

# Ukraine

## CONFLICT UPDATE

Institute for the Study of War, Russia Team

**Russian President Vladimir Putin will likely order Russian forces to deploy overtly into Russian proxy-controlled Ukrainian territory and to the line of contact with Ukrainian forces on February 24. Russia will likely invade unoccupied Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts shortly after that deployment. A Russian invasion of most of the rest of Ukraine could occur at the same time or shortly thereafter.** The proxy leaders of the Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics (DNR and LNR) formally asked Putin to deploy Russian forces into DNR and LNR territory on February 23. The DNR and LNR leadership also requested Russian assistance to gain control over the rest of Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts, which they illegally claim as rightfully theirs. Putin secured unlimited parliamentary approval to deploy Russian forces abroad for any purpose he chooses on February 22. A Russian deployment to the DNR and LNR would set conditions for successive or simultaneous Russian military operations to conquer the entire Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts and large areas of Ukrainian territory.

Meanwhile, Russian state TV set information conditions to justify a full-scale invasion and occupation of Ukraine to the Russian people. State media denied Ukrainian sovereignty and circulated repeated fabricated claims of Ukrainian aggression. Russia may conduct additional spectacular false flag attacks to legitimize their invasion to the Russian public. However, the repeated US and Ukrainian exposure of Russia's planned false flag attacks in recent days may lead Putin to begin his invasion without the public justification he desired. The current Russian state TV information operations, along with Putin's speeches, suggest that Putin may intend to annex all or most of Ukraine directly to Russia after conquering it rather than setting up some sort of puppet state in Kyiv. Evidence for Putin's post-invasion intentions remains inconclusive at this time, however.

ISW published its most recent [assessment of Russia's likely immediate course of action](#) on February 22 at 1:00 pm Eastern Time. This daily synthetic product covers key events related to renewed Russian aggression against Ukraine and replaces ISW's previous "[Indicators and Thresholds for Russian Military Operations in Ukraine and/or Belarus](#)," which we maintained from November 12, 2021, through February 17, 2022. That document is no longer updated.

### Key Takeaways February 23

- **The Russian proxy Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics formally asked Russian President Vladimir Putin to deploy Russian Armed Forces to Donbas, setting conditions for an immediate deployment of Russian ground forces at scale into Donbas and toward the line of contact.**

- **Satellite imagery and Western intelligence indicate an imminent full-scale invasion with additional Russian deployments to Belgorod near Kharkiv, northeastern Ukraine, and in Gomel, Belarus.**
- **Russian state TV implied that Ukraine does not have rights to sovereignty over most of its territory, setting information conditions for the Russian population to support a Russian invasion and occupation of Ukraine.**
- **The United States forward-deployed additional forces to Europe to support NATO allies and deter Russian aggression.**
- **US and allied leaders canceled planned meetings with Russian officials due to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.**
- **The European Union (EU) and the United States are likely leveraging Russia’s unprecedented aggression against Ukraine as a catalyst to transition the EU away from its current dependence on Russian natural gas.**

**Key Events February 22, 4:00 pm ET – February 23, 4:00 pm ET**

### **Military Events**

**Russia continued deploying ground forces and rotary-wing aircraft to likely assembly areas near the Ukrainian border in Gomel, Belarus, and Belgorod, Russia, on February 22.** Satellite imagery observed a new Russian military field camp with over 100 vehicles in Gomel, Belarus, on February 22.<sup>1</sup> Belarusian social media users reported T-72 tank elements, likely of the Russian 64th Motorized Rifle Brigade, in Mazur, Gomel, Belarus, on February 22.<sup>2</sup> Russia deployed at least 30 Russian Ka-52 attack helicopters and Mi-8 helicopters to Gomel, Belarus, on February 22.<sup>3</sup> Russian social media users observed a likely reinforced Russian battalion tactical group in Novooskolsky Raion, Belgorod, Russia, on February 22.<sup>4</sup> Satellite imagery observed growing Russian armor buildups in Belgorod and Valuyki, Russia, on February 23.<sup>5</sup>

### **Russian Activity**

**Russia began withdrawing all diplomatic staff from across Ukraine on February 23, indicating that Russia is preparing to conduct large combat operations against Ukraine.** Russian officials stated that Russia began evacuating personnel from all diplomatic missions in Kyiv, Lviv, Kharkiv, and Odesa, Ukraine, on February 23.<sup>6</sup> Russian officials confirmed that Russian diplomatic staff destroyed documents in Russian diplomatic missions in Ukraine on February 22. The Ukrainian Foreign Ministry (MFA) recommended that Ukrainian citizens in Russia leave Russia immediately on February 23.<sup>7</sup> Russia will likely conduct offensive operations against Ukraine before February 25.

