

Ukraine

CONFLICT UPDATE

Institute for the Study of War, Russia Team
February 28

ISW published its most recent [Russian campaign assessment](#) at 4:00 pm EST on February 28.

This daily synthetic product covers key events related to renewed Russian aggression against Ukraine.

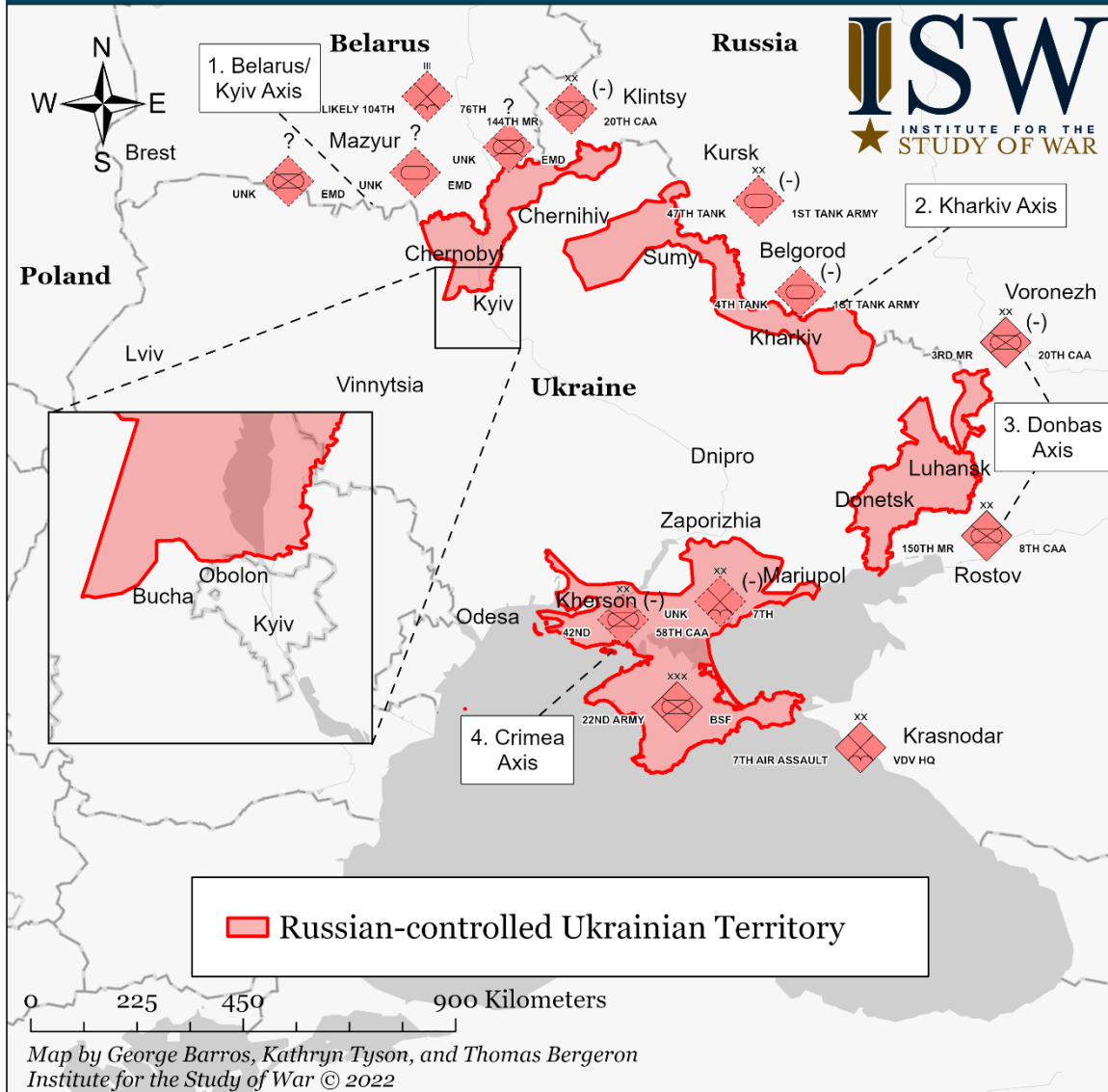
Key Takeaways February 28

- Russian forces increasingly targeted Ukrainian airfields and logistics centers on February 28, particularly in western Ukraine. Russia likely seeks to ground the Ukrainian air force and interdict the ability of Western states to resupply the Ukrainian military.
- Russia deployed additional heavy forces and artillery that it has so far failed to employ in assaults on Kyiv to the city's western approach on February 27-28. Russian forces will likely launch a renewed assault on western Kyiv on March 1.
- Russian forces began using heavy artillery against central Kharkiv on February 28, indicating a dangerous inflection in Russian operations as the Kremlin chooses to use air and artillery assets it previously held in reserve.
- Russian forces resumed limited advances in northeastern Ukraine on February 28 after an operational pause on February 26-27.
- Russian and proxy forces resumed assaults on Ukrainian forces defending Mariupol from the east and deployed additional artillery and anti-tank guided missile (ATGM) assets to the Mariupol front line on February 28.
- Russian and Belarusian forces may be preparing for an additional line of advance from Belarus into western Ukraine.
- Russian successes in southern Ukraine are the most dangerous and threaten to unhinge Ukraine's successful defenses and rearguard actions to the north and northeast.
- Russian troops are facing growing morale and logistics issues, predictable consequences of the poor planning, coordination, and execution of attacks along Ukraine's northern border.
- Russian officials downplayed Russian President Vladimir Putin's February 27 decision to place Russian nuclear and missile forces on their highest combat readiness orders. The United States declined to change its own alert levels.
- The Kremlin largely froze trade in foreign currencies and raised interest rates to halt the Ruble's freefall on February 28 due to the imposition of Western sanctions. The ruble fell over 30 percent against the dollar on February 28.
- The United States and its European allies levied further sanctions targeting the Russian Central Bank, throttling Russia's ability to prop up the ruble. Tax havens Switzerland and

Monaco joined European Union (EU) sanctions, contravening the Swiss tradition of neutrality.

- **NATO and EU countries prepared potential sanctions targeting Belarus following a sham constitutional referendum and intelligence suggesting Belarus could join the Russian invasion of Ukraine.**
