



Monitoring of Xenophobia and Extremism in Ukraine August 2016

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Introduction

The presidential campaign in the United States continues to haunt the minds of Ukrainians. German Foreign Minister, the Presidency of the OSCE, does not bother to disguise the pro-Russian position.

Putin arrived in the thumb track occupied Crimea, where he said the members of the Russian Security Council that Ukraine was preparing attacks in the peninsula, because they do not want or can not fulfill Minsk agreements. The provocation of the Russian Federal Security Service proved to be unsustainable in the occupied Crimea.

It is hard to imagine a more telling example of shifting the blame on others, even more so - in the context of the deterioration of the situation in the Donbass.

Putin declared in the Crimea the appointment of Dmitry Livanov as a Special Representative for social and economic cooperation with Ukraine. This designation must demonstrate to the world community that the Kremlin is not completely configured to destroy the relations with our country. However, there is a nuance: the last few years, so the special representative was the Russian ambassador in Ukraine, but the failure of adventure with pushing to work in Kiev, Mikhail Babich has forced the Kremlin to look for ways to save face. Hence Putin's statement that Russia is not interested in folding contacts with Ukraine. Ukrainian officials continue to shy away from Putin's "fraternal embrace." Poroshenko did not rule out the Russian invasion, stressing that the Ukrainian military are willing to give it back. Klimkin said that the Russian-Ukrainian diplomatic relations retain their shape, but not the content, so Kiev will initiate burst. Consistent attention to the situation in Ukraine on the part of Joe Biden, once again became a permanent interlocutor Poroshenko, Ukrainian President informed the leaders of Germany and France on the Kremlin's effort to thwart settlement in Donbass formed the agenda of the last month.

Prognosis

Expert assessment “President Poroshenko’s First Year in Power”, DIF, 05.06.2015

General score for the first year in Office was 5.3 points out of 10 possible. The most successful, in the view of experts, is – foreign policy achievements (7.3 points). Also, mostly positive assessment the President received for cooperation with the Parliament (6.4 points) and government (5.8 points). Furthermore, the experts gave Poroshenko (5.5 points) for his actions in defence policy, the functions guarantor of the Constitution and the rights and freedoms of citizens (5.4 points) and interaction with society (4.6 points). As for progress in reforms most experts assessed this are in negative term with only 4 points and this bring fulfilment of his election promises, in the eyes of the experts to only 3.7 points.

Analysing the achievements of the President, the experts pointed first of all to his role in the formation of an international coalition of countries and organizations that supported Ukraine in its conflict with Russia. He also was praised for signing the Association Agreement with the EU. As for domestic policy, Poroshenko’s main achievements are: successful early parliamentary elections, freezing the acute phase of hostilities in the Donbas, preventing the spread of separatism in other regions of Ukraine, as well as enhancing the combat readiness of the Ukrainian armed forces. Some experts also mentioned Poroshenko efforts in preserving political stability in the country and some individual reform efforts. As for main failures during the first year, experts agreed on poor human resources policy (in particular in the context of the appointment of the Prosecutor General Vitaliy Yarema, Defense Minister Valery Gelety and head of the National Bank of Valerie Gontareva) and a very weak progress in implementing reforms expected by society. The inability of the President to perform one of the most high-profile campaign promises – to sell his business – has been the subject of criticism among the surveyed experts. In addition, some experts said Poroshenko failed to successfully complete the anti-terrorist operation despite his promises before the elections.

<https://ukraine-office.eu/en/05-06-2015-%D0%BE%D1%86%D1%96%D0%BD%D0%BA%D0%B0-expert-assessment-president-poroshenkos-first-year-in-power-dif/>

Statements of officials

Avakov calls Trump "dangerous" following statement on occupied Crimea, 01.08.2016

"U.S. presidential candidate Trump's shameless statement on the possible recognition of Crimea as Russian makes him a dangerous outcast. And he is dangerous for both Ukraine and the United States. An outcast, who indulges Putin's dictatorship, cannot be the guarantor of democratic freedoms in the United States and the world," Avakov wrote, commenting on Trump's recent statements on occupied Crimea.

<http://www.unian.info/politics/1446423-avakov-calls-trump-dangerous-following-statement-on-occupied-crimea.html>

Trump: Taking back Crimea would trigger World War III, 01.08.2016

The Republican presidential candidate assessed the geopolitical situation in Ukraine. World War III would break out if the United States were to intervene and take back Crimea from Russia on behalf of Ukraine, Donald Trump declared Monday, in his latest statement explaining his assessment of the geopolitical situation. Trump mocked media coverage of his interview with ABC's George Stephanopoulos that suggested he did not know that Russia had already invaded Crimea, which was a part of Ukraine, in 2014 and subsequently annexed it. "I know it exactly. Two years ago, approximately. OK? Approximately. It was taken during Obama's watch," Trump told a crowd in Columbus, Ohio.

http://www.politico.eu/article/trump-taking-back-crimea-would-trigger-world-war-iii/?utm_content=bufferc948b&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer

Ukrainian MP Nadiya Savchenko declares hunger strike again to boost release of Ukrainian captives in Donbas, 02.08.2016

"I have tried many methods to fight for these guys as the world fought for me. Now I will fight for them as was fighting for myself. One of the mechanisms to accelerate my release was a hunger strike to protest against the inactivity of the Ukrainian authorities. As of today, I again declare a hunger strike over the inaction of governments of the world regarding the liberation of Ukrainians from captivity", – she said at a press conference in Kyiv on Tuesday, Joinfo.ua reports with reference to Interfax-Ukraine.

"The hunger strike will continue until the date of a positive result," – added Savchenko.

http://joinfo.com/world/1018083_ukrainian-mp-nadiya-savchenko-declares-hunger-strike-again-to-boost-release-of-ukrainian-captives-in-donbas.html
<http://uaopposition.com/latest-news/savchenko-begins-indefinite-hunger-strike/>

Petro Poroshenko said a total of 415 Ukrainian paratroopers were killed in Donbas in fighting with a Russian aggressor, 02.08.2016

'A total of 415 paratroopers did not return from a mission, dying in fierce fighting with the Russian aggressor,' Poroshenko said during celebrations on the occasion of Airborne Forces Day at the Training Center of the Airborne Forces in Zhytomyr. The president said 2,295 airborne soldiers received state awards, seven of them marked with the title 'Hero of Ukraine.'

https://www.1492news.com/news/36812_1470142618

Visited occupied Donbas, Savchenko reveals, 02.08.2016

I've been there, but the representatives of the self-proclaimed "DPR" [Donetsk People's Republic] and "LPR" [Luhansk People's Republic] were not aware of this. I entered the territory beyond the contact line and talked to the people and heard their problems. I did not get too close to the cities of Donetsk and Luhansk," she stated at a press conference. When asked if she was ready to go to occupied Donbas to meet with the militant leaders, she replied: "I'm ready to work. I've already said a thousand times – I'm ready to go there – but have no desire for undue publicity. With cover or without it, I'm ready to go there to achieve results, as everybody is well aware that a human being's life is the most precious thing," she declared.

<http://www.unian.info/politics/1449442-visited-occupied-donbas-savchenko-reveals.html>

Obama: U.S. to continue to ensure Russia, militants stop terrorizing Ukraine, 03.08.2016

"And so, I don't think that it wildly sways what is a tough, difficult relationship that we have with Russia right now. But it's not going to stop us from still trying to pursue solutions, so that we can, for example, implement the Minsk Agreement and get Russia and those separatists to lay down arms and stop bullying Ukraine," he said, according to The White House. "I think we've already got a lot of differences with Russia on a whole bunch of issues. But I think that we've been able to try and stay focused on those areas where we still have common interest. There is an understanding that we have deep disagreements on issues like Ukraine, but perhaps, potentially, we have an interest in bringing an end to violence in Syria," he stated.

<http://uaopposition.com/latest-news/obama-u-s-continue-ensure-russia-militants-stop-terrorizing-ukraine/>

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2016/08/02/remarks-president-obama-and-prime-minister-lee-singapore-joint-press>

Provocateurs from DPR, LPR and Transnistria accompany religious march: Tandyt, 03.08.2016

"We knew that the provocateurs, who were involved, from DPR/LPR and Transnistria, were moving from Ternopil and Donetsk regions. We warned them gently. We controlled the situation there," Tandyt stated. He stressed that the clergy of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate was set up constructively. "We made it clear that we would strictly prevent any attempts to use the "procession" for any provocative purposes. I would say that we had an understanding from our volunteer battalions and patriotic movements and this situation was proof that people have a really big heart," Tandyt declared.

<http://www.unian.info/society/1450806-provocateurs-from-dpr-lpr-and-transnistria-accompany-religious-march-tandyt.html>

Statement by the delegation of Ukraine at the UN Security Council open debate on children and armed conflict, 04.08.2016

Ukraine appreciates the Malaysian initiative to hold an open debate on children and armed conflict. It is especially timely and symbolic considering that this year we mark the 20th anniversary of the creation of the mandate of the Special Representative of Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict. I also thank the Secretary-General for his introduction as well as all distinguished briefers for their contributions.

Ukraine commends the work of the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict. Ukraine also aligns itself with the statement of the EU to be delivered later today.

<http://ukraineun.org/en/press-center/96-statement-by-the-delegation-of-ukraine-at-the-un-security-council-open-debate-on-children-and-armed-conflict/>

Ukraine's ambassador: Trump's comments send wrong message to world, 04.08.2016

Even if Trump's comments are only speculative, and do not really reflect a future foreign policy, they call for appeasement of an aggressor and support the violation of a sovereign country's territorial integrity and another's breach of international law. In the eyes of the world, such comments seem alien to a country seen by partners as a strong defender of democracy and international order. The United States was among the 100 nations which supported the U.N. resolution "Territorial Integrity of Ukraine" not recognizing Russia's attempt to annex Crimea. A candidate for the presidency in any country ought to realize the challenges he or she will face to ensure consistency in foreign policy and uphold his or her country's international commitments. Ukraine — a strategic partner of the United States — entered the 1994 Budapest multilateral commitment, giving away the world's third largest nuclear arsenal in return for security assurances to its territorial integrity from three nuclear powers: the United States, the United Kingdom and Russia.

<http://thehill.com/blogs/pundits-blog/international/290411-ukraines-ambassador-trumps-comments-send-wrong-message-to>

Savchenko: Ukraine needs law on free possession of weapons to resolve situation, 05.08.2016

Ukrainian MP Nadia Savchenko believes that a law on free possession of weapons should be framed to resolve the situation in Ukraine. According to Savchenko, the guns will not simply disappear from society if permission to carry weapons freely is not provided. She added that if a person with a legal weapon commits a crime, he must necessarily pay the penalty. "There is a military proverb: if you cannot stop it, then you must control it. The law on weapons is now in such a state that we need to control what people already have in their hands," Savchenko told.

<http://uaposition.com/latest-news/savchenko-ukraine-law-free-possession-weapons-resolve-situation/>

Mobilization to be announced immediately if situation deteriorates in Donbas: Turchynov, 05.08.2016

"The number of mobilized soldiers was reduced by more than 2.5 times during the first six months. In the second half of this year, all mobilized military personnel have to return home," he said. "However, I want to emphasize, in case of serious deterioration on the front line, fresh mobilization will be announced immediately," NSDC Secretary Oleksandr Turchynov declared.