**The Russian Foreign Ministry (MFA) threatened an unspecified “strong and not necessarily symmetrical” response to US sanctions on February 23.**<sup>8</sup> The MFA added that sanctions are ineffective in preventing Russia from “firmly defending [Russian] interests.” MFA Spokesperson Maria Zakharova claimed the sanctions were “illegitimate” and targeted Russia’s development.<sup>9</sup>

**The Kremlin continued falsely accusing Ukrainian forces of attacking Russian territory on February 23 to legitimize additional Russian military action against Ukraine.** The Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) claimed it prevented terrorist attacks on Crimean churches

organized by the supporters of the “Right Sector” Ukrainian nationalist group on February 23.<sup>10</sup> The FSB claimed it detained six Russian nationals that Right Sector radicalized online to detonate improved explosive devices. The Kremlin previously falsely accused Ukrainian forces of attacking the southern Russian city of Rostov with artillery and ground forces on February 21.<sup>11</sup>

**Kremlin-sponsored TV channels denied Ukraine’s right to sovereignty over most of its territory from February 22 to 23, setting information conditions for the Russian population to support a large war against Ukraine beyond Donbas.** Russian news program *Vesti* claimed that Russia cannot forget that Russian political leaders created the territory of modern Ukraine by robbing Russia of its “historical territories.”<sup>12</sup> *Vesti* implied that only Kirovohrad and Dnipropetrovsk oblasts, and the northern parts of Zaporizhzhia and Mykolaiv oblasts, are legitimate Ukrainian territories, setting information conditions for the Russian population to support a Russian invasion and occupation of Ukraine. *Vesti* praised Putin’s February 21 speech, claiming it restored thousands of years to Russian history and that the Ukrainian nation did not exist during the Kievan Rus kingdom from the 9th to the mid-13th century. *Vesti* falsely claimed that the Kremlin recognized Ukraine as a sovereign state and agreed to pay Ukraine’s perestroika debts in 1991 under an agreement that Ukraine would return Russian “territorial gifts” to Russia. *Vesti* accused Ukraine of “blowing its chance” to finally create a state by falling under the control of radical nationalists and the West. Russian talk show *Vremya Pokazhet* additionally stated that Putin’s recognition of the Donetsk and Luhansk People’s Republics (DNR and LNR) marked the return of “Russian sovereignty,” implying that Ukrainian territories are Russian territories<sup>13,14</sup>

**The Kremlin intensified offensive cyber operations against Ukrainian government websites, Ukrainian frontline soldiers, and open-source intelligence (OSINT) Russia-watchers on February 23.** Likely Russian actors conducted Distributed Denial-of-Service (DDoS) cyberattacks against Ukraine’s Foreign Ministry, Defense Ministry, Cabinet of Ministers, Parliament, Federal Security Service, and banks on February 23.<sup>15</sup> Likely Russian electronic warfare systems sent targeted propaganda text messages to personnel of Ukraine’s 53rd and 54th mechanized brigades near the frontline informing the servicemen that Russian units deployed to Donbas with Moscow’s approval to attack on February 22.<sup>16</sup> The messages called on Ukrainian servicemen to desert their posts to save their lives—a psychological warfare tactic that Russian forces previously used in 2015.<sup>17</sup> Likely Russian Twitter bots also mass-reported OSINT aggregators that study Russian military movements on Twitter, temporarily disabling at least five prominent OSINT accounts for 12 hours on February 22-23.<sup>18</sup> Increased Russian cyberattacks and electronic warfare activity are leading indicators of an imminent Russian attack against Ukraine.

