

**INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE**

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**CASE CONCERNING  
APPLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION FOR THE SUPPRESSION  
OF THE FINANCING OF TERRORISM AND OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION  
ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION**

**(UKRAINE V. RUSSIAN FEDERATION)**

**VOLUME XVII OF THE ANNEXES  
TO THE MEMORIAL  
SUBMITTED BY UKRAINE**

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Annex 528 Mumin Shakirov, I was An Opposition Fighter in Ukraine, The Atlantic (14 July 2014)
- Annex 529 Peter Leonard, Ukraine: Air Force Jet Downed by Russian Missile, Associated Press (17 July 2014)
- Annex 530 RT, Malaysian Airlines plane crash: Russian military unveil data on MH17 incident over Ukraine (FULL), YouTube (21 July 2014)
- Annex 531 Max Seddon, Locals Say Rebels Moved Missile Launcher Shortly Before Malaysian Plane Was Downed, BuzzFeed News (22 July 2014)
- Annex 532 Shaun Walker, Ukrainians Report Sightings of Missile Launcher on Day of MH17 Crash, The Guardian (22 July 2014)
- Annex 533 Courtney Weaver, Malofeev: The Russian Billionaire Linking Moscow to the Rebels, Financial Times (24 July 2014)
- Annex 534 Alfred de Montesquiou, Un camion volé pour transporter le lance-missiles, Paris Match (25 July 2014)
- Annex 535 Thomas Grove & Warren Strobel, Special Report: Where Ukraine's separatists get their weapons, Reuters (29 July 2014)
- Annex 536 Christopher Miller, Russian Resigns to Make Way for Ukrainian as New Head of 'Donetsk People's Republic,' Guardian (8 August 2014)
- Annex 537 Roland Oliphant, Kamensk-Shakhtinsky & Tom Parfitt, Russian Armoured Vehicles And Military Trucks Cross Border Into Ukraine, The Telegraph (14 August 2014)
- Annex 538 Shaun Walker, Aid Convoy Stops Short of Border as Russian Military Vehicles Enter Ukraine, The Guardian (15 August 2014)
- Annex 539 Shaun Walker, Ukraine Rebel Leader Says He Has 1,200 Fighters 'Trained in Russia' Under His Command, The Guardian (16 August 2014)
- Annex 540 Roland Oliphant, Russian Paratroopers Captured in Ukraine 'Accidentally Crossed Border', The Telegraph (26 August 2014)
- Annex 541 BBC News, Ukraine Crisis: Key Players in Eastern Unrest (28 August 2014)
- Annex 542 MKRU, The DPR and LPR Promise Kiev That They Will Remain Part of Ukraine in Exchange for Recognition of Their Status (1 September 2014)
- Annex 543 Petyr Kozlov & Alexey Nikolsky, The Self-Proclaimed Republics in the East of Ukraine Put Forward their "Negotiation Demands" to Kiev, Vedomosti (2 September 2014)

- Annex 544 Tatyana Popova, Leaders of the Outrages of the DNR, Ukrainska Pravda (23 September 2014)
- Annex 545 Glavcom, Igor (Bes) Bezler: I Don't Watch TV - I don't Know About the Minsk Agreements (21 October 2014)
- Annex 546 Zavtra, Who Are You, Shooter? (20 November 2014)
- Annex 547 Alexander Borodai: I am a Russian Imperialist, Actual Comment (24 November 2014)
- Annex 548 MKRU, Colonel of the FSB Igor Strelkov Called the Senseless Assault on the Donetsk Airport (1 December 2014)
- Annex 549 James Rupert, How Russians are Sent to Fight in Ukraine, Newsweek (6 January 2015)
- Annex 550 Large Military Staging Ground Detected in Russia, The Interpreter Magazine (7 January 7 2015)
- Annex 551 CORRECT!V, Flug MH17: Der Weg Der Buk-Einheit (9 January 2015)
- Annex 552 Maddie Smith, Ten Civilians Killed in Ukrainian Bus Attack as Donetsk Airport Control Tower is Destroyed, VICE (13 January 2015)
- Annex 553 Mariupol City Council, City Mayor Yuri Hotlubey and Donetsk Oblast Public Prosecutor Nikolai Frantovsky Held a Briefing at Which They Described the Current Situation in Mariupol (VIDEO) (24 January 2015)
- Annex 554 Oleksandr Stashevskiy, Rebels Launch Ukraine Offensive After Bloody Bus Strike, AFP (24 January 2015)
- Annex 555 Oleksandr Stashevsky and Dmitry Zaks, Ukraine Rebels Announce New Offensive as Rockets Kill 30, AFP (24 January 2015)
- Annex 556 Viktoria Savitskaya, Mariupol Recovers after Shelling, LB.ua (24 January 2015)
- Annex 557 Stephen Brown and Noah Barkin, Merkel Rules Out Arming Ukraine Government But Unsure Peace Push Will Work, Reuters (7 February 2015)
- Annex 558 Lb.ua, Media Publish the Demands of the DPR and LPR for the Resolution of the Conflict (Documents) (11 February 2015)
- Annex 559 Zn.ua, The DPR's and LPR's Proposals at the Negotiations in Minsk (11 February 2015)
- Annex 560 Vladimir Soldatkin and Pavel Polityuk, "Glimmer of Hope" for Ukraine After New Ceasefire Deal, Reuters (12 February 2015)
- Annex 561 Linda Kinstler, A Ukrainian City Holds Its Breath, Foreign Policy (20 February 2015)
- Annex 562 Deadly Bomb Blast Hits Rally In Ukraine , Al Jazeera (22 February 2015)

- Annex 563 Kiev Blames Russia, L.A. Times (22 February 2015)
- Annex 564 The Interpreter Magazine, We All Knew What We Were Going For and What Could Happen (English translation of an interview in Novaya Gazeta by Elena Kostyuchenko dated 2 March 2015)
- Annex 565 BBC News, Putin Reveals Secrets of Russia's Crimea Takeover Plot (9 March 2015)
- Annex 566 DW, Putin reveals details of decision to annex Crimea, (9 March 2015)
- Annex 567 Meduza, I Serve the Russian Federation!' Soldiers Deployed During the Annexation of Crimea Speak (16 March 2015)
- Annex 568 Maxim Tucker, Russia Launches Next Deadly Phase of Hybrid War on Ukraine, Newsweek (31 March 2015)
- Annex 569 Olga Ivshyna, Commander of the "Special Forces of the DPR": Russia's Help was Decisive, BBC Russia (31 March 2015)
- Annex 570 Corey Flintoff, Bomb Attacks Increase In Ukraine's Second-Largest City, Kharkiv, NPR (6 April 2015)
- Annex 571 Simon Shuster, Meet the Pro-Russian 'Partisans' Waging a Bombing Campaign in Ukraine, TIME (10 April 2015)
- Annex 572 Zoya Lukyanova, Translator for the DPR: "This is a Performance for the Whole World," LB.ua (21 April 2015)
- Annex 573 David Stern, Lethal Divisions Persist in Ukraine's Odessa, BBC News (2 May 2015)
- Annex 574 Maria Tsvetkova, Special Report: Russian Soldiers Quit Over Ukraine, Reuters (10 May 2015)
- Annex 575 Michael Usher Travels to Ukraine to Track the Missile that Shot Down MH17, 60 Minutes Australia (17 May 2015)
- Annex 576 Maria Tsvetkova, Special Report: Russian fighters, caught in Ukraine, cast adrift by Moscow, Reuters (29 May 2015)
- Annex 577 Jo Becker & Steven Lee Myers, Russian Groups Crowdfund the Wars in Ukraine, N.Y. Times (11 June 2015)
- Annex 578 Tomasz Piechal, The War Republics In The Donbas One Year After The Outbreak Of The Conflict, OGródek Studiów Wschodnich (17 June 2015)
- Annex 579 Corey Flintoff, Who's Behind a String of Bombings in Ukraine's Black Sea 'Pearl'?, NPR (1 July 2015).
- Annex 580 John Thornhill, Fear Vladimir Putin's Weakness Not His Strength, The Financial Times (17 August 2015)
- Annex 581 Anton Zverev, OSCE says spots deadly Russian rocket system in Ukraine for first time, Reuters (2 October 2015)

- Annex 582 BBC News, Ukraine Rebels Have Powerful New Russian-Made Rockets - OSCE (2 October 2015)
- Annex 583 The Russian Secret Behind Ukraine's Self-Declared 'Donetsk Republic', France 24 (15 October 2015) (video)
- Annex 584 Robert Hackwill, Caught Red-Handed: the Russian Major Fighting in Ukraine, EuroNews (8 December 2015)
- Annex 585 The Guardian, Putin Admits Russian Military Presence in Ukraine for the First Time (17 December 2015).
- Annex 586 Julian Röpcke, How Russia Finances the Ukrainian Rebel Territories, Bild (16 January 2016)
- Annex 587 Anna Shamanska, Former Commander of Pro-Russian Separatists Says He Executed People Based on Stalin-Era Laws, Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty (19 January 2016).
- Annex 588 Examining the Evidence of Russia's Involvement in a Malaysia Airlines Crash, Stratfor (13 May 2016)
- Annex 589 Desire to Break Free from Ukraine Keeps Devastated Donetsk Fighting, PBS Newshour (5 July 2016)
- Annex 590 Mironov Promises Draft Bill "On the Status of the Donbas Militas, RIA.ru (14 September 2016).
- Annex 591 Henry Meyer and Onur Ant, Analysis: The Russian 'Philosopher' Who Links Putin, Bannon, Turkey: Alexander Dugin, Chicago Tribune (3 February 2017)
- Annex 592 John Wendle, In Avdiivka, Ukrainians See Surge in Fighting as Putin Testing Trump, TIME (3 February 2017)
- Annex 593 Al Jazeera, Avdiivka Civilians Caught in Crossfire as Clashes Rage (5 February 2017).
- Annex 594 John Wendle, Avdiivka, Evacuating Again as Fighting Escalates, Al Jazeera (8 February 2017)
- Annex 595 Anton Zverev, Ex-Rebel Leaders Detail Role Played by Putin Aide in East Ukraine, Reuters (11 May 2017)
- Annex 596 Nikolaus von Twickel, South Ossetia: A 'Little Switzerland' for Donbas?, EURASIANET.org (31 May 2017)
- Annex 597 Prosecutor General's Office Put Zhirinovskiy In Suspicion Of Financing Terrorism, Front New International (23 August 2017)

# Annex 528

Mumin Shakirov, I was An Opposition Fighter in Ukraine, The Atlantic (14 July 2014)



# I Was a Separatist Fighter in Ukraine

 [theatlantic.com/international/archive/2014/07/i-was-a-pro-russian-separatist-fighter-in-ukraine/374411/](http://theatlantic.com/international/archive/2014/07/i-was-a-pro-russian-separatist-fighter-in-ukraine/374411/)

Shortly after posting on a social network, Artur Gasparyan found himself risking his life for Russia.



Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

*Ever since unidentified, Russian-speaking gunmen fanned out across Crimea in late February, in an operation that soon led to Moscow's annexation of the Ukrainian peninsula, one of the greatest mysteries in the crisis has been the origins of and forces behind these faceless soldiers. They have since cropped up across eastern Ukraine, joining pro-Russian Ukrainian separatists in ongoing battles with the Ukrainian military.*

*The interview below is an exceedingly rare conversation with one of these so-called "little green men." Artur Gasparyan, a young Armenian, claims that he was recruited in Moscow, forced to erase his online identity, trained and armed by shadowy men in civilian clothes, shuttled across the border, and warned that he faced "certain death." That turned out to be nearly true, and now he's warning others. "I survived by a miracle," he says.*

\*\*\*

Artur Gasparyan, a 24-year-old native of Spitak, Armenia, was recruited in Moscow in May to fight in eastern Ukraine. Now back in the Russian capital, he spoke with Mumin Shakirov (see original in Russian [here](#)) in detail about his experiences.

**You expressed interest in going to Ukraine on a forum on [the social network] Vkontakte after you read about the fire in the Odessa Trade Union Building, in which 42 pro-Moscow separatists died. What happened next?**

About 10 guys showed up at a meeting somewhere near VDNKh [the All-Russian Exhibition Center in northern Moscow]. We spoke in the entrance arch of a residential building there. A Slavic man in civilian clothes who didn't give his name met with us.

First, he asked us whether we knew how to handle weapons. He warned us that we would be going to [the eastern Ukrainian city of] Slovyansk, that we were heading to certain death, that the punishment for looting was execution on the spot—which, by the way, I saw was true several times while I was in Ukraine. Two men immediately walked away.

**Did they promise you money?**

They didn't promise a per diem or payment. Only free food, clothing, weapons, and a guarantee that they would transport our bodies to Rostov-on-Don and give them to our relatives. If, of course, they found them. They insisted that we destroy all our online accounts and, in general, remove any personal information from social networks. I deleted my accounts on [the Russian social-media sites] Vkontakte and Odnoklassniki.

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[What the Hell Is Going On in Ukraine?](#)

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**How did you get to the Ukrainian border?**

On the morning of May 12, the group got into two cars and headed south. It took about 24 hours to get to Rostov. It turned out that the drivers were also volunteers. One of them, by the way, was killed. They took us to a camp—some small homes near a creek and a forest—I don't know where. They took away all our road maps. Our telephones and other personal things were logged and taken away. We changed into clothes they gave us.

### **How long were you at this camp?**

Nearly two weeks. Every day, more and more new people came. By the end, there were about 100 of us. We didn't rest at all—it was a military schedule. We got up; we went for a run; we had breakfast; we had training; we did orienteering in the fields, in the forest; we learned the hand signals.

### **What do you mean, hand signals?**

They taught us to communicate using gestures and signs in order to recognize each other, to communicate silently at night, to give commands like back, forward, stop, get down, danger, and so on. Now I can speak with my hands like a deaf person. All this was taught by an instructor in civilian clothes. He, like all the other big and small bosses, didn't give his name. We didn't even know one another's real names—just nicknames. Even now I don't know the names of most of the guys who were killed beside me in that hell.

### **Did you have any combat experience before Ukraine? You were in the breakaway Azerbaijani region of Nagorno-Karabakh, but that isn't real war.**

Mostly we just had some exchanges of fire, automatic weapons or grenade launchers. In short, it was a low-level war of positioning. Nonetheless, I knew more about war than most of the guys there.

### **Were there Russian nationalists among them?**

I didn't see any nationalists, although most of the guys there were Slavs. Whether they were Belarusians, Russians, or Ukrainian—I can't say. They were good, patriotic guys. None of them looked at me funny because I'm Armenian. There were a bunch of guys from the Caucasus, some Armenians from [the Russian city of] Krasnodar and [the Ukrainian city of] Kryvyi Rih. Some Chechens came a little later. I became friends with a few—one guy named Red and another named Small. Both of them were killed in those KamAZ trucks.

### **How did you cross the border?**

Near midnight on May 23 we left the base, about 100 guys in KamAZ trucks. We were accompanied by a guide in a Niva [Russian-made jeep]. We rode for several hours and stopped at the border. There we joined up with another 50 guys from other camps and we were given our weapons: grenade launchers, automatic rifles, pistols, and grenades. Then we got back into the trucks.

### **Did they teach you to shoot?**

Some of the guys knew how to fire grenade launchers. I was made the commander of a machine-gun squad of from three to six guys. They gave me that job after looking over my military-service document. I guess there are some numerical codes there that I never noticed before. When they called me, they asked me to read the code. So they knew how to use my training. Apparently they worked separately with everyone like that.



A pro-Russian fighter on the roof of the Donetsk airport. (RFE/RL)

**What do you mean "they"? Were they Federal Security Service, military intelligence (GRU), Interior Ministry? Who were these people who met you, trained you, crossed the border with you?**

I don't know their names, even their first names. They looked like Slavs. They were all in civilian clothes. I don't even remember their faces.

**When did you cross the border?**

It was around dawn on May 24. On the Ukrainian side, we were met by some high-level representatives of the [self-proclaimed] Donetsk People's Republic. They had taken over some military base in Donetsk and they put us up in a barracks there. We slept the whole day. Then we washed up, got ourselves in order.

The next day, May 25, we took part in the well-known parade in the city in our KamAZ trucks—the one that the Chechens made famous. They gave interviews, fired their weapons into the air, posed for the cameras. People were cheering and they greeted the volunteers from Russia like liberators. In the evening, we returned to our barracks.

**And when did you first see combat?**

They sounded the alarm on the night of May 25-26. There were three guys in my group—from Moscow, Lipetsk, and Chukotka [in Russia]. They were all killed. We were put in civilian buses and taken to the airport. All 100 of us went into the building and there we

joined up with some Ossetians. The passengers were quickly evacuated, but employees remained at their posts. In the morning, two planes landed and we didn't interfere with the work of the airport. The building was quickly taken under control.

We positioned ourselves on every floor. My assistant and I were on the seventh floor—the roof. We were ordered to cover a high area about half a kilometer away so that no one else could be there. We set up a machine gun.

**What was the point of seizing a civilian airport in Donetsk? The fighting at that time was in a completely different place, near Slovyansk.**

To prevent them from sending in troops from Kiev. They told us no one would fire at us. Just pose for the cameras and that's all. They would see us, get scared, give up. We'd disarm everyone and send them home. The airport would be ours.

**Who do you mean?**

The Ukrainian troops around the airport. There was gossip that supposedly we were so tough and everyone was afraid of us. But it turned out just the opposite. At 2 p.m. the helicopters came. Then the airplanes, and they started bombing the place. I was on the roof and with my aide, I managed to get to the sixth floor. It was a big attack—I counted four helicopters and two planes.

**Did you have mobile anti-aircraft weapons?**

"We went down to the first floor and were just sitting there, waiting to be killed." Our commander from the Vostok Battalion [of volunteer fighters from Russia], Aleksandr Khodakovsky [regional head of the elite Alfa special forces under former Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich], told us they wouldn't bomb the airport and that "zenits" [shoulder-launched anti-aircraft weapons] wouldn't be necessary. So we left them at the base. Khodakovsky's snipers were there.

There were agents of the Ukrainian SBU Security Service who had come over to the Donetsk People's Republic. They had unusual rifles that I'd never seen before—not Dragunov sniper rifles. They left somewhere at about 1 p.m. and the bombing started at 2.

**What happened on your floor?**

One Chechen was killed on the roof immediately. Two others were wounded. They fired on the helicopters with everything they had. It took me two or three seconds to get up there. I fired on the high area from where a sniper was shooting at us. They forced us tightly into the building and were bombing from all sides. They had missile launchers around the perimeter of the airport and were firing on the terminal.

Khodakovsky naively thought that since the airport was new—just opened for the European soccer championships [in 2012]—they wouldn't use heavy weapons on it. If we had only had our anti-aircraft weapons, none of that would have happened.

**Do you think it was betrayal or incompetence?**

I don't know. We lost a lot of men. One of the Chechens—a really smart guy—threw a couple of smoke bombs onto the roof and managed to drag his wounded comrades out. We made our way down to the first floor and were just sitting there, waiting to be killed. We couldn't go outside. Someone contacted the commander—a guy called Spark—and we were given the order to get into the trucks. It was nearly evening. The trucks were standing inside—in the terminal. I didn't want to get in. I knew how risky it was. Spark told me, "If you question the order, I'll shoot you here." I took my weapon and got in.

### **How many men were in the truck?**

There were two trucks with about 30 to 35 men in each one. A covering squad remained in the airport. They went out on foot at night—they all got away. Spark gave the order to drive out of the terminal and to fire in all directions at anything that moved. We lifted the covers—they were open trucks stuffed with volunteers. Our truck flew out of the terminal and we begin to fire on both sides, up in the air, everywhere. We proceeded along a road for about four or five kilometers. The trucks were about 500 or 600 meters apart. Two trucks speeding along, firing without stopping. It was terrifying.

It's true that I stopped firing when I saw that there was no one there. When we arrived in the city, we saw that the first truck was standing in the road. I didn't understand what had happened. Cars were driving around it and people were standing around—it was the edge of Donetsk.

### **There were dead and wounded there?**

We rushed past at high speed. I didn't manage to look. Someone was still shooting. After about 500 meters, someone fired on our truck with a grenade launcher. The shell landed in the driver's cabin. We thought we'd been lucky, so we jumped out. We got bruised up a little, but no one was hurt. The truck that they hit first got caught in a crossfire from machine guns. There were also snipers firing at them. At least 30 men died there—no fewer.

Then they began firing on us too from somewhere. I dropped my weapon and grabbed one wounded guy from Crimea. I loaded him on my back and ran blindly through some yards. Our medic found us. He had a weapon, so I took it and started firing in all directions, up onto the roofs. And I ran further with the wounded guy.

### **Did you know who controlled the city?**

We were sure the city had been taken by the National Guard and that they were looking for us. We came to an ambulance depot and I fired toward the roof a couple of times to attract their attention. My comrade was bleeding badly. He'd been shot in the arm and the leg. I shouted to the medics: "Save him! Help!" A woman shouted back: "Don't worry, we are on your side!" We put the Crimean into an ambulance and they took him to a hospital. I told them where the trucks were and six ambulances rushed out. Soon they were bringing guys from the trucks to the hospital.

"Even now I don't know the names of most guys who were killed beside me in that hell."

Someone told me that only three guys survived from the first truck. There was panic and terror. Someone told me that one guy blew himself up with a grenade to avoid being taken prisoner by the Ukrainians. They didn't understand that they were being attacked by their own people. Someone apparently told local militiamen that Right Sector [a Ukrainian nationalist group that was part of the Maidan protest movement] fighters were rushing down the highway in two trucks.

### **What was the official story?**

On television they said something like that the militias were transporting unarmed wounded under the sign of the red cross and Ukrainian forces fired on them. At that point, I still didn't know we'd been attacked by our own forces. I was sure it was the National Guard. Sometime in the morning of the 27th, two guys from the cover group that remained at the airport woke me up. They told me that it was friendly fire.

We were asking what to do next. We decided to run away during the night, secretly, on foot, back to the border and to Russia. We found some civilian clothes, changed into them, took some backpacks and left the unit. There was a driver with us who went by "Shumakher." He told us that he had an uncle outside of Donetsk. Six of us arrived at this private house to spend the night. On the morning of the 28th, we heard shouts from a neighboring house: "Don't shoot! Don't kill us!" It turned out they sent a squad out after us.

### **How did they find you?**

I don't know. Maybe someone gave us away. We threw away our packs and other things and ran off again. We were just wandering around the streets without any money or documents. We came to a town and a checkpoint and told them our story. They took us from the checkpoint to Horlivka [a city in eastern Ukraine's Donetsk Oblast] to a commander by the name of "Devil." But that's a different story.

### **Why did you spend two weeks with this Devil?**

We didn't have any choice. I didn't know how to get away. Devil turned out to be a normal guy, a professional soldier from Horlivka. He promised to send us back to Russia at the first opportunity. All five of us stayed with him. We told them what had happened to us, and he said he wouldn't turn us over to the "easterners." He left us alone. Later, if anyone wanted to fight some more, they stayed. But I left.

### **What did you do in Horlivka from May 28 until June 15?**

I put on a uniform again. We were given weapons and took part in several operations. They were better organized, more systematic. We carried out some diversions—snuck around, blew something up, snuck away. We blew up a Ukrainian fueling post in Dokuchayevsk. We snuck in quietly during the night in civilian cars. I covered the position with a machine gun and they blew up the post with a grenade launcher.

### **Why did you blow up the fuel depot?**

So they couldn't gas up their tanks and trucks.

### **But didn't you need fuel?**

We didn't have any vehicles. Stuff like that only appeared among the militias about three days after I left.

### **What stories on television that you've seen strike you as the most outrageous and disturbing?**

When they do interviews with people from the Donetsk People's Republic [DNR in Russian]. The DNR is a really a fiction. The DNR, as I understand it, exists only in the offices of [self-proclaimed DNR Prime Minister Aleksandr] Borodai, [self-proclaimed DNR parliamentary speaker Denis] Pushilin, [former Ukrainian parliamentary deputy Oleh] Tsaryov. But decisions are made somewhere else and by other people.

### **Journalists who have been in the region say that about 20 percent of those fighting are Russians and the other 80 percent are local militias.**

I'd say exactly the opposite. Most of them are Russians, Chechens, Ingush. There are also Armenians like me. I spoke to some locals and they say that they did what they'd been told. I said, "What did they tell you to do?" They answered: "We voted. The rest is up to you." That is, they participated in the referendum on DNR independence but they don't intend to fight. One guy told me, "I want to get my pay and then drink until my next payday." In general, they have no experience. Don't know how to handle weapons. No one had been in the military. I'm talking about in Donetsk.

### **And in Horlivka?**

There it is about 50-50. But the Russians fight better. They are people who have been in the military. It is a real army—Ukraine hasn't [really] had an army for 23 years.

### **Why are you telling us all this?**

Until now, the people who—basically—betrayed us (what happened at the airport could have been avoided and everything could have been different if they had organized it right) are still giving orders and volunteers from Russia are still going to serve with them. I want these people to understand who is going to be commanding them. I went. I survived by a miracle. I feel sorry for them. They are on their way to serve such commanders as Khodakovsky and others. I don't know all their names.

### **How did you get back to Russia?**

Devil kept his word. He thanked us, gave us each 1,000 [Ukrainian] hryvnias for the road, wished us luck, and sent us home. Three guys came with me. One who was wounded and two others. We rode in civilian cars through Luhansk Oblast, avoiding the customs point, about 150 kilometers. We were met on the Russian side and they took us to Rostov. We ended up at the same base where we'd been trained. They gave us back our clothes, documents, telephones, some money for the road, and sent us home.

### **You are a citizen of Armenia, from another country. ...**

I even fought under the Armenian flag. I have photos.

## **Why would you be willing to die for a foreign country?**

I don't consider Russia a foreign country. I have the mentality of a Soviet person. My grandfathers fought for the Soviet Union and I am fighting for it. I don't consider Russia a foreign country.

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*This post appears courtesy of [Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty](#).*



# Annex 529

Peter Leonard, Ukraine: Air Force Jet Downed by Russian Missile, Associated Press (17 July 2014)



# Ukraine: Air Force jet downed by Russian missile

postandcourier.com/news/ukraine-air-force-jet-downed-by-russian-missile/article\_1e67fc3a-cd70-5de7-b1e6-

e24de12bba40.html

By PETER LEONARD Associated Press

July 16, 2014



KIEV, Ukraine - An Air Force fighter jet has been shot down by an air-to-air missile fired from a Russian plane, a spokesman for Ukraine's Security Council said Thursday.

Andrei Lysenko also said Ukrainian troops had been fired upon by missiles from a village just inside Russia.

Officials in Kiev have recently accused Russia's armed forces of being directly implicated in attacks on Ukrainian troops battling an insurgency near the border.

Lysenko said in a televised briefing that the pilot of the Sukhoi-25 jet that was hit on Wednesday evening was forced to bail out after his jet was shot down. He provided no further details.

Pro-Russia rebels, meanwhile, claimed responsibility for strikes Wednesday on two Ukrainian Sukhoi-25 jets.

The Defense Ministry said the second jet was hit by a portable surface-to-air missile, but added the pilot was unscathed and managed to land his plane safely.

Moscow denies Western charges that is supporting the separatists in Ukraine or sowing unrest in its neighbor.

On Monday, Ukraine said one of its military transport planes carrying eight people was shot down by a missile fired from Russian territory. Security Service chief Valentyn Nalyvaichenko said he had "unconditional evidence" that Russia was involved in downing the craft.

Rebels claimed to have shot that plane down.

The U.S. slapped tougher sanctions against Russia on Wednesday for its actions in Ukraine, prompting a strong reaction Thursday from Russian President Vladimir Putin, who said they will stalemate bilateral relations and hurt not only Russian but also American businesses.

Russia's benchmark MICEX was down 2.6 percent in early afternoon trading Thursday upon news of the sanctions while Russia's biggest oil company, Rosneft, was nearly 5 percent down.

The U.S. sanctions target two major Russian energy firms including Rosneft, a pair of powerful financial institutions, eight weapons firms and four individuals.

The U.S. penalties, however, stopped short of the most stringent actions the West has threatened, which would fully cut off key sectors of Russia's oil-dependent economy. But officials said those steps were still on the table if Russia fails to abide by the West's demands to stop its support for the pro-Russia insurgents.

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# Annex 530

RT, Malaysian Airlines plane crash: Russian military unveil data on MH17 incident over Ukraine (FULL), YouTube (21 July 2014)



# Annex 531

Max Seddon, Locals Say Rebels Moved Missile Launcher Shortly Before Malaysian Plane Was Downed, BuzzFeed News (22 July 2014)



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WORLD

## Locals Say Rebels Moved Missile Launcher Shortly Before Malaysian Plane Was Downed

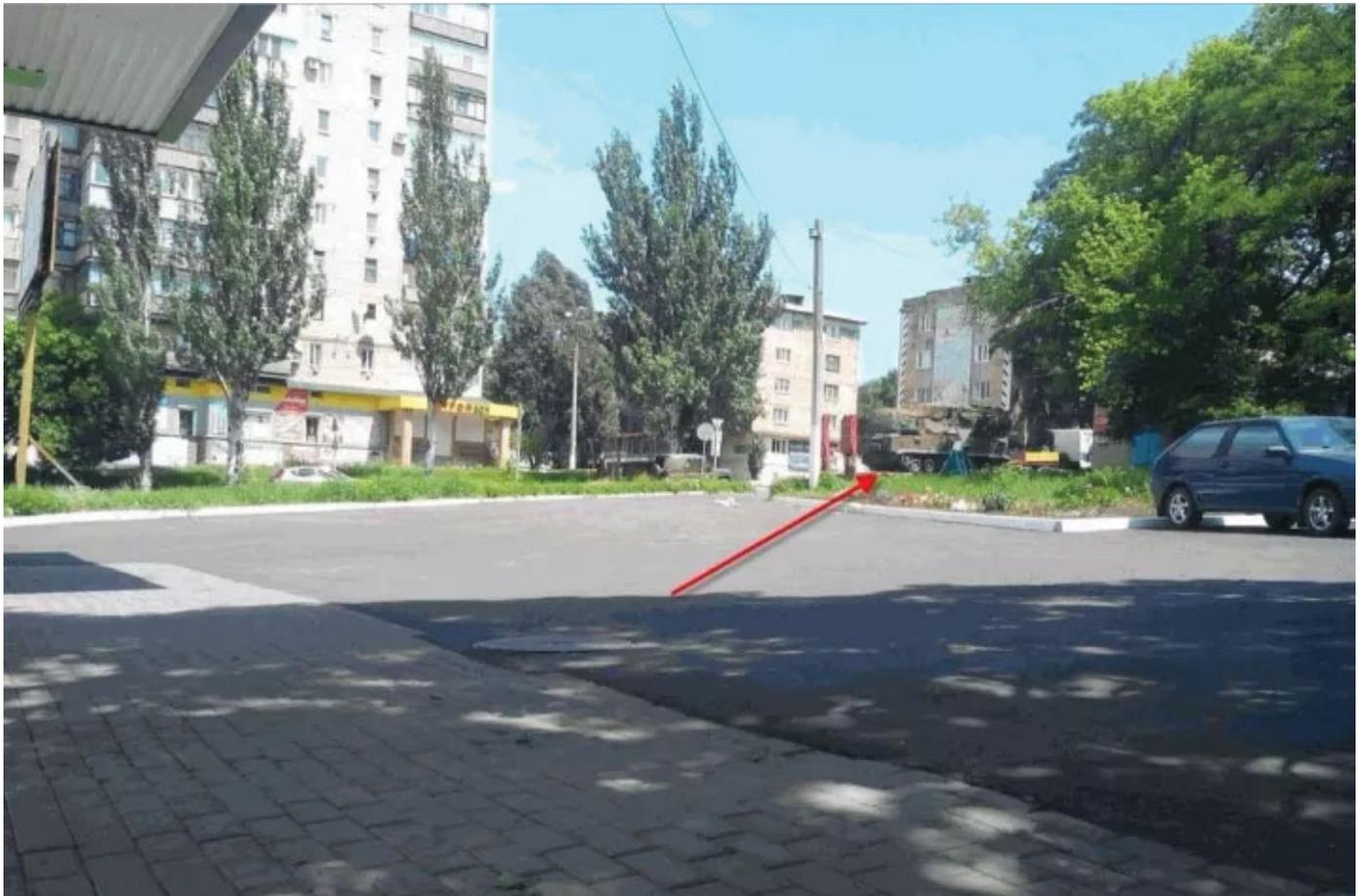
Local accounts undermine the rebels' argument that they do not own such weapons.

Posted on July 22, 2014, at 3:43 p.m.



**Max Seddon**

BuzzFeed News World Correspondent



Share

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A photo released by Ukrainian intelligence purportedly showing a Buk S-11 missile being driven through the town of Torez on the day Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 was downed.

*Via facebook.com*

**TOREZ, Ukraine** — Its white metal shutters are down and business is slow, but this nondescript home improvement store in a decaying rebel-controlled east Ukrainian industrial town could be key to establishing who downed Malaysia Airlines Flight 17.

Several locals near the StroiDom store in Torez, about 10 miles from where the plane crashed, said Tuesday that they had seen what appeared to be a missile launcher driving through their town a few hours before the plane was shot down last Thursday. Their story appears to corroborate Ukrainian claims that the separatist rebels had a sophisticated missile launcher and drove it to the site that Ukrainian and U.S. intelligence say was used to fire on the Boeing 777 jet, killing all 298 on board.

BuzzFeed visited the site where a photo was taken purportedly showing the launcher, which Ukraine says was a Buk SA-11 surface-to-air complex, driving through Torez around lunchtime on the day of the attack. The photo purportedly shows it being driven past the filling area at a gas station on the town's main street across from the hardware store. The road was ridden with tire treads from heavy equipment.

**Another video posted on Thursday purportedly shows the Buk driving into Torez shortly before noon. The video could not be verified, but correlated with accounts given by local eyewitnesses.**



Several locals said that the launcher had driven down Gagarina Street, one of the town's main thoroughfares, toward the town of Snizhne, near where Ukraine and the U.S. say the missile was fired. Though convoys of heavy equipment have become a regular sight in Torez since the conflict between pro-Russian separatists and the government in Kiev started in April, workers in one store said that the one that passed through last Thursday was much louder than ones they had seen before.

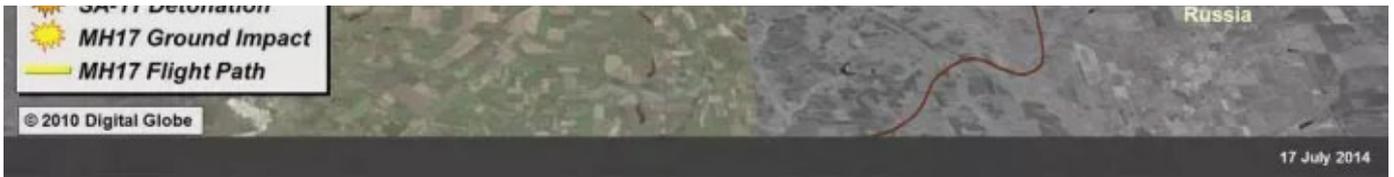
The locals all asked not to be identified for fear of reprisal from the rebels, who control the town. Many of the residents who spoke to BuzzFeed denied knowing anything about the launcher or claimed that it had never passed through the town.

Moscow and the rebels both deny that the separatists ever possessed a Buk, though the rebels [crowed about capturing one](#) on Twitter and in Russian state media in late June. On Monday, [Russian generals released data](#) that they said showed Ukraine could have either shot the plane down from its own surface-to-air missiles in the area or from a fighter jet that trailed the plane. Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko dismissed the accusations.

While the locals' accounts do not prove that the rebels fired the missile, they do undermine their denials of ever owning such a system. The entire area around Torez is rebel-controlled, and there are rebel checkpoints on all the entrances to town.

**The U.S. says it has satellite data showing a missile was fired at the plane later on Thursday from a field outside Snizhne.**





<http://U.S. Embassy Kiev>

BuzzFeed also visited the location where this photo, uploaded to Twitter on Thursday, was taken, apparently capturing the trail of smoke from the rocket in a field south of Snizhne.



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 @WowihaY

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Thu Jul 17 16:23:38 UTC+0000 2014

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The photo was presumably taken from a church or nearby bus stop on a hill overlooking the field in the suburb of Pervomaiske. The area where the smoke is coming from has been the center of heavy fighting in recent days. Constant shelling could be heard in the distance on Tuesday afternoon, and a dark plume of smoke wafted over the horizon. Rebels manning checkpoints on the outskirts of Snizhne said they had orders not to let any journalists into the town.

The vantage point of the photo also corresponds with [recordings](#) Ukraine posted a day after the attack of what it said were rebels discussing moving the rocket. "You get there and Pervomaiske's round there, look on the map," says a man on the recording identified as Sergei Petrovsky, a rebel intelligence officer nicknamed "Gloomy."

"Get set up in that area somewhere, get the men you have left over there," continues the man identified as Petrovsky. "Your job is backup, plus guarding the thing you're going to take over there."

Max Seddon is a correspondent for BuzzFeed World based in Berlin. He has reported from Russia, Ukraine

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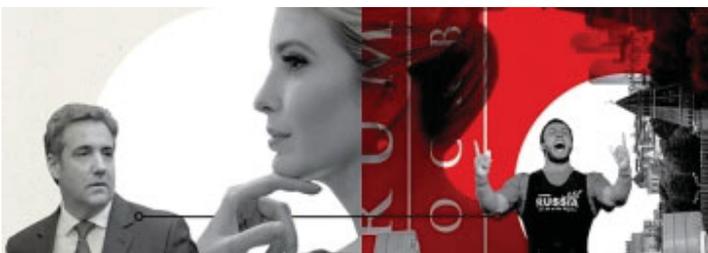
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# Annex 532

Shaun Walker, Ukrainians Report Sightings of Missile Launcher on Day of MH17 Crash, The Guardian (22 July 2014)



# Ukrainians report sightings of missile launcher on day of MH17 crash

 [theguardian.com/world/2014/jul/22/ukraine-sightings-missile-launcher-mh17](http://theguardian.com/world/2014/jul/22/ukraine-sightings-missile-launcher-mh17)

Shaun Walker

July 22, 2014

Claims by pro-Russia separatists in east [Ukraine](#) that they have never been in possession of the missile launcher apparently used to down flight MH17 are looking increasingly flimsy, as several witnesses told the Guardian they had seen what appeared to be a Buk missile launcher in the vicinity of the crash site last Thursday.

The sightings back up a number of photographs and videos posted online that put the Buk system close to the crash site on the day of the disaster. Just before lunchtime last Thursday, prior to the Malaysia Airlines plane's takeoff, a Buk was driven through Gagarin Street, one of the central thoroughfares of Torez, witnesses said.

Torez would later be the town where bodies of the victims were loaded on to refrigerated train cars. The tarmac on Gagarin Street is strewn with ruts made by tank treads, and locals say armoured vehicles controlled by separatists driving through the town have become a regular occurrence in recent weeks. The convoy last Thursday was different, however.

"We were inside and heard a noise much louder than usual," said one shopkeeper, who did not want to be identified. "We came running out and saw a jeep disappearing into the distance with something much larger in front of it. Later, customers said it had been a missile carrier."

In another shop further down the street, there was talk of a convoy of two jeeps and a missile launcher covered in a net driving past in the direction of the town of Snizhne. "I've never seen anything like it," said a middle-aged woman. She said her husband showed her a photograph of a Buk launcher afterwards and she realised that was indeed what she had seen. A group of men also said they had seen a Buk.

There have been suggestions that the missile was fired from fields on the outskirts of Snizhne. Many in Torez did not want to speak about the Buk or claimed not to have heard anything about it. Others said the missile's journey through the town had been a talking point in recent days, but people were scared of divulging too much to outsiders. None of those who reported sightings of the Buk wanted their names published.

Armed rebels at a checkpoint outside the entrance to Snizhe were turning away cars with journalists on Tuesday, saying they had received orders not to let the press into the town.

Ukrainian intelligence has suggested that the missile launcher was provided by [Russia](#) and taken back across the border after the deadly attack on MH17. "It is most likely that the machinery which fired the missiles at Malaysian aircraft will be destroyed and the people who

committed the act of terror will be annihilated," said Anton Gerashchenko, adviser to Ukraine's interior minister.

Russia has denied giving the rebels a Buk launcher, and suggested the Ukrainian army had a number of Buk systems in the vicinity. They have also claimed that a Ukrainian fighter jet was in the vicinity of MH17 at the time of the crash.

The self-styled prime minister of the Donetsk People's Republic, Alexander Borodai, again denied that the rebels were responsible for the crash in a statement to the press in the early hours of Tuesday morning, before he handed the flight's black box recorders to a visiting Malaysian delegation. Ukraine had the "technical ability and the motive" to carry out the attack while the rebels had neither, he said.

However, the rebels had downed a number of Ukrainian planes in the area in recent weeks, and while the presence of the Buk in rebel-controlled territory on the day of the crash does not prove that rebels launched the missile, it does show they are lying about not having any of the systems under their control.

US officials have said they have satellite evidence that a missile was launched at MH17 from the region of Snizhne last Thursday, and were due to make the evidence public later on Tuesday.

Topics

[Malaysia Airlines flight MH17](#)

# Annex 533

Courtney Weaver, Malofeev: The Russian Billionaire Linking Moscow to the Rebels, Financial Times (24 July 2014)



# Malofeev: the Russian billionaire linking Moscow to the rebels

FT [ft.com/content/84481538-1103-11e4-94f3-00144feabdc0](http://ft.com/content/84481538-1103-11e4-94f3-00144feabdc0)

July 24, 2014

## Russia

Courtney Weaver in Moscow

July 24, 2014

In late January, a month before Russian soldiers appeared in Crimea, Russia's Orthodox billionaire Konstantin Malofeev was unexpectedly grounded in Sevastopol by an ice storm. What followed next, he claims, was a miracle.

A shrewd and deeply connected businessman who made his fortune in private equity, Mr Malofeev had been travelling with the Russian patriarch to take a collection of ancient Christian relics on tour through Russia, Ukraine and Belarus.

The delegation had not been planning to stop in Sevastopol, yet 100,000 people – a third of the local population – ended up coming out to pray with the relics. “It was one prayer from all the people: for Sevastopol to once more be part of Russia,” Mr Malofeev recalled smiling. “God’s will.”

Yet in Russia’s controversial annexation of Crimea, others see less the Lord’s hand and more Mr Malofeev’s.

Throughout the Ukraine crisis, Mr Malofeev, 40, has emerged as a key figure linking the pro-Russia forces on the ground in Ukraine and the political establishment in Moscow.

That relationship has become increasingly fraught following the crash last week of a Malaysian Airlines plane in eastern Ukraine, with western leaders accusing Moscow of supplying the rebels with the surface-to-air missile that downed it. On Tuesday, Ukraine’s interior ministry announced it had opened a criminal investigation of Mr Malofeev for financing “illegal armed groups”, branding him a “sponsor of terrorists”.

In a rare interview, Mr Malofeev dismissed the investigation as “ridiculous” and insisted “Kiev with American support” was responsible for the crash of flight MH17. “The Ukrainians were interested in this because they wanted the Americans to start crying loudly about Russian support [for the separatists] and how Russia is guilty.”

The businessman admits that earlier this year he had tried to send \$960,000 of his own money to Sevastopol “for humanitarian purposes”. But he says this transaction was frozen and that he had not sent any funding to the pro-Russia separatists in the east – only to Ukrainian refugees.

“I’m not sending any money there. I’m only sending goods – water, food and medicine – and nothing that can be used for [military capabilities],” he said.

Nonetheless, Mr Malofeev enjoys unusually close ties to the top pro-Russia political and military leaders on the ground in east Ukraine.

Alexander Borodai, the prime minister of the self-declared Donetsk People’s Republic, is a friend who worked as the businessman’s public relations consultant before leaving to serve as the political adviser of Crimea’s new pro-Russia premier, Sergei Aksyonov.

I’m in the middle of patriotic circles. People who have patriotic and Orthodox views know me, and sometimes I know them. You can find a link between me and almost any Orthodox activist. But that doesn’t mean I’m paying them a salary or that we’re in the same business

Igor Girkin – nom de guerre Strelkov – who has been leading the separatists’ military operations in the east, is another former employee. Mr Malofeev is also close to Mr Aksyonov, who organised Crimea’s referendum to join Russia.

Mr Malofeev played down as a coincidence the fact that two ex-employees were now controlling the separatists’ military and political operations.

“I’m in the middle of patriotic circles. People who have patriotic and Orthodox views know me, and sometimes I know them,” he says. “You can find a link between me and almost any Orthodox activist. But that doesn’t mean I’m paying them a salary or that we’re in the same business.”



More signs of Russia’s Ukraine role

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Once a relative unknown in the Russian business world, Mr Malofeev – an avowed monarchist and creationist – has become more prominent in Vladimir Putin’s third term as the Russian president encourages more traditional and Orthodox values.

He has moved to the centre of a group of conservative ideologues that includes Vladimir Yakunin, the head of Russian Railways and a longtime Putin ally, and Igor Shchegolev, a university classmate who served as Russia’s telecommunications minister and is now a top aide to the president. Mr Shchegolev was added to a [US sanctions list](#) last week.

Mr Malofeev is “very ideological, patriotic and believes in the idea of a great and Orthodox Russia”, said Alexei Makarkin, an analyst at the Centre for Political Technologies think-tank. “There is basically no difference between his views and Strelkov’s.”

During his private equity days, the fluent English speaker worked closely with western companies including French insurer Axa and US fund Paul Capital. These days he spends more time mingling with leaders of the US evangelical movement.

## In depth

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### Crisis in Ukraine

Pro-Moscow separatists in eastern Ukraine have escalated the political turmoil that threatens to tear the country apart

Although he rails against the White House, the businessman also admits he has substantial US holdings. He says he is confident the investments are sanctions-proof as they are held through other funds and says he is not worried his name might be added to a future US sanctions list. “I can meet my friends somewhere else,” he quips.

This spring Tages-Anzeiger, the Swiss daily, reported that Mr Malofeev attended a far-right conference in Vienna with France’s Marine Le Pen and Austria’s Heinz-Christian Strache.

Mr Malofeev refuses to discuss a private meeting. “What am I supposed to say?” he exclaims. “I’m not a fascist? I don’t eat babies for breakfast? An Orthodox Christian cannot be fascist. Russians suffered from Nazis more than any other nation in the world.”

Sergei Markov, a political consultant close to the Kremlin, had little doubt Mr Malofeev was sharing his wealth with the Ukrainian rebels. “Of course,” he said. “This is an oligarch with certain ideological views who thinks his ideas should change society.”

As for his political ambitions, Mr Malofeev insists they do not extend beyond his current position: “I want the Russian Empire back,” he says. “I don’t want to be head of it.”



# Annex 534

Alfred de Montesquiou, Un camion volé pour transporter le lance-missiles, Paris Match (25 July 2014)



# Un camion volé pour transporter le lance-missiles

 [parismatch.com/Actu/International/EXCLU-MATCH-Un-camion-vole-pour-transporter-le-systeme-lance-missiles-](http://parismatch.com/Actu/International/EXCLU-MATCH-Un-camion-vole-pour-transporter-le-systeme-lance-missiles-577289)

577289

Alfred de Montesquiou



«Ce camion, les combattants me l'ont embarqué au début du mois, avec une dizaine d'autres», a affirmé le propriétaire, Vassili, joint par téléphone. «Je l'ai effectivement reconnu sur les photos. Mais comme on me l'a volé, je ne sais ni où il est, ni à quoi il sert. Je ne le contrôle pas du tout», a insisté Vassili, directeur de l'entreprise Stroy-Bud Montage, basée à Donetsk, la capitale des séparatistes pro-russes dans l'extrême Est de l'Ukraine.

Le renseignement ukrainien, la CIA et de nombreux experts suspectent que le vol MH17 de la Malaysia Airlines a été abattu par un missile sol-air de type SA-11 tiré depuis une rampe de lancement BUK autour de la ville de Snijne, aux mains des rebelles. L'équipe de Paris Match avait justement photographié un tel lance-missile en bordure de Donetsk, sur la route de Snijne au matin du jeudi 17 juillet, quelques heures avant le drame qui a coûté la vie à 298 personnes.

Le même semi-remorque blanc à liseré bleu sur le capot, très reconnaissable, a encore été photographié au petit matin le lendemain du drame par une caméra de surveillance dans la ville de Krasnodon, en train de se hâter vers la frontière russe toute proche. Il semble manquer un ou deux missiles SA-11 sur la rampe de lancement...



Le même camion photographié à l'aube du vendredi 18 juillet 2014 par une caméra de surveillance dans la ville de Krasnodon, tout près de la frontière russe, selon cette image circulée par le renseignement ukrainien. © Paris Match

Un des principaux chefs de la rébellion pro-russe a également admis dans une interview à l'agence Reuters la présence d'une rampe de lancement BUK à Snijne, et implicitement concédé qu'elle avait servi, avant de se rétracter cette semaine....

Les photographies de Paris Match montrent que les rebelles avaient omis d'ôter le panneau publicitaire sur le camion qu'ils avaient volé. C'est ainsi que nous avons joint le propriétaire du véhicule. Vassili a indiqué que les rebelles occupaient ses entrepôts dans la banlieue de Donetsk depuis le 8 juillet. «Ce sont des combattants de Slaviansk. Ils ont débarqué en me disant qu'ils aimaient mes locaux et qu'on devait dégager. Ils m'ont embarqué une dizaine de gros véhicules, dont le camion blanc. Je sais pas ce qu'ils sont devenus», a avoué Vassili, désemparé.

Toute reproduction interdite

# Annex 535

Thomas Grove & Warren Strobel, Special Report: Where Ukraine's separatists get their weapons, Reuters (29 July 2014)



# Special Report: Where Ukraine's separatists get their weapons

 [reuters.com/article/us-ukraine-crisis-arms-specialreport/special-report-where-ukraines-separatists-get-their-weapons-idUSKBN0FY0UA20140729](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-ukraine-crisis-arms-specialreport/special-report-where-ukraines-separatists-get-their-weapons-idUSKBN0FY0UA20140729)

DONETSK Ukraine (Reuters) - On the last day of May, a surface-to-air rocket was signed out of a military base near Moscow where it had been stored for more than 20 years.

Members of the Ukrainian Emergency Ministry carry a body near the wreckage at the crash site of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH17, near the settlement of Grabovo in the Donetsk region in this July 19, 2014 file photo. REUTERS/Maxim Zmeyev/Files

According to the ornate Cyrillic handwriting in the weapon's Russian Defence Ministry logbook, seen by Reuters, the portable rocket, for use with an Igla rocket launcher, was destined for a base in Rostov, some 50 km (31 miles) from the Ukrainian border. In that area, say U.S. officials, lies a camp for training Ukrainian separatist fighters.

Three weeks later the rocket and its logbook turned up in eastern Ukraine, where government troops seized them from pro-Russian separatists.

The logbook, which is more than 20 pages long, records that rocket 03181 entered service on May 21, 1993, and had regular tests as recently as 2005 to make sure it was in fighting form. The seal of the Russian Defence Ministry has been stamped over the signature sending the weapon to Rostov.

A copy of the log was passed to a diplomat in Ukraine's capital, Kiev. Reuters was unable to verify its authenticity with the Russian military, and Moscow has consistently denied arming the separatists in eastern Ukraine.

The Igla and its logbook are just one indication that weapons are flowing from Russia into Ukraine. Interviews with American officials, diplomats in Kiev, and Russian military analysts paint a picture of a steady and ongoing flow. These people say weapons – from small arms to armored personnel carriers, tanks and sophisticated missile systems – have flooded into the region since May, fueling the violence.

In an interview with Reuters last week, a separatist leader said that Russia may have supplied the separatists with BUK rockets, which were used to shoot down Malaysia Airlines flight MH17. The destruction of the civilian passenger plane over eastern Ukraine on July 17 killed nearly 300 people.

Alexander Khodakovsky, commander of the Vostok Battalion, told Reuters: "I knew that a BUK came from Luhansk (in east Ukraine) ... I heard about it. I think they sent it back. Because I found out about it at exactly the moment that I found out that this tragedy (of MH17) had taken place. They probably sent it back in order to remove proof of its presence."

Three U.S. government officials said the weapons flow from Russia increased dramatically several weeks ago in response to successes by Ukrainian government forces, including the recapture of Slaviansk, a separatist stronghold in eastern Ukraine. The new shipments included anti-aircraft systems designed to combat Ukraine's air power, those officials said.

"If you trace the increase in supplies and materials ... we've seen in the last few weeks culminating in this tragic incident, it's clearly in the face of successes by the Ukrainian forces," said a senior U.S. official, who like the others spoke on condition of anonymity.

Moscow, which has said it is willing to cooperate with an international investigation into the loss of MH17, has denied sending any BUK missiles to the rebels. It has said Washington is attempting to destabilize Russia through events in Ukraine.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said this week that Moscow was hopeful that monitors from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe could be deployed along Russia's border with Ukraine to dispel suspicions that Russia is aiding the rebels.

"We hope that this will dispel suspicions that are regularly being voiced against us, that those (border) checkpoints controlled by the militias from the Ukrainian side are used for massive troops and weaponry deployment from Russia to Ukraine," he said.

Pro-Russian separatists in Ukraine maintain most of their weapons have come from captured Ukrainian armories or have been seized directly from the Ukrainian military on the battlefield.

## BORDER SKIRMISHES

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In the weeks following Russia's annexation of Crimea in March, tensions grew on the south and east frontiers of Ukraine. Kiev's border guard agency said it stopped thousands of Russian citizens who tried to enter Ukrainian territory carrying weapons or bags full of camouflage.

Separatists started firing on border guard positions, according to Ukrainian officials. On May 29, the Stanychno-Luhanske border guard division in Ukraine's Luhansk province was attacked by 300 gunmen with small arms and grenade launchers. Rebels seized control of the facility after five days of fighting. Other border guard divisions and checkpoints along Ukraine's more than 2,000-km border with Russia also fell.

Separatists were able to ferry in people and equipment almost unhindered.

That led to more ambitious attacks on Ukrainian targets. On June 14, for instance, separatists shot down a Ukrainian IL-76 military transport jet coming in to land near the eastern city of Luhansk. All 49 people on board died; charred pieces of the fuselage and engines littered the rolling wheat fields outside the village of Novohannivka.

The weapon used that day, according to separatists who later spoke about the attack, was an Igla rocket launcher, sometimes known generically as a MANPAD, for man-portable air-defence system.

The origin of the weapon remains unclear: There is no evidence this was connected to the Iglu rocket seized by Ukrainian forces a week later along with its log book. Iglus were used extensively in Afghanistan, Chechnya and Bosnia in the 1990s and are easy to transport and common in eastern Ukraine. Videos, posted online after Ukrainian troops drove separatists out of Slaviansk on July 7, show boxes marked 9M39 – the model of missile used with an Iglu – stacked in the basement of the mayor’s office.

The day after the IL-76 was shot down, Valery Bolotov, top commander of the Luhansk People’s Republic, claimed responsibility. “I can’t tell you anything more detailed on the IL-76, but I will repeat that the IL-76 was hit by our militia, the air defense forces of the Luhansk People’s Republic,” Bolotov, who wore a camouflage T-shirt, said in a video posted on YouTube.

The commander said that separatists in Luhansk controlled nearly 80 km of the border from Dolzhanksy to Izvaryna at that time, but denied getting weapons from Moscow, saying they had been pillaged from Ukrainian army and police store rooms.

A separatist officer in Slaviansk who used the nom de guerre Anton also said the Iglu in the IL-76 attack was not Russian but a weapon seized from Ukrainians. He declined to say whether the separatists received other weapons from Russia.

Alexander Gureyev, a Russia supporter from Luhansk, told Reuters last week that all the separatists’ weapons had been found in local arms warehouses.

“We had to boost our arsenal,” he said. “If you have small-caliber weapons and they’re shooting at you with Howitzers - that’s not right. But now they’re getting it from us with Howitzers, mortars, tanks. It’s given them something to think about.”

He declined to detail the origin of heavy weapons, but said separatists were “thrilled” when the IL-76 was shot down. “It was like a holiday in the city. People thought things would change and that with such a success people would stop dying in this conflict.”

He said the Luhansk rebels had decided to station anti-aircraft sharpshooters at the nearby airfield in retribution for the deaths of at least eight people in what he called a Ukrainian airstrike on the rebels’ headquarters in Luhansk.

“They simply flew above us, we were already fed up with it all and decided that we would start shooting at everything,” he said. “We simply took anything out of the sky that flew above us.”

## “RUSSIAN BONEYARDS”

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Not everyone believes the separatists’ assertions that their weapons had been seized from Ukrainian troops.

A diplomat said that arms had started to come in from Russia regularly around the time of the independence vote in Crimea in May. In the past couple of weeks an increasing amount of materiel had arrived “in reaction to the collapse of Slaviansk,” he said. That included T64 tanks from stocks of old weapons discarded after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Anton Lavrov, an independent Russian military analyst said: “It would be stupid to deny that Russia supports the separatists. The main question is only the scale of this support.”

He said pro-Russian separatists have been found in possession of a Kamaz Mustang military transport vehicle that is not used in Ukraine and cannot be bought there. Reuters could not independently verify that.

“There was a serious escalation in the middle of June, when heavy weapons began to appear among the separatists, including tanks and artillery in such quantities that it would be hard to attribute it to seizures from Ukrainian stockpiles.”

Another independent Russian military analyst, Alexander Golts, also said the rebels had received arms from Russia. He described it as “all old Soviet weaponry.” He said rocket launchers were spotted in April or the beginning of May very early in the conflict.

Washington is in no doubt Russia is the source of many of the weapons. At least 20 tanks and armored personnel carriers have crossed the border from Russia since the downing of Malaysia Airlines MH17, a senior U.S. intelligence official said.

In a media briefing on July 22, U.S. intelligence officials also released satellite photographs of what they said was a training site for Ukrainian separatists near the Russian city of Rostov. The photographs appear to show increased activity at the site between June 19 and July 21.

A Moscovite volunteer called Valery Kolotsei, 37, said he joined the rebels in Ukraine’s Luhansk region for a few weeks in May and June. He said he had connected with other volunteers over Vkontakte, Russia’s version of Facebook. They had gathered, he said, in the Rostov region, where U.S. officials say a camp for training Ukrainian separatist fighters sits.

Kolotsei said the rebel group he joined used a motley array of weapons, including a mortar produced in 1944.

## “OUT OF CONTROL”

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Before the MH17 incident, U.S. spy agencies issued multiple warnings that Russia was shipping heavy weaponry, including rockets, to Ukrainian separatists, U.S. security officials said.

The officials said that before MH-17 went down, the United States had become aware separatists possessed SA-11 BUK missiles, but believed they were all inoperable. Officials acknowledged, too, that U.S. intelligence agencies do not know who fired the missile or when and how separatists may have obtained it.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has firmly denied his country had any involvement in the fate of MH17. Putin and the separatists blamed Ukraine for the disaster, with some suggesting a Ukrainian missile team brought down the passenger aircraft.

Ukraine rejects such claims. Vladyslav Seleznyov, a spokesman for Ukraine's military operations in eastern Ukraine, said: "The Ukrainian army has portable missile systems of the Igla and Osa type and the complex BUK. However, they are not used in this campaign because there is no need for them." The rebels have no aircraft, he said.

Despite the MH17 tragedy, the conflict shows little sign of diminishing. Another U.S. official said: "There are indications that some groups feel betrayed by Moscow not doing enough. Others don't like the way this is headed." He said some rebels fear the fighting has "gotten out of control."

Olexander Motsyk, Ukraine's ambassador to the United States, told Reuters in an interview that his country has evidence Russia is preparing to supply separatist rebels with a powerful new multiple-rocket system known as the Tornado. According to military websites, the system first saw service earlier this decade and is an improvement on Russia's older Grad missile launcher.

The evidence for this, Motsyk said, includes satellite photographs as well as intercepts of telephone conversations. He declined to be more specific.

Referring to the flow of weapons from Russia into eastern Ukraine, he said: "Nothing has changed after the downing of the civilian airliner."

Grove reported from Donetsk, Strobel from Washington; Additional reporting by Mark Hosenball, Jason Szep, Matt Spetalnick and Phillip Stewart in Washington, Elizabeth Piper in Kiev, Alissa de Carbonnel in Moscow, and Maria Tsvetkova, Anton Zverev and Peter Graff in Donetsk; Editing by Simon Robinson and Richard Woods

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# Annex 536

Christopher Miller, Russian Resigns to Make Way for Ukrainian as New Head of 'Donetsk People's Republic,' *Guardian* (8 August 2014)



# Russian resigns to make way for Ukrainian as new head of 'Donetsk People's Republic'

 [theguardian.com/world/2014/aug/08/russian-resigns-ukrainian-head-donetsk-peoples-republic](http://theguardian.com/world/2014/aug/08/russian-resigns-ukrainian-head-donetsk-peoples-republic)

Christopher Miller for Kyiv Post

August 8, 2014

The Russian prime minister of the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic has announced his resignation in a move aimed at dampening claims that the rebellion in eastern Ukraine is being masterminded by Moscow.



Borodai, a Russian national, steps down amid growing tensions from within the separatists' ranks and as Ukrainian government forces move to encircle the city of Donetsk.

He will be replaced by Alexander Zakharchenko, a Ukrainian citizen from Donetsk Oblast and member of the militant group Oplot, who has been a major player in the insurgency against Kiev's government forces since its military offensive began in April.

Wearing a black t-shirt with his trademark blue blazer, Borodai told journalists inside the rebel headquarters in Donetsk yesterday that he came to eastern Ukraine "as a crisis manager," and claimed that under his leadership "the Donetsk People's Republic became a state."

Flanked by Zakharchenko, Borodai said, "I am a Muscovite. Donbass should be led by a genuine Donetsk native."

However, Borodai made it clear that he would remain closely involved. He added "that even if I spend much of my time in Moscow I will serve" the self-styled republic as first deputy prime minister and an advisor to Zakharchenko, who wore a striped t-shirt of the kind worn by the Russian navy, and the cross of St George, a Russian military decoration.

## Advertisement

Borodai is one of many Russian citizens with close ties to Moscow and Russian intelligence services. Before arriving in eastern Ukraine, he was an advisor to Sergey Aksyonov, the current acting head of Crimea appointed by Russian President Vladimir Putin following Russia's annexation of Crimea in March, and a consultant for an investment fund in Moscow, where he also owns a restaurant chain.

He is also a close confidant of Igor Girkin, better known by his nom de guerre Strelkov, meaning "the shooter," who is the military commander of the Donetsk region. The two men, both Muscovites, fought together in Moldova's breakaway region of Transnistria in the early 1990s.

Borodai's departure comes on the heels of a recent trip to Moscow, where he spent several

days tending to “business related to the [Donetsk People’s Republic.]”

Speaking for the first time in his new role as prime minister of the self-declared republic, Zakharchenko described the escalating standoff with Ukraine’s military by saying: “The situation is indeed difficult but not critical.”

Events earlier in the day, however, highlighted the intensifying situation in Ukraine’s restive east, where rebels have suffered significant losses at the hands of Kiev’s forces in recent weeks.

In Donetsk, local authorities urged residents to use “maximum caution” and stay indoors as a barrage of shells rained down near the city’s security services building, which is used as a base by the rebels. At least one person was reportedly killed.

Several kilometres north of Donetsk, government forces moved at least two dozen tanks and artillery to a high point on the hills, where they fired salvos of shells toward the rebel-held city of Horlivka. Thunderous booms shook homes and echoed through the valleys below, as thick black smoke rose from the city of some 250,000 people.

The Horlivka city council said in a statement shortly after that five people were killed when a shell hit near a bus stop.

*Christopher J Miller is editor of the Kyiv Post*

# Annex 537

Roland Oliphant, Kamensk-Shakhtinsky & Tom Parfitt, Russian Armoured Vehicles And Military Trucks Cross Border Into Ukraine, The Telegraph (14 August 2014)



# Russian armoured vehicles and military trucks cross border into Ukraine

 [telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/ukraine/11035401/Russian-armoured-vehicles-and-military-trucks-cross-border-into-Ukraine.html](http://telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/ukraine/11035401/Russian-armoured-vehicles-and-military-trucks-cross-border-into-Ukraine.html)  
Roland Oliphant

August 13, 2014

A column of armoured vehicles and military trucks crossed the border from Russia into Ukraine on Thursday night, in the first confirmed sighting of such an incident by Western journalists.

A separate, larger convoy of around 270 Russian trucks, which Moscow claims is carrying aid, rumbled to a halt just short of the border on Thursday night, while in east Ukraine, shells hit the centre of rebel-held Donetsk for the first time.

The Telegraph witnessed a column of vehicles including both armoured personal carriers and soft-skinned lorries crossing into Ukraine at an obscure border crossing near the Russian town of Donetsk shortly before 10pm local time.

The Ukrainian and Western governments have long accused Russia of filtering arms and men across the border to fuel the separatist insurgency in Ukraine's Donetsk and Luhansk regions, but such an incident has never before been witnessed by Western journalists.

The convoy, which included at least 23 vehicles, appeared to be waiting until sunset near a refugee camp just outside Donetsk, before moving towards the crossing without turning off headlights or making any other attempt to conceal itself.

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- [Ukraine denounces Russian 'cynicism' as aid convoy nears border](#)

13 Aug 2014

While it was not immediately clear whether all of that convoy crossed the border, The Telegraph did see a substantial number of vehicles pass through check point manned by gunmen after shadowing the convoy down narrow country lanes near the frontier.

While the force did not seem to be a substantial invasion force, it confirms that military supplies are moving across the border. While the APCs carried no visible markings the fuel tankers and soft-skinned trucks in the convoy bore black Russian military number plates.

The vehicles do not appear to be associated with the Russian aid convoy that is camped 20 miles further down the same road.

Russia claims it wants to prevent a humanitarian crisis in eastern Ukraine, where civilians are caught in the crossfire in a conflict between pro-Russian separatist rebels and government troops that began in April.

Intense shelling on Luhansk and Donetsk left more than 25 people dead, while Ukrainian forces reported nine troops dead and 18 injured over the past day.

Igor "The Shooter" Girkin, the rebels' military commander, resigned from his post on Thursday. He will be replaced by a senior militiaman known only as "The Tsar".

The separatists – who Ukraine and Nato say receive volunteers and weapons from across the border with Russia – have been on the back foot in recent weeks. Besides Mr Girkin, another senior rebel leader, Valery Bolotov, resigned yesterday saying it was due to injuries.

Vladimir Putin, Russia's president, said in a speech that Moscow wanted "to stop bloodshed in Ukraine as soon as possible".

Speaking in Yalta on the Crimea peninsula, which Russia seized from Ukraine in March, Mr Putin added that, "the situation is becoming more dramatic by the day. The country has immersed itself in bloody chaos, a fratricidal conflict". He stressed that Russians should avoid a rift with the West over Ukraine and "build our country, not fence it off from the outside world".

Kiev sees Moscow's calls for peace as deeply hypocritical and is suspicious of the aid convoy, which it believes is a possible covert invasion, or at least an attempt by Moscow to freeze a Ukrainian advance on rebel strongholds.

Russia's aid convoy is aimed at Luhansk, the worst-hit city, where residents have been without electricity and running water for several weeks, homes have been destroyed by artillery and mortar fire and food supplies are dwindling.

Under a tentative agreement between the two countries earlier this week the aid was supposed to be brought in to Ukraine at a border crossing near Kharkiv, in the northeast of the country, outside the conflict zone. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) agreed to help with the handover and possibly with providing vehicles for the cargo to be transported across Ukrainian territory.

However, that agreement collapsed amid bitter recriminations on Wednesday, and on

Thursday the convoy struck south to Kamensk-Shakhtinsky, close to the rebel-controlled portion of Ukraine's border with Russia.

The ICRC said that it would not facilitate the convoy if Russia decided to send the trucks into Ukraine without permission. "Talks between the two sides are continuing but we can't help unless they come to an agreement," said Victoria Zotikova, a spokesman.

Laurent Corbaz, the organisation's head of operations for Europe and Central Asia, is due to travel to Kiev on Friday and Moscow early next week for talks over the convoy.

For a short time on Thursday it looked as if Vladimir Putin had resolved to send the aid mission straight across the border, in spite of Ukrainian objections.

After leaving Voronezh, the 270-vehicle convoy barrelled south towards Rostov-on-Don – a major city that could serve as another staging point.

