



## Zelensky Urges Biden To Impose No-Fly Zone Over Ukraine; Turkey Shuts Straits To All Warships

### Description

**Update(1845ET):** Ukraine's President Zelensky has urged the West to consider imposing a no-fly zone against Russian aircraft. Zelensky on Monday appealed directly to Joe Biden to consider **a no-fly zone for "significant parts" of Ukraine**. The Ukrainian leader issued the statement in an exclusive Axios report. [He told Axios](#) that there's a chance for Ukraine's armed forces to **"beat the aggressor" if the Western allies are willing to "do their part."**

He also suggested that this would result in less total bloodshed, and spare civilians: **"If the West does this, Ukraine will defeat the aggressor with much less blood,"** Zelensky conveyed through an advisor.

White House press sec. Jen Psaki tells [@marykbruce](#) any potential no-fly-zone would "essentially...be a step toward" a direct conflict, and "potentially a war with Russia, which is something we are not planning to be a part of."

LIVE UPDATES: <https://t.co/r3JDLsDZpQ> [pic.twitter.com/J9WwBAxEYp](https://pic.twitter.com/J9WwBAxEYp)

— ABC News (@ABC) [February 28, 2022](#)

However, not only did Biden rule out sending American troops to Ukraine in a Monday statement, but press secretary Jen Psaki also stressed that a no-fly zone is also ruled out, given that **either scenario would bring Washington into direct war with Russia**, and likely lead to WW3.

"Here's what's important for everybody to know about a no-fly zone: What that would require is implementation by the U.S. military. **It would essentially mean the U.S. military would be shooting down Russian planes,**" Psaki told MSNBC on Monday.

Sen. Rubio says setting up a no-fly zone in Ukraine would lead to World War III.

“People have to understand what that means. That means a willingness to shoot down Russian planes. And that would mean World War III.”

— Andrew Desiderio (@AndrewDesiderio) [February 28, 2022](#)

Zelensky had described additionally of current measures, “The sanctions are heading in the right direction. In addition to disconnecting the Russian Central Bank from SWIFT and providing more Stingers and anti-tank weapons, we need the West to impose a no-fly zone over significant parts of Ukraine.”

An additional major development Monday is that Turkey as expected has invoked the Montreux Convention and **has now closed the Bosphorus and Dardanelles straits to all Russian warship traffic**. This means Russian vessels cannot enter the Black Sea from the vicinity of the Mediterranean. But this also applies to [all warships at this time](#)...

“When Turkey is not a belligerent in the conflict, it has the authority to restrict the passage of the warring states’ warships across the straits. If the warship is returning to its base in the Black Sea, the passage is not closed. We adhere to the Montreux rules. **All governments, riparian and non-riparian, were warned not to send warships across the straits.**”

Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu has since declared that **“all countries, that have coast to Black Sea, or not, not to let warships pass through the straits”** according to state-run *Anadolu*. It follows Turkey issuing formal recognition of the Russian invasion of Ukraine as a “war” – which in turn triggers the Montreux Convention.



He said [the following](#):

“We warned all countries, that have a coast on the Black Sea or not, not to let warships go through the straits,” Çavuşoğlu told reporters after a Cabinet meeting in Ankara, Anadolu reported.

“To date, there has been no request for passage through the straits [since the war started],” he clarified.

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**Update(1449ET):** Already Putin has previously been on record as saying Western actions such as sanctioning a sitting head of state or targeting the central bank would be viewed as an “act of war”. But now another red line has been drawn, following more and more European governments – **most notably Germany** – [ditching their policies of neutrality](#) when it comes to shipping their weapons into foreign conflicts:

RUSSIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY SAYS THOSE SUPPLYING LETHAL WEAPONS TO UKRAINE WILL BEAR RESPONSIBILITY SHOULD THESE WEAPONS BE USED DURING RUSSIA'S MILITARY OPERATION – IFAX

More than likely, US and UK-supplied weapons, particularly anti-tank missile systems as well as possibly Stingers, are **already being used by Ukraine forces** against Russian tanks and armored vehicles. Unverified footage circulating widely online suggests as much at this early stage.

But it appears Russia's military is taking steps – or at least threatening action – against any external supply lines coming from NATO countries in support of Ukrainian forces. This clearly has the potential to **quickly spiral into direct military conflict with the US and West...**

NEW: Russia's top military command has ordered heavy strategic bomber flights in effort to block US and European military aid from getting to Ukraine, per a defense ministry statement.