- **The first round of Russian-Ukrainian negotiations in Gomel, Belarus, failed to yield any agreement.**
- **EU and Ukrainian leaders strengthened their push for quick Ukrainian admittance to the European Union.**
- **NATO and the EU announced more financial and military equipment support to Ukraine, including an EU package amounting to over 500 million euros of military aid.**
- **Russian shelling of civilian areas in eastern Ukraine and worsening food shortages across the country will likely exacerbate the refugee crisis across Ukraine and into Eastern Europe.**

Assessed Control of Terrain in Ukraine and Main Russian Maneuver Axes as of February 28, 2022, 3:00 PM EST



Confirmed Russian units in the past 24 hours:

Elements of the 104th Airborne Regiment of the 76th Airborne Division attacked Kyiv Oblast likely from Gomel, Belarus.

Elements of the 26th Tank Regiment of the 47th Tank Division of the 1st Tank Army attacked Sumy Oblast from Kursk, Russia.

Elements of the 96th Separate Reconnaissance Brigade and elements of the 423rd Motorized Rifle Regiment of the 4th Tank Division of the 1st Tank Army attacked Kharkiv Oblast from Belgorod, Russia.

Elements of the 25th Motorized Rifle Brigade of the 6th Combined Arms Army (CAA) attacked Kharkiv Oblast from Belgorod, Russia.

Elements of the 15th Motorized Rifle Brigade of the 2nd CAA attacked Chernivtsi Oblast from Bryansk, Russia.

Key Events February 27, 5:00 pm EST – February 28, 5:00 pm EST

Military Events:

The Russian military is reorganizing its military efforts in an attempt to remedy poor planning and execution based on erroneous assumptions about Ukrainians' will and ability to resist. Russian operations around Kyiv remain limited as logistics and reinforcements arrive but will likely resume in greater strength in the next 24 hours. Ukrainian military leaders said that they have used the pause to strengthen Kyiv's defenses and prepare to defend their capital in depth. The Ukrainian military likely cannot prevent Russian forces from enveloping or encircling Kyiv if the Russians send enough combat power, but likely can make Russian efforts to gain control of the city itself extremely costly and possibly unsuccessful.

The Russian military has begun using area-attack weapons including tube- and rocket artillery in the city of Kharkiv, dramatically increasing Russian forces' damage to civilian infrastructure and the number of civilian casualties. Unconfirmed reports indicate the Russian military is also using thermobaric weapons, which can have devastating effects, especially on civilian targets. Ukrainian resistance in and around Kharkiv remains determined, but it is unclear how long Ukrainian defenders can hold if Russia sustains or increases attacks of this variety coupled with ground attacks supported by arriving Russian reinforcements.