**The Kremlin continued to justify its recognition of the Donetsk and Luhansk People’s Republics (DNR and LNR) as liberating the DNR and LNR from Ukrainian oppression to legitimize further military action in Ukraine.** The State Duma Committee’s First Deputy Chairman Viktor Vodolatsky claimed that Ukrainian aggression makes it “impossible” for LNR and DNR residents evacuated to Russia to return to Ukraine.<sup>19</sup> Senior United Russia official Andrey Turchak announced that the Duma will form a friendship group with the DNR and LNR parliaments on February 23, further formalizing institutional ties.<sup>20</sup> Turchak said on February 23 that Russia will only send troops into the DNR and LNR if the republics’ leadership requests such action; the proxies requested Russian troops later on February 23.<sup>21</sup> The Russian Foreign Ministry (MFA) denied that Russian President Vladimir Putin’s recognition of the LNR and DNR violates the Minsk II Accords on February 23.<sup>22</sup> The MFA stated that Kyiv has violated the Minsk II Accords since 2014 by committing “hallmarks of genocide” against citizens of Donbas and called on the United Nations to demand that the government of Ukraine implement the agreements.<sup>23</sup> Russian Representative to the UN Vasily

Nebeznya stated that Russia will not be lenient with violators of the ceasefire in Donbas on February 23.<sup>24</sup> Nebeznya said the West is inciting Ukrainian aggression and urged the UN General Assembly to calm Kyiv's offensive military action.

## **Proxy Activity**

**Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republic (DNR and LNR) heads Denis Pushilin and Leonid Pasechnik asked Russian President Vladimir Putin to deploy Russian Armed Forces to Donbas on February 23, setting conditions for an immediate deployment of Russian ground forces at scale into Donbas.**<sup>25</sup> Pushilin and Pasechnik called on Putin to repel Ukrainian aggression in Donbas and officially invoked provisions in the treaties of "friendship, cooperation and mutual Assistance" that Russia ratified on February 22. Pushilin falsely claimed that Kyiv continues to wage genocide against DNR residents while Pasechnik falsely claimed that Western states support Ukraine forcibly capturing the LNR's territory. Putin will likely overtly deploy Russian forces to Donbas at scale on February 24 to set conditions for future military operations to conquer the entire Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts and possibly support the invasion of the rest of Ukraine.

**The Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics (DNR and LNR) claimed that they cannot currently expand their borders without Russia's help to overcome Ukrainian forces on February 22-23, setting conditions for Russia to undertake offensive operations to capture all of Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts.** DNR Head Denis Pushilin claimed that the DNR cannot consider expanding its territorial control through the entire Donetsk oblast because Ukrainian forces could launch an offensive "at any moment."<sup>26</sup> Pushilin reiterated claims that Ukrainian forces deployed multiple launch rocket systems to the front line.<sup>27</sup> The LNR claimed that Ukrainian forces intensified artillery attacks against civilians in Donbas and killed an LNR militant.<sup>28</sup> The Kremlin continued coordinating support for the proxies' claims. The Russian Investigative Committee claimed on February 23 that it identified at least 85 Ukrainian servicemembers and officials who committed "crimes" or "gave criminal orders" in combat in Donbas.<sup>29</sup> The DNR and LNR escalated kinetic activity against Ukraine while making these claims and killed at least one Ukrainian soldier from February 22 to 23.<sup>30</sup>

## **Belarusian Activity**

N/A

## **Ukrainian Activity**

**The Ukrainian government announced conscription of reservists, declared a state of emergency, and approved martial law protocols on February 22-23 in response to Russian President Vladimir Putin acquiring the legal authority to deploy troops abroad.**<sup>31</sup> Ukrainian Commander-in-Chief Valery Zaluzhny ordered the conscription of reservists for up to one year on February 23.<sup>32</sup> Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky emphasized on February 22 that Ukraine has not announced a general mobilization. Ukraine's parliament and the National Security and Defense Council both unanimously declared a state of emergency in all Ukrainian regions except Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts because similar regimes already exist there.<sup>33</sup> Ukraine's parliament also adopted protocols for government operation during a state of emergency and/or martial law, voted to increase defense spending by over 900 million dollars, and supported introducing sanctions against Russian MPs who voted for the recognition of the Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics.<sup>34</sup> Ukrainian National Police Deputy Chairman Oleksandr Fatsevich stated that law enforcement will continue to guard over 100 energy facilities and other unspecified critical infrastructure.<sup>35</sup> The Ukrainian Border

