

**February 7th - March 6th, 2022
Ukraine Monthly Situation Report**

CONFLICT DEVELOPMENTS

- Ahead of the first anniversary of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine on 24 February, it was feared that another large-scale attack by the Russian army would take place. Even though no new offensives were launched, the intensity of hostilities in the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts remains high. Once warmer weather sets in, the hostilities are likely to [gather](#) steam. The Armed Forces of the Russian Federation (hereinafter: AFRF), with the assistance of private paramilitary groups, continued to advance in the Donetsk oblast, around the cities of Bakhmut, Mariinka, Shakhtarsk and Vuhledar, as well as in the Luhansk oblast near Kreminna. Attempts were undertaken by [Russian subversion and reconnaissance groups](#) to enter the Kharkiv oblast from Russian territory.
- Not able to push the Ukrainian army back from cities in the Donetsk oblast, Russian troops are demolishing them with artillery and air force. For example, the city of Mariinka [no longer](#) exists, if photos and footage shared in early March are correct. Prior to 2021, 9000 people lived there. The Ukrainian Armed Forces (hereinafter: AFU) deployed near Mariinka are exhausted, having no resources to mount a large-scale counteroffensive. Furthermore, the awaited retreat of the AFU from Bakhmut has not happened.
- According to the Ukrainian government, as of 6 March the Russian Federation (hereinafter: Russia) lost [154.000](#) soldiers. After incurring heavy losses, along with appeals made by the families of Russian soldiers from Tatarstan and Tuva, the units comprised of volunteers were [sent back home](#). Afterwards, there was a torrent of new appeals made by Russian conscripts and their families, asking the Russian political leadership to send them home.
- The tactics of Russia's large-scale strikes and drone attacks have changed. In the second half of February, "point attacks" targeting specific cities or objects were predominant, which may be explained by the dearth of missiles and drones. On 10 February, the AFRF mounted the [largest](#) missile and drone attack in February (61 out of 71 Russian missiles were downed by the Ukrainian air defense). Also, 29 C-300 missiles were launched on Ukrainian cities located close to the Russian border. On 10 February, 20 kamikaze drones were shot down, while another 4 were downed on the following day. On 16 February, Ukraine was attacked by [36 missiles](#), 16 of which were neutralized by the AFU. On 18 February, another massive missile attack took place. Ukraine was subjected to 16 missiles and 4 air strikes. Two "Calibre" missiles were downed by the AFU. On 26-27 February the AFRF mounted a further massive [attack](#) using 14 kamikaze drones, most of which were downed by the AFU. On the night of 6 March, another [attack](#) was launched with the use of 15 kamikaze drones, 13 of which were shot down. Also, residential blocks of the large cities of [Kherson](#), [Zaporizhzhia](#) and [Pokrovsk](#) were subjected to missile attacks. In addition, the cities of Kharkiv, Khmelnytskyi, Marhanets, Kupyansk, Kramatorsk, Siversk, Myrnohrad, Vuhledar, Avdiivka, Polohy, Orikhiv, Vovchansk, Beryslav, Slovyansk, Chasiv Yar and other settlements located in the Chernihiv, Kharkiv, and Sumy oblast were subjected to Russian shelling.

- The AFU, or local Ukrainian partisans, undertook a series of attacks on military and strategic targets in Russia and Belarus. For example, on 26 February, the Russian A-50 jet, which is used to detect aircraft, shipping, missiles, and other incoming projectiles at long ranges, [was damaged](#) as a result of an explosion at an airfield in Belarus. A string of attacks on Russian oil depots, airfields, and other military objects were launched. On 2 March, information about an armed unit composed of Russian citizens crossing [the Russian border](#) from Ukraine and engaging in combat with the Russian military in the Bryansk oblast was shared. It was claimed that the AFU did not mount this attack. The Russian government interpreted this incident as a terrorist attack. Many media outlets assumed this was a Russian provocation aimed at accusing Ukraine of terrorism.

