



29 August 2014 – An average of around 36 people are being killed every day as a result of intense fighting in densely populated areas of eastern Ukraine, according to a new report issued today by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

“Deliberate targeting of civilians is a violation of international humanitarian law, and more must be done to protect them,” said UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay. “There is an urgent need to end the fighting and violence in the eastern regions, before more civilians are harmed or forced to flee, or face intolerable hardships trapped inside the conflict zones,” she added.

The report documents a wide array of serious human rights abuses committed primarily by the armed groups who have seized control over a large part of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions in eastern Ukraine since mid-April. It also documents violations committed by Ukrainian forces in their efforts to recapture territory.

According to the report, civilians fleeing the intense and prolonged fighting in eastern Ukraine have been targeted and killed; others have been prevented by the armed groups from leaving the cities of Luhansk and Donetsk as the Ukraine Government tightened its blockades around the two main strongholds of the armed groups.

Supposedly “safe” corridors established by the Ukrainian forces to enable residents to flee from

these cities, traversed areas where the fighting was ongoing. Civilians using these corridors were subsequently killed or injured.

Although more than half the population of Luhansk and Donetsk cities have now left, not enough was done in time to evacuate people from the areas of fighting, the report says, especially those most vulnerable such as institutionalized children, older people and people with disabilities. The evacuation of many children to other parts of Ukraine was blocked by armed groups.

Over 1,500 cases of alleged offenses committed by local officials and citizens in the east have already been investigated by Ukrainian authorities, and more than 150 people have been prosecuted. Nevertheless, "residents of these regions back under the control of the Government report the fear of reprisals, the lack of confidence that their own cases will be investigated, and fear that impunity will continue with no accountability," the report says.

"Justice and accountability must replace impunity for major human rights violations that have occurred over the past four months," the High Commissioner said, "and justice must be applied to all."

At least 2,593 people have been killed in Ukraine between mid-April and 27 August 2014.

*UNRIC's library backgrounder on [Ukraine](#)*

*The full report can be accessed at: <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/UA/UkraineReport28August2014.pdf>*

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