KYIV KYIV · 25 NOVEMBER 2023

KYIV, 25 NOVEMBER 2023: 75 DRONES ON HOLODOMOR REMEMBRANCE DAY

In the early hours of 25 November 2023, the day Ukraine remembers the victims of the Holodomor famine of 1932–33, Russia launched 75 Shahed attack drones at Ukraine, the largest drone attack of the war up to then. Kyiv was the main target. The Air Force reported 74 of the 75 shot down; falling debris injured five people in the capital, among them an 11-year-old child, set a kindergarten on fire and cut power to 77 apartment buildings and 120 institutions in central Kyiv.

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VERIFIED RECORD
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75 · 74

Shahed drones launched · shot down, the largest drone attack of the war to that date B

Air Force of Ukraine, 25 Nov 2023 (via Ukrainska Pravda, ArmyInform)

5

people injured in Kyiv, among them an 11-year-old child; none hospitalised B

Kyiv City Military Administration (S. Popko), 25 Nov 2023 (via Suspilne); Prosecutor General's Office (via ArmyInform)

77 · 120

apartment buildings · institutions in central Kyiv left without power after an overhead line was cut B

Ministry of Energy and Kyiv City Military Administration, 25 Nov 2023 (via RFE/RL, Euromaidan Press)

1

kindergarten set on fire in Solomianskyi district; about half of the building to be rebuilt B

Kyiv City State Administration (V. Nepop), 30 Nov 2023 (via Ukrinform, Suspilne)

BOTTOM LINE

A record attack on a day of mourning. The Air Force counted 75 Shahed drones launched overnight from Primorsko-Akhtarsk and Kursk region, plus a Kh-59 guided missile; 74 drones and the missile were shot down. Kyiv was the main target, on Holodomor Remembrance Day.

Debris on homes and a kindergarten. Debris fell in four Kyiv districts. In Solomianskyi it set a kindergarten on fire and smashed part of a five-storey block of flats; five people were injured, an 11-year-old among them.

No UN finding on this night. The UN human rights monitors' November 2023 update does not name the attack. The UN's findings on Russia's attacks on Ukraine's energy system concern the campaign, not this strike.

LEGAL QUALIFICATION IN THREE LAYERS

75 SHAHED DRONES LAUNCHED, 74 SHOT DOWN; 5 INJURED IN KYIV INCLUDING A CHILD OF 11 — TIER B: AIR FORCE, KYIV CITY MILITARY ADMINISTRATION

ATTACKS ON UKRAINE'S ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE SINCE AUTUMN 2022: WAR CRIME AND CRIME AGAINST HUMANITY — UN COMMISSION OF INQUIRY, A/81/440 (CAMPAIGN-LEVEL FINDING)

PRE-TRIAL INVESTIGATION AS A WAR CRIME (ART. 438(1) CCU) — UKRAINIAN PROSECUTORS, POSITION

Established. At Tier B the Air Force reports 75 Shahed drones launched at Ukraine on the night of 24–25 November 2023, with Kyiv the main target; the Kyiv City Military Administration counts five people injured, an 11-year-old among them, and damage in four districts. No court and no UN body has made a finding on this attack; the UN monitors' November 2023 update does not name it. **Pattern.** The attack came at the start of a winter of mass air strikes: the UN monitors recorded a 26% rise in civilian casualties in December 2023 after the wave of attacks from 29 December, and later found that Russia's 2024 attacks on the power grid point to breaches of the principles of distinction, proportionality and precaution. At campaign level, the UN Commission of Inquiry (A/81/440, Oct 2026) found attacks on Ukraine's energy infrastructure since autumn 2022 to be war crimes and a crime against humanity. **Position.** Ukrainian prosecutors opened a war-crimes investigation (Art. 438(1) CCU); the hub's inference is an indiscriminate attack on a capital (AP I art. 51(4)–(5)).

WHAT WE ASK

Ask the UN monitors to verify and report the 25 November 2023 attack on Kyiv. Keep air defence flowing to the cities that drone waves target. Name drone waves on cities, and their timing on days of remembrance, in UN reporting.

