://www.gp.gov.ua/ua/news.html?_m=publications&t=rec&id=227036&fp=50

³⁹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9b6BiN7Eo3s&t=3s>

⁴⁰ Law of Ukraine "On Preventing Prosecution and Punishment of Persons in Connection with Events that Occurred During Peaceful Demonstrations, and On Invalidating Certain Laws of Ukraine".

⁴¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eWP33VrFCZY>

⁴² <https://gordonua.com/news/politics/lucenko-schitayu-nepravilnoy-kvalifikaciyu-deystviy-uchastnika-revolyucii-dostoinstva-bubenchika-239894.html>

⁴³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l7fLPPqVfqM>

⁴⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nvj16r9mmhM>

⁴⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qMB4PLQUAAU>

On January 10, 2017, members of the right-wing organization S-14 disrupted a hearing in the Berkut officers' case. Nothing is known about any investigation into this incident and no one has been brought to account for it so far⁴⁶. On September 14, 2018, an assault was made on a judge in the Maidan shootings case. The judge was hospitalized. The judge attributes the attack to his professional activities⁴⁷.

On October 31, 2018, the SBI arrested a MoIA sniper on suspicion of murder of Maidan activist Oleksandr Khrapchenko. On November 3, 2018, the Pecherskyi District Court of Kyiv authorized a 60 day detention for him⁴⁸. On December 12, 2018, his case was separated from the cases of the five Berkut officers to avoid another pre-trial investigation. Nevertheless, the investigation is still ongoing due to a large number of required investigative actions.

Two Berkut officers were arrested on April 3, 2014⁴⁹; three others were arrested on February 20, February 23⁵⁰, and June 26⁵¹, 2015 respectively, with four of the five officers remaining in custody since then and one officer being kept under 24 hour house arrest after the court changed the restraining measure for him on July 16, 2019⁵². This is cause for concern for the detainees' rights, as they have remained in custody from four to five years without the possibility of bail.

On February 22, 2019, the court refused to sequester the land where the Dignity Revolution Museum⁵³ was to be built. In May 2019, the Museum's construction began at the Institutska Street⁵⁴, which could impede reconstructions of events, which are regularly conducted there, due to the construction covering the crime scenes.

3) Investigation of the May 2, 2014 events in Odesa.

In its Report, the Government described the investigation of the May 2, 2014 events in Odesa in 4 paragraphs (paras. 37-40), only providing general statistics on the results of the investigations.

The investigation of the events of May 2, 2014 in Odesa focused on three aspects: riots in the city centre, during which six men were shot dead; riots at the Kulykove Pole Square followed by a fire at the Trade Unions House, which claimed the lives of 42 people; as well as negligence of the police and the State Emergency Service.

4) Investigation into the city centre riots that killed six men.

Of those who took part in the riots, 29 persons were charged, with 28 of them being anti-Maidan supporters as well as one Euromaidan supporter. The latter is the only person charged with murder committed on May 2, 2014 (the murder of Yevgen Losynskyi). The investigation into the death of 5 other men – Andriy Biryukov, Oleksandr Zhulkov, Igor Ivanov, Hennadiy Petrov and Mykola Yavorskyi – is still ongoing and has named no suspects so far.

Criminal investigation of the murder of Yevgen Losynskyi

On May 18, 2014, the police arrested a Euromaidan supporter suspected of killing Yevgen Losynskyi, an anti-Maidan supporter, as well as of attempted murder of a police officer in the city centre. On May 20, 2014, the court, in the presence of multiple Euromaidan supporters who were demanding that the court release the suspect, ordered house arrest as the suspect's restraining measure⁵⁵. In November 2014, the house arrest's maximum duration expired and now the suspect is free of any restraining measure.

⁴⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=79omJrOz2uk>

⁴⁷ <http://rsu.gov.ua/ua/news/do-uvagi-gromadskosti-ta-zmi-zdijsneno-napad-na-suddu-akij-sluhae-spravu-pro-vbivstvovudej-na-majdani>

⁴⁸ <https://gordonua.com/news/localnews/gorbatyuk-podtverdil-chto-podozrevaemogo-v-ubiystvah-na-maydane-snaypera-arestovali-3-noyabrya-507677.html>

⁴⁹ <http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/54849886>, <http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/53126587>

⁵⁰ <https://www.facebook.com/arsen.avakov.1/posts/790773834346058>

⁵¹ <http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/45973462>

⁵² https://zik.ua/ru/news/2019/07/16/berkutovtsa_tamtura_otpustyly_yz_zala_suda_na_kruglosutochniy_domashnny_1607283

⁵³ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=St_UTOUoNHg

⁵⁴ <https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-kyiv/2698951-u-kievi-pocali-zvoditi-memorial-geroiv-nebesnoi-sotni.html>

⁵⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aePVsT10Mnc>

In April 2015, an indictment was sent to the Primorskyi District Court of Odesa. Between June and March 2016, three district courts of Odesa — Malynovskiy⁵⁶, Suvorovskiy⁵⁷ and Kyivskiy⁵⁸ — refused to consider this case, justifying it with the lack of judges, the participation of their judges in the pre-trial stage, and fears of potential disturbances by radicals that support the defendant.

On May 31, 2016, the Kyivskiy District Court of Odesa ruled to return the indictment to the prosecutor on the grounds that it was not in line with CPC requirements⁵⁹. After the indictment had been once again sent to this court on November 14, 2016⁶⁰, the court again decided to return the indictment on January 5, 2017, citing vague legal classification⁶¹.

In July 2018, the indictment was sent to the Primorskyi District Court of Odesa, but due to the insufficient number of judges for a panel (earlier all judges had participated in the case as investigative judges), the case was once again referred to the Malynovskiy District Court of Odesa⁶².

As of August 1, 2019, examination of the case on its merits still did not begin.

The defendant's radical supporters, including the now former MP Igor Mosiychuk, pressured the court by disrupting court hearings⁶³ and forcing judges withdraw from the case⁶⁴.

Investigation into the murders of five men in the city centre

The police have failed to find the murderers of Andriy Biryukov, Oleksandr Zhulkov, Igor Ivanov, Henadiy Petrov and Mykola Yavorskyi.

According to the Council of Europe's International Advisory Panel, the difficulties with finding those responsible for these killings are due to the lack of accurate information on how exactly some of the victims received fatal wounds (only the deaths of three of them were properly documented in a hospital) as well as the fact that the crime scenes had not been properly secured⁶⁵.

The case against 19 anti-Maidan supporters charged with participating in the city centre riots

The most high-profile case that shows the inefficiency and bias of the investigators is the case against 19 anti-Maidan supporters charged with participating in the city centre riots.

On September 18, 2017, the Illichivsk City Court of Odesa Region acquitted all 19 defendants, emphasizing the inefficiency of the investigation as well as the biased and politically motivated criminal prosecution of anti-Maidan supporters for their participation in the events of May 2, 2014 in Odesa⁶⁶. Following the acquittal, all 5 defendants that had been in custody since May 2014 were released in the courtroom. However, immediately after their acquittal, 2 of them were arrested by the Prosecutor's Office right there in the courtroom on new charges, specifically organization of the riots. On October 18, 2017, the Appeals Court of Odesa Region found that the detention had not been officially registered from the moment of apprehension to the moment of determination of the restraining measure on September 19, 2017, which was pre-trial detention⁶⁷.

The Prosecutor's Office appealed against the acquittal, and on December 4, 2017, the Appeals Court of Mykolayiv Region opened proceedings on this appeal⁶⁸. However, as of August 1, 2019, the court still did not start the consideration.

⁵⁶ <http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/47969390>

⁵⁷ <http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/55273736>

⁵⁸ <http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/56213379>

⁵⁹ <http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/58007236>

⁶⁰ <http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/63933419>

⁶¹ <http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/63933992>

⁶² <http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/75208386>

⁶³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yd6HjYHgpPE>

⁶⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ueHHestJUGk>,
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S-N8a7eIwmc>

⁶⁵ Para. 131 <https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=090000168048851b>

⁶⁶ <http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/68926870>

⁶⁷ <http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/69748399>

⁶⁸ <http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/70681462>

Investigation of the riots at the Kulykove Pole Square followed by a fire at the Trade Unions building that claimed the lives of 42 people

The investigation into the fire at the Trade Unions building has been ongoing for five years now and no suspects have turned up. Moreover, the investigation does not even aim to find those responsible for setting fire to the Trade Unions building while there were people inside. Instead, the focus is on cases in which anti-Maidan supporters are prosecuted for participating in the city centre riots, while the May 2, 2014 episode in Odesa that killed 42 people is simply being ignored.

The criminal investigation of police misconduct during the city centre riots and at the Kulykove Pole Square

On December 24, 2014, criminal proceedings were opened against the former head of MoIA's Main Directorate in Odesa Region on charges of abuse of authority, negligence and dereliction of the duty to rescue people during the city centre riots and at the Kulykove Pole Square, which claimed 48 lives.

On May 13, 2015, the Pecherskyi District Court of Kyiv ordered to place the suspect under house arrest⁶⁹. In December 2015, the investigation was completed and the case file was sent to the Primorskyi District Court of Odesa⁷⁰. On June 6, 2016, the court returned the indictment to the Prosecutor's Office on the grounds that it was not in line with CPC requirements⁷¹. On July 12, 2016, the Appeals Court of Odesa Region overturned this decision and returned the case to the Primorskyi District Court of Odesa⁷². On March 20, 2017, the judge was dismissed and the trial had to start anew⁷³.

As of August 2019, the proceedings at the Prymorskyi Court of Odesa are still ongoing, but neither the court nor the law enforcement or the media are providing proper coverage for them. There is no public or official information on the current progress of the trial.

Criminal investigation into the actions of officials of the State Emergency Service

On October 16, 2014, over five months after the fire at the Trade Unions building, criminal proceedings were opened against State Emergency Service officials for deliberate abandonment of people that were inside the Trade Unions building, which resulted in 42 deaths.

On March 3, 2016, the Primorskyi District Court of Odesa ordered to place the former deputy head of the Main Directorate of the State Emergency Service in Odesa Region⁷⁴, the former shift head⁷⁵ and his former assistant⁷⁶ under house arrest.

In June 2016, an indictment against these three officials of the State Emergency Service was referred to the Primorskyi District Court of Odesa. On September 26, 2016, the court ordered the return of the prosecutor's indictment on the grounds that it was not in line with CPC requirements⁷⁷. In January 2017, the Prosecutor sent a revised indictment to the court. Between April 2016 and January 2018, 6 judges stepped away from the case, citing their participation in the pre-trial stage⁷⁸. On May 14, 2018, the Appeals Court of Odesa Region sent the case to the Kyiv District Court of Odesa due to the insufficient number of judges for a panel at the Prymorskyi District Court of Odesa⁷⁹. On October 29, 2018, the Kyiv District Court of Odesa once again returned the indictment to the Prosecutor for revision⁸⁰. The Prosecutor appealed against this

⁶⁹ https://www.gp.gov.ua/ua/news.html?_m=publications&_t=rec&id=155920&fp=5310

⁷⁰ <http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/58184124>

⁷¹ <http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/58184124>

⁷² <http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/58879753>

⁷³ <http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/65421379>

⁷⁴ <http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/56273137>

⁷⁵ <http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/56273219>

⁷⁶ <http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/56246023>

⁷⁷ <http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/61840750>

⁷⁸ <http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/66832215>,
<http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/66772122>,
<http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/66724245>,
<http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/66802885>,
<http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/70836669>,
<http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/71558122>

⁷⁹ <http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/74078416>

⁸⁰ <http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/79278196>

decision and on January 16, 2019, the Odesa Appeals Court overturned the decision of the first instance court and returned the case to the Primorskyi District Court of Odesa⁸¹.

As of August 2019, the trial still did not begin. The first court hearing is scheduled for September 23, 2019.

5) Efforts on ensuring the safety of judges and other participants of cases on the events of May 2, 2014 in Odesa.

In its Report, the Government states that temporarily, until the CGS starts working, court security is the responsibility of the National Police and the National Guard. In its response to our inquiry, however, the National Guard reported that protection of courts is not within their scope of responsibilities.

The Government's Report also provides no information on the measures taken by the State to ensure security for courts and participants of trials related to the events of May 2, 2014 in Odesa.

Of particular concern are the attempts of radical Euromaidan supporters to undermine independence of the judiciary, lawyers and other litigants. The police have not only tolerated such behaviour in court-rooms, failing to ensure the safety of all participants of these proceedings, but have also been neglectful in investigating these incidents. Thus, the Kyiv District Court has made numerous statements regarding real threats to life and health from aggressive Euromaidan supporters, as well as the threat of attempts to free defendants from custody⁸². The courts have also experienced pressure from Ukrainian MPs. Radical Euromaidan supporters organized so-called "corridors of shame" for the relatives of those killed or injured on May 2, 2014 in Odesa, subjecting these people to public humiliation while the police were doing nothing⁸³.

6) Investigation of the events of May 9, 2014 in Mariupol.

The Government has investigated only one episode of the May 9, 2014 events in Mariupol, which involved seizure of the Mariupol police district department by anti-Maidan supporters that resulted in six deaths and at least eleven wounded.

The rest of the episodes, which involved the use of firearms and infliction of grievous bodily harm and which claimed the lives of 7 civilians, have not yet been investigated. The investigators have no suspects in these cases.

Question 9. *With reference to the Committee's previous concluding observations (para. 11) expressing concern at reports of torture, ill-treatment, enforced disappearance, deprivation of life and other violations by members of armed groups, including in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, and in the light of the follow-up information provided by the State party, please provide information on:*

- a) *Any cases in which alleged perpetrators of acts of torture, ill-treatment, enforced disappearances and deprivation of life committed on the territory of the State party but in areas not under governmental control – whether officials of the State party, members of armed groups or officials of the Russian Federation – have been prosecuted during the period under review;*
- b) *The status of the criminal investigations pertaining to such abuses being undertaken by the Security Service of Ukraine and the Military Prosecutor;*
- c) *Whether redress and rehabilitation have been provided to victims identified during the above investigations, including to those who were wounded and to the families of those killed, in accordance with the Committee's general comment No. 3 (2012) on the implementation of article 14.*

⁸¹ <http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/79278196>

⁸² <http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/76584252>,
<http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/75569756>,
<http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/75408893>,
<http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/76094587>,
<http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/75031173>,
<http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/68887889>,
<http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/68887912>.

⁸³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WBCijuq3w3s>

ANSWER TO QUESTION No. 9

Cases on instances of murder, torture or enforced disappearances in the TOT are the responsibility of the National Police, SSU, as well as, partially, PG's Main Military Prosecutor's Office. Such proceedings, however, are largely ineffective due to a number of external and internal factors.

The Prosecutor's Office of Luhansk Region in August 2014 and the Prosecutor's Office of Donetsk Region in September 2014 ceased their activities in the TOT. The SSU and police departments followed suit soon after, with some of their personnel joining illegal armed groups. After the autumn of 2014, terrorists captured a number of cities in Donetsk and Luhansk regions. After that, the work of Ukrainian public authorities in this territory became impossible. The authorities moved to other cities in their respective regions.

Nevertheless, criminal proceedings have been opened regarding crimes committed in the TOT, although investigative actions proved impossible due to the lack of access to the crime scenes. As a result, some evidence has been lost. Law enforcement agencies today are unable to examine the crime scenes, collect physical or written evidence, interview witnesses, apprehend suspects, etc. In their replies to inquiries regarding the course of investigations, the authorities report that it is impossible to carry out proper investigations.

However, even if the required evidence were to be gathered, it is hardly possible to bring the perpetrators to justice. Most of them are hiding in the TOT or in Russia. None of the leaders of illegal armed groups responsible for torture, murder or forced disappearances have faced justice thus far. The PG has repeatedly asked Interpol to put those responsible for violent crimes in the territories controlled by illegal armed groups on wanted lists, but many of these requests have been rejected, specifically those regarding Mr. Zakharchenko (head of the so-called "DPR"), Mr. Bezler (Horlivka Unit head responsible for capturing and torturing hundreds of people), Mr. Plotnytskyi (head of the so-called "LPR"), Mr. Strelkov (commander of terrorist groups in Slovyansk), Mr. Pavlov (commander of the Sparta Battalion), etc. In accordance with Article 3 of the Interpol Statute, it has no right to interfere in political, military, religious or racial matters and considers the conflict in Ukraine to fall under this definition⁸⁴.

In these conditions, with no access to the areas where investigative actions are required and with no power to apprehend and prosecute the perpetrators, it appears impossible to conduct effective investigations in the near future. Moreover, those who suffered in the course of the ATO (prisoners, wounded, families of those killed) still have no special status, nor has a special state register of civilians affected by the armed conflict been created. As a result, there is no official government statistics on the numbers of prisoners, missing persons or persons deprived of life. According to the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine, over 3.3 thousand civilians have been killed and about 9 thousand civilians have received injuries⁸⁵.

The majority of criminal investigations have to do with the capture of civilians and soldiers, torture, murder, extra-judicial killings and abductions as well as damaged or destroyed property. In these situations, testimonies of witnesses that were near the victim at the time and saw the crime being committed constitute the only source of evidence available to the State. However, this source has its own limitations, for instance, when it is difficult to locate a witness or when a witness refuses to testify, particularly out of fear of retribution. Moreover, in a large number of investigations, there are no eyewitnesses in the first place. At the same time, even those investigative actions that could be carried out in the territory controlled by the Government of Ukraine were in many cases performed so poorly that evidence of crimes was irretrievably lost, and this was the responsibility of the investigative authorities. Victims of terrorism were often not recognized as the injured party in such proceedings, which, naturally, was not conducive to the investigations.

According to PG's official website, only 72 pre-trial investigations under Article 258 CC "Terrorist Act" resulted in indictments sent to court over the 2014–2017 period, which is only slightly over 1% of the total number of criminal proceedings initiated during this period (6044)⁸⁶.

⁸⁴ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2015/04/15/7064810/>

⁸⁵ https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/UA/ReportUkraineFev-May2018_UKRAINIAN.pdf

⁸⁶ <http://www.gp.gov.ua/ua/statinfo.html>

Articles 1 and 4

Question 10. *With reference to the Committee’s previous concluding observations (para. 7), please indicate whether the State party has amended the Criminal Code to include a definition of torture that is in conformity with article 1 of the Convention and that specifically includes the inflicting of torture by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity.*

Question 11. *With reference to the Committee’s previous concluding observations (para. 8), please indicate if the State party has amended its legislation to ensure that the crime of torture is considered a grave crime and subject to penalties commensurate with the seriousness of the offense.*

ANSWER TO QUESTIONS 10, 11

The concept of torture was introduced into the Criminal Code for the first time in 2001 with Article 127, and its definition there differs from the one in Article 1 of the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (hereinafter — Convention). Among other things, the provision lacked the special subject of “public official”.

In 2005, another element was added to the definition of the crime of torture — its commission by law enforcement officials, with a corresponding increase in the severity of punishment of up to life imprisonment if the act has resulted in the victim’s death. The definition of “torture” was also expanded with the motive of torture or threat of torture.

In 2008, another version of Article 127 CC was adopted, which added the motive of discrimination to the definition of “torture”, with the special subject of “law enforcement official” and with the severity of punishment for this crime significantly reduced — between 3 and 7 years in prison. Thus, CC no longer considered torture a serious crime, which contradicts the “grave nature” of such crimes within the meaning of para. 2, Article 4 of the Convention.

The final changes to Article 127 CC were made in 2009, removing officials from the list of potential perpetrators and introducing the following classifying features: “on the grounds of racial, national or religious intolerance”, with the potential sentence increased to 5–10 years in prison.

Thus, the definition of the crime of torture in Ukrainian law has no provision for instances when it is committed by a public official carrying out the torture in the official capacity.

Despite the Government’s assurances that the MoJ has already drafted a bill that should, among other things, amend Article 127 CC and bring it in line with the Convention, on March 27, 2019 this bill was returned for elaboration, which means that Ukraine has failed to fulfil its commitment to bring the definition of torture in domestic law in line with Article 1 of the Convention over the reporting period. Thus, Article 127 CC continues to provide for a general perpetrator instead of a “public official or other person acting in an official capacity” as in Article 1 of the Convention.

Question 12. *Please provide data on prosecutions of public officials carried out during the reporting period under articles 127 (torture), 364 (abuse of authority), 365 (exceeding authority) and 373 (compelling testimony) of the Criminal Code. Please provide data on the number of such prosecutions that resulted in a conviction and the sentence handed down in each case, disaggregated by the institutional affiliation of the perpetrators. Please in particular indicate whether any member of the Security Service of Ukraine has been prosecuted on charges of torture during the reporting period, and the outcome(s).*

Question 13. *Please provide additional information on the progress of the Prosecutor-General’s investigation into the 24 complaints resulting in indictments of 40 law enforcement officers for torture or ill-treatment received in the first nine months of 2015, as referenced in the State party’s follow-up report, and information on any investigations into allegations of torture and ill-treatment that have led to indictments since September 2015.*

ANSWER TO QUESTIONS 12, 13

In most cases, reported criminal offences under Articles 127, 364, 365 and 373 CC are not entered by investigators in the Single Register of Pre-Trial Investigations, in violation of Art. 214 CPC, which requires

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for this to be done within 24 hours. As a result, the applicants in these cases must file complaints on failure to enter information in the SRPTI with the investigating judges. Crime reports are also groundlessly considered in accordance with the Law of Ukraine “On Citizens’ Applications”. Due to these circumstances, pre-trial investigations in criminal proceedings start after significant delays, which often results in loss of evidence, such as medical evidence in the form of signs of injuries.

Even after a pre-trial investigation has begun, investigators largely fail to conduct the necessary investigative actions. In particular, applicants in many cases — the victims of crimes — are not recognized as victims, which prevents them from taking an active part in the proceedings. The applicants are then forced to file complaints against this with the investigating judges. Moreover, even once they are recognized as victims, their requests for necessary investigative actions are often denied⁸⁷. Data on criminal proceedings under Articles 127, 364, 365 and 373 CC are given in the following table⁸⁸:

CC article	Article 127 CC (Torture)			Article 364 CC (abuse of authority or office)			Article 365 CC (excess of authority or office)			Article 373 CC (compelling testimony)		
	Year	Registered	Indictment issued	Court decision reached	Registered	Indictment issued	Court decision reached	Registered	Indictment issued	Court decision reached	Registered	Indictment issued
2014	39	19	0	4919	231	210	4121	58	67	61	0	0
2015	4	2	0	4925	187	85	3885	38	31	48	0	0
2016	38	11	0	4947	99	59	3599	46	27	63	0	0
2017	47	28	0	5657	189	45	4130	30	24	60	0	0
2018	115	52	2	4945	250	34	3621	24	14	76	0	0

Currently there are no official statistics on crime reports, except for a handful of registered reports, while the real figure is much greater. Moreover, as the above statistics show, the number of cases taken to trial is far lower than the number of applications. In addition, the number of cases that go to trial is much lower than the number of crime reports, while the court judgements are even fewer.

As for the progress of investigations of 24 reports by the PG, which have resulted in indictments against 40 law enforcement officers during the first 9 months of 2015, we have received no information in response to our inquiries. In its reply, the PG’s office claims that it has no such information and no statistics on the matter.

Question 14. *Please provide information concerning any prosecutions carried out by the Office of the Military Prosecutor relating to allegations stemming from the conflict zone, including:*

- a) *Charges of voluntary homicide and illegal abduction or confinement by members of special police battalion “Tornado”. Please also provide information on steps taken to investigate allegations of sexual violence perpetrated by members of the battalion and the measures taken by the State party to ensure the safety of all participants in court proceedings related to those allegations;*
- b) *Charges against members of the territorial defence battalion “Aidar”.*

ANSWER TO QUESTION No. 14

1) Investigation of crimes committed by members of the Special Police Battalion “Tornado”.

In its Report, the Government only provides information on the number of episodes being investigated concerning the crimes committed by members of the Special Police Battalion “Tornado”.

Given the closed nature of the investigations into most of these crimes, any information about them, either in the court decisions register or in the media, is virtually non-existent. It is possible to find out the results of these investigations only from official statements or replies from the state bodies responsible, which raise questions due to discrepancies between the number of investigated episodes and the actual

⁸⁷ http://search.ligazakon.ua/1_doc2.nsf/link1/VRR00212.html

⁸⁸ Information based on PG’s reply to the KHPG

number of episodes involving crimes committed by the Tornado battalion, especially considering the large-scale nature of its criminal activities reported by a number of media outlets, human rights activists and international organizations.

In response to our inquiry, the PG reported that in 2015–2016, the Main Military Prosecutor’s Office was conducting pre-trial criminal investigations into the commission by certain officers of the Special Police Battalion “Tornado” and individuals that were unofficial members of the Tornado battalion, of a number of grave and particularly grave crimes between December 2014 and June 2015 in the territory of Luhansk and Donetsk regions.

The PG also reported that four indictments had been sent to first instance courts with charges against 12 persons, whose trial had been consolidated into one court proceeding.

The first instance court sentenced 8 defendants to 8-11 years in prison, and 4 defendants to 5 years in prison or to 2–3 years of probation.

