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Atrocity Alert is a weekly publication by the Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect highlighting situations where populations are at risk of, or are enduring, mass atrocity crimes.

ESCALATING ATROCITIES IN MYANMAR DEMAND URGENT INTERNATIONAL ACTION

A new report by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) warns of a rapidly worsening crisis in [Myanmar \(Burma\)](#), particularly in Rakhine State, and highlights disturbing new trends in abuses against civilians. Amid escalating hostilities between the military and the Arakan Army armed group in Rakhine State, civilians from the Rohingya and ethnic Rakhine communities are caught in the crossfire. UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk said, “The military and the Arakan Army have acted with near complete impunity enabling the recurrence of violations in an endless cycle of suffering... Videos and pictures show death, destruction and desperation, distressingly similar to images that we already saw during the 2017 atrocities committed by the military against the Rohingya. It pains me deeply to see the same happening again.”

The report documents widespread and systematic patterns of indiscriminate attacks against civilians and protected objects, the razing of villages, forced recruitment, denial of humanitarian assistance and mass forced displacement. Since November 2023 approximately 150,000 Rohingya have fled to Bangladesh, adding to the nearly one million Rohingya refugees already confined to overcrowded and under-resourced refugee camps.

Across the country, OHCHR verified at least 6,764 civilian deaths from February 2021 to May 2025, including over 1,400 women and 800 children. Nearly half of these deaths resulted from direct military aerial attacks, illustrating the junta’s increasing reliance on airpower to commit atrocities. Alarming, the report also identifies two emerging trends: the use of chemicals and armed paramotors. During the reporting period, OHCHR received 26 allegations involving the use of chemicals, including fertilizers, attached to explosive devices in attacks against civilians across six states and regions. Armed paramotors, near-silent aircraft typically used for reconnaissance, have now been repurposed to drop munitions from high altitudes with little to no targeting precision. Since December 2024, there have been 137 paramotor attacks.

Torture in detention centers also remains pervasive. Detainees, including children and political prisoners, have faced electric shocks, strangulation and sexual violence, often leading to death. The documented abuses, including indiscriminate and targeted attacks on civilians, the use of chemical weapons, torture and sexual violence, among others, are prohibited under international law and may amount to crimes against humanity and war crimes.

Amid the deteriorating crisis, the upcoming UN High-Level Conference on the Situation of Rohingya Muslims and Other Minorities in Myanmar on 30 September presents a critical opportunity for meaningful action. Member states must seize this moment to increase coordinated and targeted sanctions on military leaders, businesses, arms suppliers, financial institutions and aviation fuel networks that sustain the junta's military capabilities. It is equally vital to scale up humanitarian support and ensure aid reaches communities beyond the junta's control. International support for accountability mechanisms remains essential to ending the cycle of impunity that enables continued atrocities.

GROWING CIVILIAN TOLL IN UKRAINE AMID RUSSIA'S INTENSIFIED ATTACKS

On 7 September Russia launched its largest aerial attack on [Ukraine](#) since the start of the full-scale invasion, striking multiple regions, including the capital, Kyiv. The strikes, carried out during daylight hours, targeted civilian infrastructure across the country. At least four civilians, including an infant, were killed and a government building destroyed in the capital. These attacks mark an intensification in violence by Russian forces following the resumption of strikes on Kyiv beginning 27 August, during which at least 23 people, including 4 children, were killed. In one instance, a section of a five-story residential building collapsed in Kyiv's Darnytskyi district due to missile impact. In the frontline region of Donestk, a Russian airstrike on 9 September killed more than 24 civilians, mainly elderly retirees waiting in line to receive their pensions.

The UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Ukraine, Matthias Schmale, condemned the strikes, stating, "Yet again, attacks impacted homes, a government building, a kindergarten and other civilian infrastructure in Kyiv and Chernihiv, Kharkiv, Kremenchuk, Kryvyi Rih, Odesa, Sumy region, Zaporizhzhia – leaving behind loss, destruction and grief...Civilians and civilian infrastructure are protected under international humanitarian law – they are not a target."

Addressing the UN Human Rights Council on 8 September, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk reported that more civilians were killed and injured in July than in any month since May 2022, due to Russia's intensified attacks along the frontline and in urban centers. High Commissioner Türk also emphasized that the past several weeks have seen some of the most extensive airstrikes since the start of the war, with "countrywide drone and missile saturation attacks resuming and intensifying."

International efforts to secure a ceasefire have yielded little progress. European leaders and the European Union have called for a full and unconditional ceasefire as a foundation for peace negotiations, warning of further sanctions should Russia fail to comply. UN officials, including the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, have urged both sides to embrace diplomacy and adopt confidence-building measures, such as [prisoner exchanges](#), which have already resulted in the repatriation of both living detainees and mortal remains. However, Russian negotiators have demonstrated little willingness to engage, with some downplaying the likelihood of a ceasefire in 2025, casting doubt over prospects for a negotiated, lasting settlement.

While recent talks between United States President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin have drawn attention, any negotiations to end the conflict must not sideline Ukraine. A lasting peace requires urgent measures to protect civilians, safeguard the rights of people in Russian-occupied territory, end torture and ill treatment and ensure accountability for atrocities. Full respect for international law and assurances for justice are essential to restoring dignity to the victims of the ongoing conflict.

UN EXPERTS WARN OF GRAVE ABUSES AGAINST PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE DPRK

On 3 September the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) issued its findings on the [Democratic People's Republic of Korea \(DPRK\)](#), following the country's review during the Committee's latest session. The CRPD expressed grave concern over credible reports of systematic abuses against persons with disabilities. These include accounts of infanticide of children with disabilities, sometimes carried out in medical facilities with official consent, forced abortions and sterilizations and medical experimentation. The CRPD condemned the DPRK's eugenic and discriminatory medical policies, which under the guise of "disability prevention," infringe on the right to life of persons with disabilities.

The risks faced by persons with disabilities in the DPRK are further compounded by gender and age. Women and children with disabilities are subjected to gender-based and sexual violence, including coerced marriage, abduction, trafficking and rape. The CRPD noted the absence of legal protections, adequate investigative mechanisms, support services and prevention efforts, leaving survivors without access to justice or redress.

Although DPRK authorities have taken some formal steps toward protecting disability rights since 2016, including ratifying the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, hosting the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and accepting relevant recommendations during its third and fourth Universal Periodic Reviews, a significant gap remains between its international commitments and domestic implementation. For instance, national legislation does not explicitly guarantee the right to life for persons with disabilities, including those in detention and healthcare settings, where they face heightened risks of medical neglect, starvation and abuse without independent oversight.

Human rights abuses and restrictions on fundamental freedoms targeting persons with disabilities are inseparable from the DPRK's broader system of discrimination and persecution. Julia Saltzman, DPRK expert at the Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, said, "The systematic enforcement of discriminatory and exclusionary policies affecting persons with disabilities in the DPRK is not incidental but a tool of state repression, embedded within broader patterns of indoctrination, discrimination and persecution. These policies and practices occur within a pervasive climate of gross human rights violations and impunity that often amount to crimes against humanity."

The DPRK should amend its constitution and domestic legislation to guarantee equality and non-discrimination for persons with disabilities, as well as adopt a comprehensive anti-discrimination law that includes effective remedies and protections. The government must take a gender-sensitive approach, including measures to prevent gender-based and sexual violence, and expand access to support services for women with disabilities. It should also permit independent monitoring and grant full access to the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and relevant UN Special Procedures.