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As 100s of 1000s people flee Ukraine, AOHR Condemns racism at the borders

Over the previous days, Arab Organisation for Human Rights in the UK ([AOHR UK](#)), has watched Russia's invasion of Ukraine with alarm, and great concern for the plight of civilians across the country. According to the UN., after only four days, this war of aggression has caused at least 64 civilian deaths and 240 casualties, and forced 368,000 people to flee the country.

Neighbouring countries, Ukraine's key international allies, and the various global institutions have a basic obligation to provide shelter for all those fleeing this war – including the many foreign nationals residing in Ukraine. Moreover, such provision [must be done equitably](#), without prejudice according to race or nationality.

It is on this basis that AOHR UK condemns the [various instances](#) of blatant racism against both Arab, sub-Saharan African, and Black Ukrainian refugees within the country and at its various western borders. They are as much the victims of the invasion as are all refugees, and must be provided shelter on that basis.

Instances include a video shared on social media by a Moroccan student, which showed a crowd of people he described as “Moroccans, Arabs, Africans” gathered together, left in the road as coach after coach of Ukrainians leaves for the Polish border.

Another was reported by a Tunisian student, who described “[Racism, beating and humiliation \[at the border\]. I was able to enter after 18 hours-long lines because I am a girl.](#)”



Yet another instance was authorities charging Black people the full of price of train tickets, whilst White people were allowed to board for free.

Many other such examples have been shared via social media over the past four days.

Such prejudice on the basis of race and nationality within Ukraine and at the borders has found echo in the international press, in which the “civilized”, “European”, “middle-class” victims of this unfolding war have been counterposed to the civilian populations of Syria, Afghanistan, and Yemen – [with the former appearing to elicit far more sympathy from journalists](#).

Hence, AOHR UK demands that all refugees and victims of Russia's war against Ukraine be treated without prejudice, whether at the borders or in the press.

Arab Organisation for Human Rights in the UK (AOHR UK)