



Monitoring of Xenophobia and Extremism in Ukraine February 2016

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Introduction

Ukraine is still in crisis both politically and economically.

Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko has asked Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk to resign, saying he has lost the support of the governing coalition. Mr. Yatsenyuk's government has been criticized over the slow pace of reforms and faces allegations of corruption. He came to power promising to tackle corruption and implement economic reforms, but has become the focus of accusations of corruption, even though no concrete evidence has emerged. Western governments have expressed concern over the resignation of reform-minded figures from the government. Demonstrators have gathered outside parliament in Kiev to protest against government policies.

Economy Minister Aivaras Abromavicius, seen as a key reformer by the West, resigned earlier this month, claiming that huge quantities of money were being diverted from the government. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has threatened to withhold aid money to Ukraine if it does not carry out reforms. Petro Poroshenko says that he will not allow a snap parliamentary election at the current stage, as there is neither time nor necessity for that.

Publication of previously secret transcripts of the meeting of the National Security Council (held at the beginning of the occupation of the Crimea), and launched a "war ratings" suggest the existence of at least two vectors of development of the political process. One is aimed at the preservation of the situation in general, and only small, mostly forced personnel changes, the other can be described by the words "to its foundations - and then." Diametrically opposite

approaches are unlikely lead to the stabilization of the situation, because the spring in Ukraine - the traditional time for the rise of protest activity, so many reasons for this. According to Ukraine's third president Viktor Yushchenko, the Maidan coup was unable to transform into a full-fledged political movement and failed to dismantle the old corrupted system. The current political crisis may spark a new revolution.

Pro-Russian militants every day increases the number of attacks and increasingly used internationally banned weapons, trying to provoke our military to open a return fire in the ATO area. So, in its covert support of terrorists, Russia seeks to create buffer zones full of chaos and blood. The latest illustration of that happen to be the territories of the eastern region of Ukraine, where self-styled DPR / LPR now seek to acquire the trappings of legal state. So, the more weapons to the madmen – the more havoc. The United States accuses “merging - Russian separatist forces” in the Donbas in ceasefire violations and obstruction of international observers.

The Government of Ukraine continues to supply natural gas and electricity to the territory controlled by the rebels, make payments of pensions and other social payments to Ukrainian citizens in the occupied territory of Donbass.

For the Kremlin government the most important thing - to achieve the lifting of sanctions, with maximum preservation of what already grab in Ukraine. The only question is - whether it will be possible. There are many voices sounds in the West, ready to compromise, but generally West is solid and continues to wait for implementation of the " Minsk - 2 " and the decision of the Crimean issue. Ukrainian authorities must demand control of the Donbass border, elections under international supervision, and then – inside settlement.

Prognosis

Poll: Nearly two-thirds of Russians support Kremlin's policy toward Ukraine, 03.02.2016

Answering the question: "Do you think the policy of the Russian authorities in relation to Ukraine has been rightful, or rather wrongful in the past two years," 26% of respondents said it was "totally rightful," while 38% said it was "mostly rightful." At the same time, 15% of respondents said it was "probably wrongful," 8% said it was "totally wrongful," while 13% could not answer distinctively. However, 30% of Russians said that in the current conflict situation, Russia should "isolate Ukraine politically and limit economic cooperation." A total of 28% respondents said that Russia should "actively oppose Ukrainian politics, but develop social and economic relations between Russia and Ukraine," 25% believe that Russia should "re-engage and move on, despite the mutual contradictions," while 17% could not answer.

<http://uatoday.tv/society/poll-nearly-two-thirds-of-russians-support-kremlin-s-policy-toward-ukraine-583849.html>

Majority of Ukrainians would favor Ukraine membership in EU and NATO – poll, 04.02.2016

Among those surveyed, 59% of respondents would support becoming a member of the EU, 22% of respondents said they would vote against such move, the rest could not answer the question or refused to participate in the survey. At the same time, based on results of the public opinion survey, only 16% of respondents would favor Ukraine’s membership in the Customs Union, while 62% of respondents would be against it, while the rest could not answer the question or did not participate in the survey. Regarding the NATO membership, the survey showed that 47% of respondents would favor joining NATO, while 31% of respondents would turn down such move, the rest could not answer the question or did not take part in the poll.

<http://toinformistoinfluence.com/2016/02/06/majority-of-ukrainians-favor-ukraine-membership-in-eu-and-nato-poll/>

Statements of officials

Poroshenko: lifting anti-Russian sanctions would encourage aggression, 01.02.2016

"Sanctions were imposed on Russia in response to its aggression against Ukraine. As long as the aggression goes on, lifting sanctions would only mean encouraging the aggressor to continue the hostile actions," Poroshenko said at a joint press conference with German Chancellor Angela Merkel in Berlin on Monday, February 1. "It is obvious that sanctions against Russia must remain in place until Russia and its proxies fully implement the Minsk agreements and Russia gets out of Donbas – takes its troops and weapons and gives the borders back," he said. Poroshenko stresses that the ceasefire in Donbas should be full.

<http://www.unian.info/politics/1252227-poroshenko-lifting-anti-russian-sanctions-would-encourage-aggression.html>

<http://www.unian.info/politics/1253508-poroshenko-presses-for-deployment-of-international-peacekeepers-in-donbas.html>

Ukrainian PM: Canada and Ukraine plan to sign and ratify free trade deal this year, 02.02.2016

Those are the words of the Ukrainian Prime Minister. Arseniy Yatsenyuk made the announcement during a visit to Kyiv by Canada's Foreign Affairs Minister Stéphane Dion. He pledges his country's support as Ukraine looks to ratify the milestone trade pact. Canada's Foreign Affairs Minister Stéphane Dion: "The lucrative deal is expected to lift Ukraine's GDP by over USD 13 billion. It will also eliminate taxes on imports to Canada from Ukraine and increase exports to the ex-Soviet state." Ukrainian Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk: "This deal, it's an opening of our common markets and it's also another step in support for Ukraine. In the fight against military and economic aggression against Russia." The free trade agreement was announced by Canada in July 2015. Ottawa says it remains steadfast in its support of Ukraine in the face of Russian destabilisation efforts.

<http://uatoday.tv/politics/ukrainian-pm-canada-and-ukraine-plan-to-sign-and-ratify-free-trade-deal-this-year-582584.html>

NATO should keep its promises for Russia to trust it - security chief, 02.02.2016

Russia is open to negotiating better relations with NATO, but it's only possible if the Western military bloc starts keeping its promises and considering the national interests of other countries, the head of the Russian Security Council told the press. "What sort of trust can we talk about? You can see it yourself that NATO is making promises, but it never keeps any of the promises made to our country, it does not take our interests into consideration," Nikolay Patrushev said. He noted that ramping up cooperation between Russia and NATO was undesirable because it would create even greater potential for mutual distrust and tensions.

<https://www.rt.com/politics/330974-nato-should-keep-its-promises/>

<http://112.international/opinion/russia-and-nato-no-trust-no-confidence-2433.html>

EU urges Kremlin to react to Kadyrov's threats toward Russian opposition, 02.02.2016

Observing the latest communications from Chechen President Kadyrov in Instagram, EU Ambassador to Russia Vygaudas Usackas said that he was appalled by such disgusting unveiled murder threats, and expressed his hope for the Russian authorities and law enforcement bodies to react immediately, the EU Delegation to Russia reported in a statement.

<http://www.breakingnewspoint.com/story/2502246/eu-urges-kremlin-to-react-to-kadyrovs-threats-toward-russian-opposition.html>

http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/russia/press_corner/all_news/news/2016/20160202_en.htm

Merkel presses Putin to ensure Ukraine ceasefire holds, 02.02.2016

German Chancellor Angela Merkel pressed Russian President Vladimir Putin to use his influence to ensure a ceasefire is upheld in eastern Ukraine and OSCE monitors are granted free access to conflict areas, her spokesman Steffen Seibert said.

"Here, Russia must assert its influence on the separatists," spokesman said in a statement, describing Merkel's message to Putin. He said the phone call took place at Putin's request.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-ukraine-crisis-germany-russia-idUSKCN0VB106>

Ukraine counts on Germany in countering Russian aggression and rapprochement with EU – Poroshenko, 03.02.2016

"The head of state has expressed his gratitude for the Bundestag's close attention to the peaceful settlement of the situation in Donbas and for the support of Ukraine in countering Russian aggression, and restoration of its territorial integrity," the presidential press service said. Poroshenko emphasized the need to continue sanctions against the aggressor.

"Sanctions are an effective mechanism to induce Russia to fulfill the Minsk agreements," the president was quoted as saying. Poroshenko welcomed the results of his talks with German Chancellor Angela Merkel in Berlin on February 1, 2016. He said they "confirmed the common vision of the implementation of the Minsk agreements and the extension of sanctions."

<http://en.interfax.com.ua/news/general/322031.html>

Poroshenko: Putin starts information war, 03.02.2016

The fact that we had such an intensive meeting today shows the priority that Ukraine has for Germany and the whole of Europe. Everyone knows: if Russia threatens Ukraine and also has its sights on other states, this concerns the global security of Europe. "Russia has not implemented a single point of the Minsk Agreement. Instead, we can see 8,000 Russian soldiers with Russian commanders in our country, new military sites directly along the border, and constant military trainings. Russia is investing a lot in these war preparations. And we are not getting any explanations for this", Poroshenko said.

<http://www.bild.de/politik/ausland/petro-poroshenko/interview-with-bild-44408768.bild.html>

<http://www.bild.de/politik/ausland/petro-poroshenko/interview-with-bild-44408768.bild.html>

EP Supports 'Geneva Plus' Format On De-Occupation Of Crimea, 04.02.2016

The President of Ukraine Petro Poroshenko wrote. According to the resolution, the European Parliament supported establishment of the 'Geneva Plus' format. The Russian Federation was once again called on to start negotiations of de-occupation of the peninsula with Ukraine and other parties. "An important decision toward de-occupation of the Ukrainian Crimea", wrote the President. Today, the EP adopted the resolution calling of the Russian Federation to withdraw its troops from the territory of Ukraine, as well as from the annexed Crimea. Last month, the President of Ukraine Petro Poroshenko called the 'Geneva Plus' format to be optimal as far as the returning of Crimea is concerned.

<http://ukraineunderattack.org/en/55315-ep-supports-geneva-plus-format-on-de-occupation-of-crimea.html>

EU sanctions on Russia at risk without Ukraine reforms: Denmark, 05.02.2016

Ukraine must uphold its part of a peace deal with Russia by modernizing the country or risk a collapse of support for EU sanctions against Moscow, Denmark's foreign minister said. The EU is pressing Kiev to overcome political feuding and implement reforms to bring Ukraine out of Russia's shadow and into the West, but the resignation of Ukraine's frustrated economy minister has underlined the difficulties. "If Ukraine doesn't come through with the reforms linked to the Minsk peace process, it will be very difficult for Europe to continue united in support for sanctions against Russia," Kristian Jensen told Reuters, referring to the peace deal agreed by Ukraine, Russia, France and Germany last year.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-ukraine-crisis-eu-idUSKCN0VE239>

Poroshenko says Ukrainian government needs "rapid reload", 05.02.2016

"The president emphasized that he was strongly determined to continue reforms awaited by Ukrainian society. Rapid reload of the government is essential for that. At the same time, the president believes that the reformer ministers and their teams should stay on board," the presidential press service reported on Thursday evening. The ambassadors underlined the importance of the Ukrainian authorities' unity in countering Russian aggression. The parties also discussed the implementation of the Minsk peace agreements. Russia has not been adhering to the agreements, Poroshenko said and called on the partner countries to continue pressure on Russia through sanctions.

<http://en.interfax.com.ua/news/general/322532.html>

MEPs Condemn Russia's 'Unprecedented' Abuses Against Crimean Tatars, 04.02.2016

The European Parliament in Strasbourg has overwhelmingly adopted a resolution condemning Russia for its treatment of the Crimean Tatar population in the Ukrainian region of Crimea, which was annexed by Moscow in 2014. "I think it is fitting and adequate that this parliament comes together in a joint resolution to highlight the human rights situation in the occupied Crimean territories," MEP Reinhard Butikofer, of Germany's Green Party, told: "In particular, the Crimean Tatars have been persecuted from the very beginning of the Russian invasion." The resolution "strongly condemns the unprecedented levels of human rights abuses perpetuated against Crimean residents, most notably Crimean Tatars, who do not follow the imposed rule of the so-called local authorities." It also calls on Russia to grant international institutions and human rights monitors "unimpeded access" to the region.

<http://www.rferl.org/content/crimean-tatars-human-rights-european-parliament/27532399.html>

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=MOTION&reference=P8-RC-2016-0173&language=EN>

U.S.: Russia unilaterally blocks extension of OSCE SMM onto its border with Ukraine, 05.02.2016

Combined Russian-separatist forces in Donbas violate the truce and hinder the work of international observers, that's according to a statement by the U.S. Mission to the OSCE.

<http://www.morningnewsheadlines.com/story/2720740/us-russia-unilaterally-blocks-extension-of-osce-smm-onto-its-border-with-ukraine.html>

http://osce.usmission.gov/feb_4_16_russia_violations.html

Yatsenyuk names required principles for Cabinet team to continue its work, 07.02.2016

According to Yatsenyuk, the first principle is the lack of political pressure and political corruption: "Each minister appointed by the coalition, bears overall responsibility for the area of his work and for the policy, which he defines in the industry. None of the political figures, none of the businessmen who have their own interests, have the right to put pressure on a minister and forcing them to take the decisions that contradict with the minister's policy and the Ukrainian interests." "No more political quotas in state governing bodies. No political and business interests in the management of state-owned companies and state banks," he added. The second principle is a "zero tolerance toward corruption – both political and economic." "Any appointment to the state-owned companies will be carried out exclusively through an independent nominating committee. So, 60 of the largest state-owned companies will have new and independent managers. Independent of both the political factions and parties, and from business groups and business elites," said the prime minister.

<http://www.unian.info/politics/1257985-yatsenyuk-names-required-principles-for-cabinet-team-to-continue-its-work.html>

Talking to Russia doesn't mean abandoning Ukraine, new ambassador to Canada says, 08.02.2016

Ukraine's new ambassador to Canada Andriy Shevchenko has dismissed suggestions the Liberal government is automatically abandoning his country by re-engaging with Russia. Ukrainian Ambassador said he hopes Canada will boost its support for his country, including through the provision of arms and long-term aid. He also defended his government's slow fight against corruption, which has become a concern for Canada and other donors. But despite the Trudeau government's plan to treat with Russia on the Arctic and other areas of mutual interest, Shevchenko said the Liberals have been as supportive of Ukraine as were the Conservatives. "If we go back to facts, if we go back to actions, as of the moment I can clearly tell you we don't see any differences or changes in the Canadian policy," the ambassador said. "And we really hope it will stay that way." Shevchenko admitted receiving phone calls and emails from Ukrainians concerned about Dion's comments. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov's suggestion last week that Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Russian President Vladimir Putin talked at the G20 in November about "normalizing relations" didn't help.