HUMANITARIAN DIMENSIONS

- According to the official data shared by [juvenile prosecutors](#), 464 Ukrainian children have been killed with over 931 having been wounded to various degrees of severity. 16.221 children are considered to have been deported. In the Kherson oblast, over [200 inhabitants of a village](#) were forcibly relocated and submitted to “the filtration procedure”. Their homes are now occupied by Russian troops, without the inhabitants’ permission. [3.151 educational facilities](#) in Ukraine have been damaged by Russian bombardments and shelling, 440 of them have been totally destroyed.
- At least 6.000 Ukrainian children were relocated through the chain of centers dealing with “re-education and adoption” in occupied Crimea and Russia. According to the [report](#) issued by the Humanitarian Research Lab at the Yale School of Medicine, at least 43 such camps have been discovered. The camp has held those that have parents or custodians, as well as orphans. The youngest child in a camp is only 4 months old, while some of the children were placed in custody, with others being adopted by Russian families.
- [1.877 Ukrainian settlements](#) are now under Russian occupation. 180 Ukrainian political prisoners are being illegally [detained](#) in Russian prisons. 116 of them are Crimean Tatars.
- 171 cases of sexual violence crimes are being investigated by the Ukraine’s [Prosecutor General Office](#). 39 of the cases deal with men, while 13 of the victims are minors.
- According to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, [Dmytro Kuleba](#), as of today 29 countries have joined the coalition of countries supporting the creation of a Special Tribunal for the Crime of Aggression carried out by Russia.
- In the temporarily occupied territories of the Kherson oblast, the local “administration” is taking measures aimed at the [privatization of property](#). Abandoned houses are sealed, while signs are being hung saying that the houses have been transferred to the ownership of the local “administration”. Russian military personnel in the oblast are going from door to door, checking property ownership certificates.
- Reprisals in the Zaporizhzhia oblast are increasing. A “special ID” is now required to be able to move between the occupied cities. Starting from [March 1](#) such an ID can only be obtained by those in possession of a Russian passport.

- On the first anniversary of the war, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights [published confirmed data](#) on civilian victims. According to it, 8.006 civilians have been killed, with 13.287 wounded since the beginning of the Russian invasion. However, the UN believes the actual number to be significantly higher.
- During the first year of the full-scale invasion, Ukraine's environment has suffered losses of about [1,9 trillion UAH](#). According to these estimates, the damage inflicted on Ukraine's local infrastructure amounts to [130 billion EUR](#).
- It is expected that over the next 10 years Ukraine will face a [demographic catastrophe](#) on a scale that has not hit any other country before. Due to a considerable decline of its population and a high mortality rate, Ukraine's population is expected to shrink to at least 35 million.
- [Overall Russian losses](#) in Ukraine (killed and wounded soldiers) amount to 200-250.000. Such losses have broken a historical record set by the Soviet Union after WWII. According to the Commander of the Joint Forces the Armed Forces of Ukraine, Serhiy Nayev, the AFU manages to down "[80% or even more](#)" Russian missiles. However, the AFRF are changing tactics. According to the Deputy Minister of Justice of Ukraine, Ms. Vysotska, Ukraine spends at least 10.000 UAH a month on [one Russian prisoner of war](#). Research conducted by an [international group of lawyers](#) has revealed that torture chambers in Kherson were part of "a thorough plan" devised by the Russian government. Large scale torture was funded by the Russian state.
- Russians continue to block the [rotation of experts from IAEA](#) at the temporarily occupied territory of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power plant (hereinafter: ZNPP). The plant continues to be actively militarized. Also, over [600 conscripts and cadets](#) have arrived from Russia at the ZNPP. Currently, they are based in the plant's bomb shelter, awaiting relocation to the Donetsk front.
- Since the introduction of the "grain deal", [43 countries](#) have received more than 22 million tons of Ukrainian agricultural produce. Nevertheless, since October 2022 only [40% of possible export volume](#) has been ensured due to Russia delaying the inspection of ships in the Bosphorus. The lack of Ukrainian produce, which still holds leading positions in terms of grain exported, is compensated for by other countries, e.g., Australia. Interestingly, [the Russian information agency TASS](#) has reported an increase in the grain produce. However, such statistics also include Ukraine's occupied territories. This report effectively includes stolen Ukrainian grain.
- [The Insider](#) conducted research on the "Auchan Retail Russia" supplying goods for Russian troops. According to the research, both the Russian retailer and its head office in France were aware who the end users of their humanitarian aid were. Three weeks after the invasion, the French retailer acknowledged that Auchan goods were donated under the guise of humanitarian aid meant for civilians. However, according to the report, the company did not have any [information about the end users](#). The Insider published receipts testifying to the donation of the goods being made with the involvement of 10 companies with ties to Saint Petersburg. In a phone conversation, representatives of 2 of the 10 companies admitted that the Auchan goods were destined for the Russian military on the front. The sum of the donations stood at 27.000 EUR.
- Footage of a [Ukrainian prisoner of war](#) being gunned down allegedly by Russian soldiers after saying, "Glory to Ukraine" has been circulating on social networks. The Ukrainian Parliament Commissioner