<http://uaposition.com/latest-news/mobilization-announced-immediately-situation-deteriorates-donbas-turchynov/>

<http://www.unian.info/war/1455008-turchynov-announces-two-scenarios-that-russia-can-implement-to-try-to-conquer-ukraine.html>

Poroshenko's administration: Ukraine on alert awaiting start of Russian army offensive, 07.08.2016

"In the north of Crimea, Russian troops are also carrying out their maneuvers, and for a while the movement at checkpoints was suspended on the initiative of the Russian side. This means the occupiers are conducting their maneuvers, and we need to be aware that at any moment, at any hour, they can start a large or small-scale offensive," Lysenko said.

<https://czncd.wordpress.com/2016/08/07/poroshenkos-administration-ukraine-on-alert-awaiting-start-of-russian-army-offensive/>

Savchenko announces agreement to swap two prisoners of war in Donbas, 08.08.2016

There is an agreement on the exchange of prisoners of war (POW) in Donbas under the "two for two" arrangement,. "At present, there is an agreement to swap two for two – and it must be done now," she said. "The president should do this by issuing a decree, instead of waiting for the courts, because it will then continue for six months and not be relevant anymore," Ukrainian MP Nadia Savchenko stated after coming out of the Presidential Administration.

<http://uaoposition.com/latest-news/savchenko-announces-agreement-swap-prisoners-war-donbas/>

Ukraine should legally recognize occupation by Russia of its territory – Syroid, 08.08.2016

Ukraine should legally protect areas in eastern Ukraine occupied presently by the Russian Federation, Deputy Chairwoman of the Verkhovna Rada Oksana Syroid has said. "The only way out is to take a legal decision, to lawfully recognize the occupation of some areas of Ukraine's eastern regions by Russia and to declare this," Syroid told.

She said if Ukraine fulfills the requirements of the Russian Federation [provides special status of the part of Donbas territory, a full amnesty to militants and holds of elections in Ukraine's uncontrolled part of Luhansk and Donetsk regions], it will lead to legal capitulation. "The fact that Russia insists on it is a plan of legal capitulation. This is not the implementation of the Minsk agreements, not a legal decision of the conflict. This is a very common capitulation. And this indicates that the path that was chosen was wrong," Syroid said.

<http://en.interfax.com.ua/news/general/362453.html>

Ukraine calls on world to prevent recurrence of genocide of Crimean Tatar people, 09.08.2016

"We urge the international community to condemn the deeds of self-proclaimed Russian authorities in Crimea that are violating the human rights of the indigenous population of the peninsula. 70 years ago the Crimean Tatars were forcibly deported from their homes, and this tragedy must not occur now," stressed in the statement of Ukraine's Ministry of Foreign Affairs published on the official site of the institution.

https://www.1492news.com/news/36916_1470746510

Ukraine does not expect Russian offensive in near future – Ukraine MP, 09.08.2016

"As for videos showing the movement of a rocket launching system, the deployment is carried out there [Russia] every day or every other day ... I can tell openly we do not anticipate war or attack by the Russian Federation on Ukraine in the near future. Putin has realized that continuing a military occupation of Ukraine does not bring the anticipated results for him. Putin's strategy relies on bargaining with Ukraine over the return of Donbas [to Ukraine] provided that we abandon all attempts to ever regain Crimea. He [Putin] does not plan to capture anything else," Gerashchenko stated.

<http://www.unian.info/politics/1461446-ukraine-does-not-expect-russian-offensive-in-near-future-ukraine-mp.html>

Putin accuses Ukraine of trying to provoke a new conflict over Crimea, 10.08.2016

Russia's FSB security service said two people were killed in clashes and its forces had dismantled a Ukrainian spy network inside Crimea. Kiev denied the assertions, calling them an attempt by Moscow to create an excuse to escalate towards a war. The Russian president accused Kiev of playing a dangerous game and said he saw no point in holding a new round of talks about the troubled peace process in eastern Ukraine on the sidelines of a G20 summit in China next month. "The people who seized power in Kiev ... have switched to terror tactics instead of searching for ways for a peaceful settlement," Putin told a news conference, saying Russia would not let such actions pass without a response. "The attempt to provoke an outbreak of violence, to provoke a conflict is nothing other than a desire to distract (Ukrainian) society from its problems," he added, calling Ukraine's actions "criminal."

<http://www.news1s.com/url.php?p=http://uk.reuters.com/article/ukraine-crisis-crimea-attack-int-idUKKCN10L2B1>

<http://www.news1s.com/url.php?p=http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/world-news/ukraine-accused-by-russia-of-terror-attacks-in-crimea-as-two-killed-in-clashes-34955730.html>

<http://www.news1s.com/url.php?p=http://news.sky.com/story/ukraine-accused-of-trying-to-storm-crimea-10530875>

<http://www.news1s.com/url.php?p=http://www.wsj.com/articles/putin-blames-ukraine-for-deaths-of-service-members-in-crimea-1470847486>

<http://www.unian.info/society/1463248-putin-comments-on-alleged-killing-of-russian-soldiers-in-crimea.html>

<http://www.timesofisrael.com/russia-claims-to-foil-crimea-terror-attacks-blames-kiev/>

<https://www.euractiv.com/section/europe-s-east/news/russia-says-ukraine-attempted-to-destabilise-crimea/>

Lutsenko: We have evidence proving Yefremov opened doors to war, 10.08.2016

Available evidence, the investigation has at its disposal, indicate the direct responsibility of the former head of the party of Regions parliamentary faction Oleksandr Yefremov for the outbreak of the armed conflict in eastern Ukraine, Prosecutor General Yuriy Lutsenko has said.

"Yefremov is probably the first, the only one figurant during my tenure toward whom I have an extremely negative attitude. According to the evidence, this man opened the door to the war in our country. I am convinced in it! And these are not my emotions, this is the evidence, which different people have provided during the investigation," Lutsenko said .

<http://en.interfax.com.ua/news/general/362931.html>

U.S. not to comment on Russia's reports about incident in Crimea, 11.08.2016

"We've seen the reports. We're going to refer you to the government of Ukraine for further information. I would note that we're also directly in touch with Ukrainians ourselves," Director of the Press Office of the U.S. Department of State Elizabeth Trudeau said at a daily press briefing in Washington, DC, on August 10. She reiterated that the U.S. position on Crimea remained unchanged. "Crimea is and will always be part of Ukraine. We condemn and call for an immediate end to the Russian occupation of Crimea, and our Crimea-related sanctions will remain in place until Russia returns the peninsula to Ukraine," she said. Trudeau also said that the U.S. sees dialogue as an instrument of the Minsk talks on Donbas.

<http://www.unian.info/politics/1463698-us-not-to-comment-on-russias-reports-about-incident-in-crimea.html>

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/dpb/2016/08/260946.htm>

Crimea incident yet another Kremlin-manufactured provocation, Ukraine says, 11.08.2016

Ukrainian Foreign Affairs Ministry has issued an official statement, condemning Russia's claims that Kyiv tried to organize terrorist attacks in Crimea. In the statement, the Ministry says it rejects all accusations and calls them 'completely groundless'. 'Under a made up pretext, the Kremlin is undertaking another hybrid special operation with the aim to justify its future aggressive actions against Ukraine. The occupying power does not limit itself to daily shellings in Donbas but also uses staged sabotage acts in Crimea in an attempt to shift responsibility for its own destructive actions on Ukraine and on our partners.', the message reads.

<http://uatoday.tv/politics/crimea-incident-yet-another-kremlin-manufactured-provocation-ukraine-says-714122.html>

<http://www.unian.info/politics/1463903-russian-provocations-in-crimea-resemble-beginning-of-war-with-georgia-kuleba.html>

<http://www.rferl.org/content/crimea-fsb-ukraine-incursion/27912985.html>

US: no evidence so far to corroborate Russia allegations over Crimea, 11.08.2016

Pyatt said U.S. sanctions in relation to Russia's annexation of Crimea would remain in place until the territory was returned to Ukraine. Russian President Vladimir Putin accused Kiev on Wednesday of using terrorist tactics to try to provoke a new conflict and destabilize Crimea, a region Moscow annexed from Ukraine in 2014. Russia said it had thwarted armed Ukrainian attempts to get saboteurs into the peninsula. "Russia has a record of frequently levying false accusations at Ukraine to deflect attention from its own illegal actions," Pyatt wrote. "US government has seen nothing so far that corroborates Russian allegations of a "Crimea incursion" & Ukraine has strongly refuted them."

<http://news.trust.org/item/20160811092154-osdzb>

<http://112.international/politics/pyatt-commented-russian-provocation-with-acts-of-terrorism-in-the-occupied-crimea-8310.html>

<http://www.unian.info/politics/1465226-nato-comments-on-events-in-crimea.html>

The Guardian: Putin might be ready for another military invasion, 11.08.2016

'Two years after Putin sent "little green men" – actually undercover Russian Special Forces soldiers – to overrun Crimea, another military offensive seems distinctly possible. Crimea's "parliament" said Ukraine had already launched an undeclared war. Ukraine says the supposed plot is FSB fiction'. Here's how the Guardian's Luke Harding offers his own view of the events that are going on in Crimea and the possible scenarios that might unfold in the near future due to the Kremlin's aggressive stance in this regard.

<http://112.international/politics/the-guardian-putin-might-be-ready-for-another-military-invasion-8294.html>

https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/aug/10/vladimir-putin-may-believe-time-is-ripe-for-another-invasion?CMP=share_btn_tw

Gerashchenko: Russia accusing Ukraine of all mortal sins to end sanctions, 11.08.2016

Russia is trying to get rid of international sanctions by claiming alleged Ukrainian provocations in the occupied territory of Crimea, Iryna Gerashchenko, first deputy chairperson of the Verkhovna Rada and Ukraine's representative in the humanitarian subgroup of the Trilateral contact group on Donbas settlement, posted. "The aim of the Russian Federation is to remove sanctions by any means, and it is therefore accusing Ukraine of all mortal sins, such as terrorism, sabotage, violations, non-fulfillment and delays. We have no reason to play along with this scenario," she said. Gerashchenko also said all political forces need to support the position of Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko regarding Russian provocations in connection with the "terrorist attacks" in Crimea.

<http://www.unian.info/politics/1463983-gerashchenko-russia-accusing-ukraine-of-all-mortal-sins-to-end-sanctions.html>

"No independent confirmation of Russian claims" - Mogherini's spokesperson, 11.08.2016

The European Union states there has been no independent confirmation of the claims made by the Russian authorities regarding Ukraine's involvement in the events in Crimea, reported referring to a statement of Maja Kocijancic, the spokesperson for the European External Action Service. "We have heard the claims by the Russian authorities about the alleged events in Armyansk (Crimea) as well as the statements of the Ukrainian authorities denying any involvement in any such alleged events and condemning in the strongest terms such allegations. It is also important to note that there has been no independent confirmation of the claims made by the Russian authorities," Kocijancic stated.

<http://uatoday.tv/politics/no-independent-confirmation-of-russian-claims-mogherini-s-spokesperson-714587.html>

<http://www.unian.info/politics/1465023-eu-issues-statement-concerning-events-in-crimea.html>

Statement by the High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini on the situation in Ukraine, 12.08.2016

I spoke this afternoon with the Ukrainian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Pavlo Klimkin, about the escalation in tensions between Ukraine and the Russian Federation.

