

**ALERT**



# UKRAINE

“This war is a catastrophe. It’s truly awful ... I never thought I would live to see such horror for the second time in my life. I thought it was in my past, all over and done with. And now we’re reliving it.”

—90-year-old Holocaust survivor Alla Ilyinichna Sinelnikova, who fled to Russia to escape Nazi persecution during the Holocaust. She is now fleeing from the forces of the very country where she previously sought refuge.

**ON FEBRUARY 24, 2022 RUSSIA LAUNCHED A MASSIVE INVASION OF UKRAINE** and began conducting deadly attacks on civilians. These attacks are an escalation of conflict in eastern Ukraine that began in early 2014 after Russia annexed the Ukrainian region of Crimea. Thousands of Ukrainian civilians have been killed or injured.

Russian forces’ crimes against Ukrainian civilians include executions, attacks on hospitals, the use of cluster munitions and thermobaric weapons in residential areas, attacks on humanitarian corridors, sexual violence, torture, and the forcible deportation of Ukrainians to Russia. Russian forces have laid siege to a number of Ukrainian cities, cutting civilians off from basic necessities. The discovery of mass graves, including the bodies of women, children, and the elderly, in and around the city of Bucha provides further evidence of mass atrocity crimes by Russian forces.

**There is a reasonable basis to believe that Russian forces are committing war crimes and crimes against humanity against Ukrainian civilians. Publicly available information warrants investigation into the potential commission of genocide,** notably dangerous rhetoric against Ukrainians from Russian President Vladimir Putin, forcible deportations of Ukrainian civilians to Russia, and other crimes including killings and sexual violence.

This invasion has led to the largest refugee crisis in Europe since World War II. More than six million people have fled Ukraine and more than seven million have become internally displaced.

Putin has justified this invasion by spreading the false claim that democratic Ukraine needs to be “denazified.” This distortion and misrepresentation of Holocaust history is dangerous and disrespectful, especially for the nearly 10,000 Holocaust survivors who lived in Ukraine at the time of the invasion. Many of these survivors are once again being forced to flee their homes to escape violence and oppression.

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SIMON-SKJODT CENTER  
FOR THE PREVENTION OF GENOCIDE

**The Museum's Simon-Skjodt Center is extremely concerned by this crisis and calls for the international community to:**

- Continue pressuring Russia to end its invasion of Ukraine and specifically halt the targeting of civilians.
- Support refugees fleeing the conflict.
- Uphold the memory of the Holocaust by condemning Russia's false accusation of Nazism in Ukraine and protecting survivors and memorial sites.
- Document and investigate mass atrocities with the goal of pursuing justice and accountability.

**LEARN MORE AT** [ushmm.org/ukraine](https://ushmm.org/ukraine)

*Previous page: The mother of Ukrainian soldier Lubomyr Hudzeliak, who was killed during Russia's invasion of Ukraine, mourns over his flag-draped coffin in Lviv on April 6, 2022. Yuriy Dyachyshyn/AFP/Getty Images*



**WHAT YOU DO MATTERS.** We can all play a role in helping prevent genocide. Action takes many forms, and every action counts. You can:

**Stay informed.** Follow the news; visit our website to learn more about places at risk of genocide and other violence, [ushmm.org/genocide-prevention/countries](https://ushmm.org/genocide-prevention/countries)

**Join the Museum community.** Sign up to receive email updates and follow us on Twitter [@CPG\\_USHMM](https://twitter.com/CPG_USHMM) and Facebook [@CenterForThePreventionOfGenocide](https://www.facebook.com/CenterForThePreventionOfGenocide)

**Engage with your community.** Spread the word about what you've learned with friends, family, and colleagues

**Support education and relief efforts.** Find out more about humanitarian organizations, what they are doing in response to mass atrocities, and how you can help

**Contact the media.** Tell television, radio, newspaper, and online journalists that you want better coverage of places at risk of genocide and other violence; visit their websites, tag them on social media, call them, and send emails that provide feedback on their coverage

**Contact your elected representatives.** Alert them to the need to provide humanitarian assistance, protect civilians, stop the violence, and promote solutions to crises

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