Sources: A — OHCHR/HRMMU, Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, November 2023 update, 11 Dec 2023 (ukraine.un.org/en/node/254943; no mention of this attack); OHCHR/HRMMU press release, 16 Jan 2024 (ukraine.un.org/en/257916); OHCHR/HRMMU, Attacks on Ukraine's Energy Infrastructure: Harm to the Civilian Population, 19 Sep 2024 (ukraine.un.org/en/node/278995); UN Commission of Inquiry, A/81/440, 26 Oct 2026 (via Al Jazeera, aljazeera.com/news/2026/10/26/russian-attacks-on-ukraines-energy-infrastructure-a-war-crime-un; Interfax-Ukraine, en.interfax.com.ua/news/general/1226289.html). B — Air Force of Ukraine, 25 Nov 2023 (via ArmyInform, armyinform.com.ua/2023/11/25/74-iz-75-u-povitryanyh-sylah-utochnyly-kilkist-znyshhenyh-shahediv; Ukrainska Pravda, pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/11/25/7430307); Kyiv City Military Administration (S. Popko, M. Shamanov), 25 Nov 2023 (via Suspilne, suspilne.media/625031-nicna-ataka-dronami-na-kiiv-so-vidomo; Ukrainska Pravda, pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/11/25/7430306); Prosecutor General's Office, 25 Nov 2023 (via ArmyInform); Ministry of Energy, DTEK, Ukrenergo, 25 Nov 2023 (via RFE/RL, Meduza, Suspilne); Kyiv City State Administration (V. Nepop), 30 Nov 2023 (via Ukrinform, Suspilne); Mayor V. Klitschko; President V. Zelensky, Telegram, 25 Nov 2023 (via the Kyiv Independent). C — Suspilne, Ukrainska Pravda, the Kyiv Independent, Meduza, Euromaidan Press, RFE/RL (rferl.org/a/ukraine-drone-strikes-holodomor-day/32699366.html), Espreso, 25 Nov 2023; Ukrainska Pravda, 25 Nov 2023 (Holodomor 90th anniversary; EU High Representative J. Borrell and US Ambassador B. Brink reactions). RU — Kremlin spokesman D. Peskov, 6 Oct 2023 (The Insider, theins.ru/news/265638); The Moscow Times (Russian service), 25 Nov 2023 (no official Russian comment). All accessed 18 Nov 2026.

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KYIV HOW IT HAPPENED

DRONE WAVES OVER A CAPITAL AT DAWN

Ukraine marks Holodomor Remembrance Day on the fourth Saturday of November; 2023 was the 90th anniversary of the famine. In the hours before the commemorations began, Kyiv sat under a six-hour air raid alert.

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24 Nov 2023, evening	Russia carries out a combined missile and drone strike on Ukraine the evening before; a separate attack, listed to avoid confusion. C — Espreso, 25 Nov 2023
25 Nov 2023, 02:37	Air raid alert in Kyiv; it lasts more than six hours. Explosions are heard around 05:00. B — Mayor V. Klitschko; Suspilne Kyiv, 25 Nov 2023
25 Nov 2023, about 04:00	The Kyiv City Military Administration reports a drone attack on the capital, with drones arriving in groups and waves from several directions. B — S. Popko and M. Shamanov, KCMA (via the Kyiv Independent, Suspilne)
25 Nov 2023, morning	Debris falls in Solomianskyi, Dniprovskyi, Holosiivskyi and Pecherskyi districts. In Solomianskyi a kindergarten catches fire and part of a five-storey block of flats is destroyed; two women are rescued from the second floor. B — KCMA; Kyiv City Council; State Emergency Service (via Ukrainska Pravda, Suspilne, Meduza)
25 Nov 2023, 10:00	DTEK reports homes and 12 institutions in Kyiv and 16,000 customers in Kyiv region without power; the Ministry of Energy reports 77 apartment buildings and 120 institutions in central Kyiv cut off by a damaged overhead line. Ukrenergo reports damage to main lines in central Ukraine. B — DTEK, Ministry of Energy, Ukrenergo (via Suspilne, RFE/RL, Meduza)
25 Nov 2023, 11:00	The Air Force raises its count from 71 to 74 of 75 Shahed drones shot down; a Kh-59 guided missile is destroyed over Dnipropetrovsk region. Air defence worked in six regions. B — Air Force of Ukraine (via ArmyInform, Ukrainska Pravda)
25 Nov 2023, day	The President: 'Deliberate terror. At the exact time.' The EU High Representative: Russia 'unleashed its most extensive drone attack on Kyiv', 'instilling fear among the population'. The US Ambassador thanks Ukraine's air defenders. C — V. Zelensky, Telegram (via the Kyiv Independent); J. Borrell on X, 17:22; B. Brink on X (via Ukrainska Pravda)
25 Nov 2023	The Prosecutor General's Office opens a pre-trial investigation into a violation of the laws and customs of war (Art. 438(1)); five injured, aged 11 to 65. B — Prosecutor General's Office (via ArmyInform, 25 Nov 2023)
30 Nov 2023	City authorities say about half of the kindergarten must be rebuilt; a nearby new school needs more than 100 windows replaced. B — Kyiv City State Administration, V. Nepop (via Ukrinform, Suspilne)
11 Dec 2023	The UN human rights monitors report at least 461 civilians killed or injured in Ukraine in November 2023; the update does not name the attack on Kyiv. A — OHCHR/HRMMU, Protection of Civilians update, November 2023
26 Oct 2026	Since this file: the UN Commission of Inquiry reports to the General Assembly that Russia's attacks on Ukraine's energy infrastructure since autumn 2022 are war crimes and a crime against humanity. A — Commission of Inquiry, A/81/440 (via Al Jazeera, Interfax-Ukraine)