The European Union condemns and does not recognise the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol by the Russian Federation. We continue to be unwavering in our support for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine. Any actions that could lead to a further escalation of the conflict must be avoided by all sides; a peaceful resolution of the conflict is the only possible solution. This includes eastern Ukraine, where we urge all parties to fully engage in the complete implementation of the Minsk agreements. The European Union and its Member States will continuously assess the situation, including at the level of the Political and Security Committee next Wednesday.

http://eeas.europa.eu/statements-eeas/2016/160812_03_en.htm

U.S. general calls on Russia to allow observers at military drills, 12.08.2016

Russia should allow observers, including Western journalists, to attend upcoming military drills that could again put Ukraine on edge just as Russian President Vladimir Putin has sharpened his rhetoric, the commander of the U.S. Army in Europe. The comments by Lieutenant General Ben Hodges came as Ukraine accuses Russia of amassing more than 40,000 troops in Crimea, a Ukrainian peninsula seized by Moscow in 2014, and on the Ukrainian border. Ukraine's U.N. ambassador, Volodymyr Yelchenko, warned this week that the Russian forces could reflect "some very bad intentions." Hodges declined to offer estimates of Russian forces or speculate about Putin's intentions ahead of pre-announced, large-scale exercises in Russia's south that are expected to include Crimea. But he said Russia could help address concerns by following the example of military drills led by the United States and its allies in Europe, to which Russia was allowed to send observers.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-russia-ukraine-idUSKCN10N2AO>

Crimean saboteurs not members of Ukrainian intelligence - Ukraine Defence Ministry, 13.08.2016

Ukraine's Defence Ministry has stated that those individuals who, according to the Russian security services, were part of so-called Crimean "subversive groups," had never been members of the Main Directorate of Intelligence. "Regarding some allegations by the Russian special services, the Ministry of Defense reports that the 37th battalion of the 56th brigade had never been part of the Main Directorate of Intelligence. Those persons who appeared in the reports are not employees of the Main Directorate of Intelligence of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine," according to the report issued by the Ministry of Defence.

<http://uatoday.tv/politics/ukraine-defense-ministry-says-crimean-saboteurs-not-members-of-ukrainian-intelligence-726597.html>

Minister Dion concerned by heightened tensions between Russia and Ukraine, 13.08.2016

The Honourable Stéphane Dion, Minister of Foreign Affairs, today issued the following statement: "I am concerned by the heightened tensions between Russia and Ukraine, and by the actions and rhetoric that are contributing to these tensions. We have seen no evidence to support recent Russian accusations. At this critical time, Canada urges all sides to intensify their diplomatic efforts and make every effort to avoid provocations.

"Canada continues to condemn Russia's violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and we are resolute in our position that we do not recognize the illegal annexation of Crimea. We also underscore, as have our partners and allies, the need for full implementation of the Minsk agreements, in order to end the violence and bring about a peaceful and durable solution in eastern Ukraine."

<http://news.gc.ca/web/article-en.do?nid=1111199&tp=980>

Lavrov confident that Russia-West relations will return to previous level, 15.08.2016

Russia has no intention of going into isolation, relations with the West will return to their previous level sooner or later, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said "Our dialogue with (German Foreign Minister) Frank-Walter (Steinmeier) has never been interrupted," he said. "I really appreciate the opportunity to communicate with my German counterpart candidly, frankly, without smoothing things over." "We do not make a tragedy out of this (the situation in the Russian-German relations - TASS)," Lavrov went on to say. "We have said on numerous occasions that taking offence, going into isolation is no choice of ours." "I am confident that our ties will return to a sustainable path sooner or later, the more so because their further degradation meets neither our countries' nor Europe's interests," he added.

<http://tass.ru/en/politics/894318>

<http://www.unian.info/politics/1469873-kremlin-can-escalate-situation-in-donbas-in-response-to-terrorism-in-crimea-media.html>

<http://tass.ru/en/politics/894353>

EU is ready to mediate between Ukraine and Russia, 16.08.2016

The EU, regarding the strained relations between Moscow and Kyiv, declares its readiness to play a mediating role, a representative of the European Commission in Brussels said. He added that the EU is ready to take such a step, if asked. European Commission representative noted the need for execution of the Minsk agreements to resolve the situation in the Donbas region.

<http://112.international/ukraine-and-eu/eu-is-ready-to-mediate-between-ukraine-and-russia-8506.html>

<http://uaposition.com/latest-news/eu-ready-mediate-russia-ukraine/>

Crimea provocation: Neither satellites, nor locals confirm Kremlin's allegations – Klimkin, 16.08.2016

Ukrainian Minister of Foreign Affairs Pavlo Klimkin says that there is no evidence either from satellites or from local residents in Crimea to support the Kremlin's allegations that Ukraine allegedly plotted terrorist attacks on the peninsula. "Russia accuses us of opening fire at the administrative border with the occupied Crimea. But how could the use of artillery systems remain unnoticed by a satellite and local residents. On the other hand, the Russian troops presently deployed in the occupied Crimea could launch an act of provocation at any moment, which could be used as a pretext for an attack on Ukraine, he said.

<http://uaposition.com/latest-news/crimea-provocation-satellites-locals-confirm-kremlins-allegations-klimkin/>

Poroshenko to Hollande, Merkel: Kremlin's allegations aim to discredit Ukraine, 16.08.2016

"Of particular concern is the fact that Russia has used the abovementioned provocation as a pretext for torpedoing of work in the Normandy format and the implementation of the Minsk agreements," the press service quoted Poroshenko. The Kremlin's recent provocation has caused a considerable aggravation of security in the region. The European leaders in turn assured their Ukrainian counterpart of assistance in de-escalation and expressed readiness to jointly work to improve the situation. The parties reaffirmed commitment to joint efforts to resolve the conflict in temporarily occupied Donbas and Crimea solely through political and diplomatic means and stressed the need for a consistent continuation of cooperation in the Normandy format.

<http://www.unian.info/politics/1473191-poroshenko-to-hollande-merkel-kremlins-allegations-aim-to-discredit-ukraine.html>

U.S. Senator Coons: No consensus in Senate on lethal aid to Ukraine, 16.08.2016

Head of a U.S. Congress delegation, says that he does not think that there is consensus in the U.S. Senate at the moment on providing lethal weapons to Ukraine. The Obama Administration was against supplying lethal aid to Ukraine due to concerns about the weakening of joint commitments with the European allies in the issue of tough sanctions against Russia, he said. It is important for the United States to hold the strong and united front with the European allies, but it is equally, if not more, important to maintain Ukraine's independence amid Russian aggression, he said. Coons said that during his recent visit to Ukraine he had heard several sincere and serious requests about strengthening U.S. support for Ukraine in defense, materiel, but also weapons. "And I'm going to address it seriously," he said.

<http://epeak.in/frame/?url=aHR0cDovL3VhcG9zaXRpb24uY29lL2xhdGVzdC1uZXdzL3U0cy1zZW5hdG9yLWNvb25zLWNvbnNlbnN1cy1zZW5hdGUibGV0aGFsLWFpZC11a3JhaW5lLw==&id=2621800>

Poroshenko's adviser: Fresh mobilization possible if fighting in Donbas worsens, 17.08.2016

"The seventh wave of mobilization will be declared if the situation at the front worsens. "If this happens, the mobilization will primarily concern reserve military troops, who have already fought in Donbas. They will stand faster in the ranks of the defenders at the front and will not require long training," he added. "As of today, we have not witnessed increased tension," Biryukov noted.

<http://www.unian.info/politics/1473866-poroshenkos-adviser-fresh-mobilization-possible-if-fighting-in-donbas-worsens.html>

Yanukovych wants face-to-face interrogation with Poroshenko, other senior officials, 18.08.2016

"An official petition was sent to the Prosecutor General's Office of Ukraine on Tuesday," The lawyer for Ukraine's former president Viktor Yanukovych, Vitaliy Serdiuk told. According to the document, Yanukovych wants to be questioned by the Prosecutor General's Office in court simultaneously with Poroshenko, former PM Arseniy Yatsenyuk, Verkhovna Rada Speaker Andriy Parubiy, Kyiv Mayor Vitaliy Klitschko and NSDC Secretary Oleksandr Turchynov. He also asks face-to-face interrogation with other officials whose names are not mentioned by the lawyers. It says that these are those individuals who were invited by the PGO as witnesses on the so-called Maidan case. "To ensure transparency of the process, Viktor Yanukovych insists on holding the interrogation in court under Part 1 of Article 225 of the Criminal Procedure Code of Ukraine," the lawyers said. "Only evidence received in court is decisive," Serdiuk added.

<http://www.unian.info/politics/1475656-yanukovych-wants-face-to-face-interrogation-with-poroshenko-other-senior-officials.html>

Putin says his new trade envoy won't "frighten" Ukrainian authorities, 20.08.2016

During a meeting with Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev in Crimea on Friday, Putin supported the premier's proposal that former Education Minister Livanov be appointed trade envoy to Ukraine. "It goes without saying that his experience can and must be used in other spheres. He will be offered a job as a special representative of the President of the RF on trade and economic ties with Ukraine," Putin continued. "He is not a military man. If our colleagues are frightened by people who once served in the army, they should know that Mr Livanov is a strictly civilian person with vast experience in government work. I think his personal and business qualities will help develop and revive trade and economic ties with our neighbor, which is vital for us," he added.

<http://ukraine.timesofnews.com/putin-says-his-new-trade-envoy-wont-frighten-ukrainian-authorities.html>

<http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/52728>

Clinton campaign manager suggests Donald Trump may be a 'puppet for the Kremlin', 21.08.2016

In an interview on Sunday on ABC's "This Week," Mook told host George Stephanopoulos that the Republican presidential nominee and his campaign's ties to Russian President Vladimir Putin's regime suggested the real-estate mogul could be appeasing Russian state interests. "We need Donald Trump to explain to us the extent to which the hand of the Kremlin is at the core of his campaign," Mook said. "There are real questions being raised about whether Donald Trump himself is just a puppet for the Kremlin in this race." Mook asserted that Trump's actions indicated a cozy relationship with Russia, noting Trump's favorable comments about Putin and the campaign's successful push to soften language in the Republican Party platform that would've mandated providing weapons to Ukraine.

<http://www.businessinsider.com/robby-mook-donald-trump-kremlin-puppet-2016-8?r=US&IR=T&IR=T>

I-Day parade to show Ukraine can maintain peace, tranquility: Poroshenko, 22.08.2016

Our parade is not only to demonstrate our power to our enemies. It is not just to show our allies and partners what we have done for two years, having built and created from scratch a new Ukrainian army, the new Armed Forces and other security forces. Foremost, it is a demonstration to the Ukrainian people that we have the tools and can protect the peace and tranquility of our state and our people," Poroshenko stated.

