



Putin Orders Peacekeeping Operation In Ukraine's Breakaway Regions

Description

RUSSIA/DONBAS: Update (525pm ET): In the latest development out of the Donbas, Reuters reports that **under its new agreement with separatist leaders, Russia has a right to build and establish military bases in eastern Ukraine.**

BREAKING: Russia's agreements just signed with the LPR and DPR give the right to use military infrastructure and military bases on each other's territory, and provide for joint protection of the borders of Donbass

— ASB News / MILITARY?? (@ASBMilitary) [February 21, 2022](#)

Meanwhile, as the night progresses in eastern Ukraine, we are now getting footage of “peacekeepers” being bussed in to the Donbas across the border.

[#Ukraine](#): Footage of [#Russia](#)'s military “peacekeepers” being bussed in to the Donbas across the border. This is essentially the beginning of the invasion.
pic.twitter.com/7pUgkJrJzQ

— Jake Hanrahan (@Jake_Hanrahan) [February 21, 2022](#)

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Update (422pmET): It appears that boots are about to hit the ground. According to various media outlets, Putin has ordered the Russian military to “secure the peace” in the Eastern Ukraine's breakaway regions of Donetsk and Lugansk.

[#BREAKING](#) Putin orders Russian military to ‘maintain peace’ in Ukraine rebel regions

pic.twitter.com/rXWrMI7rEH

— AFP News Agency (@AFP) [February 21, 2022](#)

The Russian president officially signed the decree recognizing the independence of two breakaway regions earlier on Monday. He has instructed the Russian Defense Ministry to send peacekeepers into the Donbass, while telling the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to establish diplomatic relations with both Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics.

Putin has ordered Russian troops into Ukraine.

The decrees on recognizing the Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics order the Russian armed forces to go into separatist territory on peacekeeping missions.

pic.twitter.com/cjKMidID4Q

— max seddon (@maxseddon) [February 21, 2022](#)

TBH Russian troops were in Donbas since 2014. But now they will be overt and with air support. <https://t.co/HH4qg7JePt>

— Yaroslav Trofimov (@yarotrof) [February 21, 2022](#)

Convoy militar ruso llegando a Donetsk pic.twitter.com/8MEH4CYyLG

— 6w (@6w_es) [February 21, 2022](#)

A Reuters witness saw unusually large columns of military hardware moving through the breakaway city of Donetsk after Putin told Russia's defence ministry to send forces into the two regions to "keep the peace" in a decree issued shortly after announcing recognition for Russian-backed separatists there.

????TROOP MOVEMENT IN UKRAINIAN CAPITAL KIEV.

— Columns reportedly heading to Kharkiv. pic.twitter.com/4Lxigx70pP

— Ukraine War Report (@UkrWarReport) [February 21, 2022](#)

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Update(2:30pmET): It's official: Putin has confirmed the change of status recognition while warning Kiev and the West that Russia's military will act against any further aggression. **He warned that Ukraine's government must now halt all military actions against Donbas or whatever happens next will be on them.**

President [#Putin](#) signed decrees recognising independence of [#Donetsk](#) People's Republic and [#Lugansk](#) People's Republic, as well as treaties on friendship and cooperation between [#Russia](#) and DPR and LPR. pic.twitter.com/LHoQhUslde

— Russian Embassy, UK (@RussianEmbassy) [February 21, 2022](#)

“Modern Ukraine was completely created by Russia,” Putin stated at the outset of his speech.

- PUTIN SAYS UKRAINE WAS NOT ABLE TO ACHIEVE STABLE STATEHOOD AND HAS THEREFORE HAD TO RELY ON FOREIGN COUNTRIES LIKE THE UNITED STATES
- PUTIN: UKRAINE HAS BECOME 'A COLONY WITH A PUPPET GOVERNMENT'
- PUTIN SAYS UKRAINE PLANS TO CREATE ITS OWN NUCLEAR WEAPONS
- PUTIN SAYS WE WERE PROMISED NATO WOULD NOT EXPAND PUTIN SAYS THE OPPOSITE HAPPENED
- PUTIN: I WILL SAY SOMETHING IVE NEVER SAID FOR THE FIRST TIME: I ASKED CLINTON HOW WOULD YOU FEEL ABOUT RUSSIA JOINING NATO?
- PUTIN SAYS WE SAW FIVE WAVES OF NATO EXPANSION RECENTLY
- U.S. DOES NOT NEED SUCH A BIG COUNTRY AS RUSSIA IN NATO
- 'WHY MAKE AN ENEMY OF US
- PUTIN SAYS RUSSIA HAS EVERY RIGHT TO PROTECT ITS SECURITY, THAT'S WHAT WE'LL DO
- PUTIN: UKRAINE DOESNT WANT A PEACEFUL RESOLUTION
- PUTIN: RUSSIA WILL TAKE STEPS TO ENSURE ITS SECURITY
- PUTIN SAYS RUSSIA WILL RECOGNISE INDEPENDENCE OF TWO BREAKAWAY REGIONS IN EASTERN UKRAINE