<http://news.nationalpost.com/news/canada/canadian-politics/talking-to-russia-doesnt-mean-abandoning-ukraine-ambassador-says>

Lutsenko announced the verdict Yatsenyuk and said about the crisis in the coalition, 08.02.2016

«Unfortunately, today there are already three factions stated that they do not want to see him, and the number of deputies in these fractions means that the coalition is incompetent, if they don't vote. We have repeatedly stated that the coalition does not accept the Opposition bloc and its broken, and today a coalition of 300 votes is the only possible one. When three factions declare that they are not ready to work with Prime Minister Yatsenyuk, that means he will not be able to work with the coalition and to reformat the coalition, he also can not», said Lutsenko. He stressed that he spoke with representatives of «Batkivshchyna» and «Samopomochi» who adhere to rigid positions regarding a change of guard. «No change of Vice-premiers, Ministers will not change the situation when these fractions do not take on the post of Prime Minister Yatsenyuk,» said Lutsenko, adding that to this position and joined the faction of the Radical party of Oleh Liashko.

<http://en.reporter-ua.ru/lutsenko-announced-the-verdict-yatsenyuk-and-said-about-the-crisis-in-the-coalition.html>

Poroshenko: MPs do not need absolute immunity, 09.02.2016

"I decided not to wait until lawmakers demonstrate their constitutional initiative and introduced draft amendments to the Constitution of Ukraine to abolish parliamentary immunity. The Verkhovna Rada honestly voted for this draft law, for its submission to the Constitutional Court, but later they became very busy and had no time to consider this draft law," he said at a meeting with National Anti-Corruption Bureau personnel on Tuesday.

<http://uatoday.tv/politics/poroshenko-mps-do-not-need-absolute-immunity-587707.html>

<http://www.unian.info/politics/1259771-poroshenko-wants-judges-to-be-stripped-of-immunity.html>

U.S. Intelligence Chief: IS, 'Assertive' Russia Among Unprecedented Challenges, 09.02.2016

U.S. National Intelligence Director James Clapper says the United States faces an unprecedented array of security challenges including cyberattacks, "homegrown" terrorists, Islamic State (IS) extremists, North Korea's nuclear saber-rattling, and Russia's "assertive" foreign policy. "In my 50-plus years in the intelligence business, I cannot recall a more diverse array of challenges and crises that we confront as we do today," Clapper told the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee on February 9 while discussing his agency's annual worldwide threat assessment. In his prepared statement to the committee, Clapper said disruptions in cyberspace and attacks by U.S.-based supporters of violent extremists are the most imminent security threats faced by the United States in 2016.

<http://www.rferl.org/content/us-clapper-russia-pressure-ukraine/27541488.html>

<http://www.unian.info/world/1260239-us-ambassador-to-nato-announces-xxi-century-deterrence.html>

<http://in.reuters.com/article/us-usa-security-idINKCN0V11AQ>

Russia refused to participate in negotiations in Minsk, 09.02.2016

Earlier, as reported mass media, the Russian representative in group Boris Gryzlov I expressed readiness in any day to arrive to Minsk for continuation of consultations.

We will remind, the representative of Ukraine in tripartite contact group Leonid Kuchma I offered to hold the next meeting after a meeting of the Norman four. With the offer Kuchma addressed to the special representative of the acting head of OSCE in tripartite contact group Martin Saydik who suggested to hold a meeting on February 10 earlier.

<https://news.pn/en/RussiaInvadedUkraine/154363>

Defense Ministry says contract army becoming popular in Ukraine, 12.02.2016

Ukrainian Defense Ministry press secretary Viktoriya Kushnir says that since the beginning of the year, the number of soldiers who want to sign a contract with the Armed Forces of Ukraine has increased 20 times compared to December 2015.

<http://www.searchnewsonline.com/update/1913805/defense-ministry-says-contract-army-becoming-popular-in-ukraine.html>

EU urges Ukrainian authorities, political forces to unite efforts to continue reforms, combat corruption, 12.02.2016

The European Union Delegation in Ukraine has calls upon the Ukrainian authorities and all political parties to unite to ensure that the reform process in Ukraine continues with renewed vigor. "This is vital for Ukraine's future, its democratic development and its people. The economic and social recovery of Ukraine requires further improvements in the business climate, as well as continued popular support for the reforms set in motion by the Government," reads a statement posted on the Facebook page of the EU Delegation in Ukraine. In particular, the EU Delegation said that Ukraine urgently needs credible and concrete results in the fight against corruption. A key area in this regard is transparency in the selection and appointment of managers of state-owned enterprises and in their financial reporting as well as steps toward privatization or liquidation of some of those enterprises, in line with the program for macroeconomic and financial stabilization agreed with International Financial Institutions, the delegation said.

<http://en.interfax.com.ua/news/general/324236.html>

Russia has no legitimate reasons to deploy nuclear weapons in Crimea – U.S. State Department, 12.02.2016

First, we condemn Russian illegal annexation of Crimea and we think it would be inappropriate and illegal for them to deploy nuclear weapons in Crimea," Rose said.

Speaking about his upcoming visit to Ukraine, the U.S. official said that he plans to discuss "a broad set of issues, for example modernization of the U.S.-Ukraine nuclear risk reduction center as well as discussion on a number of topics related to the convention arms control in Europe and space security."

<http://www.unian.info/politics/1234484-russia-has-no-legitimate-reasons-to-deploy-nuclear-weapons-in-crimea-us-state-department.html>

Ukraine needs PM with impeccable reputation: Abromavicius, 12.02.2016

Abromavicius wrote that Ukraine needs a technocratic government and the prime minister with an impeccable reputation.

"The obvious candidate that meets this requirement is Minister of Finance Natalie Jaresko. She might only be reproved for her American origin, but, as the experience of the Baltic States shows, it is rather a plus, than a minus," wrote Abromavicius. He noted that in all three Baltic countries had presidents coming from the western diaspora, who have successfully worked for two consecutive terms. The main task of the new government, according to Abromavicius, should be to accelerate reforms in all spheres, and first of all - the reform of the State Fiscal Service, and fast transparent privatization.

<http://www.unian.info/politics/1263598-ukraine-needs-pm-with-impeccable-reputation-abromavicius.html>

European Parliament President says Russian authorities seek to split Europe, 14.02.2016

"First of all, I share entirely the view of Mr. Poroshenko about the intent of the Russian government to split the European Union from inside," President of the European Parliament Martin Schulz said. "The anti-European skeptics, anti-Islamic, Islamophobic, homophobic – whatever kind of parties – are strongly represented in the European Parliament." He noted, there are persistent rumors about euro-sceptical parties and movements being targeted for Russian support.

<http://uatoday.tv/news/european-parliament-president-says-russian-authorities-seek-to-split-europe-590828.html>

NATO does not want return of Cold War, says its Supreme Allied Commander, 14.02.2016

NATO does not see or want a new Cold War. That's according to the alliance's Supreme Allied Commander who was speaking on Friday in response to remarks by Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev. General Philip Breedlove told reporters at the Munich Security Conference that "Minister Medvedev is entitled to his opinion. We don't look at what is happening as a Cold War and no one in NATO wants to return to a Cold War."

<http://uatoday.tv/politics/breedlove-590657.html>

<http://uatoday.tv/politics/nato-chief-says-firm-reaction-to-russia-s-destabilisation-of-european-security-order-is-needed-590393.html>

'Putin not interested in being our partner' - Senator McCain, 14.02.2016

"Mr. Putin is not interested in being our partner. He wants to sure up the Assad regime, he wants to re-establish Russia as a major power in the Middle East. He wants to use Syria as a live-fire exercise for Russia's modernising military. He wants to turn the Latakia province to a military outpost from which to harden and inforce a Russian sphere of influence, a new Kaliningrad or Crimea and he wants to exacerbate the refugee crisis and use it as a weapon to divide the trans-atlantic alliance and undermine the European project." McCain insisted on the importance of Moscow changing its targets to respect the ceasefire deal agreed in Munich last Friday. "I want to be wrong, because if this agreement turns out to reward aggression rather than punishment, if it comes to be seen as a further embodiment of Western weakness and not strength, if it deepens the perception among our allies and our partners in the Middle East that we are untrustworthy and factless, then not only will this agreement fail, but the war in Syria will grind on, more innocent people will die, Western credibility and influence will diminish, the refugees will continue to flow out, the terrorists will continue to flow in and our citizens will be attacked again and again."

<http://uatoday.tv/society/mccain-590803.html>

Mogherini supports anti-Russian sanctions until Minsk deal fully implemented, 14.02.2016

Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko had on Saturday a meeting with High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini in the framework of the Munich Security Conference, according to the presidential press service. "The Head of State informed on the situation in Donbas. The parties expressed concern over the increasing number of shelling and non-admission of the OSCE to the objects located in the occupied territory," reads the report. "Federica Mogherini noted the necessity of prolongation of sanctions against Russia until complete implementation of the Minsk agreements," the press service says.

<http://uatoday.tv/politics/mogherini-supports-anti-russian-sanctions-until-minsk-deal-fully-implemented-590771.html>

Odesa region governor says 'real change' of policies needed in Ukraine, 14.02.2016

Former President of Georgia and the current Governor of Ukraine's southern Odesa region Mikheil Saakashvili says real change is needed in Ukraine.

"Yes, I do agree with Secretary Kerry, but for that we need a change, we need a very unambiguous position also from Washington that Ukraine needs real change and keeping in place figures that cannot enforce that change is counterproductive. And so we expect Washington also to say that, that once they are asking for reform, the second thing to say is exactly that there is also needs a change of - also real change - of policies, [and this] also should be based on a change of personalities, a change of guard. Without it there can be no real change of policies. This guard have been around for two years already, and the results they have produced have been miniscule and some of them have been quite bad."

<http://uatoday.tv/politics/saakashvili-590836.html>

Ukrainian president issues warning against Russian propaganda, 14.02.2016

Ukrainian President is in Munich this weekend as part of a security conference focusing on the migrant crisis as well as the war in Syria. However, Ukraine's leader says his country needs to be on the agenda as well. While addressing reporters Petro Poroshenko underlined the importance of not giving into the Russian propaganda during the conference. Petro Poroshenko: "Unfortunately Munich becomes an arena for Russian statements. We remember Putin's statement in the year 2007, today's statement of Medvedev, when he said about the cold war, about the so-called civil war in Ukraine and I make a very strong answer. Mr Putin, Mr Lavrov, Mr Medvedev, this is your aggression in Ukraine and we do not give you any tiny opportunity to provide here propaganda, Kremlin style propaganda, to poison the opinion of European people."

<http://uatoday.tv/politics/ukrainian-president-issues-warning-against-russian-propaganda-590513.html>

<http://uatoday.tv/politics/ukrainian-president-mister-putin-this-is-not-a-civil-war-in-ukraine-this-is-your-aggression-590416.html>

Putin tells Obama he hopes Ukraine to pardon militants, 14.02.2016

"They [the two presidents] also discussed the situation in Ukraine, especially in the context of the implementation of the set of measures to resolve the conflict, agreed in Minsk on February 12, 2015. Putin expressed hope that the Kyiv authorities would finally take practical steps to comply with their obligations as soon as possible, including the establishment of a direct dialogue with Donbas, granting amnesty, and carrying out constitutional reform, coordination with the representatives of Donetsk and Luhansk and the enactment of amendments to the law on special status [of Donbas]," reads the statement. It is noted that the conversation between the leaders of Russia and the U.S. was open and businesslike. The parties gave a positive estimation of the results of the meeting of the International Syria Support Group in Munich on February 11-12, which confirmed the approaches and provisions of Resolution 2254 of the UN Security Council both in the part of humanitarian aspects and in the modality of ceasefire regime, as well as in preparations for a realistic political process," the statement reads.

<http://ukrainianwall.com/english-news/putin-tells-obama-he-hopes-ukraine-to-pardon-militants/>
<http://uatoday.tv/politics/obama-and-putin-hold-talks-on-conflict-in-eastern-ukraine-591476.html>

Blockade of Russian trucks in Ukraine enters fourth day, 15.02.2016

Ukraine's decision to block transit of Russian trucks does not violate international treaties, in particular, the rules of the World Trade Organization (WTO). That is the message from the Ukrainian Deputy Trade Minister. "We have already started negotiating with the involved parties, and this is the only right decision. From time to time, vehicles get blocked even in the EU. And no one immediately bans transit of vehicles in a tit-for-tat move - the parties start negotiating to get the issue sorted out", Mykolska says.

<http://uatoday.tv/society/blockade-of-russian-trucks-in-ukraine-enters-4th-day-live-updates-591263.html>
<http://uatoday.tv/politics/ukrainian-activists-block-russian-trucks-at-border-with-belarus-591070.html>

Medvedev: EU sanctions on Russia 'never brought them anything but lost profits', 15.02.2016

Dmitry Medvedev: "They will have to have the courage to say, guys, we'll just scrap all this from day X, and could you please reciprocate by lifting your response measures as well. That would be the right approach." Medvedev said Russia will not be the one which cancels sanctions first. "Again, we are not the ones who started this, so it is not up to us to undo it. They have always been trying to intimidate us with some sanctions, which were introduced even in the Soviet period, many times. What is happening now is no different."

<http://uatoday.tv/politics/medvedev-eu-sanctions-on-russia-never-brought-them-anything-but-lost-profits-591345.html>

Kasko: corruption, cover-up reign in PGO, 15.02.2016

Deputy Prosecutor General Vitaliy Kasko, who announced his resignation earlier on Monday, said that corruption and cover-up reign in the Prosecutor General's Office of Ukraine (PGO), while key positions are occupied by the followers of former Prosecutor General and Yanukovich ally Viktor Pshonka. "My desire to resign is due to the fact that today's top officials of the prosecutor's office have actually turned it into the body saturated with corruption and cover-up, while any attempts to bring in change are persecuted immediately. It's not justice and law that are in charge here, but arbitrary rule and lawlessness. Day by day, key positions at the PGO are occupied by followers of infamous [Viktor] Pshonka," Kasko said.

<http://ukrainianlaw.blogspot.com/2016/02/kasko-corruption-cover-up-reign-in-pgo.html>

Medvedev: "I never said new Cold War has begun", 15.02.2016

"I never said that a new Cold War has begun, but I said that NATO decisions bring a new Cold War nearer. I said this and I will say it again," he said in an interview with Time magazine correspondent Simon Shuster following the Munich Security Conference, according to the Russian government website. "The political line of NATO toward Russia remains unfriendly and closed," Medvedev said in his speech at the Munich Security Conference on Saturday. "It can be said more sharply: we have slid into a time of a new cold war," he said.