for Human Rights, Dmytro Lubinets, said that the shooting of a prisoner of war is a violation of the Geneva conventions and is proof of another war crime committed by Russia.

- On 3-5 March, Lviv hosted the international [conference](#) “United for Justice” which featured high-ranking officials. The issues of a possible Special Tribunal for Russia’s political leadership, bringing those guilty of war crimes to justice and other questions related to international humanitarian law were discussed.

POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC DIMENSIONS

- Ukrainian President, Volodymyr Zelenskyy’s [press conference](#) on February 24 demonstrated the prevailing trend of external messages over internal. The President highlighted his success in drumming up international support for Ukraine and weapons deliveries. He called on international organizations to join the “Peace Formula”, as well as declaring his readiness to engage China and the countries of the Global South. Zelenskyy rejected the idea of compromises or negotiations before the liberation of the Ukrainian territories. The press conference showed that Ukrainian society feels that the government has failed to present a clear vision in terms of the economic and political development of the country in the post-war period. Society demands efforts to fight corruption and achieve justice despite war. The state authorities are ready to listen to criticism from society and businesses, as well as rectify mistakes.
- The Ukrainian Ministry of Economy expects 3 million Ukrainian refugees to [return home](#) in the first year following the end of the war. 1,5 million refugees are expected to return in the second year. Overall, three quarters of all the refugees are expected to come back home. The Ministry has also [revised](#) the macroeconomic prognosis for 2023, predicting a decrease in GDP from 3,2% to 1%. These estimates are based on the assumption that hostilities will not end by mid-2023 and will last “almost the entire year”.
- On 23 February the head of the Office of the President of Ukraine, Andriy Yermak, [chaired](#) over the extended meeting of the Presidium of local and regional authorities under the auspices of the head of state. On 4 March, Lviv hosted the first session of the Congress of local and regional authorities under the auspices of Ukraine’s President. It brought approximately 1.600 participants together. The event was held with the participation high-ranking officials, such as President Zelenskyy, Andriy Yermak (who is also the head of the Secretariat of the Congress of local and regional authorities), the head of the Verkhovna Rada, Ruslan Stefanchuk, and Ukraine’s Prime Minister, Denys Shmyhal.

The fact that the Congress was held proves the following:

- the unity among Ukrainian national and regional authorities, at least at the symbolic, administrative and managerial levels;
- the end of the “diarchy” in the implementation of regional policies. Before, sway over regional executive authorities was held by Mr. Yermak and the former deputy head of the Office of the President of Ukraine, Kyrylo Tymoshenko;

- increasing influence wielded by Mr. Yermak, who has extended his control over the shifts in personnel in Ukrainian regions;
- the consequences of the abolition of the Ministry of Communities and Territories are now clear. This ministry merged with the Ministry of Infrastructure. It would appear that a state body has “vanished” from the Ukrainian government that used to fulfill the tasks of working out the Strategy and priorities of state regional policies;
- a new balance has been struck between regional executive authorities (military administrations) and local self-governing bodies. Despite the fact that local self-governing bodies have been kept as an institution, they have *de facto* been subordinated to regional executive authorities;
- a vacuum still exists in the legal support for regional policies and local self-governing bodies. There are no unified rules of the game that would ensure effective cooperation amid war between military administrations, oblast self-governing bodies (oblast councils) and local self-governing bodies.

