

**Joint Statement by the Speakers of the Parliaments of Estonia, Finland*,
Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Ukraine and First Deputy Speaker of the
Parliament of Iceland****

**On Supporting Ukraine and Urging Russia to Uphold International Law
and Ensure Access to the Prisoners of War**

Vilnius, 10 March 2025

Russia, emboldened by impunity, continues to blatantly violate principles of the UN Charter and mock fundamental human rights. **Russia**, aided by its accomplices, **continues its' genocidal warfare against Ukraine and its people**, threatening the continent and the world.

The effectiveness of international guarantees for thousands of Ukrainian **prisoners of war** (POWs) at the mercy of Russian captors is seriously undermined, as **Russia does not give sufficient access** to the prisoners of war and hostages to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), other international and humanitarian organizations operating in the temporarily occupied by the Russian Federation territories of Ukraine and in Russia. The denial of access to internment facilities for independent monitors, combined with the adoption of broad amnesty laws for Russian servicemen, contributes to impunity for systematic torture and ill-treatment of POWs.

As per findings of the UN and independent CSO/NGOs, Ukrainian Prisoners of war are subject to **widespread and systematic torture**, including sexual violence, ill-treatment, prolonged incommunicado detention, and enforced disappearance, constituting war crimes and crimes against humanity in Russian captivity. Ukrainian POWs described severe beatings, electric shocks, sexual violence, suffocation, prolonged stress positions, forced excessive exercise, sleep deprivation, mock, and humiliation. They have also witnessed and are victims of **executions**.

Entire groups of Ukrainian POWs were routinely subjected to these abusive practices across various internment facilities in numerous regions within the temporarily occupied by Russia territory of Ukraine and the Russian Federation, showing similar patterns of brutality.

Russia is executing Ukrainian prisoners of war in a manner contrary to international law. It is a war crime. Since August 2024, there has been an alarming spike in executions, with at least 79 executions recorded by UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine.

**The Speaker of Eduskunta, Parliament of Finland is supportive of the content of this declaration, but due to constitutional and legal constraints, his signing cannot be perceived as binding for the Finnish Parliament and/or State.*

***The First Deputy Speaker of Althingi, Parliament of Iceland is supportive of the content of this declaration, but due to constitutional and legal constraints, her signing cannot be perceived as binding for the Parliament of Iceland and/or State.*

These war crimes reflect Russia's state policy of terror and disregard for international law. This is not the work of rogue soldiers - it is a deliberate state policy aimed at breaking Ukraine's resistance through terror. The Kremlin not only allows these crimes but actively encourages them. Public figures in Russia have explicitly called for inhumane treatment, and even execution of Ukrainian PoWs, often using dehumanizing terms in public discourse and through State-owned media.

We reiterate – the only way to stop these atrocities is by holding **Russia accountable** and **ensuring Ukraine has the means to defend itself.** Inaction will only embolden Russia to continue its brutality.

The international community must support Ukraine until **its victory** over the aggressor state and ensure accountability of perpetrators and masterminds for violations of international law. Only this way will lay the path towards **a comprehensive, just and lasting peace for Ukraine and Europe.**

We urge Russia to implement its international commitments with respect to international humanitarian law, adhere to the provisions of the Geneva Conventions.

We urge Russia to grant immediate and unhindered access for the ICRC and other relevant international organizations and mandate holders to the PoWs in order to fulfil their mandates in the temporarily occupied by Russian Federation territories of Ukraine.