<http://www.unian.info/politics/1265051-medvedev-i-never-said-new-cold-war-has-begun.html>
<http://qovernment.ru/en/news/21790/>

Russia says does not intend to return eastern border control to Ukraine, 15.02.2016

In particular, answering the question, whether it is true that Russia is allegedly ready to return to Ukraine control over the section of the border in occupied Donbas, on condition that the border guards will be recruited from the local population, Karasin said: "This information does not correspond to reality." According to him, the Minsk package of measures clearly stipulates that "the restoration of Ukrainian control over the relevant section of the Ukrainian-Russian border can take place only after the crisis is settled comprehensively." At the same time, Karasin said that Ukraine's regaining of control over the border was "linked to the need to coordinate the details of all the measures with the representatives of Donetsk and Luhansk in the framework of the Tripartite Contact Group envisaged by the Law "On special procedure of local government in some districts of Donetsk and Luhansk regions."

<http://www.unian.info/politics/1265147-russia-says-does-not-intend-to-return-eastern-border-control-to-ukraine.html>

US Ambassador in Ukraine says Kasko's resignation is 'a bitter blow to reforms', 15.02.2016

US Ambassador to Ukraine Geoffrey Pyatt reiterates US's support for Ukraine anti-corruption efforts 'in prosecutorial domain'. He called the resignation of Ukrainian Deputy Prosecutor General Vitaly Kasko "a blow to Ukraine's reform progress." He added that Kasko was "a champion of change within the Prosecutor General's Office." "Ukraine deserves a clean judiciary," Pyatt said.

<http://uatoday.tv/politics/us-ambassador-in-ukraine-says-kasko-s-resignation-is-a-bitter-blow-to-reforms-591393.html>

Ukraine Mission to UN: Russia deploys 23,000 troops in Crimea, refurbishes storages of nuclear weapons, 16.02.2016

The ongoing militarization of Crimea threatens not only the Black Sea region but the other countries as well, Volodymyr Yelchenko, Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the UN, said at the UNSC Open Debate on "The Respect to the Principles and Purposes of the Charter of the United Nations as Key Element for the Maintenance of International Peace and Security."

<http://www.globalnewsupdates365.com/story/1542884/ukraine-mission-to-un-russia-deploys-23000-troops-in-crimea-refurbishes-storages-of-nuclear-weapons.html>

EU concerned with Poroshenko's amendments to Law on Prosecution, 16.02.2016

Jan Tombinski: I welcome the work under way in the Verkhovna Rada this week on important anti-corruption legislation that is also part of Ukraine's visa liberalization commitments. Draft legislation on asset recovery (4056) and on seizure and special confiscation (4054) are in line with the EU standards. I am concerned by amendments proposed in the Law "On Prosecution" (4055) that threatens the independence of the Specialized Anti-corruption Prosecution by granting too many discretionary powers to the Prosecutor General. It is also important that an effective asset declarations system is introduced without further delay in 2016, in line with Ukraine's commitments. This should be comprehensive and cover all officials in areas and positions vulnerable to corruption, who should re-submit the declarations in electronic form to allow National Agency for Prevention of Corruption, once fully operational, in fulfilling its mission. After 8 months of ineffective attempts to set up the Agency, it is high time to see it up and running.

<https://www.facebook.com/EUDelegationUkraine/photos/a.145962402115063.26057.126879227356714/1073765512668076/?type=3&theater>

Russian political expert: Putin not to start "big war" in Donbas, 16.02.2016

At the moment, the Kremlin is trying to show that Russia is not going to make any concessions. It is possible that in this regard, it can intensify hostilities in Donbas and Syria. "Putin has to show that the approach to some agreements on conflict settlement on the part of the Russian Federation is not a sign of weakness, but a sign of strength," Russian analyst Oreshkin said. Despite possible escalation in these regions, there will be no large-scale Russian offensive, because the costs would be incomparably high. "Putin's aggressive actions are working for the time being. Because everyone is waiting for something bad from him. The West was simply not ready in cases with Donbas and Crimea. But now, everything has changed. The West and Ukraine are now expecting similar actions by Putin," Oreshkin said adding that such offensive would be refuted. The Kremlin understands this, so it has to create the appearance of strength. Putin has exhausted his potential for surprises. He can't act unpredictably.

<http://www.unian.info/politics/1266250-russian-political-expert-putin-not-to-start-big-war-in-donbas.html>

http://zik.ua/en/news/2015/06/17/stubbornness_and_inadequacy_win_over_in_kremlin_ukraine_be_ready_russian_political_expert_warns_599749

EU breaks taboo on 'Russian forces in Ukraine', 16.02.2016

It said in its Official Journal on Monday (16 February) that Russian deputy defence minister Anatoly Antonov is being added to its blacklist because he is "involved in supporting the deployment of Russian troops in Ukraine". It listed first deputy defence minister Arkady Bakhin for the same reason. It also listed Andrei Kartapolov, a senior Russian military commander, for being "involved in shaping and implementing the military campaign of the Russian forces in Ukraine". The text in the legal gazette is signed by EU foreign relations chief Federica Mogherini. EU leaders did, in an informal declaration in August last year, mention "aggression by Russian armed forces on Ukrainian soil".

<https://euobserver.com/foreign/127667>

Merkel ready to lift Russia sanctions if conditions met: party officials, 16.02.2016

German Chancellor Angela Merkel would like to lift European sanctions on Moscow over the Ukraine conflict sooner rather than later but does not yet see the basis to do so, deputies from her party said on Tuesday. They said Merkel told a meeting of the Christian Democratic parliamentary group on Tuesday that she would "rather today than tomorrow lift" the sanctions imposed on Russia over its role in the Ukraine crisis and its annexation of the Crimea peninsula. However, a decision to lift the sanctions would have to be based on the facts on the ground, which were not yet in place in the areas of eastern Ukraine controlled by Russian-backed separatists, the party officials reported her as saying.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-ukraine-crisis-germany-sanctions-idUSKCN0VP2AW>

Putin says EU-Russia ties will return to normal 'sooner or later', 17.02.2016

"It will happen sooner or later. Relations between Russia and the European Union will be normalized," Putin said after talks at his residence near Moscow with Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban. The EU imposed sanctions on Russia in response to Moscow's annexation of Ukraine's Crimea peninsula and the conflict in eastern Ukraine. Some European leaders, including Orban, want to restore trade relations with Russia, testing EU solidarity over the issue. Putin said that Russia will fulfill all its obligations under an agreement to help Hungary to build Paks nuclear power plant. The Russian president said that Russia sympathizes with Hungary's view on the refugee crisis, saying it is "defending its European identity". Putin said the only way to solve the migrant crisis was to restore political stability in volatile parts of the Middle East and North Africa. He said the prerequisite for that was to "destroy terrorism. That is the number one objective."

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-russia-hungary-sanctions-idUSKCN0VQ1X0>

EU says Ukraine's political leaders should maintain focus on important work towards reforms, 18.02.2016

The Ukrainian authorities have done substantial work over the past months to move forward the reforms and this work should continue and deliver results for the benefit of the Ukrainian people, according to Maja Kocijancic, the Spokeswoman of High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini.

<http://www.businessnewsworld.com/news/eu-says-ukraines-political-leaders-should-maintain-focus-on-important-work-towards-reforms.html>

<http://www.ukrinform.net/rubric-politics/1967768-eu-reacts-to-developments-in-parliament-ukraines-leadership-should-continue-reforms-without-oligarchs.html>

Pyatt: New Prosecutor General to be agreed with parliament and society, 18.02.2016

Such statement the U.S. Ambassador made at the Conference on "Constitutional Reform: Promoting an Independent, Accountable, Transparent and Efficient Judiciary in Ukraine." "First, it should be an individual who enjoys the support of the Rada and the trust and confidence of Ukrainian civil society. Ultimately, the success of any prosecutorial and judicial system rests on the respect and confidence it enjoys from the people who are governed," Pyatt said. "Second, a new Prosecutor General should be a dedicated individual committed to a reform of the institution of the Prosecutor General. In this regard, Ukraine has a successful model to follow in your new Patrol Police," he said.

<http://www.unian.info/politics/1268875-pyatt-new-prosecutor-general-to-be-agreed-with-parliament-and-society.html>

<http://ukraine.usembassy.gov/pyatt-hilton-02182016.html>

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<https://euobserver.com/foreign/127667>

European air safety body confirms safety of flights over Black Sea, Crimea remains closed, 18.02.2016

European aviation safety regulators have confirmed that air carriers can safely plan their routes over some areas of the Black Sea, but the airspace above the territory of Crimea itself remains closed. That is how Ukrainian Ministry of Infrastructure commented on the report published by the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) on Wednesday. "Two air routes - L851 and M856 that run through airspace above western part of the Black Sea can be used when planning flights over the territory," the ministry said in a statement. "However the airspace over the Crimean peninsula and its territorial waters remains closed," the Infrastructure Ministry said in a statement on media reports about the restoration of flights over Crimea.

<http://uatoday.tv/society/european-air-safety-agency-approves-resuming-commercial-flights-over-crimea-593921.html>

Poroshenko tells Biden about escalation near Maryinka, Grad attacks, 19.02.2016

"The president has informed [Biden] about the deterioration of the situation in Donbas, particularly the intensification of shelling, the use of MRLS by Russian-controlled militants and their increased activity in the area of Maryinka," the press service said.

Vice President Biden in turn condemned the worsening of the security situation and assured of Washington's permanent position of support of Ukraine's territorial integrity.

The sides also touched on the adoption of visa-free laws by the Ukrainian parliament on Thursday and agreed that it was important to continue reforms in Ukraine in the context of cooperation with the International Monetary Fund and other international financial institutions.

<http://www.unian.info/politics/1269736-poroshenko-tells-biden-about-escalation-near-maryinka-grad-attacks.html>

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-ukraine-crisis-biden-idUSKCN0VR2W5>

Polish president Duda says Russia fomenting new Cold War, 19.02.2016

Polish President Andrzej Duda accused Russia of fomenting a new Cold War through its actions in Ukraine and Syria, and said Poland was ready to help any future NATO efforts in combating the Islamic State. In an interview with Reuters, Duda hit back at comments by Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev, who last week described East-West relations as descending "into a new Cold War" and said NATO was "hostile and closed" toward Russia. "If Mr Medvedev talks about a Cold War, then looking at Russian actions, it is clear who is seeking a new Cold War," Duda, allied to Poland's ruling Law and Justice Party (PiS) said in an interview in his presidential palace in Warsaw. "If someone is undertaking aggressive military activities in Ukraine and Syria, if someone is bolstering his military presence near his neighbors ... then we have an unequivocal answer regarding who wants to start a new Cold War. Certainly, it is not Poland or the NATO alliance."

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-poland-president-nato-idUSKCN0VS1OZ>

Russian opposition's Ilya Yashin: "Russians who fought in Donbas may turn into aggressive opposition to Putin", 20.02.2016

Russian politician, deputy chairman of the PARNAS opposition party Ilya Yashin has said in an interview that the Kremlin now has full control over the occupied Donbas and explained why the Russian opposition is forced to participate in the parliament elections in the annexed Crimea at the same time condemning the very annexation. Speaking about the Kremlin's total control over the occupied Donbas, Yashin also told how many lives of the Russians how many Russian

lives every inch of the Ukrainian land is worth. According to him, a new report titled "National Security Threat," which will be presented in Moscow February 23, will unearth more evidence of engagement of the Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov's army against the Ukrainian troops. Yashin also explained why his PARNAS party, which strongly opposes the Crimea's annexation, will nevertheless be taking part in the elections to the State Duma on the territory of the seized peninsula.

<http://www.unian.info/politics/1271043-russian-oppositions-ilya-yashin-russians-who-fought-in-donbas-may-turn-into-aggressive-opposition-to-putin.html>

Yatsenyuk: Anti-corruption agencies should fight political corruption without mercy, 22.02.2016

"All newly created anti-corruption authorities should fight any attempts of political corruption by officials, Members of Parliament or any political leaders strictly and without mercy," Yatsenyuk said during the "10 Minutes with the Prime Minister" weekly program broadcast by major TV channels on Sunday evening. "When we talk about a European Ukraine, this means that Ukraine should be a state free of corruption. We have destroyed backbone mafia-style corruption at the very highest levels," he said.

<http://uatoday.tv/news/yatsenyuk-anti-corruption-agencies-should-fight-political-corruption-without-mercy-596085.html>

Bezmertnyi says Kremlin influences militants' position in peace talks, 22.02.2016

Ukraine's envoy to the Trilateral Contact Group's sub-working group on political issues in Minsk peace talks, Roman Bezmertnyi claims the Kremlin-influenced militants insist on amnesty, local elections, full control over the so-called "people's militia" and the respective territory.

<http://www.businessnewsworld.com/news/bezmertnyi-says-kremlin-influences-militants-position-in-peace-talks.html>

<http://www.unian.info/politics/1272175-bezmertnyi-says-kremlin-influences-militants-position-in-peace-talks.html>

Donbas still far from peace – German, French FMs, 22.02.2016

"Ukraine is facing unprecedented challenges. Its sovereignty has been undermined by one of its neighboring states in a way many in Europe believed impossible in the 21st century. The ensuing conflict in eastern Ukraine takes a large part of the political and financial efforts that should be aimed at the reform process. Unfortunately, we are still a good distance away from a peaceful, political solution," the two ministers wrote in an article titled "Kyiv Must Act."

<http://ukrainianwall.com/english-news/donbas-still-far-from-peace-german-french-fms/>

<http://www.faz.net/aktuell/politik/ausland/europa/gastbeitrag-kiew-muss-handeln-14083020.html>

Amnesty International: Pro-Russian paramilitaries involved in repression against Crimean Tatars, 24.02.2016

"There was no effective investigation into six cases of suspected enforced disappearances of Crimean Tatar activists in 2014 and one confirmed case of abduction, torture and killing. This was despite a plethora of evidence, including video footage, strongly suggesting that pro-Russian paramilitaries from the so-called 'Crimean self-defense force' were responsible for at least some of these crimes," the report said.

Freedoms of expression, assembly and association continued to be curtailed under the de facto administration in Crimea, after its occupation and annexation by Russia in 2014, Amnesty International said. "Those expressing pro-Ukrainian sympathies faced harsh reprisals. The Crimean Tatar community was particularly affected: its public events were regularly banned, Crimean Tatar-language media outlets were forced to close down and their leaders were subjected to regular house searches and faced criminal prosecution and detention on politically motivated charges," the report reads.

<http://www.unian.info/society/1274017-amnesty-international-pro-russian-paramilitaries-involved-in-repression-against-crimean-tatars.html>

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/research/2016/02/annual-report-201516/>

Russia restricts entry of Ukrainian-registered vehicles to Crimea – Border Guard Service, 24.02.2016

Crossing of the administrative border with the temporarily occupied territory of Crimea has been restricted due to a failure of the customs electronic database system of the Russian border guard service, according to the State Border Service of Ukraine.