WHAT THE RECORD SHOWS

The Air Force counted 75 Shahed-131/136 drones launched from Primorsko-Akhtarsk in Russia's Krasnodar region and from Kursk region, and a Kh-59 guided missile. Its commander said Kyiv was the main target. The first count, 71 shot down, was raised to 74 at 11:00. The city administration said more than 60 were downed over Kyiv.

Debris fell in four districts. In Solomianskyi it set a kindergarten and a non-residential building on fire, destroyed part of the second floor of a five-storey block and broke windows from the ground to the fifth floor. Debris also hit the top floor of a high-rise in Dniprovskyi and a four-storey building in Holosiivskyi.

WHO WAS HURT

Five people injured, aged 11 to 65: two with cuts to the limbs, three with acute stress reactions. All were treated on site or in emergency rooms; none was hospitalised (KCMA; Prosecutor General's Office). No deaths were reported.

The power cut reached 77 apartment buildings and 120 institutions in central Kyiv (Ministry of Energy); DTEK also counted 16,000 customers without power in Kyiv region, most restored after the all-clear.

Sources: A — OHCHR/HRMMU, Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, November 2023 update, 11 Dec 2023 (ukraine.un.org/en/node/254943; no mention of this attack); OHCHR/HRMMU press release, 16 Jan 2024 (ukraine.un.org/en/257916); OHCHR/HRMMU, Attacks on Ukraine's Energy Infrastructure: Harm to the Civilian Population, 19 Sep 2024 (ukraine.un.org/en/node/278995); UN Commission of Inquiry, A/81/440, 26 Oct 2026 (via Al Jazeera, aljazeera.com/news/2026/10/26/russian-attacks-on-ukraines-energy-infrastructure-a-war-crime-un; Interfax-Ukraine, en.interfax.com.ua/news/general/1226289.html). B — Air Force of Ukraine, 25 Nov 2023 (via ArmyInform, armyinform.com.ua/2023/11/25/74-iz-75-u-povitryanyh-sylah-utochnyly-kilkist-znyshhenyh-shahediv; Ukrainska Pravda, pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/11/25/7430307); Kyiv City Military Administration (S. Popko, M. Shamanov), 25 Nov 2023 (via Suspilne, suspilne.media/625031-nicna-ataka-dronami-na-kiiv-so-vidomo; Ukrainska Pravda, pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/11/25/7430306); Prosecutor General's Office, 25 Nov 2023 (via ArmyInform); Ministry of Energy, DTEK, Ukrenergo, 25 Nov 2023 (via RFE/RL, Meduza, Suspilne); Kyiv City State Administration (V. Nepop), 30 Nov 2023 (via Ukrinform, Suspilne); Mayor V. Klitschko; President V. Zelensky, Telegram, 25 Nov 2023 (via the Kyiv Independent). C — Suspilne, Ukrainska Pravda, the Kyiv Independent, Meduza, Euromaidan Press, RFE/RL (rferl.org/a/ukraine-drone-strikes-holodomor-day/32699366.html), Espreso, 25 Nov 2023; Ukrainska Pravda, 25 Nov 2023 (Holodomor 90th anniversary; EU High Representative J. Borrell and US Ambassador B. Brink reactions). RU — Kremlin spokesman D. Peskov, 6 Oct 2023 (The Insider, theins.ru/news/265638); The Moscow Times (Russian service), 25 Nov 2023 (no official Russian comment). All accessed 18 Nov 2026.