Russian advances in southern Ukraine remain slower than they had been in the initial days of the war, possibly due to Russian efforts to concentrate sufficient combat power to conduct decisive operations against Mariupol and, possibly, Zaporizhia.

The next major phase of Russian offensive operations will likely begin within the next 24 hours and play out over the ensuing 48-72 hours. Ukrainian resistance remains remarkably effective and Russian operations, especially on the Kyiv axis, have been poorly coordinated and executed, leading to significant Russian failures on that axis and at Kharkiv. Russian forces remain much larger and more capable than Ukraine's conventional military, however, and Russian advances in southern Ukraine threaten to unhinge the defense of Kyiv and northeastern Ukraine if they continue unchecked.

Russian ground forces are advancing on four primary axes and a possible fifth axis, discussed in turn below:

- 1) Kyiv Axis:** Russia deployed additional heavy forces and artillery it has so far failed to employ in assaults on the city to the western approach to Kyiv on February 27-28. Russian forces will likely launch a renewed assault on western Kyiv on March 1. Attacks by Russian light forces on the outskirts of the city failed to make progress on February 28. Ukrainian forces are unlikely to capitulate.
- 2) Northeast Axis:** Russian forces began using heavy artillery against central Kharkiv on February 28, indicating a dangerous inflection in Russian operations as the Kremlin chooses to use air and artillery assets it has held in reserve to date. Russian forces additionally resumed limited advances in northeastern Ukraine on February 28 after an operational pause on February 26-27.
- 3) Donbas Axis:** Russian and proxy forces resumed assaults on Ukrainian forces defending Mariupol from the east and deployed additional artillery and anti-tank guided missile (ATGM) assets to the Mariupol front line on February 28. Russian forces may attempt a renewed assault on Mariupol in the coming days. Russian forces likely intend to pin Ukrainian forces in place on the line of contact to enable Russian forces breaking out of Crimea to isolate them.
- 4) Crimea Axis:** Russian forces continued limited advances on two axes out of Crimea—north toward Zaporizhia and west toward Mykolayiv, reaching the outskirts of Mykolayiv on February 28. Russia may struggle to fully supply both axes of advance and may be forced to choose which advance to prioritize.
- 5) Russian and Belarusian forces may be preparing for an additional line of advance from Belarus into Western Ukraine.** The Belarusian 38th Air Assault Brigade deployed to Kobryn, near Brest in southwestern Belarus, on February 28. The Ukrainian General Staff reported on February 28 that there is a high likelihood of Belarusian forces joining Russian operations. ISW previously reported a Russian armored column assembling in Stolín, Belarus, on February 25 to support a possible advance

into Rivne Oblast in western Ukraine. A Russian offensive in western Ukraine would likely seek to cut Ukraine off from ground shipments of Western aid through Poland, Slovakia, and Hungary. However, Belarusian airborne forces would likely face similar difficulties to previous, failed, Russian airborne operations against Kyiv if they attempted airdrops.

Russian Activity

The Kremlin largely froze trade in foreign currencies and raised interest rates to halt the Ruble's freefall on February 28 due to the imposition of Western sanctions. Foreign exchange payments will be blocked from March 1; the S&P marked Russian sovereign debt as having junk status on February 28.¹ The Ruble fell over 30 percent against the dollar on February 28, leading to massive lines at Russian ATMs amid concerns over inflation and bank runs.² TASS reported that Russians demanded nearly 1.4 trillion rubles in cash on February 25, with Sberbank and Tinkoff seeing increased demand for ATM withdrawals.³

The Kremlin sought to freeze foreign currency exchanges and lending to halt the Ruble's freefall. The Russian Central Bank increased the key interest rate from 9.5 percent to 20 percent to accommodate for the depreciation of the Ruble and counter the risk of inflation, and Putin instructed banks to preserve lending rates prior to this increase.⁴ The Central Bank additionally banned foreigners from selling Russian securities and ordered exporters to convert most of their foreign currency reserves into rubles.⁵ The Central Bank canceled stock trading and closed the derivatives market on the Moscow Exchange on February 28.⁶ Rossiya Bank temporarily limited issuing mortgages, consumer loans, car loans, credit cards, and overdrafts due to the Central Bank's key rate increase.⁷ Putin additionally signed a special decree on February 28 implementing several actions freezing the ability of Russians to sell foreign currencies.⁸ Foreign exchange payments will be blocked from March 1, and the S&P marked Russian sovereign debt as having junk status on February 28.⁹