<http://www.kyivpost.com/article/content/ukraine-politics/unian-russia-restricts-entry-of-ukrainian-registered-vehicles-to-crimea-border-guard-service-408815.html>

Risk remains of large-scale hostilities' resumption in Donbas – Poroshenko, 24.02.2016

"The prospect of the resumption of full-scale hostilities in the East, due to the systematic violation by the Russian aggressor of the obligations taken in Minsk is clearly visible on our radars," the president said at Ukraine's National Defense University on Wednesday. He was attending a graduation ceremony for operative-strategic and operative-tactical specialists. Ukrainian military schools have had early graduation ceremonies for two years in a row, Poroshenko said. "The reason for the reduced training period, and the early graduation, is that the military threat coming from the East remains topical in the long-term and short-term prospect, even in case of the most optimistic scenario in Donbas, and a long ceasefire developing into the political settlement and a lasting peace," the Ukrainian president said.

<http://en.interfax.com.ua/news/general/326966.html>

NATO warned of vulnerability to Moscow in eastern Europe, 26.02.2016

A chorus of voices across Nato is warning that the alliance cannot defend Europe's eastern border against an increasingly aggressive Russia.

<http://www.kyivpost.com/article/content/russia/financial-times-nato-warned-of-vulnerability-to-moscow-in-eastern-europe-408927.html>

<http://www.unian.info/world/1276257-ft-nato-warned-of-vulnerability-to-moscow-in-eastern-europe.html>

Breedlove tells Congress US must rebuild forces in Europe to confront newly aggressive Russia, 25.02.2016

The U.S. military must rebuild in Europe to face a more aggressive Russia, whose advanced submarines, weapons systems and geographic advantage have the U.S. "playing zone defense," the top U.S. commander in Europe said Thursday.

"We have about 20 years of a different paradigm to correct," Gen. Philip Breedlove, commander of U.S. European Command, said during testimony before the House Armed Services Committee. Breedlove, who has led EUCOM during the command's biggest transformation in a generation, said he did not foresee a need to return to a Cold War-style military posture. But the era of trying to make a partner of Russia is over, and key U.S. capability gaps need to be addressed, he said. "Russia has chosen to be an adversary and poses a long-term existential threat to the United States," Breedlove said.

<http://www.stripes.com/news/breedlove-tells-congress-us-must-rebuild-forces-in-europe-to-confront-newly-aggressive-russia-1.396034>

Breedlove tells Congress US must rebuild forces in Europe to confront newly aggressive Russia, 26.02.2016

"We have about 20 years of a different paradigm to correct," Gen. Philip Breedlove, commander of U.S. European Command, said during testimony before the House Armed Services Committee. Breedlove, who has led EUCOM during the command's biggest transformation in a generation, said he did not foresee a need to return to a Cold War-style military posture. But the era of trying to make a partner of Russia is over, and key U.S. capability gaps need to be addressed, he said. "Russia has chosen to be an adversary and poses a long-term existential threat to the United States," Breedlove said. "This is not the Cold War, but I do believe we are not where we need to be now in a mixture of permanently forward-stationed forces and pre-positioned stocks so that we can rapidly fall in on it," Breedlove said.

<http://www.stripes.com/news/breedlove-tells-congress-us-must-rebuild-forces-in-europe-to-confront-newly-aggressive-russia-1.396034>

EP President comments on anniversary of Nemtsov murder and Crimean annexation, 27.02.2016

"One year since Boris Nemtsov murder and two years since illegal annexation of Crimea. Two wrongs which should never have happened," Schulz wrote. Rallies are held in memory of Russian opposition leader in Moscow and in other cities of Russia and the world today to mark the first anniversary of Nemtsov's killing. Boris Nemtsov, a Russian opposition politician and former deputy prime minister who was an outspoken critic of President Vladimir Putin, was shot dead in central Moscow late on February 27, 2015. Nemtsov was shot four times in the back. Russian lawmakers refused to hold a minute's silence in honor of Boris Nemtsov.

<http://www.unian.info/world/1277419-ep-president-comments-on-anniversary-of-nemtsov-murder-and-crimean-annexation.html>

The corruption that fueled Ukraine's 2014 revolution won't go away, 28.02.2016

KIEV, Ukraine — From a wood-paneled office overlooking Kiev's Victory Avenue, Andriy Pyvovarsky, a former chief executive turned government reformer, is paid \$300 a month to manage a vast ministry more reminiscent of a "holding company." The Ministry of Infrastructure's bloated portfolio of almost 300 state-owned enterprises — including a railroad, seaports and roads — funnel cash to corrupt businessmen with connections to Ukraine's parliament, he says. For months, they have blocked his attempts to privatize them. "This is an existential issue for the deputies," meaning members of parliament, Pyvovarsky said in an interview this month. "If the state-owned companies suddenly disappear, if they're privately owned, then what's in it for them? They cannot skim from those companies anymore."

https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/the-corruption-that-fueled-ukraines-2014-revolution-wont-go-away/2016/02/24/1e4ee2e4-d04b-11e5-90d3-34c2c42653ac_story.html

Poroshenko reveals details of his visit to Crimea prior to annexation, 28.02.2016

"I made up my mind — I would go there on the day of the pseudo-voting by the Supreme Council of Crimea. I secured authority from the then Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada and [simultaneously] acting President [Oleksandr Turchynov]. My agenda included negotiations with Crimean Supreme Council members, the presidium, its chairman — I intended to offer all they had been seeking. At that time, we were ready to discuss every detail as for the legislation of Ukraine, the Crimean Constitution and ensure necessary safeguards of the people's interests, even in their understanding," Poroshenko said. At the airport, he saw troops standing in a line and blocking the airport's exit. They asked Poroshenko not to go to the Crimean Supreme Council's building and proposed holding a meeting at a certain "bath and laundry complex" outside the city of Simferopol. Poroshenko said he refused and went to the Council's building. "What I saw: the Council's building was blocked and locked while the 'referendum' was being held. There was no civilian, there was a cordon of Russian troops. Under international law, it was an absolutely clear act of annexation by another state's armed forces. And more — those were not the military of the Black Sea Fleet. They were special forces, trained for such tasks, brought from the [Russian] continent," Poroshenko said.

<http://ukrainianlaw.blogspot.com/2016/02/flashback-poroshenko-reveals-details-of.html>

Yatsenyuk promises strong banks, transparent privatization, reform in state sector, 29.02.2016

"The application of the open market contract with the EU develops the basis of our program," Yatsenyuk stated throughout the "10 Minutes with the Head of state". In his words, the federal government's activity strategy includes 2 primary areas. "The very first one is developed to make sure financial development, consisting of the development of brand-new tasks as well as hardship decrease; the various other is to bring back a social agreement, or I would certainly call it "to offer the Ukrainian individuals as well as bring back rely on the federal government." Baseding on Yatsenyuk, the federal government has actually supplied a couple of fundamental actions for financial development— they consist of the conditioning of the financial system as well as the resumption of financing at economical prices; effective as well as transparent|transparent as well as effective privatization by welcoming a wide circle of financiers; as well as the reform of state-owned business.

<http://journalfocus.com/2016/02/yatsenyuk-promises-strong-banks-transparent-privatization-reform-in-state-sector/>

Hungary's Orban says no automatic extension of sanctions against Russia, 29.02.2016

The European Union is expected to hold discussions about whether Russia has fulfilled the Minsk agreement on Ukraine and there will not be an automatic extension of sanctions against Moscow, Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban said on Monday.

"At the end of the first half of the year a serious debate can be expected within the EU about the fulfillment of the Minsk agreement," Orban told Hungarian ambassadors.

"In other words, there won't be an automatic extension of sanctions against Russia, and whatever decision we will make, that should be preceded by a calm and objective analysis about the Minsk agreement," he added.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-ukraine-crisis-russia-hungary-idUSKCN0W20WF>

Germany working on 'Marshall Plan' for Ukraine - parliament deputy, 29.02.2016

Germany is working on a 'Marshall Plan' for Ukraine, Karl-Georg Wellmann, head of the German-Ukrainian parliamentary group and German parliament member, has said.

"We have been working on a new strategy for Ukraine's stabilization and development together with the Ukrainians. With much greater financial and political efforts. This is something new, and it will supplement the Association Agreement," Wellmann said in an interview with the newspaper Segodnya. The new strategy "is just being elaborated, it has not been incorporated into official policy," he said. "This is the idea of a solid 'Marshall Plan' for restoring the economy, management, the judiciary, etc. If this 'Marshall Plan' ever starts working, that will happen only under full control and monitoring [by Germany]. Europe is Ukraine's destiny. But you will have to do your homework first. For example, that was done by the Poles after signing the Association Agreement with the EU 20 years ago," the parliamentarian said.

<http://en.interfax.com.ua/news/general/328070.html>

Poroshenko: No snap election, Ukraine won't have better parliament, 29.02.2016

"The only thing I would like to emphasize is that I cannot allow early parliamentary elections to date. Despite their declarations, certain political leaders are trying to incite early elections. We have neither time nor necessity for that. We will not have a better parliament and must learn to cooperate with this one," Poroshenko said at a meeting with representatives of the Aspen Institute. Poroshenko cited former Minister of Foreign Affairs Hennadiy Udoenko who he considers to be his teacher, saying that the key values for a politician should be honesty, professionalism and patriotism. "Unfortunately, some politicians add their ambitions and even personal indignation, which become huge obstacles. A real leader focuses primarily on state interests," he said. Ukraine needs responsible, patriotic, professional and honest leaders today, he added.

<http://www.unian.info/politics/1278897-poroshenko-no-snap-election-ukraine-wont-have-better-parliament.html>

Ukraine's Ex-President Predicts New Revolution in the Country, 29.02.2016

According to Ukraine's third president Viktor Yushchenko, the Maidan coup was unable to transform into a full-fledged political movement and failed to dismantle the old corrupted system. The current political crisis may spark a new revolution, he added.

"I can feel the smell of burning tires. And believe me this is going to be a true third Maidan [revolution], not an imitation like several days ago in Kiev," Yushchenko said.

<http://sputniknews.com/europe/20160301/1035575251/new-revolution-yushchenko.html>

<http://www.fort-russ.com/2016/02/yushchenko-calls-for-support-of.html>

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>

Rada goes with preliminary approval of Constitutional amendments on judiciary, 02.02.2016

The relevant decision was supported by 244 out of 356 MPs registered in the session hall. This draft law is now finalized. Compared with the previous one, MPs again have the right to vote for non-confidence in the Prosecutor General of Ukraine - the norm already effective today. All other provisions are identical to the draft law, previously considered by the Verkhovna Rada.

http://www.fm-tv.kiev.ua/main_news/70883/view/

The SBU detained one of leaders of "LPR" Korsunsky who earlier quietly walked about on the Kiev restaurants, 04.02.2016

SBU detained Sergey Korsunsky who is reasonably suspected of participation in the terrorist organization «an hour agoLPR», SBU Representative Elena Gitlyanskaya reported on Facebook. Korsunsky was detained in Poltavshchyna and he is suspected of commission of the crimes provided article 258-3 of the Criminal code of Ukraine.

<https://news.pn/en/RussiaInvadedUkraine/153985>

Poroshenko meeting G7 envoys to tell of Cabinet's fate, 04.02.2016

The EU official said that the President of Ukraine invited the ambassadors of the Group of Seven, to explain together with Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk, what will happen next [regarding the Ukrainian Government]. The diplomat said he wanted to know what will happen with the government and reforms. Tombinski stressed that the most important thing is continue with all the reforms that had already been developed, and to consolidate the path of reform.

<http://uatoday.tv/politics/poroshenko-meeting-g7-envoys-to-tell-of-cabinet-s-fate-584482.html>

President approved new military-administrative division of Ukraine, 05.02.2015

Military-administrative division of Ukraine sets out territorial and geographic limits of responsibility for the military governance units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine in the context of the fulfillment of administrative-military functions in the sphere of defence on land, in the air and maritime space taking into account the territory recognized temporarily occupied under the laws of Ukraine and the resolutions of the Verkhovna Rada. The necessity of new military-administrative division of Ukraine is caused by the provisions the Military Doctrine of Ukraine, which envisages the mechanisms of response to the threats to the military security of the state, particularly those from the Russian Federation.

<http://www.mil.gov.ua/en/news/2016/02/05/president-approved-new-military-administrative-division-of-ukraine/>

Twelve of 23 guns used for killing Maidan protestors identified, 06.02.2016

The SBU chief reported to the president that in the course of the investigation into the events of the Revolution of Dignity of 2013-2014, SBU undertook a number of search operations, as the result of which fragments of 23 firearms used against Maidan activists were found, the president's press service reported. The weapons were mechanically damaged, ID numbers were filed off. Following the examination, SBU identified 12 out of 23 weapons.

<http://en.interfax.com.ua/news/general/322796.html>

Ukrainian prosecutors pledge not to close case of Yanukovich's ally Ivanyushchenko, 08.02.2016

Ukrainian Prosecutor General's Office (PGO) Prosecutor Vladyslav Kutsenko says the PGO does not plan to dismiss the case of former Regions Party Member of Parliament and ex-President Viktor Yanukovich's close ally Yuriy Ivanyushchenko, also known as Yuriy Yenakiyevsky.

<http://www.newstime365.com/headlines/1545337/ukrainian-prosecutors-pledge-not-to-close-case-of-yanukovychs-ally-ivanyushchenko.html>

Prosecutors go after 'Putin's friend' for visiting occupied Crimea, 08.02.2016

The prosecutor's office has launched criminal proceedings into the fact of the visit of the Polish MEP Janusz Korwin Mikke to the Russian-occupied Crimea, that's according to the response by the Prosecutor's Office of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea to the request by MP Heorhiy Lohvinsky.

<http://www.kyivpost.com/article/content/ukraine-politics/unian-prosecutors-go-after-putins-friend-for-visiting-occupied-crimea-407640.html>

SBU suspects Russian JCCC officers of collaboration with Donbas terrorists, 09.02.2016

The SBU Security Service of Ukraine has detained two Russian officers from the Joint Centre for Control and Coordination (JCCC) of the Ceasefire and Stabilization of the Parties' Demarcation Line in Donbas as suspects for possible collaboration with terrorists of the self-proclaimed Luhansk and Donetsk People's Republics (LPR and DPR). Order services officers inspected their belongings and found the insignia of DPR and LPR, chevrons of different types, 14 manuals on military affairs marked as "distribution limited."

<http://www.unian.info/war/1259676-sbu-suspects-russian-jccc-officers-of-collaboration-with-donbas-terrorists.html>

Poroshenko and Biden discuss reform efforts, Donbas conflict and Crimea de-occupation, 12.02.2016

"The parties stressed the necessity of continuation of reforms in Ukraine, particularly in the context of cooperation with the International Monetary Fund," the press service said.