A number of issues and decisions have been addressed with a view to averting a crisis at the regional and community levels and ensuring the preservation of local self-governing bodies in the context of martial law:

- the government is preparing a decree on ensuring the financial resilience of communities (sources for funding local budgets amid war and during martial law);
- according to Ukraine’s Prime minister, five [priorities](#) for a swift recovery have been identified: energy, renovation of damaged housing, critical infrastructure, demining and economic recovery. The Prime Minister has also appealed to the heads of the military administrations to prepare project proposals as soon as possible that would cover these 5 priorities in order to launch a swift recovery process as soon as the relevant laws have been passed;
- de-centralization Commissions aim to identify the needs for the repair and renovation of housing and infrastructure. The commissions will be tasked to pay compensations to those affected. These commissions will be created within local authorities. They will be responsible for examining compensation applications, inspecting destroyed housing and entering the relevant data into the [Register](#) of damaged and destroyed property;
- the newly formed Agency for Recovery on the Ground will be engaged in the event that there is a need for a particular region or community to fund or support the implementation of projects;
- the preparation of bills Nr. 6504 and 4298 to be reviewed by the parliament. These bills are aimed at enhancing the transparency and accountability of local authorities, while also protecting their personnel and implementing European standards for local self-governance institutions in general;
- the institutional capacities of local authorities will be strengthened. In particular, the launch of Offices for the support of reforms in communities is being planned (emergency

consulting support for local authorities in terms of the development of anti-corruption practices, work with recovery projects and the deployment of digital tools).

INFORMATION WARFARE DIMENSIONS

- Russia continues to use rhetoric aimed at mobilisation, while spreading anti-Western messages and narratives about the West posing a threat to Russia.
- **Support for Putin's policy by Russians. Support of the "special military operation – SMO".** The Russian media spreads victorious messages about Russian resilience in the face of western sanctions. According to Moscow, Russia is experiencing [economic growth](#). Russian official discourse insists on Russian citizens [supporting](#) and trusting their President. Putin is portrayed as a figure uniting the country and society. On 18 February, the all-Russian Center for Public Opinion Research said that 79.1% of Russians trust Putin, with 76% approving of his work. 16.7% of respondents take issue with Putin's policies. Putin's address to the Federal Assembly is presented in the media as a huge success, in particular, his messages about the legitimacy of retaking Russia's "[historical lands](#)" during the so-called "SMO" and the support of those fighting in it. The Russian information space [claims](#) that Putin's address evoked interest across the globe, claiming that this was a world-class speech. Several narratives regarding [historical lands](#) have been circulated. The Russian media believe that Russian society has shown more [interest](#) in Putin's address this year than in 2022.
- **Routinization of the war in Russian societal discourse. Militarization of society.** On the whole, Russian narratives are aimed at routinising the war within Russian society since it is going to be "protracted". According to official messages, the war is necessary and legitimate as Russia needs to stand up to "the countries of the collective West" which are trying to destroy it. It is believed that the West intends to "[capture](#) the entire post-Soviet space". The war is presented as the unification of Russian society to respond to threats. A romantic image of war is being forged with the help of Russian pop-culture (e.g., the concert at [Luzhniki](#) on 22 February featuring Russian celebrities singing songs about the "SMO", etc.). Narratives about national unity in supporting the "SMO" are being promoted. The media [are appealing](#) to big names in Russian music and cinematography. A positive image of Russian fighters in the "SMO" is being built. Commercial events are held to honour them (e.g., the alley of memory in [Syktyvkar](#), monuments in [Tambov](#)). The contest under the aegis of the Russian President of [sculpture works to immortalize the memory of Russian heroes fallen in 2019-2024](#) is ongoing. Society is being actively mobilized and militarized. The participants of the "SMO" were [invited](#) to attend Putin's annual address. Messages about the "[shift of the elites](#)" are appearing. In particular, social benefits and the advancement of political careers are promised to those who have gone to fight in the war, to "assault Mariupol and Bakhmut" since they are building a "new Russian state, a military empire". Narratives about the decision to have the Russian economy switch to "[war needs](#)" are being circulated. However, Putin [denied](#) the need for such measures in his address to the Federal Assembly.
- **Victories of the Russian army. Hidden conflicts between the Ministry of Defense and the Wagner paramilitary group.** Messages are being promoted about victory in the war. Russian propagandist