President [#Putin](#) informed President [@EmmanuelMacron](#) and Federal Chancellor [@OlafScholz](#) of his intention to sign the decree to recognise [#Donetsk](#) and [#Lugansk](#) People's Republics. pic.twitter.com/Xi4JfhLXgr

— Russian Embassy, UK (@RussianEmbassy) [February 21, 2022](#)

LIVE FEED:

The Western powers have expressed surprise and dismay at the move, as sanctions packages are being prepped in Washington and Europe.

“The President of Russia informed them that he intends to sign a relevant decree [on recognition] in the immediate future.

The President of France and Chancellor of Germany expressed disappointment with this

development. They also expressed a willingness to continue contacts.”
pic.twitter.com/bbArddb98E

— max seddon (@maxseddon) [February 21, 2022](#)

Official Kremlin statement confirming Russian change of status in Donbas:

Official Kremlin statement confirming that Putin intends to recognize the two separatist republics <https://t.co/11dJOvQ78p> pic.twitter.com/JSqoCp9096

— Michael A. Horowitz (@michaelh992) [February 21, 2022](#)

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Update(12:38pmET): Despite the evening growing late Moscow time, it appears Russia is readying a major decision on the looming question of the independence of the two breakaway republics in eastern Ukraine. The AFP is [reporting](#) that **Putin will make a televised address “soon”** according to state media sources. Likely it is to be carried via Russian state channels, with reports suggesting it will happen starting at 9pm local time (or 1pm ET).

- PUTIN TOLD SCHOLZ AND MACRON HE WILL SIGN A DECREE ON EASTERN UKRAINE REGIONS SHORTLY, WESTERN LEADERS WERE DISMAYED – RIA CITES KREMLIN
- PUTIN PLANS TO SIGN UKRAINE SEPARATIST RECOGNITION: KREMLIN

As fighting in Donbas has continued into evening, Ukrainian government officials reported that **a civilian has been killed by shelling** during an attack on government-held Novoluganske, which lies a couple dozen miles north of Donetsk.

Journalists are now looking for ominous signs of what might be about to come...

The official account of Russia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs changed its profile picture to what appears to be tomorrow’s date. pic.twitter.com/VXjQ39iUwb

— Ana Fota (@anafota4) [February 21, 2022](#)

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Update(10:40amET): Putin said during his addressing the Russian Security Council that **“I will make a decision today”** over whether or not to recognize the Donetsk and Luhansk separatist republics at a moment of heavy fighting with Ukrainian national forces.

There were indications from the meeting that Russia would give the West **a three day ultimatum** and window before recognizing the separatist regions in eastern Ukraine – perhaps as a chance for last minute diplomacy to proceed; however, with Putin’s words it appears we’ll **learn the fate of the region sooner than later**.

Russian state tv RT’s editor says Putin has already made his mind to recognise breakaway regions Donetsk and Luhansk in Ukraine

— Rag?p Soylu (@ragipsoylu) [February 21, 2022](#)

However, Russia’s top diplomat Sergey Lavrov appears to be a voice of caution while other officials within the security council were in favor of independence.

Top officials in the meeting were asked whether they support the pro-Russian separatist republics...

A long line of officials – some enthusiastically, some looking terrified – urge Putin to recognize the DNR.

Putin says, “A decision will be taken today.”

Then the TV cuts out. It’s like the finale of the Sopranos.

What the hell did I just watch????

— max seddon (@maxseddon) [February 21, 2022](#)

It reportedly led to some uncomfortable moments as the world now awaits Putin’s decision:

Bizarre moment.

Head of Russia’s foreign intelligence agency gets flustered as Putin asks him if he supports Russia recognising the separatist regions.

“I support the annexation of the regions into Russia!”

Putin laughs and says “we’re not talking about that”. [Clearly we are.]

<https://t.co/WMEVtHIYUY>

— Patrick Reeve (@Reeve) [February 21, 2022](#)

If Putin does pull the trigger on recognition, it could virtually assure some level of a war or serious conflict, given that the breakaway republics would come under more intense attack from Ukraine’s army, leading to Russian intervention in defense of the “newly recognized” regions – if we soon get to that point.

