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# **UKRAINE: The Tribunal for Putin: first legal assessment of genocide in Ukraine**

## **The Tribunal for Putin: first legal assessment of genocide in Ukraine**

*On 28 August, the human rights initiative T4P launched its submission to the International Criminal Court, detailing the acts of genocide committed by Russia in and around the Ukrainian city of Mariupol.*

**KHPG** (06.09.2023) – “We chose to document acts of genocide in Mariupol”, said Yevgen Zakharov, director of the Kharkiv Human

Rights Group, which co-founded the T4P initiative, “because it was the most challenging task. Since 2 March 2022 there has been no direct communication with Mariupol and public services have not been working there: it presented a particularly dire situation. We could only gather information about the war crimes committed in the city through direct communication with the victims and witnesses.”

“We are convinced that acts of genocide were committed in Mariupol and the surrounding district,” said [Mykhailo Romanov, a co-author of the submission](#): “and they took three forms: murder; creating conditions of life, calculated to destroy a protected group; and the deportation of children.”

The authors of the submission estimated that the death toll resulting from Russia’s siege and occupation of Mariupol was approximately 100,000 people. Mykhailo Romanov commented: “Back then, we could not determine the exact number. But by indirect means, i.e., by deducting from the total population those who reportedly had been evacuated, transferred to Russia or else, we calculated that around 100,000 must have been killed. They were murdered in different ways, using different methods and weapons, but in any case, these were murders.”

The submission may be read in both [Ukrainian](#) and [English](#) in the online library on human rights. Earlier, [the T4P presented its submissions regarding Russian shelling of Ukraine](#): according to the initiative’s data, 84 percent of war crimes are directed at the civilian population.

“We have finally moved from what we feel to what we want recognized as an international fact, to what we wish to be written down in history books,” commented Oleksandra Romantsova, Executive Director of the Centre for Civil Liberties. “These are accusations not only against Putin but against the entire Russian regime during the last nine years. Mariupol is a vivid example of how thousands of people are suffering from the decision of Putin and his regime to wage

war against Ukraine, to destroy the country and its people.”

“It is actually very frightening,” said Yevgen Zakharov. “The Russians methodically shelled and destroyed people’s homes, one after another. Snipers shot people queuing up for water or cooking food on a fire outside. Some people died because they stayed on the upper floors with no access and died there of hunger and thirst; during bombardments, people jumped from the upper floors, unable to tolerate this nightmare. They committed suicide, as they no longer had the strength to cope with it and saw no opportunity to escape. There are so many stories like this.”

Testimonies about events in Mariupol were earlier published in [Voices of War: Mariupol](#), a volume of 24 interviews with people who managed to escape from the city and were interviewed by the Kharkiv Human Rights Group. The book will be presented later this year at the Frankfurt Book Fair. In Ukraine, it is available for sale in the Knyharnia Ye bookshop network.

Press conference with English translation: [https://youtu.be/Y1\\_3IxTIP00](https://youtu.be/Y1_3IxTIP00)

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