This number of prosecuted Tornado battalion members and the extent of their punishment clearly do not match the number and gravity of crimes committed by the battalion.

The appeals court is currently considering appeals filed by the Prosecutor’s Office (against the mildness of the sentences) and by the Defence (against the lawfulness and validity of the sentences).

2) Allegations against members of the Territorial Defence Battalion “Aidar”.

The Government provided information, which the PG confirmed, on the conviction of five persons for the commission of grave and particularly grave crimes committed as part of an armed gang, as well as on a pending criminal investigation of another 6 persons.

In addition to the Government’s information, we would like to add the following.

Since the Main Military Prosecutor’s Office investigates only crimes committed by members of the military — namely the crimes committed by servicemen in violation of the law-prescribed military service procedure — the Main Military Prosecutor’s Office only investigates those crimes committed by Aidar members that fall under the agency’s specific jurisdiction⁸⁹. As of 2016, crimes committed by the military became the responsibility of the SBI⁹⁰, yet the Main Military Prosecutor’s Office still investigates such crimes.

According to media reports, investigations of crimes committed by Aidar members involve a large number of procedural violations and attempts to conceal the true extent of crimes committed by Aidar members⁹¹. The investigations are inconsistent and do not give enough reason to believe that all the necessary investigative actions have been carried out to ensure a thorough investigation⁹².

The sentences for Aidar members are also inconsistent. In early 2019, the SCU Court of Cassation overturned prison sentences of three Aidar members for unlawful detention of a person and sent the case for retrial⁹³. As a result, there is no final decision even in this one case that made it to trial.

Question 15. *Please indicate whether legislation or regulations have been enacted to provide for mandatory video recording of interrogations and to ensure that video monitoring equipment is installed in all places where interrogations are permitted in all places of deprivation of liberty.*

ANSWER TO QUESTION No. 15

One of the Committee’s recommendations was to require mandatory videotaping of suspects’ interrogations and to take steps to arrange video surveillance in all places of detention. This recommendation

⁸⁹ Moskal submits to the PG and MoIA a list of Aidar’s crimes committed under the direction of Melnichuk, <<https://ukr.segodnya.ua/politics/moskal-peredal-v-genprokuraturu-i-mvd-dokazatelstva-prestupleniy-aydarovcev-pod-rukovodstvom-melnichuka-621900.html>>.

⁹⁰ Criminal Procedure Code of Ukraine, <<https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/4651-17>>.

⁹¹ MP sends a report to the police on crimes committed by officials of the Prosecutor General’s Office, <<https://www.rbc.ua/ukr/news/melnichuk-obvinil-sledovateley-gpu-sokrytii-1435667464.html>>.

⁹² Crimes of violence: SSU finds evidence against Aidar, <<https://www.obozrevatel.com/crime/47153-nasilstvennyie-prestupleniya-sbu-nashla-dokazatelstva-protiv-ajdara.htm>>.

⁹³ Aidar members sentenced in 2017 have been released, but the case is still pending: see details, <<https://www.5.ua/kyiv/zasudzhenykh-u-2017-rotsi-aidarivtiv-vypustyly-na-voliu-odnak-spravu-ne-zaversheno-podrobytsi-186073.html>>.

has not been implemented. Although Article 224 CPC, including its original version of April 13, 2012 (that is, during Ukraine's previous reporting period), provides for the possibility of photo, audio and/or video recording during questioning, this is only mandatory if the participant of the procedural action has filed the appropriate request (Article 107 CPC).

Interrogation rooms and detention facilities, including police departments, where suspects are most frequently interrogated, are not equipped with video recording devices. The Government's reference in para. 89 of the Report to the existence in pre-trial detention facilities and centres of premises equipped for videoconferencing does not relate to the questioning of suspects, but rather to the participation of detained defendants in court proceedings via videoconferencing.

As we have been informed by the National Police of Ukraine, investigators are guided by their subjective assessment when determining how to record an investigative action, as well as whether to use technical means for this.

When conducting interrogations on the premises of pre-trial investigation facilities, the police use offices of the investigating officers or other rooms, with the consent of the person to be questioned.

As for the number of interrogation rooms with recording equipment, a perfect example is the central building of the National Police, which has no such rooms at all.

Question 19. *Please provide information on any measures taken during the reporting period to safeguard the independence of the judiciary from political interference and other forms of pressure, particularly in the context of high-profile cases. Please also provide information on instances in which investigating judges have ordered the investigation of allegations of torture or ill-treatment aired in court by a criminal defendant, pursuant to article 206 of the Criminal Procedure Code.*

ANSWER TO QUESTION No. 19

Protection of the judiciary from political interference

In its report, the Government states that the High Qualification Commission of Judges conducts judge evaluations to determine whether a judge is fit to administer justice in a certain court, in particular, based on the criteria of political neutrality, competence, integrity and professional ethics. However, this evaluation is only able to show whether a judge has certain political bias rather than safeguard judges from political pressure.

One of the most effective ways to pressure judges is to initiate groundless criminal prosecutions under Art. 375 CC (delivering a deliberately unjust verdict), against a judge or a group of judges responsible for a verdict that is deemed unacceptable by the Prosecution).

After information is entered in the Single Register of Pre-Trial Investigations on a court decision that the Prosecutor's Office or other criminal prosecution body deems unjustified, the pre-trial investigation body may, even without notifying the judge of the suspicions, initiate an investigation, including by conducting a search at the judge's office/home, wiretapping the judge's telephones (subject to court authorization), etc.

PG statistics on registered criminal offences (proceedings) and the results of their pre-trial investigations under Art. 375 CC for 2014 – 6 months of 2019.

Year	CPs registered	CPs where notices of suspicion have been served	CPs where indictments have been sent to trial
2014	110	13	1
2015	206	22	7
2016	174	7	6
2017	258	12	3
2018	295	1	1
6 months of 2019	287	10	6

The most obvious instances of attempts to put pressure on judges concerned the CP under Art. 375 CC on January 27, 2017 against a judge of the Krasnogvardiyskiy District Court of Dnipro who had denied the prosecutor's request regarding a restraining measure on the grounds that the prosecutor failed to observe territorial jurisdiction⁹⁴; as well the CP under Art. 375 CC initiated on August 10, 2018 against a judge of the Kyiv District Court for closing a CP against Kharkiv Mayor Hennadiy Kernes⁹⁵.

The Council of Judges of Ukraine and the SCJ have made numerous statements regarding the Prosecutor's Office's attempts to pressure judges through Art. 375 CC⁹⁶. The SCJ has submitted numerous requests to the PG to prosecute those responsible for trying to pressure judges by bringing against them criminal charges under Art. 375 CC⁹⁷.

The Council of Europe's Group of States Against Corruption GRECO also reported the prosecutors' attempts to pressure judges by means of Art. 375 CC. In this regard, GRECO, referring to the Council of Europe's standards, states that interpretation of the law, assessment of circumstances or evidence by a judge to resolve a case should not be cause for criminal prosecution, except for instances when criminal intent exists. The authors of the GRECO report also recommended to remove Art. 375 from the CC⁹⁸.

High officials have made numerous public attempts to pressure judges, including by threatening them. For instance, MP Vitaliy Kupriy wrote a letter to the SCU asking it to "consider the information in this petition carefully, after which to take immediate action to restore the citizen's rights". On May 25, 2017, Prosecutor General Yuriy Lutsenko stated that he "will be concerned about the fire safety of the Pechersk (Pecherskiy District Court of Kyiv)" if "it were to deliver another compassionate verdict"⁹⁹. Valeriya Gontariva, head of the National Bank of Ukraine, wrote a letter to the SCU chairman demanding to sort out the courts that were bringing back "zombie banks" eliminated by the National Bank of Ukraine¹⁰⁰. Minister of Internal Affairs Arsen Avakov threatened to withdraw guards from judges after disapproving of a decision in the case of Odesa Mayor Hennadiy Trukhanov¹⁰¹.

Since 2016, the SCJ has been maintaining a public register of reports on interference with the work of courts¹⁰². As of August 1, 2019, the register contained 231 reports for 2019, 436 for 2018 and 334 for 2017. In these reports, judges complain, among other things, about interference by the National Police, SSU, National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine, General and local prosecutors as well as MPs that send letters to the courts with requests for objective examination of circumstances or visit court in the company of athletic men and spit into judges' faces¹⁰³. The list of MPs that judges complain about contains, aside from the aforementioned Vitaliy Kupriy, the names of 22 other Parliament members.

⁹⁴ <http://www.vru.gov.ua/news/2231>

⁹⁵ https://pol.gp.gov.ua/ua/news.html?_m=publications&_c=view&_t=rec&id=234759

⁹⁶ <http://rsu.gov.ua/en/news/statta-375-kk-ukraini-domokliv-mec-dla-suddiv>,
<http://rsu.gov.ua/ua/events/view/risenna-rsu-no-45-vid-13-serpna-2018-sodo-zahodiv-dla-zabezpecenna-dotrimanna-principu-rivnosti-pered-sudom-i-zakonom>,
https://ukr.lb.ua/news/2018/03/05/391818_tisk_suddiv_trivaie_golova_vrp.html
<http://www.vru.gov.ua/news/2231>
http://www.vru.gov.ua/mass_media/1041

⁹⁷ <http://www.vru.gov.ua/news/2231>,
http://www.vru.gov.ua/chronology_single/1836,
<http://www.vru.gov.ua/news/4671>,
<http://rsu.gov.ua/ua/events/view/risenna-rsu-no-45-vid-13-serpna-2018-sodo-zahodiv-dla-zabezpecenna-dotrimanna-principu-rivnosti-pered-sudom-i-zakonom>

⁹⁸ <http://rsu.gov.ua/uploads/news/grecoeval4rep20169ukraineukr-ae17f067a2.pdf>

⁹⁹ <https://www.facebook.com/LlutsenkoYuri/posts/741109972754847>

¹⁰⁰ <https://www.unn.com.ua/ru/news/1639292-nbu-zvernuvsya-do-verkhovnogo-sudu-iz-prokhannyam-zobov'yazati-sudi-priymati-rishennya-na-yikh-korist>

¹⁰¹ <https://www.pravda.com.ua/news/2018/02/19/7172086/>

¹⁰² http://www.vru.gov.ua/add_text/203

¹⁰³ http://www.vru.gov.ua/content/file/2690-0-6-17_.pdf

The mayors of Drogobych¹⁰⁴ and Zolochiv¹⁰⁵ as well as the Irpinsk City Council¹⁰⁶ and the Kozelets Village Council¹⁰⁷ sent letters to courts in which they criticized and openly questioned certain court verdicts.

There were numerous instances when judges were summoned to court as witnesses in cases they had been involved in earlier as investigating judges¹⁰⁸, as well as instances of searches¹⁰⁹ and detentions of judges¹¹⁰.

Of course, in the cases when a verdict is clearly unjust, criminal proceedings against a judge under Article 375 CC are justified and necessary. However, we would like to draw attention to the abuse of power practised by prosecuting authorities in order to influence judges, regardless of the circumstances of a case and the evidence that speaks in favour of the party that represents the interests of the public in court.

Information on cases in which the investigating judge ordered the investigation of allegations/complaints of torture or ill-treatment voiced by criminal defendants in court under Article 206 CPC

In its report, the Government failed to answer the question about instances when investigating judges would order the investigation of allegations/complaints concerning torture or ill-treatment reported by criminal defendants in court, in accordance with Article 206 CPC.

There are no official statistics in Ukraine on the examination by judges of torture or ill-treatment allegations reported by defendants in court under Article 206 CPC.

Of particular concern here are instances when the investigating judge refused to order an investigation into allegations of torture or ill-treatment¹¹¹ reported by defendants or their lawyers, in defiance of part 6, Art. 206 CPC, which requires judges to take action in these situations. Moreover, in accordance with part 6, Art. 206 CPC, after hearing a torture allegation, the judge must arrange for the defendant's medical examination, order the pre-trial investigation authority to look into the defendant's complaint, and take the necessary steps to ensure the defendant's safety. However, in most cases the investigating judge simply orders the prosecutor to investigate the allegation. When the defendant has no lawyer and the investigative judge considers the investigator's request for a restraining measure in the form of detention, such complaints are not always recorded by the investigating judge.

Question 20. *With reference to the Committee's previous concluding observations (para. 17) expressing concern about the unnecessary detention of asylum seekers, please provide information on measures taken by the State party to ensure that asylum seekers are detained only as a matter of last resort and for as short a period as possible, and provide data on the number of asylum seekers currently in detention and the length of time they have been detained. Please also provide data on the application of alternatives to detention for asylum seekers by courts during the reporting period.*

ANSWER TO QUESTION No. 20

Detention of asylum seekers

After the CAP was supplemented with Article 183-7 on detentions of foreign nationals, the courts started making decisions on whether to place foreign nationals in SMS THCs, yet prosecuting authorities had also continued performing this function for a long while, in violation of the law.

¹⁰⁴ http://www.vru.gov.ua/content/file/1972-0-6-18_.pdf

¹⁰⁵ http://www.vru.gov.ua/content/file/1766-0-6-18_.pdf

¹⁰⁶ http://www.vru.gov.ua/content/file/450-0-6-18_.pdf

¹⁰⁷ http://www.vru.gov.ua/content/file/507-0-6-18_.pdf

¹⁰⁸ http://www.vru.gov.ua/content/file/1218-0-6-18_.pdf

¹⁰⁹ http://www.vru.gov.ua/content/file/1024-0-6-17_.pdf

¹¹⁰ http://www.vru.gov.ua/content/file/2176-0-6-17_.pdf

¹¹¹ <http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/75766275>,
<http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/77562495>,
<http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/63181158>,
<http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/75162968>,
<http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/82973056>,
<http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/46124012>,

After the changes introduced by the Law of Ukraine no. 2147-VIII¹¹² on December 15, 2017, part 18, Article 289 CAP allows detaining foreign nationals for the duration of the consideration of their appeal without a court order authorizing such detention. This amendment contradicts part 2, Art. 29 of the Ukrainian Constitution which prohibits detention of a person without a court order.

When representatives of the SBGS detain foreign nationals at airport checkpoints, the foreigners held “incommunicado” on special premises are not allowed to see their lawyer, in spite of the appropriate provision in the Law of Ukraine “On the State Border Service of Ukraine”. This unlawful detention could last for days or even longer. SSU officials almost always fail to draw up protocols on administrative detention in due time when detaining foreign nationals, or forgo this altogether, which means that they do not inform FLA centres about detentions and the need to provide detainees with legal assistance.

SMS THC's for foreign nationals and stateless persons staying in Ukraine illegally

There are SMS THC's¹¹³ in Mykolayiv (opened on April 20, 2018), Volyn and Chernihiv regions. Their maximum capacity is 473 people.

Indicator		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Persons placed in THC's over the year	persons	291	358	473	656	1037
Persons held in THC's as of the beginning of the year	persons	116	172	172	186	444
Total number of persons held in THC's over the year	persons	407	530	645	842	1481
Persons expelled from THC's over the year	persons	116	198	265	309	511
Persons released from THC's over the year	persons					356

The number of persons detained for subsequent expulsion is increasing. Thus, first instance courts delivered 498 decisions in 2014 regarding applications for the detention and expulsion of foreign nationals and stateless persons, of which 405 were fully satisfied; in 2015 – 527 decisions in total and 465 satisfied; in 2016 – 753 decisions and 654 satisfied; in 2017 – 1,234 decisions and 1,035 satisfied; in 2018 – 1,829 decisions and 1,666 of those satisfied.

As of the beginning of 2018, 444 persons were held in THC's, 1,666 were detained by courts and placed in THC's, so the total number of detained persons would be 2,110.

In 2018, 356 persons were released from THC's and 511 were expelled. Thus, if we assume ideal conditions for the state, that is, that 356 persons were released and 511 persons were expelled from THC's on the first day of 2018, even though this is not the case, the state still had to house 1,243 persons in THC's, but how could it have been done if the maximum capacity of THC's is 473 people? The answer is obvious: the THC's were overcrowded. It should be noted that according to an oral account given by a SMS representative during the presentation of the comments to the 7th Periodic Report of the Government, which took place on December 16, 2018 at the Ombudsman's Office, THC's are currently 60-70% full.

Another notable fact is that in 2018, the courts ordered for 1,666 persons to be detained and placed in THC's for subsequent expulsion, yet only 1,035 were actually placed in THC's. This is examined below.

It should be noted that in 2017, the SMS provided UNHCR and its partners access to UNHCR-protected persons that were being held in THC's, for monitoring and provision of legal assistance. However, as of January 2018, the SMS decided to restrict access for UNHCR partners¹¹⁴. The representative of the SMS explained it by the non-compliance of the UNHCR with formal SMS requirements in getting permission to visit the facilities.

¹¹² <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2147-19#n6636>

¹¹³ <https://dmsu.gov.ua/pro-dms/struktura-ta-kontakti/punkti-timchasovogo-perebuвання-inozemciv-ta-osib-bez-gromadyanstva.html>

¹¹⁴ <https://www.unhcr.org/ua/wp-content/uploads/sites/38/2018/08/2018-08-UNHCR-UKRAINE-Refugee-and-Asylum-Seekers-Update-FINAL-UA.pdf>

According to the Ombudsman's report for 2018¹¹⁵, NPM monitoring revealed the following violations of the rights of foreign nationals and stateless persons in SMS THC:

- inadequate conditions of detention;
- violations of the right to freedom of thought and religion;
- violations of the right to maintain communications with the outside world;
- violations of the right of foreign nationals and stateless persons to legal aid.

Alternatives to measures aimed at enforcing decisions on expulsion

Such alternatives include 1) having an enterprise, institution or organization vouch for a foreign national or stateless person, 2) releasing a foreign national or stateless person on bail. Nevertheless, aside from isolated cases, the courts are not using alternatives to measures aimed at enforcing decisions on expulsion.

The vouching for a foreign national or stateless person by an enterprise, institution or organization has not been used in Ukrainian courts (information taken from the Single State Register of Court Decisions (SSRCD)¹¹⁶.

Since there is no official information on the implementation of alternative measures, we looked for such verdicts in the SSRCD, and there was only one such decision¹¹⁷, and even then the foreign national was unable to pay bail¹¹⁸ due to the unreasonably large sum required.

The bail amount is between one and two hundred minimum subsistence wages for able-bodied persons and must be transferred within five business days after the court adopts the decision to grant release on bail. The subsistence minimum is UAH 1,921 per month, which puts bail between USD 7.5 and USD 15 thousand, which is obviously too much for someone staying in Ukraine in violation of migration law.

Question 22. *With reference to the Committee's previous concluding observations (para. 15) expressing concern that the crime of human trafficking is not properly investigated and prosecuted and victims lack access to effective remedies and redress, please provide updated information on the number of investigations, prosecutions and sentences handed down for human trafficking; funds provided to the State Targeted Social Program; the results of international cooperation initiatives to combat human trafficking; whether victims of trafficking are provided with redress and effective remedies, including psychological and legal support, medical care, access to shelters and welfare benefits and work permits; whether specialized training is provided to police, prosecutors, judges, immigration officers, border police, psychologists and community support officers aimed at the effective prevention, investigation, prosecution and punishment of acts of trafficking; and any awareness-raising or media campaigns on the criminal nature of such acts.*

ANSWER TO QUESTION No. 22

According to KHPG's information, there's a transnational criminal group operating in Ukraine since no later than 2015, tricking Ukrainian citizens into going to Russia and forcing them into a life of crime through coercion, threats and blackmail, specifically criminal activities related to the production and distribution of drugs. Due to the obvious collusion between the drug dealers and Russian law enforcement, the reports of Ukrainians about this criminal network are not being investigated. Russian courts are ignoring the fact that these Ukrainians are victims of human trafficking. After a brief investigation and an unfair trial, they are convicted under Art. 228.1 of Russia's Criminal Code (illegal production, sale or trafficking of drugs).

According to our information, over 300 Ukrainian citizens that fell victim to this transnational criminal group have been prosecuted. 197 victims of human trafficking have already been convicted in Russia for drug trafficking with sentences between 5 and 20 years in prison. 46 Ukrainians have returned to Ukraine

¹¹⁵ <http://www.ombudsman.gov.ua/files/Dopovidi/Report-2018-1.pdf> (apk. 259).

¹¹⁶ <http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/>

¹¹⁷ <https://opendatabot.ua/court/77759289-474c07a2e5ddc0817da544ea83c4f107>

¹¹⁸ <https://opendatabot.ua/court/77920159-5cb51c8ead9bd76647a62ceb69029954>

but continue serving sentences in Ukrainian prisons. 35 others have already requested transfer and are awaiting Russia's Justice Ministry's response. However, 22 of our countrymen are at risk of being left in Russia as their requests to be returned to Ukraine were denied.

In para. 226, the Government states that in 2014–2018, 531 Ukrainian citizens were recognised as victims of human trafficking. However, according to our information received from the victims themselves or their families and confirmed by the evidence uncovered in the course of criminal investigations, over 300 persons fell victim to that one criminal group alone over the specified period¹¹⁹. This figure keeps growing with each month as human rights defenders and victims' families continue their investigations. Thus, the information provided by the Government of Ukraine does not reflect the actual number of victims of human trafficking and the real extent of these criminal activities.

The main problem for victims of human trafficking lies in the lack of effective legal remedies. In defiance of Art. 214 CPC, crime reports are not registered immediately and appropriate entries are not made in the Single Register of Pre-Trial Investigations, and even after the investigating judge issues an appropriate order, this is still done with considerable delays.

The procedure for granting the status of a victim of human trafficking does not take into account the specifics of this category of victims and does not meet international legal standards. Thus, people recruited for drug distribution in Russian territory and convicted there are transferred to Ukraine to continue serving their sentence, and the possibility that they were coerced into criminal activities is never considered.

The procedure for granting the status of a victim of human trafficking is established by the Procedure for Establishing the Status of a Victim of Human Trafficking adopted by CMU Resolution no. 417 of May 23, 2012 (hereinafter – the Procedure).

Thus, the victims have to send applications for obtaining that status while being held in places of detention, which in practice creates a number of problems for them.

Firstly, their correspondence is not confidential. Every detail of how they became victims of human trafficking becomes known to the administration of their PC and soon to the rest of the convicts. This often has a negative effect on the attitude toward victims, conditions of their detention and relations with other convicts.

Secondly, the officials responsible for interviewing victims have neither time nor resources to visit PCs, which are often located far from regional and rayon centres, which makes it difficult to arrange for an interview. With no portable communications devices, such interviews require two visits at the very least. Moreover, if the victim of human trafficking wishes for their lawyer or family members to be present, the interview becomes practically impossible to organise.

Thirdly, responsible officials from local state administrations as well as the relative and lawyers of the victims have trouble getting into PCs in the first place. In accordance with Art. 24 CEC, such visits can only be done with permission from the PI's administration or from the bodies responsible for supervising PCs. Having made inquiries in Kharkiv, Mykolayiv and Dnipropetrovsk Regional State Administrations, we discovered that no such permissions have been granted to them and so they never conducted any visits to PCs.

Thus, the Procedure fails to meet the needs of victims of human trafficking serving their sentences in prisons.

Another urgent problem for victims of human trafficking that were forced into criminal activities is the impossibility of being exempt from criminal liability. Article 26 of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, which came into force for Ukraine on 1 March 2003, establishes the obligation of each party, in accordance with the basic principles of its legal system, to provide for the possibility of not imposing penalties on victims for their involvement in unlawful activities, to the extent that they have been compelled to do so. Nevertheless, this provision of the CoE Convention has not been implemented into Ukrainian legislation.

According to a study conducted by a group of independent experts and commissioned by the OSCE Project Coordinator in Ukraine at the request of Ukraine's Ministry for Family, Youth and Sports, neither the Criminal nor the Criminal Procedure Code currently contain provisions that would guarantee immunity to victims of human trafficking for their forced involvement in illegal activities. Because of this, victims

¹¹⁹ <http://khp.org/index.php?id=1570605859>

of human trafficking are reluctant to share their stories with the authorities¹²⁰. Since 2008, the year this study was conducted, the situation has not changed.

Thus, the victims are left with the regular mechanisms for avoiding punishment offered by Ukrainian law, which provides four procedures for the release of convicts. Parole and substitution of the remaining part of the sentence are incentives granted for good behaviour. These measures are only possible after the convict has already served a part of the sentence. Neither option takes into account the vulnerable status of victims of human trafficking and the fact that were forced into criminal activities. Amnesty, as per the current text of the relevant law, may not be applied to victims of human trafficking due to a direct prohibition in the law, since these persons were involved in drug-related crimes. Pardon is an extraordinary procedure that is applied in special cases and under special circumstances.

As a result of this situation, victims of human trafficking have no effective remedy for returning to the legal status they used to enjoy before the offence. In other words, Ukrainian law has no provisions that would establish a clear and predictable procedure which victims of human trafficking could use in order to be released from prison, as required by the CoE Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings.

