

## March 14

### A brief overview of the situation

- 1. DEVELOPMENTS IN THE CONFLICT.** On March 14, intensive hostilities resumed in different directions, mostly in the Donetsk, Luhansk and Mykolayiv oblasts. The Russian army captured a few settlements in the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts. However, the Russian army advance has been halted in other directions with several columns of supply convoys being destroyed. Rocket strikes on Kyiv continue to be carried out. **On March 14, several cruise missiles were shot down over the right bank of the capital. Fragments of the rocket damaged residential buildings. Another building was hit by an airstrike during the night as well as the 'Antonov' plant located nearby.** Trostyanets, Okhtyrka, Mariupol, Severodonetsk, Avdiivka (the local Coke Plant), Volnovakha, Popasna, Rubizhne and dozens of other towns and settlements continue to be hit by shelling with many casualties reported. The number of civilian deaths in Mariupol alone amounts to nearly 2200 people. On the morning of March 14, an airstrike hit Rivne, which damaged the local TV tower and claiming 9 lives. On March 14, a Russian unmanned flying vehicle hit the ground in Romania (more than 100 km away from the Ukrainian border). According to new reports, a rocket launched from the tactical ballistic missile 'OTR-21 Tochka' was shot down over Donetsk, leading to several casualties. The Ministry of Defense of Ukraine refuted any information about deaths among foreign citizens on the Yavoriv test range. Previously, the Russian authorities claimed that this was a base for foreigners. In fact, this is a training camp for new soldiers.
- 2. NEGOTIATIONS.** Another round of negotiations between Ukraine and Russia took place through video conferencing. The Ukrainian side insisted on a cessation of hostilities and withdrawal of Russian forces from the territory of Ukraine. According to the Ukrainian side, fulfillment of these conditions will enable subsequent discussion of political issues, compensation and reparations, and overall of a comprehensive peace agreement. In parallel, the impossibility of concluding a peace agreement is being discussed within the Russian discourse, since according to the Russian narrative neither of the sides declared war on the other. The sides refrain from commenting on the details of the negotiation process. It was communicated, though, that the talks would resume on the following day (March 15).
- 3. ECOLOGICAL DIMENSION.** The power transmission line leading to the Chernobyl nuclear power plant has again been damaged. At the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power station, the Russian military started to dispose ammunition, which may lead to an increase of radiation with an environmental disaster looming on the horizon.
- 4. HUMANITARIAN DIMENSION.** In some directions, the evacuation through 'green corridors' is being carried out. Over 160 private cars managed to leave Mariupol for Berdyansk on March 14, although evacuation buses could not reach Mariupol from Berdyansk. People continue to be evacuated from a number of settlements in the Kyiv oblast that are constantly shelled. Journalists are barred from entering Irpin, where an American reporter was killed during the weekend. In the towns temporarily controlled by Russian forces, local activists continue to be terrorised. On March 14, a priest of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine, Oleh Nikolaev, was kidnapped. According to the Ministry for Reintegration of Temporary Occupied Territories, approximately 150 000 Ukrainians managed to reach safe territory through 'green corridors'. At the same time, the Russian side claimed on March 14, that 250 000 of the Donbas inhabitants left for Russia, fleeing the hostilities zones. Ukrainian Prosecutor General, Iryna Venedyktova, announced a possible prisoner swap in a near future. A press-conference was held featuring Russian conscripts taken captive. During the press-conference, they apologized to the people of Ukraine and accused the Russian government of deceiving them and forcing them to fight against Ukrainians. Following today's hostilities the Karlivka filter station in the Donetsk oblast has been left without electricity. About 200 000 locals in several settlements now have no access to water. Mobile connection is either absent or intermittent in the Luhansk and Mykolayiv oblasts. In 13 Ukrainian oblasts the schools resumed today. In another 8 oblasts school was resumed only in some of the communities.
- 5.** The Ukrainian side reports destruction of agricultural machinery. Systematic cases of such actions are registered in the Brovary district (Kyiv oblast), Melitopol district (Zaporizhzhia oblast), Pryluky, Nizhyn and Novhorod-Siversky districts (Chernihiv oblast) as well as in a number of districts in the Kherson and Kharkiv

oblasts. Agricultural machinery is also seized for military use by the Russian forces for engineering works, building fortifications and towing armored vehicles.

6. **INFORMATION DIMENSION. RUSSIAN PROPAGANDA.** The RF spread information on March 14 about residential districts of Donetsk being shelled from Ukrainian territory by a rocket launched from the tactical ballistic missile 'OTR-21 Tochka'. According to Russian reports, Ukraine used cluster weapons. This incident is actively being presented by the Russian side as 'crimes committed by the Ukrainian army against civilians'. The Russian political leadership cites this as an example of inhumanity during talks with foreign leaders (Israel). The Russian side stated it would reciprocate by shelling 'Ukrainian military infrastructure', such as the Antonov plant. According to Russia, this plant is located outside Kyiv, while the plant is actually located within the territory of the Ukrainian capital.
7. The Russian media landscape is also full of messages of the Ukrainian army 'killing the wounded' in the Donetsk oblast. Russia keeps reporting inhumane deeds of the Ukrainian side while also disseminating photos and videos of humanitarian aid being delivered by Russia to the territories of the Kharkiv oblast.
8. The Russian government is increasing its efforts to control the dissemination of information inside the country, with for example steps taken to block the social network Instagram. Official information circulates about the need to introduce political education for Russian schoolchildren being discussed within the Russian society. Actors and artists who are 'in disagreement with Putin's policy' continue to be condemned and persecuted in the official media.