



## “Battle Of Donbas” In Full Swing As Russia Launches ‘Hellish’ All-Out Assault

### Description

In the overnight hours the “Battle of the Donbass” – as Ukraine’s Zelensky is calling it – was launched with a full renewed Russian onslaught, marking the beginning of a second phase of the war which kicked off with the Feb.24 invasion. The opening hours of Tuesday were marked by constant shelling and missile strikes in the region.

“**Another stage of this operation (in eastern Ukraine) is beginning** and I am sure this will be a very important moment of this entire special operation,” Lavrov [announced](#) during a live interview with *India Today* on Tuesday.

Importantly, when asked about whether the ‘special operation’ launch by Vladimir Putin would eventually extend to the capital of Kiev, Lavrov responded: “**We are not up for regime change in Ukraine.**” This coming weeks after Russia’s military commanders announced a new focus on liberating the east.



*Ukrainian multiple rocket launcher BM-21 “Grad” shells Russian troops’ position, near Luhansk, via AFP*

Further as translated in state sources, the top diplomat [emphasized that](#) “Russia had no other choice but to start the operation, as Ukrainian forces had intensified attacks in Donbass, prompting mass evacuations of civilians from the region and forcing the Donetsk and Lugansk People’s Republics to ask Moscow for help.”

As heavy military assets and troops poured into the far eastern Ukrainian region starting from the weekend through the past days, President Volodymyr Zelensky [assessed in a video address](#) that a **“very large part of the entire Russian army is now focused on this offensive,”** adding that “No matter how many Russian troops they send there, we will fight. We will defend ourselves.”

At least dozens of Russian strikes have been reported throughout the Donbas as the operation kicked into forces during the [overnight and morning hours](#):

*Russia has launched a full-scale ground offensive to take control of Ukraine’s east, according to authorities in Kyiv, with explosions reported all along the front lines and one local official describing the situation as **“hell” amid “constant fighting”**.*

??Suburbs of [#Donetsk](#). [#Ukraine](#) [#UkraineRussiaWar](#) [pic.twitter.com/G9u2ZBX50K](https://pic.twitter.com/G9u2ZBX50K)

— MilitaryLand.net (@Militarylandnet) [April 18, 2022](#)

This after the Russian defense ministry called on all Ukrainian fighters to immediately lay down their arms if they want safe passage, particularly in the besieged and largely destroyed city of Mariupol in

the southeast, where it's believed a couple thousand Azov as well as foreign fighters are holed up in a large steel factory.

Donbass source: "No one has ever seen something like this. Even very experienced ones. Lines of planes strike without stopping. They unload and go to new circles. Again, again. Without stopping. I don't know, what will be left of the positions of the AFU in the morning"

— Levi (@Levi\_godman) [April 18, 2022](#)

"Constructed in the early Soviet era and rebuilt after the Nazi occupation during World War II, Mariupol's Azovstal steelworks is one of Europe's biggest metallurgical plants, covering more than 11 sq km (4.25 sq miles) and overlooking the Sea of Azov," [France24](#) reports of the at this point days-long standoff.

"It is now the site of one of the last pockets of Ukrainian resistance in the besieged port city. Ukrainian military officials say there are also hundreds of civilians sheltering in the plant," the description continues. "Russia's defense ministry has demanded that measures be taken to release civilians from the Azovstal plant."

Video of the Ilyich plant in Mariupol. <https://t.co/6gYsaKHMEg> [pic.twitter.com/dpf2hLm9Yz](https://t.co/dpf2hLm9Yz)

— Rob Lee (@RALee85) [April 19, 2022](#)

Additionally, on Tuesday the Russia military said it has **opened a 'humanitarian corridor' for any remaining Ukrainian militants to "voluntarily lay down their arms"**. It announced that the window for exiting the corridor would begin at 14:00 Moscow time, according to RIA. Essentially what's being offered is a 'surrender or die' ultimatum.

by Tyler Durden

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