Service announced restrictions on civilian traffic and sea movements and other activities in regions bordering Russia, Belarus, Crimea, and non-government-controlled Donbas.<sup>36</sup>

## US Activity

**The United States announced on February 22 it will forward-deploy 5,000 additional US forces to Europe and that it has repositioned US forces in Europe eastward to deter Russian aggression and support US allies.**<sup>37</sup> US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin announced troop movements in Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, and Germany on February 22. The 18th Airborne Corps moved a headquarters capable of commanding a Joint Task Force to Germany. The Defense Department noted that these forces are trained and equipped to deter aggression and defend US allies. Austin announced on February 22 that the United States deployed 4,700 personnel of the 82nd Airborne Division and unspecified support elements from the United States to Germany. Austin also announced that the 82nd Airborne Division deployed an Infantry Combat Brigade and unspecified support elements to Poland.

**US intelligence reportedly assessed on February 23 that Russia deployed initial forces into Donbas and will conduct a full-scale invasion of Ukraine within the next 48 hours (by February 25).** Anonymous US officials told *Newsweek* that the Biden Administration informed Ukraine that Russia will likely conduct a “full-scale” invasion of Ukraine within the next 48 hours and that a possible Russian surveillance aircraft violated Ukrainian airspace on February 23.<sup>38</sup> *Newsweek* added that Russia will likely employ airstrikes, cruise missiles, and a ground invasion.<sup>39</sup> Pentagon spokesperson John Kirby said Russian forces along Ukraine’s border are “at a state of readiness where they could attack at any time” during a February 23 press briefing.<sup>40</sup> Kirby said that Russian President Vladimir Putin has not indicated that he is willing to de-escalate.<sup>41</sup> Kirby and Latvian Prime Minister Arturs Krišjānis Kariņš claimed Russia moved additional forces and tanks into Ukrainian territory controlled by the Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics in Donbas on February 23.<sup>42</sup> A senior US official told *CNN* on February 23 that Russia deployed one to two battalion tactical groups, each made up of around 800 Russian troops, to Donbas.<sup>43</sup> US officials told *CNN* and *Newsweek* on February 23 that Russian forces may attack the northeastern Ukrainian city of Kharkiv, which Ukraine does not plan to evacuate.<sup>44</sup>

**US and allied leaders followed through on their promises to cancel meetings with top Russian officials as Russia began its invasion of proxy-occupied eastern Ukraine.** US Secretary of State Antony Blinken canceled a planned February 24 meeting in Geneva with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov on February 22, citing Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and wholesale rejection of diplomacy.<sup>45</sup> Italian Foreign Minister Luigi Di Maio also announced Italy will not hold meetings with Russian officials until Russia eases tensions on February 23.<sup>46</sup> US President Joe Biden will likely not meet with Russian President Vladimir Putin as Biden had agreed to “in principle” on February 21 barring additional Russian aggression.<sup>47</sup>

## NATO and EU Activity

**Western states announced sanctions against Russia on February 22 and 23, following similar actions by the United States, United Kingdom, the European Union (EU) on February 22.**<sup>48</sup> The Australian government sanctioned eight members of the Russian Security Council and several Russian banks and restricted trade with the Donetsk and Luhansk People’s Republics (DNR and LNR) on February 23. The Canadian government sanctioned two Russian banks, banned Canadians from purchasing Russian sovereign debt, and sanctioned the DNR and LNR and Russian MPs who voted to recognize them on February 22. The Japanese government froze assets of Russian

MPs involved in the recognition of the DNR and LNR and prohibited the sale of Russian bonds in Japan on February 23. The EU announced sanctions against Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu and other senior Russian officials, as well as Russia's Internet Research Agency, on February 23. The EU said this would be the first of many installments of sanctions should Russia continue to take aggressive action against Ukraine.<sup>49</sup>