The Ukrainian president briefed Biden on the situation in Donbas. He also emphasized that Ukraine had not seen any attempts by Russia and Russian-backed militants to de-escalate the Donbas conflict.

<http://uatoday.tv/news/poroshenko-and-biden-discuss-reform-efforts-donbas-conflict-and-crimea-de-occupation-589745.html>

Restrictive requirements mar selection of anti-corruption prosecutors, 12.02.2016

The competitive selection of Ukraine's first rank-and-file anti-corruption prosecutors earlier this month was hailed by the authorities as a major step towards the rule of law.

Though it is indeed a positive development, problems abound. The requirement that bans applicants without five years of prosecutorial experience artificially limits the pool of candidates, critics say. Moreover, many applicants were so unprofessional that literally "the best of the worst" had to be chosen in some cases, they argue. As a result, only 12 of the 318 applicants were chosen on Feb. 6 in a competitive selection process by a special commission of lawmakers, lawyers, activists and law enforcement officers to become rank-and-file anti-corruption prosecutors. That will fill less than half of the 30 vacancies in the newly created institution.

<http://www.kyivpost.com/article/content/kyiv-post-plus/restrictive-requirements-mar-selection-of-anti-corruption-prosecutors-407993.html>

Ukrainian activists launch blockade of Russian trucks, 12.02.2016

The action was organized by local war veterans, volunteers, and activists, the local portal Mukachevo.net reports. It comes following Poland and Turkey closing their borders to Russian trucks. The freight transport with Russian car plate numbers has stopped at the entrance to the Nyzhni Vorota village. A part of the trucks turns around and heads back. Some drivers stay to see what happens next. "We won't give up our positions until Russia is acknowledged as an aggressor country, is banned from placing its business on Ukrainian land, and until our authorities won't stop trade with Russia," the activists claim.

<http://euromaidanpress.com/2016/02/12/ukraine-blocks-russian-trucks-following-polands-and-turkeys-blockade/#arvlbdata>

<http://uatoday.tv/society/blockade-of-russian-trucks-in-ukraine-enters-4th-day-live-updates-591263.html>

Ukrainian President starts working visit to Germany, 13.02.2016

It has been reported by the press service of the Head of State. "The President will hold bilateral meetings with leaders of the European Union, NATO, US Secretary of State John Kerry and leaders of a number of European countries," reads a statement. It is expected that the presidential panel will begin at 11:30 Kyiv time. On this day the debate of prime ministers will be also held, it will be attended by the prime ministers of Russia and France.

<http://www.ukrinform.net/rubric-politics/1964930-president-starts-his-working-visit-to-germany.html>

Ukraine officially bans transit of Russian trucks, 15.02.2016

The decision by Ukraine's Cabinet of Ministers on February 15 was made after a reciprocal move by Moscow. Ukrainian officials say Russia is violating both WTO (World Trade Organization) procedures and bilateral state agreements on road transport. The Foreign Ministry is demanding an explanation of why such a blockade was imposed. Meanwhile, Ukraine's Prime Minister says Ukraine is appealing to EU member countries to help make

Russia implement the basic rules of the WTO. Since February 12, activists in 10 regions of Ukraine have been blocking Russian transport vehicles. They argue such a move would be justified after Moscow halted Ukrainian commercial transport, in response to the Ukraine-EU agreement on free trade, which took effect January 1 2016.

<http://uatoday.tv/business/ukraine-officially-bans-transit-of-russian-trucks-591278.html>

Ukraine deputy prosecutor resigns, saying cases blocked, 15.02.2016

Ukraine's government, stymied by political infighting, faced yet another set-back on Monday when a deputy general prosecutor resigned, saying he was fed up with endemic corruption in the country's judiciary. Vitaly Kasko's resignation comes on the eve of a possible no-confidence vote against Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk's government and serves as another mark against the fraying coalition government, which has faced increased skepticism from the international community. Popular in the West for his reform-minded ideas, Kasko echoed the same frustrations with government-sanctioned corruption and cronyism that Aivaras Abromavicius expressed when he resigned from his post as economy minister on Feb. 3 and accused President Petro Poroshenko's ally in Parliament of corruption. Kasko accused Viktor Shokin, the Poroshenko-appointed general prosecutor, of derailing anti-graft cases and sidelining investigations into the 2014 shootings on Kiev's Independence Square.

<http://bigstory.ap.org/article/ed9c22035ac54fb8b68bfb9dba73fd7c/ukraine-deputy-prosecutor-resigns-saying-cases-blocked>

Poroshenko Bloc's faction deems results of Yatsenyuk's government as bad, 15.02.2016

"It has been decided to acknowledge the performance as unsatisfactory – this is the faction's decision. It was decided to commission the MPs to use signature lists to collect signatures [in support of the Cabinet's dismissal]," MP from the Petro Poroshenko Bloc's faction in parliament Serhiy Leshchenko told reporters after the faction's meeting, which was attended by President Petro Poroshenko and Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk on Monday evening. Leshchenko said his faction would collect signatures on its own.

"And in case this issue is put to vote [in parliament], we'll vote for the dismissal [of Yatsenyuk's government]," he said. This information was confirmed by another MP from the Poroshenko Bloc Volodymyr Aryev. Answering a question how the faction voted on the same issue during the Monday meeting, he said that one MP had voted against with 9 abstentions.

<http://www.unian.info/politics/1265971-poroshenko-blocs-faction-deems-results-of-yatsenyuks-government-as-bad.html>

MPs ask to revoke for resignation of Cabinet, 17.02.2016

MP from the Batkivschyna faction Ihor Lutsenko and MP from the Bloc of Petro Poroshenko Kostiantyn Usov have said that they voted for a resolution of no confidence in the government, but the counting system did not count their votes.

<http://www.newstime365.com/headlines/1593729/mps-ask-to-revoke-for-resignation-of-cabinet.html>

Rada calls on Russia to end occupation, abduction and terrorist financing, 18.02.2016

The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine has adopted a decision on the Appeal of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine to the parliaments of foreign states, parliamentary assemblies of international organizations to condemn the ongoing aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine.

<http://www.businessnewsworld.com/news/rada-calls-on-russia-to-end-occupation-abduction-and-terrorist-financing.html>

Chief prosecutor Shokin extends his leave, 18.02.2016

"Yes, indeed, I confirm that his leave has been extended," he said.

According to the law, it is impossible to dismiss a person while he or she is on official leave. As reported earlier, Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko on Tuesday called on Prosecutor General Viktor Shokin and Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk to resign.

Shokin was reported to have submitted his letter of resignation. However, later it became known that Shokin had taken leave as of Monday, and he would start work on Thursday. His duties are now performed by his first deputy Yuriy Sevruk.

<http://www.unian.info/politics/1269377-chief-prosecutor-shokin-extends-his-leave.html>

Rada coalition officially ceases to exist, 19.02.2016

"According to the submitted application, I announce that the Samopomich faction ceases to participate in the parliamentary coalition "European Ukraine," Groyzman said at a meeting of the Parliament. "It's a pity, but I think we will continue political consultations and find the right way out for the country from the current situation," he said. As reported, Ukraine's Samopomich and Batkivschyna factions demanded the resignation of the government. On February 16, the Verkhovna Rada failed to score the needed number of votes for passing a vote of no confidence in the Cabinet of Ministers and refused to dismiss Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk.

<http://www.unian.info/politics/1270004-rada-coalition-officially-ceases-to-exist.html>

<http://www.fort-russ.com/2016/02/european-ukraine-ceases-to-exist.html>

http://en.censor.net.ua/news/375186/coalition_ruptures_as_samopomich_faction_quits

Zaporizhia City Council declares Russia aggressor state, DPR and LPR terrorist organizations, 19.02.2016

Zaporizhia City Council on Friday made a decision to declare the Russian Federation an aggressor country and the self-proclaimed DPR and LPR terrorist organizations.

<http://www.businessnewsworld.com/news/zaporizhia-city-council-declares-russia-aggressor-state-dpr-and-lpr-terrorist-organizations.html>

Petro Poroshenko and his wife Maryna Poroshenko honored memory of the fallen Heroes of the Heavenly Hundred, 20.02.2016

The presidential couple put icon lamps near the Memorial Cross on the Alley of Heroes of the Heavenly Hundred, a place where brave Ukrainians had been killed.

<http://www.ukrinform.net/rubric-politics/1969076-poroshenko-and-his-wife-honored-memory-of-fallen-heroes-of-the-heavenly-hundred.html>

<http://www.ukrinform.net/rubric-politics/1969167-poroshenko-not-a-single-criminal-to-remain-unpunished.html>

Ukrainian president's office reports release of four servicemen from militant captivity, 20.02.2016

"Ukraine has got four of its soldiers freed from captivity," the Ukrainian presidential administration's spokesman for ATO, Oleksandr Motuzianik said.

<http://en.interfax.com.ua/news/general/326400.html>

RADA REGISTERS DRAFT PRESIDENTIAL CONSENT FOR SHOKIN DISMISSAL, 22.02.2016

However, the wording of the order has not been published yet. As reported earlier, on February 19, a letter of resignation by Prosecutor General of Ukraine Viktor Shokin was submitted to the Presidential Administration. On the same day, Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko submitted to the Verkhovna Rada a motion for granting his consent to the dismissal of Shokin from the post of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine.

<http://x-news.com.ua/rada-registers-draft-presidential-consent-for-shokin-dismissal-116589/>

PGO finds indirect evidence of Yanukovich ordering Maidan dispersal, 22.02.2016

Based on a batch of indirect evidence, the decision to disperse the Euromaidan protesters was taken by ex-president of Ukraine Viktor Yanukovich, according to Serhiy Horbatiuk, head of the special investigations department at the prosecutor general's office of Ukraine.

<http://ukrainianwall.com/english-news/pgo-finds-indirect-evidence-of-yanukovich-ordering-maidan-dispersal/>

"Maidan-3" canceled: almost all tents in Kyiv center dismantled, 22.02.2016

Municipal utility services Monday afternoon pulled down almost all of the tents set up earlier on the Maidan Nezalezhnosti square in the Kyiv center. MP Boryslav Bereza wrote that everything is being cleaned and wound up in the center of the capital.

<http://ukrainianwall.com/english-news/maidan-3-canceled-almost-all-tents-in-kyiv-center-dismantled/>

Transcript of NSDC meeting on Crimea annexation warns about Russia troops, 22.02.2016

The transcript says that, according to Ukrainian Defense Ministry updates provided by the then Acting Defense Minister Ihor Tenyukh, "a concentration of Russian forces along the Russian-Ukrainian border has been taking place under the guise of military drills of the RF armed forces." The documents were posted by MP Boryslav Bereza.

<http://ukrainianwall.com/english-news/transcript-of-nsdc-meeting-on-crimea-annexation-warns-about-russia-troops/>

<http://uatoday.tv/politics/us-and-germany-asked-ukraine-not-to-take-any-actions-in-2014-in-response-to-russia-s-takeover-of-crimea-596623.html>

<http://www.kyivpost.com/article/content/ukraine-politics/unian-us-germany-asked-ukraine-not-to-start-active-military-operation-in-2014-nsdc-transcript-408666.html>

Ukraine coordinates actions with Germany, France pending Normandy meeting in Paris, 23.02.2016

"The sides coordinated further actions on the eve of the Foreign Ministers' meeting in the Normandy Four format that will be held in Paris on March 3," the presidential administration reported. Poroshenko greeted Jean-Marc Ayrault with his appointment as minister of foreign affairs. The Ukrainian president particularly noted that Ayrault's first foreign visit was to Ukraine. The sides also discussed the situation in the east of Ukraine and the fulfillment of the Minsk agreements. Poroshenko expressed concern over numerous violations of the ceasefire by Russia-controlled militants and their use of banned weapons. The Ukrainian president and the German and French ministers agreed that the political will of Russia is needed to end the shelling.

<http://www.unian.info/politics/1273014-ukraine-coordinates-actions-with-germany-france-pending-normandy-meeting-in-paris.html>

Poroshenko signs notorious "party dictatorship" law, 25.02.2016

Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko has signed notorious "party dictatorship" bill No. 3700 into law, which will let parties delete party candidates from their election lists after elections, according to an announcement on the page of the law on the parliament's official website.

<http://www.worldnewsmagazine.com/news/1643595/poroshenko-signs-notorious-party-dictatorship-law.html>

Poltorak outlines extent of next possible wave of mobilization, 27.02.2016

"A total of 45,000 personnel are being dismissed now. Even if mobilization is announced, this figure will stand at 10,000-12,000, less than it was before," Poltorak said. The minister stressed that the number of contract soldiers increased significantly after the improvement in material support for the army. "Previously 200-300 people joined the contract military service monthly, this month alone 9,000 people have been enrolled following the first increase in monetary remuneration. We already have 7,000 of conscripts," the minister noted. Poltorak also said that the next wave of mobilization would depend on the situation along the front line. "Whether or not mobilization will be announced depends on the situation.

<http://www.unian.info/society/1277420-poltorak-outlines-extent-of-next-possible-wave-of-mobilization.html>

Ukraine calls on UN to beef up international presence in Donbas, 29.02.2016

Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations Volodymyr Yelchenko has called on the United Nations to enhance an international presence in Donbas, eastern Ukraine, by deploying UN peacekeepers and OSCE police.

<http://www.kyivpost.com/article/content/ukraine-politics/unian-ukraine-calls-on-un-to-beef-up-international-presence-in-donbas-409124.html>

Terrorism / Separatism

OSCE tower camera reveals movement of ATO forces to militants, 01.02.2016

"Our troops are in plain sight. The camera may even see their faces. But the electronic eye fails to record separatist tanks and mortars. It can't get to them – they are 3,500 meters away," Tsaplienko said. The journalist believes that the information about the movement of ATO forces is no secret to the Russian proxies, as the OSCE video signal is streamed to Kyiv, Mariupol and Donetsk. "The main 'supervisor' of the reality show is right there. On the day of the solemn installation of the white tower, the OSCE SMM Principal Deputy Chief Monitor Alexander Hug was asked whether he could guarantee that the militants would not get video from surveillance cameras, and his answer was negative," Tsaplienko said.

http://www.fm-tv.kiev.ua/main_news/70843/view/

No actual de-escalation in Donbas: militants use banned weapons against Ukraine forces, 01.02.2016

The combined Russian-separatist forces attacked Ukrainian positions in eastern Ukraine 53 times in the past 24 hrs, including with the use of the banned weapons, ATO press center wrote.

<http://www.theworldnewstimes.com/post/1811675/no-actual-deescalation-in-donbas-militants-use-banned-weapons-against-ukraine-forces.html>

Ukraine intel says Russia is mulling Donbas offensive, 01.02.2016

Command of the Russian occupation forces is intensifying measures to enhance the combat capability of the 1st and 2nd Army Corps of the Center of Territorial Troops of the Southern Military District of the Russian Armed Forces, according to the report by the Main Directorate of Intelligence of the Ukrainian Defense Ministry.