Question 23. *With reference to the Committee's previous concluding observations (para. 13), please indicate whether the State party has established a system of juvenile justice that promotes alternative measures to deprivation of liberty whenever possible.*

ANSWER TO QUESTION No. 23

The new juvenile justice system is limited to the creation of an Inter-Agency Coordination Council on Juvenile Justice (hereinafter referred to as "Inter-Agency Council") in 2017. The 2017–2018 Inter-Agency Council Activity Report does not give any reason to believe that a real justice system has been established, one that takes into account the best interests of the child in the administration of justice by promoting, wherever possible, alternatives to deprivation of liberty.

The Inter-Agency Council's main goals were determined based on the provisions of the National Human Rights Strategy 2020. However, despite clearly defined goals, none of those have been achieved.

In particular, the option of mediation as a form of restorative justice has not been introduced at the legislative level, specifically: no amendments have been made to the CPC and relevant legislative acts of Ukraine, and Draft Law of Ukraine "On Mediation" has not been submitted to the CMU for consideration.

According to the MoJ's official website, as of November 2017, the MoJ, together with experts brought in as part of the Inter-Agency Council's working group, prepared a draft concept of the Law of Ukraine "On Justice for the Child". However, as the Government notes in its Report, the document is still at the draft stage and is yet to be considered by the Parliament.

Moreover, no action has been taken to improve the justice system for juveniles by expanding the options of punishment with those that do not involve isolation from society. The State refers to the existence of special restraining measures for juveniles, yet these measures already existed in the previous CPC. The current CPC shows no changes in the provisions on criminal proceedings involving minors.

According to an exclusive interview given by former Ukraine's Deputy Minister of Justice Denys Chernyshov in September 2017, when a juvenile commits a minor crime, instead of imprisonment they can undergo probation programs and, in a year or two at maximum, get re-socialized without ever being imprisoned. Probation programs are very important, because once a minor gets into the system, they return to crime in almost 100% of cases¹²¹.

At the same time, according to the State, as of 2017 there were 1,276 minors registered with probation authorities, with the total number of probation subjects being 68 thousand persons. Thus, even with as many as 13 juvenile probation centres operating in Ukraine as of 2018, they are physically unable to service even half of the probation subjects.

¹²⁰ *Andrea Sulkner*. Study "Needs assessment of the national referral mechanism for victims of trafficking in human beings in Ukraine". OSCE, 2008 — p. 81: <https://www.osce.org/uk/secretariat/37381?download=true>

¹²¹ <https://www.5.ua/suspilstvo/pidlitkova-zlochynnist-shcho-take-iuvenalna-probatsiia-ta-iakyi-vidsotok-retsdyvu-155062.html>

In addition, CMU Order no. 654-r of September 13, 2017 approved the Concept for Reforming (Developing) the Penitentiary System of Ukraine, which has no provisions on the need to develop new models of penal institutions for women and minors.

Article 3

Question 24. *With reference to the Committee's previous concluding observations (para. 17), please provide updated information on:*

- a) *Steps taken to ensure that all asylum seekers have access to fair and efficient refugee status determination procedures and are effectively protected against refoulement, including through the creation of a formalized border monitoring mechanism in cooperation with UNHCR and civil society organizations;*
- b) *Whether asylum applicants have access to legal aid and interpreters and are allowed more than five days to file appeals against negative asylum decisions;*
- c) *Measures taken to ensure that internally displaced persons are effectively protected from being returned to a risk of torture or ill-treatment.*

ANSWER TO QUESTION No. 24

On the exercise of the right to be granted the status of refugee or person in need of additional protection

According to statistics¹²², between 2014 and 2018 the SMS reached the following decisions concerning asylum seekers:

Decision		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
recognised as refugees	persons	124	49	20	21	24
recognised as persons in need of additional protection	persons	204	118	48	74	75
denied protection	persons	257	599	416	228	284
revoked status of refugee or person in need of additional protection	persons	2	4	9	4	2
deprived of status of refugee or person in need of additional protection	persons	1	7	7	3	5
Total number of persons recognised as refugees	persons	2534	2487	2429	2382	1799
Total number of persons recognised as persons in need of additional protection	persons	479	598	649	709	768

SMS statistics lack vital official information for assessing the current situation with asylum requests in Ukraine, particularly information on the number of such requests submitted to the SMS, the number of denied requests and the number of refusals to issue documents required to resolve the issue of recognition as refugee or person in need of additional protection. After rejection, a request's consideration is terminated and information about it is not included in the data from the table above.

Despite the SMS's attempts to manipulate data, we can see that in 2016, 2017 and 2018 the number of persons granted refugee status decreased by a factor of 6 and the number of persons granted additional protection — by a factor of 3. This is a clearly negative trend for the SMS.

According to the information provided by the SMS to Radio Liberty, in the first half of 2018 they received 352 applications from people seeking refugee status or those in need of additional protection; in 2017 — 771 applications; in 2016 — 656; in 2015 — 1,433; and in 2014 — 1,173¹²³. At the same time, in para. 115 of the Report the Government states that in 2015–2018 775 applications for secondary FLA were received in connection with complaints against SMS refusals to grant refugee status, so legal aid was provided to

¹²² <https://dmsu.gov.ua/diyalnist/statistichni-dani/statistika-z-osnovnoj-diyalnosti.html>

¹²³ <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/svoboda-v-detalyah/29511350.html>

about 20% of the applicants, and given the fact that in the FLA system every instance of provided legal aid is counted as a new case — this figure becomes a mere 10%.

According to SMS regulations, interpreters are provided to asylum seeker only during interviews, while it is necessary to provide them with interpretation during every appeal to the authorities, especially during the first one.

The courts often neglect to ask the persons being expelled whether they were informed, in a language that they understand, of the procedure for applying for the status of refugee or person in need of additional protection in Ukraine, whether they were provided with an interpreter, whether they were given a copy of the court application on their expulsion in a language they understand, whether they were informed that they could make use of free legal services, and whether they know to which country they are being expelled.

There are no interpreters present during court hearings either; in the best case scenario this role is played by a citizen of the person's country of origin that happens to know Russian. Court decisions are not translated into the person's native language. Foreign nationals and stateless persons have only 5 days to appeal against SMS rejections, which, coupled with the absence of legal assistance, makes it virtually impossible for them to succeed.

Problems with obtaining refugee status or additional protection:

- Highly bureaucratic procedure for applying (short deadlines, rigid form of the application, a chance that it will be returned without consideration due to procedural errors)
- The system for providing asylum seekers with interpreters¹²⁴ and lawyers does not work properly during the consideration of their applications and in courts
- The SMS does not take into account reports of international governmental and non-governmental organizations on the situation in the asylum seekers' country of origin
- Applications take a long time to be considered (over a year)
- Decisions to reject an application do not provide the reasons for it and are written in Ukrainian without translation
- Short term for appealing in court against SMS rejections (5 days)
- Lengthy court proceedings that examine complaints against SMS rejections (over a year)
- Court decisions and other documents are not translated into the asylum seekers' language
- Court decisions on the cancellation of SMS decisions require the SMS to re-examine the application, which often results in another rejection and forces asylum seekers to go to court several times, making the whole process last over 5 years.
- Persons applying for protection are unable to exercise their right to temporary employment guaranteed by law¹²⁵
- Those applying for protection are not eligible for any free medical services, including emergency medical care and primary medical care examinations.
- After being granted refugee status, aside from a one-time financial aid of UAH 17, refugees receive no benefits or help with their integration into society, such as free language classes, employment, social benefits, housing, etc.
- They are granted additional protection for a period of 5 years and are not entitled to naturalization

While their applications are being considered, asylum seekers may be placed in Temporary Holding Centres for Refugees (THCRs) located in Odesa and Zakarpatska regions¹²⁶. The THCR in Kyiv Region is not working at full capacity due to protests among the local community. The procedure for placement in a THCR is lengthy and overly bureaucratic. THCRs can accommodate no more than 350 people and are in need of renovations.

¹²⁴ <https://zakon2.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/z0801-13>

¹²⁵ https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/3671-17_ч.1_ст.13.

¹²⁶ <https://dmsu.gov.ua/pro-dms/struktura-ta-kontakti/punkti-timchasovogo-rozmishhennya-bizhencziv.html>

Measures taken to ensure effective protection for IDPs from recurrence of torture or ill-treatment

According to the Ministry of Social Policy, since the outset of the occupation of the ARC and the beginning of the armed conflict in eastern Ukraine, about 1,600,000 IDPs have been registered in Ukraine¹²⁷.

In 2014, the Government adopted a resolution on the provision of social aid to IDPs to help them pay utility bills and rent¹²⁸. According to this resolution, an able-bodied person is entitled to a fixed amount of UAH 442 per month to cover the costs of rent and utilities, even though this was not enough to cover these costs even at the time of the resolution's adoption. This amount has remained unchanged since 2014 to this day, while the cost of utilities almost tripled compared to 2014. Subsistence minimum wage for the able-bodied population, on the other hand, was raised every year. Due to the lacking assistance from the state which has failed to provide IDPs with housing, funds to cover the cost of rent, and jobs, some of the IDPs were forced to return to non-government-controlled territory, risking death, injury, torture or ill-treatment.

We would also like to point out that about one third of IDPs are pensioners registered with Ukraine's Pension Fund (PF) and receiving their pensions from it. In order to control the payment of pensions to IDPs, the Government has adopted a number of regulations that not only introduced special rules for receiving pensions, but also imposed various restrictions on IDPs, in contradiction of existing legislation. Mandatory ID checks and inspections at the pensioners' place of residence by employees of social protection bodies were introduced. These measures forced IDP pensioners to remain at their rented residence without going outside their respective administrative division unit for fear of losing their pension should they be absent during an inspection.

In 2018, the Government once again tightened control over pensions for IDPs. Thus, in accordance with Resolution No. 335¹²⁹, IDP pensioners are not be able to get pension debt (pension funds accumulated over the duration of pension suspension) when applying for resumption of pension payments. These funds are instead accumulated on the PF's account and paid under a separate procedure, to be determined by the CMU. KHPG would like to point out that the CMU has yet to establish this procedure.

Faced with suspended pensions and unpaid pension debts, retired IDPs are forced to protect their rights in court. However, court proceedings take a long time, and even when the verdicts are in favour of IDP pensioners, the State Executive Service of Ukraine is in no hurry to enforce them. The existence of problems with pension suspension is evidenced by the ruling of the SCU Grand Chamber of September 4, 2018 in the administrative case no. 805/402/18¹³⁰.

As for the pension debt for IDPs, the Government is still avoiding paying it. Based on PF's budget, available on its official website¹³¹, only UAH 50,000 was allocated for 2018 for settling pension debts following court decisions, with the same amount allocated for 2019 as well. This leads us to believe that the Government has no intention to comply with court decisions on the payment of pension debts.

As for the Government's arguments on providing IDPs with affordable housing, based on the information KHPG received from the State Specialized Financial Institution "State Fund for Assistance with Housing for Youth" (hereinafter – the Fund)¹³², IDPs are entitled to preferential long-term loans for construction (renovation) and purchase of housing in accordance with the procedure established by CMU Resolution no. 584¹³³. In accordance with this Resolution, IDPs entitled to improvement of their living conditions must reside and be registered in the territory of their local council. An IDP certificate cannot be used to confirm one's place of residence. This causes problems when trying to obtain the preferential loans mentioned by the Government. The Fund also told us that the Law of Ukraine "On the State Budget for 2019" does not provide for funds for preferential loans for construction (renovation) and purchase of housing.

¹²⁷ Information letter from the Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine no. 64/0/108-19/22 of July 23, 2019.

¹²⁸ <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/505-2014-%D0%BF>

¹²⁹ <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/335-2018-%D0%BF>

¹³⁰ <http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/76945461>

¹³¹ <https://www.pfu.gov.ua/1543626-byudzheth-potochnogo-roku/>

¹³² Information letter from the State Specialized Financial Institution "State Fund for Assistance with Housing for Youth" no. 1200/05.3 of July 24, 2019.

¹³³ <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/335-2018-%D0%BF>

Since 2014, there has been a problem with the recognition of birth and death certificates issued by “institutions” of the so-called “LPR” and “DPR” as well as by the authorities that are in effective control of Crimea. In accordance with Ukrainian law, these documents are not recognised by Ukrainian authorities. A court decision is required for the legal recognition of documents issued in non-government-controlled territory, which is a lengthy and complicated process. Meanwhile, the absence of birth certificates and certain other documents limits IDPs’ access to social benefits, education and healthcare, and without death certificates they find it difficult to exercise their right to dispose of, inherit and recover lost property.

Article 11 of the Convention

Question 27. *With reference to the Committee’s previous concluding observations (para. 19) expressing concern about serious overcrowding, inter-prisoner violence, high mortality rates and poor conditions in a number of prisons, please provide updated information on:*

- a) *Measures taken to reduce overcrowding in places of detention, including through greater resort to alternatives to incarceration;*
- b) *Measures taken to reduce inter-prisoner violence, including by improving prison management and reducing the prisoner/staff ratio and ensuring that the internal regulations of penal institutions explicitly prohibit prison staff from designating prisoners with the power to manage other prisoners; and data on the number of investigations undertaken into the instigation by prison staff of inter-prisoner violence, and any resulting prosecutions and convictions;*
- c) *Measures taken to improve material conditions of detention in conformity with the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules), including ensuring that international standards for living space are universally respected;*
- d) *Measures taken to improve the conditions in which detained persons are transported to penitentiary facilities, particularly by rail, and to ensure that persons are not transported in conditions amounting to ill-treatment;*
- e) *Data on the number of investigations into deaths in custody carried out during the reporting period and the number of resulting prosecutions for torture and ill treatment and their outcomes;*
- f) *Whether independent forensic examinations have been allowed in connection with all cases of deaths in custody and whether the results of independent autopsies have been accepted by courts as evidence in criminal or civil cases; (g) Training provided to prison staff and medical personnel on communication with and the managing of inmates and on detecting signs of vulnerability.*

ANSWER TO QUESTION No. 27

Overcrowding of prisons, violence in PIs, material conditions of detention and transfer of prisoners

Amendments to part 5, Art. 72 CC made it so one day of pre-trial detention counts as two days of imprisonment. Over the year and a half after the adoption of this provision, over ten thousand convicts have been released. Thus, the number of convicts has decreased sharply, leading to a reduction in the number of convicts in each PI. To illustrate: at the beginning of 2017, there were 60,399 convicted prisoners in Ukraine, by the end of 2018 — 55,121. There are 131 convicts per 100,000 of the population in Ukraine. This is based on the population of Ukraine as of November 1, 2018, which, according to State Statistics Service, was 42,029 million.

In this regard, in 2018 the CMU passed a decree “On the Procedure for Optimizing the Activities of Pre-Trial Detention Facilities, Penitentiary Institutions and Enterprises of Penitentiary Institutions”. The activities of 17 PIs in total were suspended in accordance with this regulation. The selection of specific institutions for optimization was based on the number of inmates, even though the criterion here should have been material conditions of the premises.

Shostkivska PI no. 66 was among those to be suspended. The institution was designed for 14 blocks, all of which had already been renovated shortly before the suspension. It should be noted that there are plenty PIs in Ukraine with much worse conditions of detention; information about them will be given below. Said

PIs are still working while all inmates of the Shostkivska PI had been relocated, leaving the institution empty¹⁵⁴. Over the past two years, a number of PIs with satisfactory or good conditions of detention have been suspended while many institutions where conditions of detention are not in line with international standards have been ignored¹⁵⁵.

According to the information provided by the MoJ, the funds required for improving living conditions for convicts at SCES facilities in 2015 amounted to UAH 274 million (including UAH 239.2 million of capital costs and UAH 34.8 million of current costs), in 2016 — UAH 470.6 million (including UAH 451.8 million of capital costs and UAH 18.8 million of current costs). The amount of capital and current costs used for these purposes in 2015 was UAH 26.4 million (UAH 6.1 million of capital costs and UAH 20.3 million of current costs), in 2016 — UAH 31.3 million (UAH 3.4 million of capital costs and UAH 27.9 million of current costs)¹⁵⁶. Thus, the budget provided only 2.5% of the funds required for capital expenditures in 2015 and 0.7% in 2016.

In some PIs inmates do not have enough beds, which forces them to take turns sleeping. This practice is still widespread at PTDCs. People held at PTDCs complain about tiny cells (Kharkiv PTDC no. 27), poor lighting, lack of fresh air (Vinnytsia PI no. 1). In some cases, the cells do not have enough tables or even places to sit. Particularly problematic in this regard are the so-called transit cells, where convicts transported between PIs are kept. Constant violations of their rights are often forcing convicts to go on hunger strikes, harm themselves, etc. (Zamkova PI no. 58, Chernihiv PI no. 61). In 2018, courts ordered to force-feed no fewer than five convicts.

Conditions of detention in most PIs are unsatisfactory due to such factors as lack of living space, poor sanitary and material conditions, basement-like cells, poor temperature control and lighting, restricted access to fresh air and drinking water, etc. Proper conditions of detention are generally available only to convicts doing maintenance work, minors and women, as well as privileged persons. Due to extremely limited state funding, PIs are forced to save money on utilities as much as possible, making tap water available for limited amounts of time, purchasing a bare minimum of fuel and stocking up on firewood themselves, as well as keeping industrial areas without heating.

Nutrition standards for convicts adopted by the CMU Resolution no. 336 of June 16, 1992 (hereinafter — Nutrition Standards) do not meet the standards set by the MoH, as required by the European Prison Rules. Nutrition Standards also do not provide for different rations depending on religion, culture or nature of a convict's work (except for those engaged in hard labour). There are also no special norms for people with AIDS, HIV, leprosy, gout, circulatory diseases and other serious illnesses. Para. 2 of the Procedure for the Application of Nutrition Standards for Convicts states that persons with gastrointestinal disorders, on doctor's orders, are to be provided with food based on dietary norms during outpatient treatment. However, no more than 3% of a PI's population get dietary nutrition.

In most PIs, the food has bad organoleptic properties; cooked meals don't have enough meat; food supplies get spoiled because of poor storage conditions yet are still used in cooking. In addition, problems occur with food deliveries to PIs. Thus, at the Dnipro PI no. 4, rations have had no meat for a month now, and there are no potatoes in stock. At the Chornomorska PI no. 79, female convicts had to eat nothing but fish for every meal for almost a month, as there were no meat deliveries, while neighbouring PIs from the very same city (Odesa) did have a supply of meat. In some cases, PIs were getting food of poor quality (Voznesenska Correctional Colony no. 72).

The CPT in its September 6, 2018 report to the Government of Ukraine prepared based on its visit to Ukraine from 8 to 21 December 2017, also brought up the issue of terrible prison food¹⁵⁷. According to the CPT, a large number of convicts, including those undergoing medical treatment (paras. 119 and 120), complain about poor quality of food, lack of its variety as well as food shortages (para. 70). The 2015, 2016 and 2017 US Embassy reports also state that the issue of poor nutrition in Ukrainian prisons remains unresolved¹⁵⁸. The Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights also mentions poor food in PIs in

¹⁵⁴ <http://khpg.org/index.php?id=1537528588>

¹⁵⁵ <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/396-2017-%D0%BF>

¹⁵⁶ http://www.ombudsman.gov.ua/files/Dopovidi/spec_dopov_npm_2016_n.pdf

¹⁵⁷ <https://rm.coe.int/16808d2c2a>

¹⁵⁸ https://photos.state.gov/libraries/ukraine/895/pdf/2015%20HUMAN%20RIGHTS%20REPORT_Ukr.pdf,

https://ua.usembassy.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/151/2017/04/Final-UKRAINE-2016-HRR_Official_Ukr.pdf, https://ua.usembassy.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/151/HHR_2017_Ukr.pdf

the 2017 annual report (paras. 196, 227–229). According to the report, the Nutrition Standards require vegetables, such as cabbage, beets, carrots, onions and cucumbers, to be provided to convicts daily, yet in many PIs inmates get no fresh vegetables at all. The Commissioner also emphasizes the issue of improper application of food substitution provisions, particularly the unjustified and unauthorized change of food products. This food substitution, which by law should only be used in the event of temporary shortages of certain food products, is treated as a general rule, which has resulted in a virtual absence of natural food products on PI menus, particularly protein-rich food, vegetables and fruits. As a result, some convicts essentially rely on the food that they receive from their families in order to survive. Some of them, particularly those held at PTDCs, do not touch the food prepared at these institutions at all.

When brought to court hearings on their cases in courts located in regional centres, people get no dry food rations and are therefore forced to go hungry on these days.

On December 27, 2018, the Government adopted new Nutrition Standards, which are taking effect on January 1, 2020. The new norms do not contain a calculation of the energy value of prison food products. In addition, they state that food substitution is done in order to diversify the prisoners' menu, to comply with doctors' advice or in the absence of other food products in stock. This could open the door to all sorts of abuses by PI administrations, allowing them to change the convicts' menu constantly. In addition, funding for prison nutrition under new standards is done based on what's left in the budget, which is bound to have an adverse effect on the availability and quality of food at PIs.

After amendments were made to the CPC that allowed everyone to visit PIs, including members of public oversight councils operating within regional departments of the penitentiary service as well as assistants of Ukrainian MPs who can bring along members of the press and doctors, our organization has been sending monitors to various PIs since late 2014, revealing numerous violations of convicts' rights. These visits became a source of invaluable first-hand information on the actual state of observance of prisoners' rights. Each visit's details are available to the public on the KHPG website Human Rights in Ukraine: <http://khpg.org>.

A typical example here is the situation with conditions of detention at the Zhovtovodska PI no. 26. None of its blocks meet the required standards. Almost all cells in the residential area are in unsanitary, neglected condition. Dampness is everywhere. Lighting in living quarters is either very poor or non-existent. To get to the residential area, it is necessary to walk down a pitch black corridor and stairs. According to the inmates, lights are usually turned on before dark until bedtime. The residential area has densely packed iron beds with thin mattresses, which are causing inmates back pains. Moreover, the cells are overcrowded.

The walls of some living quarters in the residential area are covered with fungus and mould, as well as traces of moisture leaks. All premises have a strong smell of dampness, making it difficult to breathe, and the inmates have to sleep, eat and do exercises in these dangerous conditions. There were also complaints that the premises are infested with fleas and cockroaches. Only one block had boiled drinking water, others only had tap water. The quality of such water is very low; a cup of it leaves a residue of rust after 24 hours and could even have white worms in summer.

According to the inmates, the temperature in living quarters at night drops to 8–10 °C, or 3–5 °C during winter. This is despite the fact that the PI has its own boiler room for heating. The inmates have to sleep fully clothed and covered with several blankets. Water pipes are all rusty as well as leaking in places, which causes occasional floods.

Bathrooms at the PI are in a terrible state. The faucets don't work properly and the walls are stripped of tiles. The toilet rooms have an unbearable smell. Each block has 4 to 6 toilet cabins, so the inmates have to wait in line to relieve themselves. There are no doors in the toilets and partitions in some blocks are no more than 50 centimetres in height. Plumbing is in disrepair.

According to the prisoners, even cold tap water is provided only for 2 hours a day. As a result, they are forced to collect water in tanks and make do with that. The stench in the toilets is made even worse by the lack of water in the flushing tanks. There is mould on the ceiling and window sills of the mess hall; the mess hall itself has a damp smell. There is no dietary menu, even though the PI has inmates with diabetes and gastrointestinal disorders¹³⁹.

¹³⁹ <http://khpg.org/index.php?id=1552909974>

One month after April 23, 2019, a bill was registered in the Parliament with a proposal to revoke the right of certain parties to visit PIs for oversight and inspection at any time without explicit permission (accreditation), including assistants to Ukrainian MPs as well as members of public oversight councils of the SCES and its territorial units (interregional departments)¹⁴⁰. However, this bill was not adopted before the dissolution of the previous Parliament.

Question 18. *With reference to the Committee's previous concluding observations (para. 16) please describe measures taken during the reporting period to ensure that sufficient staffing and financial resources, including from the State budget, have been provided to ensure the full and effective operation of the national preventive mechanism, in compliance with the Optional Protocol to the Convention. Please indicate how the State party will ensure that the national preventive mechanism is able to undertake preventive visits outside the framework of the investigative work carried out by the Ombudsman's office. Please also provide data on the number of visits to places of detention undertaken by the national preventive mechanism during the reporting period, and provide information on how the resulting recommendations have been implemented.*

Question 28. *Please indicate whether the Parliamentary Commissioner is able to monitor and visit regularly all places of deprivation of liberty and is able to carry out unannounced visits, and provide data on the number of visits carried out by the Parliamentary Commissioner to places of detention during the reporting period.*

ANSWER TO QUESTIONS Nos. 18, 28

The Government mentions in its Report (para. 101) positive changes after the Ombudsman's visits to places of detention, which were noted by the Ombudsman after follow-up visits. However, the Ombudsman's official website has information about horrific conditions at the Khmelnytskyi PTDC, which remained unchanged from 2013 to 2017. Thus, most cells there have no adequate lighting, there is an excessive amount of grates on the windows, the bathrooms are in poor technical condition, and the walls in some cells are damp and covered with fungus. These premises are also not equipped with tanks with boiled drinking water, or supply and exhaust ventilation. Most cells require renovation. Electricity in the facility is used in violation of fire safety rules. People are forced to sleep on the floor¹⁴¹.