<http://www.unian.info/society/1481369-i-day-parade-to-show-ukraine-can-maintain-peace-tranquility-poroshenko.html>

<http://uk.makemefeed.com/2016/08/23/poroshenko-names-consolidation-of-ukrainian-citizens-his-priority-2271720.html>

Minsk agreements need urgent progress: Merkel, 23.08.2016

"The process continues. The Minsk agreements remain the basis for our ongoing efforts. They are recognized by all parties," she stated. "They contribute to the fact that it is possible to prevent even greater bloodshed. However, it is true that we need to make progress on an urgent basis," Merkel stressed. "Therefore, I will continue to work together with the presidents of France, Ukraine and Russia for the sake of peace in Ukraine," the German Chancellor added.

http://joinfo.com/world/1018377_minsk-agreements-need-urgent-progress-merkel.html

Normandy format may soon be "resuscitated": Poroshenko, 24.08.2016

"My talks with the leaders of Germany and France give reason to hope that in the near future, despite any statement, the Normandy format will be resuscitated," Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko told Ukrainian diplomats in Kyiv during a joint appearance with Polish President Andrzej Duda on Wednesday.

<http://uaposition.com/latest-news/normandy-format-resuscitated-poroshenko/>

<http://www.unian.info/war/1494666-poroshenkos-office-elaborates-how-ukraine-gets-ready-for-possible-russian-incursion.html>

OSCE Chairperson-in-Office Steinmeier on recent incidents targeting and restricting the freedom of movement of the OSCE Monitors in Ukraine, 24.08.2016

Germany's Foreign Minister, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, issued the following statement:

"It is with great concern that I have learned that again shots were fired in the direction of an SMM team near Novooleksandrivka and that another SMM patrol was held at gunpoint and searched near Lukove. Such assaults aiming at obstructing the work of the civilian, unarmed OSCE monitoring mission and its observers are completely unacceptable. The recent attacks add to a number of impediments to the work of the Mission, including numerous restrictions on their freedom of movement, which are well documented in the Mission's reports.

<http://www.osce.org/cio/260911>

Ukrainian President: Putin wants all of my country, 25.08.2016

On the day of his country's 25th anniversary of independence from the Soviet Union, Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko is warning that Russian President Vladimir Putin wants "the whole Ukraine" to be part of the "Russian Empire." "It is absolutely the same situation like Russian bombardment in Aleppo," he told CNN's Christiane Amanpour "They have only one purpose -- [the] world should be less stable, less secured." Had you asked him in 2013, Poroshenko said,

if it would have been possible for Russia to "occupy the Crimea," he would have said "no, this is not possible -- there is some red line, and Putin [will] not cross this line." "If you asked me in January, year 2014," he went on, if it was possible that "thousands of Russian regular troops will penetrate on Ukrainian territory in the east of my country in July and August," I would have said, "no, this is not possible." With those moves, he said, the world "is completely changed." "Russian aggression completely destroyed the post-war global security system," he said. Twenty-five years after independence, he said, the fight goes on -- "fighting for freedom, fighting for democracy, fighting for sovereignty and territorial integrity."

<http://edition.cnn.com/2016/08/24/world/ukraine-amanpour-poroshenko/index.html>

Tombinski warns against introducing "mirror" trade sanctions against Russia by Ukraine, 25.08.2016

Tombinski pointed to Ukraine's role as a transit country in trade. From a legal point of view, the ambassador said, if the country is a member of the World Trade Organization, all steps will be checked in terms of compliance with the common law. Tombinski said the EU agreed that Russia's latest restrictions on Ukrainian trade and transit to Central Asian countries, mainly to Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, had openly breached international trade rule. At the same time, he said that Ukraine's decision to respond with "mirror" trade sanctions would not be the right move, since Ukraine would also be accused of violating the rules.

<http://uaposition.com/latest-news/tombinski-warns-introducing-mirror-trade-sanctions-russia-ukraine/>

Steinmeier Calls For New Arms Deal With Russia To Avoid Accidental War, 26.08.2016

Germany's foreign minister is calling for a new arms control deal with Moscow as intensified military exercises by Russia and NATO have raised concerns that a war could inadvertently be triggered. Frank-Walter Steinmeier said that while Russia has since 2014 violated the bonds of trust built up over decades as well as basic principles of peace, "we must all be united in the desire to avoid a further twist in the escalating spiral." In 2014, Russia illegally seized Crimea from Ukraine and began backing separatists fighting Kyiv's forces in eastern Ukraine. A new arms control process would offer a "proven means for transparency, risk avoidance, and trust building," he said. "We want a structured dialogue with all partners who carry responsibility for the security of our continent," perhaps working through the OSCE, he said.

<http://www.rferl.org/content/steinmeier-calls-for-new-arms-deal-russia-avoid-accidental-war/27947090.html>

U.S. concerned about sudden combat readiness check of Russian armed forces, 26.08.2016

The Pentagon is deeply concerned about the escalation of violence in Donbas and the proximity of Russian military units to Ukraine, Baldanza said. It is also known to Pentagon that Russia has used military exercises to conceal the deployment of its troops in Ukraine, she said. The U.S. Department of Defense has seen reports about the beginning of surprise drills by the Russian military, and it hopes that Russia will meet all obligations and will be transparent about the scope and nature of that activity, as noted in the report.

<http://uaposition.com/latest-news/u-s-concerned-sudden-combat-readiness-check-russian-armed-forces/>

Putin behind Russia's provocations in Crimea: Crimean Tatar leader, 26.08.2016

Head of Crimean Tatar Mejlis and Ukrainian MP Refat Chubarov stated that Russian President Vladimir Putin was behind Russia's provocations in Crimea. "Referring to a pre-arranged provocation, he stated that the 'Normandy Four' format would not be effective because Ukraine was acting as a terrorist state. It is us, on our land!" Chubarov said. "As far as I know, after these events began, there were no contacts between the Russian president and the president of Ukraine. And Putin's talk about the alleged provocation was rude and arrogant. It is understandable that our president has denied all these allegations and said that Russia has been looking for a pretext for more subversive actions, possibly for stronger military aggression. According to sources, contacts between administrations of the two presidents have been frozen," Chubarov said.

<http://uatoday.tv/politics/putin-behind-russia-s-provocations-in-crimea-crimean-tatar-leader-734962.html>

Slovakian leader renews call for ending EU sanctions on Russia, 27.08.2016

Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico renewed his call for the European Union to end sanctions against Russia after a meeting this week with President Vladimir Putin in Moscow. Slovakia holds the rotating EU presidency and will host a meeting of the bloc's foreign ministers next week. He is one of several central European leaders opposed to continuing sanctions on Russia. The EU imposed energy, financial, and defense sanctions on Moscow after it annexed Ukraine's Crimea in March 2014. The sanctions have been extended repeatedly and are due to expire at the end of January. "Personally, I think it is time to view the sanctions rationally and to say that they harm both the EU and Russia," Fico said on Facebook on August 26. "We agreed with Vladimir Putin that our common pursuit is to revive our mutual trade again." Slovakia imports almost all its gas and oil from Russia, as well as nuclear fuel to generate two power plants. It exports cars to Russia.

<http://www.rferl.org/content/slovakia-premier-fico-renews-call-end-european-union-sanctions-russia/27949172.html>

Gerashchenko comments on 1st meeting in Minsk after Crimean provocation, 27.08.2016

Ukraine's representative in the humanitarian subgroup of the Trilateral contact group on Donbas settlement, Iryna Gerashchenko wrote. "It was the first meeting after the Crimean provocation staged by the Russian Federation ... After which Putin angrily stated that the 'Normandy format' meeting would make little sense. So yesterday, the 'Normandy format' was exposed to harsh attack and criticism from the Kremlin puppets (and not only they)". "This is an alarming signal, and I think the leaders of the Normandy format should pay attention to it, because everything that is happening looks like the Kremlin's pre-arranged scenario," she added.

<http://uaposition.com/latest-news/gerashchenko-comments-1st-meeting-minsk-crimean-provocation/>

Lithuania formin says EU sanctions on Russia should stay, 30.08.2016

EU sanctions on Russia over the conflict in Ukraine should stay in place as long the situation on the ground does not improve, Lithuania's foreign minister said on Monday, dismissing calls from EU's rotating president Slovakia for them to be lifted. Slovakia's prime minister, Robert Fico, called on the EU to end the sanctions after meeting President Vladimir Putin in Moscow, saying they had harmed both the EU and Russia but influenced "absolutely nothing". "My immediate reaction to comments like that is that if we have reached absolutely nothing, then let's add more sanctions," Lithuania's Linas Linkevicius told Reuters during a visit to Norway.

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-ukraine-crisis-lithuania-idUKKCN1141NN>

Dzhemilev: West may pay dearly for flexibility in matters related to the occupation of Crimea, 31.08.2016

«The Russians sentenced my son Khayser to three and half years in prison and took him immediately from Crimea to prison in Astrakhan. Afterwards I've heard Putin wants me to meet, and if the conversation is «efficient» I will be opened the way back to my homeland and my son will be released at once. In return I asked whether «Tzar» had taken hostages my son? If yes, thus he is the terrorist. And we don't talk to the terrorists», said Mustafa Dzhemilev. The leader of the Crimean Tatar people noted that according to the Russian politician Grigoriy Yavlinskiy, «Putin was able to act only two ways used to while working at the security services. Either he enlists or manages the special operations against the non-recruited people». «In my case this rule has been worked but they couldn't enlist me thus I am persecuted», said Mustafa Aga.

<http://15minut.org/news/163001-dzhemilev-west-may-pay-dearly-for-flexibility-in-matters-related-to-the-occupation-of-crimea>

Steinmeier: the key to returning to the G8 is in Moscow, 31.08.2016

"The conflicts in Syria and Ukraine demonstrate our interest not to exclude Russia from close cooperation between the world's leading economies," the minister said in an interview posted on the website of the German Publishers Association on Wednesday. "If substantial progress is made in eastern Ukraine and at the talks on the ceasefire in Syria, the G7 member-countries will be able to discuss this issue with Moscow. The key to returning to the G8 is in Moscow."

<http://tass.com/world/896734>

U.S. explains unwillingness to restore relations with Russia, 31.08.2016

The U.S. doubts the possibility of returning to "business as usual" with Russia at this stage. "Now, there's been some progress towards the implementation of Minsk, and that's a good thing – progress by both sides. There needs to be more," U.S. State Department spokesperson John Kirby said at a daily press briefing in Washington, DC, on August 30. "Nothing's changed about our view that it's still not time for 'business as usual' with Russia across a wide variety of sectors given the concerns that we still have about their actions in Ukraine, the occupation of Crimea, and the tensions that still exist as we try to get Minsk implemented," he remarked.

<http://uaposition.com/latest-news/u-s-explains-unwillingness-restore-relations-russia/>
<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/dpb/2016/08/261362.htm#CUBA>

Actions of Ukrainian Authorities

Rada authorizes arrest of two judges, 01.07.2015

The decision to arrest Medentsev, who is suspected of taking a UAH 570,000 bribe for a decision in favor of a certain company, was supported by 265 out of 324 MPs registered in the session hall. Medentsev is now on the wanted list.

The decision on Chernushenko's arrest was backed by 273 out of 340 MPs registered in the session hall. As reported earlier, on June 24, the Prosecutor General's Office reported Chernushenko was suspected of committing serious criminal offenses.

Prosecutor General Viktor Shokin initiated that he should be removed by the High Qualification Commission of Judges of Ukraine from performing his duties and appealed to the parliament with a request for authorizing the arrest of Chernushenko.

