

YAHIDNE: A VILLAGE IN A SCHOOL BASEMENT

For 28 days Russian troops held almost the whole population of a village — about 365 people, 70 of them children, the youngest six weeks old — in the 197 m² basement of the school they used as their headquarters. Ten elderly people died in the dark. The Commission of Inquiry called it inhuman treatment and a war crime; Ukrainian courts have convicted 16 servicemen in absentia and charged the brigade's general.

UKRAINE EVIDENCE HUB
VERIFIED RECORD
OCT 2026

DRAFT — not published. Draft for the editor. Figures checked against OHCHR (12 May 2022), the Commission of Inquiry A/77/533 (18 Oct 2022), the Chernihiv District Court verdicts (11 Mar 2024, 7 Jul 2025) and the SBU (13 Apr 2026). Photo slots to be filled from official sources (Chernihiv regional administration, President's Office, CC BY).

365

civilians confined in the school basement for 28 days, 70 of them children **A**

Commission of Inquiry, A/77/533, paras. 78, 102 (18 Oct 2022)

10

older persons died during the confinement; their names were written on the basement wall **A**

Commission of Inquiry, A/77/533, para. 79

0.5 m²

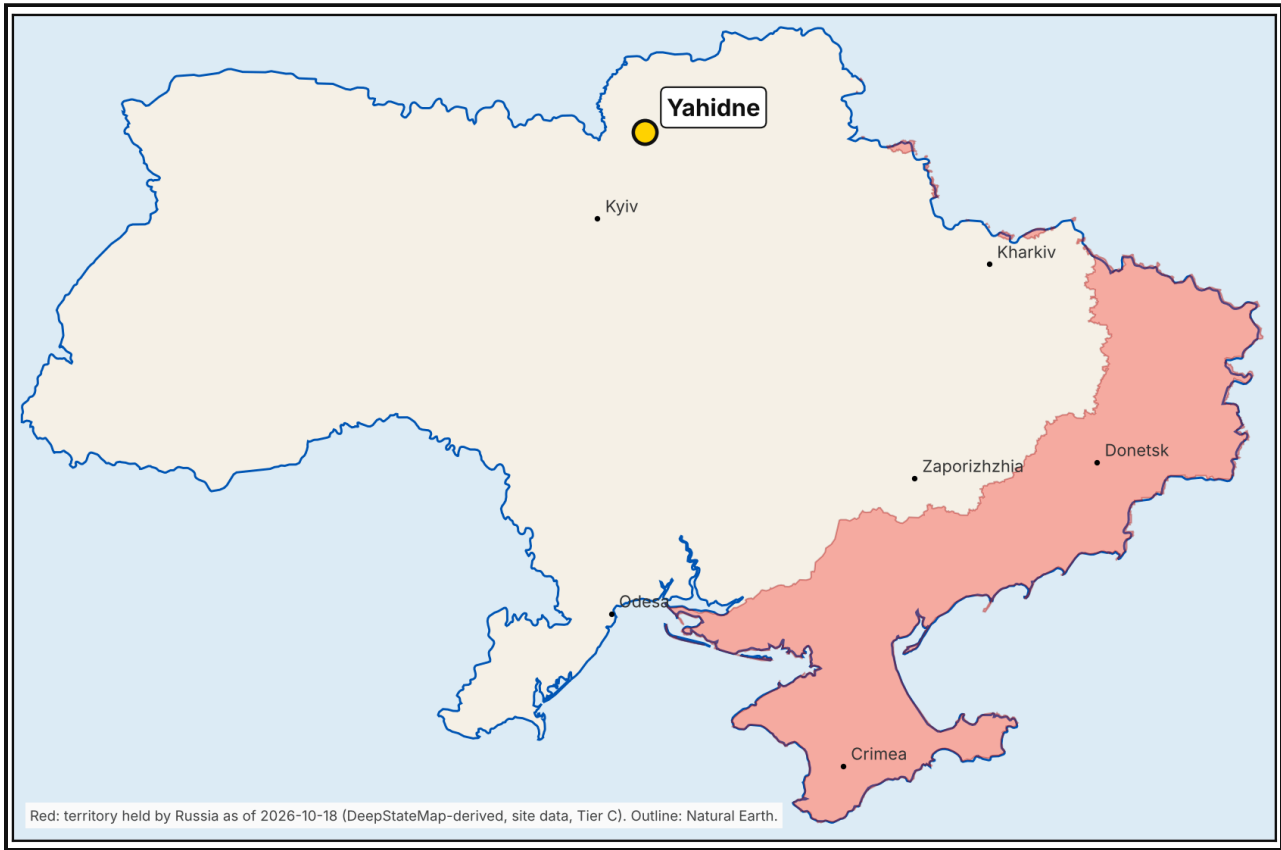
per person: 368 people in 197 m², as established by the court **B**

Chernihiv District Court verdict, 11 Mar 2024

16

Russian servicemen convicted in absentia, 12 years each; the brigade commander charged in 2026 **B**

Chernihiv District Court, 11 Mar 2024 and 7 Jul 2025; SBU 13 Apr 2026



BOTTOM LINE

Established by the UN. The Commission of Inquiry found that Russian forces confined 365 civilians, including 70 children, in the basement for 28 days in inhumane conditions — no light, no ventilation, no toilets, minimal food and water — and that ten older persons died; the Commission itself visited the basement (A/77/533, paras. 54, 78–79, 102).