Russia has tried to “fully destroy” Ukraine's airfields with missile attacks, per Ukraine MoD

— Jack Detsch (@JackDetsch) [February 28, 2022](#)

“Mr. Putin is the one escalating this,” Pentagon press secretary John Kirby says about Russia's threats to nations supplying weapons to Ukraine

— Lucas Tomlinson (@LucasFoxNews) [February 28, 2022](#)

Meanwhile, President Biden has sought to ‘assure’ the US public...

BIDEN SAYS AMERICANS SHOULD NOT BE WORRIED ABOUT NUCLEAR WAR

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**Update(1200ET):** In what can be called the first positive development coming on day five of this war, the Russian and Ukrainian sides left the multiple-hour long meeting along the Belarus border **agreeing to continue another round of talks in “the coming days”** – Bloomberg reports citing *Interfax*.

“Russian and Ukrainian sides have agreed to continue another round of talks in the coming days, Interfax reports, citing Russian official Vladimir Medinsky.”

The next round of talks is expected to take place on the Polish-Belarus border. This after Ukraine's government was reportedly adamant in saying it's “not ready to surrender or capitulate” to Russia, in a separate statement made to the press, and reported by CNBC. The development also comes after Zelensky **signed an application for Ukrainian membership to the European Union.**

????#Breaking: Zelensky signed an application for Ukraine's membership in the European Union.[#Ukraine](#) [#EU](#) [pic.twitter.com/J8rQoKWWgu](#)

— The RAGE X (@theragex) [February 28, 2022](#)

And now with Switzerland closing its airspace to Russian flight traffic, there's a near total European blockade of airspace outside Russia...

???? Switzerland, the long standing neutral state, announced that from 5pm Moscow time it will close its airspace to all flights from Russia and any aircraft with Russian markings: RIA

— Rag?p Soylu (@ragipsoylu) [February 28, 2022](#)

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**Update(11:15am ET):** President Putin on Monday signed a decree implementing ‘countermeasures’ as retaliation for EU-wide and US severe sanctions against the Russian economy. Russian residence are effectively **barred from transferring foreign currency to their accounts, also including deposits in foreign banks**, according to *Interfax*.

The decree entitled “On the application of special economic measures against the United States and countries that have joined them,” is now law, according to a Kremlin statement. “Exporters must sell 80 percent of foreign exchange earnings credited from 1 January 2022,” the Kremlin press service stated of the new measure.

“For residents participating in foreign economic activity to carry out the mandatory sale of foreign currency in the amount of 80 percent of the amount of foreign currency credited starting from 1 January 2022 to their accounts in authorized banks on the basis of foreign trade contracts concluded with non-residents and providing for the transfer of goods to non-residents, the provision of services to non-residents, performance of work for non-residents, transfer to non-residents of the results of intellectual activity, including exclusive rights to them, no later than three working days from the date this decree comes into force,” the decree reads according to a Russian media translation.



*Kremlin press photo*

Bloomberg details further:

- *The steps, which take effect March 1, also include **restrictions on companies buying back their own stock**, according to the text of the decree published Monday.*
- *The U.S. and its allies have imposed sweeping sanctions on Russia's biggest banks, including the central bank, and limits on billionaires and top officials including Putin himself for the invasion of Ukraine.*
- *The moves triggered a sharp drop in the ruble and forced the central bank to take emergency steps to stabilize the market.*

Putin said of the new measures and of the Ukraine war more broadly that “**a settlement is possible only if Russia's legitimate security interests are unconditionally taken into account.**”

According to media statements: “At the same time, it was noted that the **Russian side is open to negotiations with Ukraine and expects that they will lead to the desired results.**” The security demands include the objectives recognition of Russian sovereignty over Crimea and the “demilitarization” and “de-Nazification” of Ukraine. And on Monday, there were these further significant developments:

- U.S. MONITORING RUSSIAN NUCLEAR FORCES AS CLOSELY AS POSSIBLE, HAVEN'T SEEN ANY SPECIFIC MUSCLE MOVEMENTS AS RESULT OF PUTIN'S ALERT ORDER – OFFICIAL SAYS
- U.S. SAYS “NO REASON TO CHANGE” NUCLEAR ALERT LEVELS AT THIS TIME AFTER PUTIN DIRECTIVE-WHITE HOUSE
- ZELENSKY HAS SIGNED AN APPLICATION FOR EU MEMBERSHIP

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**Update(9:36am ET):** Negotiations between Ukraine and Russia have reportedly **lasted almost 3 hours**, according to Pravda Ukraine. At the same time the Kremlin announced its Northern and Pacific fleets along with its strategic bombers **are all in a state of ‘maximum alert’** – though it's unclear as yet precisely what this really means. As for the ceasefire meeting in Belarus, Ukraine issuing the following to international press agencies:

