

House Foreign Affairs Committee
Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission

Hearing

on

Ukraine: Abducted Children and Mechanisms for Accountability

March 25, 2026 - 2:00 p.m.: 4:00 p.m.

2255 Rayburn House Office Building

STATEMENT SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

Submitted by:

Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ)

Chair McGovern, Chair Smith, and Members of the Commission:

The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) respectfully submits this statement for the record in connection with the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission’s hearing on “Ukraine: Abducted Children and Mechanisms for Accountability” to highlight the impact of war on journalists and the media in Ukraine.

Background

As Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine enters its fifth year, the war continues to profoundly impact press freedom in the country, with journalists’ work being threatened by relentless shelling, power outages, and drone attacks. The physical safety of journalists and the arbitrary detention of members of the press by Russia are key areas of concern.

Key Issues

Physical safety of journalists

According to CPJ’s research, [at least 21 journalists and media workers have been killed](#) while working in Ukraine since the start of Russia’s full-scale war on February 24, 2022. Among those killed in Ukraine is U.S. photojournalist and documentary film producer [Brent Renaud](#), who was shot and killed by Russian forces on March 13, 2022, in the Ukrainian city of Irpin.

In 2025, Russian drones killed [four journalists](#) in Ukraine, the highest annual number of journalist deaths in the war since 15 were killed in 2022. At least one of those cases was a targeted attack: French photojournalist [Antoni Lallican](#) was killed by a targeted strike from a Russian first-person view drone on October 3, 2025, while reporting in Donetsk, in eastern Ukraine. Russia's increased use of longer-range drones makes it extremely difficult and dangerous for journalists to work on the frontline.

In four years of war, Russia has also repeatedly [struck](#) the offices of media outlets across the country. Journalists have been seriously [injured](#) and their homes have been shelled.

Arbitrary detention of journalists

Beyond the physical dangers of reporting, Ukrainian journalists face arbitrary detention by Russian forces.

Russia is currently holding [at least 12 Ukrainian journalists](#), a number that is likely an undercount, given that it only includes cases in which CPJ has been able to establish that the individual was detained as a result of their journalism. This number includes journalists who were detained prior to February 2022 — including ethnic Crimean Tatar journalists, who have been harassed and detained since Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 — and those who were detained in territories Russia occupied after the start of the full-scale invasion.

Among those detained are the following journalists:

- [Anastasiya Glukhovska](#), captured in August 2023, is held in Pretrial Detention Center No. 3 in Kizel, in Russia's Perm Krai administrative territory, where Ukrainian journalist [Viktoria Roshchina](#) died in September 2024. When Roshchina's body was returned to Ukraine in February 2025, it [showed](#) signs of torture and ill-treatment, and some organs were [missing](#). The cause of her death has yet to be established.
- [Iryna Levchenko](#), captured by Russian forces in Ukraine in early May 2023, is held in a pretrial detention center in Simferopol, in Russian-occupied Crimea.

Neither Glukhovska nor Levchenko has been formally charged. They have been held under conditions that include credible reports of torture, as well as physical and psychological abuse.

Recommendations

CPJ presents the following recommendations to the U.S. Congress and the Trump Administration in support of Ukrainian journalists arbitrarily detained by Russia:

- Demand the immediate and unconditional release of all detained Ukrainian journalists, including Anastasiya Glukhovska and Iryna Levchenko, in upcoming prisoner exchanges and make this issue a diplomatic priority in the U.S.-led peace negotiations between Russia and Ukraine.
- Press Russian authorities for full transparency regarding Glukhovska's and Levchenko's legal status and condition in detention.
- Call on Russia to immediately provide a full account of the circumstances surrounding the death of journalist Viktoria Roshchina, who died in Russian custody in 2024.