A human shield for a headquarters. The school above the basement was the Russian command post; troops fired on Ukrainian positions from its grounds, placing hundreds of confined civilians at risk (para. 54).

Judged. Fifteen servicemen of the 55th Brigade (Tuva) and the officer who commanded the site were convicted in absentia; the brigade commander, Maj-Gen Denis Barilo, was charged in April 2026. No perpetrator is under Western sanctions for Yahidne.

LEGAL QUALIFICATION IN THREE LAYERS

INHUMAN TREATMENT AND UNLAWFUL CONFINEMENT, WAR CRIME — ESTABLISHED (COI)

CIVILIANS USED TO SHIELD POSITIONS — PATTERN

COMMAND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE 55TH BRIGADE AND 41ST ARMY — POSITION

Established. Commission of Inquiry: inhumane conditions of detention amounting to inhuman treatment, a war crime; civilians placed at significant risk by firing from the school grounds (A/77/533). OHCHR: 360 residents, 74 children, held 28 days; ten died (High Commissioner, 12 May 2022). **Pattern.** Mass confinement of villagers in basements under Russian command posts in the Chernihiv and Kyiv regions in March 2022; summary killings of men at the start of occupation. **Position.** Ukraine qualifies the confinement as cruel treatment of civilians and use as a human shield (Art. 438 CCU), tried as such against 16 servicemen, and extends responsibility to the brigade and army command.

WHAT WE ASK

Cite A/77/533 whenever Russia denies the treatment of civilians under occupation. Designate the 55th Separate Motor Rifle Brigade, Maj-Gen Barilo and the convicted servicemen under national and EU regimes — none is listed. Support the memorial and museum in the school. Keep Yahidne in the record of the Third Committee and the Human Rights Council as the documented case of a whole village held hostage.

Sources: A — OHCHR, High Commissioner's statement to the Human Rights Council special session, 12 May 2022; Commission of Inquiry A/77/533 (18 Oct 2022), paras. 54, 77–79, 102; ECtHR, Ukraine and the Netherlands v. Russia [GC], 9 Jul 2025, Annex C. B — Chernihiv regional prosecutor's office, 22 May 2022; Office of the Prosecutor General 8 Jun 2022, 4 Apr 2023, Jul 2025; Chernihiv District Court verdicts 12 Jan 2023, 11 Mar 2024, 7 Jul 2025; Chernihiv Court of Appeal 6 Apr 2023, 26 Feb 2026; SBU 16 Jul 2025, 13 Apr 2026; President's Office 3 Apr 2023, 3 Apr 2025. C — Human Rights Watch, 18 May 2022; Reuters / Al Jazeera 8 Apr 2022; iStories 27 Apr 2022; RFE/RL 18 Jun 2022; Detector Media 18 Jun 2022; Ukrainska Pravda 12 May 2023; IWPR 15 Aug 2023, 23 Apr 2024, 27 Mar 2025; Suspilne 23 Nov 2023, Feb 2024, Sep 2025; Babel 24 Nov 2023; MIHR trial monitoring 2023–25; Slidstvo.Info 23 Oct 2024; KHPG 19 Sep 2025; Eurozine / Public Interest Journalism Lab 23 Feb 2026; Ukrinform 6 Mar 2026; Kiarszys & Lemiesz, Antiquity 100(411), 23 Mar 2026; Kyiv Independent 13 Apr 2026. All accessed 20 Oct 2026.



TWENTY-EIGHT DAYS UNDER THE COMMAND POST

The 55th Brigade arrived on 3 March 2022 and made the school its headquarters. Everyone found in the village was taken to the basement; the troops fired from the schoolyard, and the people below were the reason the yard could not be fired upon.