<http://www.unian.info/politics/1095641-rada-authorizes-arrest-of-two-judges.html>

SBU prevents blast at railway in Lviv region, one law enforcement officer injured, 10.08.2016

In a special operation, officers found and detained five members of the terrorist group that planned to simultaneously blow up the railway tracks going in three different directions from the regional center. One terrorist was detained while laying explosives on a bridge near the village of Dubliany in Lviv region. He opened fire while trying to resist arrest, as a result of which one officer was injured. The terrorist was wounded when law enforcement officers fired in retaliation. The lives of the officer and the terrorist are not under threat. While searching the detainees, secret service officers seized a large number of firearms, explosives and components for their production, in particular: RPG-7 and RPG-26 grenade launchers, RGO, F-1 and RGD-5 grenades, as well as five kilograms of explosives IX 25, 600 grams of TNT, three electric detonators, three pistols and a large quantity of ammunition of various calibers. Searches and other urgent investigative actions are underway.

<http://www.unian.info/society/1457868-sbu-prevents-blast-at-railway-in-lviv-region-one-law-enforcement-officer-injured.html>

Ukraine buys Russian buses worth UAH 78 million, 10.08.2016

The report says the buses are produced in Russia and imported from the aggressor country. They are later re-equipped in Ukraine into school buses. Volunteers, who have been investigating shady dealings, have reported about 65 buses that were purchased worth a total of UAH 78 million. Ukraine's Ministry of Education had stated that the Ukrainian legislation did not impose any restrictions on purchases of Russian-produced transport vehicles for the needs of Ukrainian schools. However, the activists have already appealed to the Security Service of Ukraine and the National Security and Defense Council demanding to put an end to those operations. After all, Pavlov Autobus Plant (PAZ), the leading manufacturer of buses in Russia, belongs to a large holding that also produces military equipment for the Russian army, the report noted.

<http://uaposition.com/latest-news/ukraine-buys-russian-buses-worth-uah-78-million/>

Ukraine border guards recommend not traveling to occupied Crimea after FSB provocation, 11.08.2016

The State Border Guard Service of Ukraine recommends not traveling to the temporarily occupied territory of Crimea due to the tense situation on the peninsula, which has been escalated by the Russian occupiers, Ukrainian Border Guard Service press secretary Oleh Slobodyan said.

"Taking into account the tense situation on the peninsula, which has been escalated by the occupiers in recent days, the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine urges citizens to refrain from traveling to occupied Crimea unless there is urgent need," he stated.

<http://www.unian.info/society/1464486-ukraine-border-guards-recommend-not-traveling-to-occupied-crimea-after-fsb-provocation.html>

Poroshenko puts all units on border with Crimea, in Donbass on combat alert, 11.08.2016

The move comes in the wake of alleged attempted terrorist attacks in Crimea. Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) reported on August 10 that it had prevented terrorist acts in Crimea that had been prepared by the Main Intelligence Department of the Ukrainian Defense Ministry. One FSB officer was killed during the operation to detain the terrorists. Later a serviceman of Russia's Defense Ministry was killed as the saboteurs made a second attempt of intrusion. Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Wednesday that Russia would do everything to ensure the security of citizens and infrastructure in Crimea. Ukraine's President Pyotr Poroshenko and the Foreign Ministry have rejected Moscow's accusations calling the alleged saboteurs' detention a provocation.

<http://tass.ru/en/world/893761>

Readout of Vice President Biden's Call With President Poroshenko of Ukraine, 12.08.2016

Vice President Biden spoke today with President Poroshenko and discussed recent tensions on the Crimean Peninsula, which is occupied by Russian forces in contravention of international law. The Vice President urged President Poroshenko to do his part to avoid escalating tensions. The Vice President noted that we have urged the Russian side to do the same. Both leaders reiterated their strong support for political and diplomatic means to restore Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, in particular through full implementation of the Minsk Agreements. The leaders also reviewed recent progress towards fulfilling IMF conditions for disbursing the next tranche of financial assistance, and agreed on the importance of recent Ukrainian efforts to continue critical anti-corruption reforms.

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2016/08/12/readout-vice-president-bidens-call-president-poroshenko-ukraine-0>

Ukrainian Interior Minister Avakov announces large-scale "cleansing" among generals, 17.08.2016

Ukrainian Interior Minister Arsen Avakov has submitted for approval a draft proposing a reduction in the posts of generals. "The proposed cuts: the State Border Guard Service (with about 42,000 people), including 74 generals, will have 14 people remaining; the National Guard (46,000 people), including 38 generals, will have 18 people remaining; the Emergency Service (73,000 people), including 27 generals, will keep 21 people; the National Police and the Ministry of Internal Affairs (175,000 people), including 57 generals, will have 42 people left," he wrote. In total, the posts and ranks of generals will be reduced from 194 to 95 among all paramilitary formations and law enforcement bodies which are part of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

<http://uaposition.com/latest-news/ukrainian-interior-minister-avakov-announces-large-scale-cleansing-generals/>

Poroshenko vetoed the amnesty for ATO participants in 2016, 17.08.2016

President of Ukraine Petro Poroshenko vetoed the bill #4255, announcing amnesty for the condemned ATO participants. This is proved by information on of the draft law on the site of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. Specifically, it is stated that the document was returned by the President with his proposals on it's last stage. Thus, the document proposed to release convicts, who defended the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, took part in the ATO and gained the status of combat veteran.

<http://112.international/politics/poroshenko-vetoed-the-amnesty-for-ato-participants-in-2016-8566.html>

Ukraine complains to UN about Putin's visit to Crimea, 20.08.2016

Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations Volodymyr Yelchenko during a meeting with Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations discussed a visit of Russian President Vladimir Putin to annexed Crimea. This has been reported by the mission's press service. The diplomat called the Russian leader's visit to the peninsula illegal. He also focused on strengthening the concentration of Russian troops along the border.

<http://www.ukrinform.net/rubric-politics/2069849-ukraine-complains-un-of-putins-visit-to-crimea.html>

Poroshenko dismisses Ukrainian Ambassador to Czech Republic following scandal, 21.08.2016

This was stated in a presidential decree dated August 19. As noted earlier, Czech media reported that Zaychuk sought to post bail to free former adviser to the fugitive ex-president of Ukraine, Ali Fayad, who has remained in a Czech prison since April 2014 on terrorism-related charges. According to a letter by the Czech Minister of Justice, Zaychuk offered to post bail and inquired about the required amount, noting that Fayad "might not have committed any crime." On March 18, Borys Zaychuk submitted his letter of resignation.

<http://uaposition.com/latest-news/poroshenko-dismisses-ukrainian-ambassador-czech-republic-scandal/>

NABU to analyze Avakov's phone calls in purchases of backpacks for Ukraine army, 21.08.2016

Kyiv's Solomiansky district court has issued a ruling allowing detectives from the National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine (NABU) to review phone calls made by Ukraine's Interior Minister, Arsen Avakov, in a case related to the purchasing of backpacks for the Interior Ministry from a company which is believed to be connected to his son, Oleksandr.

<http://uk.makemefeed.com/2016/08/22/nabu-to-analyze-avakov-s-phone-calls-in-purchases-of-backpacks-for-ukraine-army-2257898.html>

Telephone conversation with Angela Merkel and Francois Hollande, 23.08.2016

The three leaders discussed the internal Ukrainian crisis and the possibility of implementing the Minsk agreements by coordinating political and security measures. They focused on the importance of formalising the special status for Donbass, implementing a constitutional reform and amnesty, as well as holding local elections. All these issues should be coordinated within the Contact Group, where Kiev can talk directly with Donetsk and Lugansk. The leaders also expressed concern over persisting instability at the contact line and numerous ceasefire violations and pointed to the need for strict compliance with the ceasefire agreement, the withdrawal of heavy weapons under the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission's control and the adoption of measures to further de-escalate tensions, including by disengaging the armed groups and creating demilitarised zones. President of Russia Vladimir Putin updated his colleagues on the crude provocation by Ukraine, which sent a group of subversives in early August to stage terrorist attacks in Russia. Kiev's use of such forceful measures is directly harming the Minsk process and cooperation within the Normandy format.

<http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/52749>

President of Ukraine discussed the escalation of the situation in Donbas with NATO Secretary General, 25.08.2016

The Head of State informed about the escalation of the situation in Donetsk and Luhansk regions, and the growing number of Russian provocations in the occupied Donbas and Crimea. Petro Poroshenko also called for keeping the issue of the Russian aggression against Ukraine on the agenda of the North Atlantic Alliance. Jens Stoltenberg underscored the importance of full implementation of the Minsk agreements. The Parties discussed the status of implementation of the 'Integrated package of NATO assistance to Ukraine' approved at the Alliance Summit in Warsaw. The President expressed hope that the package will help to modernize the Ukrainian army to the NATO standards.

<http://www.president.gov.ua/en/news/prezident-ukrayini-obgovoriv-eskalaciyu-situaciyi-na-donbasi-37983>

Ukrainian Prosecutor`s Office publishes evidence of Putin adviser`s involvement in war in Ukraine, 26.08.2016

The most important aspect of these conversations are the dates on which they were reportedly recorded, i.e. in late February and early March 2014. They imply that not only the so-called "civil war" in Ukraine was triggered by Russia. The social conflict that preceded the use of guns had also already been secretly orchestrated, guided and financed from Moscow, as I suspected in my September 2014 comment "In Defense of Conspirology" for PONARS Eurasia. Most Ukrainian presentations of these audio documents miss the fine distinction between Moscow's "help" to the instigators of the "civil war" starting in April 2014, and Moscow's earlier "help" in organizing and financing the "Russian Spring" of February-March 2014 that preceded the actual war. For the Western public, that is an important difference as it concerns the nature and origins of the entire conflict.

<https://toinformistoinfluence.com/2016/08/26/ukrainian-prosecutors-office-publishes-evidence-of-putin-advisers-involvement-in-war-in-ukraine/>
<http://www.ponarseurasia.org/node/7274>
<http://euromaidanpress.com/2016/08/23/ukraine-publishes-video-proving-kremlin-directed-separatism-in-ukraine/>
<http://spps-jspps.autorenbetreuung.de/files/07-mitrokhin.pdf>
<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09668136.2016.1176994>
<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/09668136.2016.1176994>

Terrorism / Separatism

Russian proxies attack Ukraine 85 times in last 24 hours, 01.08.2016

Combined Russian-separatist forces attacked Ukrainian army positions in eastern Ukraine 85 times in the past 24 hours, including 37 times in the Donetsk sector, 35 times in the Luhansk sector and 13 times in the Mariupol sector, according to the ATO HQ press center.

<http://www.onlinenewsplanet.com/news/2726716/russian-proxies-attack-ukraine-85-times-in-last-24-hours.html>

Russian proxies attack Ukraine 54 times in last 24 hours, hot spot in Donetsk sector, 02.08.2016

Combined Russian-separatist forces attacked Ukrainian army positions in eastern Ukraine 54 times in the past 24 hours, including 36 times in the Donetsk sector, 14 times in the Mariupol sector and four times in the Luhansk sector, according to the ATO HQ press center.