Kremlin Spokesperson Dmitry Peskov stated that Russia will take additional measures responding to Western sanctions other than "special economic measures."¹⁰ Peskov claimed "sanctions will only strengthen import substitution in Russia" due to large-scale import substitution measures that have been in place since 2014.¹¹ Peskov stated that "the Russian economy is quite stable and largely oriented towards the domestic market." Russian Finance Minister Anton Siluanov stressed that the Finance Ministry has prepared significant capital amnesty provisions to ensure domestic stability and protect Russian capital abroad.¹² The Kremlin will likely continue to obfuscate the crippling impact of Western sanctions.

Russia banned the airlines of 36 countries from entering Russian airspace on February 28, retaliating for European and Canadian bans on Russian airlines.¹³ EU airspace regulations prevented Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov from flying to Geneva, Switzerland for an arms control summit on February 28.¹⁴ Russian Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Maria Zakharova downplayed the sanctions and media descriptions of dozens of grounded Russian planes.¹⁵

Russian officials downplayed Russian President Vladimir Putin's February 27 decision to place Russian nuclear and missile forces on highest combat readiness orders and the United States declined to change its own alert levels.¹⁶ White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki said on February 28 that the United States "sees no reason to change" US nuclear alert levels in response but emphasized that the United States must not underestimate Putin's threats.¹⁷ Kremlin Press Secretary Dmitry Peskov emphasized on February 28 that Russian troops are simply following Putin's orders and that their actions hold no dual meanings.¹⁸ Peskov called concerns of a Russia-NATO war "absolutely ridiculous" and said that Putin's order came due to NATO leaders' alleged "aggressive statements" on February 28.¹⁹ Russian Defense Minister Sergey Shoigu told Russian President Vladimir Putin that the Strategic Missile Forces, the Northern and Pacific Fleets, and long-range aviation began combat duty per the president's order on February 28.²⁰ International Committee of the Russian Federation Council First Deputy Chairman Vladimir Dzhaborov incongruously stated on February 28 that the shift was not a threat of nuclear war but was instead a warning that all enemies should carefully consider actions against Russia.²¹ Russian Permanent Ambassador to the UN Vasily Nebeznya claimed Russia is exercising "self-defense" against what Russia has repeatedly and falsely purported to be Ukraine's goal "to restore access to nuclear weapons."²²

The Russian Defense Ministry (MoD) falsely claimed victories on the Crimean and Donbas axes and falsely claimed that Russia had gained air superiority over Ukraine on February 28, reinforcing misleading perceptions of an easy military operation in Ukraine to the Russian public. Russian Defense Ministry Spokesperson Igor Konashenkov falsely claimed that Russia achieved air supremacy over all of Ukraine on February 28.²³ Russian state TV channels claimed that “the Russian military cannot back down now,” especially after gaining control over Ukrainian air space—likely to set information conditions for further Russian escalations (and casualties) in Ukraine.²⁴ Konashenkov additionally claimed that the Russian Air Force destroyed over 1,000 pieces of military infrastructure, emphasizing a Kremlin narrative of Russian military success.²⁵ Konashenkov also prematurely claimed that Russian forces captured Enegodar and the Zaporizhia nuclear power plant on the Crimea axis while Enegodar and Zaporizhia remained under Ukrainian control.²⁶ Konashenkov claimed that the Ukrainian military is replacing officers with reservists and that these reservists are still surrendering to Russian proxy forces.²⁷ Russian TV outlets also claimed that Ukrainian “nationalists” are looting Ukrainian cities and committing war crimes, likely to set conditions to justify the Russian seizure of urban centers.²⁸ Russian TV also amplified claims that Russian Armed Forces are now ready to deter a Western attack on Russia, claiming that the United States and NATO have forgotten that Russia is a nuclear power and will only negotiate with Russia if a “small nuclear missile” hits them.²⁹

Belarusian Activity

NATO and the European Union (EU) announced they are prepared to levy sanctions against Belarus following intelligence assessments that Belarus will likely join Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and Belarus’s adoption of a new Russia-favorable constitution allowing the deployment of Russian nuclear weapons within Belarus.³⁰

