

UN condemns executions of Russian POWs by Ukrainians

The UN human rights watchdog is aware of a new graphic video purportedly showing the execution of Russian POWs by Ukrainians and has raised the issue with Kiev



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The UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) is aware of recently-emerged footage apparently showing the execution of Russian soldiers who had surrendered by Ukrainian troops, a spokeswoman for the UN watchdog, Marta Hurtado, has said.

“We have raised concerns about the treatment of prisoners of war, including alleged killings of POWs by the Ukrainian Armed Forces, with Ukraine’s Ministry of Defense,” Hurtado told TASS in a statement on Friday.

The graphic video in question surfaced earlier this week, filmed by an armed individual speaking Ukrainian and demanding answers from three men in military uniforms lying on the ground. After failing to elicit a coherent response from them, the man shoots one of the men in the head multiple times at point blank range.

One of the men, lying motionless on the ground, also has visible blood around his head, apparently getting shot and killed before the video started. A fellow Ukrainian soldier appeared to try to reason with the gunman, pointing out that the third captive was holding a grenade. The killer briefly showed his face at the very end of the video, concluding it with

an obscenity and 'Glory to Ukraine' slogan, which is commonly associated with World War II-era Nazi collaborators but is widely used in present-day Ukraine.

Additional footage seemingly filmed in the immediate aftermath of the incident showed the killer trying to provide excuses to justify his actions. The UN is aware of this footage as well, Hurtado said, adding that none of the excuses actually have merit.

"We are also aware of another video that has appeared on social media platforms that includes additional footage of the original incident and also appears to show a Ukrainian soldier confessing [to] the killing and trying to justify it by alleging that the victims refused to surrender or that they were part of the Wagner Group military and security contractors fighting on behalf of the Russian Federation," the spokeswoman said. *"These excuses do not provide justification for the soldier's actions under international humanitarian law."*



According to the Russian Defense Ministry, the killing of unarmed soldiers who surrendered is a *"widespread practice"* by Kiev's troops, and multiple incidents of this sort have occurred amid the ongoing conflict, with some of them published online by the killers themselves. The Russian Investigative Committee said on Thursday that the footage appeared to show the recent murder of three Russian POWs by *"Ukrainian nationalists,"* pledging to investigate further and identify the perpetrators.