<http://www.kyivpost.com/article/content/ukraine-politics/unian-russian-proxies-attack-ukraine-54-times-in-last-24-hours-hot-spot-in-donetsk-sector-420076.html>

Russian proxies attack Ukraine 71 times in last 24 hours, use banned weapons, 03.08.2016

"In the Donetsk sector, the militants do not stop armed provocations between the towns of Krasnohorivka, Avdiyivka and Horlivka. The situation was most tense in the village of Zaitseve and Krasnohorivka. The Russian-backed mercenaries used mortars of various calibers, grenade launchers, rocket-propelled grenades, heavy machine guns and small arms. They also fired from infantry fighting vehicles and used banned heavyweight tube artillery systems," the press center said.

<http://www.unian.info/war/1450246-russian-proxies-attack-ukraine-71-times-in-last-24-hours-use-banned-weapons.html>

Russian militants preparing offensive at Svitlodarsk bridgehead: Ukraine intelligence, 04.08.2016

"The intelligence service has detected signs of enemy preparations for combat operations in the Donetsk and Sloviansk directions (Svitlodarsk bridgehead). From August 4 to 8, there is threat of an intensified offensive or raid actions to expand controlled areas," the report read. The militants also continue to conduct reconnaissance. In particular, the intelligence service spotted a reconnaissance group of the 9th separate Assault Marine Regiment (Novoazovsk) of the 1st Armed Corps (Donetsk) of the Russian Armed Forces. Sabotage and reconnaissance groups are also scheduled to make an appearance in the following settlements: Maiorsk, Zaitseve, Avdiyivka and Opytne, as well as Pisky, Krasnohorivka and Maryinka.

<http://uaposition.com/latest-news/russian-militants-preparing-offensive-at-svitlodarsk-bridgehead-ukraine-intelligence/>

Russian proxies attack Ukraine 42 times in last 24 hours, 05.08.2016

Combined Russian-separatist forces attacked Ukrainian army positions in eastern Ukraine 42 times in the past 24 hours, including 21 times in the Donetsk sector, 19 times in the Mariupol sector and twice in the Luhansk sector, according to the ATO HQ press center.

<http://www.breakingnewspoint.com/story/3427228/russian-proxies-attack-ukraine-42-times-in-last-24-hours.html>

Maryinka crossing post temporarily closed due to shelling – Border guards, 06.08.2016

"Today, at 6 a.m., at the time the Donetsk-Kurakhovo road corridor was to be opened, militants began shelling the Maryinka control post. Fire was launched from 5.45mm and 7.62mm caliber small arms at the checkpoint in the direction of the forest sector near the village of Oleksandrivka, located in the uncontrolled territories," the report said. No casualties have been reported due to the shelling. "In order to avoid civilian casualties, the crossing of individuals and vehicles has been temporarily suspended," the State Border Guard Service announced. It was also reported that within the past few days, illegal armed groups attacked the Maiorsk checkpoint. Witnesses said a sniper fired in the direction of Horlivka.

<http://www.unian.info/war/1456363-maryinka-crossing-post-temporarily-closed-due-to-shelling-border-guards.html>

<http://uk.makemefeed.com/2016/08/08/donbas-war-update-ukraine-reports-54-attacks-in-last-day-2082742.html>

Militant leader seriously injured as his car explodes in Luhansk, 06.08.2016

Luhansk militant leader Igor Plotnitsky has reportedly been released from hospital after assassination attempt. The source also said Plotnitsky would be able to get back to work in the coming days, "most likely even on Monday." According to doctors at the hospital where Plotnitsky was taken for medical care, the LPR leader is listed in serious condition, Kiva wrote on Facebook. "After the explosion, Plotnitsky's SUV was loaded onto a tow truck and taken to the hospital, from where Plotnitsky was transferred, which implies that the wounds had been very serious and no one dared to pull him from the exploded car at the scene," Kiva wrote.

<http://uatoday.tv/crime/militant-leader-seriously-injured-as-his-car-explodes-in-luhansk-710882.html>

Russia massing tanks near Crimean Dzhankoy at border with mainland Ukraine – witnesses, 07.08.2016

Witnesses report large amounts of Russian military hardware have been massed near the towns of Dzhankoy and Armyansk in Crimea's north, close to the administrative border with mainland Ukraine. "Witnesses report that large groups of Russian military hardware have been massed near Armyansk and Dzhankoy. Dzhankoy has been cordoned off by troops with tanks and other equipment," Deputy Chairman of the Crimean Mejlis Nariman Dzhelalov wrote.

<http://uatoday.tv/news/russia-massing-tanks-near-crimean-dzhankoy-at-border-with-mainland-ukraine-witnesses-711407.html>

Ukraine-Crimea checkpoints resume operations, 07.08.2016

"At about 14:30 local time, the Russian occupying authorities resumed operations at the checkpoints in occupied territory in Crimea, which are over against the Kalanchak and Chaplynka checkpoints [in Ukraine]. Yet, they handle only those persons and vehicles that are heading for Crimea," the border guards said. Those individuals and cars that want to leave the occupied peninsula are still blocked, they said. Thus, the Ukrainian State Border Service advises citizens that plan trips in that direction against traveling unless it is absolutely necessary. However, the Chonhar checkpoint whose operations resumed at about 11:00 local time on Sunday, August 7, handles traffic in both directions, it added.

<http://uaposition.com/latest-news/ukraine-crimea-checkpoints-resume-operations/>

Russian proxies attack Ukraine 47 times in last day, use artillery in Shyrokyne, 09.08.2016

Combined Russian-separatist forces attacked Ukrainian army positions in eastern Ukraine 47 times in the past 24 hours, including 20 times in the Mariupol sector, 16 times in the Donetsk sector and 11 times in the Luhansk sector, according to the ATO HQ press center.

<http://www.businessnewsworld.com/news/russian-proxies-attack-ukraine-47-times-in-last-day-use-artillery-in-shyrokyne.html>

Russian proxies attack Ukraine 61 times in last day amid escalation, 10.08.2016

Militants launched 45 shells from 122mm artillery systems on the Ukrainian positions in the town of Maryinka, as well as mortars and grenade launchers on the town of Krasnohorivka, and the villages of Pavlopil, Lopaskyne, Vodiane, and Novotroyitske. The occupiers fired from heavy machine-guns on the villages of Shyrokyne and Starohnativka. Their armored vehicles were engaged in Shyrokyne, Starohnativka, and Maryinka. In addition, enemy snipers opened fire thrice near Maryinka and the village of Hnutove. Ukrainian troops successfully repelled an attack by an enemy sabotage and reconnaissance group that stormed the fortified positions of the defenders of Starohnativka on Sunday after midnight. There were no casualties among Ukrainian soldiers.

<http://www.unian.info/war/1457756-russian-proxies-attack-ukraine-61-times-in-last-day-amid-escalation.html>

Witnesses share footage of Russia army trucks moving across occupied Crimea, 09.08.2016

According to the captions, the convoy moves along a detour road between Simferopol and Yalta. "Russia's Bastions [mobile coastal defense missile systems] are being relocated to the Starokrymsky training range," a witness comments in the second video clip. The K-300P Bastion-P (NATO reporting name SS-C-5 Stooage) is a Russian mobile coastal defense missile system. The main role of the Bastion-P is to engage surface ships, including carrier battle groups, convoys, and landing craft. A typical battery is composed of one or two command and control vehicles based on the Kamaz 43101 6×6 truck, one support vehicle, four launcher vehicles based on the MZKT-7930 8×8 chassis, each operated by a three-man crew and holding two missiles, and four loader vehicles. Launcher vehicles can be located up to 25 km (16 mi) away from the C2 vehicles.

<http://www.unian.info/war/1459998-witnesses-share-footage-of-russia-army-trucks-moving-across-occupied-crimea.html>

Situation deteriorating on border with Crimea: Occupiers block exit to mainland Ukraine, 09.08.2016

Occupiers have halted operations at the Chonhar checkpoint in Crimea, according to the Ukrainian State Border Guard Service. "The supervisory bodies of the country-occupier have prepared documents only for those persons who are traveling to the temporary-occupied peninsula, and only at the Chaplynka checkpoint," the report read.

The Kalanchak checkpoint remains completely blocked, in both directions, for people and vehicles. The situation at the control entry and exit checkpoints along the administrative border with the temporarily occupied territory of Crimea has, therefore, worsened, the State Border Guard Service said.

<http://uaposition.com/latest-news/situation-deteriorating-border-crimea-occupiers-block-exit-mainland-ukraine/>

Ukraine accuses Russia of deploying nuclear weapons carriers near border, 09.08.2016

Russian and Ukrainian forces are reportedly beefing up their forces in the border region even as Kiev accuses Moscow of mobilising nuclear weapons carriers. The military build-up has come on the heels of Kiev saying that Russia could invade Ukraine "at any moment". Speaking to reporters during a media briefing, Vadym Skibitskyi, spokesperson for the intelligence wing of the Ukrainian defence ministry, said: "We do not rule out such a probability [the deployment of nuclear weapons in Crimea]. There are indeed carriers of nuclear weapons in the territory of the Crimean peninsula.

<http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/ukraine-accuses-russia-deploying-nuclear-weapons-carriers-near-border-1575238>

Ukraine reports 67 attacks in Donbas in last 24 hours, 11.08.2016

Combined Russian-separatist forces attacked Ukrainian army positions in eastern Ukraine 67 times in the past 24 hours, including 32 times in the Mariupol sector, according to the ATO HQ press center.

<http://www.morningnewstime.com/update/2433395/ukraine-reports-67-attacks-in-donbas-in-last-24-hours.html>

Militants fired two checkpoints in Donbas - State Border Guard Service, 11.08.2016

Illegal armed groups opened fire on a checkpoint "Stanitsa Luhanska" and control post "Mariinka" yesterday after 9 p.m. It is also noted that militants were shelling control post "Mariinka" from small arms and rifle-attached grenade launchers from the village of Oleksandrivka, which is under the militants' control, during almost an hour. Apart from that, terrorists fired on the checkpoint "Stanitsa Luhanska". The Shelling from the small arms and AGL-17 (automatic grenade launcher) were carried out from the side of the mountain of Prince Ihor. "None of the Ukrainian defenders was injured," - says in a statement.

<http://112.international/politics/militants-fired-two-checkpoints-in-donbas-state-border-guard-service-8296.html>

Ukraine reports 61 attacks in Donbas in last 24 hours, 13.08.2016

The situation was most tense in the Mariupol sector, where occupiers fired grenade launchers, heavy machine guns, anti-aircraft guns, small arms, and mortars. In addition, snipers were active. In the Donetsk sector, Russia's hybrid military force fired 82mm mortar shells, heavy machine guns, grenade launchers, and rocket-propelled grenades.

<http://www.unian.info/war/1468011-ukraine-reports-61-attacks-in-donbas-in-last-24-hours.html>

Epicenter of Donbas fighting shifts closer to Mariupol, with two skirmishes in past day, 14.08.2016

The epicenter of fighting in Donbas has shifted closer to the Ukrainian controlled strategic port city of Mariupol, whose sector has seen 27 attacks in the past day, according to the ATO HQ press center.

<http://uk.makemefeed.com/2016/08/15/epicenter-of-donbas-fighting-shifts-closer-to-mariupol-with-two-skirmishes-in-past-day-2171535.html>

<http://www.unian.info/war/1468933-epicenter-of-donbas-fighting-shifts-to-mariupol-with-two-skirmishes-in-past-day.html>

Russian proxies attack ATO forces 59 times in last 24 hours, 15.08.2016

Combined Russian-separatist forces attacked Ukrainian army positions in eastern Ukraine 59 times in the past 24 hours, including 28 times in the Mariupol sector, 23 times in the Donetsk sector and eight times in the Luhansk sector, according to the ATO HQ press center.