In 2017, representatives of the Ombudsman visited the Zhovtovodska PI no. 26, where they discovered unsatisfactory detention conditions and provided appropriate recommendations to the colony's administration¹⁴².

In March 2019, representatives of the KHPG conducted a monitoring visit to this facility and found detainees living in conditions that not only failed to meet proper standards but were clearly incompatible with human dignity¹⁴³.

10 days after KHPG's visit to the colony, the date of a joint visit of the Ombudsman and the KHPG there was agreed on, and even though representatives of the Ombudsman's office arrived at the facility and entered it separately from KHPG members, they later confirmed in their report the shortcomings discovered by the KHPG earlier¹⁴⁴.

On February 28, 2019, representatives of the Ombudsman encountered resistance from the administration of the PI no. 110 in Lviv Region¹⁴⁵.

We can observe the ineffectiveness of the Ombudsman's office in the context of its monitoring visits (the work of the National Preventive Mechanism — NPM), and it manifests in the failure to provide coverage of shortcomings in the observance of the rights of convicts and persons in custody, including cover-

¹⁴⁰ http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=65843

¹⁴¹ <http://www.ombudsman.gov.ua/ua/all-news/all-activity/u-xmelnitskomu-slidchomu-izolyatori-vyazni-splyat-na-pidlozi/>

¹⁴² <http://www.ombudsman.gov.ua/ua/all-news/all-activity/7617-bz-pid-chas-monitoringovogo-vizitu-do-zhovtovodskoi-vipravnoi-koloniii/>

¹⁴³ <http://khp.org/index.php?id=1552909974>

¹⁴⁴ <http://www.ombudsman.gov.ua/ua/all-news/pr/26319-qe-u-zhovtovodskij-vipravnij-koloniii-na-dnipropetrovschini-uvyaznenix-tr/>

¹⁴⁵ <http://www.ombudsman.gov.ua/ua/all-news/pr/predstavnikiv-ofisu-ombudsmana-ne-dopustili-do-vipravnoi-koloniii-na-lvivschini/>

age in the Ombudsman's reports on the results of monitoring visits, as well as in the reluctance to work together with civil society organizations. For instance, when a former member of the ATO was raped in Berdyansk PI no. 77, civil society activists addressed the Ombudsman in regard to the systematic practice of the Berdyansk PI's administration of torturing inmates in order to extort money from them, yet we were told that nothing of the sort was going on at that facility¹⁴⁶.

In 2018, the Kharkiv Institute of Social Research studied NPM's activities, drawing the following conclusions:

"Statistics on visits conducted within the framework of the National Preventive Mechanism show that since its creation, the number of visited places of detention remains critically low and does not exceed 5% of the total. Moreover, some of these visits were repeated visits"¹⁴⁷.

"The weak model of the Ombudsman implemented in Ukraine lacks any serious leverage against perpetrators, aside from public condemnation and open discussion of the issues ... Systemic problems in places of detention are poorly communicated in the public sphere. The Ombudsman has presented virtually no reports before the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine since 2014 and has been presenting too few reports in the media"¹⁴⁸.

In their report¹⁴⁹, the researchers note that they found no evidence of communication between Ukraine's NPM and the SPT, or any examples of cooperation between them. The study also mentions that "there is a constant shortage of funding for visits to places of detention"¹⁵⁰.

Question 29. *Please provide updated information on the activities of the mobile units that inspect penitentiary institutions described in the State party's follow-up report (paras. 68 and 69). In particular, please provide information concerning any allegations of torture or ill-treatment received during these inspections and provide information on remedial steps and/or investigations opened in response to such allegations.*

ANSWER TO QUESTION No. 29

In paras. 68–69 of Ukraine's follow-up report and paras. 163–187 of the Report, the Government provides brief information on the activities of mobile groups tasked with the inspection of PIs, which does not contain essential details of the violations discovered in the course of these inspections.

In addition to the information provided in the Report, we would like to point out the following.

According to the MoJ's official reply, the Ministry's order on the creation of mobile groups for the inspection of PIs became invalid on December 4, 2018. Although the Government claims that members of the public were actively involved in the activities of the mobile groups, this participation was largely in name only, since there was almost no coverage of the selection of members of the public, or of the inspections carried out with their involvement, aside from mentions in official communications.

According to the MoJ, the Directorate of Penitentiary Inspections was established within its structure in 2017 as a unit for internal inspections of SCES bodies and institutions. As of April 2019, 67 prisons were inspected: in 2017 — 25, in 2018 — 32, and 10 so far in 2019. According to the information provided in the follow-up report and the Report, no complaints were received from the inmates and detainees regarding torture or ill-treatment by prison staff during these inspections. Although obtaining information on the observance of human rights in PIs is only one of the tasks of said mobile groups, they should definitely pay more attention to the issue of the rights of convicts when inspecting these institutions.

The PG is also responsible for inspecting PIs¹⁵¹.

¹⁴⁶ <https://www.ukrinform.ua/rubric-regions/2656806-u-berdanskij-kolonii-gvaltuut-ta-katuut-zasudzennih-aktivist.html>

¹⁴⁷ A. Chernousov and others, National Preventive Mechanism against Torture and Ill-Treatment (NPM) in Ukraine. Evaluation of activities. Kharkiv Institute of Social Research, 2018, <https://khisr.kharkov.ua/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Natsional-nyy-preventyvnyy-mekhanizm-proty-katuvan-ta-zhorstokoho-povodzhennia-v-Ukraini-otsinka-diial-nosti-2018.pdf6>, p. 6.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid, p. 7.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid, p. 21.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid, p. 30.

¹⁵¹ Order of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine No. 161 of 20 April 2016 "On Organizing the Activities of Prosecutors on Supervising the Observance of Law in the Execution of Court Judgements in Criminal Cases, as well as in the Application of Other Compulsory Measures Involving Restrictions to Citizens' Liberty", < <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/rada/show/v0161900-16>>.

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS REPORTING CYCLE

According to the PG's reply, their representatives carry out monthly checks in places of detention, including PTDCs, arrest houses, correctional centres, penal colonies and juvenile detention centres.

PG's statistics for 2014-Q1 2019 on inspections of the observance of law in pre-trial detention centres and penitentiary institutions are given in the following table:

	Year	Documents examined on responses of the prosecuting authorities to violations of the law	Persons subjected to disciplinary, administrative or material liability	Criminal proceedings initiated
Pre-trial investigation centres	2014	440	429	14
	2015	338	453	–
	2016	361	429	–
	2017	434	458	–
	2018	460	481	–
	Q1 2019	134	138	–
Arrest houses	2014	18	10	–
	2015	15	7	–
	2016	16	17	–
	2017	19	12	–
	2018	16	10	–
	Q1 2019	1	–	–
Correctional centres	2014	288	335	8
	2015	218	303	–
	2016	186	282	–
	2017	227	320	–
	2018	170	260	–
	Q1 2019	49	58	–
Penal colonies	2014	1,804	2,116	39
	2015	1,527	1,887	–
	2016	1,393	1,746	–
	2017	1,532	1,714	–
	2018	1,328	1,605	–
	Q1 2019	414	552	–
Juvenile detention centres	2014	57	86	–
	2015	38	48	–
	2016	22	30	–
	2017	30	47	–
	2018	17	23	–
	Q1 2019	8	13	–

The PG also provided information on the number of complaints about improper methods of coercion employed by prison administrations that were received in 2014–2018 and during the first quarter of 2019.

Year	Complaints resolved	Complaints satisfied
2014	342	8
2015	168	5
2016	141	2
2017	102	1
2018	58	1
Q1 2019	15	1

Statistics on criminal investigations into crimes committed by SCES employees involving the use of torture and other types of ill-treatment for the first quarter of 2019.

Year	Crimes investigated
2014	115
2015	76
2016	49
2017	41
2018	15
2019	5

Thus, even if we assume that not all the violations discovered during the PG's inspections of PIs were related to torture and other forms of ill-treatment, the above table shows that even according to official data, these incidents are a norm for the Ukrainian penal system.

Of vital importance in revealing the flaws in investigations into acts of torture committed by prison staff are CPT visits and the Government's responses to discovered violations. Thus, during the reporting period, the delegation received a large number of credible complaints from detainees (including minors) in the course of the 2014–2018 visits about the ill-treatment they suffered at the hands of police officers, including hitting, slapping, beatings with batons or filled plastic bottles. In some cases, the ill-treatment was severe enough to be considered torture¹⁵². The delegation also received from detainees a large number of credible statements regarding excessive force used by the police during arrests, instances of ill-treatment, as well as prolonged use of tight handcuffs¹⁵³.

In its acts on responses to these complaints, the Government mentions that criminal proceedings were initiated regarding instances of ill-treatment in PIs. However, not even the Government's reports mention any actual conviction of a government official for these offences. The proceedings were either closed or were never completed¹⁵⁴. Moreover, the Government states in its Report that no complaints of torture or physical abuse of prisoners were received in the course of the above visits¹⁵⁵.

Thus, the State not only fails to comply with the obligation to prevent torture and ill-treatment, but also manipulates information provided in the reports of international organizations.

Question 30. *Please provide data on the number of complaints of torture and ill-treatment received by other independent international and domestic prison monitoring entities during the reporting period, disaggregated by facility, and information on concrete actions taken in response to such complaints. Please indicate if any penitentiary official has been prosecuted for committing reprisals against inmates who complained about their treatment or conditions of detention during the reporting period.*

Question 31. *Please describe the impact of the adoption by the Ministry of Justice of recommendation for improving investigation of allegations of ill-treatment in prisons and pre-trial detention (No. 178/5) as referenced by the State party in its follow-up report (para. 50).*

ANSWER TO QUESTIONS Nos. 30, 31

The issue of acts of violence perpetrated by PI administrations against convicts remains unresolved. According to the MoJ, only one convict complained of torture in 2014, 15 convicts in 2017, 46 in 2018 and

¹⁵² «Report to the Ukrainian Government on the visit to Ukraine carried out by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) from 21 to 30 November 2016», <<https://rm.coe.int/pdf/1680727930>>.

¹⁵³ «Executive summary of the Report to the Ukrainian Government on the visit to Ukraine carried out by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) from 8 to 21 December 2017», <<https://rm.coe.int/16808d2c2a>>.

¹⁵⁴ «Response of the Ukrainian Government to the report of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) on its visit to Ukraine from 8 to 21 December 2017», <<https://rm.coe.int/168093ab47>>.

¹⁵⁵ «Seventh periodic report submitted by Ukraine under article 19 of the Convention pursuant to the optional reporting procedure, due in 2018», para. 170.

77 in 2019. In 2014–2019, MoJ representatives conducted 68 monitoring visits (inspections) to PIs, in the course of which they received no complaints of ill-treatment from the inmates. Since 2014, no member of prison staff has been prosecuted for torturing inmates. In response to our inquiry, the SCES provided the following information on complaints submitted by convicts in 2014–2018 regarding the use of inappropriate methods of coercion¹⁵⁶:

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Complaints received	298	168	141	102	58
Complaints satisfied	2	5	2	1	1

Information about similar complaints received by the PG’s Office, which is responsible for supervising execution of sentences¹⁵⁷:

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Complaints received	1,613	1,664	1,350	1,010	855
Complaints satisfied	23	19	7	15	10

However, this information contradicts media reports as well as facts documented by human rights defenders¹⁵⁸. Thus, according to inmates of the Temnivska PI no. 100, they are effectively barred from filing complaints against the administration out of fear of torture and ill-treatment. This situation is typical for PIs, especially those with stricter security regimes. Inmates that try to complain about the staff’s actions and protect their rights are usually put in higher security blocks. Convicts are also frequently beaten by prison staff for violating regulations, including minor ones (such as loud conversations among inmates).

In 2019, there was a spike in violence, with mass beatings of convicts by special units taking place over a short period of time (several months) in five PIs. At the end of February 2019, instances of mass beatings and degrading of convicts by other inmates — so-called “helpers of the administration” — once again occurred at the Berdyansk PI no. 77. Members of the public and the press visited the Berdyansk PI no. 77 to see the inmates and document torture incidents. The administration helpers there are constantly beating up newcomers among the convicts. Right at the quarantine zone, they are often tied up for several days, beaten several times a day, including on the heels and forced to exercise naked in the cold; they have needles inserted under their fingernails and nails hammered into their feet and hands; there have also been instances of rape. Families of the convicts are forced to pay large sums of “security” money to certain bank accounts to keep their loved ones safe. Recently, in violation of Article 24 CPC, public monitors — assistants of Ukrainian MPs — were not allowed inside the colony on three occasions. A criminal investigation was launched following the complaints of the convicts’ families. with a group of convicts recognized as victims and provided with security measures, as they have become targets of retaliation for complaining about the administration. Still, there is little hope that the investigation will be effective (see comments to questions nos. 12 and 34).

A widespread practice in PIs involves having some inmates supervise others or take action to keep others in line. Thus, there are so-called “order enforcement groups” at the Temnivska PI no. 100, which include inmates selected by the staff. The administration delegates to these inmates the responsibility of keeping other convicts in line and supervising their behaviour, participating in general and personal searches, escorting convicts to the officers on duty if they violate regulations, etc. According to the inmates, the members of these groups are authorized by the administration to use physical and mental violence against other inmates.

In March 6, 2019, a general search was conducted at the Zhovtovodska PI no. 26. At about 10 a.m., armed men in black uniforms, with faces hidden by balaclavas, entered the colony. It is unknown what unit

¹⁵⁶ Information based on SCES’s reply to the KHPG.

¹⁵⁷ Information based on SCES’s reply to the KHPG.

¹⁵⁸ Information based on SCES’s reply to the KHPG.

they belonged to since all they had in terms of identification were chevrons with the letters “ГІІР” (GShR, rapid response team). The punishment block was the first to be searched, then the residential area. At the punishment block, the inmates were simply thrown out of their cells and forced down on the asphalt. Almost every convict was beaten, none of them were even allowed to raise their heads. The assailants used their feet, aiming at various parts of the convicts’ bodies, including their heads, which is strictly forbidden. They also put hoods on the frightened convicts’ heads, put duct-tape over their eyes and stuffed rags into their mouths to keep them from screaming; then, still not allowing them to stand up, shoved them into a vehicle and took them to the Kryvyi Rig PI no. 3 (PTDC). There the convicts were thrown out of the vehicle and dragged down a corridor to their cells while being constantly beaten and humiliated.

The convicts were not allowed to bring anything with them, so most of them lacked clothing and shoes, which they had lost while being dragged across the asphalt. The eleven transported convicts sustained injuries of varying severity. Thus, one had a tooth knocked out, another had damaged ribs. Most of them say that they had bruises on their heads, torso and other parts of their bodies. Doctors never examined them over the week of their stay at the PTDC, waiting perhaps for their injuries to heal so that they could not prove anything later.

At the residential area, convicts were forced out of their cells and against the walls. They were fearing for their lives while the unknown masked men were breaking and destroying everything around. The rapid response team left behind a carnage of broken cabinets and destroyed property of the convicts. Some of the latter were also beaten with batons. According to the victims, the assailants were aiming for their legs, torso and heads. The injuries were noticeable even a week later. The details of these events can be found here¹⁵⁹; the horrific conditions of detention at this PI — here¹⁶⁰.

On April 28, 2019, another incident occurred at the Cherkasy PI no. 62. Two convicts, veterans of war, got drunk and started a fight. As a result, 5 inmates were put in the punishment block, which already had other inmates. On May 3, 2019, a state of emergency was declared at the PI and a rapid response team was brought in, which started beating up the convicts. They were beating everyone, dousing them with water and as well as using tasers on the convicts. 15 convicts were beaten before the assault was stopped by the arrival of human rights activists. Information about the two convicts was entered in the Single Register of Pre-Trial Investigations under Art. 392 CC. On May 27, 2019, unidentified masked men once again entered the punishment block and proceeded to beat the convicts there; about 16 of the convicts later cut their veins, some of them also went on hunger strike.

On May 19, 2019, at the Rivne PTDC, the inmates were banging on the doors and asking to provide immediate medical assistance to one of their cellmates. A rapid response team was brought in instead. The most active truth-sayers were taken to PTDC precincts at penal colonies and criminal charges were brought against them under Art. 391 CC.

On May 27, 2019, news broke out about a riot at the Pivdenna PI no. 51 in Odesa. The media were trying to outdo each other with fake news about hostages, casualties and fugitives, even though no one actually escaped or died. A week later, a rapid response team, masked and combat-ready, was brought in in retaliation, as the riot had long been over, brutally beating up six of the main protesters for defying the administration; for this, the convicts were even brought to the headquarters. Some of the convicts, in fear of being beaten, barricaded themselves inside the residential area and set fire to mattresses in the hope that someone outside the PI’s walls would notice the smoke. The riot was caused by atrocious food as well as the administration’s demands to be paid for allowing convicts to receive parcels from their relatives. In fact, most inmates there mention that everything has a price at this PI. In the evening, the convicts stopped their protest.

On May 22, 2019, a rapid response team entered the Chernihiv PTDC. They searched the cells, causing injuries to several inmates. The injuries were documented and this information was sent to the PG and the police¹⁶¹.

In response to our inquiry, the SCES provided information on criminal investigations into the actions of PI personnel conducted by prosecuting authorities. This information is given in the table below¹⁶²:

¹⁵⁹ <http://khp.org/index.php?id=1552665703>

¹⁶⁰ <http://khp.org/index.php?id=1552909974>

¹⁶¹ <http://khp.org/index.php?id=1559078080>

¹⁶² Information based on SCES’s reply to the KHPG.

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS REPORTING CYCLE

	Article 364 CC (abuse of authority or office)			Article 365 CC (excess of authority or office)			Article 367 CC (professional negligence)			Article 373 CC (compelling testimony)		
	Registered	Indictment issued	Court judgement delivered	Registered	Indictment issued	Court judgement delivered	Registered	Indictment issued	Court judgement delivered	Registered	Indictment issued	Court judgement delivered
2017	0	0	0	23	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
2018	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	0
2019	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0

In some cases, acts of torture resulted in deaths among the convicts. Thus, on February 21, 2019, an inmate died after being in custody at the Vilnianska PI no. 11 for only three days; on the fifth day his mutilated body was returned to his mother. It should be noted that according to the official version, the inmate died of heart failure.

In all the above cases, the victims had filed complaints with the appropriate prosecuting authorities or SBI concerning criminal acts committed against them. However, in most of these cases, no pre-trial investigation was conducted. Moreover, state authorities do not keep separate statistics on persons prosecuted for these types of crimes.

According to the SIHC, the statistics on suicides in PIs and PTDCs is as follows: 2014 – 62 cases, 2015 – 49 cases, 2016 – 58 cases, 2017 – 46 cases. In 2018, the largest number of suicides was committed at the Dnipro PI no. 4. In each case, an official inquiry was conducted into the suicides' circumstances¹⁶³, yet none of these inquiries implicated members of prison staff.

Question 32. *Please describe measures taken to ensure that independent monitors have full, unannounced access to all Security Service of Ukraine facilities, including at Kharkiv, Kramatorsk, Mariupol and Izyum, and provide data on any resulting visits and their outcomes.*

ANSWER TO QUESTION No. 32

In addition to the information provided by the Government, we received a reply from the SSU to our inquiry, in which they state that there is a specially designated temporary detention facility in Kyiv – SSU's Temporary Holding Facility (THF) – that's always open to representatives of various monitoring organizations and that has been visited by numerous monitoring bodies:

- UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine – 16.06.2017, 29.12.2017, 25.04.2018, 05.06.2018, 15.01.2019;
- CPT – 09.09.2014, 29.11.2016, 10.12.2017;
- ICRC – 11.05.2016, 12.05.2016, 09.03.2017, 21-23.03.2017, 07.03.2018, 20.03.2018, 19-20.04.2018, 03.07.2018, 31.08.2018, 03.09.2018, 03-04.10.2018, 07-08.11.2018, 18-19.12.2018, 04-06.02.2019, 09-10.04.2019, 08.05.2019.
- OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine – 30.07.2017.
- European Parliament – 25.04.2018.
- Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights – 03.08.2012, 17.08.2015, 21.09.2015, 06.11.2015, 06.06.2016, 29.07.2016, 04.08.2016, 13.07.2018.
- Secretariat of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights – 20.03.2014, 21.01.2016, 29.02.2016, 26.04.2016, 25.02.2017, 11.08.2017, 16.11.2017, 23.11.2017, 15.02.2018, 27.02.2018, 24.03.2018, 04.04.2018, 08.05.2018, 05.06.2018, 26.07.2018, 09.08.2018, 27.12.2018, 18.02.2019, 20.03.2019, 29.03.2019, 25.04.2019.

Contrary to SSU's information, the reports of international human rights organizations and the media suggest that during the reporting period, the SSU was systematically obstructing access to its institutions

¹⁶³ Information based on MoJ's reply to the KHPG.

for monitoring organizations¹⁶⁴. A number of incidents were reported when international monitoring organizations were denied access to SSU institutions altogether. Thus, SSU's refusal to show the SPT delegation its detention facilities in May 2016 disrupted the visit¹⁶⁵. Referring to SSU's detention facilities, Malcolm Evans, head of the delegation, said that the observers were denied access to places where, based on numerous reports, people were unlawfully detained as well as tortured and subjected to ill-treatment¹⁶⁶.

"The information gathered by human rights organizations that documented victims' testimonies suggests that the unlawfully detained were in some cases transferred to other premises for the duration of the monitoring visits. It is also an outrage that the SSU has not yet publicly acknowledged the issue of places of unlawful detention despite dozens of cases documented by the United Nations Monitoring Mission in Ukraine, Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch."¹⁶⁷

Question 33. *With reference to the Committee's previous concluding observations (para. 20) expressing grave concern at the serious deterioration of health condition in prisons and the increase in mortality of detainees, please provide information on:*

- a) *Whether the State party has taken measures to enhance the independence of health-care staff working in penitentiary facilities from prison administrators and to ensure adequate funding for health care in prisons;*
- b) *Measures taken to ensure that inmates are referred for specialist and outside treatment where required and to ensure that unnecessary limitations are not placed on the outside providers from which inmates may receive medical assistance when required;*
- c) *Measures taken to ensure that appropriate medical treatment is available for detainees with HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis in all penitentiary facilities, and data on the number of inmates who have died of tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS during the reporting period, disaggregated by year and facility, and the results of any investigations into those and other deaths in custody.*

ANSWER TO QUESTION No. 33

Provision of healthcare to convicts is one of the most urgent problems in the penal system. During the monitoring visits to PIs (see comment to question 27), we were able to find out the actual state of penitentiary healthcare, and our findings differ greatly from the information provided by the Government.

In September 2016, we visited an interregional hospital that services the Buchaniv PI no. 85 in Kyiv Region and found a number of violations there, such as serious violations of sanitary requirements, poor nutrition for sick convicts, virtual lack of walks in the open for them, especially for those unable to move around on their own, poor organization of medical care, and most importantly, lack of proper medical treatment, or even medical protocols established by the MoH. Thus, it is the convicts, not medical personnel, that administer medical injections and even intravenous therapy to each other. In one particular case, a convict with obvious signs of a mental disorder had been kept with other convicts and died shortly after our visit. We sent a petition to the MoJ regarding these violations, yet the Ministry essentially chose to ignore it, deeming the above shortcomings to be minor, and refused to conduct a formal inquiry into the matter¹⁶⁸.

Following the reform of penitentiary healthcare in July 2018, our monitors once again visited this hospital, which had been renamed Multidisciplinary Hospital of the SIHC, and found the same problems, only compounded by a catastrophic shortage of doctors and medicines¹⁶⁹.

¹⁶⁴ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mpvvZM_yycU

¹⁶⁵ OHCHR Report on the human rights situation in Ukraine, 16 August to 15 November 2016.

¹⁶⁶ "You don't exist." Arbitrary detentions, enforced disappearances and torture in the east of Ukraine», <<https://www.hrw.org/uk/report/2016/07/21/292289>>.

¹⁶⁷ Visit of the UN SPT to SSU premises: Subcommittee's report and comments of human rights defenders, <https://human-rights.org.ua/material/vizit_pidkomitetu_oon_do_primishhen_sbu_zvit_vidomstva_ta_dumki_pravozahisnikiv>.

¹⁶⁸ <http://khp.org/index.php?id=1495012193&w=%D0%B0%D0%BA%D1%82+%D0%BF%D0%BE+%D0%91%D0%92%D0%9A%5C-85>

¹⁶⁹ <http://khp.org/index.php?id=1531552900&w>

The penitentiary healthcare reform mentioned by the Government has actually made the situation worse for convicts. There are, of course, objective reasons for this, such as insufficient funding for penitentiary healthcare (50%), medical units requiring renovation (and no funding for it), lack of equipment (only 30% provided), with 70% of what's available being outdated. However, this is not the main problem. Most medical units in PIs, multidisciplinary as well as specialized hospitals of the SIHC, lack specialists. The shortage of medical staff in PIs is not a new problem, yet it remains very urgent to this day. According to the SIHC, as of late September 2018, the shortage of personnel amounted to about one-third, 40% of them doctors. Currently, the availability of doctors is approximately 70%, with only 80% of them having a qualification category¹⁷⁰. In some institutions, the situation is critical¹⁷¹: some of them have only the heads of medical units; at the medical unit of the Dnipro PTDC (no. 4), there is only one paramedic to service 1,700-1,800 convicts, which makes it impossible to even visit the convicts to check up on their health, let alone treat them all. According to the SIHC, as of May 2019, Ukrainian PIs had a staffing list of 2,559, of which 885.25 were doctors. Vacancies constituted 832.25 staff units, with 336.25 of those being for doctors¹⁷².