But halfway the vast column of white-painted lorries and support vehicles took a westward turn towards the border town of Donetsk – not to be confused with the Ukrainian city of the same name – where Ukrainian forces have lost control of the border and rebels rule the land.

In a choking cloud of dust, the white-painted lorries crawled off the road and lumbered into place in serried lines on the parched field.

The drivers, in their unmarked khaki uniforms of baseball cap, T-shirt and slacks, slipped out of their cabs and made for the makeshift showers set up by soldiers from a neighbouring army base.

Luhansk was just a few hours drive away. There appeared little reason the trucks could not press on. Military police, two army helicopters, and a number of unmarked vehicles bearing the black-number plates of the Russian ministry of the defence were escorting the convoy. But instead the vehicles parked up at an army base about 30 miles short of the frontier.

"We didn't try at Kharkiv yesterday, the Ukrainian's wouldn't let us through," said one older, khaki-clad man in glasses who was talking with an airborne officer from the base. "We just go where we are told, to deliver this aid."

The drivers The Telegraph spoke to said they had no idea where they would be sent next.

Neither the men in beige, nor the soldiers, made attempt to prevent journalists from wandering the site as lorries pulled in.

If anything, they were keen to show off their cargo, apparently in a bid to dispel accusations from some Ukrainian officials that the convoy may contain something sinister.

Two trucks, chosen at random by The Telegraph, proved to contain sacks of buckwheat and cardboard boxes full of sleeping bags – exactly the kind of aid Russia has always insisted it is sending over the border.

But while there are no guns on display, the mission has a distinctly military flavour.

The drivers in khaki are clean-shaven service age males, and they drive originally army-green lorries that have been hastily spray-painted white. At least one bore distinct tattoos normally associated with the armed forces.

# Annex 538

Shaun Walker, Aid Convoy Stops Short of Border as Russian Military Vehicles Enter Ukraine,  
The Guardian (15 August 2014)



# Aid convoy stops short of border as Russian military vehicles enter Ukraine

 [theguardian.com/world/2014/aug/14/russian-military-vehicles-enter-ukraine-aid-convoy-stops-short-border](http://theguardian.com/world/2014/aug/14/russian-military-vehicles-enter-ukraine-aid-convoy-stops-short-border)

Shaun Walker

August 15, 2014

The white trucks of humanitarian aid rumbled through Russia in a convoy stretching for miles, moving slowly southwards on the M4 highway, amid a landscape of fertile fields and Ladas stopped at the roadside – their boots overflowing with watermelons for sale.

But, while the trucks came to a halt well short of Ukraine's border, a different Russian convoy did make the crossing into Ukrainian territory late on Thursday evening.

The Guardian saw a column of 23 armoured personnel carriers, supported by fuel trucks and other logistics vehicles with official Russian military plates, travelling towards the border near the Russian town of Donetsk – about 200km away from Donetsk, Ukraine.

Shaun Walker (@shaunwalker7)

So [@RolandOliphant](#) and I just saw a column of APCs and vehicles with official Russian military plates cross border into Ukraine.

August 14, 2014

After pausing by the side of the road until nightfall, the convoy crossed into Ukrainian territory, using a rough dirt track and clearly crossing through a gap in a barbed wire fence that demarcates the border. Armed men were visible in the gloom by the border fence as the column moved into Ukraine. Kiev has lost control of its side of the border in this area.

The trucks are unlikely to represent a full-scale official Russian invasion, and it was unclear how far they planned to travel inside Ukrainian territory and how long they would stay. But it was incontrovertible evidence of what Ukraine has long claimed – that Russian troops are active inside its borders.

It was also ironic given the attention to the huge convoy of humanitarian aid that moved slowly southwards on the M4 highway on Thursday. As the convoy moved closer to the stretch of border controlled by pro-Russian rebels it was hard to escape the feeling that Moscow's aid convoy had the potential to turn into a slow-motion disaster, perhaps even prompting a moment that could push Ukraine and Russia out of the messy conflict fought by proxies into full-blown, open engagement.

According to Moscow, the convoy is a goodwill gesture, packed with much-needed aid for the residents of eastern Ukraine. In Kiev's view, the convoy is at best a cynical ploy; at worst, a kind of Trojan centipede, winding its way into the country at a border point no longer controlled by Ukrainian forces, the nature of its cargo taken only on trust.

The humanitarian convoy stalled for 24 hours in the city of Voronezh during Wednesday, but set out at dawn on Thursday.

At one point, with President Vladimir Putin more than two hours late to address a gathering of top Russian officials in newly annexed Crimea, and the first lorries in the convoy taking the turnoff from the main M4 highway towards rebel-controlled Luhansk in Ukraine, there were whispers that perhaps Putin's announcement was being delayed to announce that the trucks would enter Ukraine whether or not the country's authorities gave the green light, a move Kiev has said would be seen as an invasion.



▲ The aid convoy on the road in Russia. Photograph: Itar-Tass/Corbis

In the end, the convoy ground to a halt shortly after the turnoff, still about 20 miles from the border and, over a period of two hours, the vehicles parked in neat lines, throwing up clouds of dust.

Russia's foreign ministry has said there are 262 vehicles in the convoy, including 200 carrying aid. Some of the drivers put the number at 270. Already, the start of a field camp had been erected on the site, with a dozen large tents and a shower area where the men could wash off the grime and sweat of the long journey.

The trucks could be stacked with weapons, some said. Others claimed they could be carrying advance supplies for a later Russian invasion using the ground troops that have hovered in border areas. There was also a suggestion that the circus around the mysterious convoy could distract attention from other Russian moves, a fear apparently justified given the military column that crossed the border on Thursday night.

The hundreds of men driving the trucks in the convoy were all dressed in identical khaki T-shirts, shorts and caps, and there was certainly something military about their bearing.

For some observers, the large convoy moving with obvious top-level coordination and accompanied by numerous vehicles with official Russian military plates brought back memories of the "little green men" involved in the annexation of Crimea back in March. Wearing green uniforms without insignia, those men claimed to be local volunteers, although they were clearly highly trained Russian special operatives. Despite denying their presence all through the annexation, Putin later admitted that Russian military units had been involved.

Shaun Walker (@shaunwalker7)

Spent a couple of hours with the Russian convoy which has stopped, possibly for some time. Field camp being set up [pic.twitter.com/UN1NTJSsbX](https://pic.twitter.com/UN1NTJSsbX)

August 14, 2014

But, with their easy manner, lack of discipline and in some cases physiques that hinted more at beer halls than special forces training grounds, the "little brown men" of the aid convoy are clearly not the highly trained elite troops used in the annexation of Crimea.

In general, the men did not want to speak about who they were or how they had come to be involved in the convoy. One said he was a volunteer from a non-governmental organisation, but clammed up when asked for the name of the organisation.

"I'm being paid to do a job here, not to stand around talking to journalists," he said when pressed, and then looked sheepish when reminded he had just claimed to be an unpaid volunteer.

Others said they were military veterans but claimed not to be serving currently. It is possible the convoy was assembled using the semi-official method Russia has used to find volunteers to fight for rebel separatists in eastern Ukraine – phone calls from military veterans' organisations offering work.

Those at the site were dismissive of fears in Ukraine that the convoy may be carrying secret military cargo. Two of the men in brown, who would not give their names but said they were "in charge of the cargo", offered to open any of the trucks picked at random and show what was inside. Men scrambled to untie the cords securing the tarpaulin on two of the trucks chosen by the Guardian and other journalists at the site.

Inside one were white sacks filled with buckwheat, while the other contained stacked cardboard boxes. Three men pulled the tape from one of the boxes to reveal newly packed sleeping bags. As the tarpaulin was pulled away, the original military green of the trucks was revealed; their exteriors apparently only recently painted white.

Nobody would say how long they planned to be there: a few hours or several days. Neither was it clear whether a decision had been taken in Moscow to move only with approval from the International Committee of the Red Cross, or whether a decision would be made to move ahead regardless, if diplomatic wrangling takes too long.



▲ Map of Russian convoy to Ukraine.

A lone car with diplomatic plates and Red Cross insignia arrived at the location of the convoy on Thursday afternoon. Two men inside confirmed they were Red Cross officials based in Moscow but refused to give any further information about whether they had travelled with the convoy, what plans there were for inspection, or whether more representatives were on the way. On Thursday evening, the organisation tweeted that "initial contact" with the convoy had been made, and there were "many practical details to be clarified".

The trucks do indeed appear to contain humanitarian aid, and there is undoubtedly a grim situation in major towns in eastern Ukraine, as thousands don't have water and electricity, and are sheltering in basements to avoid shelling. Nevertheless, Kiev's concern about the convoy, with its thinly disguised military undertones, is understandable. Two military helicopters accompanied the convoy south, and flew just a few dozen metres from the ground as it came to a halt. The head and tail of the convoy included a number of vehicles with official Russian military plates.

Shaun Walker (@shaunwalker7)

Two helicopters accompanying the convoy, flying extremely low. Now sat in the fields alongside [pic.twitter.com/yYTr7Vhp8C](https://pic.twitter.com/yYTr7Vhp8C)

August 14, 2014

Separately, there were several military transporters loaded with artillery and tanks visible on the main M4 road during the day. Locals say the sightings have been ever more frequent in recent months, with Ukraine accusing Moscow of shelling its territory from inside Russia, and transporting heavy weaponry across the border, including perhaps the BUK missile system which is believed to have been used to shoot down a Malaysian Airlines passenger jet last month.

The armoured column seen by the Guardian appeared to be further evidence of Russia's incursions, which the Kremlin has repeatedly denied.

# Annex 539

Shaun Walker, Ukraine Rebel Leader Says He Has 1,200 Fighters 'Trained in Russia' Under His Command, The Guardian (16 August 2014)



# Ukraine rebel says he has 1,200 fighters 'trained in Russia' under his command

 [theguardian.com/world/2014/aug/16/ukraine-fighters-russia-top-rebel-leader](http://theguardian.com/world/2014/aug/16/ukraine-fighters-russia-top-rebel-leader)

Shaun Walker

August 16, 2014

One of the top rebel leaders in eastern Ukraine claims that his forces have recently received 1,200 fighters who had undergone training in Russia. The claim came during a speech to leading rebels, apparently recorded on Friday and posted to YouTube by a pro-separatist media outlet. His language suggested the men had already crossed the border.

Alexander Zakharchenko, prime minister of the self-declared Donetsk People's Republic, also spoke about 150 armoured vehicles, of which 30 are tanks and the rest wheeled or tracked armoured personnel carriers. He said the men and equipment had gathered in an area near a "corridor" to the Russian border, though he did not specify whether the vehicles themselves had crossed from Russia.

"There are 1,200 individuals who have gone through training over a four-month period on the territory of the Russian Federation and who have been introduced here at the most decisive moment," said Zakharchenko. Many among the rebel fighters admit to being Russian volunteers or veterans who received training in the Rostov region before crossing the border.

It is unclear how much direct coordination by official Russian authorities has taken place, and there was no way to verify Zakharchenko's claims. However, it is significant that the claims came from the rebel side and not from Kiev.

The claims come after a week when Russia's actions on the border with Ukraine have been under renewed scrutiny. Journalists for the *Guardian* and *Daily Telegraph* observed a convoy of armoured vehicles accompanied by trucks with Russian military plates crossing over the border on Thursday night. Ukraine said it had destroyed part of a Russian column later that night, but did not provide any evidence. Russia denied any incursion had taken place.

Late on Friday, German chancellor Angela Merkel called Russian President Vladimir Putin and urged him "to help de-escalate the situation and in particular to halt the stream of weapons, military advisers and armed personnel into Ukraine," her spokesperson said.

In recent days several columns of Russian military hardware have been observed on the move close to the border. On Friday, a column of several dozen armoured personnel carriers and several dozen support trucks were spotted moving towards the border, many of them flying Russian flags and marked with "peacekeeping troops" insignia.

Despite the increased troop movement there are some signs of negotiations behind closed doors. The heads of Russia and Ukraine's presidential administrations met in the Russian city of Sochi on Friday and agreed that the countries' foreign ministers would meet on Sunday in

Berlin.

Several separatist leaders have left their posts, including Valery Bolotov, head of the self-proclaimed Luhansk People's Republic, and Igor Strelkov, defence minister for the Donetsk rebels. Strelkov, a Russian citizen who says he was an agent of Russia's FSB security service until last year, has been one of the key figures in the rebel movement. Other rebels said he was "resting" before being given a new task. It is unclear if he has returned to Russia.

Ukrainian forces have made major gains against the rebels in recent weeks, and are closing in on the main cities of Donetsk and Luhansk, though their advance has come with heavy civilian casualties.

Russia has also let 58 Ukrainian border guards onto its territory, with the expectation that they will be allowed to inspect the humanitarian convoy currently stationed close to the town of Kamensk-Shakhtinsky around 20 miles from the border with Ukraine.

The convoy, which set out from a military base near Moscow on Tuesday, has caused controversy in Kiev, where some officials believed it could be cover for military intervention. Russia has insisted it only contains food and aid, and showed some of the contents to journalists on Thursday and Friday. Negotiations are under way to allow the trucks to cross the border with accompaniment from the International Red Cross.

# Annex 540

Roland Oliphant, Russian Paratroopers Captured in Ukraine 'Accidentally Crossed Border', The Telegraph (26 August 2014)



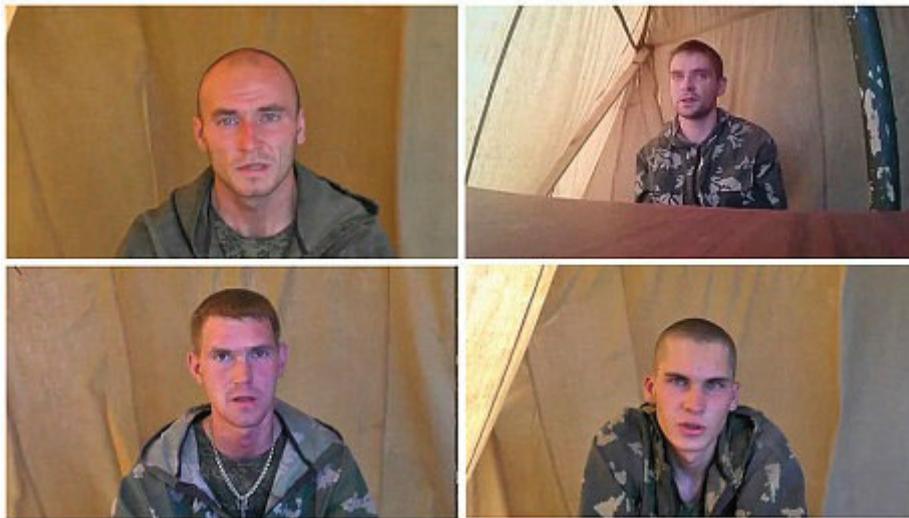
# Russian paratroopers captured in Ukraine 'accidentally crossed border'

telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/ukraine/11056312/Russian-paratroopers-captured-in-Ukraine-accidentally-crossed-border.html  
By Roland Oliphant

August 25, 2014

Ten Russian paratroopers who were captured in Ukraine on Monday crossed the border "accidentally" during a routine frontier patrol, Russia's Ministry of Defence said on Tuesday.

Ukraine's Security Service, the SBU, said on Monday that the men were captured near the village of Dzerkalne, about 25 miles southeast of the rebels' besieged stronghold, the city of Donetsk.



The Ukrainian Security Service released these images of the soldiers

The village is 13 miles north of the nearest section of the Russian border.

In its first public admission that regular Russian forces had crossed into Ukraine, a defence ministry official said the troops had made a "mistake" because of the poorly marked border.

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24 Aug 2014

"These servicemen really did take part in a patrol of a section of the Russian-Ukrainian border, crossing it likely by mistake at an unequipped and unmarked point, as far as we are aware they offered no resistance to the Ukrainian armed forces when arrested," a Ministry of Defence source told Russia's state-owned RIA Novosti news agency.

Russia has previously vigorously denied that its troops have crossed into Ukraine, despite repeated accusations from the Ukrainian and Western governments that it is providing men and material to the pro-Russian rebels fighting in the area.

The admission comes a day after the Ukrainian military said it repelled a cross-border attack involving ten tanks, two infantry fighting vehicles and two military trucks near the Sea of Azov. Ukraine described the attack, which Moscow denied knowledge of, as an attempt to open a "second front" in a southern part of Donetsk region previously relatively undisturbed by fighting.

Meanwhile, Russian media published photographs of the fresh graves of two young men in Pskov, Russia, who were widely reported to have been paratroopers who died fighting in Ukraine. The names of the dead men and some of those who were captured match social networking pages of young soldiers with the same names.

In interrogation videos released by the SBU, four of the captured soldiers identify themselves as Ivan Romantsov, Ivan Melchukov, Sergei Smirnov, and Alexei Generalov. All are from the 98th Guards Airborne Division, which is based in Kostroma in central Russia.

The videos, apparently filmed in a tent shortly after they were captured, show the men visibly shaken but without obvious signs of physical injury.

It is unclear whether they were speaking under duress.

While their accounts vary, they each describe being deployed to Rostov region in southern Russia on a "training exercise" several days previously, before being sent on a "march" with a column of vehicles with few orders and little understanding of where they were going.

None of the men said they had been told they were going to Ukraine or that they were on a combat mission.

"They didn't say anything, just 'march 70 kilometres'," says the man identified as Melchukov. "I guessed it, but I didn't know [we were in Ukraine] until they started shelling us."

The man identified as Sgt Romantsov, who describes himself as the second in command of a fighting vehicle, said his unit had been told to change uniforms, paint over distinguishing marks on their vehicles and hand over documents and mobile phones to their commanding officer before setting off.

"We asked why they were taking our phones off us, and the answer was we would be near the Ukrainian border, and the Ukrainians could allegedly work out our position from the phone

signal and shell us," he says.

After crossing into Ukraine through fields, their column appears to have come under fire before they were captured.

"My vehicle came under fire, and I realised it was not a drill," Sgt Romantsov says.

It is not clear if any Russians died in the incident, although one of the men, Smirnov, said at least one tracked fighting vehicle was struck by a shell after they encountered tanks flying Ukrainian flags.

Melchukov said the column came under mortar fire, followed by Grad rockets "from Russia." He does not say how he knew where the incoming rocket fire was coming from.

The soldiers' fate is uncertain, although the defence source who spoke to RIA Novosti hinted Moscow would expect the men to be returned to Russia because Ukrainian troops crossing the other way had also been allowed to go home.

"We made no unnecessary fuss about it, but simply allowed all who wished to return to Ukrainian territory at a safe place," the official said, referring to several hundred Ukrainian soldiers who crossed the border in July after running out of ammunition during a weeks-long battle with separatists near the frontier.

Tuesday's incident comes nearly two weeks after the Telegraph witnessed a column of unmarked armoured vehicles accompanied by trucks with Russian military plates cross the border into Ukraine via a hole in the fence earlier this month.

The Russian government forcefully denied any such incident had taken place, saying that mobile patrols do move around border areas but never leave Russian territory.

While the OSCE has observer missions at two official crossings, their mandate does not extend to any point beyond those two checkpoints.

Other parts of the border are extremely porous and cross-crossed by unofficial crossings and dirt tracks that have for years been used by locals to travel between neighbouring villages.



# Annex 541

BBC News, Ukraine Crisis: Key Players in Eastern Unrest (28 August 2014)





## Ukraine crisis: Key players in eastern unrest

🕒 28 August 2014

Ukraine crisis

**The conflict in eastern Ukraine has escalated, with the pro-Russian separatists admitting that many soldiers from Russia are helping them.**

In July the **devastating crash of a Malaysia Airlines jet** in eastern Ukraine triggered international outrage. Western governments suspect the plane was downed by a missile fired from a rebel-held area.

Here we profile some of the key figures involved on both sides of the conflict, which erupted in April when the separatists declared independence from the revolutionary, pro-Western government in Kiev.

### Alexander Zakharchenko - Donetsk rebel leader

A local field commander, Mr Zakharchenko became the "prime minister" of the self-styled "Donetsk People's Republic" (DPR) in early August after his predecessor, Russian citizen Alexander Borodai, announced he was stepping down.

On 28 August Mr Zakharchenko admitted that thousands of Russian citizens, including many professional soldiers, **were fighting alongside the separatists.**

He said 3-4,000 Russians had joined the rebel ranks during the fighting and some had been killed. "Moreover, many soldiers are coming to us from Russia who prefer to spend their holidays not on the beach but shoulder-to-shoulder with their brothers, fighting for the freedom of Donbass," he said.

His predecessor, Mr Borodai, had said "I am a Muscovite - Donbass should be led by a genuine Donetsk native". He said he would stay on as first deputy prime minister.

It was seen as an effort to prove that the insurgency in eastern Ukraine was rooted locally, not orchestrated by Moscow.

Alexander Zakharchenko was born in Donetsk in 1976 and after graduating from technical school worked as a mine electrician. Russian media say that later he was a student at the law institute of Ukraine's interior ministry and also tried his hand at being a businessman.

He was head of the Donetsk branch of the militant group Oplot ("Stronghold"). The organisation was active in helping the former Ukrainian government clamp down on the pro-

democracy Maidan protests in Kiev at the beginning of the year.

In May, Mr Zakharchenko was appointed rebel military commander of Donetsk and later became DPR's "deputy interior minister". Reports say that right up to becoming "prime minister" he was fighting the Ukrainian army and was wounded in the arm in late July.

## Strelkov - rebel commander

Commonly known by his nom-de-guerre Strelkov (which translates loosely from Russian as "Rifleman"), Igor Girkin has been one of the most effective rebel military commanders.

But his current whereabouts are a mystery, and it is not clear where he stands now in the rebel hierarchy. He is a Russian citizen.

With a background in the Russian military, including service in Chechnya, Serbia and Trans-Dniester, a self-proclaimed republic on the territory of Moldova, he commanded rebel forces in their symbolic stronghold of Sloviansk before retreating with his men to Donetsk. He says he was a reserve colonel in the FSB, Russia's Federal Security Service, until 31 March last year.

Until recently he was considered to be commander-in-chief of both the self-declared DPR and the "Luhansk People's Republic" (LPR). The EU believes he works for Russian military intelligence (the GRU), and has placed him under sanctions.

However, he has not been afraid to criticise Moscow, which he reproaches for failing to intervene directly in the conflict.

Shortly before news emerged that Flight MH17 had disappeared, a statement attributed to Strelkov (later deleted) appeared on Russian-language social media boasting that a Ukrainian army cargo plane had been shot down. However, the only wreckage reported on 17 July was that of the Malaysian airliner.

Strelkov, born in 1970, is said to be a military enthusiast who specialises in historical re-enactment and staged recreations of battles.

## Vladimir Antyufeyev - Donetsk rebel politician

A veteran of the 1990s pro-Russian separatist rebellion in Moldova, Mr Antyufeyev emerged as DPR "deputy prime minister" in July. He is known as a staunch defender of Russian state interests in former Soviet republics.

Mr Antyufeyev was born in Russia and has spent his career in the police. He was already an officer in Soviet times.

In the late 1980s, when the Soviet Union was beginning to collapse, he led an elite police unit in Riga, Latvia, which attempted a crackdown on the Latvian independence movement.

He later resurfaced in Trans-Dniester, where he fought in the 1992 separatist revolt against Moldovan troops, and became the founder and, for two decades, the sole head of the breakaway region's powerful security ministry.

In 2012 he fell out with the new regional leaders there, who launched a criminal investigation, accusing him of abuse of power, stealing public funds and destroying sensitive evidence. He fled to Moscow and lived there until the start of the Ukraine crisis.

Like some other rebel leaders Mr Antyufeyev is now on the EU sanctions list.

## Igor Bezler and Alexander Khodakovsky - Donetsk rebel commanders

Igor Bezler is a prominent commander in charge of Horlivka, a city of 300,000 people north-east of Donetsk. Born in Simferopol in Crimea, he has a Russian military background and says he has both Russian and Ukrainian citizenship. He has refused to confirm or deny serving in both Afghanistan and Chechnya.

Known as Bes (Demon), his voice was identified by Ukrainian security services in **a series of phone intercepts** which they say proved that MH17 had been shot down by the separatists. US officials say they have verified the calls.

Alexander Khodakovsky is the leader of the rebel Vostok (East) battalion based in the city of Makiyivka. He is considered a defector from Ukraine's SBU security service and was once in charge of an elite counter-terrorism squad, the Alpha unit.

Phone intercepts have linked him to attempts to stop the Malaysia Airlines plane's "black box" flight recorders getting into the hands of investigators. A voice said to be his says he is acting under orders from "our high-placed friends... in Moscow".

There are reported to be **tensions between Mr Khodakovsky and Strelkov**.

## Pavel Gubarev - rebel figure

The self-styled "people's governor" of the DPR was released from custody in Kiev on 7 May in exchange for three Ukrainian security service (SBU) officers held by pro-Russian militants in Sloviansk.

He had faced charges of separatism and seizure of public buildings.

The 31-year-old founder of an advertising company is a former Donetsk district council member from the fiercely pro-Russian Progressive Socialist Party of Ukraine.

He emerged from obscurity soon after the toppling of President Viktor Yanukovich in February and led the occupation of the regional administration building by hundreds of pro-Russian activists.

## Ihor Kolomoisky - Dnipropetrovsk governor

One of Ukraine's richest oligarchs has been in charge of the eastern Dnipropetrovsk region since March.

Despite the initial controversy surrounding the appointment, the 51-year-old is now widely credited with keeping the region with a large Russian-speaking population stable and largely

violence-free.

Mr Kolomoisky, a Jewish community leader in Ukraine, finances the National Defence Force, a militia fighting to keep Dnipropetrovsk region under Ukrainian control, **Reuters news agency reports**. It operates in alliance with the Ukrainian armed forces.

He famously offered a \$10,000 bounty to anyone who captured any Russian soldier on Ukrainian soil. He also promised to pay \$1,000 for each machine-gun handed over to the authorities.

In addition, Mr Kolomoisky offered - and on at least one occasion paid - significant financial rewards to Ukrainian troops who had successfully repelled attacks by separatists.

In retaliation, pro-Russian militants in the neighbouring Donetsk region have attacked and ransacked branches of PrivatBank, which are owned by Mr Kolomoisky.

## Rinat Akhmetov - Ukraine's richest person

After months apparently sitting on the fence, he threw his considerable resources behind a united Ukraine and against the separatists, who he says are threatening a "genocide".

The 47-year-old, whose fortune is estimated at more than \$11bn (£6.5bn), is one of the most influential people in the Donbass - a historical region including the Donetsk and Luhansk regions - where the insurgency is at its peak.

He has as many as 300,000 people employed in his coal and steel enterprises across the region, according to Reuters news agency, and it is this workforce which he has shown he is willing to use as leverage.

He called on his workers to lead the resistance to the separatists, by staging peaceful rallies daily. Rebels were driven back in the southern city of Mariupol as a result.

Mr Akhmetov's allegiance had previously been unclear, since he was a close confidant of former President Yanukovich, and has business links with Russia.

## Serhiy Taruta - Donetsk governor

One of the Ukrainian government's key figures in the east, he was appointed governor of the Donetsk region in order to assert its authority and quell the protests in the area.

He claims he never wanted to be a state governor. He is one of the founders of the transnational metallurgical corporation ISD.

Forbes Ukraine lists him among the wealthiest citizens of the country, estimating his fortune at \$697m (£415m; 500m euros).

He says ousted President Yanukovich and his close allies, who fled the country in February, are playing a crucial role in the separatist unrest in eastern Ukraine.

*BBC Monitoring contributed material to this guide.* **BBC Monitoring** reports and analyses

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# Annex 542

MKRU, The DPR and LPR Promise Kiev That They Will Remain Part of Ukraine in Exchange for Recognition of Their Status (1 September 2014)

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## The DPR and LPR promise Kiev that they will remain part of Ukraine in exchange for recognition of their status

At the contact group's negotiations in Minsk, the rebels put forward a number of demands to the Ukrainian authorities

09.01.2014 at 15:50, views: 21272

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Representatives of the self-proclaimed Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics are also demanding that the Kiev authorities cease the anti-terrorism operation for free elections to be held, that a special status be given to their armed formations and that they be given the right to appoint prosecutors and judges. In addition, they are insisting on the amnestying of political prisoners, rebels, politicians, deputies and members of the Republics' Cabinets of Ministers.



Photo: AP

On Monday, following a month-long break, the contact group for the management of the situation in Ukraine, which comprises representatives from the RF, Kiev, the OSCE and also the South-East of Ukraine, resumed its work in Minsk. Participating in the group on behalf of the Ukrainian side is former President, Leonid Kuchma, Russia is represented by its Ambassador to Ukraine, Mikhail Zurabov. The self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic is represented at the negotiations by Deputy Prime Minister Andrey Purgin, and attending the meeting on behalf of the LPR was head of the Supreme Council, Aleksey Karyakin.

The list of demands put to the Ukrainian authorities was read out by DPR Deputy Prime Minister Andrey Purgin. "These are the initial proposals for the consultative negotiation process," he told journalists, clarifying that the Republics' proposals to Kiev would comprise "8-9 items." "Today we are exchanging proposals, we'll be trying to find areas of common interest."

Representatives of the self-proclaimed Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics are demanding that the Kiev authorities recognize the special status of their territories, the special regime for maintaining order and the right of the Republics' authorities to appoint prosecutors and judges, the cessation of the anti-terrorism operation for free elections to be held, the amnestying of

political prisoners, rebels, politicians, deputies and members of the governments of the Republics, and also the creation of a commission to draft the treaty on peaceful settlement in the Donbass and the restoration of the region. In addition, they are demanding a guarantee of the right for the official use of the Russian language and the ability to engage in foreign economic activity according to a special procedure, taking into account the deepening integration with Russia and the Customs Union.

In exchange for the acceptance of their conditions, the rebels have promised to preserve the unified economic, cultural and political space of Ukraine. "If the aforementioned legislative guarantees are accepted under a guarantee from the EU and Russia, the People's Republics for their part guarantee that they will make their best efforts to maintain peace, preserve the unified economic, cultural and political space of Ukraine and across Russian-Ukrainian civilization. For the sake of the cessation of the fratricidal war and in order to fulfil the obligations we assumed during the negotiations, the People's Republics will uphold these guarantees by accepting the obligations of laws, acts and declarations that need to be fulfilled," RIA Novosti cites the statement from the self-proclaimed Republics as saying.

As the leaders of the "People's Republics" claimed, the position that they have presented is aligned and they reject any separate negotiations, also demanding that in future, negotiations with them are held by an official representative appointed by Kiev and who is in public administration.

The Ukraine contact group's first set of negotiations were held in Minsk on July 6 – without the participation of the DPR and the LPR. The negotiators had planned to hold another meeting in mid-July with the participation of representatives of the rebels by video conference, but this meeting ended up not taking place, and the parties made another attempt on July 31.

**Watch the video on: "The "March of the Prisoners of War" in Donetsk"**



As a reminder, yesterday, in an interview with Channel One, Vladimir Putin called upon the Kiev authorities to "immediately begin" negotiations with representatives of the self-proclaimed People's Republics on issues of the "political organization of society and nation-building in the South-East of Ukraine, with the aim of unconditionally securing the lawful interests of those living there."

Later, the Russian leader's press secretary, Dmitry Peskov, clarified that this wasn't a reference to nation-building in the east of Ukraine, but to the "inclusive negotiations" within Ukraine itself, and that it was absolutely wrong to interpret the President's remarks as a need for negotiations on the national status of Novorossiia. "Narratives have emerged that the President was saying that these are negotiations on nation-building in the east of Ukraine. If you just read his statement, it's clear that that isn't the case. The President was actually talking about these same inclusive negotiations, the need for the swift commencement of which was emphasized a fairly long time ago in documents that were signed in the most varied of formats," he explained. "It is these same inclusive negotiations that should determine relations with the Eastern regions, that is, it is the negotiations within Ukraine concerning the internal Ukrainian structure, in order for the interests of the country's Eastern regions, the interests of Novorossiia to be taken into account: how, to what level, using which mechanisms, and so on. That's what the President had in mind."

**Natalya Demidyuk**



# Annex 543

Petyr Kozlov & Alexey Nikolsky, The Self-Proclaimed Republics in the East of Ukraine Put Forward their "Negotiation Demands" to Kiev, Vedomosti (2 September 2014)

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## The self-proclaimed Republics in the east of Ukraine put forward their “negotiation demands” to Kiev

*The self-proclaimed Republics in the east of Ukraine put forward their “negotiation demands” to Kiev. The Ukrainian authorities won’t make concessions in relation to the Donbass, local experts are convinced*

September 2, 2014 5:41 a.m. | Petr Kozlov, Aleksey Nikolsky / Vedomosti |  Listen



The Donbass leaders have decided to entrench their military successes by diplomatic means  
Maxim Shemetov / Reuters

Yesterday afternoon, on the eve of the meeting of the Ukraine contact group in Minsk, representatives of the self-proclaimed Donetsk and Lugansk Republics put forward their “negotiation demands.” Although back on August 24, the Prime Minister of the DPR, Alexander Zakharchenko said that “Novorossiia” was only examining the issue of the recognition of its independence, and that this matter wasn’t being raised in the “negotiation demands.” Amongst the conditions named for the start of the negotiating process are the recognition of the special status of the DPR and LPR, the cessation of the Ukrainian army’s military operation for the holding of free elections to the government authorities, and the recognition of the official status of the Russian language. In addition, the self-proclaimed Republics are demanding a special procedure for the conduct of foreign economic activity, taking into account the deepening integration with Russia and the Customs Union, and also a special status for their armed formations and the right to appoint prosecutors and judges. All of these are already the integral attributes of an independent state, therefore an attempt at securing such guarantees from Kiev may be interpreted as the readiness of the DPR and the LPR to discuss the issue of broad powers of autonomy within a united Ukraine.

The representatives of the east of Ukraine came out with their “negotiation demands” the day after Vladimir Putin declared the need to start negotiations immediately: in an interview with Channel One, he proposed discussing not the technical issues but “issues of the political organization of society and nation-building in the south-east of Ukraine.” However, Ukrainian experts are convinced that Ukraine’s President Petr Poroshenko won’t agree even to the separatists’ reduced demands.

Any capitulation by Poroshenko in relation to the east of Ukraine will be seen by the citizens as treachery and if only for that reason he won't ease up on anything—otherwise the President will be “digging his own grave,” Dmitry Ponamarchuk, a political analyst, believes. He is convinced that even a formal easing of the demands of the representatives of the DPR and LPR won't affect Kiev's position: “Even if they take Kiev tomorrow, there aren't any grounds to recognize any of their demands. The referendum hasn't been recognized and will never be recognized.” What's more, a NATO summit to which Poroshenko has been invited is soon to be held in Wales, and if he makes concessions, then there's no point going to Cardiff, the expert believes: “What for? For people at NATO to spend two days in a row laughing at Poroshenko?”

There are no grounds for talking about a change in Kiev's position, and Poroshenko won't agree to these conditions under any circumstances, Aleksey Garan, a professor from the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, agrees: “These demands can't be taken into account. First, they are aimed at the break-up of Ukraine. Second, it's not known who's putting them forward. In actual fact, it's not the population of the East, but Mr. Putin who's trying to dictate to Ukraine how the country should be structured.”

Russian experts, on the contrary, believe that Poroshenko should compromise. Taking into account the noticeable change in the alignment of forces at the front and the critical state of the Ukrainian army, the most that Kiev can hope for to save face is the retention of the east of the country on whatever conditions, Aleksey Arbatov, an academic, believes. Otherwise, Poroshenko will have to resign, as he has failed and will go down in history as the president that lost not only Crimea but the Donbass too, the expert says.

Incidentally, the experts note unanimously that if these issues are discussed at all, then it's unlikely that they will be discussed within the contact group, which for the time being is targeted at the discussion of technical issues. As someone close to the leaders of the self-proclaimed DPR confirmed to Vedomosti, it had initially been planned to devote yesterday's consultations in Minsk to the main problems of the exchange of prisoners of war and the provision of aid to the civilian population. According to our source, it was explicitly stated in the published bullet points that the parties had yet to agree on the actual format of the negotiations on the status of the eastern regions.

Following the meeting of the representatives of the contact group in Minsk, the First Deputy Prime Minister of the DPR, Alexander Purgin, claimed that the focus of attention was technical issues concerning humanitarian aid, routes and schemes for its delivery from Russia and Europe, and that at the next meeting, on September 5, the plan was to develop a mechanism for the exchange of prisoners on the basis of an “all-for-all” exchange. In Purgin's opinion, the meeting was constructive which, in his view, was facilitated by the situation at the frontlines (yesterday, the process of the surrender into captivity of the surrounded Ukrainian military personnel continued, whilst the government forces abandoned Lugansk airport). The next round of negotiations, according to a representative of the DPR, may be attended by one of the current politicians in addition to former President Leonid Kuchma.

# Annex 544

Tatyana Popova, Leaders of the Outrages of the DNR, Ukrainska Pravda (23 September 2014)

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UKRAINSKAYA PRAVDA

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**Leaders of the Outrages of the DNR**

Tuesday, September 23, 2014, 09:44

TATIANA POPOVA

Managing partner of Mex advertising group, partner of the Ukrainian Crisis Media Center, for Ukrainskaya Pravda

The leaders of the DNR [Donetsk People's Republic] intend to continue "fighting for the Donbass" using violence, cruelty and intimidation.

Declaring themselves "rulers," they divide among themselves spheres of influence and positions of which they had never even dreamed before.

During peace time these pseudo-leaders could hardly have aspired to any government positions.

Most of them are representatives of the criminal world in whom the Russian special services have inspired an imaginary hope for power.

Now they allow themselves show executions, refined torture of Ukrainian soldiers and posing against the backdrop of maimed bodies.

**Igor Bezler, the "fuehrer" of the DNR**

*A story about how it is possible to go from being a security guard to the leader of a terrorist movement in the blink of an eye, and until then calmly engage in theft of cemetery enclosures*

Glaring paradoxes are usual for "Gorlovka leader" Igor Bezler.

Bezler, who is better known by the nickname "Bes," was born in 1965 in Simferopol. He studied at the Dzerzhinskiy Military Academy in Moscow, participated in the war in Afghanistan and was awarded the order of the Red Star.

<p>[Photo]</p> <p>[Stamp:] We don't need such a leader</p> <p>[fingerprints]</p>	<p>Igor "Bes" Bezler</p> <p><i>Born on December 30, 1965. <b>He is a citizen of Russia.</b> He is the leader of the Gorlovka fighters and introduces himself as a <b>lieutenant colonel in the Russian army.</b></i></p> <p><i><b>He served in Russian intelligence divisions (GRU) and was discharged in 2002. He moved to Gorlovka, where he headed a funeral services business from which he was fired in 2012 for <b>stealing 38 enclosures and tombstones</b> and for <b>extorting money</b> for a place in the cemetery.</b></i></p> <p><i>In February 2014 at GRU's request he <b>assisted with the annexation of Crimea.</b> In April 2014 he started to engage in <b>terrorist activity in Donetsk Region.</b> According to some information, he attempted to seize power in Donetsk, and his own associates call him a terrorist for this.</i></p> <p><i><b>He gave the command to neutralize Gorlovka Deputy Vladimir Rybak, who was later found dead. He was involved in the kidnapping of OSCE representatives in Slavyansk, in the deaths of civilians of Donetsk Region and the deaths of passengers of the Boeing 777.</b></i></p>
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According to SBU [the Security Service of Ukraine], until 2002 he served in Russian intelligence divisions and completed his service at the rank of lieutenant colonel, after which he was sent to Ukraine and settled in Gorlovka. Here he headed the Prostor municipal funeral services business, from which he was fired in 2012 after being accused of stealing enclosures and tombstones, and also for extorting money for a place in the cemetery. After being fired he went to work for a security agency.

In April Russia's GRU renewed contact with Bezler and sent him to Crimea. There he actively participated in taking over military bases and administrative buildings, after which he returned to Donbass. He participated in the storming of the Donetsk directorate of the Security Service of Ukraine and a district militia precinct in Gorlovka.

In Donbass Bezler managed to gain fame as an unbelievably cruel fighter. Videos of interrogations and the show execution of Ukrainian officers shocked many. Later Bezler announced that it had been staged to frighten Ukrainian authorities, but in the minds of the majority he has taken on the image of an unprincipled punisher, and this image has only become harsher over time.

Bezler started to clean house in Gorlovka: there were "purges," torture of prisoners, robberies and mass murderers. The death of Gorlovka

City Council deputy Vladimir Rybak is proof of this.

According to the Security Service of Ukraine, it has been determined that on April 17 Bezler gave the head of the self-proclaimed Gorlovka militia the task of neutralizing Rybak, who earlier had attempted to install the state flag of Ukraine on the Gorlovka District City Council building. At the same time Bezler ordered a member of his group, a member of the Russian military, to kidnap Rybak, put him in a car and take him to an agreed place where measures of physical coercion would be used on him. He himself planned to personally go to the place where Rybak was being detained.

The Security Service of Ukraine made public the audio recording of conversations of Russian commandos who were involved in the murder of Gorlovka City Council deputy Vladimir Rybak.

True to the principles of his work, Bezler continues to liquidate people who are “objectionable” to his ideology. The death of the head of Gorlovka’s State Traffic Inspectorate Yuriy Sukhodolskiy is undoubtedly the work of his team. Earlier Sukhodolskiy was detained in a so-called torture chamber which the fighters organized in Gorlovka in the building of the Artemugol state enterprise.

Rybak, Sukhodolskiy... who will become Bezler’s next victim?

Bezler does not hide his hatred of the Ukrainian idea. He openly says that he and his band immediately execute National Guard fighters. The Ukrainian soldiers are subjected to cruel torture and are kept prisoner by the fighters for months on end.

Bezler’s “punitive operation” continues to keep the residents of Gorlovka in fear. Demonstrative outrages are another attempt to bring chaos and incite fear of the imaginary strength of the fighters.

The pseudo-leaders are destroying the cities and do not intend to restore them at all. They are not interested in the life of peaceful Donbass: they need a buffer zone.

Apparently, their objective is to turn Donbass into a second Somalia and coordinate groups of bandits.

*Tatiana Popova, special for Ukrainskaya Pravda*



# Annex 545

Glavcom, Igor (Bes) Bezler: I Don't Watch TV - I don't Know About the Minsk Agreements (21 October 2014)

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[...]

## **Igor (Bes) Bezler: I Don't Watch TV – I Don't Know About The Minsk Agreements**



### **Bes promises not to blow up the chemicals factories in Gorlovka even as a last resort**

Igor Bezler, nicknamed “Bes” [demon], is one of the leaders of the “DPR,” which Ukraine’s Prosecutor’s Office calls a terrorist organization, and the leader of the armed “Volunteer Corps” of Gorlovka. Bes is an extremely controversial person, even in the expanses of the self-proclaimed Republic. The 49-year-old, who was born in Crimea, took charge of the Gorlovka wing of fighters in the Donbass at the very start of the war in the east of Ukraine. According to Bes’ former captive, Vasily Budik, Bezler was not accountable to anyone, and has now even set up his own republic, abbreviated to GEM, which stands for Gorlovka-Enakiyevo-Makeyevka. Budik himself was held captive by the fighters for 88 days, several times he was taken out to be shot, but it all ended in a staged murder (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2EIFkjRHqKY>).

The seizures of the buildings of the Ministry of Internal Affairs in Gorlovka and Donetsk are evidence of the independent nature of the group’s activities. The storming of the Gorlovka Department of Internal Affairs and the storming of the regional Department of Internal Affairs in Donetsk on July 1 have been attributed to Bes’ people. Those in charge of the self-proclaimed “DPR” back then didn’t like these actions. The so-called Prime Minister, Alexander Borodai, claimed that Bezler wasn’t obeying orders, calling the storming of the Department of Internal Affairs, as the TV channel Dozhd reported, an “attempt at a military uprising.” In his comments to the Russia 24 TV channel, Borodai stated explicitly that “this type of unauthorized action is an act against the DPR. We’re dealing with a problem of sole command. Unfortunately, we don’t control the field commander with the code name “Bes.”

However, such public squabbles, if Igor Bezler is to be believed, are a thing of the past. These days, the field commander claims that he unquestioningly obeys Alexander Zakharchenko, who replaced Alexander Borodai in the post of “Prime Minister” of the “DPR.”

For the residents of Gorlovka, the period of “Bes’ rule” is associated, first and foremost, with the handing-out of live chickens, the “extermination” of drug addicts and the replacement of the militia with “vigilantes” with white bands on their sleeves.



Igor Bezler very rarely talks to the press, especially to the Ukrainian press. If Bes lets journalists get near him, he’s cold with them, responding to questions in monosyllables. The only exception was in his last TV interview, where Bezler was persuaded to recite the poetry of Taras Shevchenko. In this way he again tried to prove that he’s not opposed to Ukraine, but allegedly only to the fascism that has beset our country.

In talking to Glavcom, the fighter talked about why he’s not planning to stand at the upcoming elections in the “DPR,” where he got the bag of cash from to pay Gorlovka medical staff, and the false attempted assassination of Pavel Gubarev.

**On the one hand, the leaders of the “DPR” have announced the holding of elections on November 2, on the other hand, Ukraine is getting ready to hold parliamentary elections on October 26 and local elections on December 7. Which of them are you getting ready for?**

We’re getting ready for the elections in the “DPR.”

**But in Minsk, the [two] sides, Poroshenko and Putin, agreed that the elections, including in the Donbass, would be held under Ukrainian law, or are you not planning to comply with these agreements?**

I’m not aware of that. I haven’t watched TV, I don’t have one here.

**It’s well known that you’re not planning to stand at the upcoming elections being prepared by the “DPR.” Why is that?**

I’m a military man, not a politician.

**How do you see your future when the armed stand-off comes to an end?**

You know, it’s like in that joke, when someone was asked, “What do you want?” And he replied, “Nothing, I’ve got it all.”

**Do you see yourself as a future Minister of Defense in the “DPR”?**

I don't see myself anywhere. Right now, I'm in charge of the home guard of the town of Gorlovka, the squadron that's subordinate to me. I'm a military man. If I'm appointed, that means I'll fulfil *(the order – Glavcom)*.

**A great deal has been written and said about your conflict with the leaders of the “DPR.” Is it still ongoing?**

I've already told the Ukrainian media that they should smoke less weed and chew fewer magic mushrooms. Tymchuk is a talking head. When he gets rid of the kefir that's in his head and replaces it with actual brains, and stops drawing on what he dreams about at night, then real information will appear in the Ukrainian media.

**Are you trying to say that you've never called the leaders of the “DPR” a “banana republic”?**

All of that is the imagination of Mr. Tymchuk and Mr. Lutsenko's kind of “armed resistance” *(Igor Lutsenko – Glavcom)*.



**Denis Pushilin, Alexander Borodai, Valery Bolotov, Igor Strelkov have left their leadership posts in the “DPR.” Why do you think that is?**

Right now, we have Prime Minister Zakharchenko, and the Minister of Defense, Kononov. I'm complying with all their demands and am complying with all the laws of the “Donetsk People's Republic.”

**According to one theory, the resignations of Bolotov and Strelkov might be linked to certain agreements reached with the oligarch Rinat Akhmetov. How true is that theory?**

I'm not interested in theories that emerge in the media. I don't know *(the reasons for the resignation, specifically, of Strelkov - Glavcom)*. I've answered your question. I'm not some Babka Vanga<sup>1</sup> to go putting forward my own theories.

**What's your relationship with Alexander Borodai like, and why did you and he have a conflict?**

I didn't have a conflict with him.

**But following the storming on July 1 by your subordinates from the Donetsk Regional Militia Department, Borodai (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iaPcQOAY4tA>) claimed that you'd broken ranks and that the storming of the militia department “was an attempt at a military uprising.”**

But it was him that claimed that, not me. I don't have any problem with him. If he has problems with me, put this question to Mr. Borodai. In actual fact, we have an absolutely normal, business-like, friendly relationship. I think there's long since been a denial of him having said that *(regarding Bezler disobeying the leaders of the “DPR” - Glavcom)*. As I understand it, this was yet again a fabricated story by the Ukrainian media.

**Very recently, information emerged about an attempt on the life of Pavel Gubarev, which allegedly took place. Was it actually an attempted assassination, organized by the Ukrainian special services, or was it infighting or simply a simulated assassination attempt?**

Are you sure it was an attempted assassination? I'm not.

**But what was it then, and who would benefit from its simulation?**

You'd be better off asking Mr. Gubarev about that.

**How is it that you're so sure it wasn't an attempted assassination?**

I didn't say that I'm sure, I said that I think there wasn't any attempted assassination.

**What grounds do you have to think that?**

I don't have any such grounds. But I think that it wasn't an attempted assassination.

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<sup>1</sup> Translator's note: a Bulgarian clairvoyant

**Let's talk about the Malaysian Airlines Boeing that was shot down in the sky above the Donbass. According to your theory, it was shot down by the 154<sup>th</sup> surface to air missile regiment of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. But according to the audio recording that was circulated by the Ukrainian Security Service, Igor Strelkov has taken responsibility for the plane that was shot down.**

Report from Igor Ivanovich Strelkov Close  
 Today, 17:16

07.17.2014, 17:50 (Moscow time), Message from the home guard.

"We've just shot down an An-26 plane in the Torez area, it's knocking around somewhere behind the Progress mine.  
 We did warn them not to fly in "our skies."  
 And here's the video confirmation of yet another "bird-fall."  
 The bird fell behind the slag heap, it didn't snag any housing. No civilians were hurt.

There's also information on a second plane that's been shot down, allegedly a Su.

Why are you asking my opinion if you know the theory that I've given voice to? The people from the Ukrainian Security Service, regarding the audio recording, need to stop fanning about so much and saying that they're catching spies and circulating unclear recordings. As regards Strelkov, if he's taken responsibility for the Boeing that was shot down, then ask Strelkov this question. My surname's Bezler, and not Strelkov.

**But your voice was also on one of the recordings. Or are you trying to say that it's not your voice?**

My voice is there, where I'm reporting the Su-25 that was shot down.

**At the start of October, employees from Gorlovka's medical services received an advance payment in the form of cash directly from you. The photograph with a huge quantity of cash sitting on a desk went viral. Where did you get so much money from?**

These are taxes that are currently in the bank. This money was paid out from the bank. Until the banking system starts working, which will allow electronic payments to be made, we're using cash. It's a price we have to pay.

**So it's taxes that didn't go to Kiev?**

We're not planning to transfer them anywhere. Kiev is a completely different country, we have a border. Why should I transfer any money to them?

**But Donetsk is transferring [its taxes], after all. At least that's what the self-proclaimed "mayor" of Donetsk, Igor Martynov, said in an interview with Glavcom (<http://glavcom.ua/articles/23342.html>).**

If the Mayor of Donetsk is transferring taxes to Kiev, that's his own personal headache. I'm not transferring taxes to Kiev.

**At one time, some "Botsman" was in charge of Gorlovka, who allegedly threatened to blow up Stirol. How close to being implemented were these threats?**

Ask Botsman about that. You see, if the command had been given to blow up factories, they'd have been blown up. If the factories are working and haven't been blown up, that means no such command was given.

**In which case could such an order be given by you?**

I rule out any such possibility.

**How many hostages do you have now?**

I don't have any, either hostages or prisoners of war. Which hostages are you talking about, where have you seen them?

**According to Vladimir Veselkin, the head of the Zaytsevsky rural council, you're holding captive Elena Pavlova, the secretary of the village council, and the accountant of the village council. Is that true?**

I don't know Ms. Elena Pavlova.

**How calm is the situation in Gorlovka these days?**

Everything's calm in the town. The shops, enterprises, schools, hospitals are working, trams and trolleybuses are operating. Everything's working.

**How many civilians have died in the town during the armed conflict?**

Lots, dozens of people: up to a hundred.



**Is the truce being observed right now?**

It's being observed to a level of 80%. There are still territorial defense battalions which aren't obeying either the head of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, or the Minister of Defense of Ukraine, if they clean up their act and stop smoking somewhere out of the way, without fulfilling orders, the truce will be observed.

**Who specifically do you mean, and how many of them are there in total?**

The Poltava battalion, the Artemovsk battalion, and other trash. How many are there? Ask the commanders of the Poltava, Artemovsk, Sich, Kievskaya Rus, and so on, battalions.

[...]



# Annex 546

Zavtra, Who Are You, Shooter? (20 November 2014)

This document has been translated from its original language into English, an official language of the Court, pursuant to Rules of the Court, Article 51.

Pursuant to Rules of the Court Article 51(3), Ukraine has translated only an extract of the original document constituting this Annex. In further compliance with this Rule, Ukraine has provided two certified copies of the full original-language document with its submission. The translated passages are highlighted in the original-language document. Ukraine has omitted from translation those portions of the document that are not materially relied upon in its Memorial, but stands ready to provide additional translations should the Court so require.



## ZAVTRA

[...]



Community "[Novorossiya \(/blogs/communities/Novorossiya\)](#)." 12:00 a.m. November 20, 2014

### Who are you, Shooter?

[...]

Igor Strelkov (/blogs/authors/1856)

[...]

<http://zavtra.ru/blogs/kto-tyi-strelok>

[...]

Igor STRELKOV. This is my fifth war. There were the two Chechen wars, Pridnestroviye and Bosnia.

[...]

[...]

Alexander PROKHANOV. You said that your withdrawal from Slavyansk was completely unexpected for the enemy.

Igor STRELKOV. Yes, it wrong-footed them. After all, I had categorical orders not to hand over Slavyansk. And when I reported that I was intending to withdraw, I had repeated to me several times the order not to withdraw, to defend Slavyansk to the last. "The blockade will definitely be raised, go and defend Slavyansk." I asked: "How are you going to help?" Silence. And I've got a thousand men and thousands of members of their families. I didn't have the right to lay them [in the ground]. That's why I took the decision to break through.

[...]

I'm absolutely convinced that if we hadn't withdrawn from Slavyansk, we wouldn't then have kept hold of Donetsk. When we went into Donetsk, everything there was wonderful. There was a mayor from Kiev

in place, the Department of Internal Affairs was still obeying orders from Kiev—a classic duality of power. The city hadn't been prepared for its defense at all. The checkpoints were poorly fitted out, the roads hadn't been blocked off, you could have got in any old how. And there were very few forces there, they were fragmented, scattered, no one was obeying anyone: you had the Russian Orthodox Army, and the Vostok battalion and Oplyut, all separate from one another. Each detachment was defending its own area, there was no unified command.

[...]  
[...]

Upon arriving in Donetsk, I left only the headquarters, the commandant's squadron, in the city. I deployed one battalion to the Petrovsky district—that's the south-western end, which was empty. The remaining forces, both from Kramatorsk and from Slavyansk, were consolidated into a brigade, split into three battalions and the cavalry squadron. They were immediately deployed to Ilovaysk, Ospino. And I created the front line.

[...]

If we hadn't created this southern face, I think everything would have been over very quickly. If we'd remained in Slavyansk, then a week or at the most two weeks later, Donetsk would have fallen. But by withdrawing, we held Donetsk for forty days until the "leave personnel" arrived. Although the last few days were simply desperate. When we withdrew from Donetsk, we set up corridors to Russia in the area of Marinka, Kozhevino, Brovka. At the same time, we made corridors for ourselves for a supply route and cut off an entire enemy group in Yakovo.

We held onto the corridor with very great losses, the elite from the Third Assault Battalion were killed in these battles. When we were carving out the corridor, in the battles near Marinka, we lost 120 men to death and injury over two days—mainly from artillery fire, from air strikes. More than 30 were killed. For me, those are huge losses.

And at the time the "leave personnel" broke through, my KEP battalion had been split into two parts: one part was on the defense in Snezhny, and the other part, together with the cavalry squadron, had ended up pinned down to the border, cut off.

[...]  
[...]

Alexander PROKHANOV. In this critical situation, were there plans to withdraw from Donetsk, too, after all, the forces were again unequal?

Igor STRELKOV. People accuse me of wanting to leave Donetsk. I'll tell you honestly: at some point I stopped believing that help from Russia would come at all. I simply stopped believing! And no one could give me that guarantee.

[...]



[...]

Alexander PROKHANOV. The alignment of the front and the march on Mariupol—was it only the "leave personnel" that did all that, or did the rebel fighters also participate?

[...]

[...]

Igor STRELKOV. Individual rebel units were subordinate to them. But it was mainly the "leave personnel" that marched on Mariupol. When they left, both the front line and the opportunities were left in a precarious state.

[...]

Alexander PROKHANOV. Igor Ivanovich, but how did you actually end up diving into this war?

Igor STRELKOV. I was an advisor to Aksenov in Crimea. He's someone with huge charisma, he's clever, intelligent, level-headed, talented. I was in charge of the only unit of the Crimean rebels: the special forces squadron, that was performing combat assignments. But following the battle for the map-making unit, when two men died (and I'd been commanding this battle), the squadron was disbanded, people went their separate ways.

When the events took place in Crimea, it was clear that the matter wouldn't end with Crimea alone. Crimea as part of Novorossiya is a huge acquisition, the diamond in the crown of the Russian Empire. But Crimea alone, cut off at the narrow neck of land by a hostile state—that's wrong.

When the Ukrainian authorities fell apart before our very eyes, delegates from Novorossiya's regions kept on coming to Crimea, wanting to repeat what had happened in Crimea in their regions. Everyone had the clear desire to continue the process. The delegates planned uprisings in their regions and asked for help. Aksenov, insofar as such a burden had fallen on him, he was working 20 hours a day, asked me to take on the northern territories. And he made me an advisor on this issue. I started working with all the delegates: from Odessa, from Nikolayev, from Kharkov, Lugansk, Donetsk. Everyone was firmly convinced that if the uprising were to progress, then Russia would come to their aid. I therefore got together those fighters from the squadron that hadn't departed, and enlisted volunteers. 52 men came together.

We ended up in Slavyansk quite by chance. We needed an average-sized town. 52 men is a force in a fairly small populated settlement. And I was told that Slavyansk had the strongest local assets. We viewed it as the best option.

[...]

[...]

Alexander PROKHANOV. When you were fighting in Slavyansk, were you only a military man or did you feel that you were a politician, too? People addressing you ask: "Who are you, Shooter?"

Igor STRELKOV. To be honest, not only did I have no intention whatsoever of getting involved in politics, I didn't even intend to be in the public eye. I'd also done a lot in Crimea. It was me that started the negotiations on the handover of the fleet headquarters, I went there alone, talked to everyone at the headquarters. But the fact is that I hadn't blown my cover anywhere. Yes, there's some colonel somewhere on the photos. I didn't say that I was a reservist or retired. It was more advantageous, for the resolution of my tactical objectives, for everyone to consider me an active [officer]. Despite that, I didn't shout out anywhere that I was active. I simply said that I was a colonel. And interpret that as you like. Well, people thought I was some colonel or other. A few people knew I was retired. And the rest of them thought what they wanted to. They didn't know either my surname or my name.

I planned to do the same in Slavyansk. I was planning to find a charismatic leader and help as an advisor. That was what I did at first. That's why Ponomarev kept turning up the whole time. He's the people's mayor. He was very active. He was useful at one time. Then everything took a different turn. And I didn't find anyone who could have been promoted as a political leader.

And then the command suddenly came for me to blow my cover: Denis Pushilin was coming, he had to be fully supported. Although I'd already burnt all my bridges, I was there without any documents, all the fighters had left behind their documents when they crossed the border, but this completely cut off the opportunity for a retreat as such.

[...]

[...]

As soon as I went on TV with Pushilin, without a mask, without my "balaclava," first of all, everyone realized who Shooter was. Although they'd known before that that I was actually giving the commands, the capture had already been reported on, there had been my photofit image, but here people were seeing me with their own eyes. I was immediately tracked down and taken to an apartment in Moscow. I hadn't reckoned on that: and I didn't even have time to warn my relatives. I hadn't ever briefed my relatives at all: what I was doing, where I was, how I was. As a result, I suffered personal losses due to this exposure, because I can't live in my own house, use my own library. And that's to say nothing of how much my relatives suffered, who found out about everything through the TV. I'd had a military dictatorship throughout the entire war in Slavyansk. And I didn't get involved beyond that.

Alexander PROKHANOV. You think that your experience is purely military experience, not political experience. Were you the Minister of Defense, the brigade commander?

Igor STRELKOV. In Slavyansk there was a battalion, there was no brigade. The first Slavyansk volunteer battalion. It had its own colors and a flag. Before we withdrew from Slavyansk, I'd effectively had no influence on Donetsk in my capacity of Minister of Defense. I was gradually organizing a front. In actual fact, Mozgovoy was subordinate to me, I sometimes assigned tasks to him. In terms of status he wasn't subordinate to me, but in a tactical and operational sense he was. I was considering my front line along the Lisichansk – Krasny Liman line. The Slavyansk garrison was complying with orders, Kramatorsk was complying, Druzhkovka—Konstantinovka. For some period of time, Gorlovka was complying with my orders, Bezler, because I helped him—I sent a detachment to clean up the town, without my detachment he wouldn't have taken control of it.

Alexander PROKHANOV. I think that everything that happened back then to you in Slavyansk and Donetsk is, in one way or another, linked to the restoration of the state. And you participated not just in

the restoration of the military structure, but in the state as a whole. In other words, you had, consciously or unconsciously, a political role, you're one of the pioneers in the establishment of the state.

Igor STRELKOV. At that time I understood full well that alone, Donetsk and Lugansk wouldn't be able to fight off the Ukrainians. Especially in the absence of their own armaments industry and a functioning government made up of local people. And from the outset, I proceeded on the premise that what had happened in Crimea would happen again—Russia would come in. That was the best option. And that's what the people were striving for. No one was planning to take a stand for the Lugansk and Donetsk Republics. At the outset, everyone was for Russia. And people held the referendum for Russia, and went to fight for Russia. People wanted to join Russia. Russian flags were everywhere. I had a Russian flag at the headquarters, everyone did. And the people were receptive to us under Russian flags. We thought that the Russian administration would arrive, the rear would be organized by Russia, and another republic would become part of Russia. And I wasn't thinking about any state-building. But then, when I realized that Russia wasn't going to take us in (I associated myself with the rebels), this decision was a shock to us.

[...]

[...]

Actually, if I'd been intent on seizing power in the DPR, I could have seized it without any problems. When I arrived in Donetsk from Slavyansk, everyone was expecting me to seize power. But my objective was to protect the republic and not to seize power. I'd happily go back there. And I think that I did everything right ...

Alexander PROKHANOV. So do I.

Igor STRELKOV. But it was me that pressed the trigger of war. If our detachment hadn't crossed the border, in the end everything would have come to an end, like in Kharkov, like in Odessa. There would have been several dozen killed, roasted, arrested. And it would all have come to an end. But it was our detachment that effectively set turning the wheel of the war that is still ongoing. We mixed up all the cards on the table. All of them! And from the very start we started fighting in earnest: destroying the guerilla groups of the "Right Sector." And I bear personal responsibility for what is happening there. For the fact that Donetsk is still under fire—I bear responsibility for that. I bear responsibility for the fact that Slavyansk was abandoned, of course. And I also bear responsibility for the fact that it hasn't been liberated.

But, insofar as "half a loaf is better than no bread,"—we're creating a movement so as to at least provide support to the rebels in a humanitarian way.

We can't say that we're providing for them. But we are genuinely helping. Half the army is currently wearing the winter clothes that we sent them. Our help is going to the troops. But only the Russian state is capable of providing humanitarian aid to the population. Only the state! It has to be taken from state reserves. Using the money that we're collecting, we can help the rebels, their families, the wounded, but not everyone by any means.

[...]

[...]

Alexander PROKHANOV. But what about the Turkish military? No, they have different military traditions. Russian military people have always, having actually acquired power, given it to the politicians that have then cracked down on them.

Igor STRELKOV. I'm not a military person at all in the classical sense. This type of commanding is more likely accidental for me. I'm a security services person.

[...]



# Annex 547

Alexander Borodai: I am a Russian Imperialist, Actual Comment (24 November 2014)

This document has been translated from its original language into English, an official language of the Court, pursuant to Rules of the Court, Article 51.

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[...]

## Actual Comment

[...]

November 24, 2014 [...]

## Alexander Borodai: I Am a Russian Imperialist [...]



*The former Prime Minister of the DPR, Alexander Borodai, talked in an exclusive interview with Topical Commentaries of the myth of Strelkov, the role of “outsiders” in the government [...] of the People’s Republics and of what will happen to the Novorossiya project in the future.*

— **Nothing has been heard about you for a few months since you left your post as the Prime Minister of the Donetsk People’s Republic, why is that and why have you now returned to the public arena?**

— It was due to the specific nature of my work. The thing is that I’m not actually cynical about the Donetsk People’s Republic and have never thought that the DPR and my role in its story are grounds for any sort of self-promotion. As a matter of fact, my function as an advisor didn’t involve the need to speak to the press. When I was the Prime Minister of the DPR, I had to make some official statements and speak at press conferences. Since I left this post, having handed it over to Alexander Zakharchenko, I have stopped needing this level of publicity, thank God, and therefore haven’t said anything to the press.

Now the situation has changed, I have left all my official posts within the DPR, have ceased to be a general advisor to the DPR government and am again a private citizen. I have now returned to my standard default role—as an expert, including on issues of the life of this region, and of the two unrecognized states—the DPR and the LPR [Luhansk People’s Republic], and it’s entirely logical for an expert to speak to the press.

— **In other words, in the post of advisor, you didn’t have any formal undertaking about not making public statements? Was that your personal decision?**

— There was no formal undertaking. I simply thought it wasn’t appropriate. [The republics’] own native-born leaders are now coming to the fore there, and I and many others who came as volunteers to fight and help aren’t native-born citizens of Donetsk. And it’s right that we need to keep quieter and seek publicity for ourselves less. Unfortunately, not everyone is following this rule.

**— How did you render advisory support to the leadership of the DPR and to what extent was your opinion taken into account?**

— Essentially, I do have some authority. Of course, Alexander Zakharchenko and I know full well that telephone conversations aren't always the most correct form of communication. But we met on more than one occasion, and I always tried to help out with the difficult issues. I can tell you one funny story about how Alexander Zakharchenko and I once met in Moscow, he and Andrey Purgin and representatives of the LPR had flown in from Minsk and were very tired after a sleepless night. Negotiations are basically very hard work. It only seems like it's easy work—you drink tea or coffee, then there's champagne at the drinks reception, but in fact it's huge emotional and physical stress. So Sasha asked me, half-jokingly, in the smoking room: "Why have you "set me up" like this?" I said to him: "What do you mean?" And he said: "Yes, this hard work, it's [...]much harder than warfare..." I said to him: "Well, sorry, that's how it's worked out, brother. It's not that I really wanted to dump this on you, but it had to be done..."

**— People are talking about some kind of "purge" in the government of the DPR and the LPR, meaning the replacement of the "outsiders" from Russia with local people. Is this actually happening? In your view, should there be local leaders within the government of the People's Republics of Novorossiya or should there be invited persons who have the necessary management experience?**

— People write and say stupid things. There's no purge taking place, what's happening is an absolutely natural process of rotation of staff, including of local staff. It's obvious that the government was put together in an impossibly short period of time and that for a time, the principle "chosen at random" was dominant. What's more, the DPR and the LPR are the Donbass, and citizens of the Donbass live there. And all the remaining Russians who came as volunteers came to help and not to live there. The people who want to stay, in my view, sometimes even arouse suspicion—after all, that means there's something they really need there, something they've really taken a liking to there. We can't rule out that it was the process of accumulating material assets that "enticed" them...

I've spoken about this issue to our law enforcers, including to the Minister of State Security, who's also an "outsider." I told him that if any of the "newcomers" suddenly really want to stay, that means that life here is "sweet," that's a sure sign that it's time for this person to leave the DPR. Because actually, war is not a natural state to be in. Everyone has their own motherland. Yes, we're all ready to fight and even to die for Russian civilization and its ideals, but that doesn't mean that we should be teaching the residents of Donbass how to live their own lives. They'll do it how they want to. We're helping them and not interfering. Notwithstanding our various high-ranking posts, we're only helpers and not leaders and definitely not behind-the-scenes puppeteers.

**— But what should be done in the event that the locals don't have the necessary experience of state-building and public administration?**

— Very few people can be found in today's world who have experience in state-building. And, well, history is already a thing of the distant past. There are no good examples there. We're not the British Empire, after all. We don't perceive the Donbass to be a colony of Russia. We're providing fraternal assistance to some of our own people—the Russian people of the Donbass.

