

Declaration on Ukraine

Gathered on 27 and 28 April 2022 in Strasbourg for a European Network of Ombudsmen conference on "The Role of Ombudsmen in Times of Crisis", organized within the framework of the French Presidency of the European Union;

Concerned by the description of the situation in Ukraine given at this conference by Ukrainian Ombudsman Liudmyla Denisova

We, Ombudsmen and Chairs of Petition Committees,

Reaffirm our full solidarity with Ukrainians who are the victims of a war of aggression, which is leading to acts that may be qualified as war crimes or even crimes against humanity;

Reiterate our support for our counterpart, Liudmyla Denisova, Ukrainian Ombudsman;

Welcome the Council of the European Union's decision to activate the temporary protection mechanism, which grants immediate protection to Ukrainian refugees. This is the first time the directive has been activated since it was adopted in 2001;

Remain vigilant as to the continued implementation of this mechanism and to the reception conditions for refugees in our various countries;

Share Liudmyla Denisova's deep concern about the fate of adults, children and orphans who have been forcibly moved to Russia;

Share her fears regarding respect for the rights of displaced persons and the risk of trafficking and exploitation of children and adults, and call for an independent international investigation to obtain more information on their situation;

Call on our Russian counterpart to carry out her role, with regard to the national authorities, in protecting the fundamental rights of all persons, regardless of their origin and without discrimination of any kind, and with particular attention to displaced people or refugees in Russia.

We, Ombudsmen and Chairs of Petition Committees,

Remain alert, in the context of this war and the arrival of refugees, to the respect by European countries of their international commitments, in particular the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Geneva Convention, the International Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the European Convention on Human Rights.

- Claire Hédon, La Défenseure des droits, France
- Jérôme Aass et David Baele, Médiateurs fédéraux de Belgique
- Marc Bertrand, Médiateur de Wallonie et fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles, Belgique
- Catherine de Bruecker, Médiatrice de la région de Bruxelles, Belgique
- Claudia Monti, Médiatrice du Grand-Duché du Luxembourg
- Emily O'Reilly, European Ombudsman
- Anthony C. Mifsud, Ombudsman of Malta
- Stanislav Křeček, Public Defender of Rights of the Czech Republic

- Martina Stamm-Fibich, Vorsitzende des Petitionsausschusses des Deutschen Bundestages, Germany
- Angel Luna Gonzalez, Sindic de Greuges de Valencia, Spain
- Adele Squillaci, Médiatrice de la Région autonome Vallée d'Aoste, Italy
- Matthias Crone, Bürgerbeauftragter des Landes Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Germany
- Angel Gabilondo Pujol, Defensor del Pueblo, Spain
- Erika Leonaite and Milda Vainiuté, Parliamentary Ombudspersons of the Republic of Lithuania
- Peter Svetina, Human Rights Ombudsman of the Republic of Slovenia
- Petri Jääskeläinen, Parliamentary Ombudsman of Finland
- Michael King, Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, United Kingdom
- Marino Fardelli, Difensore Civico della Regione Lazio, Italy
- Renate Weber, People's Advocate of Romania
- Diana Kovatcheva, Ombudsman of the Republic of Bulgaria
- Rob Behrens, Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman, United Kingdom
- Beate Böhlen, Bürgerbeauftragte des Landes Baden-Württemberg, Germany
- Ülle Madise, Chancellor of Justice of Estonia
- Dolores Fernández Galiño, Ombudsman of Galicia, Spain
- Tena Šimonović Einwalter, Ombudswoman of the Republic of Croatia
- Tuomas Pöysti, Chancellor of Justice of Finland
- Maria Lúcia Amaral, Ombudsman of Portugal
- Jesús Maetzu Gregorio de Tejada, Ombudsman of Andalusia, Spain