



Ukraine's 2nd Largest City Pummeled Under Russian Strikes As Calls For Western Intervention Grow

Description

UKRAINE: Update(1700ET): Into the late night hours local time, there were widespread reports of a series of large explosions outside Kiev's city limits. This as there's said to be a convoy of infantry, tanks, and artillery that stretches "forty miles" that's still approaching Kiev – though it's believed the Russian assault on the Ukrainian capital has been severely hampered by logistical, supply, and fuel issues.

Calls have grown in US Congress to give Ukraine **"everything they need as rapidly as possible"** – as [the latest words](#) from Top Senate Republican Mitch McConnell ahead of Biden's evening State of the Union indicated. Both in the media and in some corners of Europe calls for "confronting" Russia's militarily have grown, as expected.

Ukrainian government officials, including top ministers apparently, are [reportedly working to run the country](#) from bomb shelters and metro stations under Kiev. Tuesday evening into overnight hours it appears **most of the heavy Russian shelling is still focused on Ukraine's second largest city.**

?? Kharkiv this evening pic.twitter.com/AfSyPO3uRn

— Intelsky (@Intel_sky) [March 1, 2022](#)

Heavy multiple-launch rocket systems (MLRS) shelling of Kharkiv continues as battles rage at its outskirts tonight pic.twitter.com/mIFvHZPn1n

— ELINT News (@ELINTNews) [March 1, 2022](#)

Also on Tuesday European Parliament moved closer to granting Ukraine “candidate status” – ironically not long after Turkey’s Erdogan chided the body for suddenly seeking to fast-track Ukraine after Turkey has [sought EU entry for years](#):

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on Tuesday calling on the European Union institutions “to work towards granting” Ukraine the status of EU candidate country , it said in a statement.

The resolution, which also demanded the EU to impose “tougher sanctions” on Russia, was voted in favor by 637 Members of the European Parliament (MEPs). It condemned “in the strongest possible terms Russia’s illegal invasion of Ukraine and demands that the Kremlin end all military activities in the country.”

Meanwhile the economic war against Russia from the West has continued ratcheting up, with the latest including the UK barring any ships with Russian ties access to British ports. A UK government [statement said](#):

“The ban on Russian ships from UK ports, and new economic sanctions against key Russian financial institutions including its central bank, in close coordination with our allies, will degrade Russia’s economy and help make sure Putin loses,” British Foreign Secretary Liz Truss said in the statement.

?? Russian forces have struck Independence Square in central Kharkiv with a powerful explosion.

According to a video of the event, the blast detonated right in front of the headquarters of the Kharkiv Oblast government.

Video: Ukraine NOW/Telegram pic.twitter.com/poZjYcjRjD

— The Kyiv Independent (@KyivIndependent) [March 1, 2022](#)

Further measures were listed as “including against the Russian Central Bank and the state’s sovereign wealth fund, also mean the majority of Russia’s financial system” – all now covered under UK sanctions.

The Czech Republic introduces potential 1 to 3 year prison sentence for public support of Russia’s actions, expressed online or in any other space

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— Visegrád 24 (@visegrad24) [March 1, 2022](#)

What an odd little map the NYT has created. Ukrainians fleeing violence by heading to the west are “refugees,” while Ukrainians fleeing violence by heading east to seek refuge in Russia are just “migrants” (and are graphically minimized to the point of being barely visible). pic.twitter.com/Rp31UdVwLw

— Glenn Greenwald (@ggreenwald) [March 1, 2022](#)

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earlier

Update(1349ET): Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan issued some strong words on Tuesday which are sure to be taken as provocative both by Russia and Turkey’s European allies. “Asked about Ukraine’s bid for European Union membership at a news conference in Ankara, Erdogan said Turkey, an EU candidate for decades, **would support any enlargement of NATO and the EU.**”

- EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RECOMMENDS GIVING UKRAINE EU CANDIDATE STATUS

Of course, Turkey has lobbied for entry into the EU for years, and has long stood as NATO’s second largest military, behind the United States. This fact was cause for stinging [sarcasm in his words](#):

*Erdogan called on the bloc to show the “same sensitivity” it showed for Kyiv’s membership bid for Turkey’s application, and **slammed member states for being “not sincere”.***

“Will you put Turkey on your agenda when someone attacks (us) too?” he said.