UKRAINE IS ‘NOT READY TO SURRENDER OR CAPITULATE’ TO RUSSIA, FOREIGN MINISTER SAYS – CNBC

“Ukraine demanded an immediate ceasefire and Russian troop withdrawal on Monday, as a delegation arrived for talks with Russia at the Ukrainian-Belarusian border, per Ukrainian presidency statement,” according to a CNN foreign correspondent. **The Ukrainian delegation was headed up by Defense Minister Reznikov**; however President Zelensky was not present – while the Russian side reportedly included relatively **low level officials** at the ministerial level. Below: Latest NYT war map...



## Areas Occupied by Russian Forces as of Feb. 27



Data: Institute for the Study of War. Map: Licensed from The New York Times

At this early point it doesn't look like Monday's meeting near the Belarusian border resulted in any breakthroughs, however details are still pending. Meanwhile the below footage provides **a glimpse at what the Russian occupation will look like**, after Russian forces have reportedly taken two Ukrainian cities, and as fighting continues in the suburbs of Kiev.

Footage from Berdyansk [pic.twitter.com/tmzrJmDSvB](https://pic.twitter.com/tmzrJmDSvB)

— Aldin ?? (@aldin\_ww) [February 28, 2022](#)

Ukrainian anger against the Russian soldiers reportedly in Berdyansk  
[pic.twitter.com/lnwOHNveCK](https://pic.twitter.com/lnwOHNveCK)

— Rag?p Soylu (@ragipsoylu) [February 28, 2022](#)

China has on Monday issued a strong statement urging a cessation to the conflict and for negotiations toward a ceasefire to continue. Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesman Wang Wenbin said at a press briefing Monday:

“We call on all parties to return to the path of diplomatic negotiations and a political settlement as soon as possible. We also suggest undertaking a comprehensive settlement of the Ukraine problem through negotiations and consultations,” he said.

“We call on all parties concerned to demonstrate calmness and restraint and to avoid further escalation,” he emphasized. This as Russia **heightened its nuclear readiness posture once again**. While calling it an unnecessary “escalation” – the UK had [this to say](#):

***Vladimir Putin putting Russia’s nuclear forces on high alert is an attempt to distract people from “what’s going wrong in Ukraine”, Defence Secretary Ben Wallace has said.***

*Mr Wallace said Mr Putin was engaged in a “battle of rhetoric” by trying to “remind the world” he had a deterrent.*

*He said Russia was behind schedule on its invasion of Ukraine and Ukrainians were putting up a “very strong fight”.*

Others in Europe agreed it was a “**distraction attempt**” – as the [BBC notes](#) in its headline. And here’s the latest from the Swiss government:

SWISS DEFENCE MINISTER SAYS WE HAVE CONCLUDED USE OF RUSSIAN  
NUCLEAR WEAPONS RELATIVELY UNLIKELY, POPULATION SHOULD NOT BE  
AFRAID

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**Update(7:52am ET):** “We were ready,” said a Biden administration official of the series of sanctions and punitive measures it’s now hitting Moscow with. The latest in the below breaking news includes extensions of prior US announced actions being taken against Russia:

- U.S. BANS TRANSACTIONS WITH RUSSIAN CENTRAL BANK
- SENIOR BIDEN ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL SAYS U.S. SANCTIONS AGAINST RUSSIAN CENTRAL BANK WERE MONTHS IN THE PLANNING, ‘WE WERE READY’ U.S. OFFICIAL SAYS RUSSIAN CENTRAL BANK HAS BEEN ATTEMPTING TO BRING ASSETS TO RUSSIA, OTHER SAFE HAVENS SINCE SATURDAY’S SANCTIONS ANNOUNCEMENT
- U.S. OFFICIAL SAYS TODAY’S ACTION TO PROHIBIT TRANSACTIONS WITH RUSSIAN CENTRAL BANK WILL HINDER RUSSIA’S ABILITY TO ACCESS HUNDREDS OF BILLIONS OF DOLLARS
- U.S. OFFICIAL SAYS COORDINATED ACTION WILL CAUSE WEAKENING OF RUSSIAN CURRENCY, MAKE FINANCING MORE DIFFICULT
- U.S. OFFICIAL SAYS ALWAYS SAW RUSSIA’S \$630BLN IN RESERVES AS INSURANCE POLICY, ACTION TODAY ‘REMOVES THAT INSURANCE POLICY’
- U.S. OFFICIAL SAYS ACTIONS BY U.S., ALLIES WILL PREVENT RUSSIA FROM USING ITS