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3 Mar 2022	Troops of the 55th Separate Motor Rifle Brigade (Kyzyl, Tuva) enter Yahidne; a resident, Viktor Shevchenko, is shot the same day; villagers are herded into the school basement. C — HRW, 18 May 2022; RFE/RL
4 Mar 2022	A man detained near the school is never seen again; a woman is raped by three soldiers before being put in the basement (separate case, trial from May 2025). C — HRW; IWPR, Slidstvo.Info
9 Mar 2022	The first death in the basement, a man of 91. Ten elderly people die by 28 March; the dates are kept on the basement door. C — Reuters / Al Jazeera, 8 Apr 2022
10 Mar 2022	Satellite imagery shows dozens of military vehicles around the school. C — HRW, 18 May 2022
30-31 Mar 2022	Russian withdrawal; the residents come out. The wall lists ten dead in the basement and seven shot. B — Chernihiv regional prosecutor; HRW
8 Apr 2022	First press reports from the village; the Kremlin does not respond to questions. C — Reuters / Al Jazeera
12 May 2022	High Commissioner Bachelet to the Human Rights Council: 360 residents, 74 children, 5 persons with disabilities, 28 days; ten older people died. A — OHCHR
18 May 2022	Human Rights Watch report: unlawful confinement, inhuman conditions, summary executions — apparent war crimes. C — HRW
22 May 2022	Chernihiv regional prosecutor: more than 350 held, 77 children including five infants, ten died, seven shot; 16 of 180 houses destroyed. B — Chernihiv regional prosecutor's office
8 Jun 2022	Prosecutor General Venediktova names nine suspects of military unit 55115. B — Office of the Prosecutor General
16-17 Jun 2022	Lavrov, asked by the BBC about the UN's Yahidne findings: UN officials are vulnerable to Western pressure and repeat Western fakes. RUSSIA SAYS — BBC interview; Detector Media
18 Oct 2022	Commission of Inquiry report A/77/533: 365 civilians, 70 children, 28 days, inhumane conditions, ten dead; the Commission visited the basement. A — A/77/533, paras. 54, 78–79, 102
12 Jan 2023	First verdict: three servicemen of the 55th Brigade, 12 years in absentia, for locking a family in a cellar and beating the owner (upheld 6 Apr 2023). B — Chernihiv District Court; Court of Appeal
16 Feb 2023	The basement is on the cover of TIME. C — Ukrinform
3 Apr 2023	President Zelensky visits the basement with the Council of Europe Secretary General and the German Vice-Chancellor. B — President's Office
4 Apr 2023	Indictment against 15 servicemen: 368 held, 69 minors, 197 m². B — Office of the Prosecutor General
23 Nov 2023	Journalists identify the officer who ran the site, 'Klen', as Capt. Semen Solovov of the 228th Motor Rifle Regiment, from a concert video. C — Suspilne
11 Mar 2024	Chernihiv District Court convicts the 15 servicemen in absentia: 12 years each, the maximum under Art. 438(1); 84 victims testified. Upheld on appeal. B — Chernihiv District Court
7 Jul 2025	Capt. Solovov convicted in absentia, 12 years, for ordering the confinement and using the detainees as a shield for the command post; upheld 26 Feb 2026. B — Chernihiv District Court; Court of Appeal
Sep 2025	Journalists identify the regiment commander, Col. Aleksei Zhukov ('Pauk'); a senior officer of the 55th Brigade had been made Hero of Russia in May 2024. C — Suspilne; KHPG
2 Mar 2026	An audioguide to the occupation of Yahidne is released for the fourth anniversary; the school is being turned into a memorial museum. C — Public Interest Journalism Lab
13 Apr 2026	Notice of suspicion in absentia to Maj-Gen Denis Barilo, commander of the 55th Brigade in March 2022. B — SBU

WHAT THE COMMISSION OF INQUIRY FOUND

Russian soldiers confined 365 civilians, including 70 children, for 28 days in the school basement, with no light or ventilation, water dripping from the walls, no toilets and very limited food, water and medical care (para. 78).

Soldiers degraded the detainees and fired near them in the yard; ten older persons died during the confinement. The Commission visited the basement and saw the names of the dead written on the wall (para. 79).

The school was the Russian headquarters; firing on Ukrainian positions from its grounds placed hundreds of confined civilians at significant risk (para. 54). The youngest child was six weeks old; some children fell sick with no access to medication (para. 102).



The school in Yahidne whose basement held the village for 28 days. Photo: Enno Lenze · CC BY 2.0 · via Wikimedia Commons

THE VILLAGE BEFORE AND AFTER

Yahidne lies on the Kyiv–Chernihiv road south of Chernihiv; its population before the invasion was a few hundred. The basement measured 197 m² — about half a square metre per person (court finding, 11 Mar 2024).

Outside the basement, men were shot at the start of the occupation: seven names on the wall list; prosecutors later counted 11 to 17 killed, a figure still under investigation. The disappearance of one man detained on 4 March remains unresolved (HRW).

Of the village's 180 houses, 16 were destroyed and 148 damaged (regional prosecutor, 22 May 2022). Fifteen survivors are reported to have died within a year of release (IWPR, Aug 2023). The school is being converted into a memorial museum on the residents' decision (2024–26).

Sources: A — OHCHR, High Commissioner's statement to the Human Rights Council special session, 12 May 2022; Commission of Inquiry A/77/533 (18 Oct 2022), paras. 54, 77–79, 102; ECtHR, Ukraine and the Netherlands v. Russia [GC], 9 Jul 2025, Annex C. B — Chernihiv regional prosecutor's office, 22 May 2022; Office of the Prosecutor General 8 Jun 2022, 4 Apr 2023, Jul 2025; Chernihiv District Court verdicts 12 Jan 2023, 11 Mar 2024, 7 Jul 2025; Chernihiv Court of Appeal 6 Apr 2023, 26 Feb 2026; SBU 16 Jul 2025, 13 Apr 2026; President's Office 3 Apr 2023, 3 Apr 2025. C — Human Rights Watch, 18 May 2022; Reuters / Al Jazeera 8 Apr 2022; iStories 27 Apr 2022; RFE/RL 18 Jun 2022; Detector Media 18 Jun 2022; Ukrainska Pravda 12 May 2023; IWPR 15 Aug 2023, 23 Apr 2024, 27 Mar 2025; Suspilne 23 Nov 2023, Feb 2024, Sep 2025; Babel 24 Nov 2023; MIHR trial monitoring 2023–25; Slidstvo.Info 23 Oct 2024; KHPG 19 Sep 2025; Eurozine / Public Interest Journalism Lab 23 Feb 2026; Ukrinform 6 Mar 2026; Kiarszys & Lemiesz, Antiquity 100(411), 23 Mar 2026; Kyiv Independent 13 Apr 2026. All accessed 20 Oct 2026.