media claim that Ukraine is [doomed](#) to defeat and that no Western equipment whatsoever would help Kyiv. At the same time, Russia sees the West as a party to this war. Russian media maintain that the AFRF are victorious in their military operations, “having [broken through](#) Ukrainian tight defensive lines in the Luhansk oblast”. Also, Moscow insists on the Russian army achieving success in the [Zaporizhzhia](#) and [Donetsk oblasts](#) (purportedly, Russian troops have established control over [Krasnaya Gora](#), a settlement close to Bakhmut with almost 500 residents before the war). All settlements of the Donetsk oblast are referred to by Russians as [strategically important](#). Stress is placed on the resilience of Russian troops. The “Wagner” group claims that it is their units that are [advancing](#) in the Donetsk oblast. The Russian Ministry of Defense rejects any information about war casualties, claiming that Ukraine is [attempting](#) to sow panic among Russians by spreading footage on social networks showing the Russian army sustaining losses. New heads of four Russian military districts have been [appointed](#). In parallel, the conflict between the head of the “Wagner” group, Prigozhyn, and the Russian Ministry of Defense was mainly glossed over in Russian media in February. On 9 February, the “Wagner” group ceased recruiting inmates from Russian prisons. A discussion about the war was held on Telegram channels, especially those run by Russian “war correspondents” with ties to Prigozhyn. However, there was information about “[Wagnerites](#)” calling on the Russian Ministry of Defense to supply them with “munitions”. Nevertheless, Russian official media mainly wrote about the [edge](#) that Russian troops has over Ukrainian forces in terms of munitions supply (in response to messages spread on Telegram channels about the shortage of munitions). [Prigozhyn](#) has reported [advances](#) of the AFRF, including their capture of settlements. In February, the Kremlin was reluctant to publicly [comment on the disagreements](#) between the “Wagner” group and the Russian Ministry of Defense (the issue being that Prigozhyn’s men fall short of support from the Ministry). Kremlin Spokesman, Dmitry Peskov has denied any information pointing to the [preparation](#) for a second wave of mobilization. At the same time, mobilisation measures are being taken in Russian regions, while the participants of the “SMO” receive [social benefits](#).

- **Escalation, nuclear threat rhetoric.** In February, Russia deployed narratives and messages about the potential use of nuclear weapons in response to threats emanating from the West. Russian official media are [discussing](#) the possibility of nuclear weapons being provided to Ukraine by the West. [Propaganda](#) is being used by Russian propagandist, Vladimir Solovyov about a potential nuclear strike by Moscow in response to “threats posed to Russia”. It is claimed that the delivery of western arms to Ukraine [pushes](#) the world towards an apocalypse. As for the “Russian offensive” in February, Chechen Leader, Ramzan Kadyrov claims that the AFRF can [take](#) Kyiv, should the order be given. Russians constantly share [data](#) on the [losses](#) incurred by the AFU following the [success](#) achieved by the Russian army thanks to its “active offensive”. In parallel to this, Russian “[senators](#)” speak of Ukraine’s “surrender” as Moscow is fighting Kyiv “[using only half of its capacities](#)”. At the same time, coverage of missile strikes on Ukraine’s civilian infrastructure has almost disappeared from the Russian media. There are reports about some “explosions in Dnipro and Kherson”, as well as about [air raid sirens](#) going off in Ukraine.