**— Before you became the Prime Minister of the DPR, you were engaged in political strategy. Did you prefer being in the role of a kind of "eminence grise"?**

— Of course, everyone likes being an eminence grise. But who's going to do the work? I took up the duties of [...]Prime Minister of my own free will. It was a forced step, if you like, it was my path of duty, which I followed. But at that time, clearly, there was no one better than me. I was involved in public administration, albeit even in the rank of a consultant, I participated in the taking of a fair few state decisions on the most diverse issues— from political to economic issues, I have the requisite mental outlook and the appropriate education for this,

and I turned out to be in greater demand than the others, and was forced to take up this post. I realized that it was a heavy burden.

[...]

**— Igor Strelkov has now come out of the woodwork, are you in contact with him, what would you say about what he's doing at present?**

— I'm not in contact with him. I took him to the Russian Federation border, believed my moral duty to have been done and rid myself of this burden of responsibility with great relief.

[...] Why? I don't feel very happy about answering this question because, if we're going to talk about Colonel Strelkov, maybe not the whole truth, but some part of this truth, I will have to debunk the myth in whose creation I also had a hand in no small measure. Nevertheless, this myth now has to be debunked. Not because his numerous attacks offend me, but because this myth is already harmful to Novorossiia itself, for which we're all fighting, it's offensive for the Donetsk People's Republic. Strelkov is engaged in slinging mud at Zakharchenko, Purgin, Khodakovsky, Antyufeyev, me and others, and the whole subtext of his tales boils down to the fact that Novorossiia is him, and nothing has happened without him, and after he was forced to leave, nothing is happening, everything is falling apart. But if he were there, then everything would be good, wonderful, and there'd be a grand victory. That's a lie that discredits both the DPR and the LPR that exist in reality, and the very idea of Novorossiia.

The thing is that there's Igor Ivanovich Strelkov—who's a myth, and there's the actual Igor Vsevolodovich Girkin. The myth regarding "the iron Colonel Strelkov," a knight "without fear or reproach" was created by many people, including by me. I was recently talking to Alexander Andreyevich Prokhanov, who interviewed me, he said that this was one of those myths that people needed, and that it wasn't right to destroy it.

I'd be happy not to touch the myth, but the real Girkin is living within this myth like within a huge beautiful soap bubble. He's been left on the sidelines, he's extremely upset about that, he's running around having hysterics and he himself is destroying it. Effectively, he's reconstructing the story of this war. In his favor, naturally.

I'm not in any way denying his heroism and achievements in defending Slavyansk, having taken upon himself a considerable mass of the enemy's forces. Later, he left Slavyansk and many other populated areas, and came to Donetsk. But he appeared in Donetsk in a not entirely stable mental state. And what's more, [he was], as they say, "all in character." He was evidently counting on the status of a kind of "DPR military dictator" and was very disappointed by the fact that his claims weren't being understood.

Admittedly, the attempts to usurp this power were fairly timid and inconsistent, but despite this they still had to be cut short, including by me. I did this extremely delicately, in a friendly way, trying to protect his mental state. My deputy, the first Vice Prime Minister of the DPR, Vladimir Antyufeyev, did this in a more hardline way, which brought about Igor's extreme dislike. I remember I was moaning back then that my title wasn't the Prime Minister of the DPR but the Chief Psychiatrist of the DPR which, of course Strelkov's entourage subsequently reported to him, and this became one of the causes for his subsequent, now Moscow-based, dislike of me.

Many people in Russia see something positive in these attempts at grabbing power, thinking that this is good—that such a hero, such a saintly person would take power in the DPR. They simply don't know that

[...]

if he had got this power, then the DPR, and along with it probably the LPR, would have ceased to exist at the end of July. And we wouldn't now be talking about Novorossiya—whether it's bad there or good. There'd be nothing to talk about. The thing is that Igor Girkin, who suffers from “encirclement syndrome,” gave the order for the full withdrawal of all his subordinate troops to the Russian Federation.

— **What happened with this order? And what was the point of withdrawing the troops to the RF?**

— The order was annulled by Vladimir Antyufeyev. By doing so, this person saved the Donetsk People's Republic. I made no contribution to this, I left the DPR on July 25—I went away to Moscow for consultations, and returned in early August. And the logic of the order was simple: every man for himself. The military situation was objectively difficult, but taking such a decision was clearly premature.

When Igor and I went together on the operation to take Marinovka, in the early morning hours, before the onslaught, we were talking privately, and he said one simple thing to me: “I've done so much that my main aim is simply to survive, to make it so that I can get to Russia and get everything I've earned.”

As you understand, the desire to survive at any cost doesn't fit very well with the post of someone who is in command of troops and is responsible for defense. Strelkov wanted to go not alone, he had to go with all the troops. Then it would look like he hadn't run away, but had simply “heroically retreated” yet again. He complained back then that Alexander Khodakovsky, the Vostok commander, wasn't obeying him. Khodakovsky was indeed not obeying Strelkov and tried not to attend the command center meetings for the one simple reason that he told me during a conversation we had in person: “What if this person gives me an order that I won't be able to fulfil?” That's exactly how it was with the order to withdraw from Donetsk.

I know that public opinion in Russia is that Khodakovsky is virtually Akhmetov's fosterling, whilst Girkin is a saintly hero, but the actual situation shows some other sides of the events. And a duality of power has taken shape within the Ministry of Defense of the DPR, an informal parallel council of commandeers, who often re-examined Colonel Strelkov's orders.

At some point it became clear that it was the enemy rather than us that had gone to pieces, and the military situation started changing in our favor. Back then, Strelkov changed his mind about leaving, he berated me along the lines of “why are you taking me out, you want to make a ‘general of the retreat’ out of me, and I want to be remembered as a ‘general of the offense,’” but it was no longer a question of him getting some kind of credit.

In actual fact, it's all very sad. I realize that when this whole story is broadcast to the public at large, I'll be accused of being jealous, a loathsome bastard, [they'll say] that Colonel Strelkov is great, handsome, powerful, but I can prove my every word apart from those spoken in private discussions. But I still think that Igor will [...] have enough dignity to not deny them.

[...]

# Annex 548

MKRU, Colonel of the FSB Igor Strelkov Called the Senseless Assault on the Donetsk Airport (1 December 2014)

This document has been translated from its original language into English, an official language of the Court, pursuant to Rules of the Court, Article 51.

Pursuant to Rules of the Court Article 51(3), Ukraine has translated only an extract of the original document constituting this Annex. In further compliance with this Rule, Ukraine has provided two certified copies of the full original-language document with its submission. The translated passages are highlighted in the original-language document. Ukraine has omitted from translation those portions of the document that are not materially relied upon in its Memorial, but stands ready to provide additional translations should the Court so require.





## FSB Colonel Igor Strelkov Plays Down the Assault on the Donetsk Airport as Senseless

Former Defense Ministers of the Donetsk People’s Republic Discusses the Strategy for Taking over the Airport

December 1, 2014 at 7:52 p.m., views: 77995



In yet another interview published in his Status Report from the Militia of Novorossiyya account, Igor Strelkov, former Defense Minister of the Donetsk People’s Republic and leader of the Novorossiyya Charitable Foundation discusses the senseless assault on the Donetsk Airport and his rank as Colonel of the Federal Security Service.



Photo: youtube.com

According to Strelkov, he “would not launch an assault on the airport at all”.



“Taking over the airport merely required destroying that [Ukrainian] artillery. Meanwhile, the target for the attack was formally chosen by people who have no clue about the art of war,”

Strelkov said, speaking with journalist Alexander Chalenko, adding: “In this case they were fighting not the cause but the effect.

Taking over the airport required eliminating the cause, that is, destroying the artillery emplacements in Peski and Advyevka. In such case the airport could have been captured effortlessly. In this situation all infantry attacks on the airport have been repelled by artillery located out of reach.”

Notably, in Strelkov’s opinion, the most battle-worthy units of the armed forces of the Donetsk People’s Republic suffered from the constant onslaughts on the airport. “The onslaught on the airport was not just unnecessary. It was also harmful because it battered and caused major losses to the best units of the former Slovyansk Brigade. What’s more, these losses are totally senseless. You see, as soon as the mount an attack, the enemy opens artillery fire,” the former defense minister of the Donetsk People’s Republic said.

In response to criticism from his naysayers, who accuse Strelkov of inability to lead large-scale military operations, he said that he is an FSB colonel, which is why he is not perturbed by such rhetoric hurled at him.

“Many of your critics say that Strelkov is merely an FSB lieutenant colonel, which is why he has no experience planning army operations. What can you say to that?” the journalist asked Strelkov.

“I am in fact an FSB colonel, which is why I have adopted a calm attitude to this. For that matter, it’s not a good idea to address a military man using a lower rank than he actually has. Ranks have more value for military people than for civilians. This is actually what the military hierarchy is built upon,” Igor Strelkov replied.

“I had a dire need for a chief of staff who would be able to put down on paper everything that I intended. For that matter, all high-caliber army commanders come in two categories: chiefs and chiefs of staff. The commander makes a decision, while the chief of staff elaborates it by putting it down on paper and laying it out. The input of both parties is absolutely essential. Far from every good chief of staff is capable of commanding the army well. And vice versa. For example, one profile on Zhukov said that he was an excellent infantry commander but could not stand staff work. Of course, I do not equate myself to Zhukov, but I personally dislike staff work, to be honest. Moreover, I am unskilled at it. Meanwhile, I have a good understanding of volunteer and partisan work. I was aware of the quality of all my units: what they were capable of or not,” Strelkov concluded.

It will be recalled that after the signing of the Minsk ceasefire the Donetsk Airport became one of the hottest flash points on the map of Ukraine’s southeast. National Guard forces rely on their forward observes in the airport to launch daily mortar attacks on militia positions with the risk of hitting residential buildings, schools, and hospitals located nearby. The militias in turn attempt to drive Ukrainian soldiers out of the airport.

According to Ukrainian media reports, patience is running thin among leaders of the joint center tasked with controlling and coordinating the ceasefire in Ukraine’s east. “To resolve the crisis situation in the area of the international airport of Donetsk, steps are being taken by the joint center tasked with controlling and coordinating the ceasefire. This morning, leaders of the joint center representing Ukraine and Russia have set off for this area,” according to the ATO press center report published on December 1. The Ukrainian side is represented by Lieutenant General Vladimir Askarov. Russia is represented by Lieutenant General Alexander Lentsov.

Artur Avakov



# Annex 549

James Rupert, How Russians are Sent to Fight in Ukraine, Newsweek (6 January 2015)



# How Russians Are Sent to Fight in Ukraine

**N** [newsweek.com/how-russians-are-sent-fight-ukraine-296937](http://newsweek.com/how-russians-are-sent-fight-ukraine-296937)

James Rupert

January 6, 2015



In Yekaterinburg, the main city of Russia's Ural region, retired army officer Vladimir Yefimov organizes army veterans to fight for Russia in southeastern Ukraine, more than 1,000 miles away.

While Russia's deployment of army troops and non-official Russian "volunteer" fighters in Ukraine is not news, Yefimov describes in new detail how Russian army vets are selected, organized and paid to join the war. His account underscores that the army of Russian "volunteers" is run with at least the tacit help of the Kremlin.

Yefimov is a former special forces (*spetsnaz*) officer who now heads the Sverdlovsk Oblast Fund for Special Forces Veterans. In an [interview with Yekaterinburg Online](#), a local news website, he told of sending between 150 and 250 fighters to Ukraine's Donbas war zone this year.

While he says his fighters are "volunteers" rather than mercenaries, they are paid salaries: from \$1,000 per month for a low-ranking enlisted man to \$2,000 to \$4,000 for officers. Yefimov did not answer the reporter's question about who pays the salaries.

Ukraine's government says more than 10,000 Russian mercenaries form the bulk of the Russian proxy forces that the Kremlin has used to sponsor the creation of the separatist "people's republics" in parts of Ukraine's Donetsk and Lugansk provinces. Many fighters are motivated by the propaganda of the Kremlin-controlled media, Yefimov says.

“Our press and television present the dramatic facts. The Russian people cannot tolerate the terror that the fascists have staged there [in Ukraine]. Killing women, children and the elderly. Most of those who go [to fight] are sensitive and empathetic; they want to help. This is especially true for people from 40 to 60 years of age, who were brought up under Soviet traditions.” Other fighters go because they miss the adrenaline of war or to earn money, he said.

Russian fighters were first sent into Ukraine as “escorts” for Red Cross aid trucks, Yefimov says, and they now are sent via “humanitarian aid” convoys supervised by the paramilitary Ministry of Emergency Situations.

In an interview published the day after Yefimov’s, the director in Moscow of the Red Cross, Igor Trunov, says the dispatch of Russian “humanitarian convoys” to Ukraine is a violation of international humanitarian law, and says the “Putin convoys” are likely to have carried weapons to the [separatist] militia-controlled area of Donbas.

“I do not want to throw stones in the garden of our institutions, of our state.... But there is international law. What is the Ministry of Emergency Situations? It’s a paramilitary organ of the Russian state. And as a paramilitary structure it entered the territory of another state? ... This is an invasion. This is a violation; it cannot be done.”

With Yefimov’s interview, “a Russian has confirmed what Russia has done,” writes Eurasia scholar Paul Goble, noting “the level of detail he provides, the photographs of those involved, and the reproductions of the forms he and his comrades use” in running their operation.

Yefimov’s points include these:

- **The Kremlin is quietly supportive but is keeping all deployment of fighters unofficial.** Yefimov wrote to the office of President Vladimir Putin to ask for official status that would let recruiters open bank accounts. Putin’s regional representative wrote in reply that “At the moment, consideration of the initiative is not possible. Thank you for your patriotic impulse!”
- **Russian veterans’ associations form a broad recruitment network.** “I’m not the only one sending,” Yefimov says. “Others doing it are the Afghan veterans’ groups, the Chechnya veterans. We don’t discuss with each other the numbers, but we keep in touch by phone about those who have been rejected—for example for criminal records, for objective reasons, so that they don’t go to war through others. Still, to fully control the flow of departing volunteers, of course, is impossible: The border is open.
- **The casualties among Russian volunteers are uncoun­ted.** “I think no one has it,” Yefimov says, referring to a tally of deaths among “volunteer” fighters. “There is no central coordination in the sending of people, there is no general assembly point, so there are neither statistics nor an understanding of the scale.”

The interview below was first published in [Yekaterinburg Online](#) on December 24, 2014

**Head of the Sverdlovsk Fund of Spetsnaz Veterans: “I Help Volunteers Go to Fight in**

## Ukraine”

*By Ilya Kazakov*

Sverdlovsk residents are traveling to Ukraine to fight and are dying in the war; this is already a fact. In August, we recall, Alex Zasov, a contract soldier from Novouralsk, was killed in southeastern Ukraine; the Russian president recently decorated him posthumously with the Order of Courage.

On October 15, two Urals residents—Vasily Zhukov from the Sverdlovsk village of Belokammeniy, and a 37-year-old native of the village of Novoutkinsk, Gennady Korolev—were killed after being hit by an explosive shell from a Ukrainian tank. Another man in that battle, wedding photographer Mikhail Laptev from Kamyshlov, lost a leg.

On October 30, Donetsk airport police shot and killed former Yekaterinburg policeman Paul Bulanova, and for almost a month and a half, his relatives were unable to bring his body back from Ukrainian territory.

On December 14 in Yekaterinburg, Urals-region volunteers were solemnly decorated, having distinguished themselves in combat in Ukraine and returned home safe and sound.

We found the man who organized this award. He works, as he states himself (and by the accounts of several relatives of the boys who have died over there), to send Sverdlovsk’s men to the civil war.

Who is he? Why does he do this? And is it true that volunteers get the war a lot of money? The answers come in an exclusive interview with the head of the Sverdlovsk Fund of Special Forces Veterans, Vladimir Yefimov.

**Q. Why do you head up the special forces veterans’ fund? What issues do you work on?**

A. In 1993, I commanded a combined detachment of the Sverdlovsk region in the storming of the White House in Moscow. At the direction of Boris Yeltsin, I participated in the suppression of the "red-brown" coup.

In 1994, the cossacks elected me *ataman* [head] of the Isetsky Line Cossack Army [a prominent Cossack paramilitary organization based in the Urals region]. In 1998, I became the head of the oblast Fund of Special Forces Veterans. Since 2000, I’ve been retired.

About 1,500 people from throughout the Urals participate in the work of the fund. We engage in military-patriotic education, the socioeconomic rehabilitation of war veterans. But now, given the situation in the country, we have no time for social activities. We help with sending volunteers to Ukraine.

**Q. When did you begin to help in sending the Urals men to the war?**

A. After the Maidan, but before the reunification of Crimea [to Russia]. I called up the veterans themselves, and said, “Dmitrich, what's going on?! Let’s go, it’s necessary to restore order!”

I took time to weigh everything. And they could not resist and they rushed off at their own risk. There is a good old saying: If it's impossible to prevent a chaotic situation, then it's better to lead it. After that, I began to prepare the first group to go to Crimea.

The first to go were the guys from Khanty-Mansiysk: special forces veterans. Cossacks. They themselves worked in shifts to prepared the GAZ-66 [military truck], and three jeeps equipped to the nines. They paid for it all out of their own pockets. They took me and we drove off. In Crimea, I have many relatives and friends.

When we reached Kerch, I organized everything—gave the fellows responsible guys who connected them to the base, and in the end they were "polite people." [*This is a label used for the armed men in uniforms similar to the Russian and unmarked; they participated in Crimea until its formal re-unification to Russia—author's note.*]

When Crimea became Russia, they returned. They received great satisfaction. Some went for the adrenaline, some went just not to be bored. From that moment I seriously took up sending volunteers to Ukraine, including to Lugansk and Donetsk.

**Q. How are the volunteers selected?**

A. People come to us at the fund. They write to me a declaration: "Please provide me with support in sending me to provide help to the struggling people of Novorossiya." Together with this declaration, the man fills out a questionnaire with his data: who he is, where, where he is from, where he served [in the military], what combat experience he has. If he is a member of the Fund, such a profile already exists in our database.

After we read his application we conduct an interview. If a person is suitable as a combatant, I include him in the group to send. To all such people we give a "volunteer's pass." That is, specifically, "volunteer," not "militiaman." This is an official paper with the stamp of the Fund, so that no one later ties us to mercenarism.

**Q. Who goes to Ukraine?**

A. All kinds of people. Guys from 35 to 55 years are the most seasoned age group. There are younger guys, too. Since June I've sent six groups, each of 15 to 30 people, to Donetsk and two groups of 30 people to Lugansk. There are also the well-off guys who can equip themselves. They were completely useless. Some of them hadn't even served in the army.

There were even some who said, "Take me—I'm a drug addict. Maybe there I can get off the needle under the stress of that situation."

I'm not the only one sending. Others doing it are the Afghan veterans' groups, the Chechnya veterans. We don't discuss with each other the numbers, but we keep in touch by phone about those who have been rejected—for example for criminal records, for objective reasons—so that they don't go to war through others. Still, to fully control the flow of departing volunteers, of course, is impossible: The border is open.

**Q. It's said that guards of private security firms are sent there in an organized way. Is that so?**

A. First time I heard about it. But I don't rule out that they can go there. They're not connected with the state; their status as volunteers is assured. But, of course, they have few skills. Not everyone can be qualified. Over there they need guys with combat experience

**Q. And active-duty military, Emergency Situations (Ministry) personnel, or police—during their holidays, can they go?**

A. Russian legislation does not prohibit this. If there is a specific, direct prohibition [from the agency or unit commander], then they can't. If not, they can go. The need for professionals there is great. But you understand that within the government, everything has been thought through. If someone gets caught over there, he will have long before that already have been dismissed, and it's possible even that the documents for that eventuality will have been prepared in advance. That's what I think [*laughs*].

**Q. Do you somehow divide up the professionals and useless? Or they are on the same team?**

A. I immediately separate the flies from the cutlets: Special forces and elite go to Donetsk. Cossacks and newcomers without combat experience—to Lugansk.

**Q. How much does it cost to provide one volunteer?**

A. On average, a soldier with equipment and salary, which I estimate will hold in the future, goes for around 350 thousand [rubles; at recent exchange rates, equivalent to \$5,500 to \$6,500] per month. This is the cost of special forces work. One armored vest costs [\$1,200]; night-vision binoculars are \$1,500. And there is more winter clothing, footwear, food, medicines. This is really the market price.

**Q. Of that amount, how much would be salary?**

A. Now there are even informal wage standards. I am told that Pyatigorsk Cossacks get paid somewhere around 60,000 to 90,000 rubles a month [\$1,000 to \$1,500] for enlisted personnel; and 120,000 to 150,000 [\$2,000 to \$2,600] for officers. Now, they say, salaries have grown as high as 240,000 [\$4,000].

**Q. And why a salary? After all, they are all volunteers, as you say.**

A. I think that people have to be paid. After all, they are risking their lives. With the help of a salary, the professionals can be attracted to the war. They come, and their eyes sparkle. They accomplish their mission and they don't feel mistreated. [*He pats his pocket.*]

**Q. Who pays all of this?**

A. We get help, for everything except for the salaries, from volunteers and activists. They find and organize KamAZes [cargo trucks] with humanitarian aid. They find people willing to help with equipping the fighters. We don't have a formal [bank] account for assisting the volunteers. So often, this is the mechanism we use: We bring our sponsors with the bills for what we need. After it's paid, we get a chit for the goods with which we pick them up. It also

can happen that someone will have 100,000 rubles [\$1,700] and will call me and say, "Let's go buy them something." Then we'll take him with eight volunteers and each one can choose what he needs.

**Q. Do you also buy weapons?**

A. No, we don't buy weapons. How would we buy them here? All of that is handled on the receiving side. You arrive, you sign, you receive. You're coming back, you hand it over. They're very strict with this.

**Q. Our government is sponsoring you?**

A. So far, it doesn't help at all. In June I wrote a letter to the [Russian] presidential representative for the Urals Federal District, Igor Kholmanski. There I clearly explained that it is necessary to create a [government-registered] social organization to support the volunteer movement in Donbas. Officially.

That would let us open a bank account, to which businesses could transfer money. We could then establish official relationships with our volunteers—negotiated contracts. Not to fight, but to provide humanitarian assistance [*laughs*].

The law is like a post—you cannot step over it, but you can step around it. Officially, the organization would select candidates for humanitarian service. We need our own training center, where it would be possible to train people and, in the course of training, assign each person a military specialty.

**Q. And what did the presidential representation say to you?**

A. "At the moment, consideration of the initiative is not possible. Thank you for your patriotic impulse."

**Q. And how do the volunteers get to their duty station?**

A. The first time they went under the guise of the Red Cross. They would get from the local branch a document that they were escorts [for a convoy]. When they arrived, they just stayed there. They were given weapons and put into combat missions.

Now we also load the boys into the trucks with the humanitarian aid and send them. On average, they go for a month. Some do it while on vacation, some probably just to earn money. I ask them not to tell me how much they receive. It doesn't concern me.

**Q. After that, you are no longer responsible for their fate?**

A. We don't have the money to bring the body back to Russia or to help the relatives. I immediately warn all those who are leaving about this. They have no illusions. But where we can, we do provide help.

**Q. And how many Russian volunteers were killed in the Donets Basin, including the Urals? Do you have this data?**

A. I don't have it. And I think no one has it. There is no central coordination in the sending of people, there is no general assembly point, so there are neither statistics nor an

understanding of the scale.

**Q. Don't you consider it necessary to investigate the killing of each volunteer? To clarify the reason for his death?**

A. It's essential to understand. The commander of a normal unit keeps a log of operations in which he puts the intelligence information, each battle, all the plans, and the particulars of all irretrievable losses. But it must be understood that under the conditions of war, it's not always possible to establish the exact cause of death.

**Q. Can the relatives of those killed get access to this information? Can they learn how and where their relatives were killed?**

A. We tell them what happened.

**Q. So why do all these volunteers still go there?**

A. Our press and television present the dramatic facts. The Russian people cannot tolerate the terror that the fascists have staged there [in Ukraine]. Killing women, children and the elderly. Most of those who go are sensitive and empathetic; they want to help. This is especially true for people from 40 to 60 years of age, who were brought up under Soviet traditions. My blood boils when I see an artillery explosion upon a woman with a child. What are those swine doing?

Such sentiments were aroused especially by the events in Odessa, where a lot of guys were burned alive. Some people also go for the adrenaline. Especially those already have fought previously and who feel pulled back to it.

**Q. You are helping people to go to war. Do you not feel sorry for them?**

A. Do you think it doesn't make me sad? I'm sorry, of course. Don't imagine that my goal is to send as many as possible there. No, my goal is to send as few as possible. And for those I send, that they're the ones best prepared for combat, and those who can't be stopped in any case. Those will go, if not through me, then through others, or even on their own.

I see a special forces guy with experience. Yes, he drinks, but he has no family, no children. He wants to fight.

For the inexperienced, I try to dissuade them. I say, you're not a professional; you'll be the first in combat to fall. Not long ago, a very young boy came to me. He hadn't served [in the military]. He declared he wanted to go make war in a United Ukraine. With a trident on his arm. I really let him have it. ...

**Q. Now in Ukraine the situation is relatively calmer. Are new groups of volunteers preparing to go?**

A. Most recently, Russian volunteers have been squeezed out of Novorossiia under various pretexts. Commanders are calling guys who are already there and saying, "Go home, you're not needed here." So for now, I'm not preparing new groups. They're just not needed. But there are reserves.

**Q. Are you afraid of what will happen, as in Kazakhstan, where volunteers who fought in Donbas are on trial? That suddenly you might be charged? For example, for mercenarism?**

A. For myself and for those volunteers who went to fight on my voucher, I am calm. If someone finds that we are working to fulfill some order [from anyone], let them put us on trial. But you cannot prove something that's not there. People are going there voluntarily.

*James Rupert is an editor with the Atlantic Council. This article first appeared on the Atlantic Council website.*

# Annex 550

Large Military Staging Ground Detected in Russia, The Interpreter Magazine (7 January 7 2015)



# Russia Update: Large Russian Military Staging Ground Detected Near Ukrainian Border

[www.interpretermag.com/russia-update-large-russian-military-staging-ground-detected-near-ukrainian-border](http://www.interpretermag.com/russia-update-large-russian-military-staging-ground-detected-near-ukrainian-border)

Interpreter Staff

[Russia Update](#)

[Ukraine](#)

Photo: Aleksandr Maltsev

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Welcome to our column, **Russia Update**, where we will be closely following day-to-day developments in Russia, including the Russian government's foreign and domestic policies.

The previous issue is [here](#), and see also our **Russia This Week** story [The Guild War – How Should Journalists Treat Russian State Propagandists?](#) and special features [‘Managed Spring’: How Moscow Parted Easily with the ‘Novorossiya’ Leaders](#), [Putin ‘The Imperialist’ A Runner-Up For Time’s ‘Person of the Year’](#) and [It’s Not Just Oil and Sanctions Killing Russia’s Economy, It’s Putin](#).

About 20 activists were arrested after refusing to leave Manezhnaya Square last night following a rally in defense of the Navalny brothers.

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## UPDATES BELOW

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Does Social Media Prove That Russian Law-Enforcers are Fighting in Ukraine?

13:40 (GMT)



The tweet is like hundreds that appear on Twitter, making a claim without a link that is hard to prove -- that certain Russian combatants are fighting in Ukraine and killing Ukrainians.

fetching tweet...

**Translation:** A KPRF deputy sends his greetings to the SBU from Donbass.

The KPRF is the Communist Party of the Russian Federation.

Before long, this tweet without a link or any other information gets a bit embellished in the translation because the bloggers from the region have a context that a Westerner might not have:

| fetching tweet...

The first tweet shows a screenshot of the deputy's home page on the municipal legislature of Sergiyev Posad -- his name is Denis Akhromkin. Is he fighting in Ukraine now and killing Ukrainians? We know it to be a generally true fact that there are Russian volunteers and regular soldiers fighting in Ukraine because we've documented many such cases not only of Russian armor coming into Ukraine, but also Russian soldiers killed in Ukraine, such as those on this list of more than 250 "Cargo 200" -- the Russian military term for soldiers killed in combat whose bodies are returned to Russia -- or buried in the war zone with an Orthodox cross and only the name "Ivan."

Can such stories which so often come on Twitter without any links to their sources be confirmed? Many of the details can, but we cannot definitely prove that Denis Akhromkin is in fact in combat killing Ukrainians -- although he has been caught bragging this on posts since removed, and there are many pictures of him armed, in combat zones -- and as we shall see, independent Russian journalist Andrei Trofimov has asked a lot of hard questions and come up with some more relevant context.

The problem with VKontakte and other social media is that they can be very misleading and sometimes deliberately so and by themselves, aren't enough to establish a claim. Thousands of such accounts are now being assiduously mined by an army of bloggers in Ukraine, Russia and the West to prove that Russia invaded Ukraine and uses both volunteer and regular army in Ukraine. And thousands of accounts are also being created by wannabees and provocateurs who would like to discredit journalists.

The presence of "Lost Ivan" can be proved in other ways, also using social media or from the eyewitness accounts of Western journalists. Despite limitations, VK has proven to be a useful resource although not always as definitively as it may seem at first. Local journalists on the ground willing to cover the war and ask hard questions who take incredible risks have also been needed to run these stories to ground.

Contrary to what pro-Kremlin trolls say, Akhromkin does exist, is a member of the local city legislature -- not the State Duma -- in Sergiyev Posad, a town in Moscow region famous for its monasteries. Akhromkin appears to work at the Emergencies Ministry (Emercom) -- he is shown in pictures and newspaper articles in the uniform and gear of this ministry -- and as a volunteer patroller and possibly in that capacity has a legal firearms license.

He has a tattoo of the "Militant Russia" mixed martial arts club and a friend in a "Novorossiya" t-shirt featuring Col. Igor Strelkov.



Добавлена 3 ноября 2014 | Мне нравится ♥ 37

Комментарии к этой фотографии скрыты настройками приватности.



Денис Ахромкин  
Фотографии со  
страницы Дениса

Akhromkin is a member of several organizations including the People's Militia which is an auxiliary to the police. He has traveled to Moscow to lobby for the new law on *druzhinniki* which would give them more powers and make it possible to fine citizens who resist their "lawful orders" face punishment by fines.



*Akhromkin with deputies in the State Duma lobbying for the druzhinniki law. Photo by Alternativnaya Gazeta*

Is he in fact a member of the Communist Party? This was questioned by some Twitter members but while not immediately evident, it was eventually confirmed. The Moscow Regional Chapter of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation (KPRF) [has written about him](#), describing a clash he had with a Tajik labor migrant who hung out his underwear to dry on a clothesline. In a "think of the children" moment and drawing on his existing practice as a "cleanser" of "illegal immigrants," Akhromkin informed that man that his laundry was in view of a children's playground and he had to take it down.

The man resisted, words were exchanged, and at one point the migrant was said to take off his pants to graphically show Akhromkin what he thought of such concerns, and then popped him over the head with a bottle, although Akhromkin was not seriously injured. The police were summoned - - and all of it was captured on tape as yet another successful "round-up" of a "churok," as Central Asians are pejoratively called by such Russians.

This article happens to show Akhromkin's campaign poster for the KPRF where not surprisingly he campaigns on the issues of "Migrants, Housing and Law and Order"



Photo by Andrei Trofimov Alternativnaya Gazeta

Akhromkin is a member of a group with a VKontakte page called "*Dezinsektor*" whose name appears to be based on the Russian words for "disinfectant" and "sector" whose motto is: "We catch illegals, we force the organs to work" -- meaning the police and intelligence agencies -- although some might be thinking of the Tajik migrant's defiant gesture.

From news accounts and [his VK page](#), we can see Akhromkin is very active in bringing "humanitarian aid" to southeastern Ukraine. But is he one of those fighters who smuggles himself and arms into Ukraine under guise of the Red Cross, [as described by this veteran in Yekaterinburg who admitted he misused the local Red Cross organization in this fashion?](#)

Here's Akhromkin standing in a *telnyashka*, a Russian paratrooper's t-shirt and a bullet-proof vest in front of a Ukrainian ambulance. What's he doing there?



Добавлена 28 августа 2014 | Мне нравится ♥ 7

Комментарии к этой фотографии скрыты настройками приватности.



Денис Ахромкин

Фотографии на стене Дениса

This type of story is popular in Ukrainian and Western mainstream media right now but it isn't necessarily true -- in fact *Newsweek* has just run a story that is based on a faulty account by NVUA.net and Ukrinform which we explained here and here and which ultimately led to the head of the Moscow Red Cross to refute the story that he had claimed such Russian volunteers and arms were being smuggled into Ukraine in white "humanitarian aid" trucks -- and to denounce Ukrainian journalists who ran this story. Yet, as we pointed out, the debunkers failed to take into account that the Moscow Red Cross in fact had been critical of how humanitarian aid was being brought into Ukraine, and in fact there were reports of fighters smuggling themselves into Ukraine in vehicles bearing the red cross.

The pictures on Akhromkin's VKontakte account do show him posing with guns, though it is uncertain if they were legally obtained in relationship to his Emercom work or *druzhinnik* activity.

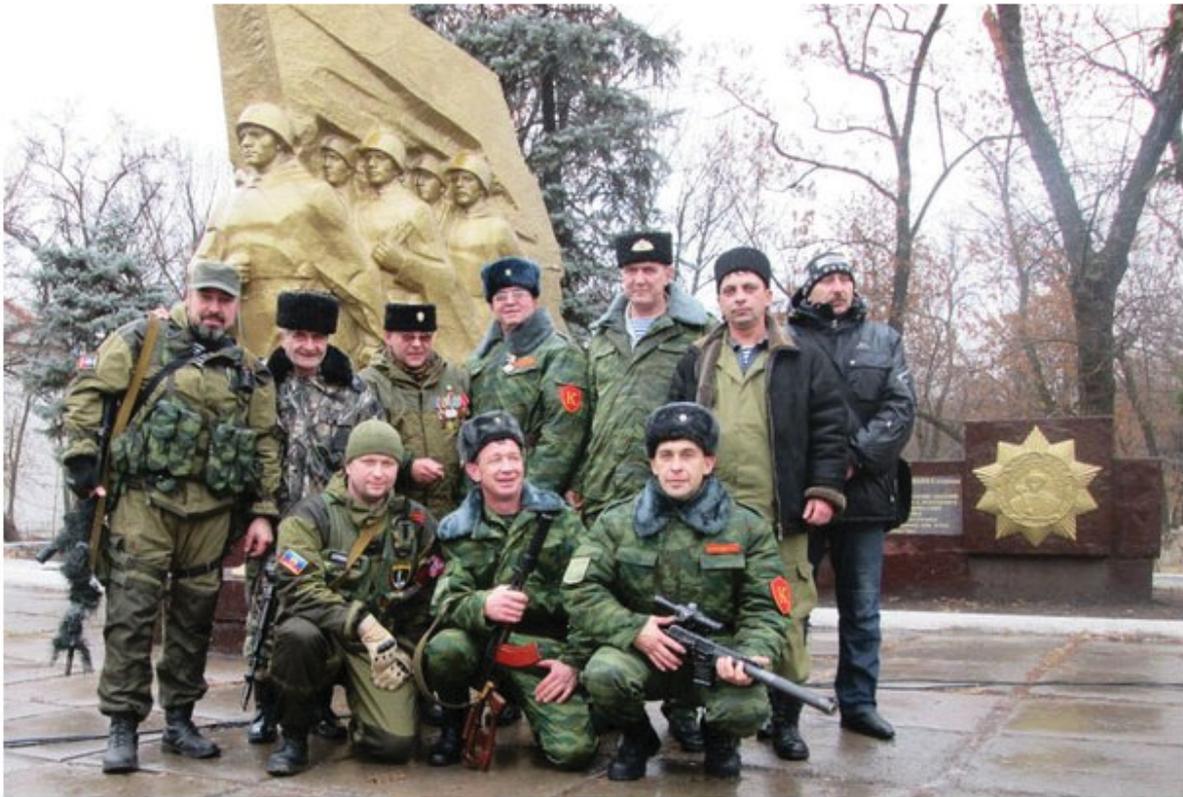


Добавлена 7 декабря 2014 | Мне нравится ♥ 29  
Комментарии к этой фотографии скрыты настройками приватности.



Денис Ахромкин  
Фотографии со  
страницы Дениса

They show him posing in Krasnodon, Ukraine, with Afghan war veterans and separatist fighters.



Войны афганцы и комендантский полк г. Краснодона и Луганска. День вручения Боевого Знамени полка.

Добавлена 24 декабря 2014 | Мне нравится ❤️ 32



Денис Ахромкин  
Фотографии на стене Дениса

They show him posing with the infamous Russian-backed battalion commander nick-named "Motorola" who has twice broken his arm in combat - he appears to be in the ruins of the Donetsk Airport.



Добавлена 30 декабря 2014 | Мне нравится ♥ 18

Комментарии к этой фотографии скрыты настройками приватности.



Денис Ахромкин  
Фотографии на стене  
Дениса

And here at the remains of the Saur-Mogila war memorial in the Donetsk region:



Такого героизма Русь не видела в новейшей истории.

Добавлена 4 октября 2014 | Мне нравится ❤️ 9



Денис Ахромкин  
Донецк в огне!!!

As the pictures in the original tweet which we also confirmed are on his VK account indicate, he's even posed by wreckage with the word "Donetsk." Is is he going on assault runs on the airport?

These pictures in fact are not proof he was actually in combat because of the propensity -- particularly of paramilitary groups and nationalist groups from Russia -- for people to want to pose and get souvenir pictures.

Are there any other clues that could confirm he did fight in a war?

Akhromkin is also shows pictures of graves of Russian soldiers who have died in battle -- he writes on the caption "Glory to Russian warriors. These men were not arms dealers, for them it was a weapon of vengeance." It's not clear where they are buried, but the way in which their graves are lined up so closely with the standard wooden Orthodox crosses often used to bury such soldiers in Ukraine -- it's likely it is in Ukraine. At home, they would have a headstone.



Слава Русским воинам. Эти ребята оружием не торговали. Для них оно было оружием возмездия.

Добавлена 4 октября 2014 | Мне нравится ♥ 10



Денис Ахромкин  
Донецк в огне!!!

Disturbingly, he is shown by an ICRC vehicle -- again, is he one of these fighters smuggling himself and his weapons into Ukraine under cover of the Red Cross? Or is he just making an aid delivery to this location:



Добавлена 28 августа 2014 | Мне нравится ❤️ 8

Комментарии к этой фотографии скрыты настройками приватности.



Денис Ахромкин  
Фотографии на стене  
Дениса

Ultimately, it's hard to prove that these pictures, even with camouflage and guns, mean this man in a militarized ministry and police auxiliary is in combat. He's sitting on a camouflaged tank -- but are sneakers the right foot gear for combat?

Фотография 52 из 201

Закреть



Добавлена 16 августа 2014 | Мне нравится ♥ 4

Комментарии к этой фотографии скрыты настройками приватности.



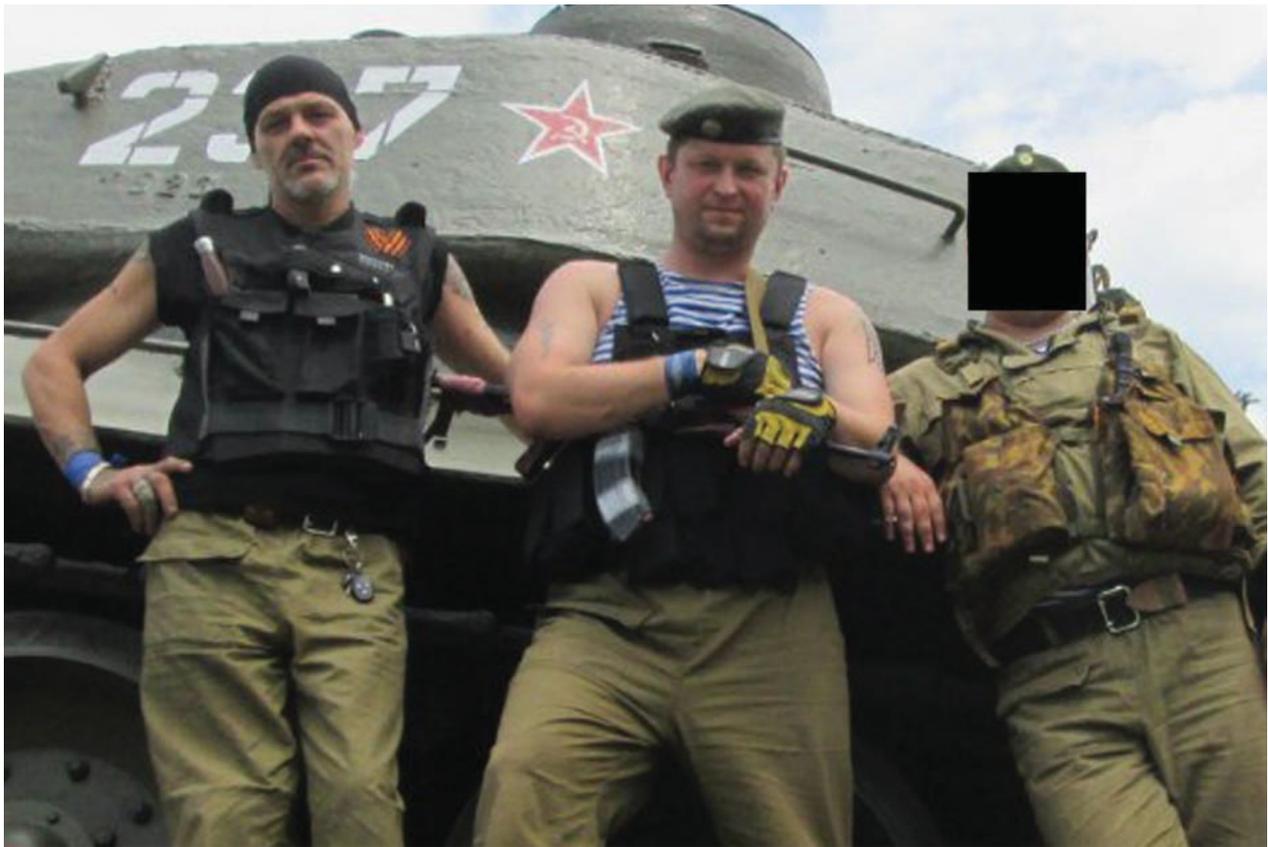
Денис Ахромкин

Фотографии на стене Дениса

But in the last week, Akhromkin appeared in sensational news reports by journalist Andrei Trofimov who claimed that Akhromkin and another man had been arrested at the Russian-Ukrainian border smuggling guns into Ukraine. Trofimov said he had tips from Russian law-enforcement about the arrest. In his first article, he didn't mention any names and blacked out the faces of some militants in a photo, but when Akhromkin himself issued public denials, he then did mention the name of him and his friend.

Akhromkin indignantly denied the charges to the local media and in a YouTube address.

Trofimov stuck to his story and reported further and printed another photograph, this time showing the face of Akhromkin and a buddy by a BTR:



Trofimov writes that Akhromkin must have known who was detained at the border because he made the comment "I begged them in every way not to put out ideas of unlawful actions and withdrew from them."

And surely he knew when he said that he "never had" any relationship to unlawful activity that he himself had a record for sentencing for unlawful weapons possession -- which he didn't report to the police. If he did, reasons Trofimov, and he was the one who informed on Yury Prudenko (seen above), with whom he had traveled to Ukraine, why did he begin blustering and denying? Prudenko himself wrote angrily in the comments of Trofimov's article that they were simply inspected at the border, no weapons were found.



Yury Prudenko. Photo via Alternativnaya Gazeta

Now the story was starting to look a little less like "humanitarian aid drop-off" and more like "combat tourism" in Ukraine.

But why were FSB agents informing a blogger of an effort to stop something that in fact they've shielded their eyes from -- and participated in -- for most of this year? Is this the famous "dumping of Novorossiya" that Col. Strelkov always frets about?

Trofimov then went even further and went to get a videotaped interview with Akhromkin and Prudenko.

The story is long in the telling but between 7:00-9:00 you can see an interesting thing happen. Akhromkin gets talking about "our armor" -- and Trofimov stops him. Our? As in -- you were fighting with the rebels?

Akhromkin stammers through a tale of seeing some POWs, and seeing a Ukrainian tank -- and then starts looking at the floor. Prudenko comes in with a more plausible tale -- they were driving along the road, when they saw a Ukrainian tank that rebels had seized themselves. It was "pinched," as the fighters often say in describing these cases.

Well, whose was it and what were they doing? Trofimov persists. Prudenko says he can hardly ask

So in the end, we can't say for sure what was going on here. Were these men at war, helping the Russian-backed rebels -- and proving that the war isn't indigenous, or only partly so? Were they merely armed deliverers of "humanitarian aid"? The prevalence of these stories now in the regional press -- and the readiness with which they are being set up and then debunked -- suggests there is some hand scripting this.

Trofimov points out that it's odd that he didn't mention Akhromkin's name in his first story -- yet he instantly started issuing denials.

Trofimov then produces a number of materials indicating that the Ukrainian authorities have declared Akhromkin a "terrorist," and published him on the crowd-sourcing site Center for Researching Signs of State Treason, Separatism, Terrorism and Mercenarism in Ukraine which was recently begun by the Ukrainian government to collect information from citizens -- and which has been criticized by some as open to abuse and false denunciations.

It's on this site that a comment in reply to a woman who asks "Where are you?" Akhromkin says "Stanitsa Luganskaya beating on Ukrainians".

**"МИРОТВОРЕЦЬ"**  
ЦЕНТР ДОСЛІДЖЕНЬ ОЗНАК ДЕРЖАВНОЇ ЗРАДИ, СЕПАРАТИЗМУ, ТЕРОРИЗМУ та НАЙМАНСТВА В УКРАЇНІ  
російские наемники! Предлагаем вам сдаться или уйти в Россию! (тел. СБ України - 0 800 501 482, e-mail: callcenter@ssu.gov.ua)

Фотография 44 из 200 [https://vk.com/photo175207895\\_333167195?all=1](https://vk.com/photo175207895_333167195?all=1) Закреть



Добавлена 3 июля 2014 | Мне нравится ♥ 17

**Наталья Годованная**  
Где это ты?? )  
20 июл в 10:22 ♥ 1

**Денис Ахромкин**  
Наталья, Станица Луганская. Бьем укропов.-))))  
20 июл в 15:15 Наталья ♥ 2

**Денис Ахромкин**  
Фотографии со страницы Дениса

Поделиться  
Сохранить к себе  
Открыть оригинал  
Пожаловаться ▾

24 26

The site has photos that apparently were once on Akhromkin's VK but appear to have been removed -- one picture has him in front of a machine gun, and another by a wall with some anti-Ukrainian graffiti.

Trofimov also reports that Akhromkin was given a 200,000 ruble (\$3,159) grant as a "People's Militia" from the governor of Moscow Region.

That proves that whatever he is doing -- he is doing it with government financing and backing.

-- Catherine A. Fitzpatrick and Pierre Vaux

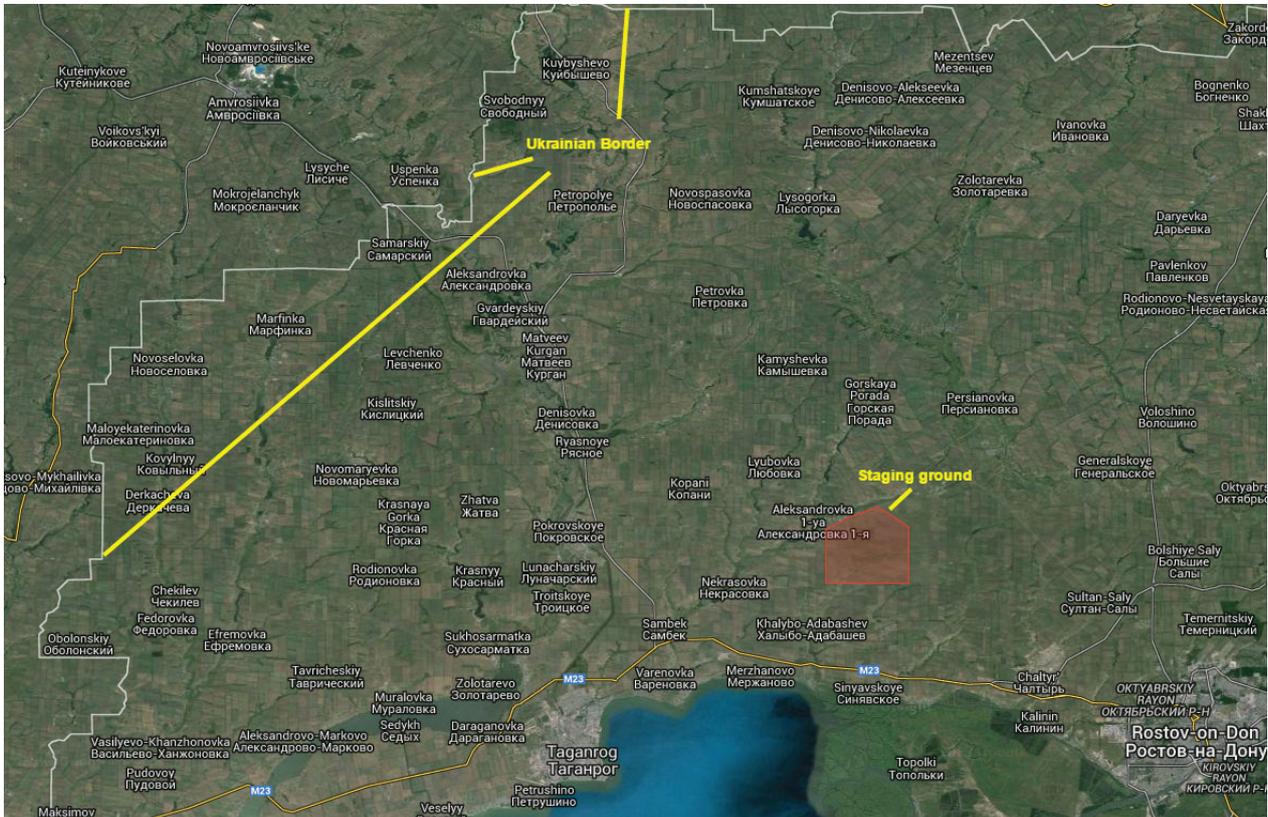
Published in Press-Stream [Russia Update: January 7, 2015](#) in Publication [Russia Update](#)

Camp at Golovinka Had as Many as 2,000 Russian Soldiers

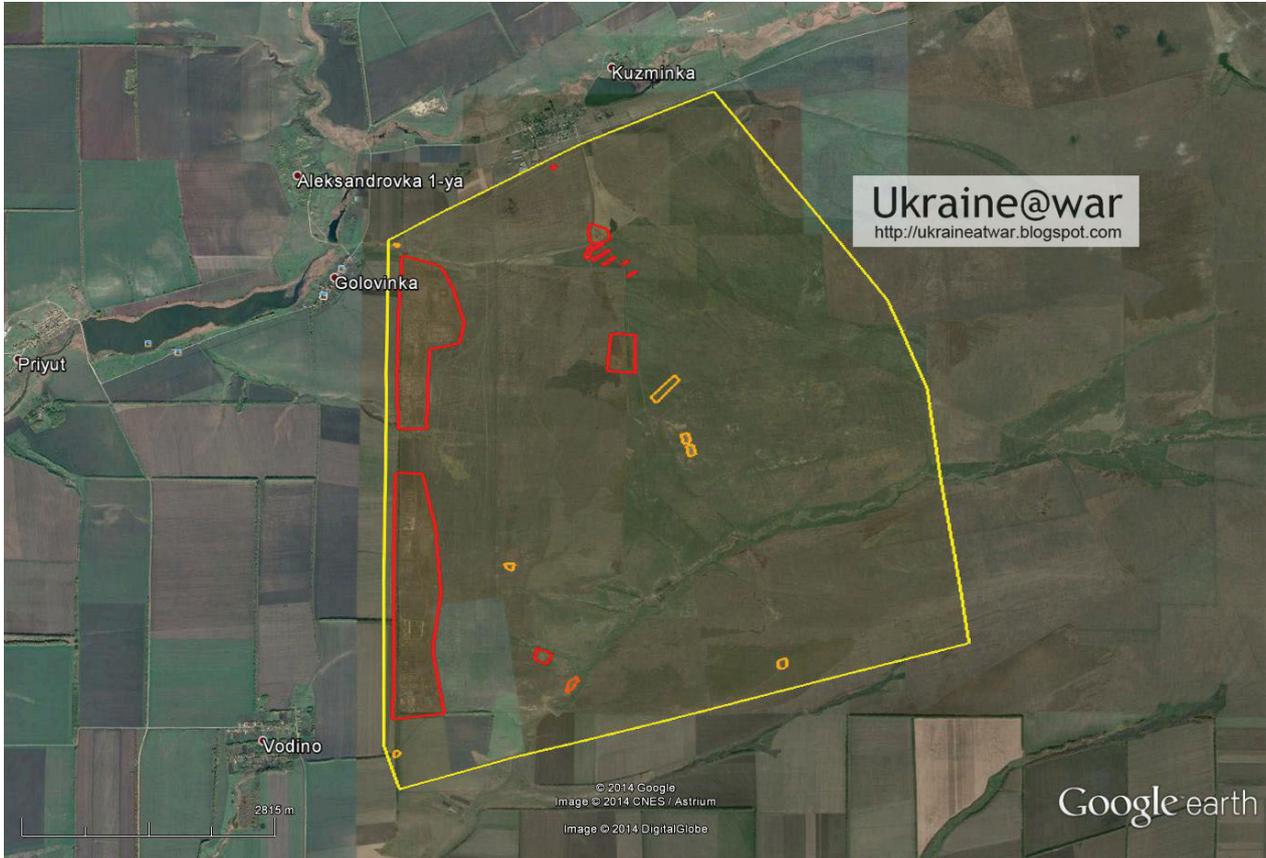
13:11 (GMT)



[@DajeyPetros](#) who runs the [Ukraine@War](#) blog has made an impressive discovery via Google Earth, finding a huge military camp and staging ground set up last year [near Golovinka in Russia's Rostov region](#), not far from the Ukrainian border.



This graphic from Ukraine@War indicates the size of the area, with the main camps highlighted in red and the wider exercise area in yellow. @DajeyPetros estimates the camp at being 5 km long and 500 metres wide, making it the largest camp in the area.



The photo above was taken on October 10 2014. Compare with this photo from October 20, 2013:



This contrast makes it clear that the camp was only established after this date, suggesting it was created specifically to prepare for operations in Ukraine.

Here are some zoomed-in photos of the camp:





@dajepetros notes:

<http://www.interpretermag.com/russia-update-large-russian-military-staging-ground-detected-near-ukrainian-border/>

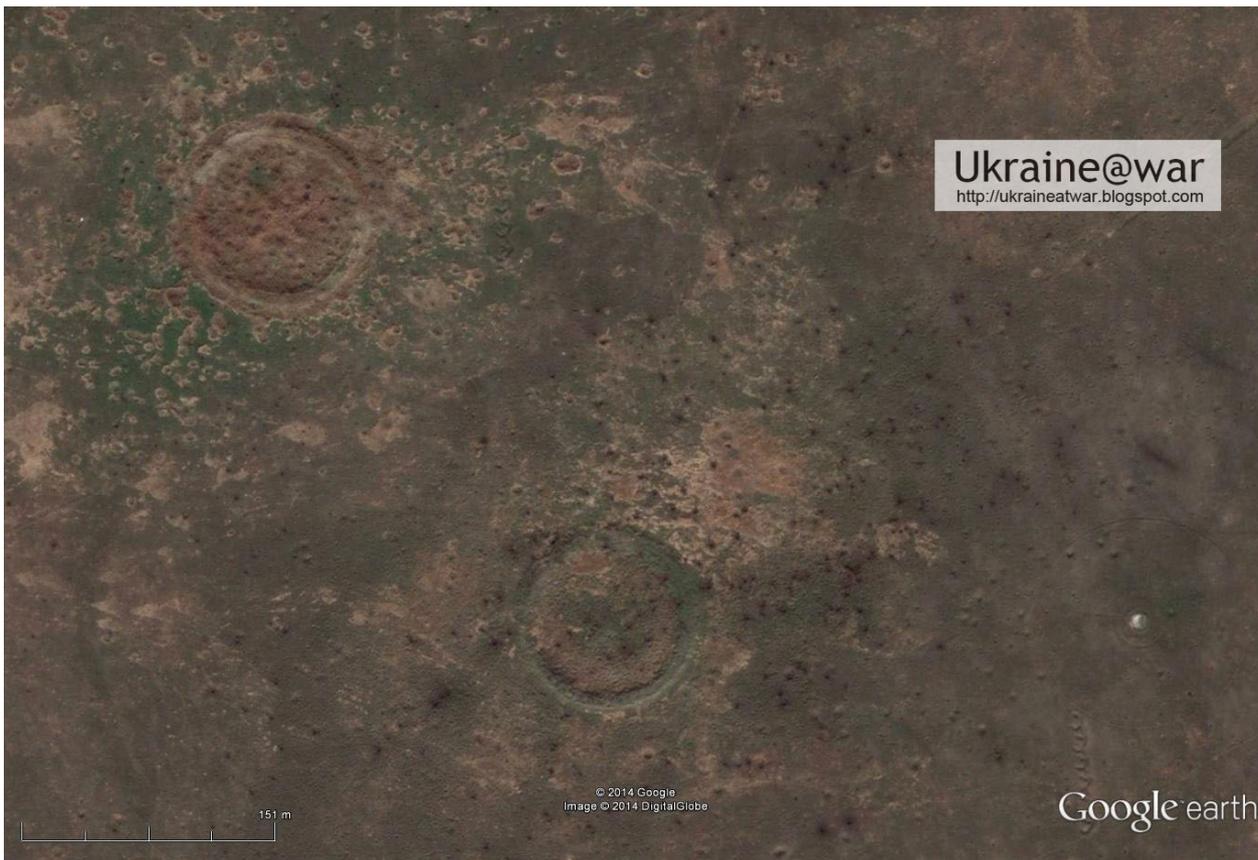
*Some 200 large tents can be counted. If 20 people can sleep in a large tent, it could give shelter to 4,000 people.*

*But there are also some other 100-200 spaces where tents HAVE BEEN standing:*



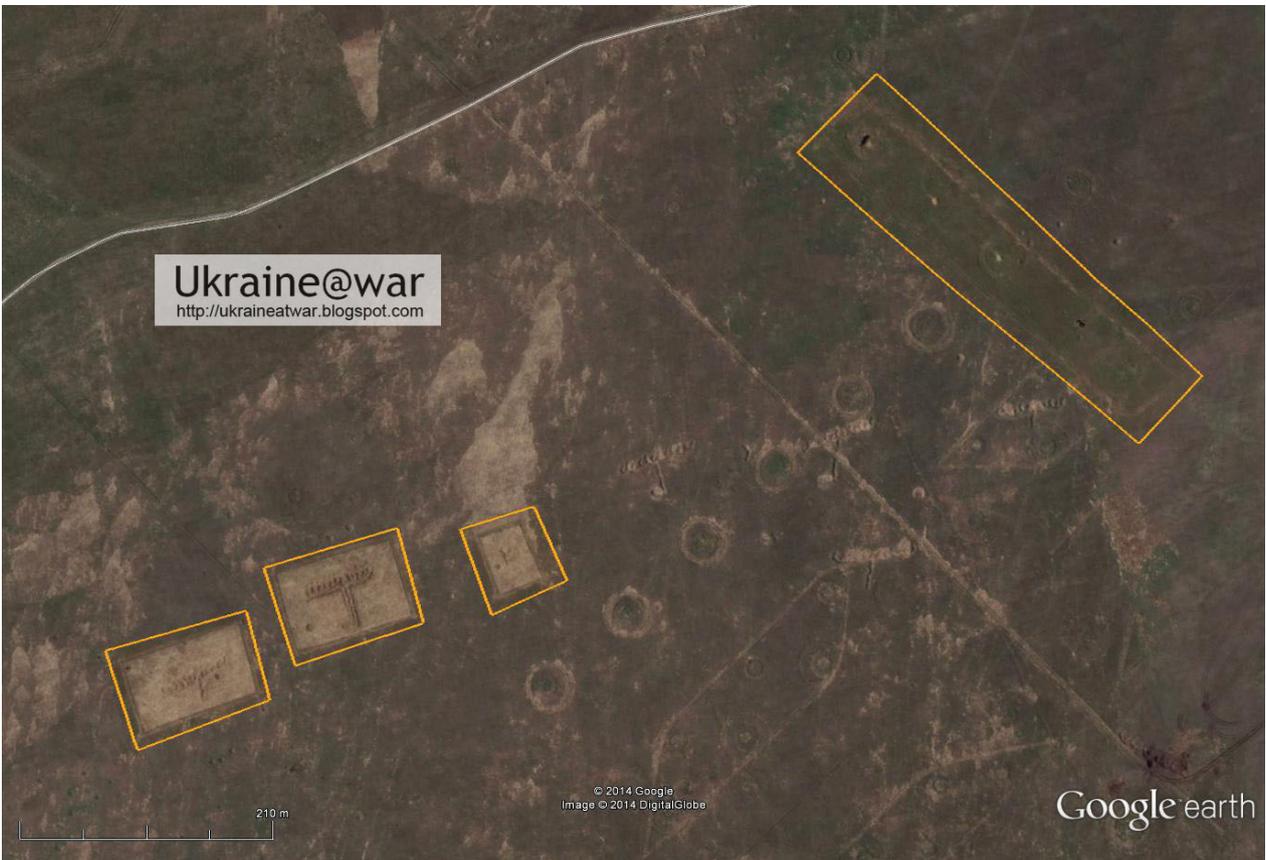
*These might have been from the units that have entered Ukraine after having temporarily stayed in this base.*

The area to the east of the encampment is littered with tracks and craters, indicating it has been used as both a firing range and exercise ground:



Note the trenches below:







Helicopter landing pads are visible above.

fetching tweet...

Photos from Russian soldiers' VKontakte pages appear to have been taken at this site.

Looking further, we can see that a number, uploaded by soldier Aleksandr Maltsev, are location-tagged in the Neklinovsky district, in which the camp is located.



The photos, uploaded on November 26 but likely taken earlier, make clear the scale of the deployment:







T-90 tanks above.





Some are geotagged in the Myasnikovsky district, just to the east:



This photo of Maltev's shows a medal awarded for participation in the "return of Crimea."



Back on August 24, a video was uploaded showing an enormous column of tanks, armoured personnel carriers and self-propelled artillery, purportedly near the Ukrainian border. While extracting a location proved impossible, the footage does closely resemble the camp at Golovinka:

[YouTube](#)

[Show Details... >](#)

Jan 07, 2015 14:46 (GMT)

As we reported on August 26, the soldier in the video identifies himself as Chechen, we translated the following from the Russian closed captions on the video (a Chechen translator has verified the accuracy of the Russian translation for us):

*[Cameraman]: These guys are going to go on the attack to bring out those who have been left inside.*

*This whole host is going in to bring out all the dead and wounded.*

*You can't see the beginning and you can't see the end [of the column]. Yes, invisible.*

*We're ready to go in.*

*Allahu akbar...*

*Everything is in the hands of the Almighty. We will try to return home. And if we do not return forgive us. We are full of courage to go forward.*

*Allahu akbar...*

*These are Chechen lads here too.*

*These tankers are Chechens.*

*[Tank crewman]: The war is underway, we'll make the Ukrainians shit themselves.*

*And all these guys are ready to cross the Terek.*

*And we will rip apart those fascists.*

*Protect us Almighty from all evil.*

*[Cameraman]: Allahu akbar.*

-- Pierre Vaux

Published in Press-Stream [Russia Update: January 7, 2015](#) in Publication [Russia Update](#)

[Load More](#)



# Annex 551

CORRECTIV, Flug MH17: Der Weg Der Buk-Einheit (9 January 2015)





# FLUG MH17

DER WEG DER BUK-EINHEIT



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TEILE DIE STORY

## +

 DIE FAKTEN

- Am 17. Juli 2014 wurde der Malaysia Airline Flug MH17 über der Ostukraine abgeschossen. Alle 298 Insassen starben. Die Nato zeigte schon Mitte Juni Bilder von russischen Panzern in der ostukrainischen Stadt Snizhne. Der Bundeswehr und der Nato ist bekannt, dass sich russische Panzer in Feindesland nur mit dem Schutz eines BUK-Raketensystems bewegen. Damit war die Flughöhe klassischer Ferienflieger seit Mitte Juni Kampfzone. Deshalb hätten die Bundesregierung und alle anderen Nato-Staaten nach Recherchen von **CORRECT!V** ihre Fluggesellschaften spätestens seit dieser Erkenntnis vor Flügen über der Ostukraine warnen müssen. Die niederländische Regierung hat dies bereits bestätigt. Die deutsche Regierung weist dies noch zurück.
- **CORRECT!V** hat vor Ort Zeugen des Abschusses von MH17 in der Ostukraine gefunden. In einer aufwändigen Recherche in Wien, den Niederlanden, der Ukraine und in Russland haben wir zudem mit Militärexperten, Warlords der Separatisten, ehemaligen BUK-Ingenieuren und ehemaligen Soldaten aus der 53. russischen Luftabwehrbrigade gesprochen. Alle sind sich im Gespräch mit **CORRECT!V** sicher: Die Separatisten waren nicht in der Lage ein solch hochkomplexes System zu bedienen. Nur russische Offiziere können den Befehl zum Abschuss von MH17 gegeben haben.
- Fotos und Videosequenzen einer BUK-Abschussrampe wurden am 17. Juli im Separatistengebiet der Ostukraine fotografiert. Das internationale Investigativ-Team Bellingcat hat die Abschussrampe in einer Online-Recherche der 53. russischen Luftabwehrbrigade zugeordnet. **CORRECT!V** hat die Standorte der Beweisfotos aus dem Netz in der Ostukraine überprüft.
- Die Ergebnisse veröffentlicht **CORRECT!V** gemeinsam mit dem *Spiegel* und dem *Algemeen Dagblad*.

 VERÖFFENTLICHUNG: 9.1.2015

 LESEZEIT: CIRCA 15 MINUTEN

 **CORRECT!V**-Reporter Marcus Bensmann war für die Vor-Ort-Recherche unserer MH17-Geschichte mehrfach im Kriegsgebiet, in der Ostukraine und

in Russland. Dort hat er nicht nur mit Zeugen gesprochen, sondern auch zahlreiche Fotos geschossen. Die Fotos vergleichen wir hier unter anderem mit den in den vergangenen Monaten im Internet zusammengetragenen Bildern und Videos, die den Weg der russischen BUK-Rakete zeigen. Zudem veröffentlichen wir Fotos vom Abschussort und von seiner Recherche.

---

Das BUK-Raketensystem startete zunächst in der westrussischen Stadt Kursk und fuhr später von der ostukrainischen Stadt Donetsk über die Orte Zuhares und Tores nach Snizhne. Sie benutzte dabei die Verbindungsstrasse N21 zwischen den Rebellenhochburgen Donetsk und Luhansk. Das Online-Investigativteam Bellingcat konnte die Kennzeichnung 3\*2 auf der BUK identifizieren.

Die Abschussrampe war auf einem Tieflader mit weißer Fahrerkabine aufgebockt, den zuvor Separatisten geklaut hatten. Nach dem Abschuss wird der Tieflader mit der BUK in Luhansk gefilmt. Es fehlt eine Rakete.

Die Strasse und alle Städte waren zum Zeitpunkt des Abschusses in Separatistenhand. Das russische Verteidigungsministerium behauptete jedoch, ukrainische BUKs seien unweit der Absturzstelle stationiert worden.

Wir haben die von Bellingcat verifizierten Bilder vor Ort nachverfolgt und konnten beweisen, dass sich die BUK ständig in Rebellengebiet bewegt hat.

Der Weg der BUK-Einheit führte mitten durch das umkämpfte Gebiet. Die Teilstrecke von Kursk bis kurz vor die Grenze ist gut dokumentiert. Das Rechercheprojekt Bellingcat konnte fast den gesamten Weg rekonstruieren. Unklar ist allein der Weg über die Grenze.



ZURÜCK ZUR HAUPTGESCHICHTE



SIE HABEN INFOS FÜR UNS?