A BASEMENT THE UN WALKED INTO

Yahidne is one of the few cases where a UN commission, a national court and independent researchers examined the same room. The wall inscriptions, the satellite images and 84 witnesses in court give the same account; the headcounts differ by source and date.

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ESTABLISHED BY BODIES WITH A MANDATE

High Commissioner for Human Rights, Human Rights Council special session, 12 May 2022: 360 residents, including 74 children and five persons with disabilities, forced by Russian forces to stay 28 days in the basement of the school used as their base; ten older people died. A

Commission of Inquiry, A/77/533 (18 Oct 2022), paras. 54, 78, 79, 102: 365 civilians, 70 children, 28 days; inhumane conditions amounting to inhuman treatment, a war crime; ten dead; civilians placed at risk by fire from the school grounds; the Commission visited the basement. A

European Court of Human Rights, Ukraine and the Netherlands v. Russia [GC], 9 Jul 2025: the Commission's Yahidne findings are among the material annexed to the judgment (Annex C). A

UKRAINIAN INVESTIGATION

Chernihiv regional prosecutor, 22 May 2022: more than 350 held, 77 children including five infants (youngest six weeks, oldest 93), 3–31 March; ten died; seven shot. B

Chernihiv District Court, 11 Mar 2024: 368 held, 69 minors (some teenagers had given false ages), 197 m², ten died; 15 servicemen of unit 55115 convicted, 12 years each; 84 victims testified. B

Chernihiv District Court, 7 Jul 2025, upheld 26 Feb 2026: Capt. Semen Solovov, 228th Motor Rifle Regiment, ordered the confinement and used the detainees as a shield for his command post; 369 held, 69 minors. B

SBU, 13 Apr 2026: Maj-Gen Denis Barilo, commander of the 55th Brigade, charged with the confinement of 369 civilians under threat of shooting. B

INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATIONS

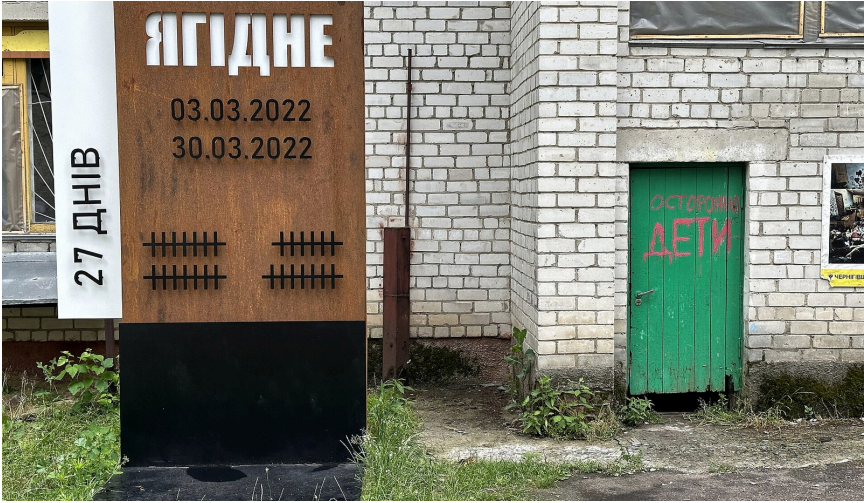
Human Rights Watch, 18 May 2022: 13 former detainees interviewed; more than 350 held, at least 70 children; ten died (eight in the basement, two at home after release); named killings on 3 and 6–7 March; an enforced disappearance; apparent war crimes. C

Reuters / Al Jazeera, 8 Apr 2022: the wall list — ten died, seven shot; the village's own count of 360. C

Suspilne investigations, Nov 2023 and Sep 2025: the site commander Solovov and the regiment commander Zhukov identified from open sources. C

Kiarszys & Lemiesz, Antiquity, 23 Mar 2026: archaeological documentation of the basement (lidar, photogrammetry) and of the door calendar — 17 of 27–29 victims recorded on it. C

THE NUMBERS — EVERY SOURCE, AS PUBLISHED		
Figure	What it counts	Source · date · tier
360 · 365 · 368 · 369	people held — OHCHR; Commission of Inquiry; 2024 verdict; 2025 verdict and 2026 charge. Media give 300–400	A / A / B / B
74 · 70 · 69 · 77	children — OHCHR; Commission; court-established; initial victim count	A / A / B / B
10 · 11	deaths in the basement — UN, courts, HRW; President's Office (Apr 2023)	A/B/C · B
7 · 11 · 17	killed outside the basement — wall list and prosecutor (May 2022); executions under investigation (2023); Prosecutor General (Jun 2022) and President (2023–25)	B / B / B
28 days	3–30 or 3–31 March 2022 — sources differ by one day on the withdrawal	A / B / C
16 · 1	convicted in absentia (12 years each) · general charged	B



Memorial plaque by the school: '27 days', 03.03.2022–30.03.2022. Photo: Enno Lenze · CC BY 2.0 · via Wikimedia Commons

The hub shows the Commission of Inquiry figure first (Tier A: 365 held, 70 children, ten dead), the court-established figures as 'according to Ukrainian authorities' (Tier B) and independent counts as support (Tier C). The number killed outside the basement is unresolved and is shown as a range.