- **Creating the image of the West as an “enemy”, the crisis of the West, discrediting support for Ukraine.** Russia continues to deploy systematic and extensive anti-western rhetoric by disseminating fake news. The West is presented as a threat to Russia and “a party to the war”. The goal pursued by the West is reportedly to “dismember Russia”. The Kremlin claims that “[Fascist countries are preparing a military campaign against Russia](#)”. Anti-American narratives are widespread. For example, the US President is referred to as a terrorist. Vyacheslav Volodin, Chairman of the State Duma, has [accused](#) Joe Biden of “blowing up Nord Stream”. The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has issued [threats](#) targeting the USA. Also, in early February Russia claimed a lack of unity among European countries and the USA regarding support for Ukraine and military aid. The Russian media is also full of stories about massive demonstrations taking place in the EU ([Germany](#)) against this policy. Moscow also points to the illegitimate nature (as seen by EU citizens) of the decisions taken by European government regarding support for Ukraine. Moscow believes that [Germany](#) promotes the idea of peace talks, a move that would allegedly also be supported by [Spain and Italy](#). The notion of the [lack](#) of unity among western countries regarding a common vision for future relations with Russia is being promoted by the Kremlin. According to the Russian media, western societies endorse Putin’s policies on values, on Russian “[traditional values](#)” while there is a “moral decline of the West”. As for Joe Biden’s visit to Ukraine and Poland at the end of February 2023, Russian propagandist sources were spreading the narrative about US [fatigue](#) with Ukraine and Zelenskyy. Russian official media release articles on “a secret warning” sent to the Ukrainian President, in which it claims that that the USA would not support Ukraine. Another narrative states that “ordinary Americans” are not happy about support for Ukraine. Biden’s visit to Ukraine was presented by some Russian propagandists as a public humiliation for Russia. Russian Telegram channels [called on](#) the Russian government to shell Kyiv with missiles while the American President was in Kyiv. Much to their dismay, there was no military response from the AFRF. At the same time, Russian officials said that Biden’s visit was approved by Moscow, particularly the President’s security. Dmitriy Medvedev, Deputy Chairman of the Security Council of Russia [said](#) that Americans were “offered security guarantees”. Russian official media shared messages about aspersions cast by “[French](#)” and American politicians on Biden’s visit who they claim is “intent on dragging the world into WWII”.
- **Discrediting Ukraine’s political leadership, rejecting the prospects of Ukraine’s integration into Europe.** In early February, prior to Zelenskyy’s trip to the EU, Russia was actively promoting anti-Ukrainian narratives in the context of Ukraine’s EU integration process. Messages about the fatigue felt by EU countries vis-à-vis Ukraine and the resistance to further support Kyiv are being promoted by Moscow. The Kremlin is also disseminating narratives about citizens of different EU countries being unhappy with Zelenskyy’s visit and Ukraine [in general](#), since the French are supposedly being dragged into “[the conflict with Russia](#)”. Russian officials [claim](#) that the British oppose “financing” Ukraine.
Russia is spreading narratives discrediting Zelenskyy’s trip to Great Britain, France, and Belgium. In the Russian information space the Ukrainian president is likened to an “[indigenous peoples](#)” representative, who receive beads as a present. Zelenskyy’s [outfit](#) and appearance are mocked since it allegedly insults senior officials in Europe. In parallel to this, the Russians are [spreading](#) the

narrative about Ukraine being incapable of achieving a victory without western aid. To substantiate the claim about western fatigue, Moscow is spreading information about some EU countries (Austria being a case in point) [growing weary](#) of training Ukrainian soldiers. At the same time, Viktor Medvedchuk's claims that "Ukraine's political leadership consists of ["Nazis"](#) is also being endorsed. Russia is producing narratives about the discrimination of national minorities in Ukraine, in particular, the [reprisals](#) taken against the Hungarian minority. Messages about corruption and corruption scandals within the Ukrainian political leadership are numerous in Russia. The Kremlin is trying to defuse the situation around Moldova. According to Russian official [messages](#), Ukraine is willing to take Transnistria. The Russian Ministry of Defense has [said](#) that Ukrainian troops are planning to capture Transnistria.