**The European Union (EU) and the United States are likely leveraging Russia's unprecedented aggression against Ukraine as a catalyst to transition the EU away from its current dependence on Russian natural gas.** Russia has previously used its control over natural gas imports into eastern Europe to pressure EU member states and Ukraine. The *Washington Post* reported on February 23 that the European Commission will announce plans to transition the EU away from dependence on Russian natural gas and bolster the EU's resiliency against price spikes and supply disruptions on March 2.<sup>50</sup> The plan would require the EU to fill natural gas reserves annually before winter. The plan would also call for a 40 percent reduction in the EU's fossil fuel consumption by 2030. Germany will likely back the proposal given it agreed to pause its Nord Stream 2 pipeline project on February 22, moving away from its previously close relationship with Russian energy companies.<sup>51</sup> US President Joe Biden announced new sanctions on the company building the Nord Stream 2 pipeline, a subsidiary of the Russian state-owned Gazprom, on February 23.<sup>52</sup> German Economic Minister Robert Habeck stated that Germany could get natural gas imports without Russia if necessary on February 23.<sup>53</sup> The United Kingdom also announced on February 17 that it would provide £100 million over the next three years to supplement Ukraine's energy sector and reduce Ukraine's dependency on Russian gas.<sup>54</sup>

### **Other International Organization Activity**

N/A

### **Individual Western Allies' Activity**

**The United Kingdom increased its economic and military support packages to Ukraine to deter and mitigate Russian aggression on February 23.**<sup>55</sup> UK Foreign Secretary Liz Truss announced a new economic package to support Ukraine's economic stability on February 23.<sup>56</sup> The UK guaranteed Multilateral Development Bank (MDB) loans to Ukraine to mitigate the effects of Russia's continued aggression against Ukraine on February 23.<sup>57</sup> Truss also stated that "nothing is off the table" in a UK response to Russia's aggression on February 23.<sup>58</sup> UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced the UK provision of additional military aid to Ukraine including unspecified defensive weapons and non-lethal aid on February 23.<sup>59</sup> UK Culture Secretary Nadine Dorries asked UK media regulators to review Russia's state-owned news channel *RT's* broadcasting license and officially accused the channel of being a Kremlin disinformation tool on February 23.<sup>60</sup>

**Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan remains determined to balance between Russia and Ukraine despite NATO sanctions and pressure over Black Sea access.**<sup>61</sup> Erdogan reiterated that Turkey does not accept Russia's recognition of the Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics (DNR and LNR), called for a return to the Minsk II Accords, and stated that Turkey follows a "constructive approach" within NATO in a February 23 phone call with Russian President Vladimir Putin. Erdogan called for swift and decisive NATO action, criticized Western leaders' previous ineffective diplomatic efforts to meet with the Kremlin, and stated that Turkey cannot abandon its ties with Russia or Ukraine due to Turkey's strong economic, military, and political ties with both states in a February 23 interview.<sup>62</sup> The Turkish government has so far refrained from imposing sanctions on Russia.<sup>63</sup>

Separately, Ukrainian Ambassador to Turkey Vasyl Bodnar told Reuters on February 23 that Ukraine may ask Turkey to prevent the passage of Russian vessels into the Black Sea if Russia launches a full-scale invasion.<sup>64</sup> Turkey controls and regulates passage through its two straits between the Mediterranean and Black Seas under the 1936 Montreux Convention. The Convention guarantees passage to warships and civilian vessels within certain regulations “during peacetime.”<sup>65</sup> However, Turkey can choose to close the straits to all foreign warships in “war time or when it is threatened by aggression.” Ankara will likely allow the passage of Russian vessels throughout Russia’s ongoing conflict with Ukraine, barring direct Russian aggression against Turkey or NATO, to avoid a direct and costly confrontation with Russia.