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KYIV THE EVIDENCE, BY TIER

A TIER B RECORD, WITH NO UN FINDING ON THIS NIGHT

The attack is documented by the Air Force, the Kyiv City Military Administration, the Prosecutor General's Office and the energy companies. The UN has made findings on the energy campaign and on the winter's attacks, but not on this night.

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ESTABLISHED BY BODIES WITH A MANDATE

No UN document checked names this attack: the OHCHR/HRMMU update for November 2023 (11 Dec 2023) gives at least 461 civilians killed or injured in Ukraine that month and does not mention Kyiv on 25 November. No UN statement on the attack was located. A

OHCHR/HRMMU, 16 Jan 2024: a 26% rise in civilian casualties in December 2023 after the wave of attacks from 29 December. HRMMU energy report, 19 Sep 2024: attacks on the grid point to breaches of distinction, proportionality and precaution. UN Commission of Inquiry, A/81/440 (Oct 2026): campaign-level finding. A

UKRAINIAN INVESTIGATION

Air Force of Ukraine, 25 Nov 2023: 75 Shahed drones from Primorsko-Akhtarsk and Kursk region, 74 shot down; a Kh-59 missile destroyed; air defence active in six regions (via ArmyInform, Ukrainska Pravda). B

Kyiv City Military Administration (S. Popko), 25 Nov 2023: five injured, aged 11 to 65; debris in four districts. Prosecutor General's Office: investigation under Art. 438(1). Ministry of Energy: 77 apartment buildings and 120 institutions without power. Kyiv City State Administration, 30 Nov 2023: kindergarten to be half rebuilt. B

INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATIONS

Suspilne, Ukrainska Pravda, the Kyiv Independent, Meduza, Euromaidan Press, RFE/RL, Espreso, 25 Nov 2023: hour-by-hour reports. C

The Moscow Times (Russian service), 25 Nov 2023: 'The Russian side has provided no official comment.' C

THE NUMBERS — EVERY SOURCE, AS PUBLISHED

Figure	What it counts	Source · date · tier
75 · 74	Shahed drones launched · shot down	Air Force of Ukraine, 25 Nov 2023 · B
5 · 11	injured in Kyiv · age of the youngest	Kyiv City Military Administration, 25 Nov 2023 · B
4	Kyiv districts hit by debris	Kyiv City Military Administration; Prosecutor General's Office · B
77 · 120	apartment buildings · institutions without power in central Kyiv	Ministry of Energy, 25 Nov 2023 · B

Drone counts differ by time and body: the Air Force first reported 71 shot down, then 74 of 75; the city administration gave 'at least 40' and later 'more than 60' downed over Kyiv; the President wrote 'over 70'. Outage figures differ too: 77 apartment buildings and 120 institutions (Ministry of Energy) against 121 or 151 apartment buildings, 75 private houses and 12 institutions (DTEK at 10:00, as reported by Suspilne and Meduza respectively). The hub uses the Air Force's final figure and the Ministry of Energy's.