Ukraine is now urging an immediate UN Security Council meeting as tensions soar and war looks to be on the horizon...

Ukrainian President Zelenskiy requests urgent meeting of the UN Security Council

— BNO News (@BNONews) [February 21, 2022](#)

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Update(9:48amET): Separatist leader Denis Pushilin has issued a formal request to President Vladimir Putin **calling on Russia to recognize the Donetsk People's Republic**. The Luhansk republic has simultaneously published the same request, at a moment Putin is holding an urgent session of the Russian Security Council. This followed quickly on the heels of what Russia's southern command said was a serious attempt of Ukrainian armored vehicles to breach its border, that resulted in five Ukrainians killed.

However, the Ukrainian government and army rejected the entirety of the allegations as “fake news” – **rejecting that its forces are even in the area** where it's said to have occurred (though without addressing the possibility that they could have been irregular forces). But Russia's FSB Director Bortnikov Russian responding by saying the Russian military “destroyed Ukrainian forces that tried to infiltrate the border and **took one Ukrainian POW**” – thus doubling down on the claims.

Russia now says it captured one Ukrainian soldier after repelling cross-border incursion by *two* Ukrainian military units. Kyiv denies any of this happened.

— Yaroslav Trofimov (@yarotrof) [February 21, 2022](#)

That a captured Ukrainian soldier could be in Russian custody would obviously provide verification, if true. But it would also be seen by the West as a massive escalation possibly leading to more direct NATO involvement.

Currently Putin is speaking at a live televised meeting of the council, where he started by stating Ukraine is planning not to uphold its end of the Minsk accords.

The question is also reportedly on the table of whether or in what way the Donbas region could achieve independence, even with at one point in the security council session an official raising the possibility of direct annexation. Putin said “**we need to consider if we recognize the independence of the two breakaway Ukrainian regions,**” according to a rush translation of his words.

- PUTIN: WE MUST DECIDE ON RECOGNIZING SEPARATISTS
- PUTIN: WEST IS MAKING `THREATS, BLACKMAIL`
- RUSSIA'S MEDVEDEV: WE KNOW WHAT WILL HAPPEN WHEN WE RECOGNIZE DONBASS INDEPENDENCE, THE PRESSURE WILL BE UNPRECEDENTED, BUT WE KNOW HOW TO FACE IT

Denis Pushilin, the head of the Donetsk People's Republic, just went on Russian TV to ask

Putin to recognize it as an independent state. Looks like Georgia 2008 all over again
pic.twitter.com/tm00PkRvkQ

— max seddon (@maxseddon) [February 21, 2022](#)

Putin further repeated while addressing the forum that “if Russia faces the danger of Ukraine joining NATO, **the threat for our country will increase substantially.**” He was perhaps addressing a hugely provocative statement made by Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba to “60 Minutes” which aired Sunday.

Kuleba on a major American television show reaffirmed Ukraine’s desire to enter NATO, which without doubt inflamed tensions further from Moscow’s point of view...

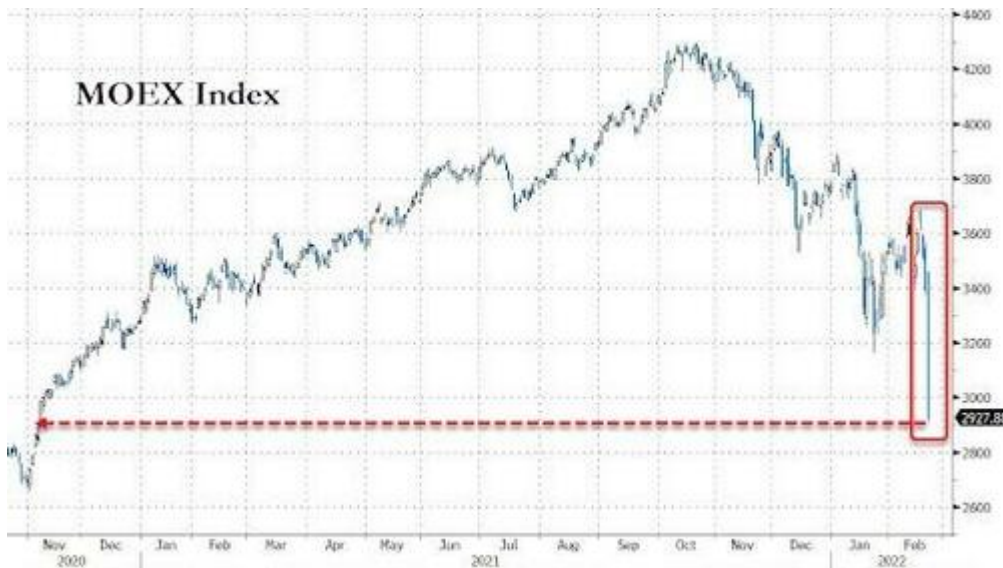
Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba told Lesley Stahl Ukraine is not willing to abandon its goal of entering NATO to please Russian President Vladimir Putin and that he still sees “room for diplomacy.” <https://t.co/hqlcp4iQ5h> pic.twitter.com/8CxR9PqvV1

