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Ukraine solidarity

We must save the children of Ukraine

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In a recent interview, Maria Lvova-Belova, the Russian Commissioner for Children's Rights reporting to the President of the Russian Federation, admitted to having 'taken in' and 're-educated' a Ukrainian teenager. At the time, she mentioned around 20,000 similar cases.

At the same time, the latest report from Yale University's Humanitarian Research Laboratory [1], published on 16 September 2025, once again demonstrates the widespread, quasi-industrial, orchestrated and planned nature of the forced Russification carried out by the Russian occupation authorities in the temporarily occupied Ukrainian territories and details in detail the fate of Ukrainian minors who have been isolated, deported and imprisoned in a network of 'ideological re-education' and militarisation camps. It reveals the full extent of the crime committed by Putin's mafia-like imperialist regime against Ukrainian children.

According to a recent survey carried out by the daily *Kyiv Independent* [2], the 1.6 million or so children living in the territories occupied by Russia are subjected to daily indoctrination from school, where they are obliged to study according to Russian standards, and forced to join youth organisations designed to glorify the army. These future janissaries are expected to swell the ranks of Ukrainians forcibly conscripted into the Russian army since 2014.

According to Kateryna Rashevska, a Ukrainian lawyer working internationally to defend the rights of Ukrainian children affected by the war, Article 50 of the 4th Geneva Convention requires an occupying power to maintain the education of children in conjunction with the local authorities, to entrust schooling, as far as possible, to persons of its own nationality, language and religion, and to prohibit enrolling children in organisations subordinate to the occupier.

But that doesn't matter to Putin's henchmen: as Igor Vorobyov, director of the Volgograd branch of the Warrior Centre programme, an organisation responsible for training 'the next generation of soldiers', bluntly explains: "If you want to defeat your enemy, raise his children."

These monstrous practices have led to Vladimir Putin and his accomplice Maria Lvova-Belova being indicted for war crimes by the International Criminal Court.

International mobilisation and pressure must be stepped up to ensure that they and their accomplices are brought to justice. We cannot work towards peace unless justice is done and the children of Ukraine can return home.

Maria Lvova-Belova had a hard time with Philipp

Philipp is a 15-year-old Ukrainian whom she abducted from Mariupol, a martyred Ukrainian town, and adopted.

'He complicated our family life', she complained recently in an interview on the Russian talk show *Smotri i Dumai* ('Look and Think'). And with good reason: 'He suffered from severe post-traumatic stress disorder after the bombings'. Above all, 'he said that Moscow and Russia irritated him [...] He was hysterical'.

To the presenter's question: "Didn't he want to live in Russia? the grieving 'mother' replied: "No, he didn't want to. [He said he didn't want to because he loved Ukraine". But Mum was tenacious: 'He gradually changed his mind and turned to reality...'.

We must save the children of Ukraine

When asked how many children Russia had 'taken', Maria Lvova-Belova replied that it was around 20,000. Yet she remains incredulous that she has been indicted by the International Criminal Court.

The official bulletin on her activities, published after the ICC arrest warrant, states:

To date, the Commissioner for Children's Rights to the President of the Russian Federation does not know exactly what the charges of the International Criminal Court (ICC) are and what they are based on. [...] The expression 'unlawful deportation of population (children)' used in the official communication on the ICC website is perplexing. The Russian Federation does not recognise the jurisdiction of the ICC and its representatives are wanted in our country. The Commissioner continues to work as usual.

Maria Lvova-Belova or the banality of evil...

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[1] ["Ukraine's Stolen Children: Inside Russia's Network of Re-education and Militarization."](#)

[2] 23 October 2025, ["Investigation: After occupying their land, Russia trains Ukrainian children for a lifetime of war"](#).