Sources: A — OHCHR/HRMMU, Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, November 2023 update, 11 Dec 2023 (ukraine.un.org/en/node/254943; no mention of this attack); OHCHR/HRMMU press release, 16 Jan 2024 (ukraine.un.org/en/257916); OHCHR/HRMMU, Attacks on Ukraine's Energy Infrastructure: Harm to the Civilian Population, 19 Sep 2024 (ukraine.un.org/en/node/278995); UN Commission of Inquiry, A/81/440, 26 Oct 2026 (via Al Jazeera, aljazeera.com/news/2026/10/26/russian-attacks-on-ukraines-energy-infrastructure-a-war-crime-un; Interfax-Ukraine, en.interfax.com.ua/news/general/1226289.html). B — Air Force of Ukraine, 25 Nov 2023 (via ArmyInform, armyinform.com.ua/2023/11/25/74-iz-75-u-povitryanyh-sylah-utochnyly-kilkist-znyshhenyh-shahediv; Ukrainska Pravda, pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/11/25/7430307); Kyiv City Military Administration (S. Popko, M. Shamanov), 25 Nov 2023 (via Suspilne, suspilne.media/625031-nicna-ataka-dronami-na-kiiv-so-vidomo; Ukrainska Pravda, pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/11/25/7430306); Prosecutor General's Office, 25 Nov 2023 (via ArmyInform); Ministry of Energy, DTEK, Ukrenergo, 25 Nov 2023 (via RFE/RL, Meduza, Suspilne); Kyiv City State Administration (V. Nepop), 30 Nov 2023 (via Ukrinform, Suspilne); Mayor V. Klitschko; President V. Zelensky, Telegram, 25 Nov 2023 (via the Kyiv Independent). C — Suspilne, Ukrainska Pravda, the Kyiv Independent, Meduza, Euromaidan Press, RFE/RL (rferl.org/a/ukraine-drone-strikes-holodomor-day/32699366.html), Espreso, 25 Nov 2023; Ukrainska Pravda, 25 Nov 2023 (Holodomor 90th anniversary; EU High Representative J. Borrell and US Ambassador B. Brink reactions). RU — Kremlin spokesman D. Peskov, 6 Oct 2023 (The Insider, theins.ru/news/265638); The Moscow Times (Russian service), 25 Nov 2023 (no official Russian comment). All accessed 18 Nov 2026.

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KYIV RESPONSIBILITY

NO UNIT NAMED YET

The launch sites are known from the Air Force; the units, the commanders and the aim points are not. The investigation opened on 25 November 2023 has, as far as the record checked shows, named no suspect.

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Who	Role in the case	Proceedings	Sanctions · courts
Russian Shahed launch crews Primorsko-Akhtarsk (Krasnodar region) and Kursk region	Launched 75 Shahed-131/136 drones at Ukraine, with Kyiv the main target, according to the Air Force	Not identified	—
Kh-59 launch aircraft	Fired a guided missile destroyed over Dnipropetrovsk region	Not identified	—
Russian military command	Ordered the night's attack	Pre-trial investigation under Art. 438(1), opened 25 Nov 2023; no suspect named in the sources checked	To be checked in Sanctions

CHAIN OF RESPONSIBILITY

The weapon identifies the system: Shahed-131/136 loitering munitions, launched from sites in Russia that the Air Force named.

The launch from two directions and the arrival in waves, changing course, is a planned, coordinated attack, not a stray launch.

Who ordered it and what the aim points were is for the investigation to establish; the hub draws no names.

THE RUSSIAN STATE'S OWN ACTS

No Russian statement about the attack on Kyiv of 25 November 2023 has been located; The Moscow Times reported that the Russian side gave no official comment.

Seven weeks earlier, after the strike on Hroza, the Kremlin spokesman said Russia's military 'does not strike civilian targets' (6 Oct 2023) — the general line Russia maintained at the time.

An investigation is not a charge, and a charge is not a verdict.