Moscow believes that Ukraine is preparing terrorist attacks in the region close to the Russian border ([the Bryansk oblast](#)).

- **Integration of the "new regions" in East and South Ukraine.** Another narrative claims that a number of Ukrainian regions, which are partly occupied by Russia, are ["irreversibly lost"](#) for Ukraine. Russians continue to flag up the integration of the temporarily occupied Ukrainian regions into the social and economic domain of Russia. The Russian Social Fund is supposed to ["ensure](#) federal support in the Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics, as well as in the Zaporizhzhia and Kherson oblasts starting from 1 March". Putin has once again [instructed](#) the government to synchronize economic indicators with "the new Russian regions" in the next 10 years. The transitional period is due to end by 2026. At the same time, no official [messages](#) have been shared regarding the future administrative arrangements or the creation of a "new federal district". Russian passports continue to be issued. Russians draw on the experience gained in Crimea in 2014 in terms of a further "integration" of the occupied territories of South Ukraine into Russia. Also, Russian propagandist channels are sharing information purporting that American experts [speak of](#) the danger arising from a potential attack on Crimea in view of a nuclear escalation between Russia and the West. Moscow insists that there is no joint position by the West on the prospects of the liberation of Crimea.
- **Shelling Ukrainian civilian infrastructure.** On the anniversary of the invasion and against a backdrop of messages rejecting the Ukrainian identity, Russian "war correspondents" were lamenting the poor results of Russian missile attacks that failed to deprive Ukraine of electricity, on their Telegram channels. They were pushing for these attacks to be beefed up.
- **Negotiations.** Moscow insists that the goals of the "SMO" remain a priority. Dmitry [Peskov](#) has said that "everything can be settled at the negotiation table". At the same time, any possibility of a sustainable peace agreement between Ukraine and Russia is dismissed. Medvedev, for example, [explains](#) it by claiming that every new Ukrainian President rescinds agreements reached previously. Ukraine's agency in making decisions is being denied. Russians believe that Kyiv is dependent on someone (possibly the West). Russian propaganda channels are full of stories about the inability to conduct peace negotiations with Zelenskyy since he is a "Fascist". According to [Kadyrov](#), peace talks can only be held after Russia forces Ukraine to make concessions. At the same time, Peskov claims that negotiations have not taken place yet due to ["instructions"](#) from above, apparently hinting at the reluctance of the West to engage in peace talks with Russia. Russian Senator, Valentina

Matvienko, has called for the [search](#) for a peace formula that would take Russia's real interests into account as well as ensure that Ukraine "does not lose its statehood". In parallel to this, Medvedchuk's ideas about the "death of the Minsk agreements" and Ukraine having lost its agency and statehood are being [promoted](#). Moscow has officially backed the proposals put forward by the People's Republic of China. Foreign Ministry Spokesman, Maria Zakharova [commented](#) on the proposals three days after they were released, claiming that Russia would support them on Russian terms, which implies Ukraine's neutrality, no further weapons deliveries to Ukraine, lifting economic sanctions imposed on Russia.

- **Rejecting Ukraine's identity.** Russia's official propaganda media continues to [disseminate](#) anti-Ukrainian narratives about Ukrainians being "a fictional people". According to Russia, the concept of Ukrainians has been made up by Anglo-Saxons. Moscow believes that Ukraine's European aspirations will destroy Europe since Ukraine is a "traitor" of Russia and will betray Europe. Russians continue to humiliate the Ukraine's political leadership.