

# JOURNALISTS MATTER: A CALL TO FREE UKRAINIAN JOURNALISTS HELD IN CAPTIVITY BY THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Due to the Russian Federation's 2014 invasion of Ukraine, Ukrainian journalists recording and exposing grave human rights violations have increasingly been targeted by Russian authorities. Since February 2022, the Ukrainian non-profit Institute of Mass Information documented **over 599 crimes committed by Russia against media and media workers. 81 media workers lost their lives:** 10 of them were killed while reporting and 71 died due to Russia's shelling and torture, or while serving in the armed forces. **At least 30 media professionals and journalists are held as civilian hostages** in Russia, facing fabricated criminal charges, torture, and deprivation of basic rights. The whereabouts of several Ukrainian journalists remain unknown. **Another four Ukrainian journalists are Russia's war hostages** and are victims of persecution due to their media background.



**26 June 2024**  
**13:00-14:00**



**Room 8,**  
**Palais de l'Europe**

## KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:

- **Dmytro Lubinets**, Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner for Human Rights
- **Kateryna Diachuk**, Chief of the Freedom of Speech Monitoring Department of the Institute of Mass Information
- **Nataliya Boguta**, journalist and colleague of Dmytro Khyliuk, journalist imprisoned in Russia
- **Kateryna Yesypenko**, wife of Vladyslav Yesypenko, journalist imprisoned in Crimea
- **Jeanne Cavalier**, Head of Eastern Europe & Central Asia Desk, Reporters without borders

## WITH THE PARTICIPATION AND SUPPORT OF:

- **Iulian Bulai**, President of the ALDE Group in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe
- **Yevheniia Kravchuk**, Chair of the Verkhovna Rada Sub-Committee on Information Policy and European Integration, co-author of the Decree No. 3666-IX on ensuring the release and return of Ukrainian journalists
- **Valentina Grippo**, PACE General Rapporteur on Media Freedom and Safety of Journalists
- **Bjørn Berge**, Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe
- **Theodoros Rousopoulos**, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

On 26 June — the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture — we urge members of European parliaments, diplomatic missions, and civil society to spotlight these crimes and advocate for the immediate release of all Ukrainian journalists detained by the Russian Federation to enforce protection of press freedoms, ensure adherence to international humanitarian law and demand Russia's accountability for crimes against civilians, including journalists, allowing media workers to safely exercise their profession.

Interpretation into English and Ukrainian will be available. Refreshments will be provided.

### Media coverage

For media accreditation and access to the Council of Europe premises, please fill out the [form](#). Interviews with the keynote speakers could be arranged on 25 and 26 June 2024 upon prior request by contacting Ms Leila Zhdanova, Programmer Manager of the Council of Europe Division for Co-operation on Freedom of Expression via email ([Leila.Zhdanova@coe.int](mailto:Leila.Zhdanova@coe.int)) or by phone (+33676015662, WhatsApp).

### FILM SCREENING

On 26 June 2024 at 20:00 (Palais de l'Europe, Salle des projections), we invite you to the screening of the documentary produced by the Public Broadcasting Company of Ukraine (Suspilne Ukraine), «Big Russian Lies: How Russia is stealing history.»

*The events are organised by the ALDE group in co-operation with the Council of Europe Division for Co-operation on Freedom of Expression, through the Project «Safeguarding Freedom of Expression and Freedom of Media in Ukraine», and in partnership with the «Journalists Matter» Campaign for the Safety of Journalists.*