<http://www.breakingnewspoint.com/story/2495187/ukraine-intel-says-russia-is-mulling-donbas-offensive.html>

Latest from OSCE Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) to Ukraine, 01.02.2016

The SMM observed a sharp increase in the number of ceasefire violations in Donetsk region on both 30 and 31 January[1]. In particular, positioned at a "DPR"-controlled area 6km north-west of Donetsk city centre between 8:55 and 14:35hrs[2] on 30 January, it heard, among other ceasefire violations, 91 undetermined explosions, 101 bursts of small arms (60) and heavy-machine-gun (41) fire and in total 544 single shots from both small arms and heavy-machine-guns from locations approximately 2.5-6km north, north-east, west, and north-west of its position. The following day at the same location, between 9:00 and 15:00hrs, the SMM heard 47 undetermined explosions, as well as five bursts of small arms and eight bursts of heavy-machine-guns 5-8km to the south-west and north-west.

http://www.osce.org/ukraine-smm/219716#_ftn1

ATO forces clash with DPR unit near Mariupol, 02.02.2016

According to Mariupol sector press officer Oleksandr Kindsfater, a subversive reconnaissance group of the Donetsk People's Republic (DPR) moved to the Ukrainian army positions near the village of Pyschevyk. A military clash lasted until 19:40 Kyiv time. Kindsfater said that the Ukrainian military returned fire forcing the enemy to retreat to their initial positions. "At 21:25, 23:15, and 23:17, the DPR units started firing rocket-propelled grenades and small arms on the Ukrainian positions near the town of Maryinka. The Ukrainian servicemen didn't fire back," the report says. The information on casualties among the Ukrainian soldiers is being specified.

http://www.fm-tv.kiev.ua/main_news/70886/view/

OSCE partially responsible for latest escalation in Donbas - Ukraine's military, 02.02.2016

The shelling of the village of Zaitseve by pro-Russian mercenaries intensified in the last days. In addition to grenade launchers, heavy machine guns and small arms, the enemy fired on the Ukrainian army positions from banned 82mm and 120mm mortars. The Command of ATO forces in Donetsk and Luhansk regions was forced to announce the temporary closure of the checkpoint in Zaitseve to ensure safety of residents. On February 1, the Ukrainian members of the Joint Centre for Control and Coordination (JCCC) of the Ceasefire and Stabilization of the Parties' Demarcation Line in Donbas informed the representatives of the OSCE mission about this decision. "We have to state the fact that the OSCE monitors do not respond to the increased militant attacks on ATO positions in the village of Zaitseve and other settlements. Consequently, through their inaction, to some extent, the OSCE monitors share the responsibility for militant attacks on Zaitseve, closure of the checkpoint in Zaitseve and the escalation of the conflict in Donbas," the press center of ATO wrote.

<http://uatoday.tv/news/osce-partially-responsible-for-latest-escalation-in-donbas-ukraine-s-military-583294.html>

OSCE confirmed the shelling Zaitseva of prohibited weapons, 02.02.2016

"Special monitoring mission of the OSCE is concerned about developments in Zaytsev. We are in Zaytsev as in areas that controlled by the government, and the uncontrolled territories almost daily. Last Saturday, when our patrol was in Gorlovka heard about 46 explosions in between 30 minutes and 160 bursts of heavy machine gun that went in the direction Zaitsev, "- he said. He said the patrol OSCE recorded in Zaytsev funnel of shells with a diameter of 120 mm, indicating that the use of banned Minsk agreements weapons. "Today our patrol was Zaitsev the territory controlled government. Our patrol checked and made an assessment of 3 fresh craters.

Observers mission crater were caused by 120-mm mortar fire that came from the south. And this information will be part of today's report. The mission sends 75 patrols each day" said Huh.

<http://ukrainiancrisis.net/news/16911>

Russian proxies attack ATO forces 56 times in last day, 02.02.2016

The combined Russian-separatist forces attacked Ukrainian army positions in eastern Ukraine 56 times in the past 24 hours, the ATO press center wrote on Facebook early Tuesday.

<http://www.theworldnewstimes.com/post/1818183/russian-proxies-attack-ato-forces-56-times-in-last-day.html>

Ukraine intel tips OSCE SMM about militants' MBTs, artillery, Grads, 03.02.2016

"The OSCE representatives were provided with information about the deployment of banned main battle tanks, artillery systems and 122mm Grad multiple rocket launchers near the towns of Stakhanov, Makiyivka, the city of Donetsk and the village of Manuilivka," the report says. At the same time, the intelligence says that the enemy fire on the positions of the Ukrainian troops has intensified. "The militants fired small arms, rocket-propelled grenades and 82mm and 120mm mortars 55 times in the past 24 hours, including 16 times in the villages of Luhanske, Zaitseve, Mayorsk, Troyitske, 38 times in the towns of Avdiyivka, Krasnohorivka, Maryinka, the villages of Nevelske, Opytne, Pisky, Novomykhailivka, and one time in the village of Vodiane in the Mariupol sector," the report reads.

<http://www.unian.info/war/1254059-ukraine-intel-tips-osce-smm-about-militants-mbts-artillery-grads.html>

Latest from OSCE Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) to Ukraine, 03.02.2016

The SMM recorded a number of ceasefire violations in Donetsk region[1]. While in "DPR"-controlled Debaltseve (58km north-east of Donetsk) between 19:11 and 20:41hrs, [2] the SMM heard 102 undetermined explosions and two bursts of heavy-machine-gun fire in areas 7-15km north-west of its position. In "DPR"-controlled Horlivka (39km north-east of Donetsk), between 19:00 and 19:30hrs, the SMM heard 23 undetermined explosions, including 120mm mortar, 10km north of its position. In government-controlled Svitlodarsk (57km north-east of Donetsk) between 16:23 and 17:45hrs, the SMM heard approximately 100 undetermined artillery explosions 10-12km south-west of its position and 15 bursts of heavy-machine-gun fire 2-5km south-east of its position. While in "DPR"-controlled Donetsk city, between 17:02 and 19:21hrs, the SMM heard four undetermined explosions 8-10km west-north-west and north-west of its location. On 3 February, positioned at "DPR"-controlled Donetsk railway station (6km north-west of Donetsk city centre) between 07:55 and 14:58hrs the SMM heard 37 undetermined explosions, and two bursts of small-arms fire in areas 3-8km to the west and north-west. In government-controlled Marinka (23km south-west of Donetsk), between 10:44 and 13:50hrs, the SMM heard five undetermined explosions in areas 1-2km south-south-east.

<http://www.osce.org/ukraine-smm/220581>

'Friendly' fire: Russian invaders fire Grad from Kominternove towards DPR-held village, 04.02.2016

"From 16:00 to 17:00 local time on Wednesday, they were using 122mm Grad MLRS's to fire from the village of Kominternove, which was invaded by Russian mercenaries late last year, towards the village of Sakhanka in the Mariupol sector," the ATO HQ said. The occupiers stationed in Kominternove also fired 120mm mortars, anti-aircraft and anti-tank missile systems in the direction of the village of Oktiabr, which is also controlled by DPR terrorist organization.

<http://www.unian.info/war/1254848-friendly-fire-russian-invaders-launch-grad-from-kominternove-towards-dpr-held-village.html>

ATO headquarters, militants decided to wipe out Zaitsev and a few points, 04.02.2016

"Instead of cease fire and to create safe conditions for the resumption of KPVV "Zaitsev" guidance so-called NPT, has decided to wipe out the entire town, " - stressed in the ATO press center. "According to current information Staff ATO militants NPT and the FSC to increase its financial, technical and other types of support from Russia, spread rumors and openly misleading their Russian curators to prepare forces ATO to attack " , - the ATO press center reported." Russian curators provided information received allegedly from the local population living in controlled Ukrainian government territory, a large concentration of troops and equipment of the Armed Forces of Ukraine for directions alleged a possible attack".

<http://ukrainiancrisis.net/news/16949>

Militants attack ATO forces over 80 times in last day, use banned weapons, 05.02.2016

The combined Russian-separatist forces attacked Ukrainian army positions in eastern Ukraine more than 80 times in the past 24 hours, using banned weapons, the ATO press center wrote.

<http://www.breakingnewspoint.com/story/2520139/militants-attack-ato-forces-over-80-times-in-last-day-use-banned-weapons.html>

Russia prepares fake news on "Ukrainian refugees" in occupied Donbas – Ukraine intel, 05.02.2016

Russia is preparing another provocation in the militant-controlled territory of Donbas in order to discredit Ukraine in the international arena, according to the Main Directorate of Intelligence of the Ukrainian Defense Ministry. It is noted that under the guidance of the Department of Information warfare of the Territorial Center of the Southern Military District of the Russian Federation, fake news pieces are being prepared in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine about the so-called "refugees from Ukraine," who have allegedly fled to the "DPR" and "LPR" due to an "extremely difficult socio-economic situation and political persecution" in Ukraine. "By means of threats and promises, the Russian information warfare experts are trying to force the Ukrainian refugees to provide anti-Ukrainian comments in the staged reports of Russian media, during the meetings with the Russian-controlled foreign journalists," the intelligence said.

<http://www.unian.info/war/1256789-russia-prepares-fake-news-on-ukrainian-refugees-in-occupied-donbas-ukraine-intel.html>

Militants attack ATO forces 84 times in last day, use mortars, anti-aircraft guns, 06.02.2016

The combined Russian-separatist forces attacked Ukrainian army positions in eastern Ukraine 84 times in the past 24 hours, using banned weapons, the ATO press center wrote.

<http://www.businessnewsworld.com/news/militants-attack-ato-forces-84-times-in-last-day-use-mortars-anti-aircraft-guns.html>

Situation in east Ukraine is tense as Russian-backed forces attack 47 times in 24 hours, 07.02.2016

'The invaders fired 82mm and 102 mm mortars on Ukrainian army positions near the town of Krasnohorivka. Spokesmen add that the fighting in the combat zone was most intense near Donetsk, as well as near other towns close to the militant-held city. Ukrainian positions near Zaitseve and Mayorsk came under mortar shelling. No Ukrainian soldiers were killed over the past 24 hours, but one serviceman was wounded as a result of sniper fire.

<http://uatoday.tv/politics/situation-in-east-ukraine-is-tense-as-russian-backed-forces-attack-47-times-in-24-hours-586270.html>

Police report: 49 children fell victim of hostilities in Donetsk region, 07.02.2016

Since the beginning of hostilities in the east of Ukraine, 49 children have been killed in Donetsk region, another 138 have been wounded, according to the report by the press service of the office of National Police in the Donetsk region.

<http://www.breakingnewspoint.com/story/2531096/police-report-49-children-fell-victim-of-hostilities-in-donetsk-region.html>

Donbas seeing escalation: 61 attacks on ATO forces recorded in last day, 08.02.2016

The combined Russian-separatist forces attacked Ukrainian army positions in eastern Ukraine 61 times in the past 24 hours, the ATO press center wrote.

<http://www.newstime365.com/headlines/1543950/donbas-seeing-escalation-61-attacks-on-ato-forces-recorded-in-last-day.html>

Truck hit mine in ATO area, 08.02.2016

Truck "Ural", carrying food for the soldiers of the 16th separate mechanized infantry battalion of the Ukraine's Armed Forces, hit a mine. Three people were injured. The truck cannot be restored that complicates the delivery of food.

<http://gha.com.ua/en/events-incidents/truck-hit-mine-in-ato-area-photo/135952/>

Ex-convicts among Donbas militants deteriorating crime situation – Ukraine intel, 08.02.2016

"Due to the recruitment of former convicts to the 1st and 2nd army corps, the crime situation in the temporarily occupied territories of eastern Ukraine continues to deteriorate," the report says.

<http://www.unian.info/war/1258541-ex-convicts-among-donbas-militants-deteriorating-crime-situation-ukraine-intel.html>

Russian armed forces on high alert in combat readiness drills, 08.02.2016

Russia's defence minister put forces in the capital of occupied Crimea, the furthest South-West of Russian occupied territory, on high alert on Monday.

Russian naval forces and marines held drills in and near the port of Sevastopol in Crimea. Warships could then be seen heading out to sea while truckloads of marines and crews of armoured vehicles occupied the land.

<http://uatoday.tv/politics/russia-drills-587030.html>

Russian proxies attack ATO troops 45 times in last day, 09.02.2016

"The militants fired rocket-propelled grenades and small arms on our fortified positions in the villages of Opytne, Luhanske, Troyitske, Zaitseve, Mayorsk, the town of Avdiyivka and Butivka coal mine," the report says. It is noted that the occupiers used mortars to shell the Ukrainian fortified positions in the village of Pisky, which is near the ruined Donetsk airport, as well as the villages of Hnutove and Troyitske, and the town of Maryinka. In addition to grenade launchers, heavy machine guns and small arms, the enemy fired 82mm mortars and an anti-aircraft gun, and used infantry fighting vehicles to attack the Ukrainian fortified positions near the town of Krasnohorivka.

http://www.fm-tv.kiev.ua/main_news/71171/view/

Militants fire grenades on Ukrainian troops in Pisky, Opytne, Avdiyivka, 10.02.2016

"The situation remained tense in the suburbs of Donetsk where the occupiers used rocket-propelled grenades and heavy machine guns to shell our positions in the villages of Pisky, Opytne, and the town of Avdiyivka," the ATO press center said. The enemy also used grenade launchers of various systems and small arms to shell the Ukrainian fortified positions near the town of Maryinka. "The militants from the temporarily occupied town of Horlivka fired mortars and grenade launchers on our fortified positions in the villages of Zaitseve and Mayorsk," the report added. "In the Mariupol sector, the Russian-backed mercenaries intensified near the villages of Talakivka and Shyrokyne, where our positions were attacked with mortar shells. The enemy also fired grenade launchers and small arms there," the press center said.

<http://www.unian.info/war/1260474-militants-fire-grenades-on-ukrainian-troops-in-pisky-opytne-avdiyivka.html>

Three killed when minibus hits landmine near Maryinka check point, 10.02.2016

"At least three people are dead. An ambulance has left for the scene from the Ukrainian government controlled side, the number of casualties is being clarified. This happened 600-700 meters from the Maryinka checkpoint. The minibus was coming from the 'gray zone' and was trying to overtake the row of cars. There were signs warning of a minefield," he told the agency. According to preliminary information provided by the press service of the State Border Service of Ukraine, there were five people in the car. Two of them died on the spot and one was seriously injured and was taken to the medical institution at Kurakhove, where he died from the injuries.