Sources: A — OHCHR, High Commissioner's statement to the Human Rights Council special session, 12 May 2022; Commission of Inquiry A/77/533 (18 Oct 2022), paras. 54, 77–79, 102; ECtHR, Ukraine and the Netherlands v. Russia [GC], 9 Jul 2025, Annex C. B — Chernihiv regional prosecutor's office, 22 May 2022; Office of the Prosecutor General 8 Jun 2022, 4 Apr 2023, Jul 2025; Chernihiv District Court verdicts 12 Jan 2023, 11 Mar 2024, 7 Jul 2025; Chernihiv Court of Appeal 6 Apr 2023, 26 Feb 2026; SBU 16 Jul 2025, 13 Apr 2026; President's Office 3 Apr 2023, 3 Apr 2025. C — Human Rights Watch, 18 May 2022; Reuters / Al Jazeera 8 Apr 2022; iStories 27 Apr 2022; RFE/RL 18 Jun 2022; Detector Media 18 Jun 2022; Ukrainska Pravda 12 May 2023; IWPR 15 Aug 2023, 23 Apr 2024, 27 Mar 2025; Suspilne 23 Nov 2023, Feb 2024, Sep 2025; Babel 24 Nov 2023; MIHR trial monitoring 2023–25; Slidstvo.Info 23 Oct 2024; KHPG 19 Sep 2025; Eurozine / Public Interest Journalism Lab 23 Feb 2026; Ukrinform 6 Mar 2026; Kiarszys & Lemiesz, Antiquity 100(411), 23 Mar 2026; Kyiv Independent 13 Apr 2026. All accessed 20 Oct 2026.



A BRIGADE FROM TUVA, A REGIMENT FROM YEKATERINBURG

Two units are on the record: the 55th Separate Motor Rifle Brigade, whose soldiers rounded up the village, and the 228th Motor Rifle Regiment, whose captain ran the site. Sixteen men are convicted; the general is charged; the regiment's commander and a decorated officer of the brigade are named but not charged.

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Who	Role in the case	Proceedings	Sanctions · courts
Maj-Gen Denis Barilo commander, 55th Separate Motor Rifle Brigade (unit 55115, Kyzyl), 41st Combined Arms Army	Troops under his command confined 369 civilians under threat of shooting (SBU)	Notice of suspicion in absentia, Art. 438(1) CCU, 13 Apr 2026	No EU / US / UK / Canada listing found
Capt. Semen Solovov ('Klen') 228th Motor Rifle Regiment (unit 22316, Yekaterinburg)	Commanded the combined detachment at the school; ordered the confinement; used the detainees to shield the command post	Convicted in absentia 7 Jul 2025, 12 years (Art. 28(2), 438(1)); upheld 26 Feb 2026, in force	No listing found
15 servicemen of unit 55115 (Suvan, A. and N. Mongush, E. Oorzhak, Khertek, Khomushku, Borisov, Dadar-ool, Dambar-ool, Demir-ool, Kenden, V. Mongush, Saaya, Dorzhu, Kendenov)	Guarded and abused the detainees; one also accused of sexual assault in the basement	Convicted in absentia 11 Mar 2024, 12 years each (the maximum); upheld on appeal	No listing found
Chynan, Shaktar-ool, I. Oorzhak 55th Brigade	Locked a family in a cellar and beat the owner; separately accused of rape on 4 Mar 2022	Convicted 12 Jan 2023, 12 years (upheld 6 Apr 2023); rape case at trial since May 2025	No listing found
Col. Aleksei Zhukov ('Pauk') commander, 228th Motor Rifle Regiment	Senior commander at the site, identified by journalists (Sep 2025)	No charge found	No listing found
Chalym Chuldum-ool senior officer, 55th Brigade	Named by journalists; made Hero of Russia in May 2024	No charge found	No listing found

CHAIN OF RESPONSIBILITY

The 55th Brigade's soldiers rounded up the village and guarded the basement; the 228th Regiment's captain commanded the site; the brigade commander, now a general, is charged with the confinement itself. The 41st Combined Arms Army's command, to which the brigade belongs, is held responsible by investigators (Ukrainska Pravda, May 2023) — no charge at that level has been found.

The conviction of the site commander (2025) and the charge against the brigade commander (2026) move the case from soldiers to command: the basement was not an excess by a platoon but the operating method of a headquarters for four weeks.

Sixteen verdicts are in absentia. None of the convicted is in custody; Russia has not responded to any of the proceedings.

THE RUSSIAN STATE'S OWN ACTS

The Russian state's only recorded response is Lavrov's reply to the BBC in June 2022: the UN's findings on Yahidne are Western fakes repeated by officials under Western pressure. No Ministry of Defence or MFA statement naming the village has been found.

In May 2024 a senior officer of the 55th Brigade, named by journalists as present in the Chernihiv region in March 2022, was made Hero of Russia (KHPG, Sep 2025).

The 228th Regiment received the Guards title in 2023.

Sanctions status checked against EU Council listings of June 2022 (which cover the 64th Brigade for Bucha, not the 55th for Yahidne) and aggregator data (Tier C) — to be verified against the EU Official Journal, OFAC, UK and Canadian lists before release. Transliterations of the convicted men's names vary between sources.