<https://www.kyivpost.com/article/content/ukraine-politics/unian-russian-proxies-attack-ato-forces-59-times-in-last-24-hours-421033.html>

Crimea: Situation on the border calm, - Ukraine's State Border Guard, 15.08.2016

The checkpoints are working under their common schedule. For the last 24 hours, the flow of passengers has cut down by 22 percent compared with that on Saturday, August 13. Most of these people leave Crimea, not enter it. No gridlocks reported on the border', said spokesman of the State Border Guard Oleg Slobodyan. In his commentary, the official noted that there is a queue of people on the Crimean side, instead. He also confirmed that the rotation activity of Russian troops in Crimea calmed down, too. 'There were no helicopters or drones performing aerial reconnaissance in the region', Slobodyan said.

<http://112.international/society/crimea-situation-on-the-border-calm-ukraines-state-border-guard-8452.html>

Russia actively increasing number of weapons in Crimea - Ukraine intelligence, 16.08.2016

Active militarization of occupied Crimea is currently underway, representative of the Main Intelligence Department of Ukraine's Defense Ministry Vadym Skibytskyi said.

"Active militarization of occupied Crimea is ongoing and new weapons systems and military equipment, which come from the Russian Federation, are being deployed there – all this is aimed at making Crimea a military base. As of today, what is most threatening for Ukraine is the supply of the latest tools that can carry nuclear weapons – this is at the first place. Second is the increase in the number of submarines, frigates and missile boats, which can use the latest missile systems such as Kalibr. In addition, escalation in the use of combat aircraft, which can work almost throughout Ukraine from Crimea, is taking place," he stated.

<http://uatoday.tv/politics/russia-actively-increasing-number-of-weapons-in-crimea-ukraine-intelligence-727977.html>

Russian proxies attack ATO forces 52 times in last 24 hours, use heavy weapons, 17.08.2016

The situation in the Donbas conflict zone remains tense but controlled. In flagrant violation of the Minsk agreements, the militants intensified their activity along the entire demarcation line, the ATO HQ said in an update as of 06:00 Kyiv time on August 17. "In the Mariupol sector, the enemy launched 60 shells from the 122mm artillery systems on the village of Chermalyk, as well as fired large-caliber guns on the village of Novoselivka and the town of Maryinka. The militants used 152mm artillery systems in the village of Rybyske. They fired mortars in the town of Krasnohorivka, and the villages of Slavne, Lebedynske, Chermalyk and Shyrokyne. The occupiers fired from infantry fighting vehicles in the village of Novohryhorivka and the town of Maryinka. A sniper was active in this direction," the press center said.

<http://www.unian.info/war/1473709-russian-proxies-attack-ato-forces-52-times-in-last-24-hours-use-heavy-weapons.html>

<http://uaposition.com/latest-news/militants-attack-stanytsia-luhanska-checkpoint-night/>

<http://www.unian.info/war/1475756-russian-proxies-attack-ukraine-96-times-in-last-day-amid-escalation.html>

Russian proxies attack Ukraine 73 times in last day, 19.08.2016

Most of enemy attacks – 38 instances – were recorded in the Donetsk sector. The enemy fired banned 152mm artillery systems on the Ukrainian positions. In the Mariupol sector, the Ukrainian army recorded 23 cases of enemy fire. In particular, the Russian-backed troops fired 122mm howitzer artillery on the Ukrainian fortified positions in the village of Myrne. The towns of Maryinka and Krasnohorivka, and the village of Pavlopil came under fire from mortars and grenade launchers.

<http://www.unian.info/war/1477649-russian-proxies-attack-ukraine-73-times-in-last-day.html>

Russian-backed separatists attack Ukraine 49 times in last day, 20.08.2016

The combined Russian-separatist forces attacked Ukrainian army positions in eastern Ukraine 49 times in the past 24 hours, according to the ATO HQ press center.

<http://uatoday.tv/politics/russian-proxies-attack-ukraine-49-times-in-last-day-666189.html>

Russia sends 55th `humanitarian convoy` with ammo to Donbas, 20.08.2016

"At 06:00 on Saturday, the trucks set off from the Noginsk rescue center in Moscow region, which will be part of the 55th "humanitarian" batch to Donbas," according to the report. The ministry notes that the 55th convoy of "humanitarian" aid will be formed in Rostov region and in the Donskoy rescue center of the Russian Emergency Situations Ministry, where trucks from other regions of Russia will join those from Noginsk. The formation of the column will be completed by August 25. The ministry added that more than 70 trucks will make up the 55th column, which will deliver more than 600 tonnes of humanitarian aid. "The cargo includes food, medicine and educational literature, which is necessary for educational institutions in Donbas to prepare for the new school year," claimed the report.

<http://uaposition.com/latest-news/russia-sends-55th-humanitarian-convoy-ammo-donbas/>

ATO HQ: Russian proxies attack Ukraine 71 times in past day, 21.08.2016

"The most intense situation was in the area of Avdiyivka – the northern suburbs of Horlivka, where the enemy fired 120mm and 82mm mortars, grenade launchers of various types and small arms, and with the onset of the evening militants carried out a series of attacks on Avdiyivka using heavy artillery. Two dozen 152mm, and more than four dozen 122mm shells, were launched at Ukrainian positions," a statement read.

Furthermore, Ukrainian positions near Krasnohorivka were attacked with 122mm caliber weapons. The militants shelled Avdiyivka with infantry fighting vehicles, and Ukrainian villages of Kirove and Svitlodarsk – with 82mm mortars. The highest number of attacks, 38, was recorded in the Mariupol sector. Further, militants shelled the villages of Novohryhorivka, Starohnativka, Talakivka, Shyrokyne, Krasnohorivka, Maryinka and Novotroitske using mortars of various calibers and grenade launchers.

<http://ukraine.timesofnews.com/ato-hq-russian-proxies-attack-ukraine-71-times-in-past-day.html>

Militants attack vehicle carrying Ukrainian JCCC members, 21.08.2016

"From 4:20 p.m. until 4:45 p.m., illegal armed formations fired 15 shells of 82mm caliber in the area [near Svitlodarsk], and were attacking from anti-aircraft installation ZU-23-2 and with heavy machine guns from the area of Kalynivka in the direction of the village of Luhanske," the ATO press center reported, citing Kremenetsky. According to Kremenetsky, the monitoring group was on a mission to collect photo evidence of violations of the ceasefire by militants, who had previously fired upon the area using 82mm and 120mm mortar shells, which are prohibited by the Minsk agreements. Kremenetsky noted that the attack on the monitoring group can be qualified as a crime against the activity of the JCCC observers, and the incident is to be discussed during a meeting of the Trilateral contact group on the Donbas settlement in Minsk.

<http://www.unian.info/war/1480271-militants-attack-vehicle-carrying-ukrainian-jccc-members.html>

<http://www.unian.info/war/1480381-militants-continue-attacking-ukrainian-positions-in-donbas.html>

Russia proxies use mortars, grenades in all sectors in eastern Ukraine, 22.08.2016

Combined Russian-separatist forces attacked Ukrainian army positions in all sectors in eastern Ukraine 46 times in the past 24 hours, according to the ATO HQ press center.

<http://uk.makemefeed.com/2016/08/23/russia-proxies-use-mortars-grenades-in-all-sectors-in-eastern-ukraine-2271735.html>

<http://uk.makemefeed.com/2016/08/24/militants-destroy-ukrainian-stronghold-near-donetsk-2285724.html>

Ukraine reports about 54 attacks in Donbas in past 24 hours, 23.08.2016

Combined Russian-separatist forces attacked Ukrainian army positions in eastern Ukraine 54 times in the past 24 hours, including 22 times in the Donetsk sector, 20 times in the Mariupol sector and 12 times in the Luhansk sector, according to the ATO HQ press center.

<http://uk.makemefeed.com/2016/08/24/ukraine-reports-about-54-attacks-in-donbas-in-past-24-hours-2285741.html>

Russian proxies intensify attacks on ATO forces on Independence Day, 25.08.2016

In the Donetsk sector, the enemy fired 122mm artillery systems, 120mm and 82mm mortars, grenade launchers of various systems, heavy machine guns and small arms. They fired tank shells at the town of Avdiyivka and used infantry fighting vehicles against the village of Luhanske. Close to midnight, the occupiers fired 152mm artillery systems and launched about six dozen artillery shells at the village of Semyhirria.

In the Mariupol sector, Russia's hybrid military force fired 122mm self-propelled units, launching more than 100 shells at the village of Shyrokyne. They also fired 120mm mortars, 82mm mortars, rocket-propelled grenades and heavy machine guns, infantry fighting vehicles. Enemy snipers were active near Maryinka and the village of Novotroyitske.

<http://ukraine.timesofnews.com/russian-proxies-intensify-attacks-on-ato-forces-on-independence-day.html>

Ukraine Intelligence outlines threats posed by sudden combat readiness check of Russian troops, 25.08.2016

Representative of the Main Intelligence Department of Ukraine's Defense Ministry, Vadym Skibitskyi, said that the Russian government may at any moment change the declared purpose of new military exercise carried out in Russia.

<http://uk.makemefeed.com/2016/08/26/ukraine-intelligence-outlines-threats-posed-by-sudden-combat-readiness-check-of-russian-troops-2314118.html>

<http://tass.com/defense/896018>

Militants shell checkpoint in Maryinka, people evacuated, 25.08.2016

According to Slobodyan, at about 7:30 p.m. militants shelled the checkpoint in Maryinka using 80-mm mortars from the uncontrolled territory of the village of Oleksandrivka.

Slobodyan informed that the militants had fired more than ten shells that fell a few dozen meters away from premises of the checkpoint. "There were no people at the checkpoint at that time. Border guards had to evacuate them and suspend the passage of persons and vehicles," Slobodyan wrote. He noted that it was not the first case when the militants fired at the Ukrainian forces near a checkpoint during the passage of people.

<http://uaposition.com/latest-news/militants-shell-checkpoint-maryinka-people-evacuated/>

Russian proxies attack Ukraine 48 times in past 24 hours, fire artillery near Avdiyivka, 26.08.2016

"In the Donetsk sector, the enemy violated the Minsk agreements, launching about 170 shells from heavy artillery systems. At the beginning and at the end of day the militants fired 152mm and 122mm self-propelled artillery systems thrice on Ukrainian positions near the town of Avdiyivka and 152mm artillery systems on the village of Arkhanhelske. In Avdiyivka area, in the northern suburbs of the town of Horlivka, the militants continued to fire mortars, grenade launchers and machine guns. The Ukrainian army also spotted an unmanned aerial vehicle flying over Ukrainian positions near the Avdiyivka industrial zone. The occupiers used infantry fighting vehicles near the villages of Luhanske and Kirove," the report stated.

<http://www.unian.info/war/1487879-russian-proxies-attack-ukraine-48-times-in-past-24-hours-fire-artillery-near-avdiyivka.html>

<http://www.unian.info/war/1488154-russia-increases-quantity-of-heavy-weapons-in-occupied-part-of-donbas-in-last-two-years.html>

Russia deploys special forces to Ukraine border as part of military drills, 26.08.2016

Crews of military transport aircraft transfer special forces from the north-west of Russia to Southern Military District. 15 combat ships of Russian navy enter the Black Sea. According to Russia's Defence Ministry, the commandment has relocated the vessels in order to check their military battle readiness. 10 more ships are now awaiting the orders in the Caspian Sea.

