

For Immediate Release

War Is Not Peace: Ukrainian Children and South African Citizens Are Not for the Russian Meat Grinder

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5 January, Cape Town – **The Ukrainian Association of South Africa calls on the South African government:**

- to immediately cease all military cooperation with Russia and to prevent the Russian Navy, which is directly involved in the militarisation of Ukrainian children, from staying in South African waters.
- to take decisive action against the manipulation and recruitment of South African and other African citizens into Russian Imperial aggression against sovereign democratic Ukraine.

“It is the height of cynicism to involve the Russian Navy in a training called ‘Will for Peace’ while Russia has waged an imperial war against Ukraine for more than 12 years,” said Dzvinka Kachur from the Ukrainian Association of South Africa. “A force that bombs cities, occupies territory, deports and militarises children, and recruits vulnerable African citizens into its military aggression wants to bring similar ‘peace’ to South Africa?”

UAZA calls all South African citizens and civil society organisations who do not want their citizens to be lured to Russia to kill Ukrainians to protest these Naval Trainings planned in Cape Town 9-16 January.

Militarisation of Ukrainian children by the Russian Navy

On 3 December 2025, the South African Government supported the UN Resolution on the Return of Ukrainian Children, which aims to stop the indoctrination of Ukrainian children.

The Russian Navy is directly involved in the [russification, indoctrination, and militarisation of Ukrainian children from occupied territories](#).

Documented cases in 2022–2023 show **forcible enrolment of abducted Ukrainian children into Russian naval and military educational institutions.**

A [network of the Russian Naval Schools](#), aiming to militarise children from 12 years and further channel them into the occupying power military forces, is being opened in the occupied territories in Russia-destroyed Mariupol, Sevastopol and planned in the Kherson region.

On 25 June 2024, the International Criminal Court [issued an arrest warrant for the Russian Navy Admiral](#) for attacks on Ukraine's energy infrastructure that caused unjustified human suffering, including harm to Ukrainian children. This shows direct links between the Russian Navy's leadership and international crimes.

[Manipulated recruitment of South African and African citizens into the Russian war](#)

17 South Africans were recently trapped by the russian military in the aggression against sovereign Ukraine. However, the real numbers remain unknown. The investigation in Kenya shows that Russian networks to recruit vulnerable African youth are well developed and provide no escape for those who realise they are trapped in the military aggression of imperial Russia. There are at least 1,400 citizens from at least 36 African countries fighting in the Russian army. Similar cases are documented in Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda and South African neighbour [Botswana](#).

These recruitments follow South African government's investigation into the recruitment of [South African young women into the military activities in Russia at Alabuga](#).

...ENDS...

#StandWithUkraine | #StopRussia | #RussiaIsATerroristState