Sources: A — OHCHR, High Commissioner's statement to the Human Rights Council special session, 12 May 2022; Commission of Inquiry A/77/533 (18 Oct 2022), paras. 54, 77–79, 102; ECtHR, Ukraine and the Netherlands v. Russia [GC], 9 Jul 2025, Annex C. B — Chernihiv regional prosecutor's office, 22 May 2022; Office of the Prosecutor General 8 Jun 2022, 4 Apr 2023, Jul 2025; Chernihiv District Court verdicts 12 Jan 2023, 11 Mar 2024, 7 Jul 2025; Chernihiv Court of Appeal 6 Apr 2023, 26 Feb 2026; SBU 16 Jul 2025, 13 Apr 2026; President's Office 3 Apr 2023, 3 Apr 2025. C — Human Rights Watch, 18 May 2022; Reuters / Al Jazeera 8 Apr 2022; iStories 27 Apr 2022; RFE/RL 18 Jun 2022; Detector Media 18 Jun 2022; Ukrainska Pravda 12 May 2023; IWPR 15 Aug 2023, 23 Apr 2024, 27 Mar 2025; Suspilne 23 Nov 2023, Feb 2024, Sep 2025; Babel 24 Nov 2023; MIHR trial monitoring 2023–25; Slidstvo.Info 23 Oct 2024; KHPG 19 Sep 2025; Eurozine / Public Interest Journalism Lab 23 Feb 2026; Ukrinform 6 Mar 2026; Kiarszys & Lemiesz, Antiquity 100(411), 23 Mar 2026; Kyiv Independent 13 Apr 2026. All accessed 20 Oct 2026.



RUSSIA'S ANSWER IS THAT THE UN IS LYING

Russia has never offered an account of Yahidne. Its single response, from the Foreign Minister, was that the UN's findings were Western fakes. The findings came from the High Commissioner's staff and from a Commission that stood in the basement.

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SERGEI LAVROV · FOREIGN MINISTER · BBC INTERVIEW, 16-17 JUN 2022

“UN officials are under Western pressure and act as a mouthpiece for Western fakes.”

BBC (S. Rosenberg); Detector Media, Arise TV renderings; Meduza, 4 Apr 2023

THE UN WENT TO THE BASEMENT

The Commission of Inquiry visited the basement and saw the names of the dead on the wall (A/77/533, para. 79). Its figures match those of a Ukrainian court that heard 84 victims and of Human Rights Watch, which interviewed 13 former detainees. The 'fake' consists of a room with 365 people's names and dates in it.

What the claim concedes: That the UN had made findings on Yahidne — the only Russian acknowledgement of the case.

THE KREMLIN · TO REUTERS · 8 APR 2022

“Russian forces do not target civilians; Ukraine and the West fabricate evidence.”

Reuters / Al Jazeera, 8 Apr 2022 (the Kremlin did not answer questions on Yahidne)

NO ANSWER ON YAHIDNE

The Kremlin was asked specifically about Yahidne and did not respond. The general line — fabrication — was given for Bucha the same week; by 2026 Russia had itself abandoned the 'staged' account of Bucha (see "Heirs of Goebbels" — the 2026 Bucha denial).

What the claim concedes: Nothing; silence on the specific case.

CAPT. SEMEN SOLOVOV · TO SUSPILNE JOURNALISTS · NOV 2023

“He denied having been in Yahidne, then claimed a man of that name had died.”

Babel, 24 Nov 2023 (reporting the Suspilne investigation)

CONVICTED, VERDICT IN FORCE

Solovov was identified from a concert video, charged in February 2024, convicted on 7 Jul 2025 and the verdict upheld on 26 Feb 2026. Eleven victims testified at his trial.

What the claim concedes: Nothing; the denial is the only statement from a perpetrator on the record.

FAIR TO SAY

The headcounts — 360, 365, 368, 369 — come from different bodies at different times and differ by a few people; the hub shows all of them and uses the Commission's 365 first. The number killed outside the basement (7 to 17) is unresolved and is shown as such.

All 16 convictions are in absentia, under Ukrainian law, with legal-aid defence; the UN findings do not depend on them. No international court has adjudicated Yahidne; the ECtHR judgment of 2025 annexes the Commission's report as evidence.

The Commission of Inquiry's later reports (2023–24) do not return to Yahidne; its findings of October 2022 stand unrevised.

Sources: A — OHCHR, High Commissioner's statement to the Human Rights Council special session, 12 May 2022; Commission of Inquiry A/77/533 (18 Oct 2022), paras. 54, 77–79, 102; ECtHR, Ukraine and the Netherlands v. Russia [GC], 9 Jul 2025, Annex C. B — Chernihiv regional prosecutor's office, 22 May 2022; Office of the Prosecutor General 8 Jun 2022, 4 Apr 2023, Jul 2025; Chernihiv District Court verdicts 12 Jan 2023, 11 Mar 2024, 7 Jul 2025; Chernihiv Court of Appeal 6 Apr 2023, 26 Feb 2026; SBU 16 Jul 2025, 13 Apr 2026; President's Office 3 Apr 2023, 3 Apr 2025. C — Human Rights Watch, 18 May 2022; Reuters / Al Jazeera 8 Apr 2022; iStories 27 Apr 2022; RFE/RL 18 Jun 2022; Detector Media 18 Jun 2022; Ukrainska Pravda 12 May 2023; IWPR 15 Aug 2023, 23 Apr 2024, 27 Mar 2025; Suspilne 23 Nov 2023, Feb 2024, Sep 2025; Babel 24 Nov 2023; MIHR trial monitoring 2023–25; Slidstvo.Info 23 Oct 2024; KHPG 19 Sep 2025; Eurozine / Public Interest Journalism Lab 23 Feb 2026; Ukrinform 6 Mar 2026; Kiarszys & Lemiesz, Antiquity 100(411), 23 Mar 2026; Kyiv Independent 13 Apr 2026. All accessed 20 Oct 2026.