In the overnight hours, huge blasts in Kharkiv have been reported...

#BREAKING: Massive explosion reported over Kharkiv, Ukraine.
pic.twitter.com/OfC4gzhbMA

— Moshe Schwartz (@YWNReporter) [March 1, 2022](#)

Turkey has for months [walked a tightrope](#) on the Ukraine issue amid Russia’s prior military build-up. But with the Russian invasion now in full-swing, Ankara has gotten more vocal – but is still seeking to strike more of a balance compared to the firm [hardline of European countries](#):

“Our call to both Russia and Ukraine is: let the firing stop as soon as possible , let Russia and Ukraine make a beautiful contribution to peace,” Erdogan said Tuesday during a joint news conference with Kosovar President Vjosa Osmani-Sadriu, on Tuesday.



Kharkiv's central square, via AP

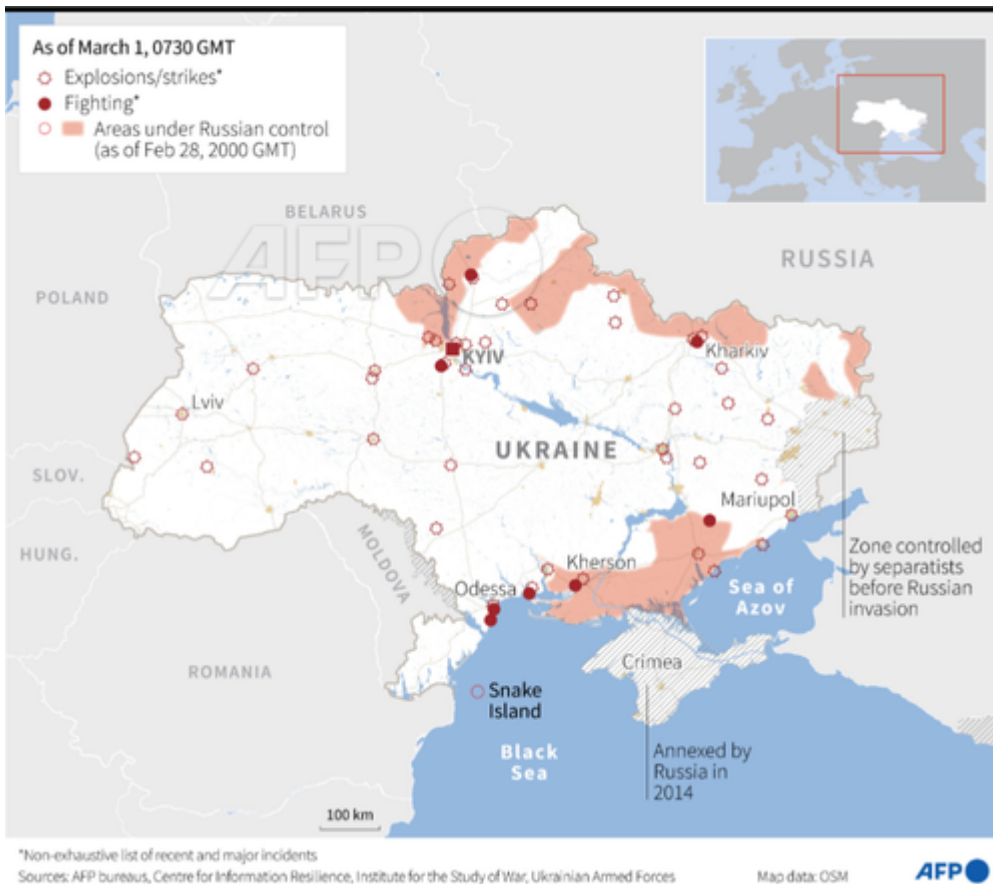
On Monday Turkey had closed the straits under its control to all warship traffic, especially Russian vessels, in line with the Montreux Convention.