<http://en.interfax.com.ua/news/general/323478.html>

<http://www.digitalnewsworld.com/news/death-toll-of-minibus-hitting-mine-at-maryinka-checkpoint-rises-to-four.html>

Flexing muscles: Luhansk Gov-r explains escalation in Donbas by Putin's troops, 11.02.2016

"The goal is to show muscles to Ukraine, Europe, and the U.S.: 'Give us Constitutional amendments, give us elections,' and all that nonsense... On the other hand, this is a provocation aimed at causing the opposite, and quite expected, reaction of the Ukrainian military and then once again to accuse them of shelling peaceful cities," said Tuka. Last month militants have increased the number and the intensity of the attacks on the positions of ATO forces, the Luhansk Governor said. Tuka stressed that the situation is quite dangerous, but it can't be viewed excluding the context of what Russia has gotten itself into in Syria. The official suggests that the Kremlin does not have enough prowess to wage war on two fronts. But at the same time, the Ukrainian official noted that the latest escalation is a saber-rattling ahead of the new stage of Minsk talks.

<http://www.unian.info/war/1262465-flexing-muscles-luhansk-gov-r-explains-escalation-in-donbas-by-putins-troops.html>

Militants attack Ukrainian troops 50 times with hotspots in eastern Ukraine, 11.02.2016

The combined Russian-separatist forces attacked Ukrainian army positions in eastern Ukraine 50 times in the past 24 hours, the ATO press center wrote. "The enemy fired rocket-propelled grenades and heavy machine guns on our positions in the villages of Pisky [near the ruined Donetsk airport], Opytne, the town of Avdiyivka and Butivka coal mine," the report says.

<http://uatoday.tv/news/militants-attack-ukrainian-troops-50-times-with-hotspots-in-eastern-ukraine-588943.html>

Russia beefs up military forces in occupied Crimea, 11.02.2016

Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu on Thursday briefed Putin on the progress of the snap drills of the Russian occupation forces in Crimea.

<http://www.weeklynewsbrochure.com/news/3333739/russia-beefs-up-military-forces-in-occupied-crimea.html>

Situation in Donbas still tense: militants attack Ukrainian forces 53 times in last day, 12.02.2016

The situation in the Donbas conflict zone remains tense. The Russian-backed gangs continue shelling of fortified positions of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. "The militants fired mortars on our positions in the villages of Zaitseve, Pisky, and the town of Krasnohorivka. In addition, they fired an anti-aircraft gun in Krasnohorivka," the report says. The enemy also fired grenade launchers of various systems and heavy machine guns on the Ukrainian fortified positions in the villages of Troyitske, Verkhniotoretske, Mayorsk, Novhorodske, Luhanske, Opytne, and Butivka coal mine.

<http://uatoday.tv/news/situation-in-donbas-still-tense-militants-attack-ukrainian-forces-53-times-in-last-day-589733.html>

First death sentence pronounced in "DPR", 12.02.2016

"Such decisions are difficult to make. We already have verdicts to capital punishment. To date, there has been only one such verdict," said "acting chairman of the military tribunal" of the "DPR" Lyudmila Strateychuk, according to the report. According to her, "the man sentenced to death has committed crimes against civilians, he was also indicted of covering up crimes, acquisition and possession of weapons and a number of other grand offenses."

http://www.fm-tv.kiev.ua/main_news/71369/view/

Number of militant attacks reaches nearly 70 times in 24 hrs, 13.02.2016

The overall situation in the ATO area remains tense: militants opened fire 67 times on the positions of Ukrainian troops, using small arms, rocket-propelled grenades, 82 mm and 120 mm mortars, the ATO press center reported. Shelling of Ukrainian fortified positions was launched along the whole demarcation line.

<http://uatoday.tv/news/number-of-militant-attacks-reaches-nearly-70-times-in-24-hrs-590483.html>

Russian-separatist forces attack Ukrainian forces 69 times in last day, 14.02.2016

The militants fired 82mm and 120mm mortars at the Ukrainian positions near the village of Zaitseve and Mayorske. In addition, the enemy fired mortars at fortified positions near the village of Krasnohorivka, Verkhniotoretske, Talakivka and Pavlopol.

<http://uatoday.tv/politics/russian-separatist-forces-attack-ukrainian-forces-69-times-in-last-day-590705.html>

<http://uatoday.tv/politics/militants-attack-ukrainian-positions-twice-near-mariupol-590720.html>

Militants storm Ukrainian positions twice near Mariupol, 14.02.2016

In the Sector "M" of the ATO zone, the illegal armed groups of the so-called Donetsk People's Republic carried out two assaults on the positions of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, said Oleksandr Kindsfater, the spokesman of the Sector "M" forces. According to the updated information, five servicemen were wounded in the attacks.

<http://www.kyivpost.com/article/content/ukraine-politics/unian-militants-storm-ukrainian-positions-twice-near-mariupol-408058.html>

Fighting flares up in eastern Ukraine: OSCE says situation is 'dire', 15.02.2016

Russian-backed separatist forces are using heavy caliber weapons on government positions near Donetsk in eastern Ukraine. The Ukrainian military reports coming under fire from mortars with a caliber of 120mm near the war-torn villages of Pisky and Horlivka. European security

watchdog the OSCE says there is a "dire" humanitarian situation along most of the line of contact. The head of the OSCE states "circumstantial evidence" shows weapons are flowing across the Ukrainian border from Russia.

<http://uatoday.tv/politics/militants-attack-ukrainian-forces-71-times-in-last-day-clash-near-hnutove-reported-591293.html>
<http://uatoday.tv/politics/skynews-east-ukraine-violence-surges-591086.html>

Militants attack ATO forces 71 times in last day, clash near Hnutove, 15.02.2016

"The Russian-backed militants shell the Ukrainian positions from mortars with increased intensity. Over the last 24 hours, the enemy used this type of weapons 20 times," the report says. The enemy used mortars against the Ukrainian fortified positions. They fired 120mm mortars, grenade launchers, and small arms on our fortified positions, the press center said.

<http://ukrainianwall.com/english-news/militants-attack-ato-forces-71-times-in-last-day-clash-near-hnutove-reported/>

Sharp increase in militant attacks on ATO forces recorded: self-propelled artillery, mortars fired, 16.02.2016

The situation in the Donbas conflict zone has worsened: the illegal armed groups increased the number of attacks, using mortars with increased intensity, the ATO press center wrote.

<http://www.dailynewsupdates24.com/story/3476310/sharp-increase-in-militant-attacks-on-ato-forces-recorded-selfpropelled-artillery-mortars-fired.html>
<http://ukraineunderattack.org/en/6606-russia-s-proxies-fired-ato-forces-with-prohibited-weapons-10-times-over-evening.html>

Civilians equally suffer on both sides of the contact line, 16.02.2016

"SMM team visited Zaitseve today – a settlement divided by the contact line, but not by the problems people face," said Hug. "We have seen no difference between the situation of civilians on both sides of the contact line, neither in the pain of the civilians we spoke to, nor in the damages we have observed." He reminded that the sides have committed to ceasefire to end the suffering of the civilian population. "While we were there, not a single shot was fired. However, as residents on both sides of the contact line told me, once the SMM leaves shelling starts again. This shows that the sides can stop the firing. And if they can stop it, they must stop it," Hug stated.

<http://www.osce.org/ukraine-smm/222611>

Militants employed Grad at Donetsk direction. 60 attacks recorded over past day, - ATO Staff, 17.02.2016

Pro-Russian gangs do not stop shelling Ukrainian army positions, disregarding any agreements on de-escalation of the conflict in eastern Ukraine. Apart from grenade launchers and mortars, invaders used multiple launch rocket systems at night. As reported, militants employed Grad rocket systems against Ukrainian army positions in Pervomaiske and Nevelske. ATO forces' strong points in Pisky, Krasnohorivka, Shyrokyne, Lebedynske, as well as near Chermalyk and Vodiane came under mortar fire. "Terrorists used grenade launchers and small arms to attack our strongholds in Opytne, Marinka, Luhanske, Novhorodske, Zaitseve, Troitske, and Novoselivka. In addition, Ukrainian army positions in Opytne were hit with an anti-tank guided missile," the report reads.

http://en.censor.net.ua/news/374702/militants_employed_grad_at_donetsk_direction_60_attacks_recorded_over_past_day_ato_staff

Russian proxies attack ATO troops 47 times in last day, 18.02.2016

The situation was most tense near the militant-held city of Donetsk and the separatist-controlled town of Horlivka. The enemy fired grenade launchers of various systems and heavy machine guns on the Ukrainian fortified positions in the villages of Opytne, Pisky, Troyitske, Zaitseve, Novhorodske and Luhanske. In addition, the militants fired 82mm mortars on the town of Maryinka and the village of Opytne. The occupiers also fired mortars, anti-aircraft guns and infantry fighting vehicles six times on the Ukrainian positions not far from the town of Krasnohorivka. "The Russian-backed mercenaries again used banned weapons. They fired 122mm artillery system on our fortified positions in the direction of Horlivka coal mine 6-7," the press center said.

<http://ukrainianwall.com/english-news/russian-proxies-attack-ato-troops-47-times-in-last-day/>

Six of 20 militant attacks on Thursday aimed at Maryinka, incursion expected in 24 hours, 18.02.2016

The situation remains tense near Maryinka, whose territory, according to Ukrainian intelligence reports, the enemy plans to make an incursion into in the next 24 hours. "During the day, the enemy opened direct fire on Ukrainian troops deployed near that town six times. The occupiers used grenade launchers and infantry combat vehicles," the ATO HQ said. The checkpoint in Maryinka was under enemy sniper fire. Local residents from the militant-held town of Donetsk report that the combined Russian-separatist troops have been massing forces and military hardware in the city's Petrovsky district to attack on Maryinka. "Since the beginning of the day, Russian-backed illegal armed formations have opened fire on ATO forces 20 times in total," the ATO HQ said. "During the day the enemy used grenade launchers of different systems to shell our strongholds," it said.

<http://www.unian.info/war/1269627-six-of-20-militant-attacks-on-thursday-aim-maryinka-incursion-expected-in-24-hours.html>

OSCE reports about 88 militant tanks along Donbas contact line, 19.02.2016

"We regularly see, for example large numbers of weapons in particular tanks just immediately beyond the withdrawal lines – they sit there, armed and battle-ready, within easy reach of the contact line. Last week, for instance, we saw a total of 88 tanks at three locations in areas not controlled by the [Ukrainian] government," OSCE Principal Deputy Chief Monitor in Ukraine Alexander Hug said in Kyiv. "Clearly, not all weapons have been withdrawn from the security zone. We continued to note that some weapons have been declared as withdrawn, most are still not verified as such, and many more have not even been declared," he said. He regretted that a year after the signing of the Minsk package he should still remind the sides of "what the security zone is supposed to be." "It is above all meant to be a zone without danger, a place of security. [But] with their shelling and firing, and positioning of men and weapons, the sides have instead created a zone of insecurity. And this is not what they have committed to," he added.

<http://www.unian.info/war/1270939-osce-reports-about-88-militant-tanks-along-donbas-contact-line.html>

Russian proxies fire grenade launchers on ATO forces overnight, 19.02.2016

Russian-separatists attacked Ukrainian army positions in eastern Ukraine 12 times overnight, using grenade launchers, heavy machine guns and small arms, the ATO press center wrote.

<http://www.businessnewsworld.com/news/russian-proxies-fire-grenade-launchers-on-ato-forces-overnight.html>

Russian proxies attack ATO troops 54 times in last day, situation tense, 20.02.2016

Russian-separatists attacked Ukrainian army positions in eastern Ukraine 54 times in the past 24 hours, including 28 times in the Donetsk sector and 26 times in the Mariupol sector, the ATO press center reported.

<http://www.businessnewsworld.com/news/russian-proxies-attack-ato-troops-54-times-in-last-day-situation-tense.html>

Russia plans to replace “DPR” and “LPR” leaders with former Ukrainian authorities currently hiding in Russia – Main Intelligence Department, 20.02.2016

Situation in the occupied areas of Donbas keeps deteriorating in various sectors. Militant leadership is getting ready to upcoming “local elections” scheduled for April 24. They reinforce their impact by appointing trusted representatives on the spot. People show no interest in political processes of the region. For example, Stanislav Kim became mayor of Horlivka, he was earlier heading military-patriotic club “Shkola pobedy” (school of victory) in Dnipropetrovsk. At the same time administrative resources are used to increase voter turnout. Public sector employees are forced to enlist in organizations headed by Plotnitsky and Zakharchenko, otherwise they are threatened to be fired. Members of the above organizations are banned from visiting government-controlled territories, said Vadym Skibitskyi, representative of the Main Intelligence Department, Ministry of Defense of Ukraine. “Russian authorities are considering replacement of existing leaders of the so-called “DPR” and “LPR” who almost lost their credibility among locals with former representatives of Ukrainian authorities who are hiding in Russia,” he added.

<http://uacrisis.org/40376-gur-mou>

Ukraine intel reports Russian army's preparation for amphibious landing near Mariupol, 21.02.2016

The Ukrainian intelligence agency has received confirmation that "the 9th Separate Motorized Rifle Regiment from in the city of Novoazovsk has been enhanced by 1st Army Corps units, including the 810th Separate Marine Brigade of the Coastal Defense Troops of the Russian Federation's Black Sea Fleet." The Ukrainian intelligence service reports that the command of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation took measures "to 'legalize' the presence of Russian Marines in that area and to conceal the fact that the amphibious operation is being prepared." In particular, "under an order issued on February 12, 2016, by so-called Chairman of the [self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic] DPR Alexander Zakharchenko, the 9th Separate Motorized Rifle Regiment was renamed the 9th Special Motorized Rifle Regiment of Marines and personnel of the 9th special regiment were provided with Marines' uniform elements, namely black berets, vests, and chevrons. Military hardware was covered with identifying markings," the GUR said.

<http://www.unian.info/war/1271669-ukraine-intel-reports-russian-armys-preparation-for-amphibious-landing-near-mariupol.html>

Russian-separatist forces attack Ukrainian troops 44 times in last day, 22.02.2016

The combined Russian-separatist forces attacked Ukrainian army positions in eastern Ukraine 44 times in the past 24 hours, with hot spots being concentrated in the Donetsk sector, the press centre of the Anti-Terrorist Operation reported on Monday. The terrorists fired an 82mm mortar not far from the town of Krasnohorivka. The town was also under sniper fire. The Russian-separatist forces used small arms, heavy machine guns and grenade launchers of various systems to shell the Ukrainian forces near the ruined Donetsk airport.