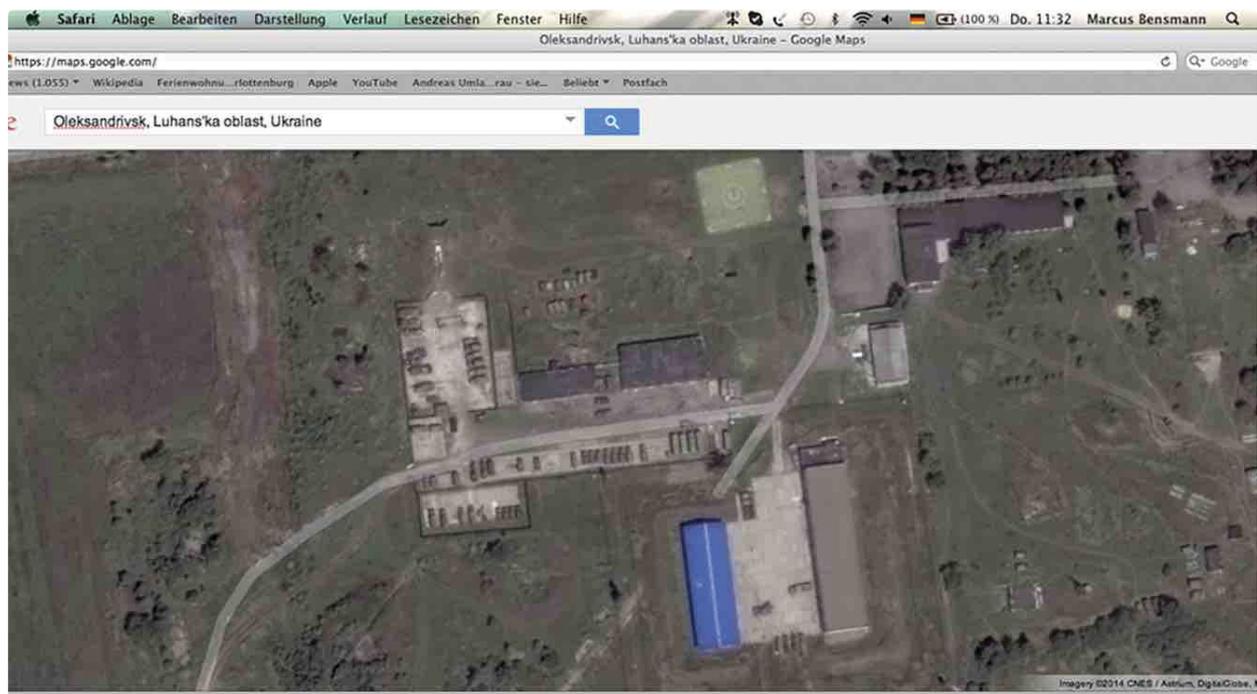
HIER GEHT ES ZUM ANONYMEN DATEIUPLOAD



Das russische Verteidigungsministerium zeigt eine Militär-Basis nördlich von Donetsk, auf der angeblich ukrainische BUK-Einheiten stehen sollen.



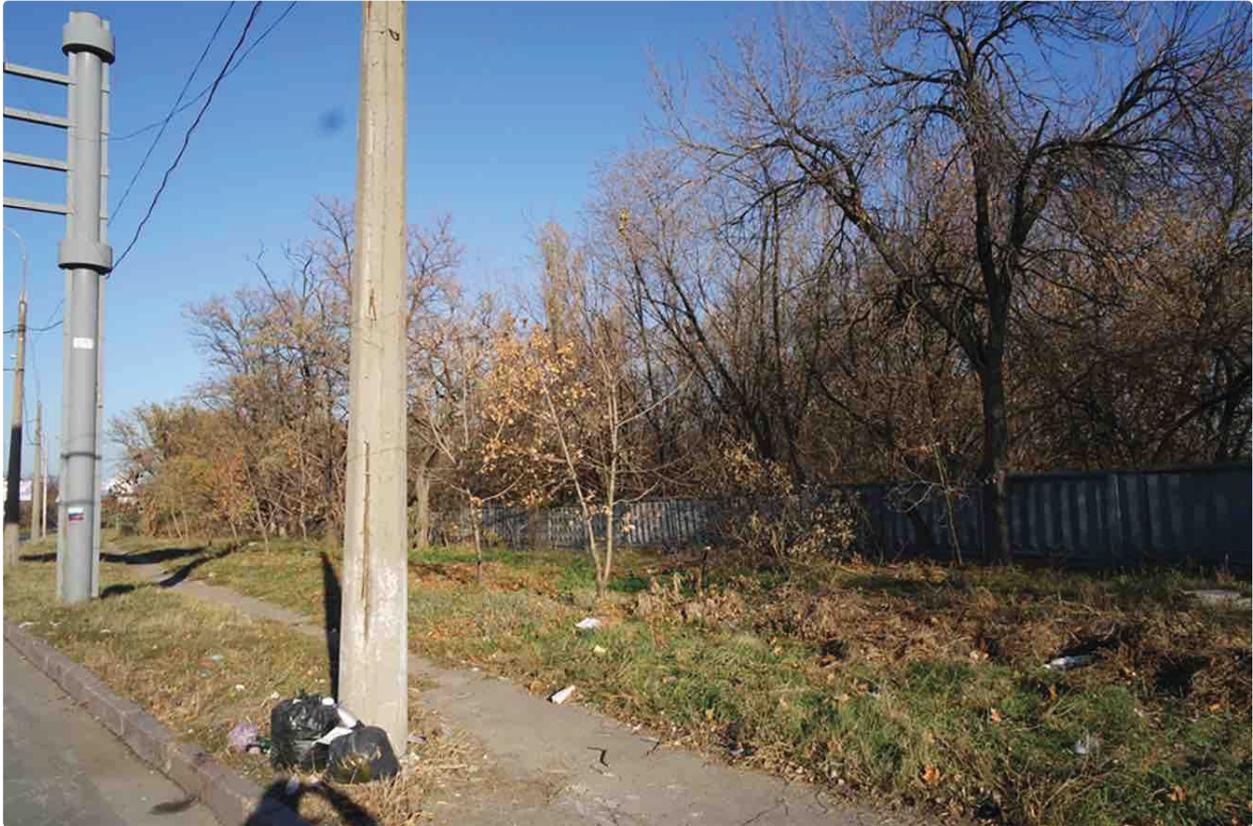
Die gleiche Basis kann man auch in besserer Auflösung bei Google finden. Das besondere dabei: Seit Jahren hat sich der Fahrzeugbestand dieser Basis nicht geändert. Die Fahrzeuge stehen zudem offensichtlich immer an der gleichen Stelle. So als würde nichts bewegt.



Ein Fotograf des französischen Magazins „Paris Match“ hat am Morgen des 17. Juli 2014 eine BUK-Einheit auf einem LKW auf der Verbindungsstraße N21 fotografiert.



Wir haben die gleiche Stelle im Herbst besucht. Der Weg der BUK-Einheit ist nachvollziehbar.



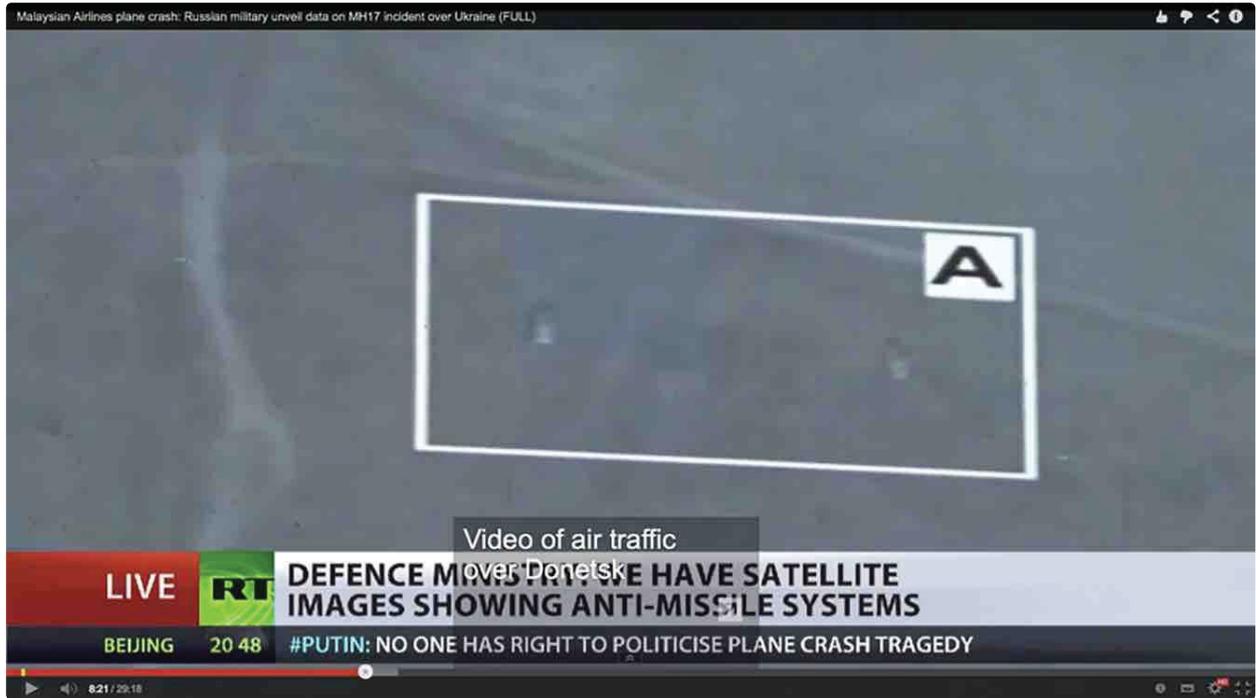
Das Rechercheite Bellingcat veröffentlichte ein Foto, auf dem die BUK-Einheit auf ihrem LKW wenig später an einer Plattenbausiedlung im Separatistengebiet vorbeifährt.



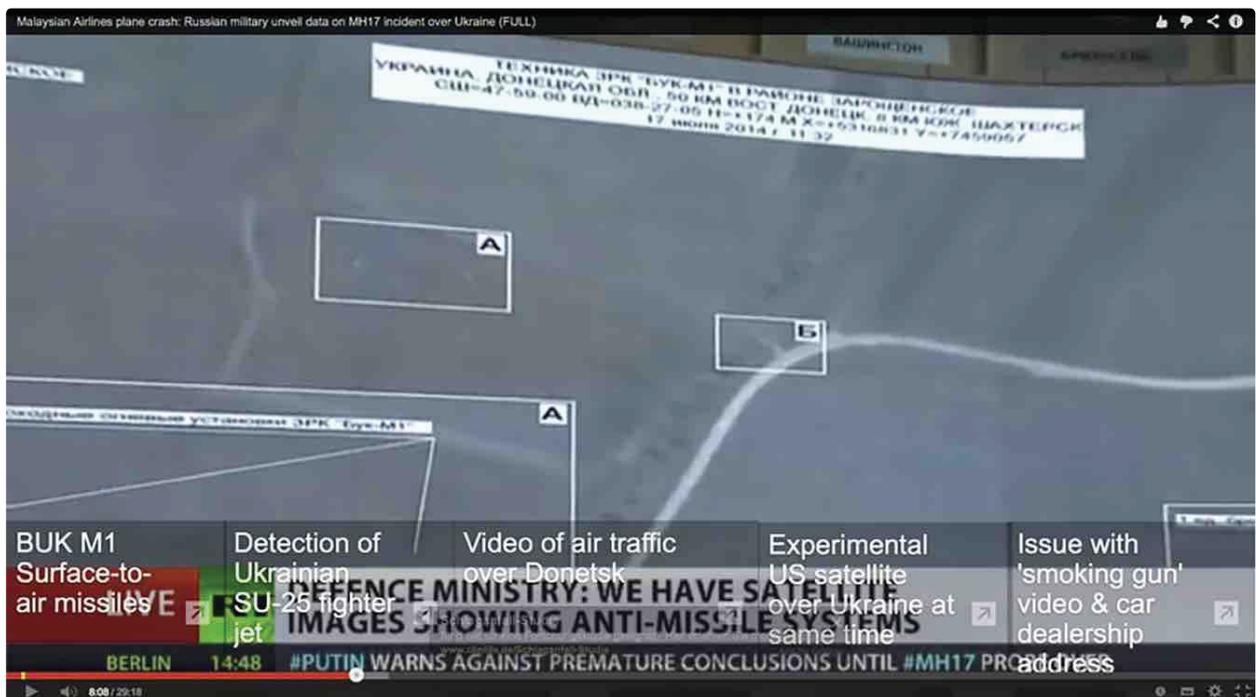
Wir haben die Plattenbausiedlung im Ort Zuhres verifiziert.



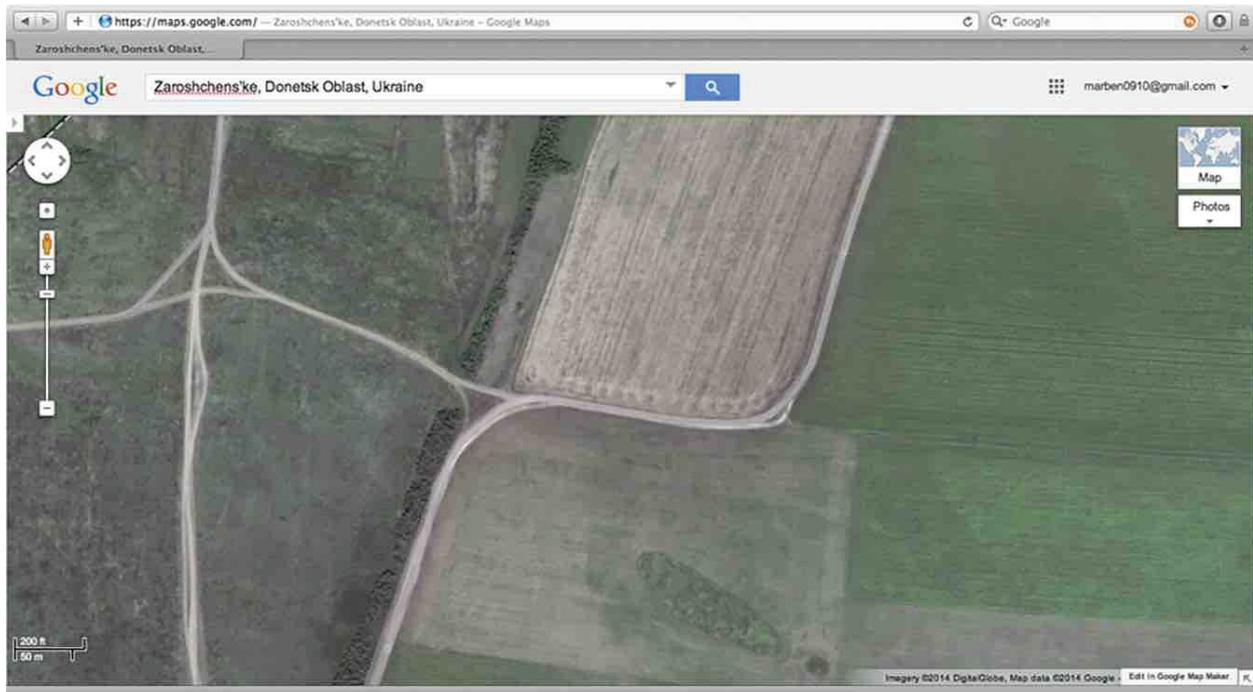
Das russische Verteidigungsministerium zeigt auf einem Satelitenbild zwei weitere Punkte. Dabei soll es sich angeblich um ukrainische BUK-Einheiten in der Nähe des Weilers Zaroshchens'ke handeln, die auf einem Feld stehen.



Das Feld liegt an einer markanten Kurve – direkt daran ein schlecht zu sehender Lehmweg.



Die Wegbiegung und der angrenzende Lehmweg sind auf Google Earth leicht zu finden.



Vor Ort hat CORRECT!V entlang der Kurve Spuren von Kettenfahrzeugen entdeckt.



Die Einwohner des Dorfes Zaroshchens'ke haben aber nichts besonderes gesehen und gehört.



Es gibt allerdings Spuren von schwerem Gerät in der Nähe.



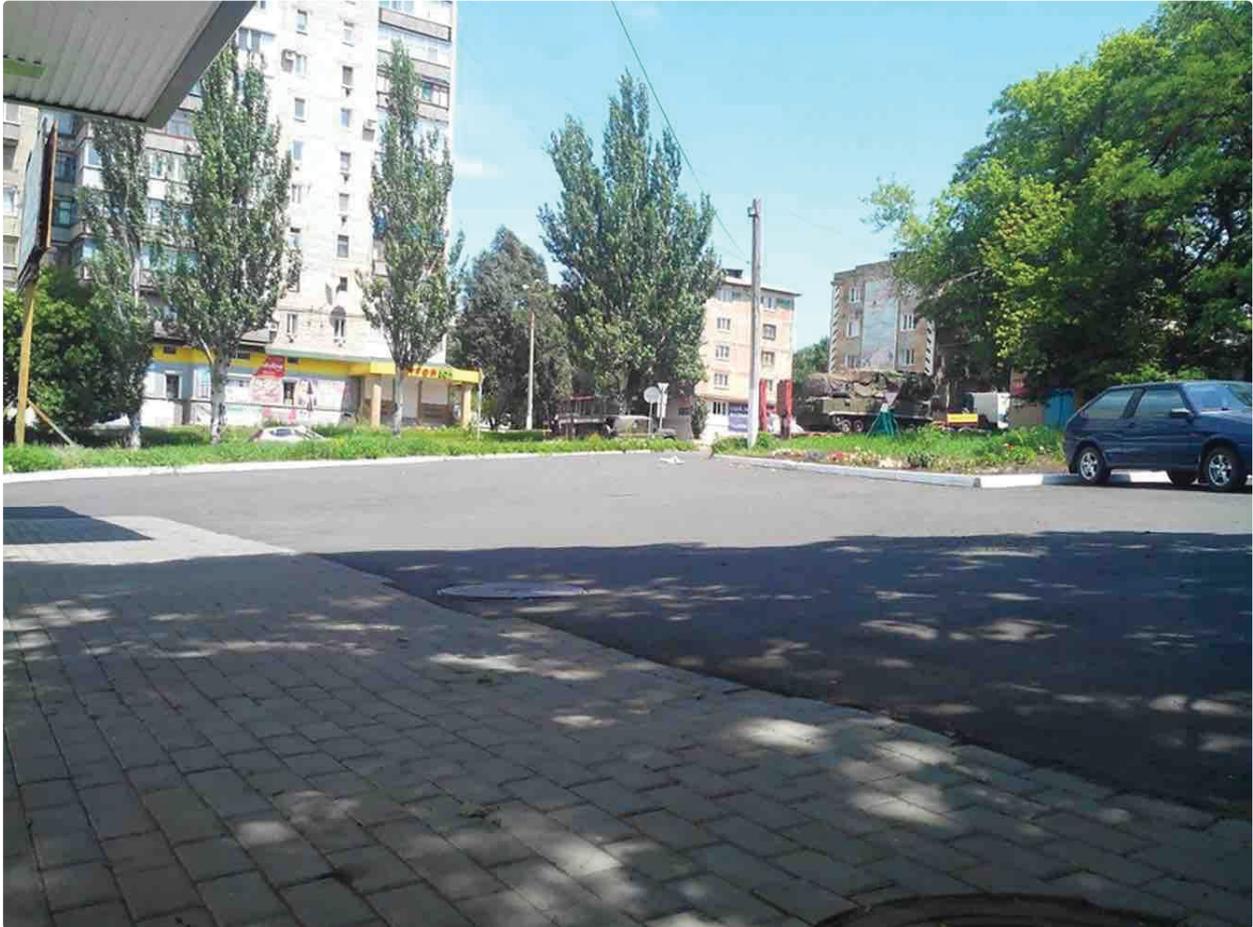
Zaroshchens'ke liegt in der Nähe. Einen BUK-Abschuss hätten die Menschen hören müssen.



Die Einwohner von Zaroshchens'ke sind sich sicher: Hier waren keine ukrainischen BUKs.



Bellingcat veröffentlichte ein Bild der BUK-Einheit in der Stadt Tores auf dem Tieflader.



Das Foto wurde von einer Tankstelle aus gemacht, die wir finden konnten.



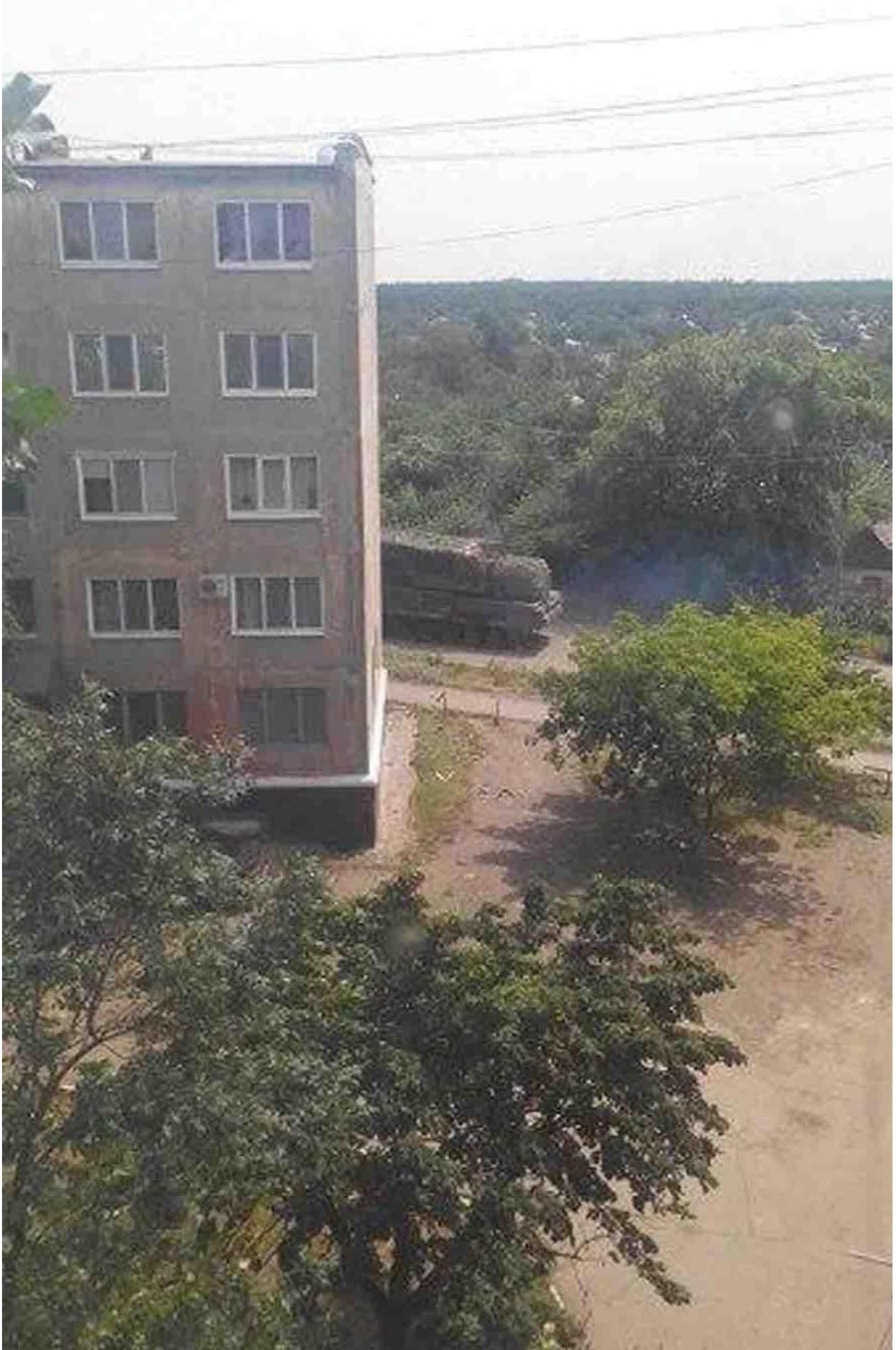
## DIE BUK IN SNIZHNE

Die Bergarbeiterstadt Snizhne sorgt schon im Juni 2014 für Aufsehen. Das US State Department sagte damals, russische Panzer seien von der naheliegenden Grenze aus in die Stadt eingedrungen. Nach dem Absturz erklärte das US State Department, dass der Ort, von dem aus eine Rakete auf MH17 abgeschossen wurde, in der Nähe der Stadt liegen müsse. Am 15. Juli, zwei Tage vor dem Abschuss der MH17, wurde ein Wohnhaus bombardiert. Vermutlich von einem ukrainischen SU-Kampffjet – einem Panzerjäger.



Ein weiteres Bellingcat-Foto: Die BUK ist nun abgeladen. Sie fährt auf Ketten durch Snizhne.







Wir finden die Häuserecke im Herbst. Die BUK ist an diesem Haus vorbeigefahren.



Auf der Straße erkennen wir Spuren von schweren Kettenfahrzeugen.



Die Spuren der Kettenfahrzeuge haben sich tief in den Asphalt gegraben.



Das folgende Haus wurde am 15. Juli bombardiert. Bis zu 13 Menschen sollen gestorben sein.



Die NATO veröffentlicht das Bild eines T-64 Kampfpanzers in Snizhne.

NATO UNCLASSIFIED



Open Source image of a lone T-64 Main Battle Tank in Snizhne, UKR, with no markings.

NATO UNCLASSIFIED

Der Markplatz von Snizhne. Die Spuren zeigen: Panzer waren in der Stadt.



## DIE SPUREN DER PANZER

Die Beweise für die Panzer in der Stadt Snizhne sind in den Asphalt gegraben. Die Panzerspuren führen bis zur russischen Grenze. Die Nato zeigt im Juni ein Foto eines russischen Panzers in der Bergarbeiterstadt. Im Gespräch mit CORRECT!V gibt der Vizekommandant der Stadt, Alexander Bondarenko, zu, dass „grüne“ Panzer – ohne offizielle Kennzeichnung – nach Snizhne gelangt sind. Wenn russische Panzer in der Ostukraine unterwegs waren, waren BUK-Einheiten nicht weit. So schreiben es die Kampfregele vor. Die Nato und das Bundesverteidigungsministerium müssen das gewusst haben. Auf unsere Fragen zu diesem Komplex bekommen wir keine Antworten. Gespräche mit Spezialisten der Bundeswehr blockiert die politische Führung des Ministeriums.

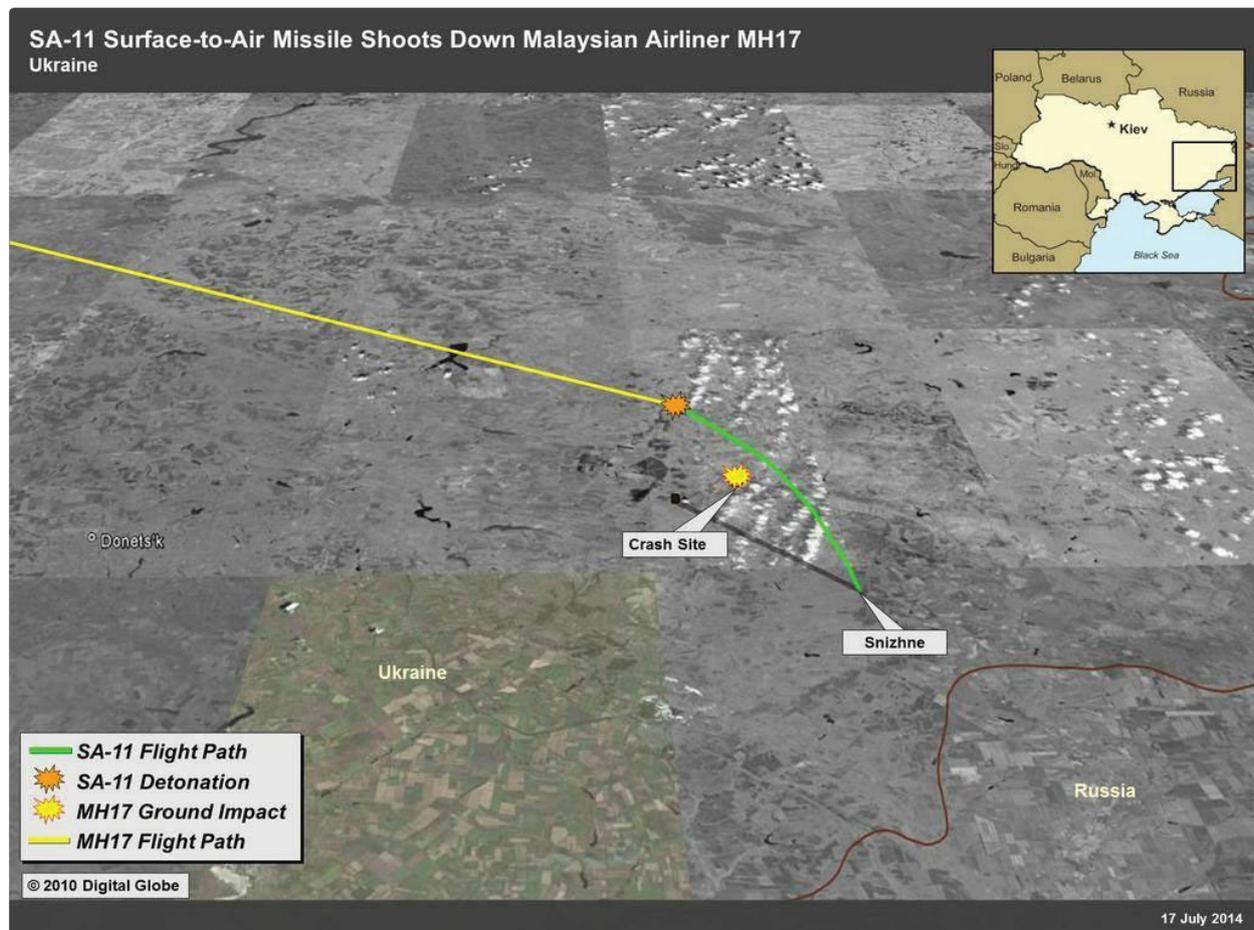
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Die Straße von Snizhne zur russischen Grenze zeigt deutliche Panzerspuren.



## DER ABSCHUSSORT

Schon kurz nach dem Abschuss des Fluges MH17 benannte das US State Department einen Ort nördlich von Snizhne als Tatort. Von dort aus sei eine Rakete auf das zivile Flugzeug abgeschossen worden. Auf der Facebookseite der US-Botschaft findet sich immer noch ein verschwommenes Satelitenphoto, das die Behauptung bestätigen soll.



Die Separatisten sagen, sie hätten ihre Luftverteidigung im Norden der Stadt aufgebaut. Dort liegt ein Feld zwischen einer Fabrik und einem Bahndamm. Der Ort ist gut geschützt. Die Fabrik blockiert den Blick zur Verbindungsstraße N21, die wenige dutzend Meter weiter vorbei führt. Auf der anderen Seite bietet eine Waldhecke und der Eisenbahndamm Sichtschutz zu einer kleinen Siedlung, einem Vorort von Snizhne. Ein Bewohner sagt, das Dorf heiße „Puschkin“: ebenerdigen Gehöfte entlang schlammiger Straßen. Die Leute hier haben Angst. Jeder erinnert sich an den 17. Juli 2014, an den Tag, an dem das Flugzeug abgeschossen wurde. Sie erinnern sich an lauten Krach, an Rauch und einen schrillen Ton. Hier wohnen die Zeugen des Abschusses.

Puschkin ist links hinter Bahndamm und Hecke. Im Hintergrund die Fabrik. Spuren im Feld.



Die Bierflaschen liegen hier im Feld zwischen Fabrik und Bahndamm.



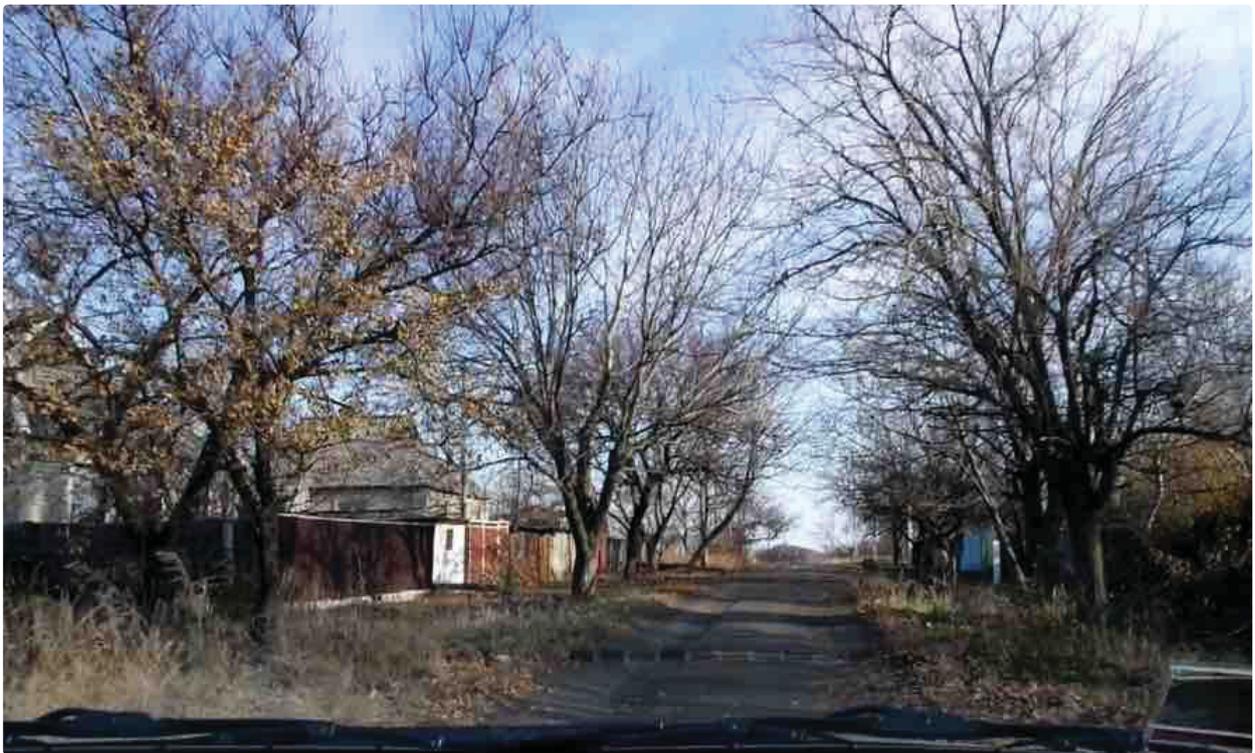
Der Blick in die andere Richtung. Die Fahrspur sei zu breit für einen Traktor, sagt ein Experte.



Die Einfahrt in die Siedlung bei Snizhne entlang des Bahndamm.



Das Dorf der Zeugen des Kriegsverbrechens ist nahezu ausgestorben; die Straße leer.

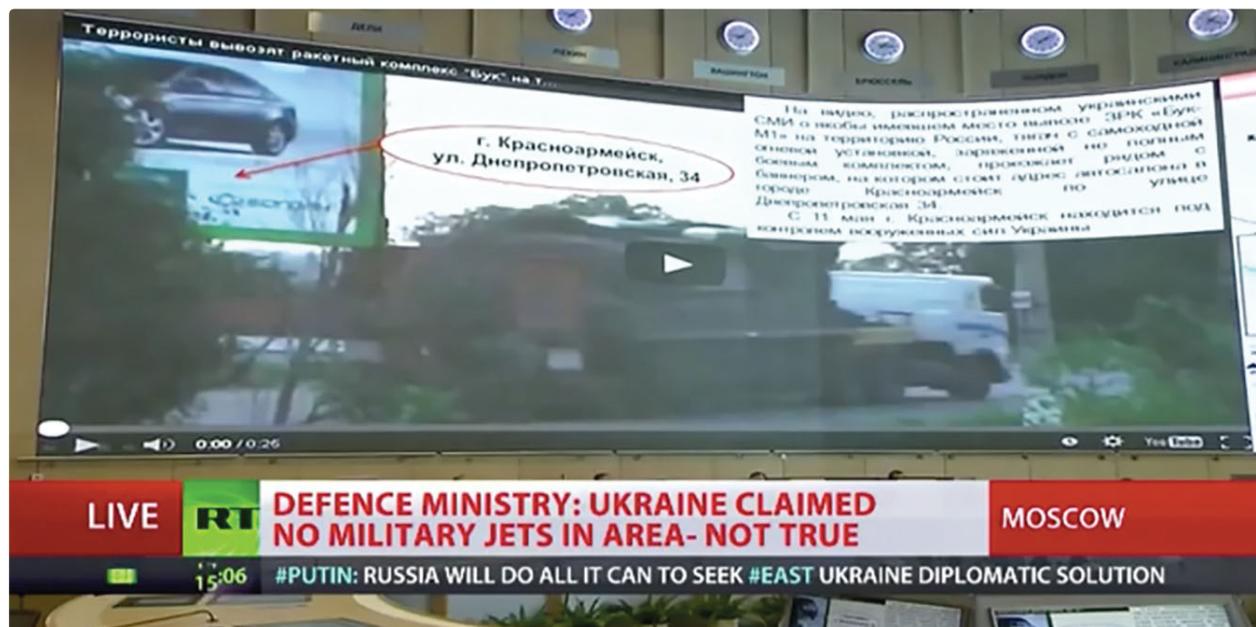


## NACH DEM SCHUSS

Die BUK wurde am späten Nachmittag des 17. Juli 2014 noch einmal gefilmt. Diesmal allerdings mit einer fehlenden Rakete. Sie ist wieder auf der Verbindungsstraße N21 unterwegs. Sie ist in Luhansk. Einem Ort in Grenznähe.

Von hier aus kann die BUK leicht zurück aus der Ostukraine nach Russland gebracht werden. Das russische Verteidigungsministerium hat in einer Pressekonferenz die Echtheit der Aufnahme bestätigt. Allerdings sagte das russische Ministerium, die BUK sei an einem anderen Ort gewesen. Nicht in Luhansk. Sondern in einer Stadt weit weg. Wir haben das Foto vor Ort überprüft. Es stammt aus Luhansk. Das russische Verteidigungsministerium hat gefragt, wann die Rakete abgeschossen wurde.

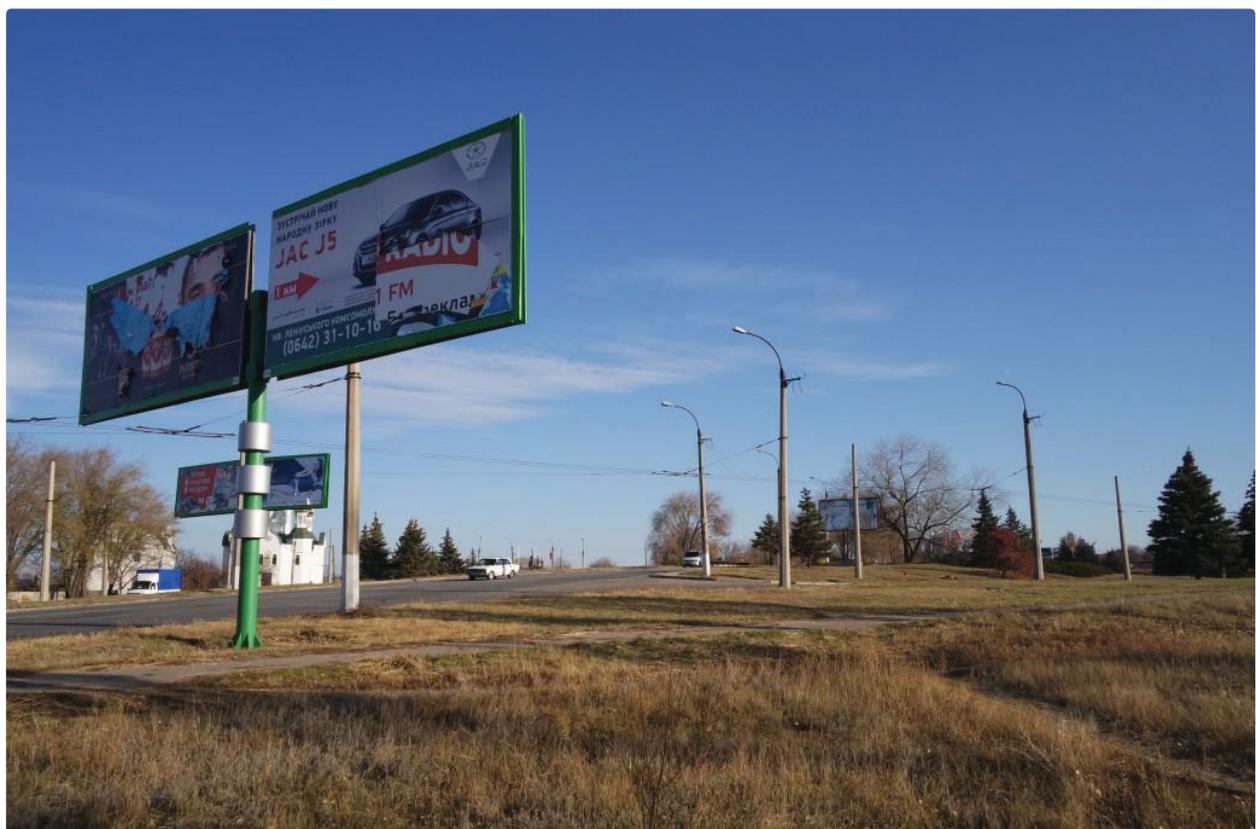
Das russische Verteidigungsministerium bestätigt: Dieser Film ist echt. Ein LKW mit einer BUK-Abschussrampe fährt unter einem Plakat der Autofirma „Bogdan“ her. Der BUK fehlt eine Rakete. Die Russen behaupten, der Ort würde von der ukrainischen Regierung kontrolliert. Sie fragen: Wann wurde die Rakete abgeschossen?



Ein Screenshot aus dem angesprochenen Video, das alle Seiten als authentisch anerkennen. Deutlich zu sehen: es fehlt eine Rakete.



Wir haben den Ort gefunden, an dem der Film entstand. Eine Kreuzung in Luhansk.



IVAN AUS DER 53. BRIGADE

Die Internetrechercheplattform Bellingcat konnte die 53 Luftverteidigungsbrigade aus Kursk als Truppe identifizieren, aus deren Reihen die Soldaten stammen, die möglicherweise die tödliche Rakete auf Flug MH17 abgeschossen haben. Einer, der besonders dabei geholfen hat, die Einheit zu enttarnen, ist Feldwebel Ivan Krasnoproschin. Auf seiner Seite im russischen Facebook-Klon Vkontakte finden sich viele Hinweise auf den Einsatz in der Ukraine.

So lichtete Ivan Krasnoproschin unter anderem seine Entlassung aus der russischen Armee ab. Ein Zufall? Diese angebliche Entlassungen vieler Soldaten geschah offenbar nur aus einem Grund: der russische Präsident Wladimir Putin sollte weiterhin behaupten können, es seien keine russischen Soldaten in der Ostukraine im Einsatz. Der Verdacht ist aber begründet, dass Leute wie Krasnoproschin nach ihrer „Entlassung“ mitsamt ihren Einheiten in die Ukraine einmarschierten, um Menschen zu töten. Die russische Führung hätte das verhindern müssen, wenn die Leute nicht in ihrem Auftrag handelten.

Lange vor dem Abschuss lässt sich Feldwebel Krasnoproschin sich bei einer Übung mit der veralteten Kriegstechnik fotografieren. Er gibt sich tapfer. Das Foto entstammt, wie die anderen hier, seiner Seite im russischen Facebook-Klon Vkontakte.



Feldwebel Ivan Krasnoproshin fotografierte eine BUK bei einer Übung der 53. Brigade.



Entlassungsnotiz im Dienstbuch – abgestempelt und freigestellt: Im Juni, eine Woche vor dem Abmarsch in die Ostukraine, werden Ivan Krasnoproshin und einige seiner Kameraden auf Befehl aus den Listen der russischen Streitkräfte ausgetragen. Zufall? Oder Absicht?



Ostukraine zu sichern.  
Wir haben die Stadt besucht.

Ein Kriegsdenkmal in Kursk erinnert an die legendäre Panzerschlacht gegen die Wehrmacht.



Die Siedlung gegenüber der 53. Brigade wird von einer Statue Marschall Schulkows bewacht.



Ein Friedhof mit gefallen deutschen Soldaten ist nicht weit entfernt.



Das Kriegsdenkmal in Kursk erinnert an die vielen Opfer im Kampf gegen die Nazis.



Die Siedlung wurde für Truppen gebaut, die aus Berlin abzogen. Gezahlt hat Deutschland.



Im „Haus der Offiziere“ in der Siedlung „Marschall Schukow“ widmet man sich der Kultur.



Die Siedlung „Marschall Schukow“ wird vor allem von Offizieren der 53. Brigade bewohnt.



## ANTRETEN ZUM KONZERT

Die Siedlung „Marschall Schukow“ in der Stadt Kursk bietet nicht viel Abwechslung. Es gibt keine Bars oder Restaurants. Nur im Haus der Offiziere finden regelmässig Konzerte

und Veranstaltungen statt. Die Siedlung wurde für die abrückenden Sowjettruppen aus Deutschland gebaut, finanziert von der Bundesrepublik.

Die Rekruten aus der 53. Luftverteidigungsbrigade leben heute in der Kaserne gegenüber der Siedlung im Kieferwald, ihre Offiziere in der Siedlung selbst.

Unser Reporter Marcus Bensmann ist bei einer Veranstaltung dabei, einem Kinderkonzert. Die Rekruten werden militärisch stramm in den Saal geführt. Die Kinder der Siedlung singen und tanzen. Die Rekruten klatschen und johlen und werden danach wieder im Gleichschritt zur Basis in den Kieferwald geführt. Einem Soldaten gelingt es, eine Schachtel Zigaretten zu kaufen. Der Rest bleibt abgeschirmt in der militärischen Truppe.

Der Rekruten der 53. Brigade treten im Haus der Offiziere zum Kinderkonzertbesuch an.



Einmarsch der Rekruten in die Aula des Offiziershauses.



Stillgestanden vor dem Offiziershaus. Danach Abmarsch in die Kaserne.



## SIE HABEN INFOS FÜR UNS?



HIER GEHT ES ZUM ANONYMEN DATEIUPLOAD



ZURÜCK ZUR HAUPTGESCHICHTE

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# Annex 552

Maddie Smith, Ten Civilians Killed in Ukrainian Bus Attack as Donetsk Airport Control Tower is Destroyed, VICE (13 January 2015)



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UKRAINE

## Ten Civilians Killed in Ukrainian Bus Attack as Donetsk Airport Control Tower Is Destroyed



By Maddie Smith

January 13, 2015 |

At least 10 people have died and 13 have been injured today after a passenger bus was shelled in the town of Volnovakha, about 22 miles southwest of the rebel stronghold Donetsk, according to Ukrainian authorities. There was also heavy fighting at Donetsk airport, where fire from separatist tanks reportedly destroyed the airport's control tower.

The Donetsk regional administration, which is accountable to the government in Kiev, claimed that the pro-Russia forces of the Donetsk People's Republic (DPR) hit the bus while it passed through an army checkpoint near Volnovakha.

The head of Donetsk regional interior ministry, Vyacheslav Abroskin has confirmed Ukrainian forces are

investigating the attack. "It was a direct hit on an intercity bus. An investigation is in progress. The road between Donetsk and Mariupol has been closed," Abroskin **said**.

However, a DPR official **told** Russian news agency TASS that it denied any responsibility, claiming: "All accusations that these were the militiamen who opened fire at the bus are devoid of elementary logic. We are not idiots to fire on our own territory".

The DPR defense ministry also described the incident as "a provocation on the part of Ukraine."

These civilian deaths came in the wake of skirmishes at Donetsk airport today, where the iconic control tower was destroyed.

| — ? *January 13, 2015*

| *Donetsk Airport Tower - before and after destruction. Read full story — UKRAINE TODAY (@uatodaytv) January 13, 2015*



The *Interpreter* translated Ukraine's LIGA Novosti report from one of the Ukrainian soldiers defending the airport, also known as Cyborgs, who said the pro-Russia rebels besieging the tower had issued an ultimatum: "They're smashing us from both sides with tanks 400 meters away and artillery. We have no support from our artillery. The militants have given us until 17:00 to leave the new terminal."

After that deadline passed, heavy shelling was audible on the Ruptly live feed, a video news service from Russia's state-owned TV channel Russia Today.

Igor Strelkov, the military rebel leader, has since *tweeted* suggesting that the rebel attack was successful: "As a result of today's fighting Donetsk airport is fully under our control!"

This will come as a setback to the Ukrainian forces, who regarded the control-tower not only as a strategic stronghold, but also as a symbol of their resistance against Russian oppression.

A lack of progress in establishing another ceasefire in the region has also meant plans for a summit this week have been cancelled. Russian, French, and German leaders had been invited to attend talks on Thursday in the Kazakh capital Astana by Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko.

But, following discussions held earlier in the week the four countries' foreign ministers have said the failure to bring about a truce completely meant that "further work needs to be done" before a summit could be held.

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TOPICS: *europa, ukraine, war & conflict, donetsk, cyborgs, airport, volnovakha, civilians, bus attack, dnr, igor strelkov*

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IN THE NEWS

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# Annex 553

Mariupol City Council, City Mayor Yuri Hotlubey and Donetsk Oblast Public Prosecutor Nikolai Frantovsky Held a Briefing at Which They Described the Current Situation in Mariupol (VIDEO)  
(24 January 2015)

This document has been translated from its original language into English, an official language of the Court, pursuant to Rules of the Court, Article 51.

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Mayor Yuri Hotlubey and Donetsk Oblast public prosecutor Nikolai Frantovsky held a briefing at which they described the current situation in Mariupol (VIDEO)

Today, January 24, mayor Yuri Hotlubey and Donetsk Oblast public prosecutor Nikolai Frantovsky held a briefing for the media during which they reported on the progress of clean-up operations following the shelling of the Vostochny neighborhood.

[...]

Buildings and structures were destroyed by shells, and 30–40 parked cars were burned. According to the mayor, however, deaths and injuries among Mariupol residents were by far the worst outcome of the shelling. As of 5:00 p.m., 29 people were killed (including two children), and another 96 residents were injured to various degrees (including seven children). All of the injured were sent to the city's hospitals. Public Health Department head Olga Golubchenko is personally monitoring medical care for the wounded. At present, all residents taken to the city's hospitals are receiving the full range of medical care, with operations and other procedures being performed round the clock. [Public health officials] are confident that there are no shortages of medications.

As a result of the shelling, 53 multi-story buildings in the Vostochny neighborhood were damaged, as well as 4 schools and 3 daycares. During the course of the day, the Mariupol City Council organized work to restore the damaged infrastructure, including replacing windows and covering window openings with plastic. Most of the repair work will be carried out tomorrow, starting at 8:00 a.m. An inspection of privately owned buildings will be carried out tomorrow, as well. Mariupol metallurgical plants and volunteers are helping the housing authorities with repairs. In addition, there are plans to open a warming station with food and hot tea near the church. A tent and a generator have been set up there for that purpose.

[...]

During the day, busses were organized to run from the Denis and Kiev markets to downtown Mariupol to serve those residents who wish to leave the Vostochny neighborhood. At present, two busses are running the route on a regular schedule. [...]



# Annex 554

Oleksandr Stashevskiy, Rebels Launch Ukraine Offensive After Bloody Bus Strike, AFP (24 January 2015)





# Rebels launch Ukraine offensive after bloody bus strike



Oleksandr Stashevskiy, AFP • January 14, 2015



1 / 3

This handout picture taken on January 13, 2015 by Anti-Terrorist Operation press service shows a damaged bus after it was hit by a long-range Grad rocket apparently fired by pro-Russian insurgents in Volnovakha

This handout picture taken on January 13, 2015 by Anti-Terrorist Operation press service

Tonenke (Ukraine) (AFP) - Pro-Kremlin insurgents unleashed a massive rocket assault in Ukraine Wednesday as Kiev and Moscow traded blame for a bus shelling that killed 12 in the war's bloodiest incident since a September truce.

The heavy calibre shells and grenades whistled through the sky every few minutes and dug huge craters in the snowy fields along a front line that skirts a devastated village 10 kilometres (six miles) northwest of the eastern rebel stronghold Donetsk.

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Blasts inside Tonenke itself -- abandoned by all but a handful of its 300 residents -- flattened buildings and mangled paved roads that stretch toward a disputed airport on the edge of Donetsk.

"This is all-out war," a volunteer soldier who adopted the nom de guerre "The Pastor" told AFP on his way out of a Donetsk suburb used by Ukrainian troops to support a skeleton force holding on to the airport since May.

"The attacks start early in the morning and end deep into the night. There is a quiet spell of one or two hours at most. It has never been like this before."

The type of long-distance exchanges piercing the skies around the militants' capital on Wednesday have caused hundreds of civilian casualties throughout the nine-month campaign.

A long-range Grad rocket killed 12 people on Tuesday when it exploded near a commuter bus travelling toward Donetsk from a government-controlled city on Ukraine's southeast coast.

Images of the yellow bus's shattered frame standing in a field of bloodied snow underscored how distant a truce remains after the death of more than 4,700 people and effective destruction of Ukraine's industrial base.

Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko told the nation that Tuesday's rocket was fired by rebels, while responsibility rested on "those who stand behind them -- those whose hand feeds them and arms them, drills them and inspires them to commit bloody crimes."

The transparent reference to Moscow -- charges which President Vladimir Putin rejects -- was followed by Kiev claims that the fighters employed a massive 30-barrel flamethrower, a type used by Russia but not Ukraine.

Kiev said insurgents used it for the first time overnight to attack the eastern village of Vesele.

This type of system "only exists in the operational service of the Russian army. It is not operated by us," Ukrainian defence ministry spokeswoman Viktoriya Kushnir told AFP.



Syria FM links talks on south to US withdrawal from border area

3 reactions 😊 0% 😡 25% 👍 75%



Kiev says uncovered plot to kill 47 after staging journalist's murder

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White House Plans Trump Putin Summit

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History Tells Us North Korea Will Never Give Up Its Nuclear Weapons

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- Russia 'outraged' -

Russia issued no immediate comment. But the foreign ministry's rights envoy called the bus incident "another crime of the Kiev military".

"We are outraged. This undermines all peace settlement efforts," Konstantin Dolgov told the TASS news agency.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov later softened those comments by conceding that "there are... several versions (of the incident). We need to examine them."

Tuesday's incident marked the biggest single loss of civilian life since the warring sides signed a September 5 ceasefire that only partially stemmed the fighting and did little to resolve the insurgents' independence claims.

The rocket strike also damaged Poroshenko's efforts to set up a peace summit where Putin could personally sign a truce under which the Kremlin assumes responsibility for disarming the militias and dispelling their independence claims.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel -- the West's main mediator in Europe's deadliest conflict since the Balkan wars of the 1990s -- argues that such a meeting would be premature with violence still raging.

Putin has argued that the revolt in western Ukraine was a natural response by ethnic Russians to their "persecution" by the more nationalist leaders who ousted a Moscow-backed administration in Kiev in February last year.

Kiev now also plans to apply for NATO membership -- a defensive shift that the Kremlin views as both confrontational and a global security threat.

A new NATO delegation arrived in Ukraine on Wednesday for a week-long visit focused on "military and technological cooperation".

The vague diplomatic term usually refers to arms deliveries. Kiev defence officials said the NATO delegation would visit Ukraine's



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3,350 reactions 😊 4% 😡 75% 👍 21%



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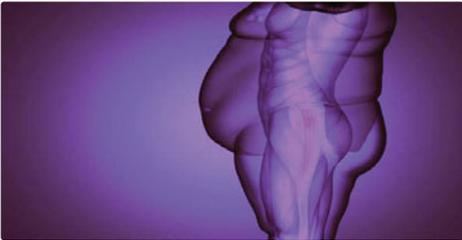
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Cardiologist: "I Urge Americans To Quit 3 Foods"

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Whale Found In Thailand Dies From Eating Over 80 Plastic Bags

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'A terrible reflection on our society': Robert Kennedy sees poverty up close

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# Annex 555

Oleksandr Stashevsky and Dmitry Zaks, Ukraine Rebels Announce New Offensive as Rockets Kill 30, AFP (24 January 2015)



Europe

## Ukraine rebels announce new offensive as rockets kill 30

(4th UPDATE) At least 30 are dead and more than 90 are injured after rockets hit Mariupol in Ukraine. Donetsk separatist leader Alexander Zakharchenko says it is the start of an offensive against Mariupol

Oleksandr Stashevsky and Dmitry Zaks, Agence France-Presse

Published 8:35 PM, January 24, 2015

Updated 7:58 AM, January 25, 2015

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Residents inspect houses that were destroyed after being hit overnight by rockets during fighting between Ukrainian and pro-Russia militants, in the Kirovskij District of the eastern Ukrainian city of Donetsk on November 23, 2014. Photo by Menahem Kahana/AFP

MARIUPOL, Ukraine (4th UPDATE) – Pro-Kremlin rebels in eastern Ukraine announced a

major new offensive Saturday, January 24, after heavy rocket fire killed at least 30 people in the government-held port of Mariupol, sparking international calls for Moscow to stop backing the separatists.

The local mayor's office said 97 people were also wounded in the strategic city by dozens of long-distance rockets that smashed into a packed residential district early in the morning and then again shortly after noon.

"Obviously, everyone in the city is very scared," Mariupol native Eduard told AFP.

A fellow resident named Pavlo described dazed survivors helping wounded victims to climb out of the concrete rubble of Soviet-era apartment blocks and navigate the streets strewn with shattered glass.

"Today, we launched an offensive against Mariupol," Russia's RIA Novosti quoted the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic's leader Alexander Zakharchenko as saying.

But he added a few hours later that his forces were still "saving their strength" and had "conducted no active operations in Mariupol".

His deputy had earlier denied responsibility for the civilian deaths and Zakharchenko did not refer directly to the rocket fire.

But he did call the potential capture of the industrial port "the best tribute possible for all our dead".

A spot inspection conducted by monitors from the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) concluded that the Grad and Uragan rocket fire came from two locations "controlled by the 'Donetsk People's Republic'".

### **'Reckless and disgraceful'**

Ukrainian Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk immediately asked the UN Security Council to censure Russia for allegedly spearheading the militants' advance on the biggest pro-Kiev city left standing in the decimated war zone.

Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko interrupted his attendance at the late Saudi King Abdullah's burial to chair an emergency National Security and Defense Council meeting in Kiev on Saturday.

"We are for peace but also accept the enemy's challenge. We will defend our motherland the way real patriots do -- until a full victory," he said in a statement.

Western leaders watched with worry as violence once again threatened to spiral out of control in what has already been one of Europe's deadliest and most diplomatically-explosive crises since the Cold War.

US Secretary of State John Kerry led the condemnation over the "horrific" assault on Mariupol.

"We call on Russia to end its support for separatists immediately, close the international border with Ukraine and withdraw all weapons, fighters and financial backing," Kerry said

during a visit to Zurich.

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg also urged Russia to "stop destabilizing Ukraine," while German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier said the situation in Ukraine was "very dangerous".

EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini warned in Brussels that the latest escalation "would inevitably lead to a further grave deterioration of relations between the EU and Russia".

Latvia, which holds the EU's six-month rotating presidency until July, called for an emergency meeting of the bloc's foreign affairs council next week.

Both the EU and the US have imposed sanctions on Russia over its role in the crisis, which began when deadly protests in Kiev last winter toppled Ukraine's Russian-backed president and saw the country anchor its future to the West.

### **Link to Crimea**

Mariupol, a city on the southeastern Sea of Azov of nearly 500,000, provides a land bridge between guerrilla-held regions to the east and the Black Sea peninsula of Crimea that Russia annexed from Ukraine last March.

A rebel assault on the port in August saw Kiev repel the attack at such heavy cost that it prompted President Poroshenko to agree to a September 5 ceasefire.

That truce was, however, followed by further clashes that killed at least 1,500 people. Overall, the nine-month conflict has claimed more than 5,000 lives.

The separatist leader of Donetsk said on Friday he was ripping up the September peace agreement and launching an offensive aimed at seizing eastern lands still controlled by the pro-Western authorities in Kiev.

The announcement came just a day after his men scored their most symbolic victory to date by flushing out Ukrainian troops from a long-disputed airport in Donetsk.

Western diplomats linked that advance to a new infusion of Russian troops -- firmly denied by the Kremlin -- designed to expand separatist holdings before the signing of a final truce and land demarcation agreement.

Ukraine claimed on Monday that Moscow had poured nearly 1,000 more Russian soldiers and dozens of tanks into the southeast in order to secure control over factories and coal mines that could help the rebels build their own state.

Putin quickly rejected the charges and blamed Kiev for the latest surge in deaths.

"Artillery is being used, rocket launchers and aviation, and it is used indiscriminately and over densely populated areas," Putin said on Friday.

But Moscow concedes that militias have recently gained more ground than allowed under the September truce terms.

Moscow has not yet responded to Zakharchenko's decision to discard the peace talks and go on the offensive. – **Rappler.com**

# Annex 556

Viktoriya Savitskaya, Mariupol Recovers after Shelling, LB.ua (24 January 2015)

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[...]

[Main – Society – War](#) – January 24, 2015, 7:30 PM

## Mariupol recovers after shelling

Residents [of Mariupol's Vostochny neighborhood started the morning with broken windows, explosions, sirens and screams.](#)

[Viktoria Savitskaya](#), journalist, Mariupol



Photo: ERA/UPG

“I was woken by an awful bang. The windows and walls were shaking. The apartment was full of smoke and [I] could smell gas. We grabbed our money and our documents and ran to the bus stop,” says Oksana. Her building is across the courtyard from the Denis market, where one of the shells landed. Her family has found refuge with friends who live on the other side of town. She does not know when they will go home, even if it is just to retrieve their things.

Mariupol recovers after shelling – news portal LB.ua

“I was making breakfast in the kitchen. There were shots in the distance, but we are used to that,” Larisa laughs bitterly. Her building was also within the radius of destruction. “Then there was a boom and the windows all shattered. It’s a good thing we had taped over them, or I would have been cut by the shards. I grabbed my son and ran into the hallway. The neighbors were out there. One neighbor lady was screaming in the darkness, ‘Your Putin is here now. Enjoy your New Russia!’ We were always Ukraine and spoke Ukrainian.”

[Shells hit the Kiev market and the school courtyard](#). Windows were shattered in almost all the buildings. Balconies and walls are damaged, and almost all the cars in the parking lot were burned.

The shelling caught people by surprise. On Saturday morning, most of the neighborhood residents were on their way to the market to buy groceries or at the school for sports practices... According to the latest information, 29 people were killed (two of them children) and 97 were wounded (including five children).



As soon as the shelling stopped, crowds of people began running from the neighborhood. Some left their homes with small bags in which they carried everything they could hold, while others could be seen dragging a sofa.

The army, the Emergency Ministry, ambulance crews and the city government arrived at the site of the attack almost immediately.

A collection point was organized for people wishing to go to the city’s central districts.

The wave of panic died down by lunch, despite the fact that [shelling started again at 1:45](#).

A local resident recounted that his daughter works at the Kiev market. Two minutes before the shelling started, he had brought her lunch:

**That’s when it started. There were three dead bodies right where we were standing. They were shelling the market. There were two rockets sticking out of the asphalt. I went out so I could take a look. The rockets had come from the direction of Novoazovsk. The cleaning products store was on fire. There were probably people in there...**

According to official reports, [the shells came from the direction of Sakhanka and Zaichenko townships.](#)

The city council’s emergency diving service and the Mariupol office of the Emergency Ministry are setting up an aid station by the church in Kiev Street for those left without a roof over their heads. Volunteers will be available in the tent 24/7. A generator has been brought in, and food and hot tea are available for anyone in need.

“We brought in plastic sheeting and started helping people cover their windows. The strangest thing was that people asked us how much we were selling it for. Can you imagine? While we’re still being shelled,” recounts a volunteer named Ivan. “We also brought water, and we helped several people leave right away. Now we are collecting donations. Tomorrow we will go back with full trunks.”

City hospitals treating the injured have been provided with donor blood and medications. At this point, what people need most is psychological help.



Photo:

Mariupol recovers after shelling – news portal LB.ua

The degree of destruction is still to be determined. Rescue workers are making their way through the destroyed buildings and putting out fires. At present, 14 fires have been reported.

The main gas line near checkpoint No. 15 was damaged. Three substations were damaged in Pavlopol and Sartana, cutting off the city's power supply. A safe corridor must be established in order for them to be restored. In Vostochny, repairs have already begun.

The Vostok boiler station has been shut down and disconnected from the grid due to the lack of power supply. Boiler station authorities drained the water from the system to keep it from freezing. Heat supply will be restored to residential buildings as soon as the substations are operational again.

Travel in the neighborhood is difficult but not subject to restriction. Traffic police are regulating intersections.

Mayor Yuri Hotlubey reported at an emergency meeting that 53 buildings, 3 daycares and 4 schools in the neighborhood were damaged. Between 30 and 49 parked cars were burned.



Photo: Viktoria Savitskaya

Daycares and schools in the city's western neighborhoods have opened their doors to those affected.

Since the shelled neighborhood is now without water, gas, electricity and heat, many of its residents have left. According to the city's chief public prosecutor, patrols have been organized in Vostochny.

Mariupol recovers after shelling – news portal LB.ua



Photo: Viktoria Savitskaya



[Viktoria Savitskaya](#), journalist, Mariupol

Topics: [MARIUPOL](#), [PHOTO](#), [MILITARY ACTION IN EASTERN UKRAINE](#), [SHELLING IN MARIUPOL](#)



# Annex 557

Stephen Brown and Noah Barkin, Merkel Rules Out Arming Ukraine Government But Unsure  
Peace Push Will Work, Reuters (7 February 2015)





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WORLD NEWS

FEBRUARY 7, 2015 / 7:43 AM / 3 YEARS AGO

## Merkel rules out arming Ukraine government but unsure peace push will work

Stephen Brown, Noah Barkin



MUNICH (Reuters) - Germany's Angela Merkel on Saturday ruled out sending weapons to the Ukrainian government to fight pro-Russian separatists but said there was no guarantee that her latest peace initiative with French President Francois Hollande would work either.

Ukraine's President Petro Poroshenko, German Chancellor Angela Merkel and U.S. Vice President Joe Biden arrive for a meeting as U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry (L-R) looks on during the 51st Munich Security Conference at the 'Bayerischer Hof' hotel in Munich February 7, 2015. REUTERS/Michaela Rehle

Speaking at a Munich conference on Saturday attended by top U.S., European, Ukrainian and Russian officials, Merkel said the Franco-German peace plan presented to Kiev and Moscow this week was worth trying, but “it is uncertain if it will succeed”.

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[Russia optimistic on Ukraine deal, warns on arming Kiev](#)

Hollande cast it as a last-ditch effort to end fighting in eastern Ukraine that has killed more than 5,000 people. With Russia's earlier annexation of Ukraine's Crimea peninsula, the crisis has driven Moscow's relations with the West to new lows.

“If we don't manage to find not just a compromise but a lasting peace agreement, we know perfectly well what the scenario will be. It has a name, it's called war,” Hollande told reporters in the city of Tulle in central France.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel addresses during the 51st Munich Security Conference at the 'Bayerischer Hof' hotel in Munich February 7, 2015. REUTERS/Michael Dalder

Debate at the high-profile Munich Security Conference focused on an emerging rift between America and Europe on over how to confront Putin as the Moscow-backed rebels gain territory. U.S. President Barack Obama is under pressure from some in Congress to provide Kiev with lethal weapons.

NATO's top military commander, U.S. Air Force general Philip Breedlove, gave the strongest signals yet in Munich that he now wants the Western allies to consider sending weapons to Ukraine.

"I don't think we should preclude out of hand the possibility of the military option," Breedlove told reporters, adding that he was referring to weapons or capabilities and that there was "no conversation about boots on the ground".

In Kiev on Saturday, the Ukrainian military spokesman said separatists had stepped up shelling of government forces on all front lines and appeared to be massing for new offensives on the key railway town of Debaltseve and the coastal city of Mariupol.

Ukraine's President Petro Poroshenko, German Chancellor Angela Merkel and U.S. Vice President Joe Biden (L-R) arrive for a meeting during the 51st Munich Security Conference at the 'Bayerischer Hof' hotel in Munich February 7, 2015. REUTERS/Michaela Rehle

Merkel and Hollande flew home from Moscow in the dead of night after five hours of talks with Putin on Friday that yielded little beyond a promise to keep talking.