- Belarus’ Central Election Commission will validate the (likely highly falsified) Belarusian constitutional referendum results on March 3. The new constitution will give the Kremlin more de facto military control over Belarus and allow Belarus to host Russian nuclear weapons.³¹ The revised Belarusian constitution also ends Belarus’ previously constitutionally enshrined neutral status.
- Belarus arrested 800 citizens for protesting the constitutional referendum on February 27.³²
- US officials stated they are prepared to sanction Belarus given the high probability that Belarusian soldiers will join Russia in the invasion of Ukraine as soon as February 28.³³
- The US State Department suspended all operations at the US Embassy in Minsk, Belarus, and authorized the voluntary departure of all non-emergency staff from the US embassy in Moscow on February 28.³⁴
- A senior EU official told *Reuters* that the EU plans to sanction Belarusian exports, oligarchs, and central banks. The EU may cut Belarusian banks off from the SWIFT interbank payment system for aiding Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.³⁵
- European countries including Lithuania, Latvia, France, and the United Kingdom, rejected the Belarusian constitutional referendum results as illegitimate and non-democratic.³⁶

Ukrainian Activity

The Ukrainian government increased recruiting efforts and financial support to its military and several Western governments expressed support for Ukraine’s intent to accept foreign volunteers on February 28. The Ukrainian Cabinet of Ministers announced that it will make monthly payments of over \$3,300 to officers and around \$1,000 for newly enlisted servicemembers on February 28.³⁷ Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky also announced on February 28 that imprisoned Ukrainians with combat experience will be released from custody to fight in the war.³⁸ Ukrainian Defense Minister Oleskiy Reznikov announced that Ukraine will offer Russian soldiers full amnesty and five million rubles (about \$46,800) to surrender.³⁹ Latvia’s Parliament unanimously voted to allow Latvian citizens to fight in Ukraine on February 28.⁴⁰ UK Foreign Secretary Liz Truss originally affirmed her support for UK citizens who want to fight for Ukraine on February 27, but the United Kingdom reversed its position on February 28.⁴¹ The *Associated Press* reported that many Ukrainians are returning from abroad to fight, with the Polish Border Guard stating that 22,000 Ukrainian citizens have entered Ukraine as of February 27.⁴² Ten US and UK special forces and

NATO veterans said that they will join Zelensky's proposed new unit of foreign fighters.⁴³ Ukrainian Deputy Defense Minister Anna Malyar stated that Ukraine has received several thousand applications from foreign nationals who want to join the foreign unit.⁴⁴ Ukraine's finance ministry separately announced that it would offer war bonds to fund Ukraine's military activity, primarily drawing from Ukrainian purchasers.⁴⁵

The Kremlin reiterated its maximalist demands and refused any prospect of a ceasefire at the first round of Russian-Ukrainian negotiations in Gomel, Belarus on February 28.⁴⁶ The Ukrainian delegation demanded a ceasefire and the withdrawal of all Russian troops from Ukraine, including Crimea and Donbas.⁴⁷ The Russian delegation demanded Ukraine demilitarize, "de-nazify," and relinquish the right to join NATO—the same maximalist demands the Kremlin made prior to its unprovoked invasion.⁴⁸ Head Russian delegate Vladimir Medinsky said that both sides found "some points on which to predict common positions" and did not elaborate.⁴⁹ Both sides agreed to meet again "in the coming days" but did not provide a date for the next round of negotiations.⁵⁰ Belarusian Foreign Minister Vladimir Makei blamed Western intervention for the delay in organizing the negotiations and said he hoped the negotiations will prevent a "Slavic spring."⁵¹

French President Emmanuel Macron reiterated international demands that Russia halt its offensive in Ukraine during a February 28 phone call with Russian President Vladimir Putin on the negotiations.⁵² The French readout claims Putin agreed to stop all strikes on civilian targets and preserve safe civilian access to roads out of Kyiv.⁵³ Putin said that only the unconditional recognition of Russian security interests, including Russian sovereignty over Crimea, Ukrainian neutrality, and the "demilitarization and denazification" of the Ukrainian government, will result in a settlement.⁵⁴ Macron also spoke with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky ahead of the negotiations on February 28 and stressed the need for an "immediate ceasefire."⁵⁵

US Activity

The United States and its allies announced sanctions against Russia to impede Russia's access to international reserves and target assets Russian President Vladimir Putin could otherwise use as an emergency fund to stabilize the Russian economy. Tax havens Switzerland and Monaco joined the US and European sanctions on Russia. Switzerland also joined the EU in banning all Russian airlines from European airspace. The new US and allied sanctions prevent Putin from using more than 600 billion USD in Russian financial reserves to stabilize the Russian economy after other sanctions imposed by the international community.⁵⁶ Companies, market indexes, and committees around the globe also enacted their own form of sanctions on Russian companies, bonds, sports teams, and business partnerships on February 28.

