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## **Chairman of the IC of Russia Instructs to Continue to Document Criminal Actions of Ukrainian Nationalists and Officials Interfering with Evacuation of Civilians**



Every day media outlets report that in Ukraine, militants of nationalist battalions, supported by the local authorities, continue to hold civilians hostage using them as a "human shield". Instead of facilitating the evacuation of citizens from the areas of hostilities, the nationalists and local authorities are doing their best to prevent the civilians from moving to safe places.

The Russian Federation's proposals on humanitarian assistance in specific localities are also rejected. For example, a video message made by Head of the Sumy Oblast State Administration Dmitry Zhivitsky has been recently published on the Internet. According to him, Ukrainian troops refused to accept any Russian transport, including humanitarian convoys.

The instances of discrimination against foreign citizens, whose evacuation is also hindered in violation of all generally accepted norms of international law, cause great concern.

As of March 5, it is known that about five thousand foreigners are being held hostage as a "human

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shield”: “in Kharkiv — up to 1.5 thousand students from India, up to 200 Jordanian citizens, 40 Egyptian citizens, 15 Vietnamese citizens,” the representative of the Russian Defense Ministry said. “There are 576 citizens of India, 159 citizens of Tanzania, 121 citizens of China, 100 students from Ghana, 60 citizens of Egypt, 45 citizens of Jordan, 16 students from Pakistan, 15 citizens of Tunisia, and 14 citizens of Zambia in Sumy,” he added.

This regrettable trend testifies to the complete disregard of the international humanitarian law by the Ukrainian authorities.

The Chairman of the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation instructed Head of the Department of Legal Support and International Cooperation O. Yu. Mikhailov, in cooperation with the Foreign Ministry of Russia, to thoroughly study all known facts of illegal actions against foreign citizens (regardless of the sanctions policy of their states) who are actually being held hostage, as well as to identify them for subsequent recognition as victims. The investigators of the Main Investigative Department of the IC of Russia were instructed to carry out investigative actions aimed at identifying and holding criminally liable specific individuals of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and nationalist battalions guilty of detaining civilians and foreign citizens.

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