Russian and Ukrainian delegations are set to meet for a second round of ceasefire talks, but it's looking increasingly shaky that this will even happen:

[#UPDATE](#) Polish President Andrzej Duda (L), during a visit by NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg (R), said his country would not send military planes to Ukraine since it would be seen as “military interference” pic.twitter.com/Y67w8tgtRr

— AFP News Agency (@AFP) [March 1, 2022](#)

TURKISH PRESIDENTIAL SPOKESMAN SAYS UKRAINIAN, RUSSIAN DELEGATIONS WILL MOST LIKELY NOT MEET ON WEDNESDAY, RUSSIA HAS ‘UNREALISTIC’ DEMANDS -CNN TURK



Currently, some wild theories are circulating in the US mainstream and even among political leaders over just what is behind Putin’s decision for an all-out invasion...

Russia analysis is the worst analysis <https://t.co/keCRlbo1U8>

— Max Abrahms (@MaxAbrahms) [March 1, 2022](#)

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Update(10:53amET): Russia’s military is **urging civilians to leave areas near Ukrainian army bases and communications facilities in Kiev**, warning that it is now conducting strikes against these specified targets.

“In order to suppress information attacks against Russia, the technological facilities of the SBU and the 72nd main PSO center in Kyiv will be hit with high-precision weapons,” the Russian MoD statement said according to TASS. “We call on Ukrainian citizens attracted by Ukrainian nationalists to carry out provocations against Russia, as well as residents of Kyiv living near relay nodes leave their homes.”

Based on widely circulating footage, it appears the invading Russian forces have **begun to take out communications towers and antennas**, as well as Ukrainian military infrastructure – also amid continuing reports that residential areas are increasingly under threat amid the siege of Kiev.

Russians are destroying the Kyiv TV Tower.

They are trying to cut us off from communications. pic.twitter.com/ppi264K5Jf

— Illia Ponomarenko (@IAPonomarenko) [March 1, 2022](#)

A massive TV tower in Kiev has been hit, with the Ukrainian Ministry of Internal Affairs confirming of some national broadcasts:

“The channels will not work for a while,” the ministry said in its statement. “The backup broadcasting of some channels will be enabled in the near future.”

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has meanwhile appealed to the UN Human Rights Council to “strip Russia” of its membership on the UNHRC. According to the AFP, Blinken said:

Putin success in ousting Ukraine government would see rights, humanitarian crises ‘only get worse’, Blinken tells UN rights council

US defense officials on Tuesday said they believe **Russia’s advance on Kiev has been slowing due to fuel and supply challenges.**

There’s been confusion over the prior reported EU jets to Ukraine...

It’s official – Europe won’t transfer fighter planes to Ukraine. Poland decided not to, and Slovakian defense ministry spokesperson confirms to me just now: “Slovakia will not provide fighter jets to Ukraine.”

— Paul McLeary (@paulmcleary) [March 1, 2022](#)

For the past week there have also been conflicting reports as to the degree of Belarus’ active participation on the ground in Russia’s invasion:

- MILITARY UNITS HAVE MOVED FROM BASES BUT COUNTRY COULD MOBILISE IN 2-3 DAYS IN EVENT OF DANGER – RIA CITES BELTA
- LUKASHENKO SAYS NO BELARUS MILITARY UNITS HAVE MOVED FROM BASES BUT COUNTRY COULD MOBILISE IN 2-3 DAYS IN EVENT OF DANGER – RIA CITES BELTA

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“Kyiv is special. If we protect Kyiv, we will protect the state. This is the heart of our country, and it must keep beating,” Ukraine’s President Volodymyr Zelensky said on Tuesday. He gave a stirring video address to European parliament, the day after he signed a formal application for Ukraine seeking EU membership.

“Our people are motivated and we are fighting for freedoms and our lives,” Zelensky said. **“We are fighting for our survival,”**

he added while **urging the body to “prove” that they stand with Ukraine.** This as he’s urging both NATO and the US to impose a No-Fly Zone, an appeal which both so far have rejected.



Satellite imagery being widely reported on Tuesday morning suggests **a massive column of Russian infantry many miles in length is now en route ready to bear down to the Ukrainian capital.** Estimates as to its size have varied, but there’s consensus it’s at least many, possibly dozens of miles, long.