- The US Treasury Department, EU, and United Kingdom implemented coordinated sanctions against Russia on February 28 that froze Russian Central Bank assets within the US, EU, and UK.⁵⁷ The sanctions blocked US and European citizens from participating in any transactions involving the Russian Central Bank, Russia's National Wealth Fund, or the Russian Ministry of Finance.⁵⁸
- The European Central Bank (ECB) reported on February 28 that Russian state-run bank Sberbank and its subsidiaries in southeastern and central Europe are likely to fail as Sberbank is unable to pay its debts or other liabilities. The United States and its allies targeted Sberbank in previous sanction packages and blocked the bank from the SWIFT payment system on February 27.⁵⁹ Sberbank is Russia's biggest lender.⁶⁰
- The US Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) sanctioned the Russian Direct Investment Fund, its management company, two of its subsidiaries, and CEO Kirill Dmitriev on February 28.⁶¹
- UK Foreign Minister Liz Truss stated the UK will coordinate a "full asset freeze on all Russian banks in days" in coordination with Western allies during a February 28 speech to parliament.⁶² Truss said this move will prevent Russia from raising debt in the United Kingdom and isolate over three million Russian businesses from accessing UK capital markets.⁶³
- The EU banned all Russian aircraft from landing, taking off from, or flying over EU territories on February 28. This move banned marketing carriers, Russian-registered aircraft, and non-Russian-registered aircraft owned or chartered by a natural-born or legal Russian citizen.⁶⁴
- UK Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said on February 28 the United Kingdom will ban all Russian ships from entering its ports.⁶⁵

- UK Interior Minister Priti Patel stated in a February 28 speech that the United Kingdom will lead international efforts to suspend Russia from the global police agency Interpol at the request of the Ukrainian government.⁶⁶
- Swiss President Ignazio Cassis stated on February 28 that Switzerland will join EU sanctions against Russia, which will freeze the Russian president, prime minister, and foreign minister’s financial assets in Switzerland and target Russia’s financial reserves.⁶⁷ Cassis stated Switzerland will close its airspace to Russian aircraft except for humanitarian or diplomatic flights. Cassis said that Switzerland will join subsequent EU sanctions “on a case-by-case basis.”⁶⁸ Switzerland acknowledged its departure from its long withstanding tradition of neutrality in international conflict. *The New York Times* reports that Swiss national bank data showed Russian companies and individuals held over 11 billion USD worth of assets in Swiss banks as of 2020.⁶⁹
- Monaco announced it will implement unilateral sanctions targeting Russian assets “identical” to the EU’s. Prince Albert said he supported “all efforts” to bring peace and encourage the withdrawal of Russian troops from Ukraine.⁷⁰
- South Korea joined US and allied sanctions blocking Russian banks from the SWIFT international payment system and banned exports of “strategic items” to Russia on February 28.⁷¹ South Korea announced its intention to ban supplies of electronics, semiconductors, computers, sensors, lasers, navigation and avionics, marine and aerospace equipment, and information and communications to Russia.⁷²
- Japan joined international sanctions on Russia’s central bank and imposed sanctions on Belarusian organizations and individuals on February 28. Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida announced Japan will also limit Japanese exports to Belarus.⁷³
- Singapore imposed unilateral sanctions on Russia that block banks and financial transactions on February 28. Singapore’s Foreign Minister Vivian Balakrishnan stated Singapore will implement export controls on items that could be used as weapons in Russia’s war. This action marks only the second time in history Singapore approved sanctions without UN Security Council approval.
- Ukrainian Foreign Affairs Minister Dmytro Kuleba called Ukrainian allies to impose a Russian oil and gas embargo on February 27. Kuleba stated that buying Russian oil and gas pays for the murder of Ukrainian men, women, and children.⁷⁴
- Lithuanian Foreign Minister Gabrielius Landsbergis asked the EU to ban Russian ships at EU ports and in other territorial waters in an EU video conference on February 27.⁷⁵
- Shell Global said on February 28 that it will end joint ventures with Russian state-owned energy corporation Gazprom and end involvement in financing the Nord Stream 2 pipeline project.⁷⁶
- *The Wall Street Journal* reported on February 28 that JP Morgan Chase & Co. will remove Russian bonds from indexes for local-currency bonds (ESG GBI-EM) and dollar-bonds (ESF EMBI) which may “lead funds that track the indexes to sell their holdings.”⁷⁷
- The New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) and the Nasdaq Stock Market halted trading multiple US-listed Russian stocks on February 28. NYSE reported that it halted the trading of Russian telecom operator Mobile TeleSystems, Russian mining and steel company Mechel, and Russian online real-estate classified company Cian “due to regulatory concern.”⁷⁸ Nasdaq halted the trading of Russian search engine operator Yandex, Russian online retailer Ozon Holdings, and several other Russian companies.⁷⁹
- The International Olympic Committee announced on February 28 that it stripped Russian President Vladimir Putin of the gold Olympic Order awarded to him in 2001 and encouraged sports organizers to ban Russian and Belarusian athletes and officials from participating in international competitions.⁸⁰
- Global football governing body FIFA and European football governing body UEFA suspended Russian national football teams and clubs from competition on February 28.⁸¹ UEFA ended its sponsorship deal with Russian state-owned energy company Gazprom across all competitions on February 28.⁸²