DOLLARS, EUROS, POUNDS OR YEN TO DEFEND ITS CURRENCY

- UKRAINIAN MEDIA: UKRAINIAN NEGOTIATING DELEGATION DEMANDED WITHDRAWAL OF RUSSIAN TROOPS FROM UKRAINE, INCLUDING CRIMEA AND DONBASS

The US announces they're cutting off Russia's central bank, banning US citizens, companies from doing business w them, "effectively immobilizes any assets of the Central Bank of the Russian Federation held in the U.S. or by U.S. persons, wherever located."

<https://t.co/8BfhYeP3J7>

— Kaitlan Collins (@kaitlancollins) [February 28, 2022](#)

And in another major announcement regarding Russian nuclear forces posture, Interfax reveals the following, though it's unclear precisely what the designation means:

RUSSIAN NUCLEAR FORCES PLACED ON ENHANCED COMBAT DUTY IN LINE WITH PUTIN ORDER – INTERFAX QUOTES DEFENCE MINISTRY

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In the fifth day since Russia's invasion of Ukraine, talks have kicked off between a Ukrainian delegation and Kremlin delegation somewhere inside Belarus at a precise location that's being kept secret – though it's somewhere along the border. The Russians have not sent anyone top level from the Foreign Ministry, instead its delegation is reportedly headed by an aide to President Putin and former culture minister named Vladimir Medinsky.

Belarusian Foreign Minister Vladimir Makei in welcoming the Ukrainian leadership **assured the group they are "completely safe"** and that it's Belarus' "sacred duty" to ensure it. Initial photos have come out of the meeting, which President Zelensky's office described as having the **ultimate aim of achieving an immediate ceasefire and total withdrawal of Russian troops**, however unlikely that remains at this moment.



Image source: TASS/Reuters

“Dear friends, the President of Belarus asked me to welcome you and to provide everything for your work, as agreed with President Zelensky and President Putin. You may feel completely safe here. This is our sacred duty,” Belarusian FM Makei [introduced](#).

“President Lukashenko sincerely hopes that, during today’s talks, it will be possible to find solutions to all the questions of this crisis. All Belarusians are praying for this. **Any proposals, in terms of organizing today’s meeting, will be considered and absolutely fulfilled**,” Makei said. “We look forward to the results.”

Zelensky has described the talks as occurring with “no preconditions” while also noting they were unlikely to produce results. Additionally as *Bloomberg* [describes](#), **“The low profile of the Russian delegation, at deputy ministerial level, further weighed on expectations of any breakthrough.”**

The Ukrainian president said Sunday he **“doesn’t really believe”** there will be a breakthrough with the Russians, but expressed there could be **“a chance, however small, to de-escalate the situation”** – according to his words carried in regional media.



*Ukraine's delegation arriving to talks by helicopter Monday. Source: BelTA/TASS*

Heavy fighting continued Monday as the talks kicked off, particularly in neighborhoods on the outskirts of Kiev, and in the cities of Kharkiv and Chernihiv.

“They are fighting against everyone and everything alive, against kindergartens, against residential buildings and ambulances,” Zelenskiy said of the Russians in a Sunday statement, which the Kremlin rejected, saying it is only targeting military sites and movements.

A strange truth.

Russia continues to send gas to W. Europe, mostly to NATO countries, and increased supply since the invasion started.

Much of it still transits Ukraine. Russian and Ukrainian managers and technicians still cooperate 24 hrs. Russia is still paying transit fees.

— Craig Murray – (@CraigMurrayOrg) [February 28, 2022](#)

And as for weekend reports that Kiev had been surrounded, which was widely reported due to statements attributed to the mayor of the capital city, Zelensky's office issued the following statement: “Russians can only dream about it. **Kyiv is completely controlled by the Ukrainian forces, arrivals to Kyiv are available. Yes, in some suburbs the confrontation continues, there were heavy battles.** But we will not give up the capital.”

Meanwhile on Monday the Vatican has offered “to facilitate” dialogue between Moscow and Kiev toward ending the war, with Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin [saying](#) “there is still and always room for negotiation. It is never too late.”

And in another breaking development, the United States has **suspended the operations of its embassy in Minsk, Belarus** – which also comes after this weekend the State Department began telling US nationals inside Russia to begin planning their departure given widespread European airspace closures around Russia.

by Tyler Durden

### Category

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