CNN [describes it as](#) “A massive **40-mile-long Russian military convoy** — made up of armored vehicles, tanks, towed artillery and other logistical vehicles — has reached the outskirts of Ukraine’s capital, Kyiv, according to satellite images from Maxar Technologies.”

Kiev officials have said the city has erected fortifications, while much of the civilian population has sought the safety of shelters or underground bunkers ahead of what’s expected to be a large-scale final Russian assault, also after two other large cities have in the past days come under heavy rocket barrage and shelling.

BREAKING: Satellite photos reveal large Russian military convoy north of Kyiv, stretching 64 kilometers (40 miles) in total (? : [@Maxar](#)) pic.twitter.com/61JLz8Gubf

— BNO News (@BNONews) [March 1, 2022](#)

The mayor of Kyiv, Vitali Klitschko, warned the people of the city as well as the world on Tuesday that **“the enemy is on the outskirts of the capital,”** and emphasized that national forces are “preparing to defend Kyiv.”

“Our armed forces, Territorial Defense Forces, are fighting heroically for our land,” Klitschko said. **“Fortifications and checkpoints have been built at the entrances to the city.** I ask everyone to keep calm. Do not go outside unnecessarily and stay in shelters in case of alarm,” he added.

Moscow has meanwhile reaffirmed that its military operation will not stop until it meets the objectives of

“demilitarizing” Ukraine. However, talks just inside Belarus on Monday between a Ukrainian delegation and Russian delegation left agreeing to keep talking. Those talks lasted a reported five hours.

The latest on the [#Ukraine](#) crisis from [@DaveClark_AFP](#) with [@olacicho](#) in Moscow
?? Russian forces strike cities in eastern Ukraine
?? Western powers vow further sanctions
?? More than 660,000 people have fled conflict <https://t.co/K69VMdFjuw>
[pic.twitter.com/W6SpzFp3qV](https://t.co/W6SpzFp3qV)

— AFP News Agency (@AFP) [March 1, 2022](#)

The Russian side has since confirmed that this second round of potential ceasefire talks **will take place Wednesday, March 2**. Ukrainian and Russian media are [confirming the next round](#):

*Another Ukrainian media outlet, Glavkom, citing sources in the Ukrainian delegation, disclosed the terms advanced by the sides during the first meeting. It said that Russia allegedly demanded Ukraine commit to paper its off-bloc status at the parliamentary level and organize a referendum on this matter. Apart from that, the Russian side **demanded Ukraine recognize the Donetsk and Lugansk People’s Republics in the administrative borders of the corresponding regions and drop its demand that Crimea should be returned to Ukraine**. Ukraine, according to Glavkom, **demanded a ceasefire and withdrawal of Russian troops from its territory**.*

At the same time, on an international level communications between Russia and the West appear to be spiraling toward non-existent. With the European airspace closure around Russia, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov opted to address an assembly of the UN Human Rights Council remotely, instead of traveling.

*More and more media pundits and US officials have begun to **call for a West-imposed No Fly Zone**:*

Perhaps the biggest risk-calculation/moral dilemma of the war so far. A massive Russian convoy is abt 30 miles from Kyiv. The US/NATO could likely destroy it. But that would be direct involvement against Russia and risk, everything. Does the West watch in silence as it rolls?

— Richard Engel (@RichardEngel) [February 28, 2022](#)

Even the video speech prompted a mass-walkout, as Fox described:

*As soon as the U.N. president turns over the floor to Lavrov, **dozens of diplomats stand and leave the meeting chamber without a word.***

*Lavrov said he was “**compelled**” to make his address by video after the European Union restricted his “**freedom of movement.**”*

Currently Ukrainian Defense Minister Oleksiy Reznikov is warning that Russia has preparations underway to launch a “**large-scale information and psychological operation**” against Ukraine, Defense Minister Oleksiy Reznikov said Tuesday. “Its goal is to break the resistance of Ukrainians and the Ukrainian army with lies,” Reznikov said in the statement.

by Tyler Durden

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