Of course, the removal of medical workers from the list of law enforcement officers at their respective institutions, as well as the fact that they are no longer subordinate to administrations of PIs are positive steps, but in many cases this "independence" is imaginary. SCES healthcare institutions are located on the premises of their respective PIs and are thus required to obey the administrations' rules regarding the regime, monitoring of convicts and security; the heads of these healthcare institutions must be present at meetings held by PI wardens; they must submit requests to the administrations in order to transfer convicts to civilian hospitals or to use vehicles for this, etc. For these reasons, the Government's claims of independence in decision-making concerning the treatment of convicts (see para. 200 of the Report) are an exaggeration.

SIHC's activities are extremely opaque. The official SCES website¹⁷³ has no information about the work of this agency, including its structure, data on purchases of medicines and medical equipment, disease statistics, mortality among convicts or contact information of SIHC's branches and structural units (hospitals and medical units). There are also no lists of regional healthcare facilities that provide medical assistance to convicts.

After penitentiary healthcare had been made the responsibility of an independent state agency, the heads of PTDCs and PCs assumed that they were no longer responsible for the life and health of convicts, although no such changes had been made to legislation, nor could they have been made. In practice, this attitude has resulted in situations when PC or PTDC administrations refuse to consider petitions, complaints and requests for medical assistance submitted by convicts, their families and lawyers. SCES healthcare facilities at PIs do not have their own communication channels, so all communication goes through the management of the appropriate SIHC branch, which significantly complicates and delays the provision of medical care to sick convicts.

Even with all these objective factors, the main problem still lies in the attitude of prison doctors toward the health of convicts. Based on our monitoring visits, low quality of healthcare, or even its absence in some places, are the main things that the convicts complain about in almost every PI. Patients have to wait for weeks to be examined by a doctor, let alone for their treatment; moreover, they are told to buy medicines at their own expense — those needed for medical operations as well as those for general use¹⁷⁴. Convicts are often forced to put bandages on themselves¹⁷⁵. Our monitoring shows that a year and a half after the launch of the penitentiary healthcare reform the state of healthcare in prisons is catastrophic, and in some institutions healthcare is simply non-existent. The provision of medical care to convicts suffering from serious illnesses is also poor. Thus, no help was provided to a patient with hepatitis C (Dnipro PI no. 4), cancer patient (Dnipro PI no. 4), tuberculosis patient (Chernihiv PTDC)¹⁷⁶. Some SCES healthcare institutions still have

¹⁷⁰ Presentation of Ukraine's Deputy Minister of Justice Denys Chernyshov on 25/04/2019.

¹⁷¹ <http://khp.org/index.php?id=1543315523&w>

¹⁷² Information based on SCES's reply to the KHPG.

¹⁷³ <https://www.kvs.gov.ua/peniten/control/main/uk/index>

¹⁷⁴ <http://khp.org/index.php?id=1472626296&w=%E2%84%96>

¹⁷⁵ <http://khp.org/index.php?id=1543315523&w>

¹⁷⁶ KHPG Database of Applications for Legal Aid

no medical license, so there is no guarantee that their activities meet licensing standards (Lviv PI no. 19). A similar situation can be observed at the Zakarpatska PI no. 9, Chortkiv PI no. 26, Kropyvnytskyi PTDC, Pyatykhatska PI no. 122 and other institutions)¹⁷⁷.

In February 2019, during the visit of our monitors to the Zhovtovodsk PI no. 26 in Dnipropetrovsk Region, it was discovered that the medical unit there lacked the most essential medicines; one of the convicts complained that they did not even have bandages. Diabetes patients there are not receiving insulin and convicts with fractured bones get no splints. Although the PC has a medical laboratory specialist, the laboratory itself has neither the reagents nor the equipment for on-site tests. In order to examine a convict, specialized examinations or dental care included, they must be taken outside the colony, but this is only done for those who can afford the cost of gasoline. There has been no fluorography specialist for over a year at the colony, so the convicts have not been undergoing fluorography, while it was later discovered that a person released from the institution had an open form of tuberculosis¹⁷⁸. According to the institution's therapist, not all medicines are provided free of charge under state programs. As a result, those convicts who can afford their own medication are prescribed more expensive drugs, which are not available at the medical unit, while those who can't are treated with whatever is available¹⁷⁹.

In August 2019, our monitors visited the Dnipro Multidisciplinary Hospital no. 4 located on the premises of the Dnipro PI no. 4. During the visit, we discovered that no treatment was being provided to sick convicts, including those who had survived myocardial infarction. According to the doctors, they do not even have enough basic medicines, let alone specialized ones. If a convict has relatives, they are often the ones to buy the medicines. The institution's doctors do not monitor their patients' health, they do not perform daily rounds and do not even visit convicts when called. It is impossible for the convicts to get examined by a doctor, and their complaints to the administration are useless. If a convict requires additional tests that cannot be performed at the institution, this is either not done at all or done after a considerable delay. One of the patients who had been brought a long way to be treated there was forced to forgo treatment under threat of physical violence. According to the convicts, this way the hospital makes room for those who pay for their stay and remain there for months even when they have no need for treatment¹⁸⁰. According to a lawyer who provides legal assistance to two seriously ill convicts held at this facility, both of these convicts are kept in regular cells and are not getting any medical help. One of the inmates, disabled since childhood, had his spleen removed as a child and suffers from hepatitis C as well as liver cirrhosis; 1.80 m tall, he cannot eat and weighs 50–55 kg. In spite of this, he is still unable to get a place at the prison hospital. Another inmate, with a temporary orthopedic plate inside his tibia, has developed a purulent process that could result in abscess and loss of limb or even death. Our organization has appealed to the MoJ, PG and the Ombudsman regarding this, but to no avail.

Complaints lodged with investigating judges under Article 206 CPC by persons held in pre-trial detention facilities that are not being provided with medical care despite requiring it, are not particularly effective either, since prison doctors and administrations in the vast majority of cases fail to comply with court orders requiring them to provide such care, or, at the very least, delay its provision indefinitely.

In para. 204 of the Report, the Government mentions that Article 116 CPC allows convicts to receive medical advice and treatment at civilian healthcare facilities, which is in line with every person's right to choose their doctor. At the same time, receiving medical services in civilian healthcare institutions, except for specific ones determined for each Ukrainian region, is only done at the expense of the convicts themselves or their relatives. Given the extreme shortage of medical personnel and, what's even more important, medical equipment, as well as the poor selection of medicines, the need for treatment outside SCES institutions or for "civilian" medical examinations arises quite often, since the penitentiary healthcare system is often incapable of carrying out examinations and treatment of inmates. Thus, this approach to treatment is discriminatory toward low-income convicts who cannot afford paid medical services. Moreover, given the limited capacity of Ukrainian penitentiary healthcare to provide treatment to convicts, depriving them of an opportunity to receive treatment in civilian hospitals in many cases means depriving them of their only

¹⁷⁷ http://www.ombudsman.gov.ua/files/Dopovidi/spec_dopov_npm_2016_n.pdf

¹⁷⁸ <http://khpg.org/index.php?id=1531552900&w>

¹⁷⁹ <http://khpg.org/index.php?id=1553780490&w>

¹⁸⁰ <http://khpg.org/index.php?id=1565960227>

chance to survive. Only a small number of inmates, such as VIPs like the former Prime Minister of Ukraine Yulia Tymoshenko (ECtHR judgement of 30/04/2013)¹⁸¹ or famous businessman and leader of the political party “UKROP” G. Korban (ECtHR judgement of 04/07/2019)¹⁸² can take advantage of these opportunities.

In paras. 204, 205 of the Report, the Government claims that PI medical units are provided with medicines for the treatment of convicts suffering from tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS. However, we are regularly contacted by convicts and their families who complain about poor medical treatment for HIV-positive inmates. In some cases, no treatment is provided at all, or it is inappropriate for the patient’s HIV type, or the ART therapy conflicts with anti-tuberculosis therapy, which forces patients to stop taking ART medication. Some convicts have a CD4 cell count of 50-100 or even lower than 20. Given below is the information from the reports we have received in 2019 regarding the absence of treatment for HIV-positive convicts.

At the Kamyansk PI no. 101, the administration failed to comply with a court order to conduct a medical examination of a patient with IV clinical stage HIV in order to determine his CD4 cell count. At the Oleksiyivska PI no. 25, a convict with IV clinical stage HIV was forced to perform manual labour and was not provided with any treatment, which made him contact us for legal aid. At the Dnipro Multidisciplinary Hospital no. 4, a convict was discovered who has IV clinical stage HIV as well as hepatitis B and C and is not getting the treatment he needs¹⁸³.

Given below are specific cases of poor healthcare in PIs over the 2014–2019 period, which illustrates the general state of penitentiary healthcare in Ukraine.

1. A woman, sentenced for selling drugs, who suffers from IV clinical stage HIV and cancer, was not provided with timely cancer treatment in 2014–2015 at the Zbarazh Correctional Colony no. 63 in Ternopil Region or at the penitentiary service hospitals. In addition, according to the ECtHR, Ukraine failed to comply with the Court-ordered interim measures, namely to carry out an immediate examination of the woman and provide the required treatment¹⁸⁴.

2. A man with viral hepatitis C, held at the Kirovograd PTDC no. 14 for selling drugs, was not provided with proper systematic medical supervision or a treatment plan for his hepatitis. In this case, Ukraine also failed to comply with the ECtHR’s order to provide treatment to the patient¹⁸⁵.

3. A man, sentenced to 14 years in prison for premeditated murder, developed Buerger’s disease while serving his sentence, which resulted in eventual amputation of two lower and two upper extremities. In addition, the convict was suffering from hypertension, coronary heart disease and other conditions, as well as had survived a heart attack. Naturally, he could not take care of himself, while his transportation to and from the hospital, given his inability to sit on his own, was done in a way that not only constitutes inhuman and degrading treatment, but is also shocking in its cruelty — he was tied to a toilet. Since June 2015, for two years, the courts had been unwilling to release the convict on the grounds of a serious illness, although doctors warned that his treatment could not be effective in prison and that further detention could kill him. Finally, after an application for interim measures had been submitted to the ECtHR requesting to provide proper treatment and care for the convict, a district court ordered his release in July 2017. The man died three weeks later.

4. A 53-year-old man had been held at the Chernihiv PTDC since July 2016. In September 2016 he had a myocardial infarction and was diagnosed with a number of cardiovascular conditions, including class II heart failure. In February 2017, doctors at a civilian hospital found that the man’s health was at risk and that he had to take a cardiac ventriculography test, which had to be done in Kyiv and cost 4,000 UAH. Over the course of his detention, an ambulance had to be called for him 12 times, including, in April 2017, during a court hearing, after which the man’s lawyer sent an application for interim measures to the ECtHR with a request to force the Government to provide proper medical treatment to his client. The ECtHR had to repeat

¹⁸¹ <https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng#%7B%22appno%22:%5B%2249872/11%22%5D%2C%22documentcollectionid%22:%5B%22JUDGMENTS%22%2C%22itemid%22:%5B%22001-119382%22%5D%7D>

¹⁸² <https://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng#%7B%22appno%22:%5B%2226744/16%22%5D%2C%22documentcollectionid%22:%5B%22JUDGMENTS%22%2C%22itemid%22:%5B%22001-194188%22%5D%7D>

¹⁸³ <http://khpg.org/index.php?id=1565960227>

¹⁸⁴ <http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng?i=001-167128>

¹⁸⁵ <http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng?i=001-166965>

its instruction after the Government had ignored the first one. In October 2017, the restraining measure for the applicant was changed and he was able to take the necessary tests in Kyiv¹⁸⁶.

5. In 2017, a woman with two children, a 1.5-month-old and a 5-year-old, was arrested at her home by the police on suspicion of fraud, taken away from her children and brought straight to the investigating judge, who chose detention as her pre-trial restraining measure. The woman has a history of mental problems and after several months at the Zhytomyr PTDC she was diagnosed with a psychiatric disorder that was progressing rapidly. The lawyer's request for the court to change the restraining measure was denied. As a result, the patient's condition became so severe that she became incapable of communication, displayed aggressive behaviour and lost all self-control. She was transferred to a psychiatric hospital for inpatient treatment; on her way there, she was brutally beaten by escorting officers for disobeying commands. After her restraining measure had expired, the woman was discharged from the hospital, but she still has not fully recovered and periodically undergoes inpatient treatment in a psychiatric hospital.

6. A man with stage IV HIV as well as urolithiasis has been serving his sentence since March 2017 at the Sofia PI no. 45 in Dnipropetrovsk Region. Experiencing terrible pain and unable to move, he was recommended immediate surgery by doctors. In summer 2018, the patient was taken to a multidisciplinary hospital but was not operated on, which by November 2018 made his condition life-threatening. The lawyer filed an application for interim measures with the ECtHR. After the ECtHR ordered the Government to provide the necessary treatment to the patient in accordance with medical recommendations, the man finally underwent surgery.

7. In the summer of 2017, a 19-year-old girl, HIV-positive since childbirth and disabled since childhood, who also suffers from tuberculosis of peripheral lymph nodes, was placed in a PTDC on the orders of the investigating judge. On admission to the PTDC she underwent a tomography scan, which revealed lymphadenopathy (enlarged lymph nodes), which required further examination in a hospital, including a biopsy. Nothing of the sort was done though and the girl had been treated for pulmonary tuberculosis over the course of six months, even though she had tested negative for it. Finally, the required examination at an oncology clinic in January 2018 revealed a lymphoma, which had already progressed to stage II-B. However, even after the cancer diagnosis, she had been deprived of treatment for three more months, among other things, because of lack of means to take her to the oncology clinic. When the girl started chemotherapy at the end of April 2018, instead of the four drugs that she had been prescribed by doctors she was given only one. In August 2018, she underwent therapy involving two drugs. From September 2018 to January 2019, the treatment was once again halted, among other things, due to signs of toxic hepatitis in the patient after chemotherapy sessions, as she was not provided in time with hepatoprotection drugs and other medicines at the PTDC required for post-chemotherapy recovery¹⁸⁷.

8. A 27 year old man serving his sentence at the Starobabanivska PI no. 92 in Cherkasy Region was diagnosed with nodular goitre class III-IV in September 2018 at a multidisciplinary hospital located on the premises of the Lviv PI no. 19, and was recommended immediate surgery. The tumour was impeding his breathing, he felt constant dizziness and a burning sensation in the heart area, yet he was brought back to the penal colony instead of undergoing the operation there and then. He was told to undergo additional examinations at civilian healthcare facilities at his own expense before surgery. In the end, the convict's mother found a civilian hospital that removed the tumour in January 2019.

With healthcare like this, the quality of medical records cannot be much better. Indeed, when no medical care is provided at all, such records (falsified) only appear in patients' medical records when legal proceedings are initiated concerning the negligence of prison doctors, such as proceedings at the ECtHR. Thus, the poor quality of medical records was mentioned in ECtHR judgements in the cases *Sergiy Smirnov v. Ukraine*¹⁸⁸ and *Beketov v. Ukraine*¹⁸⁹.

In early 2018, there was a measles outbreak in Ukraine that also reached PIs, particularly the Vilnianska PI no. 11, Khmelnytskyi PTDC and Dnipro PI no. 4. Despite this, no measures were taken to prevent its spread among inmates (such as vaccinations or tests to determine immunity levels), and the very fact of the outbreak had

¹⁸⁶ <http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng?i=001-189592>

¹⁸⁷ <http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng?i=001-194008>

¹⁸⁸ <http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng?i=001-188382>

¹⁸⁹ <http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng?i=001-190025>

been denied by the SCES for a long time. Due to the risk of an epidemic and given the PIs' low capacity to deliver a proper diagnosis, as well as poor detention conditions and nutrition there, our organization in March 2019 appealed to the MoJ and the Ombudsman to take action to prevent a measles epidemic. In May 2019, a group of convicts got infected at the Starobabanivska PI no. 92 in Cherkasy Region. However, the Main Interregional Directorate of the SCES replied to our petition sent on Facebook with a joke: "... thing is, people do tend to get sick sometimes"¹⁹⁰.

We would like to emphasize the following aspects of violations of the convicts' right to healthcare:

- absence, in the overwhelming majority of cases, of dietary nutrition for those that need it, as required by medical protocols, particularly in the case of gastrointestinal diseases, diabetes mellitus or hepatitis (see comment to question 27);
- prisoners in the final stages of a terminal illness are not provided with palliative care;
- transportation of convicts, especially those that (under Ukrainian regulations) must be escorted by a medical worker, is done in such poor conditions that it was repeatedly recognised by the ECtHR as inhuman or degrading treatment¹⁹¹. Furthermore, during transportation, sick convicts are only provided with the most basic medical care since their medical history files are sealed for the duration of the trips and may not be opened before they reach their destination, aside from special cases and only in the presence of a prosecutor;
- when guarding sick convicts at a civilian hospital, escorting officers chain them to their beds, even those in critical condition, despite their being extremely physically impaired and unable to move on their own. Unjustified or excessive use of restraints on gravely ill convicts has been repeatedly recognized by the ECtHR as inhuman or degrading treatment in cases against Ukraine¹⁹²; restraints were even used on a woman giving birth¹⁹³. Nevertheless, such practices still remain in Ukraine's penitentiary system. Also, as our monitors learned from conversations with SCES employees, after changes to the regulatory documents on supervision and security (which are not open to the general public), 7 escorting officers are now required instead of 4 for escorting one convict. This means that now two cars instead of one are necessary to take a convict from a PI to a hospital, which doubles the organizational and financial effort. All these escorts remain at the medical institution, complicating, if not paralyzing, the work of certain parts of said institution for the duration of the convict's stay there. These excessive security measures obviously exacerbate the existing difficulties with transporting convicts to civilian medical institutions;
- inappropriate conditions of detention for convicts with disabilities, which often reach levels of inhuman treatment. Thus, few rooms in PIs have ramps. Some of these convicts are unable to dress themselves. One of them was put in a punishment cell¹⁹⁴ because he stopped wearing his prison uniform since he couldn't fasten the buttons. Also, it is virtually impossible to get the disabled status for those who have been awaiting their sentence at a pre-trial detention facility, because, in situations like these, legislation only allows for such status to be granted to convicted persons.

Issues with the release of convicts on the grounds of a serious illness

Release of convicts suffering from a serious illness constitutes yet another problem. There are several aspects to this issue: shortage of special medical commissions in the system that determine whether a convict has an illness that makes him or her eligible for such release; PI administrations' reluctance to refer inmates to these commissions; as well as corruption in the system. However, the biggest issue is with the approach of Ukrainian judges toward such release, since, after receiving the conclusion of a special medical commission on whether a convict has an illness from the appropriate lists, the judges take into account the same circumstances as with release on parole, even though their defendants are either at the final stage

¹⁹⁰ <http://khp.org/index.php?id=1559041136>

¹⁹¹ <http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng?i=001-167128;>
<http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng?i=001-141632>

¹⁹² <http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng?i=001-117134;>
<http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng?i=001-158963>

¹⁹³ <http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng?i=001-161543>

¹⁹⁴ <http://khp.org/index.php?id=1543315523&w>

of a terminal illness or have lost the ability to survive on their own (such as in the case of full blindness or loss of limbs). Unfortunately, when deciding whether to release a person on the grounds of a serious illness, Ukrainian courts still use the guidelines (amended)¹⁹⁵ of the Plenum of the Supreme Court of Ukraine of 1973, according to which in such cases it is necessary, in addition to the opinion of a medical commission, to consider the gravity of the convict's crimes, his behaviour while serving his sentence, his attitude toward labour, as well as how well he has been reformed, rather than the ECtHR's perspective expressed in the judgement to the case *Yermolenko v. Ukraine (para. 51)*¹⁹⁶:

"There are three particular elements to be considered in relation to the compatibility of an applicant's health with being in detention: (a) the medical condition of the prisoner, (b) the adequacy of the medical assistance and care provided in detention; and (c) the advisability of maintaining the detention measure in view of the state of health of the applicant." Also, according to the ECtHR, "given the absolute prohibition of torture, inhuman and degrading treatment, it is not acceptable that the compatibility of the applicant's state of health with his detention was assessed solely by reference to an exclusive list of diseases and without any appropriate review by national judicial authorities." (ibid., para. 61). In Ukrainian realities, however, a person has no chance of being released if his or her condition is not on the appropriate lists.

As a result of this disregard for the health and life of convicts demonstrated by prison doctors, administrations and, most importantly, judges, most of the sick prisoners die in prison because of the absence of treatment, palliative care in their last days, or any care at all, while those fortunate enough to be released do not live long afterwards.¹⁹⁷

Mortality rates in PIs

SIHC has a peculiar approach to statistics on mortality rates: convicts that die in civilian hospitals are counted separately. Thus, by transferring terminally ill convicts to a civilian hospital, the penitentiary system artificially lowers mortality rates, using such terminology as "deaths on PI premises". The statistics we received from the SIHC differs greatly from those provided by the Government in the Appendix to para. 198 of its Report:

Statistic/Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Number of deaths on PI premises	264	166	172	197	209

When a convict is taken to a civilian hospital and dies there, this is not included in the statistics on mortality at PIs. Convicts in the final stages of a terminal illness are taken to civilian hospitals on purpose in order to reduce mortality rates.

Here are some examples of poor healthcare provision to convicts that resulted in their death.

1. At the Kharkiv PTDC, 5 people died between May and mid-August 2016, 4 of them from gastrointestinal disorders. Representatives of the Ombudsman have launched an investigation into this, but so far it has been unsuccessful.

2. In the spring of 2016, in Kyiv, the police arrested a 25-year-old young man suffering from IV stage HIV and tortured him, after which he was taken, on court order, to the Kyiv PTDC. Feverish, slipping in and out of consciousness, he was provided with symptomatic treatment while his health continued to deteriorate. By April 2017 he became too weak to walk or speak. By the summer of 2017, he was unable to eat and remained in a vegetative state, but the court still denied the lawyer's request to change the restraining measure. The young man died in August 2017. The investigation into his death was initiated only after a complaint had been filed with the investigating judge concerning police inaction. However, responsibility for this investigation has been delegated from one body to another and nothing has actually been done about it.

3. In the summer of 2016, three inmates died in the course of 1.5 months at the Kachanivska Female Correctional Colony no. 54; an ambulance was called in all three cases but it was too late to save the women.

¹⁹⁵ <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/v0008700-73>

¹⁹⁶ <http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng?i=001-114468>

¹⁹⁷ KHPG Strategic Litigation Database.

One of these cases involved some unknown injection administered by a colony nurse. According to other inmates, at least three other women died in the past as a result of inadequate medical care provided by the same nurse. Special proceedings were initiated by the Ombudsman’s Office in this regard, as well as a criminal investigation into medical malpractice, yet no one has been held accountable.

4. In May 2017, at the Temnivska PI no. 100 in Kharkiv Region, a Belarusian national died of cancer, with which he had been diagnosed only at the 4th stage of it, 3 weeks before his death.

5. In September 2017, three convicts died at the Specialized Tuberculosis Hospital of the Kherson Correctional Colony no. 61. Earlier each of them had applied for release on the grounds of a serious illness, but none lived long enough to see the outcome.

6. In 2018, at the Dnipro PTDC (PI no. 4), a convict who had a heart condition (thrombus in the heart, lower extremity ischemia with obstructed blood flow) that resulted in gangrene and sepsis was treated for purulent abscesses and phlegmons but did not undergo amputation, which caused his death. A criminal investigation into his death was launched at the lawyer’s request, yet nothing is being done in this regard.

7. A man had been serving his sentence at the Dnipro PI no. 89 for robbery since 2014. He had a musculoskeletal disorder as well as tuberculosis. In 2015, he was granted the 2nd degree disability status, in 2016 – 1st degree disability; he had to use a wheelchair to move around and required constant care. In the spring of 2017, his lawyer filed a petition for the man’s release on the grounds of his condition. By that time, the 1.8 m tall convict weighed 53 kg. At the time, special medical commissions that determine whether a person’s condition is on the appropriate List¹⁹⁸ were not working due to the ongoing penitentiary health-care reform. The first instance court, in defiance of the appellate court, denied the application twice. In April 2019 the patient died, 2 weeks before his release.