Sources: A — OHCHR/HRMMU, Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, November 2023 update, 11 Dec 2023 (ukraine.un.org/en/node/254943; no mention of this attack); OHCHR/HRMMU press release, 16 Jan 2024 (ukraine.un.org/en/257916); OHCHR/HRMMU, Attacks on Ukraine's Energy Infrastructure: Harm to the Civilian Population, 19 Sep 2024 (ukraine.un.org/en/node/278995); UN Commission of Inquiry, A/81/440, 26 Oct 2026 (via Al Jazeera, aljazeera.com/news/2026/10/26/russian-attacks-on-ukraines-energy-infrastructure-a-war-crime-un; Interfax-Ukraine, en.interfax.com.ua/news/general/1226289.html). B — Air Force of Ukraine, 25 Nov 2023 (via ArmyInform, armyinform.com.ua/2023/11/25/74-iz-75-u-povitryanyh-sylah-utochnyly-kilkist-znyshhenyh-shahediv; Ukrainska Pravda, pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/11/25/7430307); Kyiv City Military Administration (S. Popko, M. Shamanov), 25 Nov 2023 (via Suspilne, suspilne.media/625031-nicna-ataka-dronami-na-kiiv-so-vidomo; Ukrainska Pravda, pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/11/25/7430306); Prosecutor General's Office, 25 Nov 2023 (via ArmyInform); Ministry of Energy, DTEK, Ukrenergo, 25 Nov 2023 (via RFE/RL, Meduza, Suspilne); Kyiv City State Administration (V. Nepop), 30 Nov 2023 (via Ukrinform, Suspilne); Mayor V. Klitschko; President V. Zelensky, Telegram, 25 Nov 2023 (via the Kyiv Independent). C — Suspilne, Ukrainska Pravda, the Kyiv Independent, Meduza, Euromaidan Press, RFE/RL (rferl.org/a/ukraine-drone-strikes-holodomor-day/32699366.html), Espreso, 25 Nov 2023; Ukrainska Pravda, 25 Nov 2023 (Holodomor 90th anniversary; EU High Representative J. Borrell and US Ambassador B. Brink reactions). RU — Kremlin spokesman D. Peskov, 6 Oct 2023 (The Insider, theins.ru/news/265638); The Moscow Times (Russian service), 25 Nov 2023 (no official Russian comment). All accessed 18 Nov 2026.

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KYIV FACT-CHECK · WHAT RUSSIA SAYS ABOUT STRIKES LIKE THIS

'RUSSIAN FORCES DO NOT STRIKE CIVILIAN TARGETS'

Russia said nothing about Kyiv on 25 November 2023. Its official line that autumn was that its forces do not strike civilian targets. Set against the record, that line leaves the burning kindergarten and the damaged apartment blocks unexplained.

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DMITRY PESKOV · KREMLIN SPOKESMAN · 6 OCT 2023 (GENERAL LINE, NOT ABOUT KYIV)

“We keep repeating: the Russian military does not strike civilian targets.”

The Insider, 6 Oct 2023 (hub translation)

NOT SHOWN FOR KYIV: NO MILITARY TARGET NAMED, A KINDERGARTEN AND HOMES HIT

75 Shahed drones launched at Ukraine with Kyiv the main target (Air Force); a kindergarten set on fire, a five-storey block damaged, five people injured including a child of 11, 77 apartment buildings and 120 institutions without power (KCMA; Ministry of Energy, 25 Nov 2023). Civilian objects are presumed civilian in case of doubt (AP I art. 52(3)).

What the claim concedes: That a strike on civilian objects would need an explanation — none has been given for Kyiv on 25 November 2023.

FAIR TO SAY

The Kremlin statement was made about the strike on Hroza of 5 October 2023, not about Kyiv; it is cited as Russia's general position at the time.

The damage in Kyiv came from the debris of downed drones, by the city administration's account. Debris falls only because the drones were launched at a city; the hub has not examined what the drones were aimed at.

