

Joint Statement of Ombudsmen of Visegrád 4 Countries on the Situation in Ukraine

We, Signatories of this Joint Statement, strongly condemn the Russian military attack on the sovereign State of Ukraine which started on 24 February 2022. The Russian military actions constitute a gross and unprecedented violation of international law and an attack on values of a democratic and civilized society.

We also condemn all Russian military actions directed against civilians and civilian objects or in any other way constituting a breach of international humanitarian law.

In this regard, we welcome the urgent interim measure ECHR 068 (2022) from 1 March 2022 adopted by the European Court of Human Rights requesting the Government of Russia to refrain from military attacks against civilians and civilian objects, including residential premises, emergency vehicles and other specially protected civilian objects such as schools and hospitals, and to ensure immediately the safety of the medical establishments, personnel and emergency vehicles within the territory under attack or siege by Russian troops. We also welcome the decision of the International Criminal Court Prosecutor, Karim A.A. Khan QC, to open the investigation concerning the situation in Ukraine.

We appreciate and support the statements of the International Ombudsman Institute and the European Network of National Human Rights Institutions supporting Ukraine calling for the observation of international law and peaceful solution of the conflict.

Visegrád 4 countries are and most probably will be among states which will receive huge numbers of refugees from Ukraine. As Ombudspersons of these states, we believe that it is both our legal and moral duty to provide effective and timely support and assistance to Ukrainian citizens and all people fleeing war-torn Ukraine on our territories, with special attention to the most vulnerable groups of people like children, older person, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, etc.

The Russian military aggression against Ukraine cannot be justified by any means and arguments. We jointly express our deepest regrets concerning all the victims of the ongoing armed conflict and the suffering of the Ukrainian people.

We sincerely wish and hope that the armed conflict will be brought to an end as soon as possible through diplomatic efforts and without further unnecessary bloodshed.