

Russian Airstrike Killed Civilians Waiting for Food – Amnesty

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Residential building damaged by shelling in the city of Chernihiv. **Dimitar DILKOFF / AFP**

A Russian air strike on the Ukrainian city of Chernihiv which reportedly killed 47 civilians last Thursday should be investigated as a possible war crime, Amnesty International said Wednesday.

In a new [investigation](#) into the strike — one of the deadliest so far in Russia's two-week assault on Ukraine — the rights group said it “was not able to identify a legitimate military target at, or close to, the scene of the strike.”

“Amnesty International believes the majority of victims were queuing for food when the missiles struck,” the organization added, based on witness testimony and analysis of satellite images.

Previously released graphic images from the aftermath appeared to show victims of the attack holding bread and other essential goods.

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Amnesty concluded that the square in Chernihiv, a city in northern Ukraine close to the Belarusian border, was hit by “at least eight unguided aerial bombs — known as ‘dumb bombs’” — during the March 3 strike, which took place at around 12:15 p.m.

“Verified footage of the strike shows eight munitions being dropped in close succession and falling in a line, as is typical in a bombing run,” Amnesty said in its new report.

“The air strike that hit the streets of Chernihiv shocks the conscience. This was a merciless, indiscriminate attack on people as they went about their daily business in their homes, streets and shops,” said Joanne Mariner, Amnesty International’s Crisis Response Director.

Prosecutors at the International Criminal Court (ICC) have opened a probe into possible war crimes during Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, in which Ukrainian officials say hundreds of civilians have been killed in indiscriminate Russian shelling and air strikes.

Moscow has repeatedly denied hitting civilian and residential areas despite widespread evidence in Kyiv, Kharkiv and other cities. The Kremlin has also accused Kyiv of using civilians as “human shields.”

“This shocking attack is one of the deadliest that the people of Ukraine have endured yet. The Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court should investigate this air strike as a war crime. Those responsible for such crimes must be brought to justice, and victims and their families must receive full reparation.”

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