Convicts with mental issues have also died under circumstances that suggest unsatisfactory provision of healthcare to and generally poor treatment of sick convicts:

In October 2017, after being brought from the Lutsk PTDC in critical condition, a 25-year-old young man who had been sentenced to a 6 months’ arrest died of toxic hepatitis. The convict was suffering from drug and alcohol addiction and often had to undergo inpatient psychiatric treatment prior to his detention. During his detention at the PTDC, the young man had an epileptic seizure; an ambulance was called and he was provided with emergency care, but then, despite his mental issues, he was still taken to the PTDC. The convict’s health there sharply deteriorated – he was having hallucinations, having conflicts with his cellmates, speaking something unintelligible, shouting, throwing himself at the walls and doors as well as exhibiting aggressive behaviour – he was having delirium tremens. The young man was then put in a 1.5 square meters solitary cell and given neuroleptic and sedative drugs. He died two days later. The criminal proceedings initiated after his death were closed by the investigator due to the absence of signs of a crime, against which the lawyer subsequently filed a complaint with the investigating judge;

In August 2018, one convict killed another at the Lukyanivskyi PTDC’s medical unit in Kyiv, in a ward for people with mental disorders.

In the Appendix to para. 198 of its Report, the Government provides the following statistics on deaths in PIs (including the convicts who died in civilian hospitals), which is quite different from the one given above:

Statistic	2014	2015	2016	2017
Number of deaths in pre-trial detention facilities (number of deaths in civilian hospitals)	127 (58)	103 (44)	126 (53)	164 (80)
Number of deaths in penal colonies (number of deaths in civilian hospitals)	666 (174)	407 (130)	397 (132)	404 (164)
Total number of deaths	793	510	523	568

The Government claims that the number of deaths in PIs in 2015–2017 remained almost the same or was 40% lower than in 2014. However, if we take into account the fact that the number of convicts has de-

¹⁹⁸ In June 2019, KHPG sent an open petition to the Minister of Justice concerning the absence of special medical commissions**

creased more than by half since 2014, the mortality rates in 2015–2017 actually increased by almost 40% according to the figures¹⁹⁹ that correspond to those of the Government in absolute terms:

Statistic	2003	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Deaths	824	1169	1,021	911	792	510	523	568
Per 1,000 convicts	4.30	7.59	6.94	7.18	10.79	7.29	8.66	9.95

Furthermore, even according to the Government's figures, the number of deaths in PTDCs went up in 2017 compared to 2014, and if we account for the decrease in the number of persons held at PTDCs, the mortality rates in PTDCs at least tripled.

The different SCES statistics on mortality rates can be further explained by the absence of publicly available official statistics on illnesses and deaths among the convicts, which had been available on the agency's official website in the past.

Violations of the right of convicts not to be subjected to torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment found by the ECtHR.

Almost all types of violations of the right of detainees to healthcare mentioned in this comment have been recognized by the ECtHR as violations of Article 3 ECHR in its judgements in cases against Ukraine. **The number of persons recognized by the ECtHR as victims of Ukraine's violation of Article 3 ECHR in the context of inadequate healthcare provision to persons held in penitentiary facilities over 7 months of 2019 is greater than that for the 5 previous years (2014–2018).** The ECtHR has started consolidating applications concerning these issues into larger cases and considering them jointly without studying their specific circumstances. Thus, in ECtHR's judgement in the case *Korol and Others v. Ukraine* (no. 54503/08 and 7 others, judgement of 7 March 2019), the ECtHR examined 8 applications at the same time²⁰⁰.

Statistic/Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	7 months of 2019
Number of judgements in cases against Ukraine where Ukraine was found to be in violation of the right not to be subjected to torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment/number of victims	1/1	6/6	4/4	2/2	4/4	12 /20

The 2019 judgements concern violations that took place in 2016–2017 and 2017–2018, that is, after the penitentiary healthcare reform. It should also be noted that ever since its decision in the case *Nevmerzhtsky v. Ukraine* (decision on admissibility of 30/03/2004, application no. 54825/00), the ECtHR has consistently considered complaining of inadequate medical treatment to prosecuting authorities an ineffective domestic remedy²⁰¹. Eventually the ECtHR decided that Ukraine lacks any effective mechanisms of protection against violations of the right to healthcare, including judicial ones. This is evidenced by numerous instances when PI administrations do not even comply with court orders to provide convicts with the medical care they require. Thus, an incident like this recently happened at the Kharkiv PTDC, where the medical service once again failed to comply with a court order to provide treatment to a convict with spine problems.

A lawyer once managed to convince an administrative court to declare the negligence of a PI's administration unlawful and to obligate it to provide proper treatment to his client. This, unfortunately, is a rare occurrence, and besides, the convict had already received required treatment by the time the court reached a decision.

In the summer of 2019, the Vilnyanskyi District Court of Zaporizhia Region ordered a medical examination following the request of a convict, who has HIV, hepatitis C and tuberculosis, to be released from the Kamyansk PI no. 101. However, so far the institution has failed to comply with the court order.

¹⁹⁹ <http://ukrprison.org.ua/statistics/1533198157>

²⁰⁰ <http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng?i=001-191359>

²⁰¹ <http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/eng?i=001-61685>

Articles 12 and 13

Question 34. *With reference to the Committee's previous concluding observations (para. 10), please provide updated information on:*

- a) *Efforts to establish a genuinely independent complaints mechanism to receive allegations of torture and ill-treatment, and to ensure that persons who have complained are protected from reprisal, and data on the number of complaints of torture and ill-treatment received by any such mechanism during the period under review;*
- b) *Whether an independent monitoring and oversight mechanism has been established to ensure that prompt, effective and impartial pretrial criminal investigations are carried out into all allegations of torture and ill-treatment by law enforcement officials;*
- c) *Whether the State party has created a State Bureau of Investigation as planned and, if so, data on the number of cases in which this body has investigated allegations of torture or ill-treatment or complicity in or acquiescence to such conduct by high-ranking officials during the reporting period, as well as information on the outcome of any such investigations;*
- d) *Whether the State party has taken measures to ensure that prosecution authorities are promptly notified about injuries identified on detainees in temporary holding facilities;*
- e) *Whether the State party has carried out investigations into video recordings that have appeared on semi-official websites showing confessions obtained under duress and without access to legal counsel.*

ANSWER TO QUESTION No. 34

The CPC does provide for the possibility of challenging decisions, actions or inaction of pre-trial investigation bodies or prosecutors during pre-trial investigations, yet the range of such decisions and the types of inaction are very limited, and as for actions, the CPC provides for none here. Other decisions, actions or inaction of the investigators or prosecutors may be challenged during preliminary hearings, yet in criminal proceedings on alleged torture, the likelihood that the case will make it to trial is extremely low (see comment to question no. 12). Furthermore, the court's powers are limited here; thus, when cancelling a decision to deny recognition as a victim, investigating judges cannot have the victim recognised as such themselves, or when cancelling the investigator's refusal to satisfy a request, the investigating judge is unable to order the investigator to perform the appropriate investigative action. This makes challenging unlawful decisions, actions and inaction of the prosecution pointless.

Despite the detailed regulations on the filing of complaints by convicts, in practice filing complaints about prison administrations is quite problematic, and in some PIs, especially those with strict security regimes (such as the Oleksiyivska PI no. 25) it is virtually impossible. New mechanisms are needed for this, such as the use of technical means for recording the convicts' statements.

The newly established SBI has 7 territorial offices, each of those covering several Ukrainian regions making reporting a crime more difficult because only one regional centre had such an office. However, this was recently addressed, with SBI offices accepting citizens' reports opened in every regional centre.

In terms of their structure, SBI units are nominally independent from other law enforcement agencies, but their activities are overseen by prosecuting authorities, which serve as a bridge for informal relations between the SBI and other law enforcement agencies. In any case, reports submitted to the SBI regarding torture or ill-treatment are usually not entered into the Single Register of Pre-Trial Investigations; written replies are sent back to the applicants not on the first try and with considerable delays. Thus, it is up to the investigating judges to enter information about a crime of this nature into the Single Register of Pre-Trial Investigations. This style of initiating investigations into torture complaints clearly does not meet the criteria for effective investigations established by the ECtHR.

According to SBI statistics, the SBI handled only 5,794 criminal proceedings in 2019²⁰², with 22 of them torture-related (Article 127 CC), and 442 concerning excess of power by a law enforcement official (part 2, 3, Article 365 CC). In 510 criminal proceedings indictments were sent to courts.

²⁰² <https://dbr.gov.ua/report/zvit-pro-diyalnist-derzhavnogo-byuro-rozsliduvan-za-2018-rik>.

Question 35. *With reference to the Committee's previous concluding observations (para. 24), please provide detailed statistical data on cases in which officials have been prosecuted or disciplined for failing to adequately investigate complaints of torture or ill-treatment or for refusing to cooperate in investigating any such complaint.*

ANSWER TO QUESTION No. 35

Disciplinary liability of officials for failure to conduct proper investigation of complaints of torture and ill-treatment, or for refusal to investigate such complaints.

During most of the reporting period, investigations into instances of torture and other forms of ill-treatment were conducted by investigators of the prosecutor's office, whose disciplinary liability is regulated by the Law of Ukraine "On the Prosecutor's Office", Article 43 of which states that a prosecutor may face criminal charges, among other things, for failure to perform, or improper performance of, his duties.

Thus, theoretically speaking, investigators of the prosecutor's office that fail to investigate allegations of torture or ill-treatment, or investigate them poorly, may, in theory, face disciplinary action, if it can be demonstrated that they have failed to perform their duties or have performed them inadequately. However, nothing is known about any kind of disciplinary action brought against officials for this, because the PG and the Qualification and Disciplinary Commission of Prosecutors do not keep separate statistics based on this criterion.

According to the PG, 429 prosecutors faced disciplinary action for failure to perform or improper performance of their duties in 2014, 338 in 2015, 180 in 2017, 86 in 2018, and 1 during the first quarter of 2019.

After the establishment of the SBI, it was tasked with the duty of investigating crimes committed by law enforcement officials and began its work on November 27, 2018, being subject to the Law of Ukraine "On Public Service", which includes the grounds for disciplinary liability. There are no statistics on disciplinary penalties faced by SBI investigators. At present, there is no procedure for bringing to account SBI investigators due to the lack of Model Regulations on SBI Disciplinary Commissions as well as the Disciplinary Commissions themselves, which, in accordance with Article 25 of the Law of Ukraine "On the SBI", are supposed to oversee the issue of bringing disciplinary action against SBI employees.

There are additional difficulties with bringing disciplinary action against officials for failure to investigate or inadequate investigation of torture complaints due to the fact that the vast majority of torture complaints are investigated not under Article 127 CC (on torture) but under Article 365 CC (abuse of authority by a law enforcement official).

Question 36. *Please provide updated information on:*

- a) *The outcome of investigations by the Office of the Military Prosecutor of the 12 cases of alleged torture committed by members of territorial defence battalions between March 2014 and February 2016, and any additional cases of alleged torture or ill-treatment by members of territorial defence battalions investigated during the reporting period;*
- b) *The outcome of the 1,925 criminal investigations into allegations of torture and ill-treatment by police and penitentiary officials launched in 2015 by the Office of the Prosecutor-General; the result of indictments against 49 police and penitentiary officials for alleged acts of torture and ill-treatment; and the results of any additional investigations of police and penitentiary officials by the Office of the Prosecutor-General during the reporting period;*
- c) *The results of any investigation undertaken into allegations by several individuals previously held in the Mariupol SIZO that they had been ill-treated by Security Service of Ukraine officials and members of the Azov regiment and held in incommunicado detention, that evidence obtained through torture had been used during their trial and that they had been subjected to reprisals by members of the Security Service after they challenged the admissibility of that evidence;*
- d) *The results of the investigation into the killing of Aleksandr Tsukerman by law enforcement officers in Krivoye Ozero village on 23 August 2016.*

ANSWER TO QUESTION No. 36**On the results of indictments against police officers and prison staff for alleged acts of torture and ill-treatment**

There are significant discrepancies between the data for 9 months of 2018 provided by the Government in para. 73 of the Report and the information for 2018 that we received from the PG in response to our inquiry.

Aside from the fact that the information provided by the Government is incomplete, we would like to bring up the statistics on the number of pre-trial investigations conducted by prosecuting authorities as well as the number of indictments issued during the reporting period, which we received from the PG:

in 2015 – 1,662 proceedings, with 1,345 initiated in the current year;

in 2016 – 1,574 proceedings, with 1,277 initiated in the current year;

in 2017 – 1,518 proceedings, with 1,091 initiated in the current year;

in 2018 – 1,063 proceedings, with 550 initiated in the current year;

Q1 2019 – 229 proceedings.

Indictments sent to courts:

in 2015 – 27;

in 2016 – 47;

in 2017 – 43;

in 2018 – 32;

in 2019 – 2.

The PG also acknowledged critical situations in connection with torture in certain PIs and stressed the need for investigating such acts²⁰³.

The Ombudsman has repeatedly pointed out PG's ineffectiveness in responding to and investigating acts of torture committed by law enforcement officials.

On June 26, 2017, the Ombudsman submitted to the PG a request to investigate acts of torture, unlawful detention, excess of authority and forced testimony allegedly committed by employees of the Druzhkivskiyi police department and of the Military Prosecutor's Office of the Donetsk Garrison. However, the General Military Prosecutor of Ukraine ignored the allegations of torture of P. and K., unlawful detention and forced testimony. Pre-trial investigation was initiated on July 13, 2017 only on charges of excess of authority by a law enforcement officer, under part 1, Article 365 CC²⁰⁴.

On the results of investigations into complaints of persons previously held in at the Mariupol PTDC concerning acts of torture committed by SSU personnel and members of the Azov Regiment

Neither the Report nor PG's reply to our inquiry separate information on acts of torture committed by Azov members and SSU personnel.

According to the media and human rights organizations, there were numerous cases of ill-treatment of detainees at the Mariupol PTDC during the reporting period. Moreover, the suspects' family members were also subjected to ill-treatment. During their visits to the Artemivsk and Mariupol PTDCs, representatives of the OHCHR met with a number of detainees whose complaints of torture were not seeing any noticeable progress²⁰⁵.

Most of the cases of ill-treatment toward detainees in late 2015 and early 2016 involve the SSU. Most of them constitute detention in isolation from the outside world in unofficial detention facilities, where torture and ill-treatment are practised as the usual methods for obtaining confessions and information,

²⁰³ SCES employee charged with organising torture of prisoners, <https://zaxid.net/odnomu_z_kerivnikiv_penitentsiarnoyi_sluzhbi_ogolosili_pidozru_v_organizatsiyi_katuvannya_uyvaznenih_n1436412>.

²⁰⁴ Annual report of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights 2017, <<http://www.ombudsman.gov.ua/ua/page/secretariat/docs/presentations/>>.

²⁰⁵ OHCHR Report on the human rights situation in Ukraine, 16 November 2015 to 15 February 2016, <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/UA/Ukraine_13th_HRMMU_Report_3March2016_Ukrainian.pdf>.

for intimidation, or simply as a form of punishment.²⁰⁶ In 2014 there were frequent instances of torture and assault perpetrated by members of the volunteer battalions Azov, Aidar, Shakhtarsk (Tornado) and Dnipro-1.

Thus, on August 8, an Ombudsman's representative met at the Mariupol PTDC with one Mr. G., who had been charged with aiding and abetting terrorists under Article 258-3 CC and had hard evidence of torture used on him by SSU officers.

On August 3, 2017, the Prosecutor's Office launched a pre-trial investigation into the use of prohibited methods of investigation by officers of SSU's Donetsk Region branch against Mr. G. After the Ombudsman sent an appropriate response act to the Donetsk Region Prosecutor, on October 23, 2017, Mr. G was recognized as the victim in this criminal proceeding and was interviewed as such. On October 25, 2017, the Ordzhonikidzevskiy District Court of Mariupol acquitted Mr. G.²⁰⁷

On the results of the investigation into the murder of Oleksandr Zuckerman by law enforcement officers in the village of Kryve Ozero on August 23, 2016

The Government failed to provide detailed information on the progress of the investigation into Mr. Zuckerman's murder.

Additional sources have provided the following information.

On August 23, 2016, Oleksandr Zuckerman was killed during arrest by police officers, which caused a massive outrage in Ukrainian society. The state authorities that conducted the pre-trial investigation noted the crime's cynical nature²⁰⁸.

The pre-trial investigation first named six police officers as suspects; two of them were later declared witnesses²⁰⁹.

According to media reports, a number of procedural violations were committed during the pre-trial investigation, such as failure to take appropriate measures to collect evidence, despite the fact that Mr. Zuckerman was killed in broad daylight in a public place, in front of numerous witnesses²¹⁰.

On January 16, 2017 began the trial of the four ex-policemen who were charged with premeditated murder, but after the judge's dismissal and due to the inability to form a new court, the case was referred to another court²¹¹.

The trial in Zuckerman's case is still ongoing. and now only one of the four ex-policemen is facing murder charges.

The other three defendants were released from custody back in August 2017. Thus, although they have been under investigation since 2017, no restraining measure has been applied to them²¹². Only one defendant is still in custody²¹³.

After two years, from 2017 to 2019, the case is still to be examined on merits. All the court was doing during this time is decide on whether to continue keeping the defendant in custody²¹⁴.

Thus, there has been no proper prosecution for Mr. Zuckerman's murder. The trial is for show only.

²⁰⁶ Violent crimes committed in the course of the conflict in the east of Ukraine in 2014–2018, <<http://khpg.org/files/docs/1552984376.pdf>>.

²⁰⁷ Annual report of the Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights 2017, <<http://www.ombudsman.gov.ua/ua/page/secretariat/docs/presentations/>>.

²⁰⁸ Murder in Kryve Ozero: prosecution wants maximum punishment for the cops, <https://espresso.tv/news/2016/12/29/vbyvstvo_v_kryvomu_ozeri_prokuratura_prosytye_maksimalne_pokarannya_dlya_kopiv>.

²⁰⁹ Murder in Kryve Ozero: the trial of police officers in Mykolayiv Region has begun, <<https://ru.tsn.ua/ukrayina/ubiystvo-v-krivom-ozere-na-nikolaevschine-nachali-sudit-policeyskih-802285.html>>.

²¹⁰ One year after the tragedy in Kryve Ozero: how the cops are prosecuted for killing a person, <<https://hromadske.ua/posts/krive-ozero-policeyski-vbili-cholovika>>.

²¹¹ Replies from the Vradiyivskiy and Pervomayskiy City District courts of Mykolayiv Region.

²¹² Murder in Kryve Ozero. A year later only one policeman remains in custody, and there's still no court verdict, <<https://strana.ua/articles/analysis/88255-ubiystvo-v-krivom-ozere-politseyskie-ubivshie-aleksandra-tsukermana-zajavl-jajut-ovod-sudjam.html>>

²¹³ Single State Register of Court Decisions, <<http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/68688730>>.

²¹⁴ Single State Register of Court Decisions, <<http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/82311094>>.

Article 14

Question 37. *With reference to the Committee's previous concluding observations (para. 21), please provide information on:*

- a) *Whether the State party has amended its legislation to include explicit provisions on the right of victims of torture and ill-treatment to redress, including fair and adequate compensation and rehabilitation, in accordance with article 14 of the Convention;*
- b) *Whether any resources have been allocated for rehabilitation programmes in the State party, including for victims of torture, families of missing persons and demobilized soldiers;*
- c) *Any specific examples of cases in which victims of torture have received medical or psychosocial rehabilitation and information on rehabilitation programmes available in the State party and the resources made available to them;*
- d) *Information on any redress and compensation measures ordered by courts since the previous periodic report, including the number of requests for compensation made, the number granted and the amounts ordered and actually provided in each case;*
- e) *Data on compensation awards provided during the reporting period to individuals who have received judgments from the European Court of Human Rights against the State party concerning torture and ill-treatment (violations of article 3 of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms).*

ANSWER TO QUESTION No. 37

Medical or psychological rehabilitation for torture victims at the expense of state budget

Answering question no. 37, the Government failed to provide information on rehabilitation programs available to victims of torture, families of missing persons, and demobilized soldiers. The Government also failed to give specific examples of torture victims being provided with medical or psychological rehabilitation, as well as information about available rehabilitation programs and the resources allocated for them.

It should also be noted that Ukraine currently has no state targeted rehabilitation programs for victims of torture and families of missing persons. Such assistance is provided only by civil society organizations, volunteers. NGOs have undertaken to improve the situation of torture victims, alleviate PTSD symptoms and support the victims' families. Among these organizations are HealthRight International Ukraine, Blakytnyi Ptakh (Blue Bird), Donbas SOS, Vostok SOS, Sertse Voyina (Warrior's Heart), Pobratymy (Brothers In Arms), and International Medical Rehabilitation Center.

As for the rehabilitation of military personnel, we should mention the State Targeted Program on Physical, Medical and Psychological Rehabilitation as well as Social and Professional Re-adaptation of the Participants of the Anti-Terrorist Operation and Those Who Took Part in the Actions Aimed at Upholding National Security and Defence, Rebuffing and Suppressing the Armed Aggression of the Russian Federation in Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts, and Ensuring Implementation of These Actions for the Period Until 2022, adopted by CMU Resolution no. 1021 of December 5, 2018. However, according to a report of the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, the Government has not evaluated the progress of this program's implementation thus far.

Redress for victims of torture and ill-treatment awarded by the ECtHR

The Government in its response provided statistics on ECtHR judgements in complaints filed against Ukraine under Article 3 ECHR. However, the issue of the actual provision of redress to the victims after they were awarded it by the Court was left unanswered. The Government also provided no details on the measures aimed at providing such redress, including the number of requests for redress, the number of satisfied requests as well as the sums that were awarded and actually paid in each case.

It should also be noted that the Government has not completely fulfilled its obligations under the ECHR on the payment of just satisfaction. According to the Department on Enforcement of ECtHR Judgements, just satisfaction is yet to be paid in 23 cases, the final judgements in which had been delivered in 2014–2018 (see the list below for details).

SEVENTH PERIODIC REPORT OF UKRAINE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION AGAINST TORTURE

Case	Application no.	Date of final judgement
SHCHERBAK v. Ukraine	81646/17	20/12/2018
SERGEY SMIRNOV v. Ukraine	36853/09	18/12/2018
LAVRINYUK v. Ukraine	1858/08	04/12/2018
GRABOVSKIY v. Ukraine	4442/07	29/11/2018
BURLYA AND OTHERS v. Ukraine	3289/10	06/11/2018
BAKCHIZHOV v. Ukraine	24874/08	30/10/2018
SHCHERBAKOV v. Ukraine	39708/13	20/09/2018
MAYSTRENKO v. Ukraine	45811/16	28/06/2018
YEREMENKO AND KOCHETOV v. Ukraine	68183/10	14/06/2018
TKACHEV v. Ukraine	11773/08	19/04/2018
LADA v. Ukraine	32392/07	06/02/2018
URZHANOV v. Ukraine	24392/06	14/12/2017
D.S. v. Ukraine	24107/13	09/11/2017
BILOZOR AND OTHERS v. Ukraine	9207/09	20/07/2017
KRYAT v. Ukraine	21533/07	15/12/2016
PELESHOK v. Ukraine	10025/06	08/12/2016
KONOVALCHUK v. Ukraine	31928/15	13/10/2016
YAROVENKO v. Ukraine	24710/06	06/10/2016
TRUTEN v. Ukraine	18041/08	23/06/2016
ZAKSHEVSKIY v. Ukraine	7193/04	17/03/2016
SERGEY ANTONOV v. Ukraine	40512/13	22/10/2015
SAVINOV v. Ukraine	5212/13	22/10/2015
ANDREY YAKOVENKO v. Ukraine	63727/11	13/03/2014

Also, according to the Ministry of Finance and the Law of Ukraine no. 266/94-VR “On the Procedure for Providing Compensation for Damage Caused to a Citizen by Illegal Actions of Investigative Bodies, Prosecuting Authorities and Courts” of December 1, 1994:

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Number of court decisions	179	214	190	241	198
Total amount of paid damages, thousand UAH	17,785.6	18,094.7	18,094.7	27,694.7	33,651.9

To put the above figures in perspective, it should be borne in mind that acquittals constituted only 0.3% of the total number of judgements passed during the indicated period. Thus, from 2014 to 2018, judgements involving 546,621 people were passed and only 1,688 of those were acquittals.

Such a small number of paid damages, along with the small number of acquittals, indicate a repressive nature of the prosecution process and a low likelihood that a person whose confession was obtained through torture will be acquitted. The possibility of receiving redress for violations of Article 3 ECHR is directly dependent on the acquittal of the torture victim or conviction of the offender. As this is rare for Ukraine, its mechanism for awarding damages cannot be considered effective.

Article 15

Question 38. *With reference to the Committee's previous concluding observations (para. 22), please provide information on:*

- a) *Measures taken by the State party during the period under review to ensure in practice that confessions obtained as a result of torture or ill-treatment are not admissible in court;*
- b) *Information concerning cases in which courts have deemed confessions or other evidence inadmissible because they were obtained under duress;*
- c) *Data on any cases during the reporting period in which private citizens have been prosecuted for illegally detaining and torturing persons living in the vicinity of the conflict zone in order to extract confessions that they assisted armed groups, and the outcomes.*

ANSWER TO QUESTION No. 38

On the measures taken by the State to make evidence obtained through the use of torture and ill-treatment inadmissible in court

Despite the provision in the CPC that evidence obtained as a result of grave violations of human rights and freedoms should not be admissible in court, the use of such evidence is still a common practice. Two cases can serve as an example of this in which confessions obtained through torture were used in further investigations and the courts ignored the defendants' complaints.