NATO and EU Activity

European Union (EU) and Ukrainian leadership strengthened their push for Ukraine to join the EU on February 28. Several EU leaders stated their desire for Ukrainian to join the EU. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and eight EU member state presidents pressed for “immediate” steps to realize Ukrainian membership.

- European Commission head Ursula von der Leyen said on February 27 that Ukraine is “one of us” and should join the EU without committing to a specific timeline.⁸³
- Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky urged the EU to accept Ukraine to the EU “immediately” during a speech on February 28 and signed an official application for Ukraine to join the EU.⁸⁴
- The presidents of Bulgaria, Czechia, Estonia, Latvia, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia released a joint statement urging other EU member states to enable EU institutions to “immediately” grant Ukraine candidate country status and start membership negotiations on February 28.⁸⁵
- The European Parliament’s mainstream political groups drafted a motion urging the EU to grant Ukraine candidate status on February 28. MEPs will vote on the motion on March 1.⁸⁶

NATO and the European Union (EU) announced several financial and military aid packages for Ukraine on February 28.⁸⁷

- EU defense ministers met virtually on February 28 to discuss coordinating weapons delivery and financial aid to Ukraine.⁸⁸ The European Council adopted two assistance measures worth approximately \$560 million to finance defense equipment and supplies, including lethal weapons for the first time in the EU’s history, on February 27.
- UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson told Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky that the UK will provide additional military assistance to Ukraine in the “coming days” during a February 28 phone call.⁸⁹
- Finland’s government announced on February 28 it will provide defense equipment to Ukraine including rifles, anti-tank weapons, and combat rations.⁹⁰
- A US senior defense official stated on February 28 that US security assistance has continued to arrive in Ukraine as recently as February 27. The assistance includes “ground and airborne defensive capabilities.”⁹¹

Other International Organization Activity

International efforts to investigate alleged Russian war crimes increased as Russian forces began shelling residential areas of Kharkiv.

- Ukrainian officials stated that Russian forces shelled a residential neighborhood in Kharkiv, causing “dozens” of civilian casualties on February 28.⁹² Russian forces expanded shelling to residential areas in Kharkiv after attempting to enter the city on February 27.⁹³
- Ukraine and its allies called for a UN inquiry into Russian war crimes during a UN session on February 28, citing Russian attacks on schools, orphanages, hospitals, and homes.⁹⁴ The UN Human Rights Council agreed on a proposal to hold an urgent debate on Russia’s invasion and consider a draft resolution for an investigation on March 3. China, Russia, Cuba, Venezuela, and Eritrea voted against the proposal.⁹⁵ UN experts will investigate all alleged violations of international law in Crimea and the Donetsk and Luhansk People’s Republics since 2014 if the inquiry moves forward.
- ICC Prosecutor Karim Khan said on February 28 that the ICC will seek court approval to investigate alleged war crimes in Ukraine dating back to 2014.⁹⁶

Russian attacks on urban areas and increasing food shortages are likely driving additional refugee flows to Europe, though international organizations continue to rally humanitarian aid shipments to Ukraine.

- The Ukrainian Cabinet of Ministers expanded its list of critical imports to include more food items and some military goods as food shortages worsened on February 28.⁹⁷
- Residents of Kyiv struggled to access food after the 36-hour weekend curfew ended on February 28. Many stores closed after bombings started in Kyiv on February 25.⁹⁸ Some Ukrainian supermarkets are rationing the amount of food customers can purchase.

