

A special tribunal for Russia should be a response to its international terrorism

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At the time of the Russian-Ukrainian war, all information about it may contain content favorable to Ukraine or Russia, which cannot be objectively verified due to the mass production of propaganda and false war information by both sides of the conflict.

Six months after the start of the war, despite apparent setbacks at the front, the asymmetric weakness of the Russian army, and unprecedented human losses in its ranks, Putin continues to hatch plans for territorial expansion in Ukraine and increasingly uses terrorism as a weapon. The Special Tribunal for Russia should become an expression of a collective desire to neutralize the threat posed by Russia to the entire civilized world.

In the context of Russia's war crimes in Ukraine and the use of terror as a tool of warfare, there is growing evidence that Russia should be recognized as a terrorist state. The initiative to create a Special Tribunal for Russian Crimes should help to consolidate the terrorist status of the Russian Federation. Evil emanating from Russia is not abstract – it is personified. And Putin, Shoigu, Kadyrov, Lavrov and other war criminals of the Russian Federation should be responsible for the genocide and terrorist attacks carried out by the Russian army in Ukraine. But at the moment, the prospect of a direct trial against them is very ephemeral. But the creation of the Special Tribunal for Russia, with the development of an appropriate legal framework, will optimize the issue of recognizing Russia as an international terrorist.

The relevance of the Special Tribunal is also increasing due to the fact that in a legal context, Russia cannot be held accountable in the International Criminal Court (ICC), since Russia back in 2016 withdrew its signature under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Code, which treats aggression as a crime. And the ICC conducts a judicial investigation only in relation to the country that has ratified the statute.

Initially, relevant legal framework should be created to circumvent Russia's barriers to possible prosecution, for example in the context of the aforementioned withdrawal of the Rome Statute's signature. The Kremlin had long and systematically prepared for the coming aggression, and has done a lot to mitigate international isolation. The reaction to Russian international terrorism should be just as detailed and systematic – to create legal prerequisites for a criminal investigation of the terrorist attacks committed by Russia in Ukraine and with the subsequent adoption of the status of a terrorist state. This procedure is capable of exacerbating Russia's international isolation and creating prerequisites for the introduction of further sectoral sanctions.

During the war, Russia committed many crimes against peaceful Ukrainians – thousands of people died, civilian infrastructure was destroyed, millions of Ukrainians were forced to go abroad. On Putin's orders, a number of terrorist attacks were carried out against Ukraine – blowing up a colony with Ukrainian prisoners of war in Yelenovka, shelling the centre of Vinnitsa, launching a missile attack on the Amstor shopping centre in Kremenchug, the actual destruction of Mariupol (the exact number of victims is unknown, but could be tens of thousands of people) and etc. In the occupied territories, the situation can be even worse due to the complete lawlessness and arbitrariness of the Russian occupation administration. Therefore, it is extremely important to jointly punish the neo-Nazi state of our time – Russia, by creating a Special

Tribunal, where crimes against humanity committed by the Kremlin will be considered.

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