— 60 Minutes (@60Minutes) [February 21, 2022](#)

In response to the rapidly escalating crisis, the ruble has tumbled as much as 3%, extending its worst 3-day slump since March 2020...



... while the Moscow Exchange tumbled as much as 10%, its biggest drop since 2008...



... amid a bloodbath of most Russian stocks.

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Earlier:

In what provides Russia an 'opportunity' to pull the trigger on overt intervention in eastern Ukraine (assuming it's actually desiring to do so), rebel leaders in the breakaway Donetsk region on Monday **urged Moscow's urgent military help amid worsening shelling from Ukrainian national forces**, and as fighting escalates along the line of contact.

This as *Interfax* in a breaking report cites Russian defense officials who say **five "saboteurs" were killed by border guards** as they attempted to enter Russia's territory. Though details are as yet unconfirmed at this early point, Russia's military says **Ukrainian army vehicles attempted to breach sovereign Russian territory**. Ukraine is disputing the entire narrative, however, **calling it fake news** and that its forces are not in the Rostov area.

RUSSIA SAYS KILLED FIVE PEOPLE WHO TRIED TO VIOLATE BORDER: IFX

The spokesperson's office of [#Russia](#) Southern Military District said two infantry fighting vehicles of the Ukrainian Armed forces entered Russian territory.

— Michael A. Horowitz (@michaelh992) [February 21, 2022](#)

And Bloomberg details of the breaking report:

*Russian forces **killed five “saboteurs” and destroyed 2 armored personnel carriers** of the Ukrainian forces who tried to violate Russian border, Russian army’s Southern Military District says, according to Interfax report*

The Russian [MoD statement](#) said the alleged “attack occurred in the Mityakinskaya area at 6 am this morning. **Infantry fighting vehicles were destroyed by anti-tank missiles.**”

The separatists are now formally asking Moscow for military and financial assistance against the “Ukrainian attacks”; however, Ukraine’s army is currently denying that it’s conducting offensive operations in the Donbas, according to RT and regional correspondents.

Further the Kremlin is citing what it says is a major escalation, after reports that a Ukrainian shell hit and destroyed a Russian border checkpoint in the Rostov region. The Russian side now says Ukrainian munitions are landing on its sovereign soil, which some say could be **used as a *casus belli* if Putin so chooses.**



Archived image of Ukrainian troops in Donbas, via Wiki Commons

According to Russian state sources, Donbas officials and separatist commanders are intensifying their plea for Russian help, which if initiated could crucially in turn trigger heightened NATO intervention in [the conflict](#):

Speaking to the Solovyov Live YouTube channel on Monday, Eduard Basurin, the spokesman for the Donetsk People’s Militia said that Moscow should provide moral support “*first of all,*” but that

“I would not refuse any – military assistance is also needed, in different forms.”

The official also claimed that there is a war taking place in Donbass, adding, *“the situation isn’t just difficult, it is **genuinely critical**.”*

Both breakaway republics began evacuating citizens to Russian territory, announced on Feb.18, citing fears of reprisal attacks by Ukrainian forces, with at this point a believed tens of thousands of civilians having been transferred, mostly via large passenger buses.

Russia’s RIA says the alleged Ukrainian she’ll hit the Neklinovsky district of Rostov. The nearest Ukrainian positions are some 20 km away, and Russian-installed Donetsk People’s Republic controls the other side of that border. <https://t.co/jP4S9osBNh>

— Yaroslav Trofimov (@yarotrof) [February 21, 2022](#)

One Russian media report [cites that about](#) **“61,000 residents** of the LPR and DPR have crossed the border into Russia as part of evacuation amid escalation in eastern Ukraine.”

If true this would suggest a major logistical operation still in progress amid the rapidly deteriorating security situation in the war-torn Donbas, and still with unprecedented numbers of Russian troops mustered near the border in Russia’s southern regions.

by Tyler Durden

Category

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Date Created

02/22/2022