## Other International Activity

**Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying criticized Western sanctions on Russia, stated that China will not impose sanctions, and rejected any comparison between Ukraine and Taiwan on February 23.**<sup>66</sup> Chunying criticized Western sanctions as “illegal” and called for international dialogue and negotiations instead. Chunying added that China sees sanctions-oriented policies as ineffective and that previous US sanctions caused “serious economic difficulties and impacted people’s livelihood” and the United States should not undermine the rights and interests of China and other parties. Chunying rejected any comparison between Ukraine and Taiwan, claiming Taiwan has always been an “inalienable part” of China. UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson had implied that a Russian takeover of Ukraine would allow China to conclude that “might makes right” and endanger Taiwan during a February 19 speech.<sup>67</sup>



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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/images-show-new-deployment-military-vehicles-belarus-maxar-2022-02-22/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://twitter.com/RALee85/status/1496391294121357320>

<sup>3</sup> [https://twitter.com/zloy\\_odessit/status/1496416243359928320](https://twitter.com/zloy_odessit/status/1496416243359928320)

<sup>4</sup> <https://twitter.com/Osinttechnical/status/1496337207107493888>

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.cnn.com/europe/live-news/ukraine-russia-news-02-23-22/h\\_6ed671496550391e4c50d671b4d8bc58](https://www.cnn.com/europe/live-news/ukraine-russia-news-02-23-22/h_6ed671496550391e4c50d671b4d8bc58)

<sup>6</sup> <https://tass dot ru/politika/13819015>

<sup>7</sup> <https://mfa dot gov.ua/news/rekomendaciyi-gromadyanam-ukrayini-u-zvyazku-iz-ostannimi-rishennyami-rosijskoyi-federaciyi-shcho-grubo-porushuyut-suverenitet-i-teritorialnu-cilisnist-ukrayini>

<sup>8</sup> [https://www dot mid.ru/ru/foreign\\_policy/news/1800087/](https://www dot mid.ru/ru/foreign_policy/news/1800087/)