YAHIDNE
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live page · corrections
log

CIVILIANS MAY NOT BE HELD TO SHIELD A HEADQUARTERS

Two rules cover Yahidne: the prohibition of inhuman treatment and unlawful confinement of protected persons, and the prohibition on using civilians to render a military objective immune from attack. The Commission of Inquiry found both engaged.

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ESTABLISHED — BY BODIES WITH A MANDATE

Commission of Inquiry (A/77/533): the conditions of detention were inhumane and amount to inhuman treatment, a war crime (paras. 77–78); ten older persons died (para. 79); confining 365 civilians in the building from which troops fired placed them at significant risk (para. 54).

OHCHR (12 May 2022): the confinement of 360 residents for 28 days in the basement of the school used as a Russian base; ten died.

Chernihiv District Court (11 Mar 2024, 7 Jul 2025): cruel treatment of civilians and use as a human shield — national findings, in absentia.

PATTERN — WHAT THE RECORD SHOWS

Basement confinements under Russian command posts in March 2022 across the Chernihiv and Kyiv regions; summary killings of men in the first days of occupation (Bucha, Yahidne, Lukashivka).

Decorations rather than discipline: the brigade's senior officer made Hero of Russia (2024); the regiment given the Guards title (2023).

Denial by delegitimising the investigator — 'the UN is under Western pressure' — rather than by contesting the facts.

POSITION — UKRAINE'S QUALIFICATION

Ukraine qualifies the confinement as a violation of the laws and customs of war (Art. 438 CCU) — cruel treatment of civilians and use as a human shield — and has tried it as such; it holds the brigade and army command responsible (Rome Statute art. 28), a position now expressed in the charge against the brigade commander.

Ukraine treats the killings of villagers outside the basement as wilful killing; no verdict yet.

THE RULES THAT APPLY

Geneva Convention IV arts. 27, 32: humane treatment of protected persons; prohibition of measures causing physical suffering. Art. 28: a protected person may not be used to render areas immune from military operations.

Additional Protocol I art. 51(7): the civilian population may not be used to shield military objectives; art. 75: fundamental guarantees.

Rome Statute art. 8(2)(a)(ii) inhuman treatment; art. 8(2)(a)(vii) unlawful confinement; art. 8(2)(b)(xxiii) using protected persons as shields; art. 28 command responsibility.

WHAT WE DO NOT KNOW

The number of villagers killed outside the basement (7–17) and the fate of the man who disappeared on 4 March 2022.

Whether the ICC has examined Yahidne; whether the ECtHR's reasoning (as distinct from its annex) names the village.

Whether Col. Zhukov or the 41st Army command have been charged.

The exact date of the appeal ruling on the 15 servicemen (hearing scheduled 28 May 2024; upheld).

WHAT WE ASK

- Cite the Commission.** A/77/533, paras. 54 and 78–79, is the UN finding on Yahidne; use it in the Third Committee and the Human Rights Council whenever Russia disputes the treatment of civilians under occupation.
- Sanction the units.** Designate the 55th Separate Motor Rifle Brigade, Maj-Gen Barilo, Capt. Solovov and the 15 convicted servicemen under national and EU regimes; the EU's 2022 listings cover Bucha's 64th Brigade but not Yahidne's 55th.
- Support the memorial.** The residents decided in 2024 that the school should become a museum; construction has been slow. Partner funding and expertise would complete it.
- Record the method.** Yahidne is the documented case of a village used as a shield for a headquarters; keep it in protection-of-civilians statements alongside Bucha.

Sources: A — OHCHR, High Commissioner's statement to the Human Rights Council special session, 12 May 2022; Commission of Inquiry A/77/533 (18 Oct 2022), paras. 54, 77–79, 102; ECtHR, Ukraine and the Netherlands v. Russia [GC], 9 Jul 2025, Annex C. B — Chernihiv regional prosecutor's office, 22 May 2022; Office of the Prosecutor General 8 Jun 2022, 4 Apr 2023, Jul 2025; Chernihiv District Court verdicts 12 Jan 2023, 11 Mar 2024, 7 Jul 2025; Chernihiv Court of Appeal 6 Apr 2023, 26 Feb 2026; SBU 16 Jul 2025, 13 Apr 2026; President's Office 3 Apr 2023, 3 Apr 2025. C — Human Rights Watch, 18 May 2022; Reuters / Al Jazeera 8 Apr 2022; iStories 27 Apr 2022; RFE/RL 18 Jun 2022; Detector Media 18 Jun 2022; Ukrainska Pravda 12 May 2023; IWPR 15 Aug 2023, 23 Apr 2024, 27 Mar 2025; Suspilne 23 Nov 2023, Feb 2024, Sep 2025; Babel 24 Nov 2023; MIHR trial monitoring 2023–25; Slidstvo.Info 23 Oct 2024; KHPG 19 Sep 2025; Eurozine / Public Interest Journalism Lab 23 Feb 2026; Ukrinform 6 Mar 2026; Kiarszys & Lemiesz, Antiquity 100(411), 23 Mar 2026; Kyiv Independent 13 Apr 2026. All accessed 20 Oct 2026.