Merkel, who in Munich held three-way talks with Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko and U.S. Vice President Joe Biden and will fly to Washington on Sunday to meet Obama, questioned the logic of sending arms to fight separatists who are believed to have unlimited supplies of weapons from their Russian backers.

"I understand the debate but I believe that more weapons will not lead to the progress Ukraine needs. I really doubt that," the conservative German leader said. "There is already a large number of weapons in the region and I don't see that this has made a military solution more likely."

Additional reporting by Adrian Croft; Editing by Mark Heinrich

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6/1/2018

Merkel rules out arming Ukraine government but unsure peace push will work | Reuters



All quotes delayed a minimum of 15 minutes. See [here](#) for a complete list of exchanges and delays.

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# Annex 558

Lb.ua, Media Publish the Demands of the DPR and LPR for the Resolution of the Conflict  
(Documents) (11 February 2015)

This document has been translated from its original language into English, an official language  
of the Court, pursuant to Rules of the Court, Article 51.

Pursuant to Rules of the Court Article 51(3), Ukraine has translated only an extract of the  
original document constituting this Annex. In further compliance with this Rule, Ukraine has  
provided two certified copies of the full original-language document with its submission. The  
translated passages are highlighted in the original-language document. Ukraine has omitted  
from translation those portions of the document that are not materially relied upon in its  
Memorial, but stands ready to provide additional translations should the Court so require.



Media publish the demands of the DPR and LPR for the resolution of the conflict (docume...

[Home](#) — [Politics](#) — February 11, 2015, 15:58

## Media publish the demands of the DPR and LPR for the resolution of the conflict (documents)

Terrorists mainly repeating the Kremlin's proposals

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54

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Denis Pushilin (right), Chairman of the Supreme Council of the DPR, and Vladislav Deynego (left), representing the LPR  
Photo: EPA/UPG

The terrorists from the DPR and the LPR have drawn up new demands which will be discussed today [at the “Normandy format” negotiations](#). A Protocol comprising 15 points was provided to Ukraine yesterday at the meeting of the Trilateral Contact Group, [Zerkalo Nedeli](#) reports, citing its own sources.

The document, titled “Protocol of a Meeting of the Trilateral Contact Group, with the Participation of Representatives of Individual Areas of the Donetsk and

Lugansk Regions, Regarding a Set of Measures Aimed at the Political Resolution of the Conflict,” contains 15 points. Their gist can be summarized as follows.

1. Ensure a comprehensive ceasefire as of 10:00 a.m. on February 12, 2015 (Kiev time).
2. Ensure the withdrawal of heavy weaponry (with a caliber of 100 mm. or greater): for Ukrainian troops – from the actual line of contact of the sides; for the armed formations of the individual areas of the Donetsk and Lugansk Regions – from the line of contact of the sides under the Minsk Protocol dated September 19, 2014. The document also determines the distance to which weaponry systems of various types are to be removed for the creation of a security zone. The withdrawal should commence no later than the second day following the ceasefire, and the process should be facilitated by military experts from the OSCE.

Media publish the demands of the DPR and LPR for the resolution of the conflict (docume...

3. Adopt, by February 20, 2015, a Verkhovna Rada resolution, specifying a list of the areas to which the special status applies in accordance with the Law of Ukraine "On the Temporary Procedure of Local Self-Government in Individual Areas of the Donetsk and Lugansk Regions" (within the line of contact established by the appendix to the Minsk Protocol dated September 19, 2014).
4. By March 20, 2015, coordinate with the representatives of the individual areas the draft Law of Ukraine on the municipal elections in the individual areas and commence a dialog on issues of the granting to these areas of an autonomous status.
5. Cancel, by February 23, 2015, all the decisions of the political and military leadership of Ukraine on the conduct by the Armed Forces and the National Guard of the anti-terrorist operation in the Donbass.
6. Pass and bring into force, by February 25, 2015, a Law of Ukraine prohibiting the prosecution and punishment of persons for the events which took place in individual areas of the Donetsk and Lugansk Regions. Secure the pardoning, amnestying and exchange of all persons held in Ukraine (exchanging all persons for all persons). This process should be complete no later than the fifth day following withdrawal.
7. Reinstate social services for the individual areas of the Donetsk and Lugansk Regions (the payment of pensions and benefits) and secure safe access, supplies, storage and distribution of humanitarian aid. Restore in full the socio-economic interaction between the parties, including in the banking sphere.
8. Withdraw all foreign armed formations, military equipment and military personnel and contractors from Ukraine, with monitoring from the OSCE. Disarm all illegal groups.
9. Carry out constitutional reforms in Ukraine, including extensive decentralization by granting individual areas of the Donbass an autonomous status.
10. Organize free and fair elections of all local authorities on the basis of the Law of Ukraine on municipal elections in individual areas and the Law of Ukraine on the special status of the Donbass, as coordinated with representatives of the individual areas of the Donetsk and Lugansk Regions, with international monitoring.
11. Extend the work of the OSCE mission to border areas not currently under the control of Ukraine, following the entry into force of the amendments to the Constitution of Ukraine,

Media publish the demands of the DPR and LPR for the resolution of the conflict (docume...

and as coordinated with representatives of the individual areas of the Donetsk and Lugansk Regions.

**Read: [Poroshenko announces martial law due to the collapse of the meeting in Minsk](#)**

(DPR and LPR draft)

**Protocol**  
**of a Meeting of the Trilateral Contact Group,**  
**with the Participation of Representatives of Individual Areas**  
**of the Donetsk and Lugansk Regions, Regarding a Set of Measures**  
**Aimed at the Political Resolution of the conflict**

In pursuance of the Protocol based on the results of consultations (Minsk, Republic of Belarus, September 5, 2014), the participants of the Trilateral Contact Group, made up of representatives of Ukraine, Russia and the OSCE, and representatives of individual areas of the Donetsk and Lugansk Regions, have reached an understanding regarding a set of measures aimed at the political resolution of the conflict:

1. Ensure a comprehensive ceasefire as of 10:00 a.m. (Kiev time) on February 12, 2015.
2. Ensure the withdrawal of heavy weaponry (with a caliber of 100 mm. or greater):
  - for Ukrainian troops – from the actual line of contact of the sides;
  - for the armed formations of the individual areas of the Donetsk and Lugansk Regions – from the line of contact of the sides under the Minsk Memorandum dated September 19, 2014.

To create a security zone, the weaponry systems should be removed to a distance from one another of:

- heavy weaponry – at least 50 km.;
- multiple artillery rocket systems (with the exception of the Smerch and Uragan multiple artillery rocket systems) – at least 70 km.

The Tochka, Tochka-U missile systems and Smerch and Uragan multiple artillery rocket systems should be removed to a distance of at least 140 km.

Photo: zn.ua

from the actual line of contact (only for the armed forces of Ukraine).

The withdrawal should commence no later than the second day following the ceasefire.

The process should be facilitated by military experts from the OSCE, with the support of the Trilateral Contact Group.

3. Adopt, by February 20, 2015, a Verkhovna Rada resolution, specifying a list of the areas to which the special status applies in accordance with the Law of Ukraine “On the Temporary Procedure of Local Self-Government in Individual Areas of the Donetsk and Lugansk Regions” (“On the Special Status”) (within the line of contact established by the appendix to the Minsk Memorandum dated September 19, 2014).

4. By March 20, 2015, coordinate with the representatives of the individual areas the draft Law of Ukraine on the municipal elections in the individual areas and commence a dialog on issues of the granting to these areas of an autonomous status.

5. Ensure effective monitoring and verification of the ceasefire regime and withdrawal of heavy weaponry by the OSCE from the first day, using all the necessary technical equipment, including satellites, unmanned aerial vehicles and radar systems.

6. Cancel, by February 23, 2015, all the decisions of the political and military leadership of Ukraine on the conduct by the Armed Forces and the National Guard of the anti-terrorist operation in the Donbass.

7. Pass and bring into force, by February 25, 2015, a Law of Ukraine prohibiting the prosecution and punishment of persons for the events which took place in individual areas of the Donetsk and Lugansk Regions which are or were under the control of the armed formations of the Donbass.

8. Secure the pardoning, amnestying and exchange of all persons held in Ukraine (exchanging all persons for all persons). This process should be complete no later than the

Photo: zn.ua

fifth day following withdrawal.

9. Reinstate social services for the individual areas of the Donetsk and Lugansk Regions (the payment of pensions and benefits) and secure safe access, supplies, storage and distribution of humanitarian aid to those in need on the basis of international mechanisms.

10. Restore in full the socio-economic interaction between the parties, including in the banking sphere.

11. Withdraw all foreign armed formations, military equipment and military personnel and contractors from Ukraine, with monitoring from the OSCE. Disarm all illegal groups.

12. Carry out constitutional reforms in Ukraine, including extensive decentralization by granting individual areas of the Donbass an autonomous status.

13. Organize free and fair elections of all local authorities on the basis of the Law of Ukraine on municipal elections in individual areas and the Law of Ukraine on the special status of the Donbass, as coordinated with representatives of the individual areas of the Donetsk and Lugansk Regions, with international monitoring.

14. At a certain stage of the political resolution (following the entry into force of the amendments to the Constitution of Ukraine on decentralization and the granting of an autonomous status to individual areas and the signing of the Act on Guarantees for the Safety of Selected Persons and Self-Government Institutions of the Donbass), as agreed with representatives of individual areas of the Lugansk and Donetsk Regions, secure the extension of the work of the OSCE mission to border areas not currently under the control of Ukraine.

15. Intensify the work of the Trilateral Contact Group with the participation of representatives of individual areas of the Donetsk and Lugansk Regions on a permanent basis. Create working sub-groups for all aspects of the implementation of this Protocol.

Photo: zn.ua

The proposals of the DPR and the LPR effectively repeat the Kremlin's "wishes" as regards the resolution of the conflict. The Ukrainian side's position was that the workings drafted with the participation of the German and French sides should be used as the basis of the document to be drafted.

"During the "Normandy format" negotiations scheduled for today between the heads of state in Minsk, the logic of the Russian side will be close to the logic of the proposals set forth in the draft Protocol of the DPR and the LPR: "first hand over the money, hold the elections, and then we'll close the border." It will be a hot-tempered battle," Zerkalo Nedeli cites an unnamed source as saying.

As a reminder, the meeting between the heads of the four states is scheduled to commence in Minsk at any moment.

TOPICS: [RUSSIA'S INVASION OF UKRAINE](#), [COMBAT OPERATIONS IN THE EAST OF UKRAINE](#), [DPR, LPR, MINSK NEGOTIATIONS](#)





# Annex 559

Zn.ua, The DPR's and LPR's Proposals at the Negotiations in Minsk (11 February 2015)

This document has been translated from its original language into English, an official language of the Court, pursuant to Rules of the Court, Article 51.

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## The DPR's and LPR's proposals at the negotiations in Minsk

February 11, 14:51

**Representatives of the illegal formations are proposing a ceasefire from February 12, the announcement of an end to the anti-terrorist operation, the granting of autonomy to “individual areas” of the Donbass and the holding of elections.**

The editorial board of **ZN.UA** has got hold of a copy of a protocol on the resolution of the situation in the Donbass, which was handed over on Tuesday evening to participants of the trilateral contact group in Minsk by representatives of the DPR and the LPR.

The document, entitled “Protocol of a Meeting of the Trilateral Contact Group, with the Participation of Representatives of Individual Areas of the Donetsk and Lugansk Regions, Regarding a Set of Measures Aimed at the Political Resolution of the Conflict,” contains 15 points. Their gist can be summarized as follows.

- **Ensure a comprehensive ceasefire as of 10:00 a.m. on February 12, 2015 (Kiev time).**
- **Ensure the withdrawal of heavy weaponry (with a caliber of 100 mm. or greater): for Ukrainian troops – from the actual line of contact of the sides; for the armed formations of the individual areas of the Donetsk and Lugansk Regions – from the line of contact of the sides under the Minsk Memorandum dated September 19, 2014. The document also determines the distance to which weaponry systems of various types are to be removed for the creation of a security zone. The withdrawal should commence no later than the second day following the ceasefire, and the process should be facilitated by military experts from the OSCE.**
- **Adopt, by February 20, 2015, a Verkhovna Rada resolution, specifying a list of the areas to which the special status applies in accordance with the Law of Ukraine “On the Temporary Procedure of Local Self-Government in Individual Areas of the Donetsk and Lugansk Regions” (within the line of contact established by the appendix to the Minsk Protocol dated September 19, 2014).**
- **By March 20, 2015, coordinate with the representatives of the individual areas the draft Law of Ukraine on the municipal elections in the individual areas and commence a dialog on issues of the granting to these areas of an autonomous status.**
- **Cancel, by February 23, 2015, all the decisions of the political and military leadership of Ukraine on the conduct by the Armed Forces and the National Guard of the anti-terrorist operation in the Donbass.**
- **Pass and bring into force, by February 25, 2015, a Law of Ukraine prohibiting the prosecution and punishment of persons for the events which took place in individual areas of the Donetsk and Lugansk Regions. Secure the pardoning, amnestying and exchange of all persons held in Ukraine (exchanging all persons for all persons). This process should be complete no later than the fifth day following withdrawal.**
- **Reinstate social services for the individual areas of the Donetsk and Lugansk Regions (the payment of pensions and benefits) and secure safe access, supplies, storage and distribution of humanitarian aid. Restore in full the socio-economic interaction between the parties, including in the banking sphere.**

- Only in Point No. 11 (out of 15) is it proposed to - **Withdraw all foreign armed formations, military equipment and military personnel and contractors from Ukraine**, *with monitoring from the OSCE. Disarm all illegal groups.*

- **Carry out constitutional reforms in Ukraine**, *including extensive decentralization by granting individual areas of the Donbass an autonomous status.*

- **Organize free and fair elections of all local authorities** *on the basis of the Law of Ukraine on municipal elections in individual areas and the Law of Ukraine on the special status of the Donbass, as coordinated with representatives of the individual areas of the Donetsk and Lugansk Regions, with international monitoring.*

- And only in the penultimate, 14th point, does the [document] refer to the extension of the work of the OSCE mission to border areas not currently under the control of Ukraine, and what is more, this should take place following the entry into force of the amendments to the Constitution of Ukraine, and also as coordinated with representatives of the individual areas of the Donetsk and Lugansk Regions.

As ZN.UA has already reported, citing its own sources, the proposals of the DPR and LPR have copied the Kremlin's wishes, as previously set out on numerous occasions. However, they were not even considered at these negotiations. The Ukrainian side's position was that the workings drafted with the participation of the German and French sides should be used as the basis of the document to be drafted.

However, in the view of sources of ZN.UA, during the "Normandy format" negotiations scheduled for today between the heads of state in Minsk, the logic of the Russian side will be close to the logic of the proposals set forth in the draft Protocol of the DPR and the LPR: "first hand over the money, hold the elections, and then we'll close the border." "It will be a hot-tempered battle," ZN.UA's source speculated.

On February 10 during the negotiations in Minsk, DPR representative Denis Pushilin claimed that he had handed the document over to the sides for their perusal.

Subsequently, the Russian news agency TASS reported that the ceasefire in the Donbass, the withdrawal of heavy weaponry and monitoring of compliance with the agreements reached had been agreed upon on Tuesday during the contact group's negotiations in Minsk.

"At the negotiations in Minsk, the structure for the withdrawal of the heavy weaponry was agreed upon, the parties also agreed on the ceasefire regime and monitoring of its implementation. A discussion was held on the local elections and the state structure of the Donbass, and the principles of its administration," TASS reported.

However, ZN.UA's source at the trilateral contact group reported that the information circulated by TASS **was untrue** – no specific decisions had been taken at the negotiations on Tuesday, and that the negotiations would continue on Wednesday.

# Annex 560

Vladimir Soldatkin and Pavel Polityuk, "Glimmer of Hope" for Ukraine After New Ceasefire Deal, Reuters (12 February 2015)



WORLD NEWS FEBRUARY 12, 2015 / 1:42 AM / 3 YEARS AGO

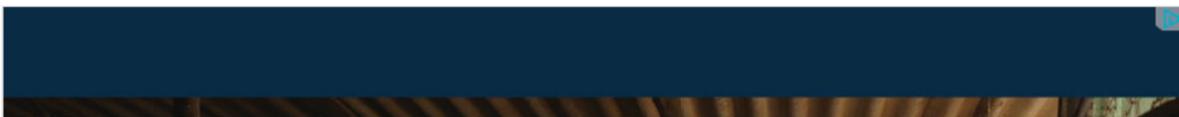
# 'Glimmer of hope' for Ukraine after new ceasefire deal

Vladimir Soldatkin, Pavel Polityuk

8 MIN READ



MINSK (Reuters) - Germany, France, Russia and Ukraine agreed to a deal offering a “glimmer of hope” for an end to conflict in eastern Ukraine, but the United States and NATO said further intense fighting on Thursday ran counter to the spirit of the accord.





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The agreement, announced after more than 16 hours of discussions in the Belarussian capital Minsk, was followed swiftly by allegations from Kiev of a new, mass influx of Russian armour into rebel-held eastern Ukraine.

It calls for a ceasefire between Ukrainian forces and Russian-backed separatists starting Sunday, the withdrawal of heavy weapons from the front line and constitutional reform to give eastern Ukraine more autonomy.

Fighting has intensified in recent days as the rebels try to take control of Debaltseve, a strategic transport hub that would link the two separatist-controlled areas of eastern Ukraine, where elections are contemplated under the accord.

The White House, under pressure from Congress to provide arms to the stretched Ukrainian military, said the deal was “potentially significant” but urged Russia to withdraw soldiers and equipment, and give Ukraine back control over its border.

“The United States is particularly concerned about the escalation of fighting today, which is inconsistent with the spirit of the accord,” it said in a statement.

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg echoed that line and told Norwegian news agency NTB: “Russia must end its support for the separatists and withdraw its forces and military equipment from eastern Ukraine.”

#### RELATED COVERAGE

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Russia denies arming the rebels and sending troops to fight alongside them, despite what Ukraine and its Western allies say is overwhelming evidence. The conflict has killed more than 5,000 people since last April.

Keeping up the pressure on Russia, diplomats said the European Union would go ahead on Monday with a new round of sanctions against 19 Ukrainian separatists and Russians, regardless of the new ceasefire.

The asset freezes and travel bans, the latest in a long series of sanctions by the EU and United States, have piled intense economic pressure on Russia's energy-exporting economy, which has also been hit by a halving of world oil prices since last June.

After an EU summit in Brussels, the leaders of Germany, France and the European Council said wider sanctions were possible if Russia violated the ceasefire agreement.

U.S. officials also said they were not taking sanctions off the table and bluntly warned the separatists against seizing more land before Sunday's ceasefire formally takes effect.

"We are trying to send the message as strongly as we can that any effort to grab more land between now and Saturday night ... will seriously undercut this agreement," a senior U.S. official who spoke on condition of anonymity told reporters in Washington.

## **"TOUGH AND EMOTIONAL"**

The Minsk talks were the culmination of a dramatic initiative by France and Germany following an upsurge in fighting in which the separatists tore through an earlier ceasefire line agreed to last September.

Russian President Vladimir Putin accused Ukraine of prolonging the negotiations, which seemed close to failure at several points.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel said Ukraine President Petro Poroshenko "did everything to achieve the possibility of an end to the bloodshed." She said Putin put pressure on the rebels to agree to the truce "towards the end" of the talks.

“This is a glimmer of hope, no more no less,” Merkel told reporters on arriving, straight from the talks in Minsk, at a European Union summit in Brussels. “It is very important that words are followed by actions.”

Russia’s RIA news agency quoted Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov as saying the talks were “tough and very emotional.”

The accord could delay the imposition of new sanctions against Moscow, although the U.S. State Department said it had not taken any options off the table. Secretary of State John Kerry said sanctions could be eased if it were implemented.

Fighting has surged in the past few weeks with more than 70 Ukrainian servicemen and at least 24 civilians killed so far this month, according to Reuters calculations based on official Ukrainian figures.

A Ukrainian military spokesman said about 50 tanks, 40 missile systems and 40 armoured vehicles had crossed overnight into eastern Ukraine from Russia. It was not immediately possible to verify the figures, which were higher than in previous such statements. Moscow dismisses them as groundless.

NATO has said there is overwhelming evidence of Russian armour entering Ukraine but declined to comment on the latest report.

“The intensity of fighting is evidenced by a sharp increase in the number of people trying to leave front-line towns,” spokesman Andriy Lysenko said in a daily briefing held on Thursday before the deal was announced.

Rebel fighters accuse Kiev of shelling civilian areas, an accusation the Ukrainian military rejects.

The fighting has destabilised Ukraine militarily and economically. As the deal was reached, Ukraine was offered a \$40 billion lifeline by the International Monetary Fund to stave off financial collapse.

Members of the Ukrainian armed forces ride on an armoured personnel carrier (APC) near Debaltseve, eastern Ukraine, February 12, 2015. REUTERS/Gleb Garanich

Russia's economy has also suffered, from the sanctions imposed for its support for the separatists in eastern Ukraine and annexation of Ukraine's Crimea region last year. Russian shares surged on Thursday after the deal was announced and the rouble gained but then slipped back.

## WEAPONS WITHDRAWAL

The agreement addressed some of the main stumbling points, including a "demarcation line" between separatists and Ukrainian forces, which the rebels wanted to reflect gains from a recent offensive that shredded an earlier ceasefire deal.

The compromise was that the rebels will withdraw weapons from a line set by the earlier Minsk agreement in September, while the Ukrainians will withdraw from the current front line, creating a 50 km (30 mile)-wide buffer zone.

Ukraine will also get control of its border with Russia, but in consultation with the rebels and only after the regions gain more autonomy under constitutional reform by the end of 2015.

Kiev has made clear, however, that it will not accept independence for the "People's Republics" the rebels have declared.

The ceasefire and heavy weapons pullback would be overseen by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, a Europe-wide security body.

French President Francois Hollande, who also took part in the negotiations, said there was still much work to be done on the Ukraine crisis, but the agreement was a real

chance to improve the situation. “The coming hours will be decisive,” he said later in Brussels.

Slideshow (9 Images)

Pro-Moscow separatists tightened the pressure on Kiev by launching some of the war’s worst fighting on Wednesday, killing 19 Ukrainian soldiers in assaults near the railway town of Debaltseve.

On Thursday, senior rebel commander Eduard Basurin said his side would deliver on the ceasefire but that in the meantime Ukrainian troops should surrender Debaltseve. He said the separatists were holding “counter-attack” operations to prevent the soldiers from breaking out.

As the fighting has escalated, Washington has begun openly talking of arming Ukraine to defend itself from “Russian aggression,” raising the prospect of a proxy war between one-time Cold War foes.

As the French and German leaders’ peace initiative was announced, pro-Russian rebels appeared determined to drive home their advantage ahead of a deal. Armoured columns of Russian-speaking soldiers with no insignia have been advancing for days around Debaltseve, where heavy fighting has occurred this month.

Additional reporting by Elizabeth Piper and Maria Kiselyova, Pavel Polityuk, Elizabeth Pineau, Polina Devitt, Aleksandar Vasovic, Alessandra Prentice, Margarita Chornokondatrenko, Gabriela Baczynska, Alexander Winning, Lidia Kelly, Richard Balmforth, Andrei Makhovsky, Roberta Rampton and Arshad Mohammed; writing by Giles Elgood, Philippa Fletcher and Mark Trevelyan; editing by Andrew Roche and David Storey

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# Annex 561

Linda Kinstler, A Ukrainian City Holds Its Breath, Foreign Policy (20 February 2015)



# A Ukrainian City Holds Its Breath

[foreignpolicy.com/2015/02/20/the-ukrainian-separatists-next-target-kharkiv-ukraine-donbass-russia-war](http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/02/20/the-ukrainian-separatists-next-target-kharkiv-ukraine-donbass-russia-war)

## Dispatch

Far from the front lines, the city of Kharkiv is facing a wave of terrorist attacks. Is it the separatists' next target?

By [Linda Kinstler](#)

| February 20, 2015, 12:20 PM



KHARKIV, Ukraine — This past Monday, around 40 protesters bearing communist flags gathered in the graying, barren central square of Ukraine’s second-largest city. They said they were there to commemorate the anniversary of the Red Army’s first liberation of Kharkiv in 1943. (The current administration in Kiev doesn’t commemorate the date, since it regards Soviet “liberation” as a synonym for “occupation.”) Gennady Makarov, a leading pro-Russian separatist and one of the protest’s organizers, bustled around the group, dispensing orders. Most of his fellow flag-bearers were pensioners, including some Soviet Army veterans, but a notable few were much younger. Across from them, on the other side of the statue, stood a crowd of policemen and some half-dozen riot buses. A policeman approached Makarov and asked what they were planning. “Just give us an hour,” Makarov responded. The policeman backed off, and the protesters began to march through Kharkiv’s drab Stalinist streets against the frigid morning wind, singing old Soviet songs. Russian and Ukrainian journalists hurried behind them, documenting their every move.

The rallying point for the protest was the city's main Lenin statue — or, to be more precise, what's left of it. Kharkiv's Lenin, which rowdy Ukrainian activists tore down in September, has been reduced to a single boot.

Kharkiv's Lenin, which rowdy Ukrainian activists tore down in September, has been reduced to a single boot.

The razed statue is now jokingly referred to as the “boot memorial.” Its pedestal is covered by an unsightly green awning with a sign that reads: “Dear People of Kharkiv, Please Pardon the Construction Underway.” The unresolved fate of the memorial is an apt summary of the current state of uncertainty in the city, whose residents appear to be split between supporting a united Ukraine and loyalty to the Kremlin's manufactured state of Novorossiia. It's unclear whether most of Kharkiv's residents would prefer to remove the statue or rebuild it — if they care at all. But Russia is just a half-hour drive away. The vast majority of Kharkivites speak Russian as their native language, and there is unquestionably an active minority of “Soviet expatriates” who yearn for the Motherland. Kharkiv was, indeed, one of the first cities that erupted with talk of separatism last year. For some time in February and March 2014, it looked as if the city would in fact become the next pro-Russian “People's Republic,” just like Donetsk and Luhansk farther east.

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Back then, even the city's mayor, the notoriously shady Gennady Kernes, supported the city's “anti-Maidan” movement, which arose in opposition to Kiev's pro-Western revolution. April was marked by bloody confrontations between pro-Russian protesters, Ukrainian demonstrators, and Ukraine Security Service (SBU) officers. Kernes was placed under house arrest by the Ukrainian government, abruptly changed his tune, and began supporting a Ukrainian Kharkiv. (According to one version of the story, leaders of the local underworld persuaded him to rethink his position.) Soon after, Kernes was shot by unknown gunmen. A period of relative quiet ensued, but in the fall it was broken by the first in a series of terrorist acts that continue to plague the city to this day. Over the past few months Kharkivites have had to adjust to a terrifying new normal.

“The fear, everyone carries it in their own way,” Volodymyr Noskov, a local journalist, told me.

“The fear, everyone carries it in their own way,” Volodymyr Noskov, a local journalist, told me.

“We're getting used to our new conditions. We all understand that this war is not for one year;

the physical, moral exhaustion really wears out your body.” The attacks have been relentless. On October 19, military warehouses came under grenade fire from unknown assailants; around the same time the SBU seized ammunition being sent illegally through the mail. In November, an explosion at Pub Stina, a popular gathering spot for local volunteers and activists, injured eleven people. On Christmas Day, another bomb exploded in a furniture store, injuring none. In January, a bomb at a Kharkiv courthouse injured fourteen. Police began guarding Kharkiv’s strategic infrastructure, and security increased in local supermarkets. On February 9, a bomb exploded at a notary’s office, again with no casualties. That day, an advisor to the SBU announced the detention of two young “saboteurs” who had planned to stage an attack using materials allegedly received from Russian special forces. According to the Interior Ministry, over 700 pro-Russian separatists have been detained in Kharkiv in recent months. Many are members of clandestine organized groups. A man arrested as a suspect in the Pub Stina bombing turned out to be a member of the ‘Kharkiv Partisans,” a group that prosecutors say receives support from Russia. Five members of a guerilla cell from the separatist Luhansk People’s Republic were arrested for trying to bomb a military recruitment office and a nearby gas pipeline. This week alone, another attack targeted Kharkiv’s railway system, and the SBU detained a small band of criminals in Kharkiv province with connections to separatists from Donetsk. Gennady Makarov, who helped to organize the recent anti-Kiev protest, is himself a former candidate for governor of the abortive Kharkiv People’s Republic. “All terrorist acts on Ukrainian soil have only one organizer,” Colonel Serhii Halushko, deputy chief of the Defense Ministry’s Department for Information Technologies, told me. “They are part of the Russian war in Ukraine.”

The bombing campaign is hardly limited to Kharkiv: similar explosions have been staged in Odessa, Zaporizhyya, Mariupol, and even Kiev. But of those cities, Kharkiv, a mere 25 miles from the Russian border, is probably the easiest target for those wishing to create a new separatist republic.

Kharkiv, a mere 25 miles from the Russian border, is probably the easiest target for those wishing to create a new separatist republic.

“The Kharkiv People’s Republic may have failed, but now that the Kremlin sees the utter helplessness of the West, and especially the leaders of key countries in the EU, it will try to move the conflict beyond the Donbass,” one Ukrainian news site warned on Wednesday. “That there are weapons here, that everything is ready, everyone understands that,” Svetlana Revzan, a local pro-Ukrainian activist, told me. But who finances Kharkiv’s separatists, and through what channels, is unknown.

Only a fraction of the rioters who participated in last spring’s unrest have been apprehended. The SBU is still searching for separatist sympathizers in the city — the same sort of people Oleksandr Zakharchenko, leader of the separatist Donetsk People’s Republic, had in mind last week when he threatened to attack Kharkiv if Ukrainian forces broke the latest cease-fire. “First of all, we will destroy ‘the Debaltseve pocket,’” he said, referring to the enclave within separatist territory that has since been abandoned by Ukrainian troops. “Then we will capture

Mariupol. And after that, we will throw all our forces into occupying Kharkiv... Some people are waiting for us there. We have a lot of our people in Kharkiv. When it's necessary, they will take up arms."

It was on the day after Zakharchenko's announcement that Makarov, wearing the ubiquitous post-Soviet uniform of a black leather cap and jacket, led his Communist march around the city. He described himself as the "leader of an association for cultural and language equality." He is the Chairman of the Coordination Council of Russian organizations in Eastern Ukraine, one of many cell-like organizations working to make Kharkiv a Russian city. "We fight against falsification of history and for Russian language, and for Russian culture, and against discrimination of Russian population," Makarov told me. I asked him and several of his fellow-marchers what they thought of Zakharchenko's call to arms. "I don't know, I don't watch TV. What announcement?" he answered. "We can't discuss political problems because for any discussion you can end up in prison." No one among the protesters was willing to say anything about Zakharchenko's comments — but given their inclinations, it's hard to imagine that any of them disagreed with him.

It doesn't help that the endless stream of terrorist attacks has worn down the city's already depleted capacity to resist. "It's not only pensioners. It's hard to say what the percentage is, but probably half of the city doesn't support Ukraine. People are hiding. They're sitting and waiting," Vladimir Mazur, the head of a local TV station, told me. "The explosions aren't meant to harm people yet," said Dmitry Kutovyi, a Kharkiv businessman and activist. "They're meant to cause nervousness. When something blows up every week, people get nervous. The result is that we get distracted. We can't focus on more important business. We're always wondering when and where we will get hit." The psychological toll of the conflict can't be underestimated. Serhiy Zhadan, a Kharkiv resident and well-known poet, warned of further Russian advances: "They took Debaltseve and they'll go further," he told me. "How come they're not already in Kharkiv?"

One of the main objectives of the Russian takeover of Debaltseve was to gain control over a crucial rail junction between Russia and Donetsk. But the railroad there was largely destroyed in the course of the fighting, and Kharkiv, another vital rail hub, would be a boon to Russian-backed forces. Nor is that the only factor that makes the city a likely target of separatist expansion. Over the past several months, the city has absorbed thousands of refugees and injured fighters from Donetsk and Luhansk. The remains of passengers from flight MH17, the Malaysian airliner shot down over separatist-controlled areas, were brought here for forensic examination. (One thwarted bomb plot targeted a visiting Dutch delegation after the remains were relocated, according to the *Los Angeles Times*). Kharkiv is also a major hub for volunteer recruitment and an important military base.

"They will always be trying to destabilize us. Until there's a change of power in Russia, and maybe even after that," Mazur told me. "Lately, many people have been comparing our situation to Israel and Palestine. We can't run away from each other but we can't expect anything good." Kharkiv hasn't figured out what to do with its Lenin; nor has it figured out whether it's ultimately a Russian or Ukrainian city. "Kharkiv is not spoken for," Lidia

Starodubtseva, a professor at Kharkiv University, told me. “The ground here, it’s like lava. It could explode at any moment.”

Trending

SERGEY BOBOK/AFP/Getty Images

**Linda Kinstler** is a Marshall Scholar at Goldsmiths, University of London and a contributing writer at Politico Europe.

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# Annex 562

Deadly Bomb Blast Hits Rally In Ukraine , Al Jazeera (22 February 2015)





NEWS / EUROPE

## Deadly bomb blast hits rally in Ukraine

*Officials say those who attacked pro-Kiev rally marking anniversary of protesters' deaths were instructed by Moscow.*

22 Feb 2015



Ukrainian officials accuse Russia of instructing Ukrainian citizens to commit the deadly blast [EPA]

At least two people have been killed after a blast struck a crowd at a pro-Ukrainian rally far from eastern Ukraine's war zone, and Kiev said it had arrested suspects who had been armed and instructed in Russia.

Ukrainian authorities fear violence could spread from two rebellious provinces to other areas in the mainly Russian-speaking east, a swathe of territory which the Kremlin calls "New Russia".

The bomb in Kharkiv, the biggest city in the east, struck one of numerous events across Ukraine on Sunday marking the deaths of 100 protesters a year ago in an uprising that toppled a Moscow-backed president.

"Today is memorial Sunday, but on this day terrorist scum revealed its predatory nature," President Petro Poroshenko said on Facebook. "This is a brazen attempt to expand the territory of terrorism."

Amateur footage posted on the Internet showed a few hundred marchers with Ukrainian flags shouting "glory to the heroes!" when the blast occurred. Demonstrators and bystanders, including a woman pushing a baby in a pram, fled in panic. A wounded man in military uniform lay in snow crying for help.

A Reuters journalist at the scene later filmed the bodies of two men lying by the road, draped in blue and yellow Ukrainian flags and surrounded by shrapnel.

Kharkiv is more than 200km from the war zone. It has occasionally seen violent protests by separatists in the past year but is now firmly under government control, and residents mostly support Kiev.

A Ukrainian prosecutor said one of those killed and four of the wounded were police who had been guarding the demonstration.

Igor Rossokha, a Ukrainian demonstrator, told Reuters his friend Igor was one of those killed: "We tried to give him first aid, but the paramedics arrived and said he'd died instantly because he was struck in the heart.

"We just wanted to commemorate the anniversary, and this happened right at the start of our march," he said. "The whole thing was called off immediately out of fear there could be more bombs on the route."

## 'Ukrainians instructed by Russia'

Markian Lubkivskyi, an aide to the head of Ukraine's SBU security service, said four suspects had been arrested. They were allegedly planning to conduct a series of attacks in the city with a Russian-made "Shmel" rocket launcher.

"They are Ukrainian citizens, who underwent instruction and received weapons in the Russian Federation, in Belgorod," he told Ukraine's 112 Television. Belgorod is a city across the nearby Russian border from Kharkiv.

Olexander Turchinov, secretary of Ukraine's National Security and Defence Council, said Kharkiv was put under high alert in an anti-terrorist operation.

Moscow did not immediately respond to the accusations. It has long denied aiding its radical sympathisers in Ukraine.

Ukrainian officials initially said the blast was caused by an explosive thrown from a car, but later said a bomb had been buried under snow. The explosion follows blasts in other Ukrainian cities in recent weeks, although it appears to be the first with fatalities.

**SOURCE: AGENCIES**

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# Annex 563

Kiev Blames Russia, L.A. Times (22 February 2015)



# Bomb blast at pro-Ukraine rally in Kharkiv kills 2; Kiev blames Russia

[latimes.com/world/europe/la-fg-bomb-ukraine-rally-kharkiv-20150222-story.html](https://www.latimes.com/world/europe/la-fg-bomb-ukraine-rally-kharkiv-20150222-story.html)



A man holds a Ukrainian flag as he prepares to help cover the body of a victim of an explosion in Kharkiv, Ukraine, on Sunday. (Andriy Marienko / Associated Press)

A homemade bomb apparently hidden in a thin layer of snow exploded Sunday during a pro-Ukraine march in the eastern industrial city of Kharkiv, killing at least two people and wounding 11, authorities said.

Four suspected perpetrators of the attack were detained later in the day, Alexander Turchinov, secretary of the National Defense and Security Council told the UNIAN news agency. He said the detainees had been trained in the Russian town of Belgorod.

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The bomb exploded shortly after 1 p.m. along the route where hundreds of people marched, many waving Ukrainian national flags, as part of a nationwide memorial to protesters who died a year ago during the so-called Maidan revolution in Kiev that ousted Russian-backed President Viktor Yanukovich, said Anton Gerashchenko, an Interior Ministry advisor.

Kharkiv is the capital of the Kharkiv region, which borders Russia as well as the Donetsk region of Ukraine, which for over 10 months has been the heart of an armed conflict between the Ukrainian government and pro-Russia separatists reportedly armed and aided by Russia.

One of the two declared dead at the scene of the bombing was a prominent local activist and the other a high-ranking police officer, Gerashchenko said. Five police officers were among the wounded, he said.

Dramatic video taken by a passerby and broadcast by TSN, a private television network, shows a column of people with flags and posters marching along the street, chanting and singing. An explosion shatters the scene, and people can be seen screaming, running and then trying to help the wounded.

"We have enough evidence to believe that this terrorist attack was organized and carried out by a group of terrorists armed and sponsored by Moscow," Gerashchenko said in an interview. "This cynical attack against peaceful marchers on the national mourning day clearly shows that regardless of the Minsk accords the Kremlin is set to continue to destabilize the situation in eastern Ukraine."

A cease-fire agreement was reached this month after talks in Minsk, Belarus, among the leaders of Germany, France, Russia and Ukraine. The accord called for a halt in hostilities and a withdrawal of heavy armaments and foreign fighters from the battle zone.

It has been repeatedly violated, and was again Sunday when separatists launched two tank attacks on the Ukrainian military near the seaport of Mariupol in eastern Ukraine, Andriy Lysenko, spokesman for the National Defense and Security Council, said at a briefing in Kiev. Both attacks were repelled, he said. No casualty figures were given.

More than 5,600 people have been killed in eastern Ukraine since the conflict broke out in April. More than 1 million people have fled the war zones for safe refuge in western Ukraine or across the eastern border with Russia.

"The explosion which these subhumans organized during a peaceful march in Kharkiv is yet another attempt to expand the territory of terrorism," Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko said in televised remarks.

*Special correspondent Butenko reported from Kiev and Times staff writer Loiko from Moscow.*

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Sergei L. Loiko

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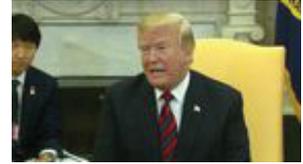
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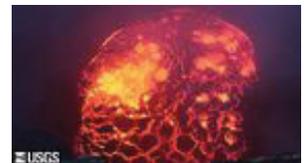
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Latest News



# Annex 564

The Interpreter Magazine, We All Knew What We Were Going For and What Could Happen  
(English translation of an interview in Novaya Gazeta by Elena Kostyuchenko dated 2 March  
2015)



Catherine A. Fitzpatrick

**THE INTERPRETER**



# 'We All Knew What We Were Going For and What Could Happen'

September 9, 2015

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*The following is an interview by Elena Kostyuchenko of the independent news site Novaya Gazeta with a Russian tank gunner, who was ordered to fight for Debaltsevo along with his battalion. The article in the original Russian has already received more than 1.8 million views.*

Dorzhi Batomunkuev, 20, 5th Separate Tank Brigade (Ulan-Ude) army unit No. 46108. Draftee, summoned November 5, 2013, in June 2014 completed his contract of 3 years. Personal ID No. 200220, army card 2609999.

shrunk.

I know that he was wounded in Logvinovo. Logvinovo is the choke-point of the Debaltsevo kettle – early on the morning of February 9, a company of special forces of the Donetsk People's Republic (DNR) (consisting of 90% Russians — organized volunteers) cleared and closed the kettle. The kettle was closed so quickly that the Ukrainian soldiers inside Debaltsevo did not know about it. In the next hours, the troops of the self-proclaimed DNR wantonly burned the vehicles coming out of Debaltsevo. That was how the deputy head of the ATO (Anti-Terrorist Operation) was killed.

The special forces withdrew, and the positions taken by Cossack militia were blanketed by Ukrainian artillery fire. Meanwhile, Ukrainian soldiers began organizing a break-out from the kettle. A Russian tank battalion, which had been on the territory of Donetsk Region for several days already, was sent to hold the positions.

We spoke in Donetsk, in the burn center of the regional central clinical hospital.

On February 19, I was blown up. It was twilight. The 19th according to the Buddhist calendar was considered New Year's Day. So the year started out hard for me. (*He tries to smile, blood quickly flows from his lips.*) Yesterday they bound my face up with gauze. My face has completely dried up. They aren't doing an operation yet, because I will tolerate the trip worse. When I move my fingers, they also bleed. I hope to get to Russia as quickly as possible.

How were you wounded?

In a tank. It was a tank battle. I hit the enemy's tank, and it exploded. I hit another tank, but it had defenses, it's defenses worked well. It turned around,

The sound is so deafening — “diinnngg”. I opened my eyes — I see fire before my eyes, a very bright light. I hear a sound like “trrts, trrts,” that’s the powder exploding in the cartridges. I try to open the hatch, but I can’t get it open. The only thing I could think was, that’s it, I’ll die. I think, what, this is it? I lived 20 years — and that’s it? Then, right away there was a defensive reaction in my head. I moved, I could move, that meant I was alive. If I was alive, that meant I could crawl out.

I tried again to open the hatch. It opened. I crawled out of the tank, and fell from the tank, and I rolled around to put the flames out. I saw a little bit of snow — and I crawled toward the snow. I rolled around, and loosened up. But how can you loosen up? I sense that my whole face was on fire, my helmet with mufflers was on fire, I took my helmet off with my hands, and I look and see the skin from my hands was peeling off along with the helmet. Then I put the fire out on my hands, then let’s get going, find some snow. Then a BMP came and the driver ran out, “Bro, bro, come here.” I look and I see he has a red fire extinguisher. He doused me, I ran toward him. He shouted, “Lie down, lie down!” and he lay down on me, still putting the flames out. The commander of the platoon fished out some promedol [anesthetic] — I remember exactly, and I was immediately stuffed into the BMP. And we fought our way out of there. Then they transferred me to a tank, and we went to some sort of village in the tank. then some man shot me up with something there, and said something to me, and talked with me. Then we left for Gorlovka. They shot up my legs, and injected promedol into my muscles so that I would not lose consciousness. In Gorlovka, I was placed in intensive care, as far as I recall. Then early in the morning, I was brought to Donetsk. I woke up from feeling hungry. I woke up on the 20th. Well, they fed me, as best they could.

## **The Trip**

I was drafted on November 25, 2013. I came voluntarily. Only contract soldiers are sent here, but I was sent to Rostov, as a draftee. Well, as a draftee, I gave good results — in artillery training and physical training. I was drafted in fact from Chita, I passed a course in Chita, and I decided to stay in Ulan-Ude. In June, I wrote a report with a request. I ended up in the second battalion. But the second battalion — in the event of war — was always the first echelon to move out, in any army unit there is such a division. Of course we had contract soldiers in the battalion, but mainly it was recruits. But closer to fall, in October, they began to gather the contractors from all the battalions of our unit in order to create out of them one battalion. We didn't have enough contractors in the unit in order to make up a tank battalion, therefore they threw in some contractors for us from the city of Kyakhta. They got us all together in a bunch, we got to know each other, we lived together for about four days, and then that was it, to the echelon.

My draft term was supposed to end November 27. But when we came to Rostov in October, my draft term was still going on. So my contract began here already. We are the fifth separate tank brigade.

You weren't discharged?

No, I wasn't discharged.

You went for training?

We were told that it was for training but we knew where we were going. We all knew where we were going. I was already prepared morally and psychologically, that I'd have to go to Ukraine.

Back in Ulan-Ude, we had painted over the tanks. Right at the train. We painted over the numbers, if someone had unit markings on their tank, those too. We took off our patches and chevrons when we got here, to the training ground. Everything was taken off...for the purposes of maskirovka

And we had experienced guys in our battalion. Some had already been a year or a bit more on contract, some had been 20 years. They said: don't listen to the command, we're going to bomb the khokhly [pejorative term for Ukrainians–The Interpreter]. If they even conduct exercises, even so you will still be sent to bomb khokhly.

Really, a lot of echelons were travelling. Everyone spent the night in our barracks. Before us, there were guys from the spetsnaz from Khabarovsk, from various cities, only from the east. One after another, you know? Every day. Ours went fifth, on the 25th or 27th of October.

The offload ramp was in Matveyev Kurgan. While we went from Ulan-Ude to Matveyev Kurgan, we saw so many cities. We travelled for 10 days. The closer we got, the more people welcomed us. They waved their hands, they blessed us. We're mainly all Buryats, see. They were blessing us [i.e. Christians were making the sign of the cross over Buddhists–The Interpreter]. (He laughs, and starts bleeding again.)

And here, too, when we were moving around. Grandmothers, grandfathers, local children would bless us...The old ladies would cry.

What Training Ground?

Kuzminsky. There are a lot of such training grounds. Tent cities. Some would move in, others would move out. We would meet the previous echelons there. The Kantemir Brigade from the Moscow suburbs came after us. They have paratroopers there and one tank company that is not so powerful. But our tank battalion has 31 tanks. You can do something serious with that.

Could you refuse?

Did you have to write up a report?

I don't know. I didn't refuse, see. And in Rostov there were some who refused. I know one from our battalion, Vanya [Ivan] Romanov. He and I had served together in one company and gone through the course together. He was a person of low priorities. Lt. Gen. Surovikin, commander of the Eastern Military District came to visit our training ground before New Year's. He came to our tank company. He shook everyone's hands... He took Ivan back with him, to the homeland, in Novosibirsk. I don't know what happened with Romanov. But the fact is that you could leave.

Did Surovikin say anything about Donetsk, about Ukraine?

He didn't say anything. (Laughs.)

## **War**

How many of you went over?

We ended up with 31 tanks in the battalion. We went in in companies. Ten tanks in each company. In addition to the ten tanks were three BMPs, a medical MT-LB and five Ural trucks with ammunition. So this is the composition of a tactical company group. The tank battalion is made up of around 120 people – three tank companies, a support platoon and a communications platoon. Plus infantry, of course. Approximately 300 people went over. All from Ulan-Ude. The majority were Buryats. The locals looked at us, they say “you're audacious guys.” But we Buddhists are like that. We believe in the almighty, the three elements and reincarnation. If you die, you're bound to be born again.

Did they explain to you on the ground that you were to seal the kettle?

out. Fire for effect. .

Did your commanders go with you?

Our commanders are all great guys. Not one of those commanders lost their nerve or backed away from anything. We're all on the same level. Regardless of whether you're a colonel or a private. Because we fight side by side. The commander of my battalion... He is now in Rostov, he got burnt in a tank just like me... My battalion commander, a colonel. Was sometime around the 12th or the 14th. Because we had to liberate one village. I can't remember what it was called. We won the village back... everything was good...

We played at carousel. This is a tactical method for combat firing with tanks. Three or four tanks go up to the front-line firing position, shoot, and, as they run out of ammunition, another three or four tanks go forward to replace them as they are reloaded. That's how we alternated.

But our battalion commander was unlucky. While operating in a carousel, when you shoot from the tank... a tank is a very temperamental machine, sometimes a shot is delayed. It seems like you've fired, but it hasn't shot a damned thing. The tank simply does not fire, it flat-out doesn't fire at all. The first tank fires – bang, the second, the third tank – hangs up. And the dillweeds [Ukrainians] pound them. That's that. The battalion commander jumped into his tank, set off – he destroyed one tank, the second destroyed him.

The gunner of the battalion commander's tank, Chipa, was burnt too. The driver, the drivers are generally OK. You sit inside the tank, you have all this heavy armour around, you're completely covered from everything. It's much easier for drivers to survive. If a shell strikes the turret, the gunner and commander are usually set on fire, but the driver doesn't burn, if they're clever – there's a button in the tank – emergency turret rotation. It turns to

I look at mine, he's unharmed, unscathed. I look at my commander... Spartak – he's lying there, in the corridor. But he wasn't as badly burnt as I was. His hatch opened immediately, but mine was shut... I'm the gunner, next to him. A tank burns for a long time.

Was anyone killed?

No. There's Minakov, whose leg was torn off in a tank. Was torn apart at the top of his boots. And he has no toes on his right foot, also torn apart. The battalion commander was torched, the gunner Chipa, Spartak... This is from my memory.

Did you go into combat with the militiamen? Did your roles overlap?

No. They're just...

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# Annex 565

BBC News, Putin Reveals Secrets of Russia's Crimea Takeover Plot (9 March 2015)



# Putin reveals secrets of Russia's Crimea takeover plot

bbc.com/news/world-europe-31796226

## Europe

Media playback is unsupported on your device

Media caption In March, Russian TV produced a lavish film on the annexation of Crimea

Vladimir Putin has admitted for the first time that the plan to annex Crimea was ordered weeks before the referendum on self-determination.

Crimea was formally absorbed into Russia on 18 March, to international condemnation, after unidentified gunmen took over the peninsula.

Mr Putin said on TV he had ordered work on "returning Crimea" to begin at an all-night meeting on 22 February.

The meeting was called after Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich was ousted.

Speaking last year, Mr Putin had said only that he took his final decision about Crimea after secret, undated opinion polls showed 80% of Crimeans favoured joining Russia.

The findings of these polls were borne out by the outcome of the referendum on 16 March, he told Russian state TV last April.

Image copyright AFP

Image caption Mr Putin's image is prominent in Crimea, as seen in this mural in the city of Sevastopol



Image copyright AP

Image caption Mr Putin celebrated Victory Day last year with a military parade in Sevastopol



Image copyright Getty Images

Image caption "Little green men" appeared in Crimea before the referendum

Image copyright AP

Image caption Ukraine's former president Viktor Yanukovich fled Kiev on 22 February 2014

Speaking in a forthcoming Russian TV documentary, Mr Putin said a meeting with officials had been held on 22-23

February to plan the rescue of Ukraine's deposed president.

"I invited the leaders of our special services and the defence ministry to the Kremlin and set them the task of saving the life of the president of Ukraine, who would simply have been liquidated," he said.

"We finished about seven in the morning. When we were parting, I told all my colleagues, 'We are forced to begin the work to bring Crimea back into Russia'."

The trailer for *The Path To The Motherland* was broadcast on Sunday night with no release date announced.

On 27 February, unidentified armed men seized the local parliament and local government buildings in Crimea, raising the Russian flag.

Among them appeared to be regular soldiers without military insignia, who were dubbed the "little green men".

Mr Putin subsequently admitted deploying troops on the peninsula to "stand behind Crimea's self-defence forces".



## Timeline: How Crimea was annexed

- 22 February, former Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich flees Kiev after violent protests
- 23 February, Russian President Vladimir Putin plans to rescue Mr Yanukovich and annexe Crimea
- 27 February, pro-Russian gunmen seize Crimea's parliament and other key buildings
- 28 February, unidentified soldiers in combat fatigues occupy two airports in Crimea
- 1 March, Russian parliament approves Mr Putin's request to use force in Ukraine
- 16 March, 97% of voters in Crimea agree to join Russia
- 18 March, Mr Putin signs a bill absorbing Crimea into the Russian Federation

[Ukraine crisis: Timeline](#)

The formal annexation of Crimea sparked unrest in eastern Ukraine on 7 April, when pro-Russian protesters occupied government buildings in Donetsk, Luhansk and Kharkiv demanding independence.

A month later, pro-Russian separatists in Donetsk and Luhansk declared independence from Ukraine after unrecognised referendums.

Ukraine responded by launching an "anti-terrorist operation" against them and the region became engulfed in a conflict which has cost at least 6,000 lives and driven more than a million people from their homes, according to the UN.

The Ukrainian government, Western leaders and Nato say there is clear evidence that Russia is helping the separatists with heavy weapons and soldiers. Independent experts echo that accusation.

Moscow denies it, insisting that any Russians serving with the rebels are "volunteers".

Full details of Mr Yanukovich's escape from Ukraine are unclear although Mr Putin spoke of preparations to evacuate him from Donetsk.

"Heavy machine guns were placed there, so as not to waste time talking," he added, with preparations made by land, sea and air.

The documentary, which Russian TV says will be broadcast soon, was made by Andrei Kondrashov, a journalist with state-run channel Rossiya-1.

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# Annex 566

DW, Putin reveals details of decision to annex Crimea, (9 March 2015)



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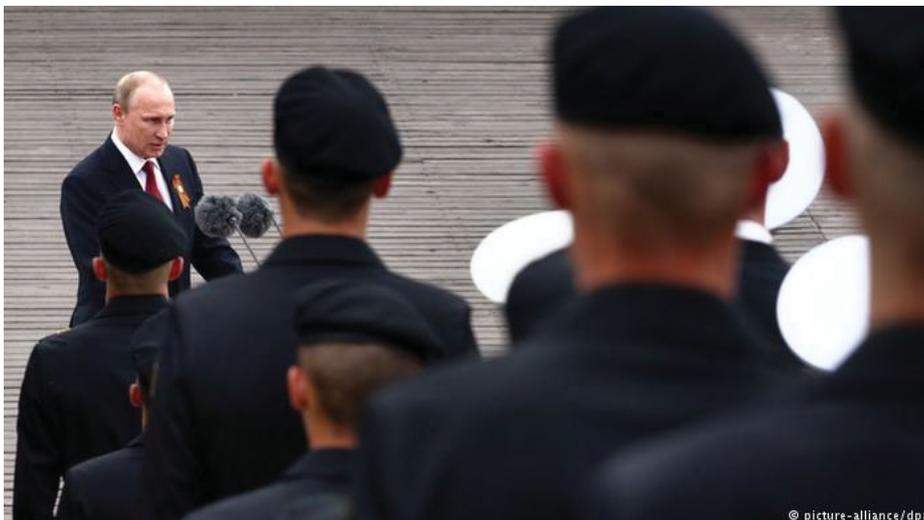
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## Putin reveals details of decision to annex Crimea

Russian President Vladimir Putin has described the moment he claims to have ordered the incorporation of Crimea into the Russian Federation. Details of the overnight meeting came to light in a forthcoming documentary.



Putin said he decided to begin the annexation of Crimea when he met security officials to discuss rescue plans for ousted Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich.

In a trailer for the documentary titled "Homeward Bound," Putin said it had been decided upon in an overnight meeting from February 22 to 23. At the end, he told defense ministry officials and special forces commanders to start work on the annexation.

"We ended at about seven in the morning," Putin said in the trailer. "When we were saying goodbye, I said to all my colleagues: we must start working on returning Crimea to Russia."

By late February, Yanukovich had already arrived in Russia, and unmarked Russian forces were preparing to establish a presence in Crimea. Soldiers took over the Crimean local parliament and voted in a new government, with the region being incorporated two days after a [March 16 referendum in favor of joining Russia](#).

### Changing story of occupation

The military operation was initially kept secret with the Kremlin insisting that only locals were involved in the uprising against Kyiv. Putin later conceded Russian troops were involved, particularly in the build-up to the cessation vote. Russian officials had previously said the annexation decision, [to which Kyiv has strongly objected](#), was taken only after the referendum.

Russian soldiers have been given medals "For returning Crimea" that cite the beginning of the operation as February 20, before the overnight meeting even took place.



Home to Russia's Black Sea fleet, Crimea was given by Russia to Ukraine when both were part of the USSR

Khrushchev as a "gift" to Ukraine from Russia in 1954 when both countries were part of the Soviet Union.

Fighting in the eastern Ukraine regions of Donetsk and Luhansk, which has [killed more than 6,000 people](#), flared up in April in the wake of Crimea's annexation by Russia.

rc/jr (AP, AFP, dpa, Reuters)

Putin also said the Russian military had been preparing to fight its way into the eastern city of Donetsk to rescue Yanukovich, with Putin claiming the toppled pro-Russian leader would have otherwise been killed.

"We got ready to get him out of Donetsk by land, by sea and by air," said Putin.

The minute-long trailer, aired late on Sunday by state television channel Rossiya-1, featured dramatic music and shots of the Crimean coast. The channel did not specify when the full film would be shown, only that it would be broadcast "soon."

Crimea has an ethnic Russian majority and is the base of Moscow's Black Sea fleet. Having been part of the Russian empire, it was transferred by Kremlin leader Nikita

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#### DW RECOMMENDS

##### UN: More than 6,000 killed in Ukraine war

More than 6,000 people have been killed since eastern Ukraine's separatist insurgency erupted last April, the UN says. The Geneva-based body warned the situation had "dramatically deteriorated" in recent months. (02.03.2015)

##### Ukraine's new president rejects annexation of Crimea

Ukraine's new president, Petro Poroshenko, has vowed to maintain the territorial integrity of his country, including Crimea. In his inauguration speech, he also vowed to pursue closer ties with the European Union. (07.06.2014)

##### Crimea headed for rocky transition

The majority of Crimea's inhabitants have chosen to split from Ukraine and join Russia. Their decision, however, will bring far-reaching changes and a host of international legal problems. (18.03.2014)

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# Annex 567

Meduza, 'I Serve the Russian Federation!' Soldiers Deployed During the Annexation of Crimea  
Speak (16 March 2015)



**meduza**

## 'I serve the Russian Federation!' Soldiers deployed during the annexation of Crimea speak

Meduza

10:52, 16 march 2015



Photo: Daniel Leal-Olivas / Corbis / Vida Press

It's more or less common knowledge that the Russian military was directly involved in the annexation of Crimea in March 2014. Very little is known, however, about the Russian servicemen deployed in Crimea before and during the controversial referendum that resulted in the peninsula's secession from Ukraine and absorption into the Russian Federation. In a special report for *Meduza*, **Dmitry Pashinsky** spoke to several Russian nationals who were awarded medals *For Returning Crimea*.

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### Oleg Teryushin

*23-years-old, Oleg is a sergeant of the 31st air assault brigade of Ulyanovsk. The brigade was relocated to Crimea from Russia for security purposes in March 2014, when Crimeans voted on seceding from Ukraine and joining the Russian Federation.*

**WE USE COOKIES!**  
**WHAT DOES IT MEAN?**





Oleg Teryushin

Photo: vk.com

I wanted to serve in the military ever since I was a kid. I didn't even have other career options in mind. I mean, someone has to defend the Motherland, right? My family actually doesn't have any connection to the army, but my hometown, Ulyanovsk, where I was born and raised, does. A lot of military people live here, especially paratroopers. That's why, as soon as I turned 18, practically the next day I went to the military enlistment office without even waiting to get my draft notice in the mail.

At first, I served as a foot soldier in the 419th motorized rifle regiment in the city of Kovrov. After one year, I came back home and almost immediately signed a contract with the paratroopers. That's how I became a sergeant of the 31st air assault brigade of Ulyanovsk. Now I'm 23, and I've spent five years of my life in the military, and another month and a half returning Crimea to Russia. This year, I'm planning to get into the Ryazan Higher Airborne Command School to keep rising in the ranks, hopefully becoming a lieutenant. The medal I got "for returning Crimea," though, won't be much help in getting into the school. Recommendations from the higher ups are really important, as are my personal traits. The medal is more for my own memory. So I have something to tell my grandchildren.

We were among the first to end up in Crimea on February 24, [2014]. Two days earlier, we awoke to the alarm in our barracks. We formed tactical groups and took planes to Anapa. From Anapa, we rode trucks to Novorossiysk, and from there we took a big

[WE USE COOKIES!  
WHAT DOES IT MEAN?](#)

No one aside from our commanders had any idea about the operation to return Crimea to Russia. They just put us in the part of the ship used for cargo. And in the morning we got out onto the shore and realized that we were somewhere in Sevastopol, at the naval station of the Black Sea Fleet.

As soon as we got out onto the shore, we were told to take any symbols and insignia off our uniforms, so that our presence on the peninsula wasn't so apparent, to avoid panic. We were all given green balaclavas, dark sunglasses, and knee and elbow pads. I think we were some of the first to be called "polite people." We were allowed to wear insignia with the Russian flag again only after the referendum.

We spent just a few days in Sevastopol. Our main task was to be ready to take on any assignment. Soon after that, our brigade relocated to the village Perevalnoe, where we set up camp. Mostly Ulyanovsk paratroopers camped with us, about 2,000 of them. This amount was necessary to demonstrate the strength of the Russian military. At this camp, our commanders talked to the Ukrainian side, trying to negotiate a timetable for their surrender. There was a lot of Ukrainian military there before the referendum. But we didn't have any clashes with them. The officers had three options: (1) leave the peninsula and go to Ukraine, (2) join the Russian forces while retaining their ranks, (3) quit the military. If I were them, I would have chosen the first option, since I'm a patriot. But there weren't many of them who did that. Most of them have families in Crimea and they had to join our forces and swear an oath to the Russian flag.

Then again, I remember there was a shooting range near us where two battalions were stationed. Not a single soldier from these two battalions remained. They all went to Ukraine. I really respected that act of patriotism.

On the day of the referendum, March 16, we went on duty with reinforcements. We took our posts early in the morning and tied white ribbons to our sleeves to show that we were peacekeepers, that we weren't there to start any military aggression. But not everyone agreed with this.

There were constant provocations from the journalists. Not Russian journalists, but Ukrainian, American, and European ones. For example, they would stand in front of our checkpoints and film reports with us in the background, talking about how Russian troops had occupied Crimea. I don't know English or Ukrainian that well, but I could still understand the gist of what they were saying. But we didn't think of ourselves as occupying the peninsula. We were just carrying out orders and ensuring the security of Crimeans who made their decision to become a part of Russia. They were unhappy with the new government [in Ukraine], with its fascist tendencies, just like they didn't like the corrupt government of Yanukovych. That's why the bile of the foreign reporters came from their jealousy towards the triumph of real democracy in Crimea.

Our boys also learned from their relatives and friends in Ukraine that the local news reports really smeared us, saying we were practically shooting people. I guess they

were talking about the people who came to our camp every day and said, “Thank you, Russian brothers! Finally we’ll live like we lived before.”

I spent a month and a half in Crimea, in all. I was home by April 12, and in the middle of May I got my medal. I remember, how on the flight home, our commander said, “Well, guys, you really made history!” Everyone in the airplane stood up and sang the national anthem. Unforgettable!

## Arkady

*From 2013 to 2014, Arkady served as a conscript in Russia’s motorized infantry. He completed two tours of duty in Crimea, after which, he says, he went to the “war zone” at the border between Russia and Ukraine in Rostov, where he transported ammunition to Russian “Grad” missile installations. Arkady’s comments are published here on the condition of anonymity.*

I was born and raised in a small village. You’ve never heard of it, of course. It’s one of those remote villages you can’t find even with a map, if you don’t know the roads. Only the elderly haven’t left, and they’ve only managed to survive this long because of their gardens. The village hasn’t had any other kind of work for years; the meat-packing factory, the only employer, was long ago abandoned and now awaits demolition. Given all this, all the young people left a long time ago for the city to find jobs or go study. A few years ago, my family left, too. Like the others, it was forever.

Before I got to the Army, I worked for a taxi company, while studying at a vocational school to be a car mechanic. With my diploma, I received a summons from the recruiting office. I was drafted into the motorized infantry, because of my driving experience and that fact that I already held commercial driver’s licenses.

Generally, the motorized infantry provides logistical support to various other military units. Simply put, it’s like a giant army of “truckers” and “taxi drivers.” The job isn’t too demanding, and soldiers don’t have to get their hands dirty. You’re where it’s warm, turning a steering wheel and watching the road carefully, so the truck doesn’t end up in a ditch, or it’s your head if something happens, should you survive the accident. (We weren’t transporting just field rations, after all, but also weapons and ammo.)

Our unit was originally stationed in Stavropol Krai, where I spent the first four months of my service. It wasn’t the most interesting time of my life: training, the military oath, and more training. On March 17 exactly, immediately after the referendum in Crimea, we were sent there for our first tour of duty. A convoy of 10 trucks carried humanitarian aid for soldiers: food, ammunition, soap, refrigerators, and furniture. They didn’t really explain any of it to us. They just raised the alarm in the middle of the night, lined us up, and read us a short briefing.

First, we were forbidden to stop on our own. In the event of an accident, we were told

avoid all contact with local civilians, journalists, other soldiers, and anybody else. We were also told not to mention the mission to our parents, partners, or friends—to tell no one. The gag order was only lifted a couple of months later.

The roads we traveled from Stavropol Krai to Sevastopol took us about 3-4 days to cover. We only moved at night, when the highways were empty. There were no serious problems along the way. Only the older trucks would break down occasionally. We'd stop, make some quick repairs, and get back on the road. The border was completely open, when we got there. I didn't notice a single Ukrainian guard. Our troops were everywhere, and they gave us the "green light." It was impossible to understand which units exactly were manning the checkpoints, let alone who was patrolling the city and its suburbs.

They wore no insignia, except Saint George's Ribbons tied to their sleeves and, more rarely, badges bearing the Russian tricolor. Most likely, these were special forces soldiers from Russia's Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU), though there were enough different kinds of troops roaming the military bases then that it looked like a bonafide Victory Day Parade. By that time, they'd managed to bring in an enormous number of soldiers: marines, paratroopers, aviation, and artillery. Having delivered the supplies, we too bunked at a Russian military base in Sevastopol. We didn't budge from behind the base's fences for a week. We slept right in our trucks, which were luckily equipped with sleeping bags.

My second tour in Crimea took place at some point in the middle or the end of April. I can't remember when exactly. This was my last trip to Crimea while in the service. We drove the same route, without any changes: Stavropol to Sevastopol. This time, though, we transported weapons and ammo, not just humanitarian aid, and were escorted by a convoy of military inspection vehicles. The boxes were sealed, and we clearly weren't supposed to know what was inside. Our job was to deliver the goods on time and as requested.

I still had six months before being discharged with our company started getting really busy. First we were transferred to Mozdok [in North Ossetia]. From there, we were sent in a large convoy (25 trucks) toward the war zone, stopping along the way in Tikhoretsk [in Krasnodar Krai] to pick up some Grad missiles at a military warehouse. We were told to deliver the ammo to Rostov. There, along the border between Russia and Ukraine, stood our soldiers, a whole unit. They were living in field camps divided into cordoned-off areas near the villages Russkoye and Kuybyshevo, and the town Kamensk-Shakhtinsky. They lied to the locals, saying the military was conducting training exercises. But people aren't fools, and they understood what was going on.

We made trips to the border area until late November, shuttling Grad missiles and other long-range weaponry like Gvozdika howitzer ammunition. I counted 15-20 pieces of heavy weapons equipment near every village. They're located about 5-7

farther away. Their firing range is 40-50 kilometers (25-31 miles), so none of this limited their ability to hit Ukrainian positions. The other side responds with the same weapons. Several times, I saw exchanges of artillery fire. I still remember how one night I drove up to one of the units stationed in Kuybyshevo. The ground crew unloaded the ammunition and the artillerymen immediately loaded it into their weapons and fired! Then they did it again. And again! When a Grad missile is fired, it's very frightening and very beautiful, especially at night.

Besides the artillerymen stationed at the border, there are also paratroopers, tank operators, and scouts from the GRU. Without exception, they're all contract soldiers without official insignia, though there are some such soldiers in the motorized motorized infantry, too. It's precisely the contract soldiers who are charged with transporting the "200" and "300" cargos (the bodies of soldiers killed or wounded in action). We were not entrusted with such deliveries. There are also some "militiamen" from eastern Ukraine serving in Russia near the border. It's easy to tell them from the rest: they're dressed in God-knows-what, they're often unshaven, and their haircuts don't conform to official regulations.

They offered to keep me on as a contract soldier, but I refused. The pay was lousy: 17,000 rubles (\$280) a month. For example, a sergeant in the paratroopers gets 30,000-40,000 rubles (\$490-\$645), and so on, depending on rank. The work is very risky, especially now. You can be shot at both near the border and quite far from it. I was lucky never to come under fire, but others in my convoy took fire, and there were even rumors about casualties, though I never saw with my own eyes anyone killed.