<sup>9</sup> <https://tass dot ru/politika/13812983>

- <sup>10</sup> <https://tass dot ru/proisshestviya/13818145>; [https://tvzvezda dot ru/news/20222231251-8zUd8.html?utm\\_source=yxnews&utm\\_medium=desktop](https://tvzvezda dot ru/news/20222231251-8zUd8.html?utm_source=yxnews&utm_medium=desktop)
- <sup>11</sup> <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/ukraine-conflict-update-4>
- <sup>12</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UEXDcUd6XzQ>
- <sup>14</sup> [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OsO\\_Z8oFmIQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OsO_Z8oFmIQ)
- <sup>15</sup> Several affected websites remained online due to backup servers introduced following the previous DDoS attack on Ukrainian websites on February 16. <https://twitter.com/netblocks/status/1496498930925940738>; <https://twitter.com/Osinttechnical/status/1496508071190970368>; [https://www.cnn.com/europe/live-news/ukraine-russia-news-02-23-22/h\\_730dbe7cd814c53f0f2977af127f35c4](https://www.cnn.com/europe/live-news/ukraine-russia-news-02-23-22/h_730dbe7cd814c53f0f2977af127f35c4)
- <sup>16</sup> <https://twitter.com/loogunda/status/1496197712785641478>; [https://24tv dot ua/ru/voennye-donbasse-poluchajut-soobshhenija-ot-rossijan-sovetom\\_n1875070](https://24tv dot ua/ru/voennye-donbasse-poluchajut-soobshhenija-ot-rossijan-sovetom_n1875070)
- <sup>17</sup> <https://twitter.com/loogunda/status/1496386575323836418>; [https://defence-ua dot com/minds\\_and\\_ideas/sms\\_vid\\_voroga\\_ta\\_telefon\\_u\\_boju\\_jak\\_nebezpeka\\_krajini\\_nato\\_vivchajut\\_uroki\\_vijni\\_na\\_shodi\\_ukrajini-3777.html](https://defence-ua dot com/minds_and_ideas/sms_vid_voroga_ta_telefon_u_boju_jak_nebezpeka_krajini_nato_vivchajut_uroki_vijni_na_shodi_ukrajini-3777.html); <https://korrespondent dot net/ukraine/3542504-voennye-v-donbasse-poluchaut-SMS-s-uhrozamy-shtab-ato>
- <sup>18</sup> <https://twitter.com/Osinttechnical/status/1496430208630595586>; <https://twitter.com/NeuronIntel/status/1496457933261090819>
- <sup>19</sup> <https://tass dot ru/politika/13817663>
- <sup>20</sup> <https://tass dot ru/politika/13819963>
- <sup>21</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/russian-military-will-only-enter-ukraines-donbass-if-separatists-ask-official-2022-02-23/>; <https://tass dot ru/politika/13792947>
- <sup>22</sup> [https://www dot mid.ru/ru/foreign\\_policy/news/1800080/](https://www dot mid.ru/ru/foreign_policy/news/1800080/)
- <sup>23</sup> The MFA echoed February 22 statements from Russia's Permanent Representative to the OSCE Alexander Lukashevich, who said that Ukraine has failed to comply with the Minsk II Accords for several years. Lukashevich also said that Russia has made consistent efforts to resolve the conflict through diplomatic means and that the recognition was a "forced decision." [https://www.mid dot ru/ru/foreign\\_policy/news/1800106/](https://www.mid dot ru/ru/foreign_policy/news/1800106/)
- <sup>24</sup> <https://tass dot ru/politika/13822327>
- <sup>25</sup> <https://tass dot ru/mezhdunarodnaya-panorama/13824025>
- <sup>26</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/russian-backed-separatist-leader-says-military-mobilisation-is-accelerating-2022-02-23/>
- <sup>27</sup> <https://tass dot ru/mezhdunarodnaya-panorama/13823031>
- <sup>28</sup> <https://tass dot ru/mezhdunarodnaya-panorama/13818843>; <https://lug-info dot com/ru/news/zhiloy-dom-v-pan-kovke-poluchil-povrezhdeniya-pri-obstrele-so-storony-vs-sckk?preview=890511956cf7-55ea-a9f4-a629-ba84a863>; <https://tass dot ru/mezhdunarodnaya-panorama/13823339>
- <sup>29</sup> <https://tass dot ru/proisshestviya/13820309>
- <sup>30</sup> <https://www dot mil.gov.ua/news/2022/02/23/zvedennya-pro-situaciyu-v-rajoni-provedennya-operacii-obednanih-sil-stanom-na-1700-23-lyutogo-2022-roku/>; <https://www dot ukrinform.net/rubric-defense/3409942-donbas-update-ukraine-reports-1-kia-6-wias-amid-96-enemy-attacks-feb-22.html>; [https://www.cnn.com/europe/live-news/ukraine-russia-news-02-23-22/h\\_7965d6bf75a26fc43289a8fcc08943bc](https://www.cnn.com/europe/live-news/ukraine-russia-news-02-23-22/h_7965d6bf75a26fc43289a8fcc08943bc)
- <sup>31</sup> <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/02/22/russia-ukraine-updates/#link-25MNP6HTEZHW7DYSP7YWPD52AE>
- <sup>32</sup> <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/02/22/russia-ukraine-updates/#link-25MNP6HTEZHW7DYSP7YWPD52AE>; <https://www dot mil.gov.ua/news/2022/02/23/verhovnij-golovnokomanduvach-zsu-pidpisav-nakaz-pro-prizov-rezervistiv-na-vijskovu-sluzhbu-za-prizovom-osib-iz-chisla-rezervistiv-v-osoblivij-period/>
- <sup>33</sup> <https://www dot rada.gov.ua/news/Top-novyna/219980.html>; <https://www dot president.gov.ua/news/rnbo-pid-golovuvannyam-volodimira-zelenskogo-uhvalila-rishen-73073>; <https://www dot rada.gov.ua/news/Novyny/219975.html>
- <sup>34</sup> <https://www dot rada.gov.ua/news/Novyny/219966.html>; <https://www dot rada.gov.ua/news/Novyny/219964.html>; <https://www dot rada.gov.ua/news/Novyny/219947.html>
- <sup>35</sup> <https://mvs dot gov.ua/uk/news/nacpoliciya-oxoronyatime-objekti-energeticnoyi-infrastrukturi-oleksandr-facevic>
- <sup>36</sup> <https://mvs dot gov.ua/uk/news/uvaga-u-prikordonnix-raionax-vvodyatsya-dodatkovy-rezimni-obmezennya>
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