YAHIDNE: A VILLAGE IN A SCHOOL BASEMENT

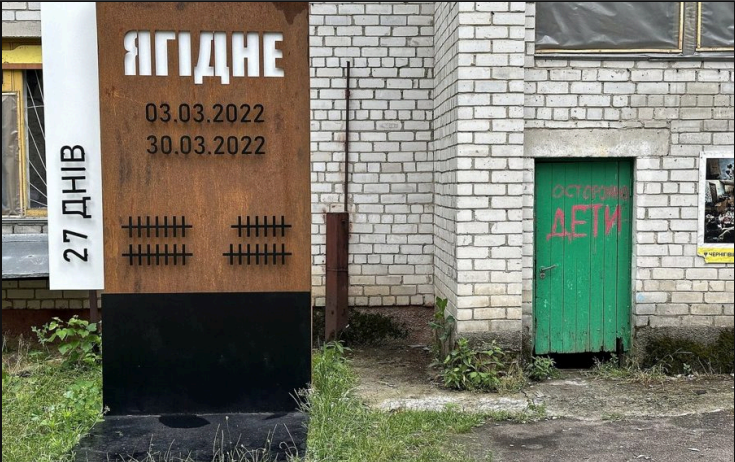
7 photographs from official sources, as shown on the live page. Each image is credited and openly licensed; videos are linked to the official post (scan the code). No image shows the dead; graphic aftermath is blurred in print. The downloadable pack on the live page holds the full-size files and their SHA-256.

UKRAINE EVIDENCE HUB
VERIFIED RECORD
OCT 2026



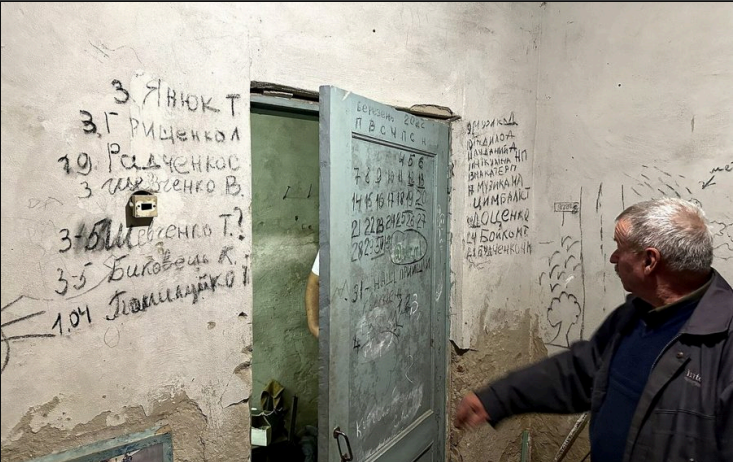
The school in Yahidne whose basement held the village for 28 days

Enno Lenze · 2023-06-29 · CC BY 2.0
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Yahidne_IMG_6624_\(53023252443\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Yahidne_IMG_6624_(53023252443).jpg)



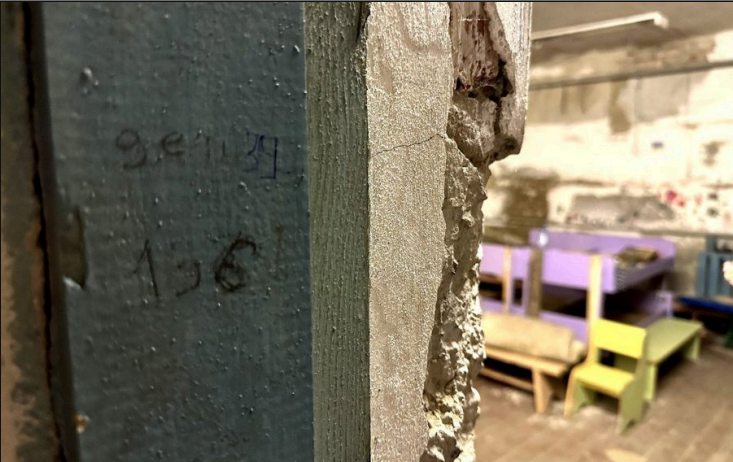
Memorial plaque by the school: '27 days', 03.03.2022–30.03.2022

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[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Yahidne_IMG_6622_\(53022936914\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Yahidne_IMG_6622_(53022936914).jpg)



The calendar kept by the detainees on the basement wall

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[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Yahidne_survivor_calendar_IMG_6676_\(53022187267\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Yahidne_survivor_calendar_IMG_6676_(53022187267).jpg)



Inscription on a basement door: 136 adults, 39 children

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[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Yahidne_136adults_39kids_IMG_6649_\(53022936564\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Yahidne_136adults_39kids_IMG_6649_(53022936564).jpg)



A room of the basement with the desks and bedding left behind

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[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Yahidne_IMG_6658_\(53022763741\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Yahidne_IMG_6658_(53022763741).jpg)



The basement after the detainees left

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[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Yahidne_IMG_6686_\(53022935259\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Yahidne_IMG_6686_(53022935259).jpg)



The school basement, photographed during the visit of the US Secretary of State, 7 Sep 2023

U.S. Department of State · 2023-09-07 · Public domain
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Secretary_Blinken_Visits_the_Yahidne_School_-_53182610509.jpg