Most often, they shoot at those who cross the border. A couple of times, they asked to send us into Ukraine to the village of Snezhnoe, saying it was necessary to supply artillery ammo to our positions there, but our commander wouldn't sign off. He said he wouldn't give up his conscripted boys. Let them send the contract soldiers, he insisted. And so they did. What else could they do? Orders are orders, after all.

In a sense, I consider myself a war veteran, though it sounds rather forced coming out of my mouth. I wish they'd just put an end to this senseless war, or at least stop hiding it. And I wish they could award us not only with medals "For Saving Crimea" (which many of us received before being discharged), but with some kind of formal veterans' benefits. Contract soldiers are deeply unhappy about participating in a "non-existent war," and many of them are quitting the military for precisely this reason. I know of more than a few cases like this.

## Alexei Karuna

*From 2013 to 2014, 20-year-old Alexei Karuna served the Black Sea Fleet, and was awarded a medal "for returning Crimea." He returned home to Pavlovsk, near Voronezh, a local celebrity. Town newspapers printed his photograph, and schools asked him to appear at "patriotic education" lessons.*

WE USE COOKIES!  
WHAT DOES IT MEAN?



Alexei Karuna

Photo: vk.com

I graduated from high school after the ninth grade and enrolled in a railroad technical college, but then I got expelled for fighting. I messed up this one kid, standing up for a girl. I also had bad attendance and acted out. We had to wear the same stupid uniform almost all the time, and I'm by nature a free-spirited person who isn't used to taking orders. I spent some time working in this shady agricultural business for a little while and then I joined the army.

I'd always looked at army service as something inevitable, like going to the dentist. You just suffer and endure. So dodging conscription was out of the question. I got the call one morning and reported to the recruitment office. After a medical examination, I was declared fit to serve.

"Where do you want to serve?" asked the officer sitting behind a big table.

"Nowhere, to be honest," I answered.

"What do you mean nowhere?! Everyone wants to serve in the airborne! In the marines! In the Spetsnaz [special forces]," he shouted while chopping the air with his hand. "But you don't want to serve anywhere!"

In the end, I decided to go to the Crimea, to the "resort." They said it's warm, there's the sea, the beach, and I'd earn a good salary. I thought there was no other choice anyway. So I said, okay, let's go to the Crimea.

When I got to Sevastopol, I did my basic training, and then I was stationed on a military ship positioned at the "wall" on the Black Sea. A month later I ended up

remaining ten months, I served as a mechanic in the Black Sea Fleet. Our detachment was stationed in the village of Gvardeiskiy, in the Simferopol region, where the 24th Ground Attack aviation unit is based. You remember the story, when the USS Donald Cook was training off the Black Sea coast, and one of our Su-24s circled over it, causing its electronic equipment to fail. That was our Su-24.\* Soon, the Air Force captured the airport, and we were moved to Sevastopol.

During my service, we usually had to be "shepherds," which is army slang meaning that we had to unload and carry things. Almost every day in the Crimea, cargo planes would fly in carrying ammunition. I probably unloaded a whole squadron's worth of ammo all by myself. I remember once a huge IL-76 flew in, and it took us three days to unload it all. It was jam-packed with barbed wire and I thought that it would be enough to fence in the entire peninsula.

I first heard about the plans to annex the Crimea in early February. We were certainly aware of what was happening in Ukraine, because every night all the soldiers went to watch the news in a dedicated room with a TV. This was mandatory by order. At the same time, our military began to enter Crimea actively. They created and organized patrols to prevent a Maidan movement there, because Crimeans were strongly against the new Ukrainian government. Hence the idea to join Russia. It didn't just come into Putin's mind; the residents of the Crimea wanted it. We talked a lot with the locals, and I know what I'm talking about. When it comes to Sevastopol, there was a Russian tricolor hanging from every balcony.

On the eve of the referendum, we were warned that the alarm would be raised and we had to be ready. The whole day we sat wearing body armor. Provocations were expected from Ukrainian nationalists and the Crimean Tatars. Some of them were for joining the Russian Federation, or rather, they didn't care whether the future was with the Russians or the Ukrainians. Others wanted Crimea to remain a part of Ukraine. But everything went very quietly, because so many Russian troops were in such a tiny place! The Black Sea fleet had 15,000 people, another 20,000 soldiers were on the ground, plus there were the special forces, located in the city. Any resistance would have been crushed. And no one resisted.

In general, we only encountered Ukrainian military personnel when some of them began to cross over to our side, taking the oath. For example, the deputy commander of our unit, a captain of the second rank, was a former Ukrainian officer—a defector. He didn't like us conscripts. Once he came into the barracks, and one of us ventured to address him.

“Comrade Captain of the second rank, we have few people left. Please reduce the workload.”

“I bet they make you clean your weapons?”

“Well we’ll fix that,” he said.

And he kept his promise, of course. We thought his bias towards us might have been a sort of revenge for the annexation of Crimea.

Many Ukrainian officers defected. Their ships and units were not seized by force. Wherever our troops appeared, they immediately raised the white flag. They were told that those who wished to join the Russian army were welcome to take the oath, and they would keep their ranks. Some went to Ukraine, and some were on our side. What eventually happened to the Ukrainian ships is a good question. I don't know. I do know that we unloaded weapons and ammunition from the Ukrainian units. I don't know about the ships. But I would have really liked to see the ships end up with us. They're good trophies.

Generally speaking, I'm a big patriot, and I was thrilled to hear the news about Crimea's return. But most of my colleagues were close to getting out. They had one thought: hurry home. That's the army for you. I would serve again, if I had the chance. I didn't end up going to the front lines because that would have taken a whole mountain of paperwork.

During the service, I wrote a request to switch to contract service. I had ten days left on duty, but they didn't manage to prepare a contract for me in time. Now I'm not really thinking about returning to the army. Our major joked once that he would call me again, if Russia continued reclaiming land from the former Soviet Union.

The medals were awarded on March 28. We were told earlier that morning, so we could put on our dress uniforms, and we lined up on the parade grounds. The unit commander came out with the chief of staff and called each man individually.

“Sailor, Karuna!”

“Present!”

“Step forward to receive your award!”

“Yes sir!”

I took three steps forward and said, “Sailor Karuna, reporting!”

The colonel presented a medal in a box along with a certificate, and in a quiet, fatherly tone says:

“Thank you very much.”

Then you turn 180 degrees and while saluting you shout:

“I serve the Russian Federation!”

And, for half the day, that's how they gave out awards. We wondered if any former members of the Ukrainian military got awards for returning the Crimea. It would have been funny to see.

Now it seems to me that the medal has brought me no good, apart from the emotional thrill and the memories I'll have for the rest of my life. On the other hand, we did not serve like others did. My friends come back from the army and I ask them: "How was the service?" And they reply: "Nothing special. We dug out a fence until lunch! We hauled bags!" And though we also hauled bags, we came back with an award. The only thing that marred my service was lower wages. The fact is that while the Crimea was considered abroad, we received the 4800 hryvnia for the last month. That was about 20,000 rubles [\$320 at today's currency exchange rate]. And then we received only two thousand. That's all Russian conscripts get. Many of them were extremely dissatisfied. When I heard about it, I just laughed. "Well, here's to returning home to Russia!" I said to myself.

*\*The claim about the USS Donald Cook's equipment failure comes from Voice of Russia and was never independently confirmed. During the incident, the Donald Cook did not go to battle stations and continued its mission in the Black Sea without further incident.*



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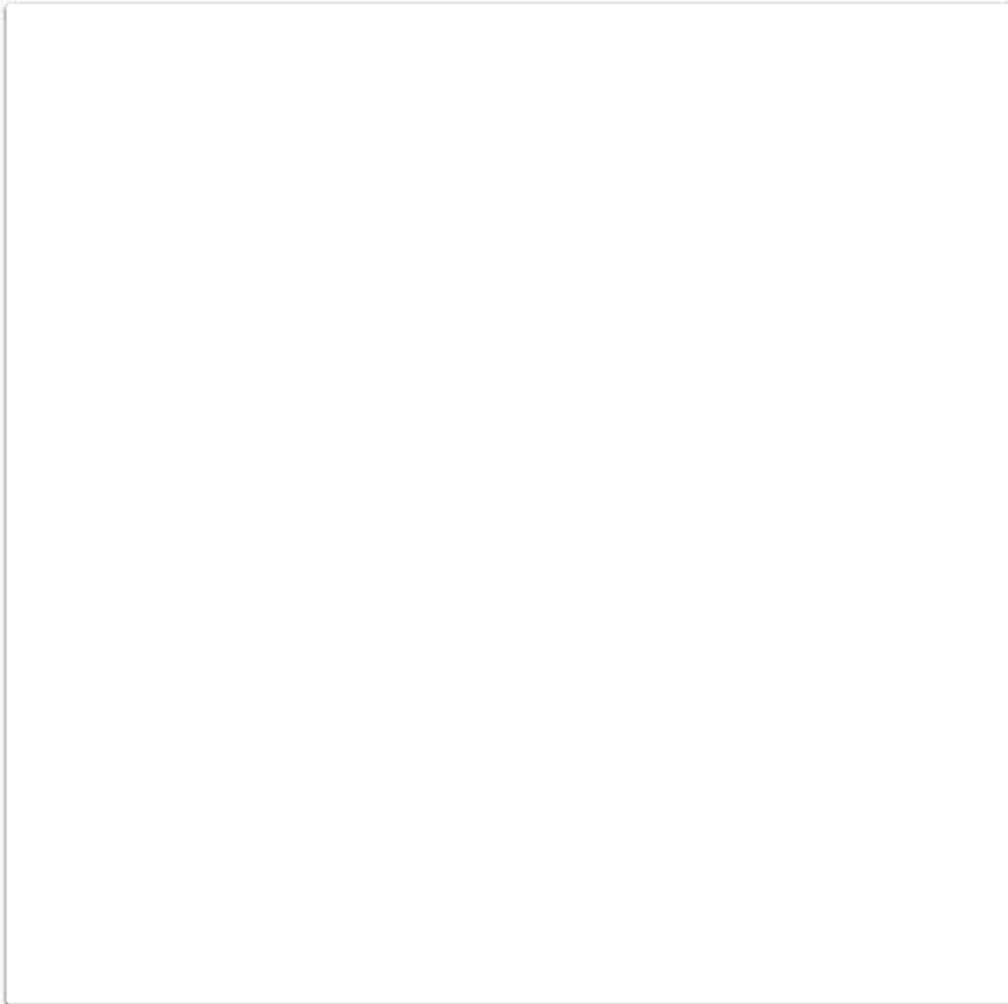
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# Annex 568

Maxim Tucker, Russia Launches Next Deadly Phase of Hybrid War on Ukraine, Newsweek (31 March 2015)



# Russia Launches Next Deadly Phase of Hybrid War on Ukraine

 [newsweek.com/2015/04/10/russia-launches-next-deadly-phase-hybrid-war-ukraine-318218.html](http://newsweek.com/2015/04/10/russia-launches-next-deadly-phase-hybrid-war-ukraine-318218.html)

Maxim Tucker

March 31, 2015



Pushing his baby daughter in a pram in front of him, 37-year-old Dmitriy Komyakov paused as marchers ahead adjusted their positions around a huge Ukrainian flag. It was a bright day in Kharkiv, Ukraine's second largest city. A good day for the hundreds in attendance to celebrate one year since Euromaidan demonstrators ousted president Viktor Yanukovich.

Just as the march moved off again, an explosion ripped into the crowd. Komyakov was close enough to feel the heat of the blast wave. As bloodied victims slumped to the floor, he searched for his wife and 12-year-old daughter among the panicked crowd. "I could see pieces of metal flying and people starting to fall," he says. "First I checked the baby to see if she was injured, then myself, looked around and that's when my wife and daughter ran to me." Miraculously, the whole family had escaped unscathed. But four people, including two teenage boys, were killed in that blast and another nine seriously wounded.

Ukraine's state security service, the SBU, says Russia has entered into a new phase of its campaign to destabilise Ukraine, with the 22 February attack in Kharkiv just one of a series of bombings orchestrated by Russian spy services, the FSB and the GRU. "It starts with the FSB's security centres 16 and 18, operating out of Skolkovo, Russia," says Vitaliy Naida, head of the SBU department responsible for intercepting online traffic. "These centres are in charge of information warfare. They send out propaganda, false information via social media. Re-captioned images from Syria, war crimes from Serbia – they're used to radicalise and then recruit Ukrainians."

He takes a suspected three-man terror cell from Dnipropetrovsk who are currently on trial as an example and walks Newsweek through the evidence, including photographs and video of weapons with Russian serial numbers and intercepted communications. Passed

instructions and weapons via dead-drops, the cell never met their handlers.

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“They were recruited by the FSB. Instructions were initially given in private messages via internet and in some cases Vkontakte [a Russian social network],” Naida says. “When they were detained and arrested, in their houses we found explosives, grenades, means of communications and printed messages – where to set explosives, where they should be placed to create panic.” Naida’s unit monitors roughly 600 “anti-Ukrainian” social network groups with hundreds of thousands of members. So far it has intercepted communications between 29 prolific group administrators and individuals using accounts linked to the Russian security services.

A cursory internet search reveals separatist groups are no longer just Ukraine’s problem. This year Armenia, the Baltic countries, Moldova and Poland have suddenly acquired new “People’s Republic” pages on social media, some overtly pro-Russian, others simply stoking ethnic tensions between majority and minority populations in the same city or country – be they Russians and Latvians, or Poles and Lithuanians.

In the meantime, not a week goes by in Ukraine without some form of terror-related incident – from a hoax bomb threat shutting down Lviv airport in western Ukraine, to a series of blasts targeting pro-Ukrainian political groups in Odessa, southern Ukraine. Infrastructure such as railways and financial institutions are hit, and in cases like Kharkiv, ordinary Ukrainians too.

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In Odessa, pro-Russian paraphernalia and ammunition were found when police detained a terror suspect. SBU

The Kharkiv bombers, a group known as the “Kharkiv Partisans”, say they were aiming to hit soldiers and political figures at the front of the march. In the end a parked truck bore the brunt of the blast, preventing dozens more casualties. Four of the “partisans” were captured immediately after the bombing, en route to destroy a pro-Ukrainian volunteers’ club with a rocket launcher.

In a video of one Partisan’s interrogation given to Newsweek by the SBU, an exhausted-sounding man whose face has been pixelated to obscure his identity ahead of trial, but possibly sporting a black eye, explains the attack. “I set the mine at a special angle to maximise impact for the front corners, where there were, as I know, volunteer battalion members and representatives of nationalist organisations.”

The man tells his interrogator that he met a Russian special forces operative while in Belgorod, Russia, in November, who asked him to video and photograph Ukrainian troop movements. In February, he says he was instructed to collect a MON-100 anti-personnel mine from a dead drop in Kharkiv, which he says he planted and detonated on the march route in return for \$10,000 – to be collected in Russia. The confession sounds forced and somewhat rehearsed. In a war where both sides have been caught out disseminating outrageous propaganda, it’s difficult to trust the SBU.

Yet Russian claims that the bombing campaign is part of a Ukrainian effort to discredit them are outlandish. Given the dire consequences for Ukraine in terms of damage to economy, potential investment and infrastructure, the idea that it is bombing itself hardly seems credible.



Police detained a terror suspect in Odessa SBU

An alternative theory is that Russia is using “partisans” as an extension of its hybrid war in Ukraine. There is already an overwhelming amount of independently verified photo, video and anecdotal evidence to demonstrate Russian involvement in the conflict in Ukraine, although Russian officials continue to deny aiding the separatists or sponsoring terrorism. “The goal is to destabilise the situation, to create panic, to damage the economy,” the SBU’s Naida says.

“They target Kiev, Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk, and Odessa, and all along the potential land corridor [between Russia and] Crimea – Mariupol, Kherson and Mykolaiv. The separatists need these cities. They know there is no chance for them to survive without the land corridor.”

Whatever the motive behind the attacks, it’s clear they are set to continue. On 25 March a railway line was blown up in Dnipropetrovsk. A 17 March SBU raid which hauled in five terror suspects in Odessa failed to prevent another bombing on 22 March. For families like the Komyakovs, the intensifying terror campaign is a second, crushing blow. They thought they had escaped the war when they fled their home in Stakhanov, a city in Luhansk region, devastated by shelling and now controlled by pro-Russian groups.

Dmitriy Komyakov had banned his 12-year-old daughter from attending any pro-Ukrainian meetings while in Stakhanov, knowing it would be dangerous. In Kharkiv, he thought it would be different. “My eldest daughter is 12, she’s very pro-Ukrainian, as all young people nowadays are,” sighs Komyakov. “She was always interested in these marches and meetings, always asking if she can go. But I never let her. Because in war, anything can

happen.”

Komyakov is utterly despondent. His family have already lost their home, and for months they have struggled to make ends meet as they tried to settle into a new life in Kharkiv. Now he is wondering whether to uproot them again. “It’s horrible but I have a feeling . . . and people here say that soon it will be the same in Kharkiv as in the city we came from. That’s a terrifying thought.”



# Annex 569

Olga Ivshyna, Commander of the "Special Forces of the DPR": Russia's Help was Decisive, BBC  
Russia (31 March 2015)



# “DNR Special Forces and Tactics” Fighter: Russia's Assistance Played a Decisive Role

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 /russian/international/2015/03/150325\_donetsk\_rebel\_interviewbbc.com

Andrey Goryanov, Olga Ivshina, BBC



Photo copyright holder: Dmitry Sapozhnikov

Image caption. Dmitry Sapozhnikov claims he fought in battles outside Donetsk since October 2014

**Dmitry Sapozhnikov, commander of a special forces and tactics unit of the self-proclaimed Donetsk People’s Republic, a native of Russia, discusses the previously unknown details of the battle of Debaltsevo in the following interview with BBC. According to him, Russian career officers, including generals, commanded the operation.**

Dmitry Sapozhnikov was born and raised in St. Petersburg. As he told BBC, at age 16 he joined the Russian monarchic movement, then graduated from the law department at St. Petersburg State University. However, politics has always been his passion. As he put it, he is now the leader of the St. Petersburg branch of the Monarchic Party of Russia. According to Delovoy Petersburg newspaper, in 2007 he founded the company Arkhangelsk Construction Timber that specialized in construction of wooden houses, which employed several dozen people several years later. However, business was not his passion but rather something he was forced to do: “In reality, for me business is a kind of lowly merchantry. Buy to sell... I had to take up this rather lowly occupation”.

In October 2014, Dmitry decided to go to Ukraine’s southeast to “defend Russian people”, in his own words. Dmitry told BBC that he commanded a special forces and tactics unit of the self-proclaimed Donetsk People’s

Republic (he is now on leave at his home in St. Petersburg) and participated in the battles of Donetsk Airport and Debaltsevo.

According to DNR representatives, it was special forces and tactics officers of the self-proclaimed “republic” that snapped closed the neck of the “Debaltsevo Pocket” in the latter half of February. According to Dmitry, his unit was prepared for a possible offensive on Mariupol at the time when he was in Ukraine’s southeast. He was interviewed over Skype two weeks ago. The last to questions were posed to Dmitry in person after his return to St. Petersburg.

***BBC: Dmitry, in your opinion, how effectively can volunteer battalions and regular units of the Ukrainian Army repel an offensive in the direction of Mariupol? Will the offensive be successful and quite swift as soon as you receive your orders?***

***D.S.:*** Let me let you in on a small secret. Take Debaltsevo, for example. We went there in early February, were stationed in Ulegorsk, and moved out to our positions in heavy vehicles. We laid the road to Logvinovo. However, we got encircled. There were very many Ukrainian soldiers who fought against us. But eventually we broke through and captured that “neck” in Logvinovo because our tank reinforcements arrived in 3-5 days. It was the Russian Army, a unit from Buryatia. Thanks to them and their heavy armored vehicles, we captured Debaltsevo.

Tanks and Russian units moved in from the direction of the Luhansk People’s Republic. But I think this is no longer a secret. Everybody acknowledges this, and so do the Russians. I have seen a lot of information on the Internet: they have admitted that Russian soldiers fight there, and there are very many units of theirs. So, in principle, I am not disclosing any secret information to you now. Everybody knows that already. *(After returning to St. Petersburg, Dmitry was amazed to learn how little the local residents knew about the involvement of the Russian military in battles in Ukraine’s southeast – Editor).*

Thanks to Russian units, we are able to capture new positions quickly. Outside Debaltsevo we stood thinking that we would have to keep them in that “pocket” for another month... We ended up capturing them in just three days. *(Russia has been consistently denying involvement in the conflict in Ukraine’s east or that it has been helping the separatists. Russia’s position is described in more detail at the end of the article – Editor).*

***BBC: Are we right in understanding your opinion that the assistance of the Russian military during such operations played a decisive role?***

***D.S.:*** Of course. Russian generals, Russian colonels. They made all the decisions,

**“I think there is a secret agreement.”**

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Photo copyright holder: Dmitry Sapozhnikov

Image caption. According to Dmitry, the assistance of Russian tank units during the battle of Debaltsevo was decisive.

**BBC: Do you often have to coordinate your operations with regular Russian units and Russian command? If so, how does this interaction happen?**

**D.S.:** Naturally, all operations, particularly such large-scale operations as “pockets”, are commanded by the Russian military, Russian generals. They make plans together with our commanders. I often had to visit the headquarters and deliver reports. This coordination happens in a quite simple manner. They come up with the plans together while we bring those plans to life.

**BBC: If you, could you reveal the names of those who commanded the Debaltsevo operation on the side of the Russian Army?**

**D.S.:** I think this would cause a stir in Russia. This is unnecessary.

**BBC: But do you actually receive direct orders from the Russian military?**

**D.S.:** We do in case of large-scale operations, but not under normal situations. For example, we received orders from Zakharchenko during the offensive on the Donetsk Airport and clashes near Spartak (*a village in Donetsk Oblast, Ukraine – Editor*).

**BBC: But Russia still refuses to admit that its career officers are involved in the Donbas conflict...**

**D.S.:** Yes. But I think this will happen the way it did in Crimea. Initially everybody denied the involvement of the Russian military in the annexation of Crimea. Now I can see they are no longer doing that. They have released a documentary: Putin’s admission about Crimea, how he himself saved Yanukovich (*he means the documentary by Andrey Kondrashov, Crimea: The Road Home” – Note by BBC*). I think the same thing will happen here. For that matter, it seems to me there exists some kind of secret agreement among Russia, the EU, and the USA, under which they refrain from exposing one another. For example, if the EU and the US wanted to expose Russia’s involvement here, I think this could have been easily accomplished. They would have simply photographed the vehicles, and that’s it. But they are not doing it. They are turning a blind eye to this. Meanwhile, Russians are turning a blind eye to the fact that the American and European military personnel are fighting on the Ukrainian side.

**BBC: Have you personally seen those Americans and Europeans here? Are there many of them?**

**D.S.:** Of course. When we took Debaltsevo, we captured some 300 international fighters (*this information could not be verified – Editor*). Americans, Europeans. Most of them were snipers. Very many instructors. Our instructors are mostly Russian officers, while theirs are, naturally, Western officers.

**BBC: Did the military personnel you took prisoner tell you anything? Did they tell you they were volunteers? Or did you capture them with identity documents of military personnel?**

**D.S.:** I did not speak to them personally, but they were said to be professionals. I think their paperwork is already in order, and they are staying here as representatives of private military companies.

## “They knew what they were up against”

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Photo copyright holder: Dmitry Sapozhnikov

Image caption. Sapozhnikov sustained a mild shell shock and was sent for treatment.

**BBC: You have said that you communicate with Russian soldiers a lot. What is their morale like? How do they feel about fighting a war in eastern Ukraine?**

**D.S.:** Here I met only Russian military personnel fighting under contract. There was a unit from Buryatia outside Debaltsevo. There were Buryats only. They said that everybody knew perfectly well where they were going, but the official legend was that "we're going for training". Word has it that they had been transported in freight cars at night so nobody would see anything. They say there were some who refused to go. They could easily say no. But those who came here, they did so voluntarily and knew what they were up against.

**BBC: In your opinion, how much longer will this conflict last?**

**D.S.:** All of this will continue until Ukraine gives up. But everything seems to be going that way already. I have been communicating with a young lady from Odesa. She says that they buy bread for 30 hryvnias per loaf now (*according to the Ukrainian Service of BBC, bread costs 7 to 10 hryvnias per loaf – Editor*). This is horrible! It's not surprising that the people are rebelling. We will wait for a change of government. My observation is that the Ukrainian people mostly oppose the war. But the Ukrainian authorities are determined to continue the conflict. If there's a change of government and Poroshenko leaves, the war will end. Meanwhile, we will fight until the territory of Donbas becomes free. I hope this will happen in the immediate future. But I am prepared to stay here for a year or two.

**BBC: Tell us a little about yourself.**

**D.S.:** I studied at St. Petersburg State University. I had a goal of going into politics and becoming a people's representative. All of my predecessors had been in the military since time out of mind. I joined the Russian Monarchic Movement aged 16. I am now officially the chairman of the regional office of the St. Petersburg chapter of the Monarchic Party of Russia. But my career as a people's representative did not work out for some reason. So I gradually started paying more attention to business. I originally performed housing renovations. We later started renovating entire condos before switching to construction. Then I started a business in timber, construction, and timber harvesting. In October I abandoned everything and traveled to Donbas to defend Russians.

**BBC: Could this war have been avoided?**

Photo copyright holder: Dmitry Sapozhnikov

Image caption

Sapozhnikov has already lost several friends in the Donbas conflict, but says he's prepared to stay there for another year.

**D.S.:** I think that if we hadn't defended the DNR and LNR and hadn't taken away Crimea, Russia would have had a revolution. People would simply not understand why we did not defend our own people. This would have been sheer betrayal. I believe that Putin did the right thing by defending Russians.

**BBC: *What would this betrayal be manifested in exactly?***

**D.S.:** Before annexation of Crimea and the victorious Sochi Olympics, I had a bad attitude toward Putin, so to speak. I leaned toward the opposition. Both in terms of politics and worldview. Now I can see that Putin is the only man capable of keeping the power vertical in order. If it weren't for Putin, somebody like Nemtsov would be ruining the country now. We would have a repetition of the 1990s.

**BBC: *What can you tell Ukrainians who support independence and believe that the brotherly Russian people attacked them?***

**D.S.:** You had to ask this question when I was still in Donetsk. While I'm here in St. Petersburg, I even feel somewhat unusual (*discussing this - Editor*). I have already grown distant. What kind of independence do they want? They had independence before the Maidan Revolution. Did we invade their territory? I don't consider it an invasion even now.

The situation was the same during WWI with Serbia and Montenegro. Did we invade then? They were grateful to us. The same is happening here. We have defended our brotherly people who faced the risk of persecution. Do you remember the calls of the Right Sector and Turchynov's government? What did they promise to do to those who oppose the authorities? We all remember this well.

I think Ukraine should now be looking in the other direction. Because they have now become vassals of Europe and the USA. I think they should come turn around and understand that they don't have any kind of independence.

**BBC: *Russia is not discussing openly the Russian casualties in Ukraine's southeast. Why do you suppose that is?***

**D.S.:** When I was there I was certain that everybody was aware of the presence of the Russian military in Ukrainian territory. Now, knowing that they don't know anything, I find it hard to answer this question.

I think if they start openly discussing the presence of the Russian military and losses, this would mean direct invasion of another country. This could in turn cause an international scandal.

Why isn't Russia discussing losses openly? Why isn't Russia burying Russian soldiers openly and with honors? I don't really understand that myself. But I know that treatment and aid are provided and paid for. I personally know a wounded soldier like that. They are

treated in hospitals. They receive medals and rewards. If soldiers get killed, families receive compensations. In other words, things are happening the same way as if it were a military operation in Dagestan or Chechnya, for example.

## Position of the Russian Ministry of Defense

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The Russian Ministry of Defense has repeatedly commented on statements by representatives of the USA and Ukraine about the possible involvement of the Russian military in the conflict in Ukraine's southeast.

"We are no longer amazed to hear even the most incredible accusations coming over the past two weeks from representative of the US Department of State and Pentagon regarding the involvement of Russian army units in the civil war in Ukraine. Viktor Muzhenko, chief of the Ukrainian General Staff, does not see them there. The OSCE does not see them. Western journalists working in the DNR and LNR do not see them. Meanwhile, Washington sees them...", Major General Igor Konashenkov, an official representative of the Russian Ministry of Defense.

Meanwhile, as he puts it, "Curiously enough, as soon as the situation in Ukraine's southeast begins to stabilize, the frequency and intensity of such accusations against Russia increase drastically".

"Neither Generals Philip Bridlaw or Ben Hodges, nor Assistant Secretary of State Victoria Noland have been able to explain how or where they allegedly saw Russian military units in Ukraine. Yet they obstinately call on everybody not to doubt anything, just like in that song, 'Guys, simply believe in miracles'," the general joked.

On March 11, Russian Deputy Minister of Defense Nikolay Pankov announced that military exercises in the field are in no way related to the armed conflict in Ukrainian territory, where no Russian military had been or will be sent. At the request of members of the Presidential Council on the Development of Civil Society and Human Rights, the Ministry of Defense verified information to the effect that on January 25, 2015 some 50 servicemen of Military Unit 10544 from Murmansk Oblast, who serve under contract, had been sent to Rostov Oblast and may cross into Ukraine to carry out combat orders.

Russian Deputy Minister of Defense Nikolay Pankov said that this information has not been confirmed.

BBC contacted the Russian Ministry of Defense with a request to comment on statements made by Dmitry Sapozhnikov. As soon as we receive their response, it will be published.

# Annex 570

Corey Flintoff, Bomb Attacks Increase In Ukraine's Second-Largest City, Kharkiv, NPR (6 April 2015)



# Bomb Attacks Increase In Ukraine's Second-Largest City, Kharkiv

[npr.org/2015/04/06/397774803/despite-tenuous-truce-in-eastern-ukraine-bomb-attacks-increase-in-kharkiv](http://npr.org/2015/04/06/397774803/despite-tenuous-truce-in-eastern-ukraine-bomb-attacks-increase-in-kharkiv)

## Europe

April 6, 2015 4:58 AM ET

Heard on [Morning Edition](#)

[Corey Flintoff](#)

Kharkiv has largely escaped the ravages of the war until recently. It has been hit by several terrorist bombings, including a blast at a Ukrainian national unity rally last month that killed 4 people.

RENEE MONTAGNE, HOST:

And let's head next to eastern Ukraine. It's been a year since separatist fighters and their Russian allies started fighting Ukrainian government troops. A tenuous cease-fire was agreed to in February. Since then, the fighting between the two sides has quieted somewhat. But there's another kind of fighting that's just beginning - anonymous attacks that seem to be part of a terrorist bombing campaign in Ukraine's second-largest city. NPR's Corey Flintoff recently made a reporting trip to that city and filed this report.

COREY FLINTOFF, BYLINE: Kharkiv is a city of nearly 1-and-a-half million people, close to the Russian border. It's a university city with a lot of young people. Many of them turned out for a pro-Ukrainian rally in late February, and they were marching when an explosion tore through the crowd and the police there to protect them.

UNIDENTIFIED POLICE OFFICER: Terrible. We think it just was like a firework. But then, when the people get down, and it's many blood, we then understand that it was not a firework, and it was a bomb.

FLINTOFF: That's a young Ukrainian police officer who was among the injured. He won't give his name because he's part of a security unit, and it's against their policy. He was still in a Kharkiv hospital 10 days after the attack where he and two colleagues were waiting for another round of operations to remove shrapnel from their bodies. The blast killed four people, including a police commander and two teenaged boys. Ten others were hurt. Tania Fedorkova is a local reporter who's covered more than a dozen bombings since they began last fall.

TANIA FEDORKOVA: (Through interpreter) Local security services say the attacks are the work of one group. They call themselves the Kharkiv Partisans, and they are said to be controlled from Russia.

FLINTOFF: Kharkiv is not far from the border with Russia. Ukraine's federal security service says that's where the terrorists are getting their explosives and their instructions. The federal investigators arrested several men in connection with the bombing and posted a YouTube video in which one man, his face digitally obscured, confesses to the attack.

(SOUNDBITE OF YOUTUBE VIDEO)

UNIDENTIFIED MAN: (Speaking Russian).

FLINTOFF: He says he was acting under orders from a member of the Russian intelligence services and that he placed the bomb along the proposed march route. He detonated it with a remote control. He says he was promised 10,000 American dollars for the attack, to be collected later in Russia. Tania Fedorkova, the reporter, says she hasn't been able to confirm whether the confession is genuine, and she adds that police haven't made much of their investigation public. But Fedorkova says the attack has triggered a debate among local activists with some urging caution.

FEDORKOVA: (Through interpreter) Maybe it would be better to wait, not to gather in the streets, because everyone believes this will happen again, and more people might be killed.

FLINTOFF: But Fedorkova says other activists believe it's necessary to keep demonstrating in favor of Ukraine or else pro-Russians will take over the city.

People on the streets say they're more afraid these days. Some say they can't or won't limit their activities, but Vladimir Bondarenko, a furniture restorer, says he stays at home as much as possible.

VLADIMIR BONDARENKO: (Speaking Russian).

FLINTOFF: He says the anxiety raised by the bombings is painful, adding that he thinks that's the whole point of terrorist acts - to bring people to a pitch of fear where they can be easily broken. Kharkiv has had more bombings since the fatal attack in February. One hit a Ukrainian army fuel tank on March 30. Just a day later, another bomb went off under unoccupied passenger train. Corey Flintoff, NPR News.

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# Annex 571

Simon Shuster, Meet the Pro-Russian 'Partisans' Waging a Bombing Campaign in Ukraine,  
TIME (10 April 2015)



**TIME**

## Meet the Pro-Russian 'Partisans' Waging a Bombing Campaign in Ukraine



Ukrainian police and forensic experts examine the wreckage of a mini-bus after explosion, in Kharkov, March 6, 2015. Sergei Kozlov —EPA

By **SIMON SHUSTER/KHARKOV** April 10, 2015

Soon after midnight on April 1, a separatist group calling itself the Kharkov Partisans issued another one of its video warnings to the Ukrainian government. It claimed that within the next 48 hours a bomb would explode far behind the front lines of the war in eastern Ukraine. “As of now, the earth will begin to burn beneath your feet,” said the group’s spokesman, Filipp Ekozyants, **in the message** to Ukraine’s President Petro Poroshenko and his top security officials.

Sure enough, the bomb arrived. Though reports have been conflicting as to the damage it caused, a large explosion rang out in the southwestern part of Kharkov, Ukraine's second largest city, within 24 hours of the Partisans' threat. **Police denied** that any bombing had occurred that night, though that seems to be part of a cover up. "The explosion did take place," says Andriy Sanin, the head of the local branch of Right Sector, a nationalist paramilitary group that works in league with Ukraine's armed forces. "It appears to have been an act of intimidation," he says, declining to give further details. In a **follow-up video** on April 3, the Partisans claimed that the attack had targeted a military convoy, killing a dozen Ukrainian servicemen.

But whatever the details of that bombing, it would hardly have been the first attack attributed to this guerrilla group. In interviews with TIME over the past two months, the group's spokesman, a former wedding singer now based in western Russia, has claimed responsibility for a spate of bombings, mostly targeting military and industrial installations in the region of Kharkov, which lies right on the border with Russia. "Our goal is to liberate the people of Kharkov," Ekozyants says in the first of several interviews. "And we will fight until the current authorities are weak enough to allow this."

Numbering more than a dozen in the past few months alone, **the bombings in Kharkov and other cities** have marked a grim turn in Ukraine's year-old conflict. The Russian-backed separatists in Ukraine's eastern regions have managed to seize control of two major cities and large chunks of the border with Russia. But they are clearly not satisfied with the extent of their possessions. Even amid the ceasefire that Russian President Vladimir Putin negotiated and signed with President Poroshenko in February, the bombing of Ukraine's cities has only intensified. The war now seems to be shifting from the use of tanks and artillery to the methods of terrorism and guerrilla warfare.

## **Beneath the Front Lines of the War in Eastern Ukraine**



1 of 25

Miners at the Chelyuskintsev coal mine ride in an elevator toward ground level. Petrovskyi district, Donetsk, Ukraine. Nov. 24, 2014. Jerome Sessini—Magnum Photos

The goal of these attacks, says Ekozyants, is to paralyze the Ukrainian authorities and inspire locals to join a separatist revolt against them. But there seems to be some debate within his organization about the admissible means of achieving this. About two hours before Ekozyants issued his warning on April 1, he told TIME that the **November bombing** of a crowded bar in Kharkov was the work of a radical cell of the Partisans. Eight people were wounded in that bombing, two of them critically.

From their bases in Russia and the rebel-held cities in eastern Ukraine, the more moderate leaders of the Partisans then issued a ban on attacking civilians, in part to avoid a popular backlash against their methods, says

Ekozyants. “After what happened at [the bar], our coordinating council issued a directive to all our cells, saying any more actions in places where there are peaceful people will be punished by lethal means.”

But the lethality of the bombings in Kharkov have still continued to increase. The **deadliest confirmed attack** struck on a religious holiday, Forgiveness Sunday, Feb. 22, the day in Eastern Orthodox tradition when believers are meant to repent for their sins. It was also the day when many in Ukraine marked the one-year anniversary of their country’s revolution, which brought a pro-Western government to power last winter. Sanin, the local paramilitary leader, was leading a march of commemoration that afternoon through Kharkov, and as his column set out through the city, an anti-personnel mine exploded at the side of the road, sending a shockwave full of shrapnel into the crowd. Four people were fatally wounded, including two teenage boys, and nine others were hospitalized.

“In the first seconds there was panic,” Sanin recalls. “Everyone was screaming, running, and there was a real risk that the victims would get trampled where they lay.” Sanin appears to have been one of targets of the attack, but he escaped with minor injuries.

A few days later, Ukraine’s state security service, the SBU, released what it claimed to be a **video of the bomber’s confession**. Because his face in the footage is blurred and his name has not been released, it has been impossible to verify the authenticity of the SBU’s claims, which **have not always been reliable**. In a monotonous patter, the alleged confessor claims that an agent of the Russian security services paid him \$10,000 to carry out the bombing on Forgiveness Sunday.

For his part, Ekozyants denies that the Kharkov Partisans had anything to do with that attack. But some of his allies in the rebel movement still believe the bombing was justified. “There were no accidental victims there at that march,” says Konstantin Dolgov, a leading pro-Russian separatist in Ukraine. “They were all the same people who were fueling a big civil war in Ukraine. They were calling for the death of Russians, of Russian-speakers,” says Dolgov, who

denies any involvement in that bombing. After a pause, he adds: “There’s a good Russian saying: You sow the wind, you reap the storm. And the storm caught up with them during that march.”

Having started his career a decade ago as an adviser to a pro-Russian governor of Kharkov, Dolgov has emerged as a one of the main links between Moscow and the separatists in eastern Ukraine. He now splits his time between the Russian capital and the rebel stronghold of Donetsk, and he is living proof that the separatists’ ambitions in Ukraine go far beyond the territories they currently control. Russia seems to support his message. On Kremlin-owned television channels, he is a fixture on political **talk shows**, frequently cast as the benevolent face of Ukrainian separatism.

One afternoon in March, he agreed to meet me at a restaurant in Moscow across the street from the offices of the Russian Presidential Administration, where he sat in a pressed suit with a little separatist flag pinned to his lapel. Despite the resistance of Ukrainian authorities, he claims it is only a matter of time before Kharkov falls to the separatists. “But the liberation is only possible from the outside at this point,” he says. All the local separatists in Kharkov have been jailed or forced to flee the city. So there are now “at least 1,500 men” from Kharkov fighting in various rebel factions in other parts of eastern Ukraine, he says. “They all hope to return home and take revenge for their murdered comrades.”

Ekozyants, who calls Dolgov a close associate, takes a somewhat different view. Through the bombing campaigns of the Partisans, he believes the Ukrainian authorities can be weakened from within, allowing the local separatists to organize an uprising in the city. “All we want is to create a government of Kharkov that will listen to the people,” he says. The ultimate aim is for the city to hold a referendum on secession from Ukraine, much as the region of Crimea did last spring before it was annexed into Russia. “If a majority of people in Kharkov vote to join up with Burkina Faso, then we will join Burkina Faso,” Ekozyants says. “But let the people decide.”

His success as a mouthpiece for separatism in Kharkov derives in part from his earlier fame. Long before the war in Ukraine broke out last spring, Ekozyants was well known in the city as a composer and singer of maudlin ballads, which he would often perform at local weddings and banquets. (“Eternal love, we live to blindly love,” went one of the refrains in **his music video** from 2009.) The showmanship has since become a hallmark of his propaganda, which is laced with moody, anti-Semitic **diatribes** against the “shameless yids” seizing power in Ukraine with help from the West.

In late February, when TIME first contacted him for an interview, he replied by sending back a theatrical **nine-minute video** – “an address to the American people” – warning of an apocalyptic war that would turn U.S. cities into “giant ruins” if Washington does not withdraw its support for the Ukrainian government. When pressed to comment beyond such bravado, he invited a reporter to visit him in the western Russian city of Ryazan, but backed out at the last minute and only agreed to talk via Skype.

In subsequent interviews, he says most of the financial support for the Kharkov Partisans comes from sympathetic businessmen living in Russia, who transfer funds into his bank account. Asked whether the Partisans receive support from the Russian military or security services, he says some Russian state support does come through the rebel leadership in Donetsk. “We don’t just cooperate,” Ekozyants says of that separatist stronghold. “We are one network. We are the same.”

And Russia clearly tolerates their activities on its territory. The bank account Ekozyants uses to gather donations is at a branch of state-controlled Sberbank, Russia’s biggest lender, in the western Russian city of Rostov. In his spare time, Ekozyants says he still earns extra money singing at banquets in Russia, and he also seems to have access to a television studio in one of the Russian cities where he operates.

In late March, he posted a video of himself in a **studio interviewing** Igor Girkin, a former agent of the Russian security services who **led the separatist militias** in their conquest of Ukrainian territory last year. The two of them muse for an

hour about the future of the “Russian world,” which they see extending across much of Ukraine. The Russian government, Girkin says, has been too indecisive in pursuing its imperial destiny in these borderlands. “But I always felt that God realizes his will through individuals,” he says. Even when those individuals are prepared to set off bombs in peaceful cities.

## Go Inside the Frozen Trenches of Eastern Ukraine



*1 of 21*

Troops belonging to the Ukrainian Army and the Aidar battalion, a volunteer fighting unit, rest in the town of Shastya, Ukraine. Shastya means "happiness." Once a picturesque town of 13,000 in Luhansk Oblast, Shastya has become the frontline between Ukrainian forces and the forces of the breakaway Luhansk People's Republic. Ross McDonnell



# Annex 572

Zoya Lukyanova, Translator for the DPR: "This is a Performance for the Whole World," LB.ua  
(21 April 2015)

This document has been translated from its original language into English, an official language of the Court, pursuant to Rules of the Court, Article 51.

Pursuant to Rules of the Court Article 51(3), Ukraine has translated only an extract of the original document constituting this Annex. In further compliance with this Rule, Ukraine has provided two certified copies of the full original-language document with its submission. The translated passages are highlighted in the original-language document. Ukraine has omitted from translation those portions of the document that are not materially relied upon in its Memorial, but stands ready to provide additional translations should the Court so require.



# DNR Interpreter: “It is a show put on for the entire world”

[/society/2015/04/21/302517\\_perevodchik\\_dnr\\_eto\\_spektakl.html](#)lb.ua

Zoya Lukyanova, journalist, Dnipropetrovsk



**Photo:** [www.donetskiy.org](http://www.donetskiy.org)

## **When and why did you decide to go to the DNR?**

I had pro-Russian sentiments because all of this propaganda even though the better part of the world supports Ukraine. I wanted to go there (to Donbas – Editor) and see what was happening there. Quite many people go to Donbas from Latgale. There are many ways to get there. I got in with a fake passport, not my internal passport. A visa is not needed to travel in Russia. First I went to St. Petersburg, then took a bus to Rostov. There I got off in Gukovo and rode to Rostov in a minivan. This happened during the cleanup of the Donetsk Airport. I ended up in a training camp. I will now call it a terrorist training camp. The camp itself is to the east of Rostov.

## **Is it in Russian territory?**

Yes. It is in Russian territory. It is either Volgodonsk or somewhere south. That camp had quality uniforms. You can't get such quality in Donetsk or Luhansk. This camp is on the approaches to Torez and Mariupol. I spent there one week and underwent physical and moral training. They tested my reactions and mental stability. Some 500 people were training at the camp at the time.

They asked if I had any experience. I said I did. I actually have a penchant for all things military (the “man from Latgale” declined to comment further on this – Author). Then one man came over. He wasn't an instructor. He was a member of Sparta (a group of DNR militants headed by Motorola – Editor). He wore a badge. He took me to another office and asked:

“Are you that cool? Do you speak languages?” I speak 4 languages: Polish, Russian, English, and my native language.

They took me from the barracks, took away my passport, issued a DNR passport, took away my civilian clothes and camera. And I went with them. They appointed me as an interpreter. I wore two ribbons: the ribbon of St. George and the Latvian ribbon. Nobody objected. After I joined them, I had a 180-degree change of heart.

### **How did you enter the DNR?**

We had a convoy of 117 vehicles coming from Russia. Your border there is just crawling with Russians. The border crossing is controlled by Russia. There are minefields right and left. I saw new tanks there, a 72 (tank T-72 — **Author**). They were masked as Ukrainian tanks: two strips, just like you have. They had run for just 40 motor-hours. I checked. Television journalists then came. For camera, they painted over those tanks, pretending those were captured Ukrainian tanks. The convoy was then on its way. All of this is later shown on television.

Read: “Russia [Interview with Brigade 95 paratroopers](#)”

### **The camp in Russian territory, then those tanks... Wasn't it immediately suspicious?**

I am telling you. I operated on patriotic sentiments and looked at this from a different angle.



Photo: EPA/UPG

February 23 celebrations in Donetsk

**I see. What was your job? What did you do?**

So I became an interpreter. I ended up in a group of four people. We wore “jungle” camouflage that only the Russian Army has. I questioned foreign prisoners. Mostly Poles. I think one of them was from “Valkyrie”. They told me so and showed me badges. He wore a fresh uniform. For that matter, I am no longer sure where he and all the others came from. He did not crack. They beat him up and then took him to a solitary cell. They built quite a prison in Donetsk. I was always accompanied by one Sparta member. I don’t know his name or rank. Only his code name.

**Was he a “rebel”?**

No way. I will tell you more: I think that Russian officers had been brought to Donbas one year before all of this began. This is not regular Russian army. This is special Russian army. The regular forces stay in their own territory and wash their socks or whatever it is they do. Meanwhile, Donbas has its own Russian army. For each group, there is one specialist, who gives you a map already in the battle field. It’s an infantry map drawn on the same scale: 2,500. Meanwhile, they have other maps, GPS data,

drones. They have the Central Intelligence Directorate behind their backs. They have regular warehouse with uniforms and munitions. There is stuff you can't possibly get in Donetsk or Luhansk. You can't even approach or ask anything the people wearing those pixel uniforms. They are from the outside. First they appear, then vanish. When a battle starts, they vanish. Only people on the frontline remain. There were professional military there. Each one of them knew what he was doing. I am sure they had been brought there in advance.

All those Givis and Motorolas are useless. They are never on the frontline. They work for cameras. Meanwhile, mercenaries (both those in the camp and in the field) are people who had already fought in a war. Some of the people in my unit had been through three wars already. They fought in Yugoslavia and Afghanistan. They are all covered in scars. It's fun for them: "Let's shoot the Ukrop!" ["Ukrop" is a derisive name used by separatists to describe Ukrainians - Translator]

### **How much did they pay you?**

They promised to pay \$500 a day for work on the frontline, or \$250 per week for work in the rear. But I have not been paid to date. Commanders get paid 1,500 hryvnias per day. They have cool cars and houses. I don't know if those houses had been expropriated from others or if they own them. But they are cool. They have weapons and the police force is in place. They covered everything. The locals already hate them. Everybody wants a normal peaceful life.

### **What about the locals? Do they help them?**

Everything they show on YouTube is a total fabrication. There's no longer any support there. When we proceeded in a convoy, people threw rocks at us. Even in Donetsk. I felt very bad then. They simply threw rocks. Everybody is unemployed. There are no businesses.

During the day they patrol the streets and deliver food to the locals just to show how good they are. But at 4 a.m., when everybody is fast asleep, they fire GRAD missiles at residential buildings. Or they can load up an SUV, drive somewhere in Donetsk or Shakhtarsk or Adviyivka, turn around and fire at their own. Meanwhile, the Russian side is firing Smerch multiple rocket launchers. I was at the border. I saw Smerch missiles flying in the direction of Ukraine. I don't know where they landed. Possibly on civilians. What they show on TV, the pictures where civilians bring them food, is a total fabrication. Their food arrives in convoys.

### **What about those Russian humanitarian convoys?**

I'll tell you what. They proceed along a road and make regular stops. Then they bury those army containers to the right and left of the road. Then they get going again, proceed for 300 meters, stop and bury them again. The stuff in those containers is really something. I saw myself. I could not take photos, since they took away everything. They took my phone. I took just a few photos in the Donetsk Airport on my phone. They sort of trusted me, so I smuggled a phone into the airport. Then what... Those propaganda trucks arrive in Donetsk and they show any picture they want for the cameras: water, salt, all that stuff. To the best of my knowledge, the next convoy from Russia will be provocative.



Photo: EPA/UPG

**Do they stage many fake shows like that?**

There are plenty of fakes. I saw those Life News people. There were fake OSCE inspectors. There were also real inspectors, but they appear when TV cameras arrive and everything is over. There are many fakes.

For example, fake stories about Ukrainians on drugs. Suppose they take over a roadblock, remove the dead and wounded. Then they get in, have drinks, inject drugs, leave the syringes and bottles. Only then TV cameras arrive. They are then branded as drug addicts and alcoholics for cameras.

Nothing like that happened. I saw. They did not even have dry rations.

**Are drugs and alcohol supplied to the militants?**

Chechens bring their own packets and syringes. They said it was morphine, but I saw people under the effect of morphine. I think they took heroin. People lie down after taking morphine, but they can walk and shoot after taking heroin. Those don't even care. They simply come to kill.

There were also disciplinary battalions consisting of 32 or 64 prison inmates. Those are real nut jobs. They simply fire away. We could use up 120 cartridges in one night, while they spend 40,000.

**When did you realize that you wanted to leave?**

They got people to change clothes. People who trained at the camp. I don't know who they were. They were brought in on a BMP infantry fighting vehicle. Before that they had been arrested. They got them to wear Ukrainian uniforms with Ukrainian badges and stuff. Then they set them free somewhere and started shooting at them. Then TV cameras would come when it's all over, and they show a picture of how many Ukrainians they killed. I became disgusted. It is a show put on for the entire world, not a political war, no. There are rebels, but rebels are hiding with children in basements. Other people are walking the streets. There are special Russian military forces. I emphasize this word: "special". When I built a sufficient enough reputation, I told them: "I'm leaving. Let me go or shoot me". I absconded through Rostov again. They would not let others go. You either leave and die or you stay. It's like a camp.



Photo: EPA/UPG

Archival photo. Rebel roadblock outside Semionovka

### **Did they simply let you go after all you've seen?**

Well, I helped them quite a bit there. They took away everything I had. I only have a few photos from my phone. As I was leaving, I heard behind my back: "Stop". I thought they would shoot me in the back of my head and even started trembling. He merely said: "Give away your military card". He only returned my passport. In exchange for the military card. I returned the same way I got there. I fear they will track me down now. They or your Security Service. I know that two Latvians did not return.

| [Read: Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church priest: Fear is the Biggest Problem in Donetsk](#)

### **What is your subjective assessment of what you have seen?**

Just hold your ground, do not attack. Russians receive no help or support there. The locals hate them. The locals have no jobs or lives because of them. Everybody is dying of unemployment and now almost hunger. This is another

orchestrated famine. Both in Luhansk and Donetsk. All of this gave me a stutter for a few weeks. I would like to fight for the other side now. Against those people, not against the civilians, but against those people. This is banditry. I have no other name for it.



# Annex 573

David Stern, Lethal Divisions Persist in Ukraine's Odessa, BBC News (2 May 2015)





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AD

## Lethal divisions persist in Ukraine's Odessa

By David Stern  
BBC News, Odessa

2 May 2015



Ukraine crisis

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David Stern meets members of the Odessa Self-Defence Volunteers

**It is a year since the southern Ukrainian port of Odessa was convulsed by violent clashes between pro and anti-government protestors, killing 48.**

More than 40 of those who died were pro-Russian activists who perished **in a fire in a trade union building**. Investigations into what caused the blaze are still ongoing.

The tragedy created deep rifts between the pro and anti-government camps in the city, and helped fuel outrage elsewhere in Ukraine, especially in the country's east, where a separatist conflict was just beginning.

Recently, a series of bomb blasts has added to the instability. Although these have caused no injuries, the uncertainty of when and where the next one might go off has heightened anxiety.

Earlier this week, police roped off a side street in central Odessa, when an unidentified bag was discovered - only to find out it contained old clothes.

Many of the explosions struck pro-government organisations, but no-one has said they carried out the attacks. Ukrainian officials blame pro-Russian "saboteurs," however, and have **made a number of arrests.**

REUTERS

## Strategic city

Fears have been increasing that a bigger incident could be in the works, as the city prepared for a number of public events - starting with the May Day holidays, then the anniversary of the trade union building fire and ending with ceremonies marking the end of World War Two.

Officials have significantly beefed up security: the city is full of additional law enforcement personnel and armoured vehicles. On the city limits, numerous checkpoints have been set up, where interior ministry forces in full battle gear inspect vehicles heading into town.

Pro-Kiev "self-defence" volunteer organisations have also stepped up their activities, going out on patrols by foot or car, and looking for anything or anybody "suspicious".

They say this could be as simple as a group of three young men, wearing track suits, with concealed faces.

The volunteers say that they have no doubt that pro-Russian elements are behind the bombings, in order to facilitate a takeover of the city by separatist or even Russian forces.

"Odessa is a strategic city for the Russian occupiers," said Vitaly Kozhukhar, deputy commander of one of the "self-defence" groups.

"The bombings are an attempt to destabilise the situation in the city," he adds. "An attempt to intimidate the civilian population. An attempt to show that there are people here who want Russia to come."

AFP

But some observers claim that the security crackdown has been bluntly applied, which only deepens the political rifts in the city. Odessa is a Black Sea port with a devil-may-care attitude, and the hope is widespread that the city will be able to recover from the recent violence, and overcome its divisions.

But some warn of what could happen if the divide persists.

"The best case scenario — when it will be a conflict between radicals and normal people from both sides, it will be a very big step towards peace," said Yuri Tkachev, the chief editor of the opposition news website Timer.

"The worst case scenario, is that we have a police state in Ukraine, and another worst case scenario is that we have civil war here in Odessa."

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# Annex 574

Maria Tsvetkova, Special Report: Russian Soldiers Quit Over Ukraine, Reuters (10 May 2015)



# Special Report: Russian soldiers quit over Ukraine

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MOSCOW/DONETSK (Reuters) - Some Russian soldiers are quitting the army because of the conflict in Ukraine, several soldiers and human rights activists have told Reuters. Their accounts call into question the Kremlin's continued assertions that no Russian soldiers have been sent to Ukraine, and that any Russians fighting alongside rebels there are volunteers.

Members of the armed forces of the separatist self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic drive a tank on the outskirts of Donetsk, Ukraine, in this January 22, 2015 file photo.

REUTERS/Alexander Ermochenko/Files

Evidence for Russians fighting in Ukraine – Russian army equipment found in the country, testimony from soldiers' families and from Ukrainians who say they were captured by Russian paratroopers – is abundant. Associates of Boris Nemtsov, a prominent Kremlin critic killed in February, will soon publish a report which they say will contain new evidence of the Russian military presence in Ukraine.

Until now, however, it has been extremely rare to find Russian soldiers who have fought there and are willing to talk. It is even rarer to find soldiers who have quit the army. Five soldiers who recently quit, including two who said they left rather than serve in Ukraine, have told Reuters of their experiences.

One of the five, from Moscow, said he was sent on exercises in southern Russia last year but ended up going into Ukraine in an armored convoy.

"After we crossed the border, a lieutenant colonel said we could be sent to jail if we didn't fulfil orders. Some soldiers refused to stay there," said the soldier, who served with the elite Russian Kantemirovskaya tank division. He gave Reuters his full name but spoke on condition of anonymity, saying he feared reprisals.

He said he knew two soldiers who refused to stay. "They were taken somewhere. The lieutenant colonel said criminal cases were opened against them but in reality – we called them afterwards – they were at home. They just quit."

Russia's President Vladimir Putin has repeatedly denied that Moscow has sent any military forces to help rebels in eastern Ukraine, where clashes and casualties persist despite a ceasefire struck in February. Putin's spokesman has derided such allegations by NATO, Western governments and Kiev. Officials say that any Russian soldiers fighting in Ukraine are "volunteers," helping the rebels of their own free will.

The former Russian soldiers who spoke to Reuters, as well as human rights activists, said some soldiers were fearful of being sent to Ukraine, were pressured into going, or disgruntled at the way they were treated after fighting there.

The former tank soldier from Moscow said he would not have gone to Ukraine voluntarily. “No, what for? That’s not our war. If our troops were officially there it would be a different story.”

He said he had been sent to fight in Ukraine last summer and returned to Russia in September when the first peace talks took place. His crew operated a modernized Russian T-72B3 tank, he said.

“(Back in Russia) we were lined up and told that everyone would get a daily allowance, extras for fighting and medals,” he said. But he said that they did not get the extras they expected. “We decided to quit. There were 14 of us.”

The names of nine soldiers who quit the Kantemirovskaya division are mentioned in an exchange of letters between Viktor Miskovets, the head of the human resources department of Russia’s Western Military District, and Valentina Melnikova, who runs the Alliance of Soldiers’ Mothers Committees, a group based in Moscow.

In the letters, seen by Reuters, human rights workers asked Miskovets to approve the soldiers’ resignations – which one soldier told Reuters the military had been unwilling to do. The letters do not mention service in Ukraine.

The soldiers left the service on Dec. 12, according to a letter signed by Miskovets. He and his deputy did not answer calls.

Three soldiers from the list, contacted by Reuters, confirmed they had quit the service recently but declined to discuss Ukraine.

A spokesman for the Ministry of Defence declined to comment on soldiers quitting the tank unit or being sent to Ukraine.

## FINANCIAL INCENTIVES

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In Russia, all men aged between 18 and 27 have to serve 12 months in the military. By law, these conscripts cannot be sent abroad. But according to human rights activists, military officials have been promising conscripts financial incentives to sign contracts that make them professional soldiers. The officials then push the soldiers into going to Ukraine.

Sergei Krivenko, head of a rights group called “Citizen. Army. Rights” and a member of a human rights council created by the Kremlin, has dealt with soldiers’ rights since the early 2000s. He said military commanders are trying to find more people who will go to Ukraine voluntarily, “but this is still ‘volunteers’ in quotation marks, because there is harsh pressure.”

A member of the armed forces of the separatist self-proclaimed Donetsk People’s Republic walks near a building destroyed during battles with the Ukrainian armed forces in Vuhlehirsk, Donetsk region, Ukraine, in this February 4, 2015 file photo. REUTERS/Maxim Shemetov/Files Krivenko said commanders take a carrot-and-stick approach: They offer large financial rewards to contract soldiers willing to go to Ukraine. If soldiers refuse, they are told to resign, he said. “You can’t criminally prosecute someone for not following the order, because the order itself

doesn't exist on paper. It's only oral."

Since 2012, contract soldiers' pay has risen, said Krivenko, who traveled to Murmansk to meet soldiers, about 30 of whom told him they had been to Ukraine. "Now they receive 20, 30, 40,000 rubles a month depending on their rank. Some even get 60,000 a month."

The average wage in Russia is about 30,000 rubles (\$580).

Resignation is not an easy decision for the soldiers, Krivenko said: "Just like others in Russia, they're paying off apartments, foreign-made cars... The question becomes where do they find the money to pay off debts, to feed their families?"

Reuters could not independently verify Krivenko's account.

A spokesman for the Ministry of Defence declined to comment on Russian involvement in Ukraine, but Putin has made his position clear. On April 16, the president said during a televised question and answer session: "I tell you directly and definitely: There are no Russian troops in Ukraine."

## "FIELD CONDITIONS"

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Another soldier who said he quit the army over the Ukraine conflict is a 21-year-old who was a member of a Grad missile unit. The soldier, who asked that he and his unit not be identified, told Reuters that in the summer of 2014 his team took up position about 2 km (one mile) from the Ukrainian border in the Rostov region of southwest Russia. The operation appeared to be an exercise, though the men were ordered to prepare as if for real combat.

"We drove there without insignia. We took off all the buttonholes and stripes. We were told that we did not need them in field conditions."

In early September the men were ordered to fire their rockets at a target "about 17 km" away, "maybe less." It was possible the target was in Ukraine, he said. "I was hoping I did not aim at any people. Or at least that I missed the target."

He said his fellow soldiers told him another battery from his unit had crossed the border and spent 10 days in Ukraine. "I did not understand who was fighting and what for, and the point of it," he said.

While on leave in January, the soldier said, he was unexpectedly summoned back to his unit.

"We were moved to another (artillery) battery that was supposed to go to some exercises in Rostov region. They said they were really big exercises and very big forces were involved," the soldier said.

Although he offered no proof, he said he had no doubt it was related to the conflict in Ukraine. "Of course it was. Why else would we be called off from vacation?"

Slideshow (8 Images)

He and four others decided to quit the army rather than risk being sent to fight in Ukraine. After completing the necessary procedures, they left in March, according to the soldier's account and documents from human rights activists and military prosecutors.

## SPOTTED IN DONBASS

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Most Russian soldiers who fought in Ukraine last year – whether volunteers or not – came from Central Russia, the North Caucasus or the Volga region, according to soldiers' accounts, relatives and Russian media. More recently, Reuters reporters in east Ukraine spotted fighters from Siberia, thousands of miles away.

Their appearance lends support to claims that Russian troops from regions closer to Ukraine have become reluctant to join the conflict.

Early this year Asian-looking fighters were seen maneuvering armored vehicles and manning checkpoints in Donbass, eastern Ukraine. The fighters turned out to be Buryats, a Mongolian ethnic group from Russian Siberia near Lake Baikal, about 4,500 km from Ukraine.

Dorjo Dugarov, a politician from Buryatiya, a region in southeast Siberia, said a Siberian soldier who had returned from Ukraine had told him that “people from the western part (of Russia) didn't want to go. Their morale has fallen.”

Yevgeniy Romanenko, a 39-year-old rebel fighter in east Ukraine, told Reuters that during battles near Debaltseve in February he drove a truck in a convoy that was accompanied by two tanks with Buryat crews. The tank crews provided cover for the truck convoy.

“One of them drove in front of the convoy and the second one behind,” Romanenko said at a hospital in Yenakiyev, where he was recovering from shrapnel wounds to his leg.

Asked if they were servicemen from Russia, Romanenko said: “Yes, that's for sure. The guys were from there. It was clear.”

In February, a Buryat soldier also appeared in an interview on a TV station in eastern Ukraine. Popular singer Iosif Kobzon, who is a member of Russia's State Duma, the lower house of parliament, was filmed visiting injured fighters in a hospital in Donetsk, eastern Ukraine's biggest city. Kobzon says he spoke to a soldier who said he was a member of a tank crew from Buryatiya. The Russian independent newspaper Novaya Gazeta later identified the soldier as Dorji Batomunkoyev from military unit 46108 based in Ulan-Ude, the capital of Buryatiya.

Rebels in Ukraine said the Buryat were not soldiers sent by Russia but volunteers. “We have volunteers from the Russian Federation,” Vladimir Kononov, the Ukrainian rebel defense minister, told Reuters in early March. “This tankman could have left the army before he came here.”

Reuters could not reach Batomunkoyev. His mother Sesegma, contacted by telephone, confirmed that her son had served in the army and been injured in Ukraine. She visited him in a hospital after he was transferred back to Russia. She declined to say whether he had been ordered to go to Ukraine or had volunteered.

“He did not say he was going,” she said. “He called me on February 19 and shouted ‘Mum, I got burnt in a tank.’ And that’s it.”

Additional reporting by Thomas Grove; Edited by Richard Woods and Sara Ledwith

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# Annex 575

Michael Usher Travels to Ukraine to Track the Missile that Shot Down MH17, 60 Minutes  
Australia (17 May 2015)



News / World

## Michael Usher travels to Ukraine to track the missile that shot down MH17

**60** MINUTES By 60 Minutes | 10:30pm May 17, 2015



Nine months after the investigation into the destruction of MH17 started, there have been no answers and no justice for the victims - but an investigation by 60 Minutes has shed more light on one of the cruellest acts of mass murder in recent memory.

Reporter Michael Usher travelled to Ukraine and visited the site where the plane crashed into the earth, killing all 298 people on board including 38 Australians.

He said the culprits "left enough footprints" to follow.

Usher and the 60 Minutes crew worked on tracking the missile launcher believed to have shot the passenger plane out of the sky on July 17 last year, following it to all the locations it had been publicly seen since that day.

"It's been nine months but there are no answers and, seemingly, no justice," Usher said.

Usher and his team moved from regions controlled by Ukraine's government across no-mans-land and to the so-called Donetsk People's Republic, where Russian-backed rebel separatists are in command.

He said the team had a great deal of difficulty crossing into rebel territory, where they were suspected of being spies.

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"They don't want any attention at all," he said.

The rebels are the prime suspects for the destruction of the plane, however, the rebels in turn claim the plane could have been shot down by Ukrainian forces in a "false flag" plot.

"Politically, this is one of the most sensitive investigations in history," Usher said.

"There are too many conspiracy theories and wild propaganda coming out of the Kremlin."

**Watch the 60 Minutes investigation in the videos above.**



Michael Usher in Ukraine. (60 Minutes)



38 Australians were among the 298 killed. (AAP)



Michael Usher and his crew traveled to the Ukraine to track the culprits. (60 Minutes)

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60 Minutes | Crime | World | MH17 | National



# Annex 576

Maria Tsvetkova, Special Report: Russian fighters, caught in Ukraine, cast adrift by Moscow, Reuters (29 May 2015)



# Special Report: Russian fighters, caught in Ukraine, cast adrift by Moscow

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 [reuters.com/article/us-ukraine-crisis-captured-specialreport/special-report-russian-fighters-caught-in-ukraine-cast-adrift-by-moscow-idUSKBN00E0YE20150529](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-ukraine-crisis-captured-specialreport/special-report-russian-fighters-caught-in-ukraine-cast-adrift-by-moscow-idUSKBN00E0YE20150529)

KIEV (Reuters) - From his hospital bed in the Ukrainian capital, Russian fighter Alexander Alexandrov feels abandoned by his country, its leaders and even the local Russian consul.

Alexandrov, 28, says he's a Russian soldier who was captured in east Ukraine after being sent there on active duty with Russian special forces to help separatists fighting Kiev. He said he was serving on a three-year contract. "I never tore it up, I wrote no resignation request," he said. "I was carrying out my orders."

## RECOMMENDED: How the WHO's cancer agency confuses consumers

Yet Russian President Vladimir Putin, in the face of widespread evidence to the contrary, has repeatedly said there are no Russian soldiers in Ukraine – only volunteers who have gone to help the separatists of their own accord.

So Alexandrov and Yevgeny Yerofeyev, another Russian who was captured with him, find themselves pawns in the deepest confrontation between Moscow and the West since the Cold War.

They believe they should be treated as captured servicemen. But Moscow will not admit they are any such thing, or that it has sent any soldiers into Ukraine to help wrest swathes of east away from Kiev's control. To do so would undermine Moscow's claims that the separatist uprising there is a spontaneous reaction by Russian-speaking communities against Kiev.

The Kremlin has described the two men as Russian citizens, and Russia's defense ministry has said they are former soldiers who left the military before they were captured.

Disowned at home, the two men stand accused by Ukrainian authorities of being terrorists.

In an interview from his bed, Alexandrov, wearing a hospital-issue green T-shirt and with several days stubble on his face, told Reuters he felt alone and trapped between these vast forces. He said the Russian consul in Kiev had visited him and Yerofeyev, but had been a let-down. The two captives had hoped Moscow would get them home in a prisoner exchange, but they said the consul had been non-committal.