- Approximately 250,000 people seeking to escape Ukraine are stuck at border crossings as of February 28. Polish Prime Minister Chief of Staff Michal Dworczyk stated that Polish border police allowed people without documents to enter Poland and that Poland and Ukraine are discussing simplifying entry procedures to speed up refugee processing.⁹⁹
- The head of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), Filippo Grandi, said on February 28 that more than 500,000 people have already fled Ukraine since fighting began. Grandi said that UNHCR’s teams are stepping up humanitarian efforts due to increasing human rights abuses.¹⁰⁰
- Senior EU officials told Reuters that the EU is preparing to offer a three-year residence and work visa to displaced Ukrainians.¹⁰¹
- Russian Ministry of Defense spokesperson Maj. Gen. Igor Konashenkov claimed that Russian forces left an “open and safe” exit corridor from Kyiv along Ukraine’s Kyiv-Vasylkov (Vasylkiv) highway, which runs south but not directly out of the country.¹⁰² ISW cannot verify this Russian claim.
- The South Korean government said on February 28 that it will provide \$10 million in emergency humanitarian assistance to help Ukraine’s government, people, and refugees “facing a severe crisis due to the illegal invasion by Russia.”¹⁰³
- Online donors have provided the Ukrainian army with a total of \$33 million since February 25. Ukrainian citizens donated at least \$14 million.¹⁰⁴
- Poland announced that it will donate \$545,000 to support the Ukraine work of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) on February 28.¹⁰⁵

Individual Western Allies’ Activity

N/A

Other International Activity

N/A



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¹ <https://www.wsj.com/livecoverage/russia-ukraine-latest-news-2022-02-28/card/putin-imposes-capital-controls-including-restrictions-on-external-debt-payments-Kedzfom80kQt1B7xaRs>

² <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/27/world/europe/ruble-russias-currency-sanctions.html>; https://www.cnn.com/europe/live-news/ukraine-russia-news-02-28-22/h_2d4a41d64c667742b6c8b6a1c3f6830a; <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/02/28/russia-ruble-central-bank-interest-rate/>.

³ <https://tass dot ru/ekonomika/13894233>

- ⁴ https://www.cnn.com/europe/live-news/ukraine-russia-news-02-28-22/h_3f8430b31eee03b3ae6403b11099cf6b; <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/02/28/russia-ruble-central-bank-interest-rate/>; <https://tass dot ru/ekonomika/13899503>.
- ⁵ <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/27/world/europe/ruble-russia-stock-market.html>
- ⁶ <https://iz dot ru/1298118/2022-02-28/tcb-soobshchil-ob-otmene-torgov-na-fondovom-rynke-mosbirzhi>; https://www.cnn.com/europe/live-news/ukraine-russia-news-02-28-22/h_14b23f768e65c61b8bb45871ab245a53; <https://www.wsj.com/livecoverage/russia-ukraine-latest-news-2022-02-28/card/more-trading-restrictions-imposed-by-bank-of-russia-v2AtyTFQ2SjsfJSFyj56>
- ⁷ <https://tass dot ru/ekonomika/13904981>
- ⁸ <https://tass dot ru/ekonomika/13902431>; <https://tass dot ru/ekonomika/13902223>; <https://tass dot ru/ekonomika/13901899>; <https://www.wsj.com/livecoverage/russia-ukraine-latest-news-2022-02-28/card/putin-imposes-capital-controls-including-restrictions-on-external-debt-payments-Kedzfom80kQt1B7xaRs>
- ⁹ <https://www.wsj.com/livecoverage/russia-ukraine-latest-news-2022-02-28/card/putin-imposes-capital-controls-including-restrictions-on-external-debt-payments-Kedzfom80kQt1B7xaRs>
- ¹⁰ <https://tass dot ru/ekonomika/13903835>
- ¹¹ <https://tass dot ru/ekonomika/13903835>
- ¹² <https://tass dot ru/ekonomika/13895557>
- ¹³ <https://www.reuters.com/business/aerospace-defense/russia-imposes-sweeping-flight-bans-airlines-36-countries-2022-02-28/>
- ¹⁴ <https://www.reuters.com/world/russias-lavrov-cancels-geneva-trip-because-eu-airspace-ban-ria-2022-02-28/>; https://www.cnn.com/europe/live-news/ukraine-russia-news-02-28-22/h_0656f25fb4d0d1dd1c314da2fb233c7e.
- ¹⁵ <https://tass dot ru/politika/13890>.
- ¹⁶ <https://tass dot com/politics/1413185>
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