Citizen E. was arrested on suspicion of setting fire to someone else's property (arson of an abandoned building owned by a museum). The suspect was taken to the police station where he was interrogated without the presence of his lawyer. The police officers got him to write a confession by exploiting his poor mental state and drug intoxication. Once his mental state improved and he realized his situation, citizen E. renounced his confession and said that he was innocent.

After that, the detainee was forced to make another confession under torture: his hands were handcuffed and stretched between two radiators as he was beaten with a filled plastic bottle on the head and shocked through his clothes with a taser. This confession was then used to justify the charges and the decision to keep the suspect in custody. Moreover, the prosecutor tricked the suspect into waiving his right to a state-appointed lawyer by promising that he would arrange for house arrest as his restraining measure. During the pre-trial investigation, not a single investigating judge took into account the circumstances under which the suspect had confessed.

Due to the lack of a lawyer as well as his fearful and vulnerable state, the detainee was unable to document the torture. There was no medical examination when he was brought to the PTDC. By the time a lawyer from a human rights organization took the case, any chance of proving the torture had been lost. The anti-torture mechanism provided for in criminal law proved to be ineffective.

The second case involved the detention of citizen A. who was charged with robbery with the use of poison. When two male police officers arrived at the scene, they apprehended citizen A., searched her, confiscated her belongings and took her to the police station. Over the next six hours police officers took turns interrogating her. The girl was humiliated, insulted and threatened with physical violence. Some of the police officers were hitting her, pushing her around and pulling her by the hair. The police officers did this to get a confession and information on her collusion with other persons who had escaped with the stolen belongings of the victims.

In order to conceal the fact that the girl had been searched by a male officer, the arrest and search protocol was drawn up as if written by another investigator, a woman, whose name was also used to summon a lawyer for the girl. However, when the lawyer arrived at the police station, the figurehead investigator was nowhere to be found. The lawyer was not permitted to see the detainee. In court, the investigators found another lawyer for citizen A., allegedly a public defender. This lawyer did not act in the best interests of the defendant, trying instead to convince her to plead guilty and confess while ignoring all violations of the law. The defendant subsequently sent a complaint to the regional FLA Centre and was surprised to find out that they never appointed that lawyer and had no idea where he came from.

These examples show that the practice of compelling confessions and testimony remains widespread in Ukraine. Although the CPC provisions aimed at preventing the use of torture have reduced the number of such cases, they have proved unable to uproot the practice completely. The investigating judges play the role of extras in criminal proceedings instead of properly analysing the actions of the prosecution.

Cases in which evidence obtained under duress was declared inadmissible

When replying to the Committee's question regarding examples of court decisions in which the courts declared inadmissible the confessions and other evidence obtained under duress, the Government cited four examples from the SCU's case-law. However, although these cases do contain examples requested by the Committee, they should be considered with the following considerations in mind. First, all of these examples are from 2015. Secondly, the court decisions were only adopted by the Second Chamber of the Criminal Court of Cassation (hereinafter referred to as "CCC") within the SCU, while there are three chambers within the CCC, each consisting of four panels. Third, with the exception of the first example, all of the above decisions indicate that the first instance and appellate courts had failed to apply procedural law correctly when examining evidence. The errors made by these courts had to be corrected by the SCU. Thus, the above examples are limited to a narrow time frame as well as to the activities of a single chamber of the SCU. This is not enough to evaluate the quality of assessment by Ukrainian courts of confessions and evidence obtained under duress.

It also does not appear possible to evaluate separately the number of cases where first instance courts would declare evidence inadmissible before the end of the proceedings. This court power is provided for in Article 89 CPC but, in accordance with the rules of the judiciary, does not require a separate court decision and is formalized as a so-called "protocol decision", i.e. is verbally announced by a judge.

At the same time, the Single State Register of Court Decisions contains only 87 case in which a court of first instance rejected evidence as inadmissible under part 2, Article 89 CPC. Thus, the number of cases in which a court excludes evidence from examination as inadmissible before the conclusion of the case is insignificant and indicates a lack of consistent practice.

Information on cases in which private citizens were prosecuted for unlawful detention and torture of persons in the conflict zone

The question concerns court cases in which private citizens were prosecuted for unlawful detention and torture of people living in the conflict zone in order to make them confess to assisting illegal armed groups. When answering this question in para. 243 of its Report, the Government refers the reader to its reply to question 9. After studying it, we have come to the conclusion that the Government failed to answer the Committee's question. The statistics provided by the Government have no relation to the category of cases identified by the Committee and only generally illustrate the state of investigations into crimes involving terrorist activities.

At the same time, the Single State Register of Court Decisions does have an example of criminal prosecution of private citizens under Articles 127 (torture) and 146 (unlawful deprivation of liberty or abduction of a person) CC. Thus, on May 30, 2014, seven people were convicted for kidnapping by the Kyiv District Court of Donetsk. However, this crime was committed for money, not to make a person confess to assisting illegal armed groups.

In addition, there were cases when members of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (hereinafter referred to as "AFU") were prosecuted for the above crimes.

On March 18, 2015, a serviceman of the AFU was convicted by the Kostyantynivskyi City District Court of Donetsk Region for unlawful detention of a local resident. Acting together with other servicemen, the perpetrator abducted the victim to intimidate him and obtain information about his possible ties to illegal armed groups. Threatening the victim with weapons, the criminals took possession of the victim's property and forced him to give up his money. After that they forced the victim inside a car. During the trip they were demanding more money from the victim. Only after the victim agreed to the criminals' demands was he returned home and left alone. The perpetrator was sentenced to 4 years in prison but was released on probation.

On March 3, 2016, the Kostyantynivskiy City District Court of Donetsk Region sentenced for the above-mentioned crime another serviceman of the AFU, who acted together with the others, to two years in a penal battalion.

On April 28, 2017, two other servicemen of the AFU, who acted in concert with the others, were convicted by the Kostyantynivskiy City District Court of Donetsk Region: one, for the totality of his crimes, to 10 years in prison with confiscation of all his property and deprivation of military rank, the other one — to three years in prison.

On November 7, 2016, three servicemen of the AFU were convicted by the Illichivskiy District Court of Mariupol in Donetsk Region for unlawful detention and abduction of a local resident, whom the soldiers suspected of assisting illegal armed groups. Working together, the criminals captured the victim at his residence. Threatened with assault rifles, the victim had a bag put on his head and then taken away in a car. On the same day, the criminals seized a motorcycle driver who looked suspicious to them and forced him inside the trunk of their car. Soon after the second victim was let out of the trunk only to be beaten with a bat. They blindfolded the man with a black sweater and tied his hands with a rubber cord from a first aid kit, after which the victim was once again forced inside the trunk and, together with the first victim, taken to another location. When they arrived at the destination, the first victim was forced out of the car and taken inside a building. There, threatened weapons, the victim was forced to write down a list of residents of the village of Sartana, who, in the victim's opinion, had dealings with illegal armed groups. The second victim was taken to another room where he was interrogated with the use of force. Both victims were subsequently released. Two of the perpetrators were sentenced to 3 years in prison and another was sentenced to two years' imprisonment but released on probation.

On May 28, 2019, the Donetsk Court of Appeals extended the sentence of one of the perpetrators in the above case to five years in prison.

On April 27, 2017, the Artemivskiy City District Court of Donetsk Region convicted a serviceman of the AFU who abducted a resident of Donetsk Region to "check him for separatism". Acting together with three other servicemen, the perpetrator came to the victim's home at night and abducted him with the use of force. The perpetrators tied the victim's hands and put a bag on his head, after which they took him to the location of their military unit against his will. There the victim was beaten on the feet with a wooden stick with the purpose of finding out what he knew about the AFU. Days later the victim's body, whose hands were still tied, was found on a road. The court sentenced the perpetrator to 5 years in prison but released him on probation.

On February 27, 2018, the Kremivskiy District Court of Luhansk Region convicted a serviceman of the AFU who abducted a local resident, acting together with other servicemen on the orders of their commanding officer. Suspecting the victim of involvement in the activities of illegal armed groups, the perpetrator, together with the other servicemen, detained the victim at a checkpoint and handed him over to officers of the Military Police. Soon after the victim was brought to a military base with his hands tied and an opaque bag on his head. The victim was taken to a half-destroyed building on the territory of the base, forced to sit on a concrete slab, and interrogated. To make the victim talk, the perpetrator stabbed his leg with a knife. The victim was also beaten and interrogated by other soldiers. As a result of the torture, the victim died. His body was buried in a wooded area to hide the crime. The perpetrator was sentenced for torture and abduction to 5 years in prison but released on probation.

The Single State Register of Court Decisions also contains examples of convictions for abductions perpetrated by members of the terrorist organizations "Donetsk People's Republic" and "Luhansk People's Republic".

On April 8, 2015, the Bilokurakynskiy District Court of Luhansk Region convicted a former police officer and a member of an armed group operating in the city of Luhansk and in Luhansk Region. Together with accomplices, the perpetrator forced a local resident into their car and made her give them the keys to her apartment. The attackers subsequently broke into the victim's apartment. Threatening the victim's husband with weapons, they handcuffed and abducted him, after which both of the victims were taken to the administrative building of the Luhansk Region State Administration, where they were held against their will in one of the so-called detention rooms. After that the victims were taken to the city of Krasnodon, Luhansk Region, where they were held in a private apartment of a nine-storey building. The court sentenced the perpetrator to 5 years in prison.

On September 28, 2015, the Lysychanskyi City Court of Luhansk Region convicted a member of an illegal armed group operating in the territory of Luhansk Region for abducting a person. To get information about the victim's work and family members, the perpetrator, acting together with accomplices, abducted a local resident and transported him to the premises of the Lysychansk District Oil Pipeline Administration located in the city of Lysychansk, Luhansk Region. There the victim was beaten and interrogated and later taken to another place to confirm his information. The perpetrator was sentenced to 6 years in prison.

On November 23, 2017, the Starobilsk District Court of Luhansk Region convicted a member of the illegal armed group "Platov's Cossack National Guard of the Great Don Army" for abducting a local resident. Together with other individuals, the perpetrator tricked the victim into the building of the Antratsit District State Administration, Luhansk Region, which was under the control of the illegal armed group. Acting with accomplices, the perpetrator hit the victim in the back and put plastic restraints on his hands and feet as well as a bag on his head. The victim was taken to another location where he was released by members of another illegal armed group the following day. During the unlawful detention, the victim was stripped of his personal belongings, money and valuables.

On December 15, 2017, two persons involved in the activities of the terrorist organization "Donetsk People's Republic" were convicted for abduction by the Zhovtnevyi District Court of Mariupol in Donetsk Region. The perpetrators came to the victim's home in the evening and abducted him for forbidding his daughter to date one of the perpetrators. Threatening the victim with an assault rifle, the attackers forced him outside and took him to the location of their military unit. After an identity check by the leadership of the terrorist base, the victim was released.

Article 16

Question 39. Please describe measures taken by the State party to protect human rights defenders, including lawyers, journalists and other media workers, from reprisals, including intimidation, harassment and violent attacks motivated by their work, and to investigate all cases of reprisals and ensure accountability for the perpetrators. In particular, please provide information on measures taken in the following cases:

- The killing of journalist Pavel Sheremet in Kyiv on July 20, 2016;
- The killing of defence lawyer Yuriy Grabovskiy in March 2016;
- Numerous threats made against human rights monitors and journalists in the wake of the publication of their personal information by the pro-government website "Myrotvorets".

ANSWER TO QUESTION No. 39

Protection of journalists

In its Report, the Government provides statistics only for the first 9 months of 2018 rather than for the entire reporting period. Also, the Government provides statistics on registered reports of crimes involving interference with the work of the press, yet it fails to mention that most of these proceedings get closed, that few notices of suspicion are served in these proceedings and that very few of these cases make it to trial.

PG's statistics on registered CPs concerning interference with the press and the results of their pre-trial investigations under Articles 171 CC (interference with the work of journalists), 345-1 CC (threat or commission of violence against journalists), 347-1 CC (deliberate damage to or destruction of journalists' property), 348-1 CC (attempted murder of a journalist) since 2014, including 6 months of 2019.

2014 Article of the CC	CPs registered	CPs with notice of suspicion served	CPs with indictment sent to court	Proceedings closed
171	80	13	7	72
345-1	introduced in Ukraine's CC on May 14, 2015			
347-1	introduced in Ukraine's CC on May 14, 2015			
348-1	introduced in Ukraine's CC on May 14, 2015			

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS REPORTING CYCLE

2015 Article of the CC	CPs registered	CPs with notice of suspicion served	CPs with indictment sent to court	Proceedings closed
171	72	13	5	48
345-1	9	2	2	2
347-1	4	1	0	0
348-1	0	0	0	0

2016 Article of the CC	CPs registered	CPs with notice of suspicion served	CPs with indictment sent to court	Proceedings closed
171	102	12	6	74
345-1	35	7	6	6
347-1	4	0	0	0
348-1	0	0	0	1

2017 Article of the CC	CPs registered	CPs with notice of suspicion served	CPs with indictment sent to court	Proceedings closed
171	129	8	5	90
345-1	35	3	2	20
347-1	9	0	0	0
348-1	1	0	0	0

2018 Article of the CC	CPs registered	CPs with notice of suspicion served	CPs with indictment sent to court	Proceedings closed
171	106	11	8	89
345-1	63	15	15	19
347-1	6	1	0	0
348-1	2	1	0	0

6 months of 2019 Article of the CC	CPs registered	CPs with notice of suspicion served	CPs with indictment sent to court	Proceedings closed
171	58	4	1	26
345-1	18	3	0	2
347-1	6	1	0	2
348-1	0	0	0	1

The murder of journalist Pavlo Sheremet on July 20, 2016 still has not been solved. The investigation has failed to produce a suspect. The PG has repeatedly acknowledged errors in the investigation and its ineffectiveness²¹⁵.

The murder of journalist Oles Buzyna on April 16, 2015 is one of the few such cases where the investigation has already been completed but the trial is being deliberately delayed, with the court failing to

²¹⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YV1kToRgldo>, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ar1bXoxnwZA>

determine a restraining measure for the defendants for four years now²¹⁶. Despite the fact that the MoIA announced that the crime had been solved and that there was hard evidence against the suspects on June 18, 2015²¹⁷, an indictment was sent to the Shevchenkinivskyi District Court of Kyiv only on November 28, 2017²¹⁸, and only on February 9, 2019 did the court start examining the case²¹⁹.

On May 6, 2019, a judge in the jury trial in Buzyna's murder case recused himself, citing prejudice toward some participants of the trial because they were abusing their procedural rights and dragging out the proceedings²²⁰. Thus, in accordance with the general rule under Art. 319 CPC, the trial has to begin anew.

Two days prior to the murder, Oles Buzyna's personal information was published on the Myrotvoret's website by a user named "404". After the murder of the writer and journalist, the following words appeared on the website: "Agent 404 did well. For successful performance of his mission he is granted a short leave."²²¹

Protection of lawyers and human rights defenders

In its report, the Government mentions the Law of Ukraine "On the Bar and Advocacy", which makes protection and observance of the rights of lawyers the responsibility of lawyer self-regulation bodies. However, lawyer self-regulation bodies can only protect the rights of lawyers within the scope of their authority, submitting complaints on violated rights to the appropriate authorities, so that these authorities could launch investigations into the facts laid out in the complaints.

The Ukrainian National Bar Association (UNBA) has made numerous statements about systematic attacks on lawyers in high-profile cases as well as on lawyer self-government bodies, most of which were perpetrated by representatives of the S-14 organization, which receives funding from the Ministry of Youth and Sports. According to the UNBA, these attacks are not being investigated²²².

According to the official data of the PG, from 2014 to May 2019, under Art. 397 CC (interference with the activities of a defence lawyer or representative of a person) 526 CPs were registered; notices of suspicion were served in 2 CPs; 1 CP made it to court; 418 CPs were closed; under Art. 398 CC (threat of, or violence, against a defence lawyer or representative of a person) 172 CPs were registered; notices of suspicion were served in 13 CPs; 10 CPs made it to court; 99 CPs were closed; under Art. 399 CC (deliberate destruction of or damage to the property of a defence lawyer or representative of a person) 24 CPs were registered; no notices of suspicion were served; no indictments were sent to court; 12 CPs were closed; under Art. 400 CC (attempted murder of a defence lawyer or representative of a person in connection with activities related to the provision of legal aid) 6 CPs were registered; a notice of suspicion was served in one CP; one CP made it to court; 3 CPs were closed.

Article of the CC	CPs registered	CPs with notice of suspicion served	CPs with indictment sent to court	Proceedings closed
Art. 397	534	3	1	428
Art. 398	175	14	10	99
Art. 399	24	0	0	12
Art. 400	5	1	0	3

²¹⁶ <http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/56794279>, <http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/57879550>

²¹⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/arsen.avakov.1/posts/857798260976948>

²¹⁸ https://www.kyiv.gp.gov.ua/ua/news.html?_m=publications&_c=view&_t=rec&id=219853

²¹⁹ <http://www.vru.gov.ua/video/497>

²²⁰ <http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/81543025>

²²¹ <https://strana.ua/news/196356-oles-buzina-chetyre-hoda-so-dnja-ubijstva-zhurnalista-i-pisatelja.html>

²²² <http://unba.org.ua/news/3455-sistemachni-napadi-na-advokativ-u-rezonansnih-spravah-ta-organi-advokats-kogo-samovryaduvannya-vimagayut-negajnoi-reakcii-pravoohoronnih-organiv-ta-kerivnictva-derzhavi.html>,
<http://unba.org.ua/news/4049-kil-kist-porushen-prav-advokativ-zrostae-pri-vidsutnosti-naleznoi-reakcii-pravoohoronciv-ganna-boryak.html>,
<http://unba.org.ua/news/3616-naau-zaklikae-prezidenta-stvoriti-koordinadu-iz-zahistu-prav-lyudini.html>,
<http://unba.org.ua/publications/3553-hto-nastupnij.html>

Given these statistics of investigations into complaints and reports of violent crimes against journalists and lawyers, we can conclude that there is no legal protection for these categories of persons in Ukraine.

In regard to the protection of human rights defenders, the Parliamentary Assembly of the CoE in para. 1.3 of its Recommendation no. 2085 (2016) “Strengthening the protection and role of human rights defenders in Council of Europe member States” recommends that member states create a platform for the protection of human right defenders, similar to that for the protection of journalists. In Ukraine, crimes against journalists are subject to special criminal liability under a number of articles of Ukraine’s CC. During the reporting period, no draft law on special criminal liability for crimes against human rights defenders was proposed.

In regard to the murder of lawyer Yuriy Grabovskiy, suspects were arrested on March 25, 2016²²³. In August 2016, the Military Prosecutor’s Office completed its investigation into Yuriy Grabovskiy’s murder and sent the indictment to court²²⁴. Nothing is known about the trial’s progress, since the case is being examined by the Shevchenkivskiy District Court of Kyiv behind closed doors, on the grounds that the evidence to be provided by the parties to the proceedings may contain information about the defendant’s personal life and circumstances that could be humiliating to him²²⁵.

On May 7, 2019, one of the suspects, Artem Yakovenko, admitted in an interview that he had been working for security services, and that his task was to lure Grabovskiy to Odesa, where security services seized Grabovskiy²²⁶.

Investigation of the disclosure of personal information of journalists, lawyers and human rights defenders on the Myrotvorets website

As for the investigation into the activities of the pro-government website Myrotvorets, which in 2016 – 2017 was publishing personal information of journalists that were working in non-government-controlled territories, the Government has failed to take any real steps to conduct a proper investigation. Certain high officials even voiced their public support for the actions of the website’s administrators²²⁷.

On May 16, 2016, Anton Gerashchenko, adviser to Interior Minister, addressed the Minister of Internal Affairs, the PG and the head of the SSU “demanding to close the case” against the volunteers of the Myrotvorets website²²⁸.

After the “Uspishna Varta” (Successful Watch) organization published results of its investigation of the Myrotvorets website, the website entered into its database information about Uspishna Varta’s head of the board Nataliya Natalyna and coordinator Tetiana Galonze²²⁹.

As of August 2019, the website is still working, the pre-trial investigation is ongoing, and no suspects have been named.

Question 40. *With reference to the Committee’s previous concluding observations (para. 23), please provide information on:*

- a) *The number of non-combat deaths in the Ukrainian armed forces during the period under review, and the number of such deaths attributed to hazing (“dedovshchina”);*
- b) *Investigations undertaken during the period under review into cases of suspected hazing in the military, information on whether military prosecutors or the national police have undertaken these investigations and whether any have resulted in prosecutions and the conviction of those responsible;*
- c) *Whether redress and rehabilitation, including medical and psychological assistance, has been provided to victims of hazing in the military during the period under review.*

²²³ https://www.gp.gov.ua/ua/news.html?_m=publications&_t=rec&id=171332&fp=3671

²²⁴ <https://ru.tsn.ua/ukrayina/prokuratura-zavershila-rassledovanie-ubiystva-advokata-grabovskogo-694065.html>

²²⁵ <http://reyestr.court.gov.ua/Review/63729003>

²²⁶ <https://vesti-ukr.com/strana/335479-obvinjaemyj-v-ubijstve-hrabovskoho-ja-ne-vinoven-advokata-ubrali-sbu-i-matios>

²²⁷ <https://www.hrw.org/ru/world-report/2018/country-chapters/313660>

²²⁸ <https://www.unian.net/politics/1346295-skandal-s-mirotvortsem-v-mvd-potrebovali-zakryit-delo-protiv-volonterov-dokument.html>

²²⁹ <https://uspishna-varta.com/ru/novyny/pravozashitnikov-uspishna-varta-vnesli-na-sajt-mirotvorec-posle-rassledovaniya-o-ego-deyatelnosti>

ANSWER TO QUESTION No. 40

Relations between members of the AFU that violate regulations (“hazing”) remain an issue to this day. Such actions are punishable under the CC. Thus, according to the State Judicial Administration of Ukraine, at least 130 servicemen were prosecuted for this offence in 2014–2018. The number of prosecutions is not exact because, when a person commits several offences, the Judicial Administration records that person under the strictest article of the CC brought against them. Based on this, we can conclude that the number of servicemen prosecuted for violating regulations is actually higher. In para. 391, the Government states that over 2014–2018 only 63 servicemen were prosecuted, but this is not true. Moreover, when interviewed by a national outlet, Major-General Oleg Gruntkovskiy, Head of the Department of Moral and Psychological Support of the General Staff of the AFU, said that the issue of psychological, moral or physical abuse of subordinates or peers still exists in the army. One of the reasons for this phenomenon is the poor training of commanding officers in the AFU²³⁰.

In the same interview, Major-General Oleg Gruntkovskiy stated that as of 2018, the AFU had only 55% of positions for specialists on moral and psychological support filled. KHPG is unable to provide this information for 2019 since the Ministry of Defence failed to respond to our inquiries.

The issue of “hazing” or violations of regulations by military personnel are not the only serious problems in the AFU. Suicides among military personnel, classified as non-combat casualties, are becoming more frequent. According to the World Health Organization statistics for Ukraine, about 500 suicide attempts are made daily here, which result in about 35 deaths. This problem exists in the ranks of the AFU as well.

Unfortunately, KHPG received no information about non-combat casualties in the AFU from the MoD after several inquiries. Furthermore, it became known to us from public sources, particularly from the aforementioned interview with Major-General Oleg Gruntkovskiy, that information on the number of suicides in the AFU may not be disclosed and is for official use only²³¹. Due to this, we have to rely on public sources. From the beginning of 2014 to 2015, the MoD provided information about 171 suicides among soldiers²³². After that, the MoD stopped giving out such information.

On November 27, 2018, Main Military Prosecutor of Ukraine Anatoliy Matios presented a report dedicated to the World Mental Health Day, stating that based on the information of the Military Prosecutor’s Office, 615 cases of suicide among AFU servicemen were registered between 2014 and 2018, with 282 suicides committed in the JFO zone²³³.

If we compare the information provided by the MoD in 2015 with the information presented in 2018 by the Main Military Prosecutor, we can see that the number of suicides has tripled.

When compared to the armies of some other countries, Ukraine is a leader in terms of suicides in the army. Some of the data can be found in the table below (*information on the number of suicides among servicemen taken from public sources*).

Table 1

Country	Number of suicides among servicemen				
	Year				
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
USA	276	266	280	285	325
Canada	19	15	15	13	13

²³⁰ Mariya Tsaturian, Oleg Grishchak, “Major-General of the Armed Forces of Ukraine Oleg Gruntkovskiy: “About 30% of suicides in the army take place in the ATO”, RBK — Ukraine, March 2, 2018, (online) <https://daily.rbc.ua/rus/show/general-mayor-vsuo-oleg-gruntkovskiy-okolo-1519946455.html>

²³¹ Ibid.