"I asked him a few questions. There was no answer to them. He said that when he has the answers, he will come again and let us know what they are," said Alexandrov, whose leg was shattered in a gun battle.

The Russian embassy in Kiev had no comment on Friday. In an earlier statement it had described Alexandrov and Yerofeyev as "Russian citizens detained in the Luhansk region" and said they were receiving proper medical treatment. "Embassy officials plan to visit the compatriots regularly," the statement said.

Ukrainian armed servicemen and officials in civilian clothes were present during the interviews Alexandrov and Yerofeyev gave to Reuters. Both Russian men made it clear they were active service members of the Russian military on the day they were captured. Alexandrov said he knew his military identification number off by heart: E131660.

He also said he fears for his relatives back in Russia. A few days ago, his wife, Yekaterina, appeared on Russian state television. Looking nervous, and talking in stilted phrases, she said her husband had quit the Russian military in December last year. That account was helpful to Putin's claims that only volunteer Russians have gone to Ukraine.

"They said I was no longer a serviceman," Alexandrov said. "It's a bit hurtful, especially when they do it through your family, through your wife. That crosses a line."

Alexandrov, who was captured on May 16, said he had been unable to get hold of his wife by telephone for nearly two weeks. She has not replied to his messages posted on social media accounts. A photograph of him with his wife stood on the table next to his bedside.

He said Yekaterina always used to pick up his calls, even before they were married, when sometimes he would call in the middle of the night. He asked to borrow a Reuters correspondent's mobile telephone so he could try calling her. Yerofeyev, also in a green T-shirt, his right arm in a bandage binding it to his torso, came into the room and watched.

Alexandrov dictated the number to the correspondent, and checked it was correct. With the phone in speaker mode, the call connected, and the ringing tone could be heard. But no one picked up.

"I'm really worried about my wife," he said. "Right now all this has fallen on her small, fragile shoulders."

Reuters was unable to contact his wife independently for comment.

## CRIMINAL CHARGES

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Ukrainian prosecutors say the two men will be charged with acts of terrorism, alleging they killed Ukrainians in combat. The soldiers have denied that, saying they did not fire their weapons.

If they had the status of soldiers fighting a war, international law would give them some protection from those charges; but they do not have that status since Moscow has said they were not acting on its orders.

"I can understand, of course, why they have turned their back on me as a serviceman, but I'm still a citizen of my country," said Yerofeyev, 30. "At least don't turn your back on me as a citizen."

Asked about the two servicemen on Thursday, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said he had nothing to add to previous comments, when he had said they were ordinary Russian citizens who were being held prisoner.

"Everything that concerns servicemen, you should address your questions to the defense ministry," said Peskov.

An official answering the telephone in the defense ministry press service on Thursday evening said no one was available to comment. There was no immediate response to written questions sent to the ministry. Previously, a defense ministry spokesman had told Russian state media that Alexandrov and Yerofeyev had served in the military in the past, but were no longer serving when they were captured.

## MURKY WAR

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The accounts given by the two Russians of how they came to be in Ukraine paint a different picture, shedding light on the realities of a shadowy war that has killed thousands of people.

They said they serve in a unit of the main intelligence directorate of the Russian general staff, based in the city of Togliatti on the Volga River. The directorate, known by its Russian initials G.R.U., is one of the military's elite forces, usually used for highly sensitive operations.

According to Alexandrov, their unit of 200 men was sent into Ukraine on March 26. Before crossing the border, he said, they were instructed to surrender their dog tags and military identification. They were also told to swap their uniforms for mismatched camouflage fatigues to blend in with the separatist irregulars.

Once inside Ukraine's separatist-held Luhansk region, his unit provided reconnaissance support to the separatists, he said. Separatist irregulars did most of the fighting, he said, and on occasion came close to shooting the Russian forces by mistake.

"I think that probably they need to drink less. Half of them are ex-convicts."

He said the May 16 firefight in which he and Yerofeyev were injured was the first time they had been involved in combat during their mission in Ukraine. Alexandrov described how he was hit in the leg, and tried to crawl to safety. When Ukrainian soldiers approached him, he thought they would kill him, but instead they picked him up, carried him to a vehicle and took him to hospital.

## A DILEMMA

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In past cases when Russian citizens have been captured or killed in Ukraine, officials in Moscow have said they were on leave from the military and fighting as volunteers - or in one case that a group of soldiers had got lost and entered Ukrainian territory by accident.

The case of Alexandrov and Yerofeyev is not so easy to brush aside. On Thursday Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko said bluntly: "These are special forces soldiers who killed Ukrainians, who were sent here. They are part of the regular Russian Federation military."

One Ukrainian soldier was killed in the firefight in which the two Russians were captured, Ukrainian soldiers who witnessed the incident told Reuters. However, a Ukrainian army colonel, whose unit was involved, said that none of his men had seen Alexandrov or Yerofeyev shooting anyone.

The case against the two men is being handled by the Ukrainian Security Service (SBU). It had no immediate comment on the case.

The SBU previously posted a statement on its website saying the two Russians were suspected of involvement in terrorist activity, but did not mention any specific evidence that either of them had been directly involved in killing Ukrainians.

Now, both Alexandrov and Yerofeyev are torn. They say they yearn to get home to their families – but they worry about how they can live in a country which, in their view, has disowned them, even though they were prepared to give their lives for it.

“It’s scary. There, no one is going to be saying thank you to me, I don’t suppose,” said Yerofeyev when asked about going back to Russia. “I think that my biggest adventures will start when I get home.”

Additional reporting by Gabriela Baczynska, Tatiana Ustinova and Vladimir Soldatkin in Moscow, and Pavel Polityuk and Richard Balmforth in Kiev; Editing By Christian Lowe and Richard Woods

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# Annex 577

Jo Becker & Steven Lee Myers, Russian Groups Crowdfund the Wars in Ukraine, N.Y. Times (11 June 2015)



## EUROPE

# Russian Groups Crowdfund the War in Ukraine

By JO BECKER and STEVEN LEE MYERS JUNE 11, 2015

WASHINGTON — The Novorossiia Humanitarian Battalion boasts on its website that it provided funds to buy a pair of binoculars used by rebels in eastern Ukraine to spot and destroy an armored vehicle. Another group, Save the Donbass, solicits donations using a photograph of a mortar shell inscribed with its web address and the names of donors. Yet another, Veche, states that its mission is to “create modern, combat-ready” military units fighting Ukraine’s central government.

These organizations are part of an online campaign that is brazenly raising money for the war in eastern Ukraine, using common tactics that have at least tacit support from the government of President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia. Although they often portray their mission as humanitarian, most of the groups explicitly endorse the armed insurgency and vow to help equip forces in the two regions at the center of the fighting, Donetsk and Luhansk.

An examination by The New York Times of the groups’ websites, social media postings and other records found more than a dozen groups in Russia that are raising money for the separatists, aiding a conflict that has killed more than 6,400 people and plunged Russia’s relations with the West to depths not seen since the Cold War.

The groups have relied on social media — including YouTube and the Russian version of Facebook — to direct donations through state-owned banks in Russia and through a private system of payment terminals owned by a company called QIWI that is affiliated with Visa and traded on the Nasdaq. While most of the donations appear to come from Russia, the organizations have also solicited funds from abroad using large American and European financial institutions, including banks and companies like Western Union and PayPal, even though many of the groups are targets of international sanctions.

The fund-raising could pose legal risks for those companies, which are prohibited from doing business with blacklisted people or groups. In fact, the sanctions have helped give rise to a cat-and-mouse game in which the fund-raising groups morph with the shifting circumstances, changing names and redirecting donations to new accounts to keep the money flowing.

With the European Union expected to renew its sanctions later this month, Mr. Putin has continued to insist that the fighters in eastern Ukraine are part of a homegrown opposition movement, even though a preponderance of evidence shows that Russia has provided manpower and weapons. In late May, for instance, two Russian soldiers were captured on the battlefield and charged with terrorism.

Mr. Putin participated in the negotiations that produced a tenuous cease-fire in February, and he has called on both sides to reach a lasting political settlement, most recently during his meetings with Italian officials and Pope Francis in Rome. Officials in Ukraine and elsewhere, however, say that he has continued to stoke the conflict in order to keep his neighbor weak and unstable.

In recent days, new signs of a buildup of Russian troops and equipment at the border, as well as fighting that killed at least 19 people on the outskirts of Donetsk, have raised fears that the simmering conflict will erupt again.

### A Common Cause

It is unclear just how extensive the fund-raising network is, or how much money flows through it, though the separatist groups identified by The Times claim in social media posts to have raised millions of dollars.

The network features a disparate yet overlapping cast of characters that includes a mustachioed former Russian military intelligence officer credited with starting the uprising, Igor Girkin, who uses the nom de guerre Igor Strelkov; the dissident writer and Putin critic Eduard Limonov, whose neo-nationalist followers have championed the territorial expansion in ethnically Russian regions with far more vigor than Mr. Putin's Kremlin; and a former "foreign minister" of the Donetsk People's Republic, Yekaterina Gubareva, and her husband, Pavel, an ethnic Russian from Ukraine and one of the most prominent separatist leaders there.

All share a common cause: establishment of a region loyal to Russia that is sometimes called the Donbass or Novorossiia. They make similar appeals to ethnic and political solidarity with the fighters opposing the central government in Kiev, and they share methods for raising money for illicit activities that the Internet has made vastly more efficient, according to experts and officials monitoring financial flows of criminal and terrorist groups.

"Violent groups operating in war zones and their supporters abroad are exploiting advancements in communications and financial services technologies to more efficiently increase popular support and raise funds for their cause," said Howard Mendelsohn, a former deputy assistant Treasury secretary and now the managing director of Camstoll Group, an advisory firm in Washington.

According to their own online appeals, the organizations have directed that donations be made via state-owned or state-controlled banks in Russia, including the country's largest, Sberbank, or credit cards issued by those banks, some branded with MasterCard and Visa logos. Mr. Putin's government, which strictly regulates nongovernmental organizations to monitor opposition political activity, has done little to stop the fund-raising.

The head of Russia's Federal Service for Financial Monitoring, Yuri A. Chikhanchin, for instance, recently told Mr. Putin that his agency had frozen 3,500 bank accounts suspected of supporting terrorist organizations. The fighters in eastern Ukraine, however, are not among the groups Russia has designated as unlawful.

“Anyone in Russia who wants to provide assistance to the D.P.R. and the L.P.R. is encouraged by and gets support from the Russian government,” said John E. Herbst, a former American ambassador to Ukraine now at the Atlantic Council in Washington, using the abbreviations for the self-proclaimed People’s Republics of Donetsk and Luhansk.

### Following the Money

One of the fund-raising groups, Save the Donbass, claimed in May to have raised the equivalent of \$1.3 million in donations through Sberbank and other payment systems, including QIWI.

The fund run by Ms. Gubareva and her husband, the Humanitarian Battalion of Novorossiya, claims to have raised \$213,000 since its founding in May 2014, shortly after the fighting began.

Its website allows donors to direct their contributions to specific militia units, including a mortar battery named after the Russian version of Pinocchio, a puppet called Buratino, and boasts that it has provided not only the binoculars used in the destruction of the armored vehicle, but also tactical military gloves, laser range finders, radios and a car used by the battery’s spotters.

At least five of the organizations solicit donations through PayPal, the online payment company based in California that is now owned by eBay. PayPal has in the past faced legal trouble for processing payments to entities in Iran, Sudan and Cuba, recently paying nearly \$7.7 million in penalties in a settlement with the Treasury Department.

When asked about the Ukrainian-related accounts — identified by email addresses in Russia — a PayPal spokeswoman, Sarah Frueh, said none of the accounts were valid. She declined to respond to additional questions seeking clarification. Many of the organizations openly advertise ways to donate using American and European banks. On the Humanitarian Battalion website, for instance, Ms. Gubareva explains how to wire dollars or euros into her account at Sberbank using correspondent accounts at Citibank, JPMorgan Chase and Deutsche Bank in New York, among others. So did the separatist group Veche.

It remains unclear how much money is flowing into eastern Ukraine from abroad. Only one of the international banks said it had detected illicit donations, blocking a contribution to Ms. Gubareva's organization, according to a bank official who spoke on the condition that the bank not be identified. Another donation of \$200 did pass to Veche, which is not on any blacklist but proclaims links to organizations that are — including Mr. Strelkov's Novorossiia Movement and the Ghost Battalion, led by Aleksei Mozgovy until he died in an ambush last month.

But the widespread use of QIWI has created potential risks for its partner, Visa. Nearly all the fund-raising groups solicit donations through QIWI, a virtual payment company founded in 2004 and later incorporated, like many Russian companies, in Cyprus. QIWI provides consumers in Russia — and increasingly other countries — with a variety of ways to make payments online or through a network of tens of thousands of terminals that act like reverse A.T.M.s, allowing users to deposit cash and then pay participating vendors.

Users can also move money to individuals — or charitable organizations — as long as they have accounts linked to working telephone numbers. Its partnership with Visa, begun in 2012, allows customers to use a QIWI-Visa credit card to pay vendors outside QIWI's network.

The system has become wildly popular, used by 17 million Russians, but it has also skirted legal trouble. The company's terminals and credit cards — along with the failure to require identification for transactions, as demanded by Russian law since last year — can be easily exploited to transfer proceeds from illicit activities, from drug dealing to tax evasion.

In a recent filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission, required because its stock is traded on the Nasdaq, QIWI said its system "remains susceptible to potentially illegal or improper uses" such as money laundering by organized crime groups and other illicit actors, including those named in sanctions by the West for their activities in Ukraine.

In February, the company filed an amendment, saying that law enforcement officials had carried out an investigation at its Moscow offices involving "a small number of clients," though it did not elaborate.

Officials with Visa said they did not believe their company had processed any donations to the organizations examined. QIWI's chief executive, Sergei Solonin, said in a telephone interview that QIWI blocked some of the accounts identified by The Times last summer because they were engaged in fund-raising activity prohibited by company policy. The company, for instance, blocks the use of its system for political fund-raising.

Mr. Solonin said other accounts were blocked after The Times brought them to QIWI's attention. One group, Tricolor, posted photographs of donations made on QIWI accounts as late as October 2014, but Mr. Solonin would not say whether that was one of the accounts closed later, citing Russia's financial confidentiality laws. After that interview, a number of groups noted on their websites that their QIWI accounts had been blocked, and removed them as payment options.

But underscoring just how tricky it can be to curtail the groups' fund-raising activities, a number redirected money to new accounts. On April 20, a group called Batman noted on its social media page that all but its Sberbank account had been blocked. But by May 18, it had updated the page to include a new QIWI account number and a plea: "Donbass needs your help!"

The Western sanctions lists, for their part, have not kept up with the groups' ever-changing names. Mr. Strelkov's Novorossiia Movement, for instance, stopped soliciting funds after the European Union placed sanctions on it in February. Instead, it asked that the funds be sent to a related group, not blacklisted, called Global Initiatives, run by the movement's chief of staff with Mr. Strelkov as chairman.

In early May, it morphed yet again, redirecting funds to yet another related group, ANO KNB. Later in the month, a group identified by the Novorossiia Movement as its partner, Strelkov Info, wrote that because of constant blocking of its accounts, "we've decided to not post them in places open to all"; donors could send an email "to find out transfer details."

Meanwhile, new fund-raising appeals keep popping up. A group calling itself Dobrovolc.org was soliciting funds online as of May 26, with QIWI and Sberbank accounts among the payment options. The group, which claims to be conducting at

least two campaigns involving volunteer snipers and “tankmen,” called on fighters familiar with such deadly weaponry as surface-to-air missiles, flamethrowers and anti-tank guided missiles to join its effort to “participate in military conflict in the west of former Ukraine on Novorossiya side.”

Andrew Roth contributed reporting from Moscow.

A version of this article appears in print on June 12, 2015, on Page A1 of the New York edition with the headline: Russian Groups Turn to Web to Crowdfund the War in Ukraine.

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# Annex 578

Tomasz Piechal, The War Republics In The Donbas One Year After The Outbreak Of The Conflict, Ośrodek Studiów Wschodnich (17 June 2015)





## The War republics in the Donbas one year after the outbreak of the conflict

OSW COMMENTARY | 2015-06-17 | [Tomasz Piechal](#)

More than one year since the first pro-Russian moves in the Donbas, separatists have taken control of parts of the Donbas and Luhansk oblasts but are still unable to form truly functioning administrative structures. The exercise of power by the central administration of the so-called 'Donetsk People's Republic' (DPR) and 'Luhansk People's Republic' (LPR) is restricted to resolving problems as they arise, while administration proper is the prerogative of the local authorities reporting to them which had been performing this function before the conflict broke out. The way the situation is developing and the fact that access to information is restricted make it difficult to determine the structure of the separatist government in more detail, precisely how it is organised, and what the internal hierarchy is like. The overriding goal of the governments of the DPR and the LPR is to maintain and develop their military potential. In effect, the lives of the so-called republics are subordinate to military goals.

The Donbas separatism is a conglomerate of different groups of interests, with Russia at the fulcrum. Its representatives set the main tactical and strategic goals and thus have a decisive influence on the development of the situation in the region. Individual separatist groupings come into conflict, and some oligarchs linked to the former Party of Regions circles have also been making attempts to maintain their influence. The struggle between individual groups of interest is intensifying as the situation on the war front becomes calmer. Since the situation has temporarily stabilised after the seizure of Debaltseve, the central governments of the DPR and the LPR have made attempts to expand their influence, combating armed criminals who are outside their control and that of Russia.

The civilian population is taking the brunt of the devastation caused by the war and the increasing militarisation of the region. Despite the fact that the intensity of the fighting on the war front is falling, worsening humanitarian problems are causing refugees to continue their flight from the territories controlled by the separatists. 2 million people have fled the conflict zone since the beginning of the war: 1.3 million of them have found shelter in other regions of Ukraine, and more than 700,000 have left for Russia. The region has also sustained great economic losses – most mines have been either destroyed or closed, many industrial plants

have restricted or completely discontinued their production, and many firms have been taken over by force. In effect, the region has seen an economic downturn.

### **The emergence of the so-called republics**

When the Revolution of Dignity prevailed and President Viktor Yanukovich was ousted in March and April 2014, Russia started stoking separatist sentiments in the south-eastern regions of Ukraine, and thus began to implement its plan to set up the so-called *Novorossiya*. In the case of the Donbas, both Moscow and local oligarchs viewed the protests in their initial phase as being beneficial (in Donetsk Oblast those who wanted to benefit most were Rinat Akhmetov and politicians linked to Viktor Yanukovich's oligarchic clan, 'The Family', and in Luhansk Oblast the key player was Oleksandr Yefremov). Russia viewed the pro-Russian demonstrations as a factor which destabilised the situation in Ukraine, while for the oligarchs they were one of the elements of negotiations with the new government. A section of the region's political elite wanted thus to put pressure on the central government through a controlled outburst of public dissatisfaction in order to retain their zones of influence and main sources of income. However, the situation was deteriorating on a regular basis and finally the local oligarchs (as a consequence of Russia's political decision) lost control of the way events played out. In effect, self-proclaimed republics were set up (the so-called Donetsk People's Republic and Luhansk People's Republic) and they have taken regular action over the past few months to legitimise their existence. The first stage was marked by an illegal and fraudulent referendum being held on 11 May 2014<sup>[1]</sup>, and this was followed by a central government election being held on 2 November. Neither vote met any democratic standards.

Two weeks after the referendum, on 25 May 2014, it was announced that the Union of People's Republics, *Novorossiya*, was set up, and was led by a former deputy from the Party of regions, Oleh Tsaryov. In theory, the union was intended to merge the two 'people's republics' into one, but they have thus far functioned independently from one another, and the union itself exists only on paper. This situation and the fact that two separate political entities have been set up instead of one result from the fact that the separatist movement in the Donbas has been fragmented from the very beginning. Various groups of interest have made efforts to capitalise on the instability, vying for influence and access to the income

generated by the region's economy. Furthermore, rivalry dating back to the Soviet times still continues between Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts. Separate business groups were formed in the two oblasts in the 1990s. Donetsk was economically stronger and has always tried to take full control over the entire region. When separatism broke out in the Donbas, these factors played the key role in the failure of the Novorossiia project as a union of people's republics.

### **Government structure in the Donbas**

According to unofficial data, around seventeen separatist battalions operate in the so-called Donetsk People's Republic alone[2]. They control either a given territory or a given economic sector. They make money from businesses they have taken over (for example, petrol stations or illegal mines) or from contraband – the sale of stolen cars, factory machines, etc. Occasionally the zones of influence of individual groupings overlap, and this brings them into conflict. In effect, the situation in the two regions is unstable not only due to military activity but also to infighting between various forces engaged in the Donbas separatism. Both the 'central governments' of the DPR and LPR, and individual volunteer battalions are fighting for their own zones of influence. A part of these battalions is dependent on local interest groups and some of them consist of foreign militants (mainly Russians and Chechens, although small groups of Serbs and citizens of other countries are also present there), and Cossack groups.

Infighting intensified when Debaltseve was seized and the active military operation phase ended. The central governments of the so-called republics made efforts to strengthen their influence in the region – their main opponents are Cossack groups who have shown no intention since the beginning of the conflict to make themselves subordinate to the governments of the DPR and the LPR. The governments want their respective republics to become more centralised. They would thus turn into a political organism which is easier to manage, and this will be an important argument in talks aimed at obtaining a greater degree of independence from Kyiv.

In administrative terms, the governments of the two 'republics' are trying to administer the territories which they nominally control. However, this primarily boils down to resolving current issues, such as the

distribution of humanitarian aid from Russia. The main goals of the central governments include maintaining a high degree of militarisation in the region and bringing all armed formations operating in the 'republics' under their control. In effect, life in the occupied territories is subordinated above all to satisfying the needs of soldiers who have to constantly be prepared to continue the fight against Ukrainian troops.

Administration proper in the occupied territories is performed by those authorities which performed these functions under the Ukrainian government. Most staff in local governments and public servants are still in their jobs, and the municipal services are fully operational. Many police officers, public prosecutors and law enforcement officers have decided to serve the governments of the DPR and the LPR. In some cities, working for the separatists is one of the few opportunities to earn a living, be it in military formations or in the state administration.

However, the detailed structure of the separatist governments remains unclear. It is difficult to determine precisely how they are organised and what their internal hierarchy is like. In the case of the DPR it is clear that the separatists have been able to develop certain basic principles of co-operation between individual centres of power. Some of the groupings operating in the remaining part of the 'republic' in exchange for paying money (as part of taxes imposed by the separatists) to the Central Republican Bank of the DPR[3] received consent from the central government for further operation in the areas they control. One of the main functions of the DPR is to ensure profits to various militant groups operating within its territory who represent either their own interests or the interests of their principals (oligarchs). The consistent cooperation of most of these groups with the 'republican' government as well as between individual groups is possible partly because their limits of competences and profit areas have been clearly set, and this means a distribution of sources of income which is satisfactory to all of them.

Though the DPR has achieved a relative setting of the hierarchy between its central government and the battalions fighting there, this remains a problem in the LPR. Various forces are engaged in an intense struggle there. The main divide inside the LPR is between Ihor Plotnitsky (the formal leader) and various Cossack groups who control territories bordering on Donetsk Oblast[4]. The Cossacks have accused Plotnitsky of reaping financial benefits for example from trade in humanitarian aid from Russia, and of having connections with Oleksandr Yefremov, who for many years was the leader of the local apparatus of the Party of Regions.

Proofs for this thesis include both his past and the composition of his 'government'. At present, most of the LPR's government is formed by staff from the former local state administration, which to a great extent was formed by Yefremov. It should be noted that as Yefremov's position became weaker[5], part of the people linked to him decided to completely subordinate themselves to the separatists who are controlled by Russia.

Ideological and financial issues are the main reasons behind the conflict between the central government of the LPR and the Cossacks – the Cossacks do not want to subordinate themselves to Plotnitsky because they would thus risk a reduction of their profits from the controlled territories. In effect, clashes between the groups controlled by Plotnitsky and the armed groups who are beyond his control are seen there on a regular basis. Some of their leaders have been executed[6]. The government itself is unable to control the territory of the 'republic' since it does not have sufficient forces to fight all the Cossacks.

### **The Russian factor in the Donbas**

Russia's activity was the key factor which triggered the conflict in the region. It is precisely citizens of the Russian Federation[7] who in the initial phase of the operation of the 'people's republics' played the leading roles in their government. It took some time until people from the Donbas were put in top positions. The change was mainly an effect of the tactic adopted by Russia – when separatism was fuelled and the first successes were achieved, the decision was made to relinquish senior positions to locals to add credibility to the vision of a 'grassroots movement'. Over time, the separatists forced a greater number of representatives of the local administration to co-operate with them. One effect of this was the 'nationalisation of staff' of the 'people's republics.'

At present, Russian citizens primarily play the role of last instance in internal disputes between the separatists. They also decide on how military operations will develop, setting the line of operation for individual separatist troops. The number of Russian military units present in the Donbas has fallen since the end of the active military stage. The main military forces designated for fighting the Ukrainian army are stationed in Russia close to the Ukrainian border. They will only be used at critical moments or when it is necessary to achieve a certain military goal.

Russian engagement in the conflict is the basic guarantor for the continuation of separatism in the Donbas. If the DPR and the LPR had not been supported by Russia, the two 'republics' would have had no chance of functioning by themselves and presenting resistance to Ukrainian troops. The key element which guarantees survival to the 'republics' is the open border, a section around 400 km long. This section is used for the regular transfer of funds, financial and military support, and personnel.

### **The problems of the civilian population**

According to the most recent data, around 2 million people have left the occupied territories since the beginning of the conflict. Over 1.3 million of them are domestic refugees, and more than 700,000 have fled to Russia[8]. Given the fact that around 7 million people lived in the two oblasts, this means that approximately 30% of their population has decided to leave.

Local pensioners are in the most difficult situation in the territories not affected directly by the fighting. They account for around 50% of the people living in the occupied territories (around 1.2 million people, while the total population of the two 'people's republics' is approximately 2.5 million). A great part of them have been deprived of the possibility of receiving regular social benefits from the Ukrainian state. The main problem is posed by the requirement to re-register at the offices operating in the territories controlled by the Ukrainian army and then to go to indicated places behind the frontline to receive the benefit. This trip was both costly and dangerous due to continued shelling. In effect, many pensioners have been left destitute. The hunger protests seen at the end of November 2014 in a few places (including Yenakiieve and Torez) were incited above all by elderly people who had no money to buy food. At present, according to the Ukrainian government's estimates, already 900,000 out of 1.2 million pensioners living in the occupied territories have been registered on the Ukrainian side, however they still need to cross the front line in order to receive the benefits. The separatist governments, despite numerous declarations made to pensioners, have paid pensions irregularly and to a limited extent.

Regardless of the deteriorating humanitarian situation, no major demonstrations of dissatisfaction with the governments' actions have

been seen in either 'republic' since the November protests. A small demonstration (around 500 people) was held on 15 June in Donetsk. Its participants chanted anti-war slogans, but even then part of the demonstrators demanded above all that the front line be moved away from Donetsk. Furthermore, tens of thousands people took part in the celebrations of the 'national' holidays in May (Victory Day on 9 May and the referendum anniversary on 11 May) held by the government of the DPR. It is thus clear that since pro-Ukrainian residents of the region have fled, the people living in the occupied territories either support the new governments or have a neutral attitude towards them. The massive propaganda employed by the separatists, who represent the Ukrainian army as the main enemy of the Donbas, has reinforced the local population's dislike of Kyiv. This process is likely to intensify in the coming months.

### **The economic disaster**

Before the war, the Donbas was one of Ukraine's most important regions in economic terms. Over the past few years the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts generated 12% and 4% of Ukraine's GDP, respectively. These two oblasts also accounted for a significant part of Ukraine's trade – they had a 25% share in total Ukrainian exports and a 12% share in total Ukrainian imports[9]. In 2013, goods worth US\$15.9 billion were exported from this region, while the region's imports were worth US\$9.4 billion. Heavy industry, mainly metallurgy and the production of machines and locomotives, and the fuel production sector (mainly the mining of various kinds of coal) played a dominant role in the production structure.

The region has plunged into economic collapse since the outbreak of the conflict. Many industrial plants have been closed and some have been destroyed as a consequence of shelling. Others yet have been taken over by the separatists. However, the real scale of damage sustained by the industrial sector is difficult to estimate. Nevertheless, it can be concluded on the grounds of numerous reports from people who still live in the occupied territories that small local factories in many places are still operational and are selling their products in the region, in Ukraine or exporting them to Russia. At the same time, work has stopped at many large companies in the region, including the Alchevsk Metallurgical Plant and the mining machinery factory in Donetsk. The situation in industry depends on how far a given place is located from the front line, on the

militant groups who control it, and on the owners of given plants. The factories who sell a great part of their production to Russia are in the best situation. They pay money to their employees, though not full salaries. The industry's operation also depends on the intensity of the fighting on the military front – the increased frequency of shelling towards the end of May resulted in a large coke plant in Avdiivka closing down; this is part of Rinat Akhmetov's assets. Most of his other industrial plants which are now located in the 'people's republics' continue their operation. Their functioning and the related payment of wages to employees is the guarantor of survival to thousands of residents of the occupied territories (more than 70,000 people are still employed by Akhmetov's plants in the 'people's republics'[10]), and this serves the interests of both the oligarch and the separatists.

Mines located in the region are in a particularly difficult situation. Many of them have been closed down. At present about half of the approximately 80 mines located in the occupied territories are still running. The remaining ones ceased production (mainly due to destruction caused by shelling). Those which are still functioning predominantly work to a limited extent, and others have taken action to resume operation. Meanwhile, production is being continued by illegal coal mines, known as *kopanki*. Their output is sold in Russia and Ukraine.

The economic problems have contributed to rising unemployment levels in the region, and this is compounding the social problems there. According to a survey conducted in March by the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology, only 50% of the residents in the 'republics' live on their wages or pensions; the others receive support from their relatives and take loans[11]. In effect, work for the separatist administration (although problems with wages are also seen here) or joining their military formations has become one of the essential ways to earn a living.

Trade and services operate to a limited extent in the occupied territories. It should be noted that until recently most goods were supplied to the territories controlled by the separatists from Ukraine, where prices are much lower than in Russia. However, due to logistical and transport problems, their prices in the 'separatist republics' are significantly higher anyway. Even the most basic products are thus much more expensive than in Ukraine. Furthermore, since crossing the front line has become more problematic, supplies (of more expensive products and those of lower quality) from Russia have increased.

One of the main impediments to doing business in the occupied territories is corporate raiding, i.e. taking over companies by force. Many functioning businesses have been taken over by armed criminals or local businessmen who decided to take others' assets, taking advantage of the existing chaos[12]. Some representatives of small and medium-sized businesses operate depending on the intensity of the fighting – when military activity is less intense, they open their businesses.

The separatist central governments try to profit from companies' activity, as well. Last September, the government of the 'Donetsk People's Republic' ordered that companies be registered at the DPR's administration and imposed a war tax and a sales tax (from 1% to 17%), depending on the form of legal ownership. The corporate income tax rate is 20%, and the personal income tax rate is 13%. Furthermore, a land tax and excise duty have also been imposed – these levies have to be paid to the Central Republican Bank of the DPR. The separatists have also taken control of all marketplaces, introducing their commissioners who collect charges, and have imposed taxes on taxi and bus drivers and the owners of *kopanki* (around US\$850 monthly).

Since the 'separatist republics' are outside the Ukrainian banking system, cash shortages are being observed in the occupied territories. Until the Ukrainian side introduced passes for crossing the front line[13], many people would go to Ukrainian territories to withdraw cash from their bank accounts. At present, taking this trip has become even more complicated. Therefore, new services have become available: these are points where money can be withdrawn from bank accounts held with Ukrainian banks. The commission fee depends on the amount withdrawn, and can even reach 15% or 20%. Currency exchange is also flourishing.

The separatist governments have responded to the problems with cash shortages by creating a multi-currency zone in the 'republics'. This means that settlements can be made there in several currencies. In theory, it is possible to pay with Ukrainian hryvnias, Russian rubles, US dollars, and euros in the DPR and the LPR. However, only the two former currencies are in common use. Their exchange rate has been fixed by the governments, and is 1:2 (one hryvnia is the equivalent of two rubles). However, there is a shortage of low denomination rubles, so the Ukrainian hryvnia is still the most popular means of payment.

## Conclusions

The main goal of existence of the 'Donbas people's republics' is the constant destabilisation of the situation in Ukraine and to put pressure on the government in Kyiv to amend the constitution to include the two autonomous political entities controlled by Russia in the Ukrainian political system. To achieve this goal, a high level of militarisation has been maintained in the occupied territories – the separatist armed forces must be ready to escalate the conflict at any time. In effect, the functioning of the two 'separatist republics' has practically been totally subordinated to armed formations operating there. Profits generated by the region's economy are distributed among the central governments, oligarchs and individual troops which have subordinated themselves to the governments of the DPR and the LPR. Groups which try to operate independently are combated on a regular basis. Thus the term 'war republics' appears to be more adequate than 'people's republics' when defining the Donbas separatism, since military needs are at the centre of both of these structures. Continued struggle and further stages of escalation of the conflict – including territorial expansion – are inherent in the meaning of their existence. Issues linked to real administration and the possible reconstruction of the region's economy have been given a clearly lower priority by the separatists.

Neither the DPR nor the LPR would have been able to function so long if not for support from Russia which contributed to the outbreak of the conflict in the Donbas with its actions. An open border section of around 400 km allows the separatists to receive support in the form of humanitarian aid, military equipment and personnel. They have also made use of it for smuggling and creating transfer channels for weapons and drugs.

The military operation and the increasing criminalisation of the region have led to a mass exodus of the local population. Those who have chosen to stay, even though their situation has deteriorated due to the emergence of the separatists, are putting most of the blame on Kyiv. Ukrainians have been accused of shelling housing estates, and thus of the deaths of civilians[14]. Negative sentiments towards Ukraine have been bolstered by the Ukrainian policy of gradually cutting the Donbas off from the rest of the country[15] and by separatist propaganda. In effect, if Ukraine regains control over the occupied territories, it may turn out to be impossible for Kyiv to include the residents of the territories affected by the war in the Ukrainian national community.

## Map

### Situation in the eastern Ukraine



[1] 89% of residents of Donetsk Oblast (2,252,000 people) and 96% residents of Luhansk Oblast (their number has not been stated as yet) reportedly voted for the 'republics' to be set up in the May referendum.

[2] There are dozens of armed groups in the region in total. The best-known armed formations include: Oplot, Vostok, Kalmius, Sparta, Somalia

(in the DPR) and Odessa, Prizrak, Zarya, Vityaz, Rus, Modjahed and numerous Cossack regiments (in the LPR).

[3] The Central Republican Bank of the DPR, which was established in early December, is mainly in charge of acquisition of funds for the central government's operation, and sometimes pays small benefits to pensioners.

[4] Various Cossack groups control, for example, Antratsyt, Krasny Luch and Pervomaisk.

[5] Yefremov himself was accused by Kyiv of supporting separatists. A court trial was launched against him in February 2015 on charges of 'inciting ethnic hatred'. For more on his influence in the LPR see: <http://www.pravda.com.ua/articles/2014/12/24/7053114/>

[6] Aleksey Mozgovoy, the commander of battalion Prizrak openly criticised the central government of the LPR and was killed on 23 May 2015. Alexandr Bednov, nicknamed Batman, was killed in early January 2015. He was accused of bandit practices by the government of the LPR and was later killed together with his bodyguards by troops reporting to Plotnitsky.

[7] For example, an FSB colonel Igor 'Strelkov' Girkin, the field commander of Sloviansk or Alexandr Borodai, who served as the prime minister of the DPR for a while.

[8] Recent data from June 12 by UNHCR: <http://unhcr.org.ua/en/2011-08-26-06-58-56/news-archive/1244-internal-displacement-map>

[9] Donetsk Oblast accounted for 19% of Ukrainian exports and 8% of imports, and Luhansk Oblast made up 6% of exports and 4% of imports.

[10]

<http://daily.rbc.ru/investigation/politics/15/06/2015/5579b4b99a7947b063440210>

[11] <http://www.unian.ua/society/1061590-lishe-tretina-jiteliv-okupovanogo-donbasu-jive-na-dohodi-vid-postiynoji-roboti-sotsiolog.html>

[12] The most infamous example was the takeover of eighteen Amstor chain stores, <http://www.epravda.com.ua/publications/2015/01/29/524255/>

[13] In January the Ukrainian government reduced the number of checkpoints through which people may enter or leave the occupied

territories to seven places where the front line is possible to cross. A new requirement to obtain a pass from one of the seven checkpoints beforehand has also been imposed. As the situation on the front line escalated in late May/early June this year, the number of checkpoints possible to pass has been temporarily reduced, and thus the transfer of people between Ukraine and the occupied territories has significantly decreased – individual checkpoints are opened and closed depending on the intensity of shelling.

[14] According to latest information provided by the UN agency, 6,417 people have been killed and 15,962 people have been wounded (data as of 15 May 2015) in Ukraine since the beginning of the conflict in Donbas.

[15] For more information on Kyiv's policy on Donbas read *OSW Commentary* by Tadeusz Iwański 'Still together but apart? Kyiv's policy towards the Donbas, *OSW Commentary*, <http://www.osw.waw.pl/en/publikacje/osw-commentary/2015-02-06/still-together-apart-kyivs-policy-towards-donbas>

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# Annex 579

Corey Flintoff, Who's Behind a String of Bombings in Ukraine's Black Sea 'Pearl'?, NPR (1 July 2015).



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# Who's Behind A String Of Bombings In Ukraine's Black Sea 'Pearl'?

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Heard on All Things Considered

COREY FLINTOFF



Police search the area near a destroyed billboard reading "Crimea is Ukraine!" following an explosion in Odessa on June 12.

Alexey Kravtsov/AFP/Getty Images

Oleg Konstantinov, the editor of a news website called Dumskaya in Ukraine's port city of Odessa, pulls up a map on a computer screen in his small, crowded newsroom. It's dotted with red, yellow, orange and green fire-burst icons, indicating where 34 bombings have taken place in the city over the past year or so.

Konstantinov and his fellow journalists have been plotting the locations, looking for patterns in the data from the attacks and trying to figure out who organized them.

"These bombings were obviously committed by different groups," Konstantinov says, as he moves his cursor over the icons. "We're basing that conclusion on the kind of targets they chose, the type of explosives they used, the timing of the attacks — actually, quite a number of facts."

Security forces have arrested suspects in several of the attacks and Konstantinov says they, too, fit a pattern. They're all men who want to see Odessa and its region split from Ukraine and become part of Russia. Konstantinov says they tend to be middle-aged, poorly educated Soviet army veterans who may belong to different pro-Russian fringe groups.

## Part Of A Bigger Conflict

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### WORLD

Snapshot Sleuthing Confirms Russian Military Presence In Ukraine

Known as the "pearl of the Black Sea," Odessa has always been a crucial trade hub as well as a rich prize in centuries of wars and political intrigue. Nowadays, it's key to the conflict between Ukraine and Russia — which began in February of last year, when Russia seized Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula, east of Odessa.

The process of understanding the city's recent attacks becomes a lot less analytical when you talk with people who've experienced the bombings, like Natasha Vasyuchenko.

She's a small woman with a weathered face and a smoker's husky voice, working the night shift in a cigarette kiosk on a busy street in one of the grittier parts of Odessa.

She was dozing when she was snapped awake by a blast in the wee hours of June 12.

"Something like an earthquake happened and all the cigarettes just fell down off the shelves," she says. "The police appeared, and then I walked to the corner and saw this destroyed billboard."

A few minutes later, there was a second blast.

Both bombs shredded billboards carrying the slogan "Crimea is Ukraine!"

Konstantinov says that unlike bombings in some other Ukrainian cities, these attacks don't seem to be targeting civilians. Only one person so far has been killed, a street cleaner who may have picked up a bomb by accident.

"The impression is that these people are trying to get attention for their cause rather than do real damage," he says. "In that sense, they're not acts of sabotage but more like classical terrorist acts," he says.

The implication, he says, is that the bombers don't want to alienate the population, in hopes that more Odessans will eventually embrace the separatist cause.

### **Concern Over Russian Spies**

Another online journalist, Vera Zaporozhets, an editor at the news website Southern Courier, tells me the investigations of the bombings are complicated by the fact that

Ukraine's security services have long been infiltrated by Russian agents.

"You probably realize that there are Russian spies in Odessa, even in the security service," she says. "And all those people still keep working — in the police and prosecutor's office."

Zaporozhets says there's only a small group of security service officers who are really trying to prevent terrorist attacks — and they're helped by civilian volunteers.

Vadim Labas, the lead research analyst for a group called Oberig, a Slavic word that means "protective charm" or "amulet," is one of those volunteers. His group gathers information and passes along tips to trusted members of the security services and journalists.

Oberig's researchers discovered that pro-Russian organizers were paying people to stage demonstrations for separatist-related causes over the past year. The researchers tipped off journalists, who exposed the payoffs in local media.

Labas says he knows there's a danger of retaliation from the pro-Russian side.

"They have a list of people who oppose them, with photos and profiles," he says, "and they've promised that after they take over Odessa, there will be tribunals and public executions of 'traitors' in the city soccer stadium."

He and his colleagues are determined to make sure that day never comes.

"We know it's a dangerous situation," he says, "but we keep on fighting."

crisis in ukraine

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# Annex 580

John Thornhill, Fear Vladimir Putin's Weakness Not His Strength, The Financial Times (17 August 2015)



# Fear Vladimir Putin's weakness not his strength

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August 17, 2015

## Latest on Russian politics

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### Opinion [Russian politics](#)

It would be rash to equate the president with Russia and declare new cold war, writes John Thornhill

#### [John Thornhill](#)

It is hard to find a more spirited supporter of Russian president [Vladimir Putin](#) than Konstantin Malofeev, the so-called "Orthodox businessman" who has been outspoken in his backing of the separatists in Ukraine.

In Mr Malofeev's telling, Mr Putin's accomplishments have been to crush the oligarchs, reassert the Kremlin's authority across the country, revive the economy, bolster the Orthodox church and re-establish Russia as an independent geopolitical actor.

"Russia is not Belgium. Russia can only exist as an empire," he told my Moscow colleagues and me earlier this year in his offices resplendent with tsarist regalia. "Putin is a historic leader. The best leader in the past 100 years."

But when asked about whether Mr Putin had succeeded in creating a system of governance that would outlast him, the voluble Mr Malofeev expressed some uncharacteristic doubts. "Finding another Putin is very difficult. I am not sure this system can continue after Putin," he said.

Mr Malofeev's hesitation touches on the cardinal sin of Mr Putin's rule that should be considered by western policymakers dealing with Moscow. Mr Putin has consolidated the Kremlin's power by stripping all rival institutions of authority and legitimacy. Over the past 15 years, he has neutered parliament, the regional governors, the free press, the opposition and the law courts. From any longer-term perspective, the striking feature of Mr Putin's Russia is not its strength but its alarming brittleness.

For the moment, Mr Putin may convey the impression of being the master of all he surveys, leading a resurgent Russia and intimidating her former Soviet neighbours. If anything, western debates about Russia tend to exaggerate the country's cycles and its politicians are shivering at the prospect of a new cold war. But before long, Russia may have slipped again into a cyclical downturn, leaving the west to fret about the dangers of economic and social chaos, virulent nationalism and nuclear proliferation. A weak Russia may be even more worrying than a strong one.

It is not only Mr Putin's political model that looks outdated. Russia's economy appears equally threadbare. Under the strains of lower energy prices, western sanctions and massive capital flight, [Russia's economy](#) contracted 4.6 per cent in the second quarter of 2015 compared with the same period the previous year. Real incomes are falling for the first time in Mr Putin's rule.

The Soviet Union once vied with the US for economic supremacy; now, America's gross domestic product using purchasing power parity is five times larger than Russia's. If, as some suggest, we have reached "peak demand" for oil then Russia's economy looks vulnerable given its failure to diversify. It has no new model for growth.

Underlying this economic fragility is a demographic disaster. Russia's population has fallen to 142m, smaller than that of Bangladesh. Many of its best brains are quitting the country, or are being forced to do so. A recent [Russian report](#) into the country's demographic trends concluded: "If the situation does not improve the country can expect problems in the economy, international competitiveness and, in a long-term perspective, geopolitics too."

## Podcast

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### [Ukraine faces battles on two fronts](#)

Rising violence in eastern Ukraine has prompted the leaders of France, Germany and Ukraine to convene an emergency summit to try to halt the fighting; at the same time Kiev's negotiations with its creditors are reaching a critical point. Ben Hall discusses the twin crises with Neil Buckley and Elaine Moore

### [Listen here](#)

Abroad, Russia has few reliable allies. The Eurasian Union it has cobbled together to rival the EU is a palace built on sand. Moscow has made much of its partnership with China but the relationship is wildly lopsided and Beijing has been adept at exacting a high economic price for its political goodwill. In a pre-nuclear age, China would have surely annexed Siberia by now.

Russia's projection of soft power looks no more promising in spite of the expansion of state-backed English-language media outlets. A report published this month by the [Pew Research Centre](#) into the attitudes of 45,000 people in 40 countries found that Russia and Mr Putin were held in low regard around the world. "Favourable opinion of Russia trails that of the US by a significant margin in most regions of the world," it found. A median of 58 per cent in each country outside Russia held a negative opinion of Mr Putin.

Considering all these weaknesses, one liberal Russian friend compares Mr Putin to the monster cockroach in the children's poem by Korney Chukovsky. For a while, the cockroach, with his ugly threats and fearsome moustache, throws all the larger animals on a picnic into a panic.

*"Into the fields and woods they dash —*

*Terrorised by the Roach's moustache!"*

But then a sparrow swoops down and snaps up the cockroach, leaving the animals to wonder why they were ever afraid in the first place.

Mr Putin's fate remains uncertain and Russia's future wildly unpredictable. Calibrating a response is difficult. The west carries more weight when it is united and strong. It has surely been right to sanction Mr Putin's regime for trampling over Ukraine's sovereignty. It is right to bolster the defences of Nato member countries that border Russia.

But it would be rash to equate Mr Putin's regime with Russia and reinforce it by declaring a new cold war. To the limited extent that it is possible, the west should make clear to the Russian people that it has no wish to isolate them. It should leave the door to Russia ajar in case any future leader wishes to walk back through it.

*john.thornhill@ft.com*

## Letter in response to this column

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Door could have been ajar in more propitious times / From David C Speedie



# Annex 581

Anton Zverev, OSCE says spots deadly Russian rocket system in Ukraine for first time, Reuters  
(2 October 2015)



# OSCE says spots deadly Russian rocket system in Ukraine for first time

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 [reuters.com/article/ukraine-crisis-russia/osce-says-spots-deadly-russian-rocket-system-in-ukraine-for-first-time-idUSL5N1213U920151002](https://www.reuters.com/article/ukraine-crisis-russia/osce-says-spots-deadly-russian-rocket-system-in-ukraine-for-first-time-idUSL5N1213U920151002)

MOSCOW, Oct 2 (Reuters) - International monitors say they have spotted a new kind of Russian weapons system in rebel-held Ukraine this week, possible evidence of Moscow's continued interest in Ukraine even as it focuses on Syria.

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, which is monitoring a ceasefire in eastern Ukraine, reported that its monitors had seen a mobile TOS-1 'Buratino' weapons system for the first time.

The Buratino is equipped with thermobaric warheads which spread a flammable liquid around a target and then ignite it. It can destroy several city blocks in one strike and cause indiscriminate damage.

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Only Russia produces the system and it was not exported to Ukraine before the conflict broke out, according to IHS Jane's Group and the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, which track arms exports.

The OSCE's findings are embarrassing for the Kremlin, which has turned down its rhetoric on Ukraine and shifted attention to Syria, where it has begun air strikes. The report comes before President Vladimir Putin holds talks in Paris on Friday with the leaders of Germany, France and Ukraine on the peace process.

The Russian defence ministry did not reply to written questions from Reuters about whether Ukrainian rebels were supplied with the weapon or where it had been exported.

Russia denies its military is even in Ukraine. But there have been numerous signs that Moscow backed the rebels with troops and equipment. Reuters reporters spotted two burnt-out tanks last year which military experts identified as Russian army tanks in rebel-held territory.

Alexander Hug, deputy chief monitor of the OSCE monitoring mission to Ukraine, told Reuters by phone monitors had spotted the Buratino at a rebel training area in the village of Kruhlyk.

"We saw the weapon on that training ground," Hug said. "Both sides agreed a year ago to withdraw heavy weaponry from the line of contact. Having them near the line of contact is of course a concern as this weapon should be in storage and not be used."

Hug said the weapons system was "indiscriminate and very destructive." The Popular Mechanics website called TOS-1 "hell on earth" for anyone it targeted.

NO COMMENT

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According to IHS Jane's and the Stockholm Institute's unofficial arms transfers database, Russia has only exported the system to Azerbaijan, Iraq and Kazakhstan.

Ukraine said it did not possess the Buratino.

"We have not got them and we have never had it in service," Vladislav Seleznyov, a spokesman for the Ukrainian military, told Reuters. "The Russian army has it. It was used against us in the area of Donetsk airport."

The Ukrainian defence ministry said on its website in March that the separatists had used seven TOS-1 Buratino systems and that one of them had been destroyed by its forces.

Fighting between Ukrainian government forces and the separatists in Ukraine's eastern Donetsk and Luhansk regions has killed more than 8,000 people since it flared in mid-April 2014.

But violence has ebbed in recent weeks to its lowest level since a ceasefire was signed in February, even though Western diplomats say the 12-point peace plan is far from fulfilled.

Rebel leaders this week signed an agreement to extend a withdrawal of weapons to include tanks and smaller weapons systems. A rebel representative said on Wednesday the agreement could mean an end to the conflict. (Additional reporting by Pavel Polityuk in Kiev and Zlata Garasyuta in Moscow Writing by Andrew Osborn; Editing by Larry King)

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# Annex 582

BBC News, Ukraine Rebels Have Powerful New Russian-Made Rockets - OSCE (2 October 2015)





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Weather

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Earth

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AD

## Ukraine rebels have powerful new Russian-made rockets - OSCE

2 October 2015



Ukraine crisis



**International monitors say they have found a new type of Russian-made rocket system in rebel-held eastern Ukraine.**

The Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) spotted the powerful TOS-1 Buratino multiple rocket launcher in Luhansk.

Meanwhile, the leaders of Ukraine, Russia, Germany and France discussed peace efforts in Ukraine, with Paris and Kiev saying the pullout of light weapons would start on Saturday.

Moscow denies arming the rebels.

It also rejects accusations by Ukraine and the West that it is sending heavy weapons to the pro-Russian separatists in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions.

However, the Kremlin admits that Russian "volunteers" are fighting alongside the rebels.

### Indiscriminate damage

The OSCE, which is monitoring the ceasefire in eastern Ukraine, **said in a statement** that it found the Buratino on a military training ground run by the so-called People's Republic of Luhansk in the village of Kruhlyk.

The rockets have two types of warhead - either incendiary, which can spread flames over tens of kilometres, or thermobaric, which sucks up oxygen to boost the explosion.

A spokesman for the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) to Ukraine told the BBC the discovery was particularly significant because of the damage the rockets could cause.

RUSSIAN DEFENCE MINISTRY

"This is a very destructive weapon which is fired indiscriminately," he said.

Russian-made Grad rockets have been used by both sides in the conflict, but the Buratino is a more powerful system.

### TOS-1 Buratino multiple rocket system



RUSSIAN DEFENCE MINISTRY

- 24 rockets fired from mobile T-72 tank chassis
- Target area can be up to 40sq km (15.4 sq miles) if all 24 are fired
- 220mm warheads are incendiary (flame-thrower) or thermobaric (using oxygen at target area to strengthen blast)
- Range is from 2.7km (1.7 miles) to 3.5km (2.2 miles), depending on variant
- Crew targets rockets with laser and ballistic guidance instruments
- Soviet forces used Buratino in Afghanistan war in 1980s
- Also used by Russian troops in Chechnya

Sources: Russian Defence Ministry, TV Zvezda

#### **Ukraine crisis: Russia tests new weapons**

#### **Ukraine 'can't stop Russian armour'**

Ukraine's military previously said the Buratino - nicknamed "scorched earth" in Russia - had been used against government troops in rebel-held eastern Ukraine.

But the OSCE told the BBC the sighting on 25 September was the first it had on record.

BBBC

Only Russia produces the system, according to defence analysis group IHS Jane's and the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute.

Russian troops used it in Afghanistan in the 1980s against the Mujahideen and in Chechnya against separatist rebels in 1999-2000.

Russia has sold a more advanced version - Solntsepyok ("heat of the sun") - to Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan and Iraq.

However, experts say the Buratino was not exported to Ukraine before the conflict in the east of the country broke out last year.

#### 41-day deadline

In Paris, Russian President Vladimir Putin met Ukraine's President Petro Poroshenko, French President Francois Hollande and German Chancellor Angela Merkel on Friday for the first time since they agreed a peace deal for Ukraine in Minsk in February.

The so-called Normandy Four meeting assessed all elements of the deal, including the staging of local elections in the rebel-held regions and the withdrawal of heavy weapons from the line of contact.

Mr Hollande said the pullout would start on Friday, with Mr Poroshenko later confirming this.

The government in Kiev and the pro-Russian rebels earlier finally agreed to withdraw weapons of less than 100mm calibre from the front line.

Mr Poroshenko said this process would then continue in stages and should be completed within 41 days.

EPA

The French leader also said the elections in the rebel areas must be held according to Ukrainian law, as envisaged in the Minsk peace deal.

This point was reiterated by Mrs Merkel, who also noticed "progress" during the talks.

Mr Poroshenko said that the four leaders had supported the idea of the elections based exclusively on Ukrainian legislation and in the presence of OSCE observers, who should be granted full access.

However, the rebels said before the Paris meeting that they still intended to proceed with staging local elections on their terms.

Kiev says such elections - to be held on different dates from the rest of Ukraine and not according to Ukrainian law - would be "fake".

President Putin's office did not provide details of the Paris talks, saying only in a brief statement that the participants "synchronised watches" on the implementation of the key points of the Minsk deal.

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# Annex 583

The Russian Secret Behind Ukraine's Self-Declared 'Donetsk Republic', France 24 (15 October 2015) (video)



# Annex 584

Robert Hackwill, Caught Red-Handed: the Russian Major Fighting in Ukraine, EuroNews (8 December 2015)



# Caught red-handed: the Russian Major fighting in Ukraine

en euronews.com/2015/08/12/caught-red-handed-the-russian-major-fighting-in-ukraine

August 12, 2015

Ukraine

By Robert Hackwill

last updated: 12/08/2015



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As fighting escalates between government troops and rebels in eastern Ukraine, despite the February ceasefire, euronews met with a captured Russian officer, who explains how he was recruited to assist the separatists on Ukrainian territory.

| We (had to) do our military service in Ukraine...It was forbidden to inform our families about this

Vladimir Starkov was arrested on July 25 with a truck full of ammunition at Berezove checkpoint. He was going from Donetsk to the village of Yasne, in rebel-held territory, but lost his way and was intercepted by a Ukrainian border patrol.

Euronews met him in the detention center in Kyiv where he was sent after his arrest.

“At the time of I was detained, I was a regular serviceman in the armed forces of the Russian Federation with the rank of Major. I was chief of missile and artillery weapons service in the military unit in the Russian city of Novocherkassk”, says Starkov.

Questioned by the Ukrainian security service, he said that around 2,000 Russian servicemen are currently deployed in Eastern Ukraine.

Many of them did not volunteer, just like Starkov. When he was ordered to move to the Rostov region bordering Ukraine, little did he know that he would serve in Eastern Ukraine.

“Senior officers gathered us in a conference room and announced that our positions would be the same as promised, but we should do our military service in Ukraine: in the Donetsk and Lugansk People’s Republics. It was forbidden to inform our relatives about this,” he says.

Starkov was in charge of weapons accountability. When he was captured, he was traveling with fake ID and ammunition that he was supposed to deliver to separatists.

“These kinds of weapons aren’t produced in Ukraine. And here we can see the document proving they’re the property of a Russian military unit,” says the Ukrainian Security Service’s press officer Vitaly Lytvinenko.

After his arrest, Starkov tried to call his family, but his calls did not go through. Euronews’ attempts to reach Starkov’s wife Larissa had the same result, our call only getting the pre-recorded message “Sorry, this type of call can not be set up”.

The Russian Defense Ministry and Russian Embassy in Kyiv ignored euronews’ request to comment on Starkov’s identity.

Russia has always denied sending its military personnel to fight in Ukraine. However it has been alleged that Russia is rotating thousands of soldiers all along the eastern Ukrainian frontline, that soldiers families are being kept in the dark, even if they are killed, and that threats like denying servicemen cheap loans for their homes have been used.

Relatives looking for answers about family members from whom they receive no news have reportedly been harshly treated, and there have been numerous sightings of servicemen along the frontline wearing Russian army uniforms, or driving vehicles with Russian army insignia. Moscow insists any Russian fighters in Ukraine are “volunteers”, or taking “holidays”.

When two other Russian servicemen were arrested last May, Moscow said they had previously quit the military.

Starkov is being charged with terrorism.

Agencies • **Euronews Kyiv office, Euromaidan news in English**

# Annex 585

The Guardian, Putin Admits Russian Military Presence in Ukraine for the First Time (17 December 2015).



# The Guardian

Vladimir Putin: there is Russian military presence in Ukraine.

## Putin admits Russian military presence in Ukraine for first time

**Russian president concedes military intelligence officers were operating in the country but insists it's not the same as regular Russian troops**

**Shaun Walker** *in Moscow*

Thu 17 Dec 2015 05.53 EST

Vladimir Putin has for the first time admitted the presence of Russian military specialists in east Ukraine.

Russia has repeatedly denied a military presence in the conflict, despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary. But the Russian president conceded there were military intelligence officers operating in the country in a marathon press conference on Thursday.

Asked by a Ukrainian reporter an hour into the briefing about two Russian military intelligence officers captured by Kiev and currently on trial in Ukraine, Putin said: "We never said there were not people there who carried out certain tasks including in the military sphere." He insisted this was not the same as regular Russian troops.

There was no opportunity for a follow-up question to examine how many military specialists Putin believes were in Ukraine and what exact tasks they were carrying out. At key moments in the conflict in east Ukraine there has been much evidence of regular Russian army involvement.

Putin also initially denied the "little green men" present during the annexation of Crimea were Russian soldiers but afterwards admitted they were.

In the first part of his press conference, Putin also dealt with questions about the Russian economy, corruption, Syria and the recent crisis in relations with Turkey.

He struck an uncompromising note on Turkey, saying if the shooting down of a Russian jet had been an accident, officials could have called Moscow, but instead they called Nato first.

"Someone in the Turkish leadership tried to lick the Americans in a particular place, I don't know whether the Americans needed that," said Putin.

Putin said Russia was committed to its Syria campaign until a political process starts and claimed its position on the country's future "broadly coincided" with the US.

"We will carry out air strikes and support Syrian army offensives for as long as the Syrian army carries them out."

“Russia’s (Syria) plan, in principle, broadly coincides with the view put forward by the United States. That is joint work on a constitution, creation of oversight mechanisms for a future democratic election, the election itself, and recognition of its results.”

The main sticking point between Moscow and the west is on the role the Syrian president, Bashar al-Assad, could play in a future transition. The US and most western countries insist Assad must leave office, but have suggested in recent months he might be able to play a transitional role for some period. Moscow has suggested it is “up to the Syrian people” to decide, but in practice this appears to mean allowing Assad to set the terms of the debate.

Russian warplanes have flown thousands of combat sorties in Syria since Moscow began its air campaign on 30 September.

Putin said in the press conference that Russia was ready to improve ties with the US and work with whoever is elected its next president and talks with the US Secretary of State, John Kerry, earlier this week showed that Washington is ready to “move toward settling the issues that can only be settled through joint efforts.”

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# Annex 586

Julian Röpcke, How Russia Finances the Ukrainian Rebel Territories, Bild (16 January 2016)



**BILD EXCLUSIVE**

# How Russia finances the Ukrainian rebel territories

Artikel von: **JULIAN RÖPCKE** veröffentlicht  
am

**16.01.2016 - 17:56 Uhr**

**Since 2014, two unique state entities have been established in eastern Ukraine. They call themselves the “People’s Republics” of Donetsk and Luhansk. But both the pro-Russian propaganda in the “republics” and the Russian President Vladimir Putin**

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/transcript-vladimir-putins-april-17-qanda/2014/04/17/ff77b4a2-c635-11e3-8b9a-8e0977a24aeb\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/transcript-vladimir-putins-april-17-qanda/2014/04/17/ff77b4a2-c635-11e3-8b9a-8e0977a24aeb_story.html) **(63) think that a different name is more appropriate for the Ukrainian conflict region: “Novorossiya”, in English: New Russia.**

*This conception – based on ethnicity and culture and entirely against international law – also explains what we know so far of Russia’s support for the separatist territories.*

Numerous [studies](http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/publications/reports/hiding-in-plain-sight-putin-s-war-in-ukraine-and-boris-nemtsov-s-putin-war) (<http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/publications/reports/hiding-in-plain-sight-putin-s-war-in-ukraine-and-boris-nemtsov-s-putin-war>) have shown that, between the spring of 2014 and the summer of 2015, it was the Russian army who led the alleged separatists to one military victory after another against Ukraine. But hardly any information is available as to how the self-proclaimed People’s Republics with their 3.8 million inhabitants have been able to cope economically and socially ever since.

*Even before the conflict, industry in the region was mostly dilapidated. Since then, it lies almost entirely in ruins. Ukraine has cut the region off from almost all welfare benefits and the banking system. Officially, Russia only delivers relief supplies approximately twice a month in its now*

*famous “humanitarian convoy” of several dozen white trucks. Overall, this is not nearly enough to guarantee a more or less intact life in an area the size of the German Bundesland Thuringia.*

**This extensive BILD investigation shows why millions of people can still lead a more or less bearable life in these areas.**

Through numerous interviews with the concerned local population in the cut-off territory of “New Russia”, insights into documents of the “People’s Republic” and exclusive intelligence findings, a detailed picture has emerged of the extraordinary involvement of Russia in the affairs of its western neighbour.

## The “People’s Republics” were never financially viable

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Although separatists in the regions of Donetsk and Luhansk already declared their independence from Ukraine in April 2014, the government in Kiev maintained most state services until June and partly July of the same year. The salaries for public servants continued to be paid; citizens could still use their accounts with Ukrainian banks.

*It was only in the summer, when it became obvious that the regions could not be brought back under its control, that Ukraine adapted to the situation and ended most payments – except pensions and benefits.*

At that time, Alina, a young teacher, was living in the large city of Horlivka. She worked at the Elementary School No. 16. In July 2014, she received her last teacher’s salary of about 117 euros in her Ukrainian bank account. After that, Ukraine stopped paying her salary. With the beginning of the new school year, the new leadership promised to continue paying all teachers – but independently of their working age, and only 78 euros.

**The reality turned out to be different. Between September 2014 and February 2015, only one salary was paid to Alina and her colleagues. “That was at the beginning of the school year, to keep up the impression of normality, and so that we would come to work at all,”**

**says Alina. After that, the funding of all social services in both “People’s Republics” broke down completely, because the ambitious aims of the new rulers were totally unrealistic.**

*Three more of those concerned confirmed to BILD that virtually no salaries and pensions were paid in the regions controlled by separatists in the winter of 2014-15.*

The next salary, plus back pay for November only, did not follow until March 2015, both paid in Ukrainian hryvnia. It seemed, Alina says, that the Ministry of Education of the “People’s Republic of Donetsk” was ordered to pay out as salaries the money reserves that had been held back until then. “They didn’t seem to need the Ukrainian money anymore,” the teacher remarks.



**From April 2015 on, salaries began to be paid regularly again, and the salary losses of the previous months were also paid back. Area-wide (from June), they were paid in brand new Russian rouble notes and coins.**

The old Ukrainian hryvnia salaries were converted 1 to 2 into new rouble salaries and then frozen. The actual exchange rate is one hryvnia to three roubles (in December 2015). This was a severe loss for millions of people, especially given that the food prices were adapted to the Russian standard and hence almost tripled.

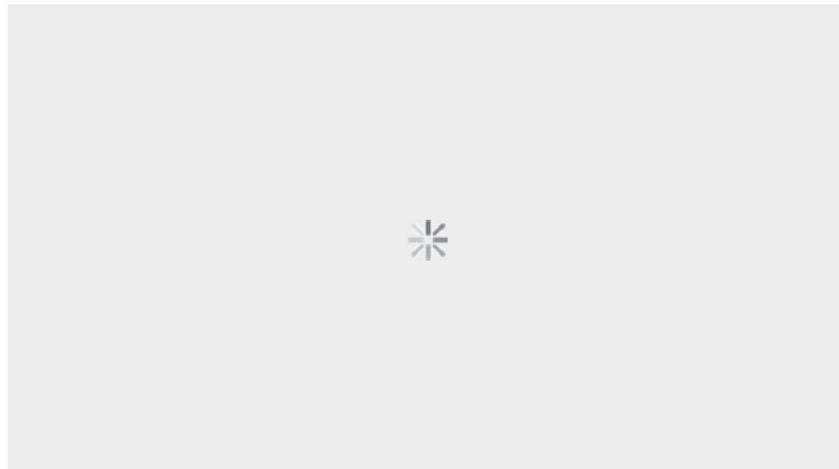


**Rouble notes and the fragment of a “grad” missile, by Alina from Horlivka**

Foto: Privat

Since the banks were no longer operating from summer 2014, the school director had to pick up the salaries each month at the “Republic’s” Ministry of Education and then hand them out to the schools’ teachers in

cash. Alina does not know where the 4,000 roubles – approximately 51 euros – per month for the public servants came from.



**Alina also shows us rouble coins. They were mostly minted in 2014 and were handed out in the occupied territories since April 2015**

Foto: Privat

**“The banks that paid out pensions and the money transporters were heavily guarded by soldiers with guns.” Today, armoured tracked vehicles still follow the columns of Russian army trucks that arrive in Horlivka and other cities once a month with millions of roubles, a witness said to BILD.**

## **Russia finances everything, even job-creation measures**

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Much has happened in the self-proclaimed “independent (!) states” since April 2015. The majority of the economy has been nationalized. Salaries in the private and public sector, pensions and benefits for single and disabled persons etc. are paid more or less regularly in roubles.

**In September 2015, the “People’s Republic of Luhansk” officially declared the rouble to be, by law, the state currency**

**(<https://archive.is/sq08r>) . Similar proclamations came from Donetsk in October.**

Even job-creation measures were then undertaken with Russian money in the occupied territories. Maria lives in the city of Antratsyt in the Luhansk region, close to the Russian border. After troops loyal to Russia took over

power, she lost her job, because she did not agree with the new rulers on several issues.

*Since September 2015, she is part of a job-creation measure that the government in Luhansk has initiated for tens of thousands of newly unemployed persons. For cleaning class rooms and sweeping the streets she is now earning 2,436 roubles, which is about 30 euros, per month*

**“I can buy five chickens from that, that’s all.” At the time of the interview, at the end of December 2015, she had also not yet received her salary for November. In the local job centre, a few days earlier, she was told: “We are sorry, but the money comes from Moscow, it’s probably cancelled or will come later.”**

## Ukrainian-Russian double pensions are essential for survival

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Maria and her one-year-old son can only survive, because the young mother has her mother’s Russian “republic pension” that her mother gives to Maria in cash. Like many other pensioners, Maria’s parents drive to the Ukrainian part of the regions of Luhansk and Donetsk once per month to receive their regular pensions in hryvnia. This is only possible in the free part of the region and requires a journey of several days, taking the travelers over the frontline.

**BILD is in contact with more pensioners from the territories occupied by Russia. Every month they face the risks and exertion of crossing the frontline. In the city of Luhansk, one of these persons – who wishes to remain anonymous – receives a pension of 1,243 hryvnia (50 euros) and 2,248 roubles (28 euros) per month. That is hardly enough for the most essential needs.**

In the Donetsk region alone, 25,000 people cross the contact line between Ukraine and the occupied territories each day, Pawlo Zhebriwskyi, Governor of the region, tells BILD. Of the 638,000 registered refugees in the region, 250,000 in fact mostly still live in the “Republics”.

It is safe to assume that many of them are pensioners and benefit claimants who use their status as refugees in order to cope financially with their everyday lives.