<http://uatoday.tv/politics/russian-defense-ministry-deploys-special-forces-to-ukraine-border-as-part-of-exercises-734727.html>

<http://www.unian.info/war/1489529-ato-hq-russian-proxies-attack-ukraine-88-times-in-last-24-hours.html>

Russian occupiers attack Ukraine 59 times, wide use of banned arms reported, 28.08.2016

Russian occupation forces opened fire on the positions of the Armed Forces of Ukraine in Donbas 59 times on Saturday, which included the wide use of banned weapons, according to the ATO HQ press center.

<http://uk.makemefeed.com/2016/08/29/russian-occupiers-attack-ukraine-59-times-wide-use-of-banned-arms-reported-2343133.html>

Russian troops attack Ukraine 91 times in past 24 hours amid escalation, 30.08.2016

In the Donetsk sector, the enemy fired artillery systems 11 times, having launched more than 40 shells of 152mm caliber and more than 200 shells of 122mm caliber. The occupiers used mortars of various calibers, rocket-propelled grenades, heavy machine guns, armored vehicles, as well as anti-aircraft guns. The militants also fired tank shells. A sniper was active in Verkhniotoretske.

<http://uaposition.com/latest-news/russian-troops-attack-ukraine-91-times-24-hours-escalation/>

Russian proxies attack Ukraine 75 times in past 24 hours, 31.08.2016

Two Ukrainian soldiers were killed in the conflict zone in eastern Ukraine during the past 24 hours. One of the fighters was shot by an enemy sniper, another one was wounded in a battle and later died because of injuries. Russian-backed separatist forces attacked the positions of Ukrainian army along the borderline. In Donetsk sector, the militants shelled the towns of Avdiyivka, Novgorodske, and Pisky. The neighbouring Mariupol sector has undergone numerous artillery attacks, in particular, the towns of Shyrokyne and Krasnohorivka.

<http://uatoday.tv/politics/russian-proxies-attack-ukraine-75-times-in-past-24-hours-737657.html>

Russia amasses 100,000 troops in Donbas, Crimea, Ukraine border – Lysenko, 31.08.2016

"There are some 40,000 troops in Donbas along the northern border and nearly 50,000-60,000 in the east. This group constantly changes and evolves. Three military districts are involved. There is a transfer of airborne units, as they are deployed along the border and in Crimea. There is movement of military equipment, and some 700 Russian tanks are now in occupied Donbas," Lysenko said. "Any escalation of the conflict will have bloody consequences both for Russia and our side, so the Russian aggressor is weighing its strength. It is conducting a very thorough reconnaissance," he added.

<http://www.unian.info/war/1495219-russia-amasses-100000-troops-in-donbas-crimea-ukraine-border-lysenko.html>

Spot Report by OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine, 31.08.2016

Between 20:55 and 21:00 on 30 August, whilst at the SMM forward patrol base in government-controlled Shchastia (20km north of Luhansk), an SMM patrol comprising five SMM staff members and a paramedic heard four shots of under-barrel-grenade-launcher (GP-25) fire approximately 1km south of their position. At approximately 22:05 the SMM heard four explosions assessed as mortar rounds outgoing from an undetermined distance south of its location. Within a few seconds, the patrol heard and felt four impacts assessed as caused by mortar rounds landing within 200m or less of the forward patrol base. The explosions shook the building and electricity immediately went out. After five minutes, the SMM heard and felt five-six more impacts of what it assessed as mortar rounds over approximately 20 minutes. The rounds were assessed as impacting within 300m of the forward patrol base. The SMM did not register any damage to its base.

<http://www.osce.org/ukraine-smm/261796>

National Minorities

Statement on the detention and treatment of Ilmi Umerov, 31.08.2016

The detention and treatment of the Deputy Chairman of Mejlis of the Crimea Tatar People, Ilmi Umerov, is a cause of deep concern. Umerov's forced detention and examination in a psychiatric unit, along with reports of his deteriorating health are disturbing. We call on the Russian authorities to respect international human rights standards; to release Umerov without delay; and to allow him access to the medical care that he needs. It is clear that human rights standards are not being met in Crimea and we continue to call on the Russian Federation to allow immediate, unfettered access to all international human rights monitoring bodies. We do not, and will not, recognise Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea. Russia must return Crimea to Ukraine.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/world-location-news/statement-on-detention-and-treatment-of-ilmi-umerov>

Mass Media

SBU DEPORTS RUSSIA'S FIRST CHANNEL JOURNALIST FOR ANTI-UKRAINIAN ACTIVITY, 01.07.2015

Cherepnina will be denied entry to Ukraine for the next three years, according to the SBU press service. The SBU officials add that the journalist has been filming anti-Ukrainian videos and even used schoolchildren in her clips.

<http://x-news.com.ua/sbu-deports-russias-first-channel-journalist-for-anti-ukrainian-activity-42492/>

Ukraine Worldwide

Kremlin pours cash into media 'black ops' in UK, 02.08.2016

Russia has ramped up spending on foreign information "black ops" by more than £100m. The Kremlin approved a large increase last year in the budget for Russia Today, its English-language channel, and other services, including Sputnik, a news wire service that has opened new headquarters in Edinburgh and which has been accused of running conspiracy stories. Total spending by Russia on television, radio and online services overseas was projected to be £151m in 2015, but was raised last year to £255m, according to the latest Kremlin budget.

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/kremlin-pours-cash-into-media-black-ops-in-uk-rdjhv0dch>

Walked through woods with land mines: Crimea political prisoner shares details of escape, 17.08.2016

Ilchenko first spent 11 months in prison and was then placed under house arrest, which is when he decided to flee. Russia had accused him of inciting ethnic hatred and instigating terrorist acts, and one of the counts was a reposting of the then leader of the Right Sector Dmytro Yarosh's article with a suggestion to cut off gas supplies to Russia's Rostov region, TSN.ua wrote. Ilchenko claims that the prison in Crimea where he was held in custody was so crowded that there was no place to sleep. For example, 15 people had to sleep in bunks designed for six people. "Everyone had to sleep for a few hours by turn. It was like a minibus during the rush hour. The food they gave us stank so much even from afar that we did not take it. When someone fell ill and we knocked to call a doctor, we were told it was not a hospital and nobody was a patient here; only there should be either dead or alive. They said they could be called when someone was dead. Bodies were given to the relatives in black bags, just like garbage. The conditions there were terrible and not everyone could stand them. I saw people hang themselves or cut their veins," he recalled. He realized that "something must be done" when he was placed under house arrest.

<http://www.unian.info/society/1475141-walked-through-woods-with-land-mines-crimea-political-prisoner-shares-details-of-escape.html>

WSJ: Russia builds up army near Ukraine border, 19.08.2016

Russia is bolstering its military presence on its western border, sending tens of thousands of soldiers to newly built installations within easy striking distance of Ukraine.

The moves, which come as Moscow ratchets up confrontation over the Black Sea peninsula of Crimea, are a centerpiece of a new military strategy the Kremlin says is meant to counter perceived threats from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

<http://www.kyivpost.com/article/content/ukraine-politics/wall-street-journal-russia-builds-up-army-near-ukraine-border-421321.html>

Moldovan authorities: Russia's military exercises in Transnistria are illegal and inadmissible, 18.08.2016

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs even called the representative of the Russian Embassy to give explanations for the "anti-terrorist exercises" conducted together with the separatist Transnistrian troops. Both the Bureau and the Ministry expressed the concern that these kind of actions are "provocative, inadmissible and illegal", being actually meant to sabotage the peace-keeping mechanisms of the region and to undermine the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova. The Moldovan governmental authorities demand, again, the withdrawal of the Russian troops and munitions from the territory of Moldova and suggest the replacement of the current peace-keeping mission by a civil one with an international mandate. The demand is repetitive, as Moldovan authorities asked the same some 10 days before.

<http://www.moldova.org/en/moldovan-authorities-russias-military-exercises-transnistria-illegal-inadmissible/>

Russia presses charges against Ukraine's defense minister, top brass for Donbass attacks, 24.08.2016

A criminal case has been opened into the use of prohibited means of warfare.

Criminal charges have been filed against Ukrainian Defense Minister Stepan Poltorak, Chief of General Staff Viktor Muzhenko, Ukrainian Ground Forces Commander Sergey Popko, former Ukrainian Ground Forces Commander Anatoly Pushnyakov and the Commander of Ukraine's National Guard Yuri Allerov. Russia's Investigative Committee is currently conducting an investigation into the illegal use of prohibited means of warfare by Ukraine's armed forces in the country's southeast. Investigators have obtained facts that the Ukrainians have repeatedly violated the ceasefire regime in the region this year.

<http://tass.com/politics/895635>

Putin orders snap checks in Russian armed forces August 25-31, 25.08.2016

"Today another snap check has started in Russia in accordance with the decision of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Armed Forces," Shoigu said. "The forces of the Southern, a part of forces and means of the Western and Central military districts, the Northern Fleet, the major command of the Aerospace Forces and the command of the Airborne forces are put on full combat alert from 7.00 a.m. Moscow time," he said. "The check will be conducted on August 25-31," the minister said. "I order Deputy Defense Minister Anatoly Antonov to inform military attaches of foreign states about the surprise overall combat readiness check of forces." "During relocation to assess the ability of the Southern Military District to promptly deploy self-sufficient force groupings to localize crisis situations. To check the capabilities of the Western and Central military districts to step up efforts in the south-western strategic direction," Shoigu said at a meeting with military leaders.

<http://tass.com/defense/895849>

Russian reporter Alexander Shchetinin found dead in Kiev, 28.08.2016

"Shchetinin's friends found him on the balcony as they came to congratulate him on his birthday," the television channel said. "He was sitting on a chair, with a bullet mark on his head (there was a gun under the chair)." The Ukrainian media say the investigation is now looking into the possibility of suicide, as they say the reporter had allegedly sent an e-mail message to a friend in which he wrote about his intention to commit suicide.

http://rbth.com/news/2016/08/28/russian-reporter-alexander-shchetinin-found-dead-in-ukraines-capital_624749

Russian Economy at Risk of Delayed Recovery After Crimea Flareup, 29.08.2016

After President Vladimir Putin accused Ukraine of plotting terrorist attacks on the Black Sea peninsula this month, the chance that Western countries will scrap economic sanctions against Russia has declined, according to a Bloomberg survey of economists. Of the 21 asked, 52 percent see the European Union beginning to lift its penalties in the next 12 months. That's down from 69 percent in the previous survey. Only 10 percent expect the U.S. to start removing its sanctions, down from 19 percent a month ago.

"Increasing Ukraine tensions will undermine investor confidence, keep EU and U.S. sanctions in place and further put off foreign capital flows, as Putin will not be focused on economic reforms," said Christopher Shiells, a senior analyst at Informa Global Markets. "This will weaken the ruble and force the central bank to adopt a more cautious, hawkish tone."

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-08-28/russian-economy-at-risk-of-delayed-recovery-after-crimea-flareup>