²³² ZN,UA, “Defence Ministry discloses non-combat casualties” (online)

https://dt.ua/UKRAINE/u-minoboroni-ozvuchili-neboyovi-vtrati-zsu-187023_.html

²³³ Alla Kotlyar, “Anatoliy Matios: “We need prevention if we want to prevent non-combat casualties”, ZN,UA, (online) https://dt.ua/interview/anatoliy-matios-schob-ne-bulo-neboyovih-vtrat-potribna-prevenciya-292174_.html

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS REPORTING CYCLE

Country	Number of suicides among servicemen				
	Year				
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
United Kingdom	9	8	11	4	–
Poland	13	9	13	–	–
Ukraine*	–	–	–	–	–

* It is not possible to provide information on the number of suicides among servicemen as this was classified as “restricted” information.

Table 2

	USA	Canada	United Kingdom	Poland	Ukraine
Number of suicides (per 100,000 servicemen):	28 (as of 2017)	20 (as of 2018)	8 (as of 2016)	11.85 (as of 2016)	55 (as of 2017)*

* Information taken from public sources (interviews with representatives of the MoD).

Unfortunately, we are unable to perform a more detailed analysis and comparison of the number of suicides among soldiers of the AFU and other countries due to the lack of complete and accurate data from the MoD. However, even with these figures alone we can conclude that suicides in the AFU are a widespread and systemic issue and that MoD’s efforts to address it are ineffective.

When a serviceman is found dead, law enforcement authorities launch a criminal investigation under Article 115 CC (“murder”). In most of these cases, pre-trial investigation authorities subsequently conclude that the death occurred as a result of suicide, after which the criminal investigation is closed due to the absence of a crime.

However, with regard to the investigation of suicides among servicemen, we would like to note that since 2015 KHPG has been getting requests for aid from the families of deceased soldiers whose death was classified as suicide after a criminal investigation under Article 115 CC. When providing legal aid to these people, KHPG lawyers find Ukrainian law enforcement’s attitude toward these cases to be superficial and one-sided, biased toward suicide, even when the case files indicate murder rather than suicide. Thus, forensic examinations conducted in suicide cases yield ambivalent conclusions — they neither provide direct evidence of murder nor confirm suicide. Despite this, investigators close almost all criminal investigations on the grounds of the absence of crime, ignoring the fact that forensic examinations were incomplete or inaccurate.

When conducting pre-trial investigations into suicides of servicemen, investigators violate the current CPC by failing to address legitimate requests of the victims (relatives of the deceased) for a full and comprehensive investigation, or, even when addressing these requests, dragging out the investigation.

We would also like to point out the actions of the military command in connection to suicides. Aside from reporting such incidents to law enforcement agencies, the command always conducts its own internal investigations. The findings of these internal investigations are independent of the official ones yet are just as one-sided: the blame for the death of a soldier is placed on the deceased himself. This causes additional suffering to the families of the deceased since, on top of everything else, it forces them to try and prove that their loved one did not commit suicide.

Summarising the above, we can conclude that neither the law enforcement agencies nor the command of the AFU are interested in conducting thorough investigations into the deaths among soldiers and in providing definitive proof of suicide or death due to other circumstances (murder). What they are interested in is in hiding their negligence or unlawful actions.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

DEFINITION OF TORTURE

1. The definition of torture given in Article 127 CC, despite several amendments, still differs enough from that in the Convention that it distorts the very essence of this phenomenon and impedes prosecution of those in power.

Recommendations:

- a) bring the definition of torture in the Criminal Code in line with the Convention, covering all elements of this crime contained in its Article 1.

INVESTIGATION INTO ACTS OF TORTURE

2. The majority of investigations into acts of torture in Ukraine are ineffective. In most of these cases, investigations are opened on orders from the investigating judge after the latter receives a complaint against the inaction of investigators, rather than following the initial victim's complaint on torture. The number of indictments that handed in to courts is much lower than the number of opened criminal investigations. Proceedings in such cases are dragged out at the stages of both pre-trial investigation as well as court examination, until the time limit or prosecution expires. As a result, government officers are rarely brought to justice.

3. There is no methodology for investigating acts of torture, and international recommendations concerning these issues are not being implemented.

4. Victims of torture often face retaliation after filing complaints with the authorities, which stops many of them from reporting these incidents in the first place.

5. The state bodies responsible for ensuring the observance of the rights of persons held in places of detention are ineffective; they are rarely able to detect instances of torture and the information they have does not represent the actual situation with crimes of torture in the country.

6. There is no mechanism for bringing disciplinary action against SBI investigators for dereliction of duty when it comes to investigating torture complaints.

7. The territorial departments of the newly established SBI have jurisdiction over 4-5 Ukrainian regions each, which only makes it more difficult to report crimes of torture and open investigations, as well as, for the victims and other stakeholders, to communicate with the persons investigating the crime or supervising this process (investigators, prosecutors, investigating judges), which has adversely affected the situation with investigating crimes of torture as a whole.

Recommendations:

- a) ensure independence of judges from prosecuting authorities, specifically by conducting an impartial and thorough investigation into every judge's report on unjustified interference with his or her activities, and by prosecuting those responsible;
- b) establish at the legislative level clear criteria for bringing disciplinary action and criminal charges against investigators and prosecutors for improper pre-trial investigation and violation of procedural deadlines; promptly adopt Model Regulations on SBI Disciplinary Commissions and establish the latter;
- c) establish at the legislative level liability of judges for violating procedural deadlines;
- d) develop and adopt a methodology for investigating crimes of torture, taking into account international recommendations on these issues (Istanbul Protocol). Develop and implement a procedure

- for involving civil society representatives in investigations of crimes of torture, as well as for civic oversight in these investigations;
- e) obligate investigative and judicial authorities to ensure, as a general rule, the safety of torture victims;
 - f) supplement the CPC with a provision that requires for interrogations of suspects to be conducted only in specially equipped rooms and with mandatory video recording;
 - g) open, in order to facilitate communication between torture victims and investigating authorities, offices of appropriate SBI territorial departments in each regional centre, for instance, at the administrative buildings of local prosecutor's offices;
 - h) take measures to eliminate systematic human rights violations committed by the SSU during the apprehension of persons and their subsequent detention; bring the practices employed by SSU officials when carrying out procedural actions with suspects in line with the law on the observance of their procedural rights; introduce a clear system for documenting the detention of detainees in the SBU premises from the moment of their factual detention (like "Custody Records");
 - i) conduct a thorough investigation into complaints of persons allegedly held by the SSU units in secret detention facilities during the ATO and JFO.

FUNDAMENTAL LEGAL SAFEGUARDS FOR DETAINEES

8. Constitutional guarantees concerning every individual's right to liberty, as well as judicial review as a safeguard against arbitrary detentions, remain empty claims. The general rule of part 2, Article 29 of the Constitution of Ukraine, which states that no one may be arrested or kept in detention without a justified court order, unless it happens when preventing a crime, stopping an ongoing crime or being in "hot pursuit", is violated in almost every case of arrest.

9. The unlawfulness of detentions in its various manifestations (detentions without a court order or the justification required; unacknowledged detention; delayed registration of detention; failing to inform a detainee on his rights or to ensure their observance; impeding the exercise of these rights; abuse of power) is a widespread occurrence among law enforcement agencies and results in ill-treatment of detainees during the initial stages of detention. Gross violations of human rights are the norm at the SSU, and the Government is unable to stop it.

Recommendations:

- a) amend — in order to comply with the fundamental constitutional guarantee against arbitrary deprivation of liberty enshrined in part 2, Article 29 of the Constitution of Ukraine — the prohibition of arrests without a justified court order ("arrest warrant") (Articles 188-190 CPC) — the CPC of Ukraine accordingly, specifically by defining the term "suspect";
- b) establish an online single national register of detentions shared by all law enforcement agencies (with information on the exact time, date and place of apprehension from the outset of actual detention), also allowing access to it to courts and FLA centres;
- c) elaborate, in order to provide for personal responsibility of relevant officers for the life and health of detainees during the entire period of detention, the CPC provisions on detention of suspects, specifically by developing and making into law a procedure, shared by all pre-trial investigation bodies, for keeping records of all actions related to the apprehension of a person and subsequent temporary detention (with appropriate registration forms), and by ensuring its implementation, namely by:
 - introducing a model detention protocol form;
 - notifying responsible officials at pre-trial investigation bodies by means of technical devices regarding a person's apprehension immediately after said apprehension (part 2, Art. 210 CPC)
 - keeping records of all actions performed with a detainee by the officer responsible for the person's detention (Art. 212 CPC);
- d) extend the THF Custody Records information system to all places of temporary detention (all THFs, police departments, premises of the SSU and State Border Guard Service of Ukraine, etc.) and ensure its effective use for guaranteeing the observance of the rights of detainees;

- e) develop and implement an effective mechanism for ensuring compliance with quality standards of FLA lawyers that provide legal aid in criminal proceedings;
- f) provide for the liability of medical professionals that give the consent for detention of persons in THFs whose condition is life-threatening;
- g) ensure the right of detainees that do not speak the language of the court to interpretation, specifically by allocating sufficient funds to allow hiring professional interpreters;
- h) make investigations into attempts to impede a detainee's right to legal aid from a chosen or state-appointed lawyer a priority for prosecuting authorities;
- i) strengthen judicial control over the observance of procedural safeguards for detainees, including by streamlining case law and organising special training for judges.

EXCESSIVE FORCE AND MURDER

10. In the five years since the events at the Maidan in 2013–2014, the tragedies of May 2, 2014 in Odesa and May 9, 2014 in Mariupol, no Berkut officer responsible for the killings and violent deaths at the Maidan and no one in Odesa and Mariupol has been convicted, which makes the public doubt the Government's sincerity when it comes to prosecuting those responsible for these crimes and getting justice for the victims.

11. The number of Tornado battalion members prosecuted by courts and the severity of their sentences clearly do not match the scale and gravity of the crimes committed by members of the Tornado battalion.

12. Investigations into crimes committed by Aidar members were inconsistent and there is no information as to whether all the necessary steps were taken to investigate these crimes. Even in the only case that was forwarded to trial, where three individuals received their sentences, the latter were later reversed by the court of cassation.

13. The high-profile murder of Pavlo Sheremet remains unsolved, the trial on the murder of Oles Buzyna is being deliberately dragged out, and the case on the murder of Yuriy Grabovskyi is, for reasons unknown, being examined behind closed doors. There were no proper investigations into crimes committed against lawyers and journalists during the reporting period.

The trial on the brutal murder of Mr. Zuckerman by police officers in 2016 still has not begun, and only one of the suspects is in custody.

14. Despite heavy criticism aimed at the Myrotvorets website, it continues to publish people's personal data, which is an obvious crime, yet the investigation into these activities is ineffective and no suspects have been named so far.

Recommendations:

- a) conduct an independent and impartial investigation into all crimes committed during the Maidan protests in 2013–2014 as well as other high-profile crimes committed during the reporting period, by:
 - providing expert institutions with the necessary resources for completing all forensic examinations,
 - taking measures to prevent pre-trial investigations and court proceedings from being delayed or dragged out,
 - ensuring public order and safety of all participants of court proceedings;
 - introducing a more flexible and effective procedure for the transfer of investigations from the PG Special Investigations Directorate to the SBI, so that such transfer would not affect the quality of investigations and would not require for the investigations to be reopened;
- b) ensure maximum publicity and transparency of court proceedings in high-profile cases in order to keep the public informed.

EXCESSIVE FORCE AND GROSS VIOLATIONS OF THE CONVENTION IN THE CONTEXT OF EVENTS IN EASTERN UKRAINE

15. Investigations into cases of torture, disappearances, including enforced disappearances, injuries and deaths of civilians in eastern of Ukraine are conducted with gross violations of the CPC. The investigating authorities are passive in their efforts, and when victims attempt to initiate an investigation or request

for certain investigative actions to be carried out, the authorities violate procedural deadlines for these actions or even fail to carry them out altogether. As a result, a large amount of evidence has been lost because it was not found in time.

16. Conducting investigative actions in the TOT is objectively impossible for Ukrainian law enforcement agencies due to the lack of access to these territories;

17. The Government has not established a uniform methodology for keeping records of civilian victims of the armed conflict; in fact, no such records exist, which prevents conflict-affected civilians from receiving compensation and rehabilitation from the state.

Recommendations:

- a) bring criminal law in line with the definitions of crimes against humanity and war crimes given in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and the Geneva Conventions;
- b) step up investigations into all cases of torture or other forms of ill-treatment, including enforced disappearances and deprivation of life committed in any territory within Ukraine’s jurisdiction;
- c) establish a national register of civilians affected by the armed conflict (killed, injured, gone missing, those who lost their property, etc.);
- d) adopt a law on compensation for conflict-affected civilians;
- e) establish a National Centre of Information and Documentation on the Issues of Victims of the Armed Conflict in Eastern Ukraine that would combine all existing state registers, with access for public authorities to the registers that they are authorized to maintain, as well as with on-demand information exchange, data processing by all registers and safeguards in place to protect personal data.

JUVENILE JUSTICE

18. Ukraine still has not finished updating its juvenile system. Although there are certain procedural safeguards in criminal proceedings against juveniles, in essence, they are no different from those used for adults. There is also no case law on juvenile crimes established by higher courts.

19. The CPC provisions concerning the grounds for choosing detention as a juvenile’s restraining measure (Art. 492 CPC), although worded somewhat differently from the regular rules (Chapter 18 of the CPC), are essentially the same as for adults. What is more, the current CPC, unlike the CPC of 1960, does not contain Clause 13.1 of the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice requiring pre-trial detention for juveniles to be used only as a measure of last resort and for the shortest possible period of time.

Recommendations:

- a) complete the reform of the juvenile justice system by:
 - adopting a law on juvenile justice and amending relevant legislation,
 - expanding the use of mediation in the administration of juvenile justice and adding punishment options other than incarceration,
 - increasing the number of probation centres and improving their work,
 - developing and implement new types of PIs for juveniles.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

20. Over the course of the armed conflict in eastern Ukraine, many Ukrainian citizens have been lured into Russia and forced to engage in drug-related criminal activities, which later resulted in their prosecution and imprisonment.

Recommendations:

- a) take legislative action to regulate the issue of assistance for victims of human trafficking in order to help the victims of this crime in Russia:
 - pass an amnesty law for the victims,
 - take real steps to rehabilitate them and compensate them for their suffering.

ASYLUM SEEKERS AND INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

21. Many asylum seekers are unable to apply for the status of refugee or for judicial protection after being denied by the State Migration Service due to language barriers, lack of easy access to FLA or short time frames for appealing against SMS decisions. FLA lawyers are helping only an insignificant fraction of these people.

22. In many cases, court proceedings are often conducted without an interpreter or legal representative. SMS decisions, court rulings and other documents are not translated into the asylum seeker's language, which renders the guarantee of judicial protection moot. Moreover, court proceedings usually take a long time, and the SMS often just denies applications again, which makes it virtually impossible for a person to obtain refugee status or a person in need of additional protection.

23. Most asylum seekers have no social protection; they are not entitled to any free healthcare services and are unable to exercise the right to temporary employment.

24. The living conditions at the SMS temporary holding centres, where most foreign nationals and stateless persons await expulsion, are not in line with international standards; moreover, due to overcrowding at these centres, some persons are held for long periods of time at temporary holding facilities of the State Border Guard Service, which are not suited for this.

25. The provisions in Ukrainian law on detention of persons for the duration of appeal consideration, as well as detentions at the special premises of the State Border Guard Service, SSU or SMS, even when a first instance court does not authorise such detention, violate the universally recognized principle of international law — prohibition of detention without a court order.

26. The Government of Ukraine does not provide sufficient social protection and support to IDPs, which forces them to return to non-government-controlled territories where human rights violations are taking place to this day. Also, although the Government has adopted certain legislative acts that could improve the situation of IDPs, the insufficient or even non-existent funding make these acts impossible to implement.

Recommendations:

- a) open new holding centres for foreigners and stateless persons and/or increase the maximum capacity of existing ones as well as improve conditions there,
- b) stop the practice of long-term unlawful detention of persons in places not designed for this;
- c) adopt regulations granting UNHCR representatives the right to visit places of detention for asylum seekers;
- d) consider restraining measures other than detention during expulsion procedures;
- e) abolish provisions that allow asylum seekers' detention in the absence of a court order;
- f) make it a legal requirement to ensure the presence of a legal representative and to provide an interpreter in state executive bodies and courts for all asylum seekers during the consideration of matters related to their status,
- g) bring payments for IDPs for covering the cost of housing and utilities in line with minimum state social standards;
- h) bring CMU regulations on pensions and pension arrears for IDPs in line with the current legislation on mandatory pension insurance and freedom of movement in Ukraine.

CONDITIONS OF DETENTION IN PLACES OF DETENTION AND DEATHS THERE

27. Conditions of detention in many PIs are inconsistent with international standards and constitute inhuman or degrading treatment, as recognized multiple times by the European Court of Human Rights. A large number of premises in PCs and PTDCs are in need of major repairs. In addition, the situation with prison food remains unsatisfactory, especially in pre-trial detention facilities.

28. The practice of unlawful use of force against convicts by PI personnel and rapid response teams is unacceptable and must be eradicated.

Recommendations:

- a) check whether conditions of detention in PIs suspended in accordance with the CMU Resolution “On the Procedure for Optimising the Activities of Pre-Trial Detention Facilities, Penitentiary Institutions and Enterprises of Penitentiary Institutions” comply with international standards, and unsuspend PIs that are up to standard;
- b) seek international humanitarian assistance to improve conditions of detention in PIs where said conditions were recognized as inadequate by the European Court of Human Rights;
- c) grant representatives of NGOs accredited by the MoJ unimpeded access to PCs and PTDCs at the legislative level, at any time of day and without any additional permission, allowing them to monitor the observance of the rights of convicts and detainees and to communicate with them one-on-one or in the presence of the administrations’ representatives;
- d) provide for disciplinary liability of PI personnel for gross violations of the rights of prisoners discovered by members of the public;
- e) establish in regulations that rapid response teams can only be used on the premises of PIs with the personal authorization of the head of the SCES.

ENSURING OBSERVANCE OF THE RIGHT OF CONVICTS TO HEALTHCARE

29. The reform of the SCES healthcare system failed to improve the quality of prison healthcare, which in most PIs remains unsatisfactory or outright catastrophic due to the shortage of medical personnel, equipment and medicines.

30. With the PC and PTDC administrations no longer responsible for the health of prisoners and due to the complete absence of publicly available information on the activities of the SIHC and its structural units, it is now extremely difficult to challenge the inaction of prison medical personnel. There is also no publicly available public official data on illnesses among prisoners, or statistics on mortality.

31. The option for prisoners to undergo treatment at civilian hospitals provided for by the CEC is an illusion of choice for most of them due to the high cost of such treatment.

32. Prisoners in the final stages of terminal illnesses are neither released from incarceration nor provided with palliative care. Cases when someone is released on the grounds of a serious illness are extremely rare, and this usually happens the very end of the prisoner’s life.

Recommendations:

- a) make the SIHC subordinate to the MoH and remove its ties to the SCES;
- b) conduct a nationwide inspection of the activities of regional branches and separate subdivisions of the SIHC;
- c) carry out anti-epidemic measures required by law to prevent the spread of infectious diseases;
- d) regulate all organisational aspects of the activities of the prison medical service, including standards on the required number of medical personnel as well as on the sufficient amount of equipment and medicines,
- e) increase pay for medical personnel in order to bring more specialists into the prison healthcare system,
- f) make all statistics on the activities of the prison healthcare system publicly available,
- g) ensure access of prisoners to their health records
- h) amend legislation on release of the prisoner’s with grave diseases from further serving of a conviction introducing the mandatory release on presence of a disease from the List of the ones approved by the MoH and the MoJ.

RESTITUTIONS, INCLUDING MONETARY COMPENSATION AND REHABILITATION

33. Ukraine has no comprehensive program for the rehabilitation of torture victims and families of missing persons. Medical or psychological rehabilitation as well as other resources are not available to the

victims. The Government has also not evaluated the effectiveness of the state rehabilitation program for military personnel.

34. Considering the low number of acquittals and court decisions awarding compensation, as well as the tiny sums that have been awarded, we can conclude that this mechanism in Ukraine is not effective. Moreover, victims of such obvious crimes as torture or unlawful detention still have to prove their suffering. The law-provided minimum amount of compensation is also usually treated as a guideline rather than a starting point.

Recommendations:

- a) develop a comprehensive rehabilitation program for victims of torture and families of missing persons,
- b) develop measures to monitor the effectiveness of rehabilitation programs for civilians as well as military personnel,
- c) involve relevant civil society organizations in the development and control of rehabilitation programs;
- d) organize systematic collection of data on compensation for victims of human trafficking awarded by international as well as domestic courts;
- e) analyse judgements of the European Court of Human Rights that found Ukraine guilty of violating Article 3 of the Convention, and plan general measures that would prevent new violations;
- f) expand national case law aimed at addressing the formalistic and inhumane approach to the issue of compensation for unlawful prosecution;
- g) revise the procedure for providing compensation for unlawful prosecution in order to simplify it for the victims.

FORCED CONFESSION

35. Confessions obtained under torture and without access to a lawyer from detainees whose detention was never registered remain a glaring problem in Ukraine. Complaints to prosecuting authorities have proven ineffective in such situations. The CPC-provided judicial review is more a formality than a safeguard against arbitrary detention. The first instance and appellate courts do not reject inadmissible evidence often enough. Judges and investigating judges can easily ignore procedural requirements established by the CPC. The role of investigating judges is just a formality and does nothing to safeguard the rights of suspects.

Recommendations:

- a) ensure proper observance of the adversarial principle, equality of arms and continuity of legal proceedings,
- b) ensure investigating judges' compliance with the CPC and case law of the European Court of Human Rights when considering motions of litigants;
- c) ensure prompt responses of prosecuting authorities and investigating judges to torture reports as well as thorough verification of all information provided by public authorities.

DEDOVSHCHINA (HAZING) AND NON-COMBAT DEATHS IN THE ARMY

36. Hazing between military personnel remain the most widespread problem in the AFU.

37. Almost all non-combat deaths in the AFU are classified as suicides, although in many cases everything points to murder.

Recommendations:

- h) increase the number of psychologists to ensure prompt responses to conflicts between soldiers as well as to issues with the soldiers' mental state,
- i) improve the effectiveness of pre-trial investigations into the deaths of soldiers,
- j) ensure access to investigations for the families of deceased soldiers.

DATA COLLECTION

38. Judicial and PG statistics, while providing data on criminal proceedings and results of trials under Articles 364 (excess of authority) and 365 (abuse of authority) of the Criminal Code, do not keep separate records of complaints of torture and ill-treatment and results of their examination by investigating bodies and courts. Meanwhile, Article 127 CC (on torture) is hardly ever used. Thus, there are no proper records in Ukraine on complaints of torture and ill-treatment and the state's responses to them, and neither does the state keep records of extra-judicial killings and enforced disappearances. As a result, there can be no hard data on compensation and rehabilitation for the victims.

Recommendations:

- a) introduce separate records of complaints of torture and ill-treatment in the official statistics of law enforcement agencies and courts, and keep separate records of the results of consideration of these complaints and the appropriate court decisions;
- b) introduce separate records of extra-judicial killings, the results of their investigation and the punishments for them;
- c) introduce separate records of enforced disappearances, the results of their investigation and the punishments for them;
- d) introduce records of compensation awarded to victims of torture, ill-treatment, extra-judicial killings and enforced disappearances, as well as of rehabilitation provided to the victims.

OTHER ISSUES

Certain categories of civilian victims of the armed conflict in eastern Ukraine: persons gone missing and detained in non-government-controlled territories

39. Another unresolved issue concerns the identification and consolidation of records of missing persons, and the Commission on Persons Gone Missing under Special Circumstances is doing nothing to locate these people. The main reason for this is the lack of proper legal regulation of the Commission's activities as well as the lack of cooperation between public authorities and international (non-governmental) organizations when it comes to records of missing persons.

40. Although some progress has been made in the transfer of convicted prisoners from the TOT to government-controlled territory, most of them still remain under the control of illegal armed groups. Furthermore, the legal status of those that have been transferred or those that have already served their sentence in non-government-controlled territory is still uncertain due to the lack of proper legal regulation.

Recommendations:

- e) jointly establish a State Register of Missing Persons with the International Committee of the Red Cross;
- f) properly regulate the activities of the Commission on Persons Gone Missing under Special Circumstances;
- g) task the State Judicial Administration with establishing a separate register of proceedings on recognising persons as persons gone missing in the TOT;
- h) introduce a clear mechanism of interaction between state bodies in the transfer of convicted prisoners from the TOT to other regions of Ukraine;
- i) adopt a law that will determine the legal status of persons in respect of which charges have been brought under the CC, CPC and CEC in connection with the armed aggression, armed conflict or temporary occupation of parts of Ukrainian territory.

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