<http://uatoday.tv/politics/militants-attack-ato-troops-44-times-in-last-day-hot-spots-in-donetsk-sector-596130.html>

Situation in the Donbas remains tense but controlled. The most difficult situation is at Donetsk direction - ATO press center, 23.02.2016

The summary reads: "The situation in the ATO area remained tense but controlled today. "The illegal armed formations once again violated the terms of the Minsk agreement this morning by using weapons banned by the given accords. The most difficult situation was at the Donetsk direction. "There was no escalation of the situation near Marinka - no shellings were recorded during the day. This town is under the control of the Armed Forces of Ukraine."

http://en.censor.net.ua/news/339013/situation_in_the_donbas_remains_tense_but_controlled_the_most_difficult_situation_is_at_donetsk_direction

Latest from OSCE Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) to Ukraine, 23.02.2016

The SMM observed a total of 794 **ceasefire violations** in Donetsk region, considerably higher than on previous days.[1] Of note, positioned in city-centre Donetsk between 16:00 and 07:00hrs on 21/22 February, the SMM recorded 312 undetermined explosions 7-10km to the west and north-west. On 22 February, positioned at the "DPR"-controlled Donetsk central railway station (6km north-west of Donetsk city centre) between 08:40 and 15:05hrs[2], the SMM heard 36 undetermined explosions and two bursts of small-arms fire 3-8km to the north, north-north-east, north-west and north-north-west. Positioned in "DPR"-controlled Yasynuvata (16km north-east of Donetsk) between 08:40 and 13:45hrs, the SMM heard 158 explosions (140 impacts and 18 blasts) caused by, among other weapons, mortars, automatic-grenade launchers, and rocket-propelled grenade launchers, plus an additional six undetermined explosions, and at least 155 bursts of small-arms and heavy-machine-gun fire and fire from infantry fighting vehicles, from locations 0.5-7km south-west, west-south-west and north-north-west of its position.

<http://www.osce.org/ukraine-smm/223951>

Donbas sees surge in escalation: 84 attacks on Ukraine troops in last day, 24.02.2016

The combined Russian-separatist forces attacked Ukrainian army in eastern Ukraine 84 times in the past 24 hours, the ATO press center reported.

<http://www.breakingnewspoint.com/story/2620846/donbas-sees-surge-in-escalation-84-attacks-on-ukraine-troops-in-last-day.html>

Russian proxies attack ATO troops 56 times in last day, 25.02.2016

The militants launched about 40 mortar missiles on the Ukrainian fortified positions. In addition, the occupiers fired mortars and rocket-propelled grenades, heavy machine guns and small arms on ATO forces. They also fired an anti-aircraft gun near Krasnohorivka. An enemy sniper opened fire on Ukrainian troops near Maryinka, Opytne, and Butivka coal mine.

<http://www.unian.info/war/1275103-russian-proxies-attack-ato-troops-56-times-in-last-day.html>

<http://www.unian.info/war/1275388-ukraine-retakes-shyrokyne-after-russian-proxies-abandon-it.html>

Kharkiv mayor's best friend found shot dead at local cemetery, 26.02.2016

Businessman Yuriy Dement, one of Kharkiv mayor Hennadiy Kernes' best friends, has been found dead, lying close to his mother's tomb at a local cemetery, according to a Kharkiv journalist. "Dement's body is lying on the back, with his hands crossed on his chest and his head directed towards the entrance of the number three municipal cemetery. [The body is] at the left side of his mother's tomb," Kharkiv journalist Rostyslav Kasyanenko wrote.

<http://uatoday.tv/news/kharkiv-mayor-s-best-friend-found-shot-to-death-at-local-cemetery-599470.html>

Ukrainian Defence Minister comments on withdrawal of militants from Shyrokyne, 27.02.2016

The Ukrainian Defense Minister Stepan Poltorak does not rule out that militants can make use of this situation to accuse Ukraine of disrupting the Minsk agreements.

"They have gone leaving the mined area. I think they are trying to provoke us. They expect us to enter Shyrokyne, and then they will carry out terrorist acts destroying our divisions, and also accusing us of undermining the negotiation process, claiming that we were the first to enter [the area]. The militants' tactic can be called a "stab in the back," Poltorak said.

<http://uatoday.tv/news/poltorak-comments-on-withdrawal-of-militants-from-shyrokyne-600142.html>

ATO HQ: Ukrainian-held Krasnohorivka survives 40 enemy attacks overnight, 28.02.2016

The situation at night was tense, as since 18:00 local time on Saturday, Russian proxies started actively shelling Ukrainian troops, the ATO HQ said. "The hottest spot was our troops' strongholds near the town of Krasnohorivka, which were attacked 40 times by the enemy, who used 120mm and 82mm mortars," it said. Donbas militants used small arms, large-caliber guns and grenade launchers of different systems to shell Ukrainian positions.

<http://www.unian.info/war/1277615-ato-hq-ukrainian-held-krasnohorivka-survives-40-enemy-attacks-overnight.html>

Situation in ATO area as of February 28.02.2016

The situation in the ATO area is defined by intensive fire influence of the enemy on the units of our forces. During 24hrs, the adversary shelled 41 times from small arms, grenade launchers, 120-mm and 82-mm mortars. The most dangerous situation is on the Mariupol direction.

<http://gur.mil.gov.ua/en/content/situation-in-ato-area-and-around-syria.html>

Russian proxies attack ATO troops 71 times in last day, 29.02.2016

"The enemy fired rocket-propelled grenades and heavy machine guns on the Ukrainian fortified positions. Infantry fighting vehicles and snipers attacked our positions near Troyitske," the press center said. In the Mariupol sector, the Russian-backed militants fired an 82mm mortar, rocket-propelled grenades, heavy machine, and guns on the Ukrainian positions. In the Luhansk sector, the enemy stepped up his activities and fired a mortar on our troops.

<http://www.unian.info/war/1277976-russian-proxies-attack-ato-troops-71-times-in-last-day.html>

Pilot Savchenko

Savchenko's lawyer shows intercepts of "LPR" leaders' chats on pilot's capture, 04.02.2016

Ilya Novikov, the lawyer of Ukrainian pilot, MP and member of the Ukrainian delegation to PACE Nadia Savchenko, released the Ukrainian SBU's intercepts of telephone conversations between the LPR leaders, who were discussing her detention.

<http://www.morningnewstime.com/update/1490021/savchenkos-lawyer-shows-intercepts-of-lpr-leaders-chats-on-pilots-capture.html>

Savchenko to be convicted, then returned to Ukraine, lawyer forecasts, 05.02.2016

Ukrainian pilot, MP and member of the Ukrainian delegation to PACE Nadia Savchenko, who is illegally detained in the Russian Federation, is a foregone conclusion, Savchenko's lawyer Mark Feygin wrote. According to him, negotiations on her return to Ukraine are underway.

<http://en.vnews.agency/news/politics/15410-savchenko-to-be-convicted-then-returned-to-ukraine-lawyer-forecasts.html>

Residents of Prague plan hour-long hunger strike in support of Ukraine's Savchenko, 15.02.2016

Europeans are planning to go on hunger strike in support of Nadiya Savchenko.

Residents of Prague have announced an hour long hunger strike to protest the imprisonment of the Ukrainian pilot by Russian authorities. That's according to Czech poet Pavlo Shrayber.

Nadiya Savchenko has been on a hunger strike for at least 40 days.

<http://uatoday.tv/politics/residents-of-prague-plan-hour-long-hunger-strike-in-support-of-ukraine-s-savchenko-591151.html>

Nadiya Savchenko to make last plea in Russian court on March 3, 18.02.2016

Today, he visited Savchenko in the remand prison. "We have agreed timetable for debate. On March 2, Savchenko's lawyer Ilya Novikov and the prosecution will speak in court, on March 3 – her lawyers Nikolay Polozov and Mark Feygin, and after that Nadia will make her last plea," Feygin said. "My speech in the debate on March 3 before Savchenko's last plea will be the most significant accusatory speech to the court and the government. I urge the Ukrainian media to come and listen to Savchenko's last plea on March 3, 2016," he said. He also said that this would be his main lawyer's speech at the trial of Savchenko.

http://joinfo.com/world/1014539_nadiya-savchenko-to-make-last-plea-in-russian-court-on-march-3.html

Savchenko case: Verdict date to be announced on March 3, 29.02.2016

The verdict date against Ukrainian pilot, MP and member of the Ukrainian delegation to PACE Nadiya Savchenko, will be announced in a Russian-based Donetsk city court in southern Russia's Rostov region on March 3, her lawyer Mark Feygin wrote. Earlier, he said that Savchenko would make her last plea in court on March 3. Prior to this, Savchenko's lawyers suggested that the verdict against their client could be announced on March 8.

<http://uatoday.tv/politics/savchenko-case-verdict-date-to-be-announced-on-march-3-600892.html>

National Minorities

Mejlis says mass searches of Crimean Tatars in occupied peninsula, 02.02.2016

Searches of several Crimean Tatar families took place in Dzhankoy district of Crimea on Tuesday, coordinator of the Committee on protection of the rights of the Crimean Tatar people and a member of the Mejlis Eskender Bariiev wrote.

<http://www.newstime365.com/headlines/1513210/mejlis-says-mass-searches-of-crimean-tatars-in-occupied-peninsula.html>

<http://english.gordonua.com/news/exclusiveenglish/crimean-tatars-in-occupation-a-year-of-repressions-65858.html>

Grenade thrown at Mejlis HQ in Kherson – Chubarov, 07.02.2016

"On the night of Feb 6 to Feb 7 2016, at about 02:50, an explosive device was thrown, allegedly a grenade, at the building of the Mejlis Representation in Kherson region, located on Ilyushi Kulyka street in Kherson," he says. The head of the Mejlis noted that the blast demolished a

basement door, but no casualties were reported. "Abmejit Suleimanov, member of the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar people, a spokesman for the Mejlis in Kherson, is now at the scene, as well as the law enforcers." The leader of the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar people says the incident is a deliberate provocation by pro-Russian forces aimed at destabilization of the situation in the south of mainland Ukraine bordering with the temporarily occupied territory of Crimea. Chubarov expects that the law enforcement agencies take all necessary measures to investigate into the matter and reveal the perpetrators and masterminds of the crime.

<http://www.unian.info/society/1257784-grenade-thrown-at-mejlis-hq-in-kherson-chubarov.html>

Russia repeats Crimean Tatars repression, 12.02.2016

The Kremlin-appointed authorities in the occupied Crimea repeat awful Soviet-era repressions of the 1930s and the genocide of the Crimean Tatars of 1944, reads the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry statement. "By roughly violating the rights and freedoms of people, who due to Russia's armed aggression against Ukraine have become hostages of the Russian occupation regime in their homeland, the Kremlin in the 21st century repeats terrible Soviet repressions of 1930s, as well as the genocide of the Crimean Tatars in 1944," reads the statement. Foreign Ministry also expressed deep concern about illegal activities of the Russian occupational forces against Crimean Tatars in Crimea, which led to massive illegal searches and groundless detentions of Ukrainian citizens - representatives of the Crimean Tatar people on February 11-13.

<http://www.ukrinform.net/rubric-politics/1964421-foreign-ministry-kremlin-repeats-sovietera-repressions-of-crimean-tatars.html>

Kremlin-Backed Prosecutor In Crimea Seeks Closure Of Tatar Mejlis, 15.02.2016

The prosecutor in Russian-occupied Crimea has filed a request with that territory's Supreme Court to ban the Crimean Tatars' self-governing body, the Mejlis. The Mejlis has refused to recognize Russia's forced annexation of the peninsula from Ukraine nearly two years ago and played a key role in the consolidation of efforts on behalf of Crimean Tatars. Natalya Poklonskaya signed the request on February 15 to brand the Mejlis "an extremist organization," Russian news agencies reported. The reports say Poklonskaya handed a copy of the legal challenge to a leader of the Mejlis, Nariman Celal, the same day.

<http://www.rferl.org/content/crimea-russian-prosecutor-looks-to-shut-tatars-mejlis/2753626.html>

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/>

SBU: No grounds for criminal case against deported Russian journalist Stolyarova, 26.02.2016

Russian journalist Mariya Stolyarova worked for Ukraine's national Inter. "The Security Service has thoroughly analyzed her posts on social networks, her reports on TV as a Russian journalist. We will give our assessment of these reports. At the same time, despite the fact that her statements contain signs of great affection for terrorist organizations, we haven't found direct quotations at the moment with signs to initiate criminal proceedings," SBU Press Secretary Olena Hitlianska told Channel 5. "We will continue analyzing her materials, but those available now don't give us grounds for opening a criminal case," she added. Stolyarova, who had been working in Ukraine since 2015, was deported to Russia under the supervision of SBU personnel. The SBU posted two-minute footage showing officers at the airport reading Stolyarova the deportation order, which she signs before leaving the room with an accompanying officer.

<http://ukrainianwall.com/english-news/sbu-no-grounds-for-criminal-case-against-deported-russian-journalist-stolyarova/>

Ukraine Worldwide

Man who helped Yanukovich flee appointed Tula region governor, 03.02.2016

Alexey Dyumin was promoted to Major-General in 2014, becoming head of special operations forces, a secret unit that played a key role in the Russian annexation of Crimea. Dyumin is said to have fulfilled his tasks "brilliantly," according to a newspaper's source. In particular, it is reported that Dyumin drafted and conducted an operation on "emergency evacuation" of ex-president of Ukraine Viktor Yanukovich who fled Kyiv on the night of February 23, 2014, with the help of Russian special forces who were ready "to evacuate him by air, sea or land."

<http://www.unian.info/world/1253775-man-who-helped-yanukovich-flee-appointed-tula-region-governor-media.html>

Russian convoy of military vehicles moving towards Feodosia spotted in occupied Crimea, 07.02.2016

About 70 APCs (armored personnel carriers) and five fuel tank trucks heading towards Feodosia town were spotted at Simferopol – Kerch highway in Russian-occupied Crimea. "Russian military vehicles were heading from the town of Staryi Krym towards Feodosia town," the video description reads.

http://en.censor.net.ua/video_news/372985/russian_convoy_of_military_vehicles_moving_towards_feodosia_spotted_in_occupied_crimea_video

Putin is a bigger threat to Europe's existence than Isis, 11.02.2016

The Putin regime faces bankruptcy in 2017, when a large part of its foreign debt matures, and political turmoil may erupt sooner than that. The president's popularity, which remains high, rests on a social compact requiring the government to deliver financial stability and a slowly but steadily rising standard of living. Western sanctions, coupled with the sharp decline in the price of oil, will force the regime to fail on both counts. Russia's budget deficit is running at 7% of GDP, and the government will have to cut it to 3% in order to prevent inflation from spiralling out of control. Russia's social security fund is running out of money and has to be merged with the government's infrastructure fund in order to be replenished. These and other developments will have a negative effect on living standards and opinions of the electorate before the parliamentary elections this autumn.

<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/feb/11/putin-threat-europe-islamic-state>

Russia bans transit of Ukrainian trucks, 14.02.2016

Russia has stopped transit of Ukrainian trucks through its territory in response to a campaign organized by Ukrainian activists to block Russian trucks from entering Ukraine. According to Russia's Transport Ministry, over a hundred of Russian trucks are currently blocked in different regions of Ukraine, and more than 500 trucks are unable to enter Ukraine from the EU on their return to Russia.

<http://uatoday.tv/politics/russia-bans-transit-of-ukrainian-trucks-on-its-territory-590855.html>