Sources: A — OHCHR/HRMMU, Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, November 2023 update, 11 Dec 2023 (ukraine.un.org/en/node/254943; no mention of this attack); OHCHR/HRMMU press release, 16 Jan 2024 (ukraine.un.org/en/257916); OHCHR/HRMMU, Attacks on Ukraine's Energy Infrastructure: Harm to the Civilian Population, 19 Sep 2024 (ukraine.un.org/en/node/278995); UN Commission of Inquiry, A/81/440, 26 Oct 2026 (via Al Jazeera, aljazeera.com/news/2026/10/26/russian-attacks-on-ukraines-energy-infrastructure-a-war-crime-un; Interfax-Ukraine, en.interfax.com.ua/news/general/1226289.html). B — Air Force of Ukraine, 25 Nov 2023 (via ArmyInform, armyinform.com.ua/2023/11/25/74-iz-75-u-povitryanyh-sylah-utochnyly-kilkist-znyshhenyh-shahediv; Ukrainska Pravda, pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/11/25/7430307); Kyiv City Military Administration (S. Popko, M. Shamanov), 25 Nov 2023 (via Suspilne, suspilne.media/625031-nicna-ataka-dronami-na-kiiv-so-vidomo; Ukrainska Pravda, pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/11/25/7430306); Prosecutor General's Office, 25 Nov 2023 (via ArmyInform); Ministry of Energy, DTEK, Ukrenergo, 25 Nov 2023 (via RFE/RL, Meduza, Suspilne); Kyiv City State Administration (V. Nepop), 30 Nov 2023 (via Ukrinform, Suspilne); Mayor V. Klitschko; President V. Zelensky, Telegram, 25 Nov 2023 (via the Kyiv Independent). C — Suspilne, Ukrainska Pravda, the Kyiv Independent, Meduza, Euromaidan Press, RFE/RL (rferl.org/a/ukraine-drone-strikes-holodomor-day/32699366.html), Espreso, 25 Nov 2023; Ukrainska Pravda, 25 Nov 2023 (Holodomor 90th anniversary; EU High Representative J. Borrell and US Ambassador B. Brink reactions). RU — Kremlin spokesman D. Peskov, 6 Oct 2023 (The Insider, theins.ru/news/265638); The Moscow Times (Russian service), 25 Nov 2023 (no official Russian comment). All accessed 18 Nov 2026.

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KYIV THE LAW AND WHAT WE ASK

A CAPITAL IS NOT A TARGET

Seventy-five loitering munitions sent at a capital of millions at night, in waves, put every district under the flight path at risk. The law requires that each one be aimed at a military objective and that civilians be spared as far as feasible.

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ESTABLISHED — BY BODIES WITH A MANDATE

Tier B: 75 Shahed drones launched at Ukraine on the night of 24–25 November 2023, Kyiv the main target, 74 shot down (Air Force); five people injured in Kyiv including an 11-year-old, a kindergarten set on fire, debris in four districts (KCMA; Prosecutor General's Office).

No court or UN body has made a finding on this attack. At campaign level, the UN Commission of Inquiry found Russia's attacks on Ukraine's energy infrastructure since autumn 2022 to be war crimes of intentionally directing attacks against civilian objects and a crime against humanity (A/81/440, Oct 2026).

PATTERN — WHAT THE RECORD SHOWS

The UN monitors recorded a 26% rise in civilian casualties in December 2023 after a wave of attacks that began on 29 December; HRMMU head Danielle Bell: 'These attacks sow death and destruction on Ukraine's civilians' (16 Jan 2024).

HRMMU found that Russia's 2024 attacks on the power grid point to breaches of distinction, proportionality and precaution, and that the harm to civilians was 'imminently foreseeable' (19 Sep 2024).

POSITION — UKRAINE'S QUALIFICATION

Ukrainian prosecutors: a violation of the laws and customs of war (Art. 438(1), Criminal Code of Ukraine). The President: 'Deliberate terror. At the exact time' — the night of Holodomor remembrance.

The hub's inference: at least an indiscriminate attack (AP I art. 51(4)–(5)) — pending an investigation that names the aim points.

THE RULES THAT APPLY

AP I arts. 48, 51(2), 51(4)–(5), 52 and 57: distinction, the ban on attacks on civilians and on indiscriminate attacks, the presumption of civilian character, precautions in attack; art. 51(2) also bans acts whose primary purpose is to spread terror among civilians.

Rome Statute art. 7(1)(k), art. 8(2)(b)(i), (ii) and (iv); art. 28 on command responsibility.

WHAT WE DO NOT KNOW

The aim points of the drones sent at Kyiv, and the units that launched them.

Whether the investigation has named a suspect.

A UN-verified count for this attack.

WHAT WE ASK

Verify the night. Ask the UN human rights monitors to verify and report the 25 November 2023 attack on Kyiv, alongside the winter attacks they have documented.

Keep the shield up. Sustain air defence and interceptor supplies for the cities that mass drone waves target.

Cut the supply. Sanction the producers and suppliers of Shahed-type drones and their components under every national regime.

Name the timing. In UN reporting and Security Council statements, name mass drone attacks on cities and their timing on days of national remembrance.

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