However, Zhebriwskyi points out that Ukraine does not intend to prohibit this. "Double pensions are surely a problem," he says. But, the politician explains, it is not in the interest of Ukraine to punish its citizens in the occupied territories. The raids at the border checkpoints are merely directed at smugglers who want to profit from people's misfortunes or "support the terrorists with money".

**A high-level security official also justifies Ukraine's policy of not taking action against the double pension recipients, even though, in theory, they could: "Who wants to blame these people?" They live under rough conditions in the occupied territories, and their Russian "republic pensions" are "not particularly high. It is very hard to survive there, even if you receive both pensions."**

*The tweet shows smuggled goods, as well as money and credit cards, seized by Ukrainian border police.*

In contrast to the pensions, Ukrainian social benefits are, as of December 2015, tied to residency in the area controlled by Ukraine. More than 300,000 families from the now occupied territories received those benefits until the end of 2014, Vitaly Muzychenko from the Ukrainian Ministry for Social Affairs explains to BILD. Since then, the payments for the regions of Donetsk and Luhansk have fallen by about 70 percent.

**At the same time, payments in other parts of Ukraine have risen by exactly the same number, which means that the affected persons of the 1.5 million registered domestic refugees mostly still claim these benefits, according to the Director.**

*He also thinks it is possible that tens thousands of these persons have merely registered as refugees, but still live in the "People's Republics". In practice, however, it is almost impossible to verify this or even to prevent it.*

**Apparently, hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians in the self-proclaimed states in the east of Ukraine, supported by Russia, still claim Ukrainian social benefits and pensions to somehow make ends**

**meet for themselves and their families. This is how ruinous the welfare system is in the occupied regions - despite the financial support by Russia.**

## The source of the money for eastern Ukraine

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The question remains, of where the many millions of euros for salaries come from each month, and how they arrive in the “People’s Republics”. The Ukrainian intelligence service is also interested in this question. It is particularly keen on interrupting the stream of cash to 30,000 or more fighters, of which around 17,000 are paid Russian mercenaries.

*BILD met with a high-ranking representative of the intelligence service in Kiev and gained exclusive insight into the service’s knowledge about the topic.*

**It is alleged that virtually the entire civil state budget of the separatist territories is organized via funds for “humanitarian aid” from Russia. The Russian government coordinates these money sources.**

According to BILD’s investigations, there is indeed in Russia an “Inter-ministerial Commission for the Humanitarian Support of the Affected Areas in the Southeast of Donetsk and Luhansk”

(<http://government.ru/docs/16219/>) that was founded on December 14, 2014.

*The Commission, which is attached to the “Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation” has held its meetings secretly, in contrast to other Commissions such as the also newly established “Crimea Commission”.*

► **Three and a half months after the establishment of the Commission, the area-wide supply of salaries in roubles for the “affected areas” began.**

## Funding of the anti-Ukrainian forces in Donbass

According to intelligence service information, the money for the “terrorists” – as Ukraine calls them – or the “United Forces of New Russia”, respectively – as they are called in the occupied territories – mainly comes from two sources:

- ▶ From “Non-Government Funds” of the Russian Federation that, upon close inspection, turn out to be very close to the government in Moscow.
- ▶ From former Ukrainian politicians and oligarchs who fled to Russia after the downfall of the pro-Russian President Viktor Yanukovich, and who are now working to destabilize Ukraine.

**“Individual persons or organizations pay for their preferred units”. These funds are coordinated and topped up by the Kremlin or the local Russian intelligence in the, effectively, controlled east of Ukraine.**

The new rulers in the concerned territories do not deny Russia’s overwhelming influence on their state budgets. The influential “Donetsk People’s Republic Member of Parliament” Alexander Khodakovsky said in an interview with a Russian newspaper (<http://www.fontanka.ru/2015/09/07/163/>) that 70 percent of the “Republic’s” budget stems from Russia’s “financial aid”.

*The real numbers could be even more revealing. BILD talked to an employee of the city council of Stakhanov, a city in the occupied region of Luhansk with 77,000 inhabitants.*

**She revealed that merely 5 to 7 percent of the city budget stems from taxes and the “Republic’s” means. More than 90 percent of the roubles available in December 2015 were “imported from outside”. The civil servant can only explain this by assuming that Russian money was paid to the city.**

## This is how the money gets to the Donbass

**For moving money to the Ukrainian Donbass, the Kremlin primarily used banks in the Georgian region of Abkhazia, which has been occupied by Russia since 2008. The banking system developed there, says the Ukrainian intelligence service, provides the structures that are needed to divert billions of roubles from the state budget and other sources and to redesignate them.**

*Nevertheless, in addition to online payment methods, the money transported into occupied eastern Ukraine almost exclusively took place in cash. The closed-down banks in the regions of Donetsk and Luhansk have hardly been reactivated by Russia at all.*

Approximately seven million 50-, 100-, and 500-rouble notes are required each month in order to pay the salaries that Russia took over. The intelligence service mostly knows how this money is travelling. The five tons of bank notes are not delivered by the “humanitarian aid convoy” that arrives every few weeks. The latter mostly serves as propaganda. Also, Ukrainian customs is now allowed to examine the contents of the convoy.

**Instead, heavily guarded trains bring tons of bank notes and coins into Ukraine – illegally, of course –once a month. On board these trains are not only the salaries for civil and military work, but also tons of ammunition and other war material.**

*According to Ukraine, the money is transported by heavily guarded military convoys from the three big train stations into the cities and villages of the occupied Donbass. There it is paid out to the people in banks or state offices – or nationalized offices.*



There is evidence that these trains of the Kremlin-controlled Russian Train Line actually exist and that they have, at least, ammunition on board. Pro-Russian rebels posted a picture in April 2015 that showed them at the train station of Sukhodilsk. Clearly visible in the background: carriages of the Russian train company, containing crates of ammunition.

# Salaries in Ukraine cost Russia one billion euros per year

**According to BILD's calculations, Russia has to spend approximately 79 million euros per month in order to pay the public service salaries and the pensions in the controlled territories.**

BILD refers to official documents of the two "People's Republics" and individual statements about salaries in various areas.

**For the pensions of 653,000 people in the occupied region of Donetsk and 425,791 pensioners in the region of Luhansk alone, Russia pays 2,418,378,168 roubles per month – that corresponds to just over 30 million euros.**



The 30,000 Russian and Ukrainian fighters, who are still working for the "People's Republics" or their donors, are particularly expensive. Whereas a teacher earns around 50 euros per month in the "Republics", a soldier – depending on his rank – earns between 90 and 465 euros, which is up to nine times as much.

**Even if Russia's expenses were limited to the salaries in the public, mostly nationalized, sector and individual social services such as pensions, these costs of approximately one billion euros per year are comparable to the state budgets of countries like Armenia or the Republic of Moldova.**

**This corresponds to 0.6 % of yearly expenses** (<http://www.welt-in-zahlen.de/laendervergleich.phtml?indicator=74>) **in the Russian state budget.**

However, these expenses are probably only one part of Russia's overall expenses for the supported regions in the east of Ukraine. Subsidized gas, fuel, oil, and food, humanitarian payments in kind and also the ammunition for continuing the war against Ukraine should also amount to several hundred millions euros per year.

# Deception of the international community

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*The details of Russia's funding of the "separatist regions" in eastern Ukraine that BILD has researched reveal the true intentions in Putin's government – in two respects:*

► **First, they are proof of a continuous and obvious violation of the territorial sovereignty of Ukraine, and they expose the tight links between the self-proclaimed "People's Republics" and the Russian Federation. These links consist in nothing less than the east-Ukrainian conflict zone's total financial dependence on Moscow.**

► **It can, second, be seen that Putin's Russia is not in the least interested in implementing the signed Minsk Agreement from September 2014. The agreement intends for the medium-term reintegration of the corresponding regions under Ukrainian control. Instead, Russia's policy can rather be considered as the long-term stabilization of the internationally unacknowledged construct of the "People's Republics" of Donetsk and Luhansk and the stabilization of their status quo.**

To sum up, it was apparently more than "foresight" by Vladimir Putin when he called the concerned areas "New Russia" in 2014. Taking a closer look at the welfare situation in the "rebel areas", they are best described as a colony of Russia that was established and is kept alive by Moscow.

We would like to thank the Ukrainian blogger "English Lugansk" (<https://twitter.com/loogunda>), who supported BILD with its research in Donbass.

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# Annex 587

Anna Shamanska, Former Commander of Pro-Russian Separatists Says He Executed People Based on Stalin-Era Laws, Radio Free Europe / Radio Liberty (19 January 2016).





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## CURRENT TIME

# Former Commander Of Pro-Russian Separatists Says He Executed People Based On Stalin-Era Laws

January 19, 2016 21:03 GMT

Anna Shamanska

For most of his 42-minute appearance on a radio talk show, former Russia-backed separatist commander Igor Girkin sounded like nothing more than a fanatic discussing a dream now widely dismissed as fantasy.

He **spoke of hopes** for the creation of a "Novorossia" -- a New Russia stretching across much of Ukraine, from Kharkiv to Odesa, and one day joining a Russian empire including all of Belarus and Ukraine.

It wasn't until the last minute that the interview with Girkin went from surreal to chilling.

Referring to his time commanding separatists in the eastern Ukrainian city of Slovyansk in 2014, a host asks him how he stopped the rampant looting.

"With executions," Girkin said matter-of-factly.

According to Girkin, separatist "authorities" installed a military court and introduced 1941 military laws implemented by Soviet dictator Josef Stalin.

"Under this legislation we tried people and executed the convicted," Girkin said.

"While I was in Slovyansk four people were executed. Two among the military for looting, one local for looting, and one for killing a serviceman," he said on the Radio Komsomolskaya Pravda, which is affiliated with a leading pro-Kremlin Russian tabloid.

One of the people killed was an "ideological" supporter of the Ukrainian nationalist group Right Sector, he said.

### Key Separatist Commander

Girkin, also known as Igor Strelkov, was a key commander in the Russia-backed separatist forces in the early stages of the war against Ukrainian government troops that has killed more than 9,000 civilians and combatants since April 2014.

Ukraine's government has called Girkin a Russian agent and accused him of war crimes. He resigned as a rebel commander in August 2014 amid reports that he had been wounded in battle.

Later that year, he told an interviewer that he was a colonel in the Russian FSB, or Federal Security Service -- a statement that was edited out of the interview published by state-run *Rossia Segodnya*.

In October 2015, the Brussels-based International Partnership for Human Rights provided the International Criminal Court with **more than 300 testimonies** about alleged military crimes and crimes against humanity that it said had been committed by Russian-backed separatists and Ukrainian forces in Eastern Ukraine.

It said that "while crimes committed by both sides of the conflict have been documented, the collected evidence primarily concerns crimes committed by separatists because of security issues related to accessing separatists-controlled territories of Ukraine."

In the radio appearance, Girkin said he was not concerned about the possibility of international prosecution.

"I am not at all bothered by international law, because it's a tool in the hands of winners," he said. "If we are defeated, well then, the norms of these laws will be applied to me."

Fighting has lessened since a February 2015 deal on a cease-fire and steps toward peace, but the Russia-backed separatists still hold large parts of Ukraine's Donetsk and Luhansk provinces.

Girkin, a former military reenactor, appeared to have the support of both the hosts and those calling in.

"God forbid," one host said, referring to the possibility of Girkin being sent to an international court for prosecution on war crimes charges.

As for his feelings about Stalin, Girkin said he dislikes the dictator as he was in his younger days, but believes that he was a great statesman at the end of his life.

"You can discuss for a long time how much blood and where Stalin spilled it, but at least you can confidently say that he did it not for himself but for the sake of an idea," he said.

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# Annex 588

Examining the Evidence of Russia's Involvement in a Malaysia Airlines Crash, Stratfor (13 May 2016)





# Examining the Evidence of Russia's Involvement in a Malaysia Airlines Crash

## Assessments

May 13, 2016 | 14:55 GMT

2 mins read

Satellite imagery obtained by Stratfor sheds new light on the July 2014 downing of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH17 over eastern Ukraine. Recent scrutiny of open-source materials, much of it led by a U.K.-based collective investigation project known as Bellingcat, has zeroed in on a Russian-made Buk surface-to-air missile system that was in eastern Ukraine around the time Flight MH17 was shot down. The Buk system is suspected of originating from an anti-aircraft missile brigade based in Russia. In early May, new video footage of unknown origins was released, appearing to place the Buk system in question near separatist-controlled Donetsk on July 17, 2014, just hours before the airliner was shot down.

Building on this new information, AllSource Analysis – Stratfor's satellite imagery partner – was able to locate images that confirm the exact time and location of the air defense system on the day of the crash. The imagery shows the air defense system, mounted atop a transloader, being transported east through the Donetsk town of Makiivka. The images were taken approximately five hours before Flight MH17 was shot down from a location near the town of Snizhne, about 40 kilometers (25 miles) away.

## Buk Air Defense System in Separatist-Controlled Ukraine on the Day of the MH17 Crash, July 17, 2014.



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This aligns with the body of existing circumstantial evidence tracing the Buk system's route to and from Snizhne. Combined, the evidence appears to show the Buk system moving from the Russian border toward Donetsk on July 15, 2014, and then moving back to the east on the afternoon of July 17, 2014, just hours before Flight MH17 was shot down.

The new imagery obtained by Stratfor does not prove that this particular Buk system fired a missile at the airliner. Nonetheless, it further substantiates the narrative being pieced together by the collective analysis of open-source information.

The mounting evidence showing a separatist- or Russian-controlled air defense system in the area of the crash, combined with the results of the official investigation conducted on the remnants of the downed aircraft, make it increasingly difficult for Moscow and the Ukrainian separatists to blame the incident on Kiev. The implication is unlikely to lead to consequences for the Russian side, but at a minimum, it provides

a stern reminder about the dangers of the proliferation of weapons like the surface-to-air missile in question.



# Annex 589

Desire to Break Free from Ukraine Keeps Devastated Donetsk Fighting, PBS Newshour (5 July 2016)



# Desire to break free from Ukraine keeps devastated Donetsk fighting

 [pbs.org/newshour/show/desire-to-break-free-from-ukraine-keeps-devastated-donetsk-fighting](https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/desire-to-break-free-from-ukraine-keeps-devastated-donetsk-fighting)

July 5, 2016

In Eastern Ukraine, there's supposed to be a cease-fire, but the fighting starts again every night. For two years, soldiers for the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic -- with the backing of Russia -- have fought the Ukrainian government to gain autonomy. Special correspondent Nick Schifrin reports from the front lines, in partnership with the Pulitzer Center for Crisis Reporting.

## Read the Full Transcript

- **JUDY WOODRUFF:**

Tonight, we begin a weeklong series from Eastern Europe that we're calling Fault Lines.

On Friday, NATO will announce the largest military buildup in Europe since the Cold War. Tensions between the West and Russia have reached the highest level since the fall of the Soviet Union. This week, we will examine the causes of that tension.

Tonight, we begin with Europe's only active front line, in Eastern Ukraine. For two years, fighters for the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic, with the backing of Russia, have fought the Ukrainian government to gain autonomy. The West, including the U.S., is backing Ukraine's government; 10,000 people have died.

With the help of the Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting, special correspondent Nick Schifrin and producer Zach Fannin traveled to Donetsk, and discovered that what is supposed to be a cease-fire is anything but.

- **NICK SCHIFRIN, Special Correspondent:**

On the front line in Eastern Ukraine, the war is fought in trenches.

At the end of each trench, small outposts are manned by men who call themselves rebels. They fight to separate from Ukraine and join Russia.

- **IVAN, Soldier, "Donetsk People's Republic" (through translator):**

It's intense all the time, all the time.

- **NICK SCHIFRIN:**

Ivan, who declined to give his last name, grew up in a nearby village. Their enemies, fellow Ukrainians fighting to stay united, are only 1,000 feet away.

- **IVAN (through translator):**

I can see their positions over there.

- **NICK SCHIFRIN:**

There's supposed to be a cease-fire. But the fighting starts every night. On average, one fighter for the self-declared Donetsk People's Republic dies every day.

This war is like going back 100 years. This is a trench war, and you can hear some of the explosions in the distance, and not very far away from us. These guys have been fighting here since January, and they say that the front line hasn't moved at all.

What motivates you to be here?

- **IVAN (through translator):**

My home is five kilometers from here. How could I not fight if the war is so close?

- **ANDREW, Soldier, "Donetsk People's Republic":**

I decided to be useful here at least.

- **NICK SCHIFRIN:**

Andrew, who also refused to give his last name, is former Soviet special forces. He says he came here to train a ragtag army.

Were you sent here by Russia?

- **ANDREW:**

No. No. I'm a volunteer, so nobody — nobody pay me something. I don't see professionally ready people. So, I see taxis. I see drivers.

Come, guys. Let's go.

- **NICK SCHIFRIN:**

Their base used to be a local school. They resist Ukraine's alliance with Europe. They align with Russia. And as the war persists, their desire to separate grows.

- **MAN (through translator):**

Once an army targets its own people, they become the enemy.

- **ANDREW:**

How we can be in one state now?

- **NICK SCHIFRIN:**

So you have to separate now?

- **ANDREW:**

Sure. They have to separate.

- **NICK SCHIFRIN:**

The front is 280-miles-long. To get to the village of Spartak, we needed an armed escort.

On this front line, Anya, who also declined to give her last name, leads what she calls an infantry brigade. The professional Russian soldiers here whom U.S. officials say number in the thousands are invisible.

So, as we walk down this road, what is the risk here?

- **ANYA, Soldier, “Donetsk People’s Republic” (through translator):**

Total risk. We’re now walking in their snipers’ scopes. Here, everything is within their snipers’ reach.

- **NICK SCHIFRIN:**

This is incoming.

We had been here just a few minutes when we heard the incoming bullets above our head, so we have taken cover. We’re staying low right now, and we’re beginning to hear rebel soldiers beginning to fire back.

(GUNFIRE)

- **MAN (through translator):**

I will take him out quickly.

- **MAN (through translator):**

Are you kidding?

(GUNFIRE)

- **ANYA (through translator):**

Let’s go! Let’s go! Stay down.

- **NICK SCHIFRIN:**

Like many of these fighters, Anya’s not a trained soldier. She was a successful chain store owner. But she’s become a true believer in a pro-Russian and anti-European future.

- **ANYA (through translator):**

The entire Ukraine is fighting with us following NATO orders. They are nothing on their own. You are writing that I’m a blonde separatist who will come and start killing your children. Yes, I will do just that.

- **NICK SCHIFRIN:**

Are you willing to die for this cause?

- **ANYA (through translator):**

Yes, of course, I'm ready to die for my home. I will not let a single fascist into my home. I will fight them as long as my heart beats.

- **NICK SCHIFRIN:**

When she and the city use fascist, it's inspired by the Soviet Union's role in the war against fascist Nazi Germany. In May, a downtown parade celebrated the Soviet Union's World War II victory.

Today, the children of World War II veterans say this war is against the same enemy. Training for that war starts young. Teenage girls spend Saturday afternoons with Russian Kalashnikovs. The average Russian soldier needs more than 10 seconds to do this; 15-year-old Katerina needs nine seconds.

- **KATERINA, Soldier Trainee, "Donetsk People's Republic" (through translator):**

Since I was little, I preferred playing football with boys to playing with dolls.

- **NICK SCHIFRIN:**

Next up, Soviet hazmat suits. Their teacher, Sergey Fomchenko, is a former Soviet soldier and police officer.

- **SERGEY FOMCHENKO, Military Trainer, "Donetsk People's Republic" (through translator):**

Why, when we look toward Russia, do they call it a crime? In general, the whole of Eastern Ukraine aligns with Russia. I would like us to be part of Russia.

- **NICK SCHIFRIN:**

Upstairs, he shows me where a rocket struck this school. Ukraine and Russia have agreed Donetsk should eventually reintegrate into Ukraine. But everyone we spoke to rejected that.

Would you ever be able to go back to Ukraine?

- **SERGEY FOMCHENKO (through translator):**

A lot of blood was spilled. Many people died. Graduates of this school and other schools are now in the army. For what? To go back to Ukraine? I think it won't happen.

- **NICK SCHIFRIN:**

So the training continues. They know their AKs by heart.

When they're not training, they're proselytizing. The Donetsk military is short on recruits. So the girls hand out recruiting flyers to fighting-age males, anyone between 18 and 55. Katerina also rejects returning to Ukraine, because of what this war has forced her to see.

- **KATERINA (through translator):**

There was a shell in my apartment block. Everything was blown up. When someone you know gets injured or killed, it's very hard to keep going.

- **NICK SCHIFRIN:**

That unwillingness to reunite means Donetsk, with the help of Russia, is becoming more and more autonomous.

Downtown, city workers whose salaries are paid by Russia look after public gardens. In supermarkets, the shelves are stocked with Russian products. The only currency accepted is Russian rubles. Residents try and lead normal lives. In the main square, with the Vladimir Lenin statue, families rent toy cars by the hour.

In the opera house built under Stalin, a matinee showing of Giuseppe Verdi's "Masked Ball," the audience was about two-thirds full at \$3 a ticket. And across the street, at the Chicago nightclub, an Italian band invited by the local government delivers distraction and ideology.

But this city is an orphan. The Donetsk People's Republic was birthed with the help of Russian soldiers. Today, it's not claimed by Russia, and it's isolated from Ukraine. There are no working banks, and no way to pick up pensions.

The best salary in town is a soldier's, \$225 per month. Vadim Bazey and Alexandr Goryakin are both 17.

- **VADIM BAZEY, High School Student (through translator):**

Right now, there's no prospects here.

- **ALEXANDR GORYAKIN, High School Student (through translator):**

The best option in terms of opportunities is to go abroad, for example, to America or England.

- **NICK SCHIFRIN:**

But that's impossible, because they're physically stuck.

They can't get Ukrainian passports. And their Donetsk I.D.s allow access only to Russia. For those without the means to leave the front lines, life is even more difficult.

Valentina Nikolayevna sleeps in her cellar because she's scared of shelling. She hasn't had running water or electricity in two years.

Has it been worth it?

- **VALENTINA NIKOLAYEVNA, Ukraine (through translator):**

During the second World War, it took us, the Soviet Union, four years to cross half of Europe. Here, it's been two years and we're in the same spot.

- **NICK SCHIFRIN:**

Can you just describe how difficult life has gotten?

- **VALENTINA NIKOLAYEVNA (through translator):**

I would have never believed it if two years ago you would have told me I was going to live in a basement. Very hard.

- **NICK SCHIFRIN:**

Nearby, this is all that's left of the Donetsk Airport. It was built only four years ago. Down the street, this neighborhood is full of homes partially or completely damaged.

But this is where we found Zakharova Vladimirovna and her 3-year-old grandson, Peter. They have spent nearly the entire war on these streets. They invited me in their home. Her husband, Zakharoff Pavlovich, grew up in this house. A Ukrainian rocket landed in their backyard.

- **ZAKHAROFF PAVLOVICH, Ukraine (through translator):**

There were so many rockets. We just heard the noise of one above us.

- **NICK SCHIFRIN:**

This collection of bricks used to be their bomb shelter. They stay because they fear looters. They both agree they have suffered, but don't necessarily agree on the solution.

- **ZAKHAROFF PAVLOVICH (through translator):**

Good people from around here were killed. They were good guys. What did they die for?

- **ZAKHAROVA VLADIMIROVNA, Ukraine (through translator):**

We have always known this part of Ukraine was very different from the rest. But we didn't know that they hated us so much. We want to have autonomy here.

- **NICK SCHIFRIN:**

That desire to separate means they will keep fighting. But they can't overpower their enemy. So the front lines will remain frozen in place, with little chance of a thaw.

For the "PBS NewsHour," I'm Nick Schifrin in Donetsk.

- **JUDY WOODRUFF:**

Tune in tomorrow, as Nick Schifrin continues his reporting from the other side, as Ukraine fights not only the war in its east, but deep corruption from within.



# Annex 590

Mironov Promises Draft Bill “On the Status of the Donbas Militas, RIA.ru (14 September 2016).

This document has been translated from its original language into English, an official language of the Court, pursuant to Rules of the Court, Article 51.

Pursuant to Rules of the Court Article 51(3), Ukraine has translated only an extract of the original document constituting this Annex. In further compliance with this Rule, Ukraine has provided two certified copies of the full original-language document with its submission. The translated passages are highlighted in the original-language document. Ukraine has omitted from translation those portions of the document that are not materially relied upon in its Memorial, but stands ready to provide additional translations should the Court so require.



# Mironov Promises Draft Bill “On the Status of the Donbass Militias”

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 stalkerzone.org/1653-2

September 14, 2016



*Translated by Ollie Richardson*

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14:49:01  
14/09/2016

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*RIA.ru*

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The leader of the party “Just Russia” Sergey Mironov, at a meeting with the Donbass militias, promised to introduce a bill in the new convocation in the State Duma “On the status of the militia of Novorossiya”.

This bill, if passed, will give the possibility of obtaining Russian citizenship, Mironov promised.

*“In the new convocation we will submit a draft bill “On the status of the militia of Novorossiya”. They will be able to automatically obtain citizenship. (The militiamen will have) the simplified obtaining of Russian citizenship if they desire. This will be achieved. In October, the bill will be heard,” promised Mironov at a meeting with the militia.*

Many of the militiamen complained that they cannot obtain citizenship or a residence permit in the Russian Federation. Moreover, there were cases when militiamen who had left

Donbass for Russia were sent back to Ukraine, including to places of residence in the areas controlled by Kiev.

“And the SBU is already rubbing their hands. Moreover, they also use it in their propaganda – “look how Moscow relates to you (the militia),” said Mironov.

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# Annex 591

Henry Meyer and Onur Ant, Analysis: The Russian 'Philosopher' Who Links Putin, Bannon, Turkey: Alexander Dugin, Chicago Tribune (3 February 2017)



# The Russian 'philosopher' who links Putin, Bannon, Turkey: Alexander Dugin

 [chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/ct-dugin-trump-putin-turkey-20170203-story.html](https://chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/ct-dugin-trump-putin-turkey-20170203-story.html)

Henry Meyer, Onur  
Ant

□

The Russian ultra-nationalist dubbed "Putin's Rasputin" by Breitbart News when it was run by President Donald Trump's chief strategist, Steve Bannon, has emerged as an unlikely foreign-policy fixer for the Kremlin.

Alexander Dugin, whose bushy beard gives him a passing resemblance to the Siberian mystic who bewitched the last czar's family, says he played a key but largely clandestine role in patching up Russia's relations with Turkey, an account confirmed by a senior figure in Ankara. And with people he calls ideological allies now in the White House, Dugin says he's bullish on better ties with the U.S., too.

After Turkey shot down a Russian warplane along the Syrian border in 2015, prompting "World War III" to trend on Twitter, the firebrand philosopher used his contacts in both countries to form a backchannel that helped Vladimir Putin and President Recep Tayyip Erdogan end an increasingly dangerous feud, according to a retired Turkish general who flew to Moscow for secret talks.

The rapprochement allowed Putin to outmaneuver the Obama administration and turn the tide in Syria's civil war on behalf of Bashar al-Assad. For Dugin, whose views on the evils of liberalism have been cited by Bannon and other far-right leaders, it also moved Russia a step closer to fulfilling his vision of unwinding the U.S.-led global order, in part by luring Turkey away from NATO and creating a "Russo-Islamic pact" that includes Iran.

Dugin, the son of a Soviet military-intelligence official, said being independent makes him an effective go-between in matters of state. The 55-year-old rabble-rouser, blacklisted by the U.S. for aiding the insurgency in Ukraine, has no official post. But he has advised a member of Putin's inner circle and written a textbook on geopolitics that's been used by the military.

"I can talk to people like an official can't," Dugin said in his Moscow office at Tsargrad TV, where he's a commentator and chief editor. "A diplomat says what he's told. What does a military man say? Even less. And an intelligence officer? Nothing at all. You don't understand where the truth lies. I speak from the perspective of geopolitics. That's why the Turks started to trust me."

Dugin, who's been described as everything from an occult fascist to a mystical imperialist, lost his prestigious job running the sociology department at Moscow State University in 2014 after activists accused him of encouraging genocide. Thousands of people signed a petition calling

for his removal after a rant in support of separatists in Ukraine in which he said, "kill, kill, kill."

The Kremlin, which gave the prolific polemicist prominent airtime on the biggest networks to cheerlead during the annexation of Crimea in 2014, has kept him at arm's length since he criticized Putin for not taking more of Ukraine. When asked if Dugin played a role in the detente with Turkey, Putin's spokesman, Dmitry Peskov, said, "No."

"He's seen as a brilliant philosopher, but brilliance and madness are very close to each other," said Sergei Markov, a political consultant to Putin's staff. Even though Dugin's not an official envoy, Markov said, "he appears to have given the Turks some very good advice."

Dugin made "everyone happy" by organizing a November visit to Crimea by a Turkish delegation that included one of Erdogan's cousins, a few weeks after meeting Prime Minister Binali Yildirim in Ankara, Markov said. The trip was a major fillip for Russia's efforts to gain recognition for Putin's annexation of the Black Sea peninsula, which provoked U.S. and European sanctions.

"Incredibly beautiful-one of the best moments of my life," Dugin said after Trump's inauguration.

Dugin's writings, in dozens of books and countless blogs, have made him an influential thinker not only in Turkey, but also Iran, where's he's a frequent visitor, and among anti-establishment parties that are on the rise throughout the West, a trend that is welcomed by Russia's leadership.

Apart from Turkey "only two countries really pay attention to me-Iran and the U.S.," Dugin said.

The foreword to one of his books was written by a retired U.S. professor, Paul Gottfried, a Trump supporter who was among the first political philosophers to use the term "alternative right" to describe the radical conservative movement. In July 2016, a month before he joined the Trump campaign, Bannon described Breitbart as "the platform for the alt-right."

In a video address to a Vatican conference in 2014, Bannon, whose White House role has been elevated to include a seat on Trump's National Security Council, defended the traditionalist views espoused by Dugin and other nationalists who want "sovereignty for their country." Dugin said he's never met Bannon.

The Russian "equivalent" of Trump putting Bannon on his security council would be if Putin did the same with Dugin, Michael McFaul, a former U.S. ambassador to Russia, wrote in a blog for the Ekho Moskvyy radio station in Moscow.

Dugin's role in resolving the crisis with Erdogan over the jet incident was confirmed by Ismail Hakki Pekin, a former head of Turkish military intelligence. He was one of five members of the Patriotic Party, including a fellow retired general and a retired admiral, who flew to Moscow in December 2015 for four days of meetings that Dugin arranged with current and retired Russian officers.

During the visit, Dugin took the Turkish delegation to a "secret room" in a "special place" to meet his benefactor, Konstantin Malofeev, a multimillionaire with ties to the Russian Orthodox Church, Pekin said in an interview in Ankara.

Dugin and Malofeev, who's also under U.S. sanctions for supporting the revolt in Ukraine, started Tsargrad, an old name for Constantinople, in 2015 and the TV channel now has some 20 million viewers. It was the only major station to carry a speech former Trump adviser Carter Page gave in Moscow last year.

Pekin said Dugin introduced Malofeev as Putin's "right-hand man," and the Turks came to learn the financier really can "knock on Putin's door."

"That's how the trip became effective," Pekin said. "We knew what we said went directly to Putin."

And what they said was that Erdogan had nothing to do with downing the bomber the previous month. Pekin said he and his colleagues were successful in convincing the Russians they spoke with, including two plainclothes generals, that rogue elements in the military were responsible for the shutdown.

It was a "conspiracy" involving followers of Fethullah Gulen, a reclusive cleric based in Pennsylvania, and U.S. and NATO officials who wanted to drive a wedge between Russia and Turkey, said Pekin, who briefed senior diplomats and military officials in Ankara after the Moscow trip.

Pekin said Dugin had sought out the two retired Turkish generals and former admiral specifically because they all had a history opposing Erdogan and spent time in jail for alleged plots to overthrow the government, which made them more credible in the eyes of their Russian interlocutors.

In March, with tensions between Putin and Erdogan still simmering, Dugin flew to Ankara for a follow up visit that included talks with relatives of Erdogan and other influential figures.

Dugin said he told the Turks that arresting the person accused of shooting dead one of the Russian pilots as he tried to parachute to safety would go along way toward re-establishing relations. The next day, on March 30, the suspect was taken into custody in the eastern city of Izmir.

"They said they were carrying out an investigation and that Erdogan would apologize," said Dugin, who passed on the information to Russian officials.

Three months later, on June 27, with Turkey's economy squeezed by the trade curbs Russia introduced after the shutdown, Erdogan finally expressed regret for the incident, paving the way for a resumption of ties.

But less than three weeks later, on July 15, something Malofeev and Dugin warned about back in that "secret room" came true—an attempted coup by disgruntled members of the military, according to Pekin.

Malofeev dismissed the assertion he's Putin's right-hand man as "a flattering exaggeration." Peskov, the Kremlin spokesman, denied the financier played a role in the rapprochement with Turkey.

Dugin, a dissident in the 1980s who co-founded the National Bolshevik party after communism ended, was in Ankara at the time of the military revolt. He gave a series of TV interviews in support of the Turkish leader's decision to mend ties with Russia, the last of which, at state-run TRT Haber, concluded just 2 1/2 hours before the coup plotters seized the station.

Erdogan blamed Gulen and his U.S. benefactors for the putsch, responding with a sweeping crackdown of suspected Gulenists that has upended society and driven Turkey and Russia closer together. The re-energized partnership was put to the test in December, when Russia's ambassador to Turkey was assassinated by a police officer in Ankara.

"That was the last attempt by the outgoing U.S. administration and the globalists to disrupt Russia's rapprochement with Turkey," Dugin said.

Dugin has delighted in watching Russia and Turkey take the reins in resolving the Syrian crisis, elbowing the U.S. aside.

Erdogan, with Putin's blessing, sent troops into Syria in August to fight Islamic State and U.S.-supplied Syrian Kurdish YPG forces, which Turkey views as terrorists for their links to autonomy-seeking PKK rebels. In return, Turkey blocked rebel supplies into Aleppo, enabling Assad's forces, backed by Russian firepower, to capture the former commercial capital in December. In January, the two leaders started joint air strikes against Islamic State targets.

Dugin, who has long predicted the demise of "the West's liberal hegemony," said the election of Trump promises to change the course of world history.

"Incredibly beautiful—one of the best moments of my life," he said after Trump's inauguration.

After decades of railing against Washington for seeking the "Westernization of all of humanity," Trump's elevation has led to a Damascene conversion for Dugin, who declared anti-Americanism "over."

"America not only isn't an opponent, it's a potential ally under Trump," he said.

Now Dugin's focusing on Europe, where he's been cultivating ties with anti-establishment parties that threaten a political and military union seven decades in the making.

With key elections in France, Germany and the Netherlands this year, the Russian polemicist has a new mantra for Europe that's ripped straight out of Trump's campaign playbook:

"Drain the swamp."

*With assistance from Stepan Kravchenko and Joshua Green.*



# Annex 592

John Wendle, In Avdiivka, Ukrainians See Surge in Fighting as Putin Testing Trump, TIME (3 February 2017)



**TIME**

## In Avdiivka, Ukrainians See Surge in Fighting as Putin Testing Trump

By JOHN WENDLE / AVDIIVKA February 3, 2017

As the eastern Ukrainian town of Avdiivka continues to see a fierce surge in violence, many here believe they are the victims of a geopolitical test of wills.

Rebel forces shelled the town's main humanitarian aid station late on Thursday, according to Pavlo Zhebrivskyi, the head of the civil and military administration of Donetsk province, killing two and injuring a third person. The total dead is now at least 15, **according to reports**, since hostilities between pro-Russian separatists and Ukrainian forces began ticking up on the frontline on the outskirts of town early on Sunday morning.

Fighting is now at the most intense level it has been in many months, and Avdiivka is caught in its orbit. Near a section of one-story wooden houses here, the shockwave of outgoing artillery and the strange whistle of mortars could be felt and heard from the street. Staff from the UN Refugee Agency slowly patrolled the dirt lane, inspecting damage from the day before when projectiles from a multiple rocket launcher hit the area, turning wooden roofs into kindling and leaving sharp dark holes in the ground – stark against the white snow.

In the bloodshed of the past few days, many here see the Kremlin testing its limits with newly-elected President Donald Trump. “There is a direct link between the fighting in Avdiivka and the election of Trump. The separatists wanted to test the reaction of the new administration,” volunteer soldier Leonid Martsun told TIME, outside of a command post on the edge of the town, as a scarred and dirty Ukrainian tank ground through the snow of the parking lot. “Putin needed to know how strongly Trump would react,” said Dmytro

Linko, a parliamentary deputy who had come down from Kiev on Wednesday to observe the operations.

This thinking seems to run in parallel to leaders in Washington. “That this surge of attacks began the day after he talked with you by phone is a clear indication that Vladimir Putin is moving quickly to test you as a commander in chief. America’s response will have lasting consequences,” wrote U.S. Senator John McCain, in a letter to Trump on Thursday. “Vladimir Putin’s violent campaign to destabilize and dismember the sovereign nation of Ukraine will not stop unless and until he meets a strong and determined response.”

Trump himself has so far said nothing about the violence, but his newly-appointed U.S. ambassador to the U.N., Nikki Haley, **sent a clear message** in her maiden speech to the body’s security council. “We do want to better our relations with Russia,” she said. “However, the dire situation in eastern Ukraine is one that demands clear and strong condemnation of Russian actions.”

Putin, on the other hand, accused Ukraine of provoking the surge in violence to win the support of the White House, while **speaking to reporters** during a visit to Hungary on Thursday.

The conflict between pro-Russian separatists and Ukrainian forces in the country’s east began after Russia annexed Crimea in March 2014, and **has killed at least 9,000** so far. Though a nominal ceasefire has been in place since Feb. 11, 2015, both sides have continued to shell and shoot across the buffer zone. This dramatic escalation, however, is creating a fresh humanitarian crisis.

On Thursday afternoon, the main aid station in central Avdiivka was thronged as hundreds of people came to collect warm clothing and blankets, a hot meal and hygiene supplies after recent fighting cut off the town’s water, power and heat as residents faced freezing temperatures hovering in the low teens.

More than a hundred people stood in line to register for assistance from Caritas, an aid organization, their breath rising into the freezing air, frosting the fur on the front of the caps. Noisy arguments continuously broke out at the

front of the line as armed soldiers let small groups of people through to sign up.

“We are here because people don’t have heat, water, or electricity,” said Father Andrei Buvakh, of Caritas. “Right now we’re providing food, warm clothing and hygienic boxes. This is very important because there is no water. The situation has been like this for a while now, but it gets worse when there is more shooting,” he said of the war, which began in early 2014 and has left nearly 10,000 dead and millions displaced.

After struggling through the line, Nina Volkova sat down inside the heated tent and registered, but became frustrated after learning she could not register her husband for assistance and that he would have to come stand in line and sign up himself. More than that, however, it is the continued violence that makes her the angriest. “I’m a construction worker,” said the 60-year-old. “I spent my whole life building the buildings they’re destroying now. I laid the bricks,” she said, as she left the tent. “I don’t know who ordered this, I just know it is bad.”

Dumitru Lipcanu, the head of the regional UNHCR field office, described dire conditions in the town. “Infrastructure has been severely damaged including water, heating and power. People now remain in their homes without the basic conditions of survival,” he said. “Local authorities are doing their best. If the power goes back on, the people will be better – but, more than they need assistance, the people want the ceasefire back.”



# Annex 593

Al Jazeera, Avdiivka Civilians Caught in Crossfire as Clashes Rage (5 February 2017).





NEWS / UKRAINE

## Avdiivka civilians caught in crossfire as clashes rage

*Thousands without heating or electricity in town of Avdiivka as Ukrainian troops and rebels remain locked in fighting.*

5 Feb 2017

Thousands of civilians are living in desperate conditions without heating and electricity in the eastern Ukrainian town of Avdiivka as clashes between government forces and pro-Russian rebels intensify.

The warring sides have been locked in heavy battles for control of the government-held town for days, with each side accusing the other of launching attacks and firing heavy artillery in violation of a two-year truce agreement.

The Ukrainian army said on Saturday that one of its soldiers had been killed in the clashes that have claimed the lives of at least 35 people in the past week.

The rebels agreed with Russia and Ukraine, on Wednesday, to agree to the calls for a ceasefire and the withdrawal of heavy weapons from the flashpoint town of Avdiivka by Sunday.

But the demand for the fighting to stop has not halted the violence and so far there are few signs of the big guns being pulled back from around the town of 25,000, just five kilometres north of the rebels' de facto capital of Donetsk .

On Saturday, a rebel military commander was also killed in a car bombing that appeared to have been linked to an internal dispute over power and unrelated to the ongoing fighting.

The clashes have damaged infrastructure and left residents without water and electricity amid freezing conditions, with temperatures plunging to -20C at night.

Girgi Nikiforov, an elderly resident who has had no heating for days, said the situation was dire.

"Lately, there has been shelling from that side," he said, pointing to rebel-held areas. "Our building was hit. The situation has been terrible for so long and it is especially tense now."

Olga, an Avdiivka resident, told Al Jazeera that many of the buildings bore the scars of war and death.

"I was sitting on the sofa listening to the radio ... suddenly there was a huge explosion - it was like everything went into slow motion. The windows were smashed in," she said.

"Later, there was a second explosion which was so loud we lost our hearing for a few seconds. A shell had hit the fourth floor. Thank God, the people who own it weren't there at the time. Otherwise, we would have had to dig them from under the rubble."

Al Jazeera's Charles Stratford, reporting from the town, said that, with rebel positions only a few kilometres away, there was no safe place for the people to seek refuge.

"A government agency has set up a camp with a soup kitchen and tents to keep residents warm amid the desperately cold weather," he said.

"Inside the tents, however, people say more government help is needed."

Ludmilla Voronina, an elderly woman from the area, told Al Jazeera: "I have no job and no pension, so how can I live? I tried to pick up aid but it was so crowded, I couldn't get anything."

Ukraine has been fighting pro-Russian rebels since early 2014 when mass protests brought down a pro-Russian government and replaced it with one seeking closer ties with the EU and US.

Kiev accuses Moscow of direct military involvement in the conflict, as well as military support for the rebels.

The Kremlin denies backing the rebels and only admits that Russian "volunteers" and off-duty soldiers have entered the war zone on their own free will.

The conflict has killed nearly 10,000 people since 2014, more than half of them civilians, and plunged Moscow's relations with the West to a post-Cold War low.



SOURCE: AL JAZEERA AND NEWS AGENCIES



# Annex 594

John Wendle, Avdiivka, Evacuating Again as Fighting Escalates, Al Jazeera (8 February 2017)





FEATURE / UKRAINE

## Avdiivka, evacuating again as fighting escalates

*Civilians in Avdiivka wonder if they will survive the cold nights and random, incessant shelling.*

by John Wendle

8 Feb 2017



Svetlana Zadorozhnyuk talks to her daughter through the window of the bus evacuating her from the town on Avdiivka [John Wendle/Al Jazeera]

**Avdiivka, Ukraine** - Svetlana Zadorozhnyuk crunches through the new snow towards the evacuation bus, holding the hand of her 10-year-old daughter. This is the second time she has sent her little girl away from the fighting in eastern Ukraine, but that has not

made it any easier.

"I'm just so tired of all this," she says through a tear-choked voice.

The girl has spent her days sitting next to her mother as she tended shop, terrorised by the sound of the incoming and outgoing artillery that has killed around two dozen and wounded many more on both sides of the frontline around the town of Avdiivka since hostilities spiked in the area on January 29.

The fighting, which seems to have eased a bit in the past days, is among the worst escalations since the Minsk II ceasefire agreement was signed in February 2015. Some here speculate that the surge in violence is connected to the inauguration of Donald Trump as US president - as a way for Russian President Vladimir Putin to test Trump's intentions over the war in Ukraine.

Regardless of the causes, Svetlana has had enough. She gives the girl's name to the organisers of the evacuation, who check it against their list of children. Then, her daughter is motioned on board.

The girl waves to her mother through the glass, breathes on the window and writes, "I love you" in the fog. "The situation now is just terrible, terrible. Right now no one knows what will happen in the next five minutes," says Svetlana.

As the driver idles the engine in the -10 degrees Celcius temperatures, 76-year-old pensioner Valentina Fyodorovna stands on the other side of the bus and tearfully looks up at her baby grandson. The blue-eyed boy bounces on his mother's lap as they wait to drive to Sviatohirsk, a pilgrimage town that is now serving as a temporary home to thousands of internally displaced people.

"I would give my pension. I would give anything for this to stop," says Valentina, wiping away her tears. The randomness of the shelling means she and everyone else in Avdiivka fear that they will not live through the night.



A Ukrainian tank drives through the streets of the embattled town of Avdiivka, on the frontline of the war in Ukraine [John Wendle/Al Jazeera]

## Saving the children

For the past week, Avdiivka, an embattled industrial town on the frontline in the war in Ukraine, has struggled with freezing temperatures, intermittent heating, and no power or water.

Now that the shelling is subsiding and the power is coming back on, the people of the town are taking stock of their ordeal and speculating on the causes of last Sunday's sudden shift from a frequently broken ceasefire to outright shelling and fighting.

The gathered mothers wave to their children as the bus pulls out. Artillery continues to rumble and thump intermittently in the background. An organiser says 23 were leaving that morning and that slightly fewer than 200 children had left by the service since last Sunday.

More had fled with their families, though schools in the town continued to hold classes.

This crisis is only the most recent since the war broke out in 2014, after pro-Western protesters deposed the pro-Russian president. Soon after, Russia annexed Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula, the site of a large Russian naval base. Kiev and the West say the Kremlin then fomented and backed a rebellion in the east of the country, while Russia says it was not involved.



A member of the International Committee of the Red Cross examines a crater made by a mortar the night before in front of School Number 2 in central Avdiivka [John Wendle/Al Jazeera]

## The Donald Trump factor

Just across the street from where the bus was parked, Mikhail Kolodych, sweeps glass and splintered wood from his sister-in-law's kitchen floor.

A shell had hit the building the night before, destroying the apartment on the floor above and shattering all the windows in this one. Everyone was already sheltering in the basement of the building - as they have been since 2014 - so no one was hurt.

In the kitchen, a shell fragment is lodged in the wall. Surveying the destruction, Mikhail echoes the sentiments of Valentina, the pensioner at the bus stop, visible through the shattered window.

"Russia is unpredictable. They have awoken and wherever they turn tomorrow, they can go. Even to the Baltic states - Estonia, Latvia, it is possible," he says.

"I think the situation is connected with President Trump," he says, warning that if Trump and other world leaders do not strengthen sanctions, "[the conflict] will grow - just look at Syria".

So far, he has seen little from the international community to make him think they will do more to help halt the fighting. But a big problem is that Trump is "also unpredictable", he says, but adds, "I think he can't just wake up and go do whatever he likes. It's not like in Russia."

On Saturday, Trump called Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko, the first direct contact between the two leaders since Trump was sworn in on January 20. Trump's stated aim of improving relations with the Kremlin has sparked fears in Kiev that the US may lift sanctions against Russia, levied against the country for its annexation of Crimea and support of rebels in the breakaway regions of Donetsk and Lugansk.

"We will work with Ukraine, Russia, and all other parties involved to help them restore peace along the border," Trump said in a White House statement, after talking to the Ukrainian president. Poroshenko's office said the call with Trump particularly focused on the "settlement of the situation in the Donbass and achieving peace via political and diplomatic means" and that the two sides "discussed strengthening the strategic partnership" between the two countries.

Trump told Fox News host Bill O'Reilly on Saturday that, "I respect a lot of people, but that doesn't mean I'm going to get along with [Putin]. He's a leader of his country. I say it's better to get along with Russia than not."

On Sunday, Vice President Mike Pence responded to the upsurge in fighting on ABC's *This Week* news programme, saying, "We're watching and [are] very troubled by the increased hostilities." But, when questioned on sanctions continuing against Russia, he said, "That's a question that will be answered in the months ahead." That response that will do little to allay fears in Kiev.

Indeed, many in Avdiivka believe that last week's upsurge in violence was a direct result of Putin wanting to test Trump's mettle.

"Maybe it is that before they meet, they needed to feel each other out," says Dmytro Linko, a member of the Ukrainian parliament who was in Avdiivka observing the army.



A volunteer hands out bread to people gathered at the central aid point in Avdiivka [John Wendle/Al Jazeera]

## Stocking up on emergency supplies

Down the street from Mikhail's sister-in-law's wrecked apartment, volunteers and Ukrainian emergency crews swarm around School Number 2.

Outside the front door, a mortar had blasted frozen earth across the front yard, leaving a dark pit and a broken tree. The volunteers unload truck after truck packed with bottled water, candles, blankets, food, diapers and other humanitarian aid donated by international and Ukrainian organisations.

Even with the sound of shelling a near constant in the background, hundreds of people gather to collect what they can.

One young mother is intent on picking up candles, since her two young sons are as terrified of the dark as they are of the shelling.

"There was shelling today and my youngest slept through it," she says, rocking her stroller back and forth in the crowd outside the school. But the older one, she says, "understands and feels everything. When the shells started to fall he got frightened. His heart, I don't know, must have been beating 300 times a second."

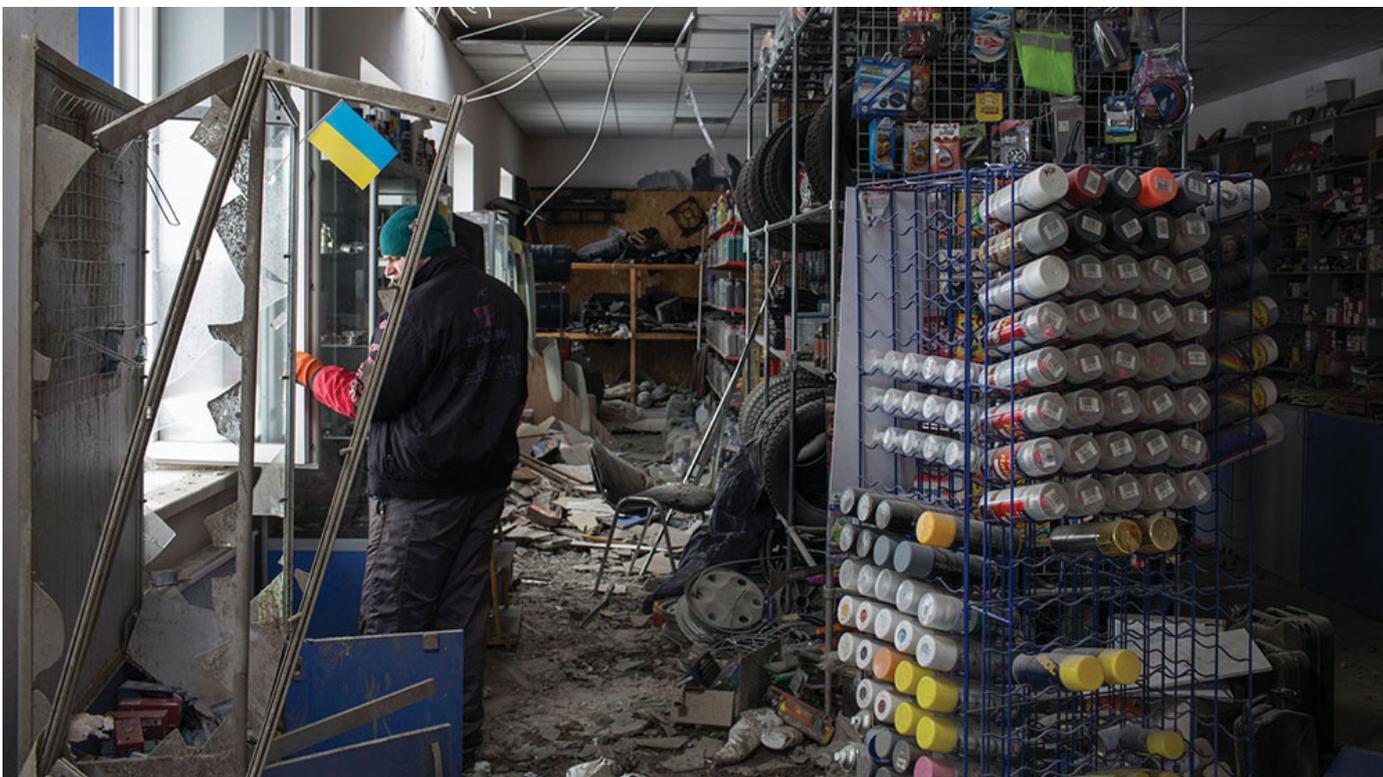
Now, she is standing in line to pick up some candles, "so that he is not afraid during the attacks and not scared of the dark".

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## Gallery



People from Avdiivka seeking humanitarian aid fight for a place at the front of the line while Ukrainian soldiers work to control the crowds [John Wendle/Al Jazeera]



An auto supply store stands ruined after two mortars detonated on its roof near Old Avdiivka, a residential area of the town nearest the frontline [John Wendle/Al Jazeera]



Leonid Tarasov, a pensioner in Old Avdiivka, on the edge of town closest to the frontline, receives blankets and candles from the International Committee of the Red Cross [John Wendle/Al Jazeera]



Pensioners gather at Nadezhda's house in Old Avdiivka to pick up donated supplies, such as biscuits, macaroni and cooking oil [John Wendle/Al Jazeera]



People wait for assistance in School Number 2 in Avdiivka [John Wendle/Al Jazeera]



Bottled water is handed through a window and passed down a line of volunteers to be stacked and readied for distribution to people in Avdiivka. Water, electricity and heating were off or intermittent all last week. Though heat and power have returned in some places, water is still off [John Wendle/Al Jazeera]



Pavel Ivanets, left, the chief volunteer organiser, walks rapidly through piles and stacks of aid delivered by donors and local and international organisations in School Number 2 in Avdiivka [John Wendle/Al Jazeera]



People stand in a chaotic line to register for humanitarian assistance in Avdiivka [John Wendle/Al Jazeera]



**Ukraine: Who controls what**

**SOURCE: AL JAZEERA NEWS**

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# Annex 595

Anton Zverev, Ex-Rebel Leaders Detail Role Played by Putin Aide in East Ukraine, Reuters (11 May 2017)





- Detained In Myanmar
- Energy & Environment
- Brexit
- North Korea
- Charged: The Future of Autos

WORLD NEWS

MAY 11, 2017 / 4:22 AM / A YEAR AGO

# Ex-rebel leaders detail role played by Putin aide in east Ukraine

Anton Zverev



MOSCOW (Reuters) - A top aide to Vladimir Putin decides how the pro-Moscow administration of eastern Ukraine is run and who gets what jobs there, three former rebel leaders said, challenging Kremlin denials that it calls the shots in the region.

FILE PHOTO: Top-level Kremlin advisor Vladislav Surkov speaks before Russia's President Dmitry Medvedev's last annual state of the nation address at the Kremlin in Moscow, Russia, December 22, 2011. REUTERS/Sergei Karpukhin/File Photo

Their comments to Reuters shed light on the role played by the secretive Vladislav Surkov, who has long been at the Russian president's side. The Kremlin says his official role is to advise Putin on Ukraine, where the rebels are fighting government forces.

The extent of his influence and powers has not been spelled out or acknowledged by the Kremlin which casts its role in the conflict as one where it has influence but is not a protagonist.

The three men who have held senior roles in the separatist movement in eastern Ukraine have explained in detail how Surkov controls the situation on the ground via handpicked proxies who give him regular situation reports, used aides to arrange elections there, and has worked to build power structures that are responsive to Moscow's wishes.

"Any call from Moscow was viewed as a call from the office of Lord God himself and... was implemented immediately," recalled Alexei Alexandrov, one of the leaders of the separatist rebellion in Donetsk who has since left the area in eastern Ukraine. Two other separatists corroborated his account, but declined to be identified.

Surkov and Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov did not respond to questions about the extent of Surkov's role in Ukraine. Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko's office also declined to comment.

Reuters has previously gathered evidence that Moscow sent Russian troops and irregular fighters, and weapons, to help the separatists, who tried to break away from Ukraine in 2014. A senior former separatist described last year how Russian financial support propped up the breakaway area.

The Kremlin has always rejected those accusations as part of its effort to get Western sanctions imposed on it over Ukraine eased.

Reuters was unable to independently verify the separatists' descriptions of Surkov's role, but their individual versions of events tallied with one another, with key details and dates consistent with existing open source information about Surkov.

Alexandrov and the two other officials said their willingness to speak out underscores a sense that their uprising has been hijacked by the Kremlin, which has put in place loyalists who they say do not have the region's best interests at heart. All three said Moscow had gradually forced out most of the separatists behind the original uprising by using threats of death and detention.

“At first we were a bit naive and thought that maybe our Moscow uncles simply didn't understand what was happening here, when our Moscow comrades treated us like dirt,” said one of the three former separatist leaders who said he last spoke to Surkov in November.

“But then I understood that they understood everything, and simply wanted us to keep our mouths shut.”

FILE PHOTO: Head of the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic Alexander Zakharchenko (C) leaves after the first session of the new local parliament in Donetsk, Ukraine, November 14, 2014. REUTERS/Maxim Zmeyev/File Photo

## HANDPICKED LEADER

Surkov helped Putin engineer Russia's tightly controlled political system and coined the term "sovereign democracy" which the Kremlin uses to describe that system.

Viewed in the West as one of the architects of Russia's annexation of the Crimea peninsula from Ukraine in 2014, Surkov was blacklisted from entering the United States and the European Union in March of that year. He told a Russian newspaper that being on Washington's blacklist was a "big honor" for him.

The separatists who came forward to describe Surkov's role say he also played a key role in the appointment of Alexander Zakharchenko as leader of the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic (DNR) in eastern Ukraine, the rebels' biggest breakaway entity by population.

Zakharchenko, a former coal mine electrician from eastern Ukraine, was the leader of an anti-Kiev militia when he was summoned to Moscow in 2014. Separatist leaders were grooming him to be defense minister in the DNR. But after he met Surkov in the Kremlin, word came back from Surkov's office that Zakharchenko was to be given the top job.

A spokeswoman for Zakharchenko did not respond to written questions.

At the time, the Donetsk rebels had been led by two men who described themselves as volunteers from Russia. Far-right former journalist Alexander Borodai was the political chief, and Igor Strelkov, who said he was a former agent in Russia's federal security service (FSB), was the military commander.

Moscow wanted them replaced by a local to try to show the West that the uprising was a grassroots phenomenon, Borodai told Reuters. It picked Zakharchenko, whom it viewed as easy to control, said one of the three ex-separatist sources.

After what Alexandrov described as a verbal order from Surkov's office, Borodai and Strelkov quietly stepped down so that Zakharchenko could take over.

Borodai said he had been the first to suggest that Zakharchenko take over, but declined to answer detailed questions on the subject.

Strelkov did not respond to a request for comment, but has previously told Reuters he left the region after coming under pressure from people he declined to name.

After Zakharchenko was made leader of the Donetsk separatists, the region held an election which confirmed him in office. A team of Russians who worked for Surkov arrived in Donetsk to help run Zakharchenko's campaign, said Alexandrov. Reuters could not independently confirm that assertion.

Ukraine and its Western allies then rejected the vote. Separatists shrugged that rejection off, however, and Moscow suggested the Ukrainian government could now negotiate directly with the separatists, an offer Kiev spurned.

The contested election helped entrench Zakharchenko, all three former rebel leaders said.

Surkov's election team did not tell anyone in Donetsk their real names, and used military-style radio call signs instead.

Asked how he knew they worked for Surkov, Alexandrov said: "They didn't hide it. They announced it loudly at the first opportunity."

Five sources, including one close to the presidential administration and another who worked with Surkov in the Kremlin, said Surkov has regular meetings with separatist leaders, both in the breakaway territory and in Russia.

FILE PHOTO: A pro-Russian armed man stands guard at a barricade near the state security service building in Sloviansk, Ukraine, April 28, 2014. The sticker on the rifle reads: "Republic of Donetsk". REUTERS/Gleb Garanich/File Photo

They say his involvement continues now, three years on from the start of the rebellion in eastern Ukraine.

Alexandrov said he met Surkov in Moscow in August 2014. Another of the former separatist leaders said his most recent meeting with Surkov in Moscow was in November last year.

## DOUBLE ROLE

Surkov had at least three meetings last year with Victoria Nuland when she was U.S. Under-Secretary of State for European Affairs — in January, May and June — according to the U.S. embassy in Moscow.

Nuland told reporters at the time that the meetings had been part of a U.S. attempt to get all sides to implement the Minsk accord, which introduced a shaky ceasefire in eastern Ukraine and laid out steps for a political solution to the conflict.

Her meeting with Surkov in June in Moscow was “thorough and constructive,” the U.S. embassy said.

But the sources who spoke to Reuters said Surkov’s true role went far beyond acting as a peace broker.

Surkov’s activities, which began at least six months before the internationally-brokered Minsk peace deal, focused on choosing personnel to take senior posts, on creating a structure for the separatist administration, on formulating a media strategy for the separatists and planning local elections, according to the people who spoke to Reuters.

After meeting Surkov in May, Nuland had warned that such elections, organized by the separatists without Ukrainian government involvement, would be ignored by Washington.

Poroshenko’s office declined to comment on these accounts.

Additional reporting by Svetlana Reiter, Polina Nikolskaya and Polina Devitt, Writing by Christian Lowe and Andrew Osborn, Editing by Peter Graff and Timothy Heritage

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6/1/2018

Ex-rebel leaders detail role played by Putin aide in east Ukraine | Reuters

# Annex 596

Nikolaus von Twickel, South Ossetia: A 'Little Switzerland' for Donbas?, EURASIANET.org (31 May 2017)



## South Ossetia: A “Little Switzerland” for Donbas?

[eurasianet.org/s/south-ossetia-a-little-switzerland-for-donbas](http://eurasianet.org/s/south-ossetia-a-little-switzerland-for-donbas)



De-facto officials of South Ossetia (left) meet with de-facto officials of the self-declared Donetsk and Luhansk “people’s republics” in Tskhinvali on April 28, 2015. About two weeks later, an international bank, MRB, was established in South Ossetia to provide financial services that connect Russia and the Kremlin-backed breakaway republics in eastern Ukraine. (Website of the de-facto president of South Ossetia)

South Ossetia has emerged as an unlikely banking center, providing financial services that connect Russia and the self-declared, Kremlin-backed breakaway republics in eastern Ukraine, according to officials in all three regions.

While the eastern Ukrainian “people’s republics” are intent on reorienting their economies toward Russia, in the short term, Moscow must prop up large industrial enterprises in Donbas. The de facto capital of South Ossetia, Tskhinvali, plays an important role in facilitating Russian subsidies.

In April, the de facto authorities in the Donetsk People’s Republic announced that they were putting the bulk of the territory’s massive industrial enterprises under a little-known holding company reportedly based in South Ossetia. And for the last two years Tskhinvali has hosted a bank that manages payments between Moscow and the two eastern Ukrainian breakaway

republics, Luhansk and Donetsk.

The holding company, Vneshtorgservis, now controls the nine biggest plants in Donetsk and the three biggest in Luhansk. The firm is reportedly run by Vladimir Pashkov, a Russian citizen and former deputy governor of the Irkutsk region in Siberia, according to comments by the de facto Donetsk Minister for Trade and Industry, Alexei Granovsky, published in Russia's Kommersant-Vlast weekly in early May.

De facto officials in Donetsk did not return a request for comment from EurasiaNet.org about the company's place of registration. The press office of Luhansk separatist leader Igor Plotnitsky also refused to comment.

But a former senior official in the Donetsk de facto republic, Alexander Khodakovsky, wrote on his blog that the company was registered in South Ossetia, and complained that the arrangement was not in the interests of the people of Donbas: "As long as we don't have a legal basis for these holding companies, we will always have grounds to suspect the [de facto Donbas] government of double-dealing and hypocrisy, of a willingness to return everything to the old oligarchs, or to sell them to people ... for whom the interests of our Republic are not even a passing concern."

Officials in South Ossetia also did not respond to written questions submitted via email from EurasiaNet.org. However, local leaders have officially confirmed the banking link. In early April, outgoing de facto President Leonid Tibilov told a visiting delegation from Donetsk that the newly formed "young republics" should support each other: "What we managed to do for you is to open an international bank," Tibilov said, according to the official news agency RES.

Tibilov did not name the bank, but it has been identified on multiple occasions by separatist officials from Ukraine as the "International Clearance Bank" (Mezhdunarodny Rashchyotny Bank / MRB). The website of South Ossetia's Central Bank lists its address as Stalin Street 20. In turn, the central banks of both the Donetsk and Luhansk "people's republics" have identified South Ossetia's MRB as their official international correspondence bank.

This bank is believed to have operated for two years now, and observers believe it exists primarily to funnel cash from Russia to the separatist republics, which are largely dependent on outside financial support. And its role is likely to have grown considerably since March 1, when the separatists in Donetsk and Luhansk brought all Ukrainian-held industrial plants under their control.

The move, partly an answer to a trade blockade imposed by Ukrainian activists, was meant to improve the revenues of the breakaway republics by forcing the plants to pay their taxes locally. However, an unintended consequence was a cut off in the supply of raw materials from Ukraine. That, in turn, led to the departure of much of the industries' management, either fired by the new separatist authorities or withdrawn by the Ukrainian owners. As a result, production

at the plants has ground to a halt.

South Ossetia is the world's only territory that has formally recognized the two "people's republics." South Ossetia itself was recognized by Russia in 2008, after Moscow crushed an attempt by Georgia to recapture the territory. All but Russia, along with a handful of states, consider South Ossetia to still be a part of Georgia.

In a [video interview](#) published in April, Donetsk's parliamentary speaker and chief international envoy Denis Pushilin explained that "all processes" regarding payments, raw materials and their documentation for the relevant plants "go through the country that has recognized us – that is South Ossetia."

Moscow so far has shied away from recognizing the Donbas republics, ostensibly because they are under Western sanctions already, but also because such a move would threaten to scuttle the Minsk agreement, which Russian President Vladimir Putin signed along with his counterparts in Ukraine, France, and Germany. (Georgia's other breakaway republic, Abkhazia, also has not formally recognized Donetsk or Luhansk, although it does maintain friendly relations with the Ukrainian separatists.)

As long as Russia does not recognize the "people's republics," companies wishing to do business there face multiple logistical hurdles, including a significant risk of being hit by sanctions from Ukraine. Thus, South Ossetia's role as a little Switzerland for Donbas plays a useful part for Russia and Russian firms wishing to disassociate themselves from the destination of their transactions.

"If in doubt, Moscow will always say that this is a problem between South Ossetia and Ukraine," said Alexei Malashenko, a Caucasus expert and director of studies of the Berlin-based Dialogue of Civilizations think tank.



# Annex 597

Prosecutor General's Office Put Zhirinovskiy In Suspicion Of Financing Terrorism, Front New International (23 August 2017)



## Prosecutor General's Office put Zhirinovskiy in suspicion of financing terrorism

[frontnews.eu/news/en/11378/Prosecutor-Generals-Office-put-Zhirinovskiy-in-suspicion-of-financing-terrorism](https://frontnews.eu/news/en/11378/Prosecutor-Generals-Office-put-Zhirinovskiy-in-suspicion-of-financing-terrorism)



**Kyiv:** The Prosecutor General's Office of Ukraine has put forward a suspicion of financing terrorism to the Russian policy of Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, the press service of the ministry reports.

"A pre-trial investigation found that Russian citizen Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, while on the territory of Moscow, in March-April 2014, with the goal of material support of terrorist organizations "LPR "and "DPR", created and led an organized group comprising separate deputies of the State Duma of the Russian Federation and members of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia, including leaders and representatives of the regional branches of the party, with the relevant purpose carried out the collection of funds from Russian citizens," is said in the message.

It is also established that the criminal group gave the militants six vehicles.

"At the expense of personally contributed property and funds, as well as funds collected from citizens of the Russian Federation, the group under the leadership of Zhirinovskiy, acting, including at the request of the head of the terrorist group "Somali" M. Tolstoy (the call sign " Givi " ), in for the period of 2014-2017 years, delivered to the representatives of these criminal formations 6 Russian-made vehicles with increased passage and operational capabilities, some of which were used during the commission of terrorist acts against and law enforcement units of Ukraine, in particular on the territory of the Donetsk airport," the Prosecutor General's Office added.

The department added that according to these facts, Zhirinovskyy compiled a report on suspicion of committing a criminal offense under Part 3 of Art. 27 p. 3 t. 258-5 of the Criminal Code of Ukraine.

On July 21, the Prosecutor General's Office of Ukraine instituted criminal proceedings against Verkhovna Rada deputy Oleksandr Vilkul.