

March 2nd, 2022

A brief overview of the situation in Ukraine

- 1. DEVELOPMENTS IN THE CONFLICT.** Continued attempts by the Russian army to cordon off large cities and to airdrop forces. Russian landing took place in Mykolaiv and was repelled. Intelligence data on preparations for Russian landing in Odesa and fighting continues to take place in Kherson. At the same time, attempts to reach Kyiv from the south-west continue, but **today Ukrainian forces recaptured Makariv – a key town in this area.** Combat operations continue around military airfields in Hostomel and Vasylykiv, close to Kyiv. During the night air strikes were carried out on Kharkiv using vacuum bombs, while Zhytomyr was hit by cruise missiles. Other cities and towns are under rocket fire. **One of the most famous architectural monuments of eastern Ukraine was destroyed in Trostianets (Sumy region) – the estate of L. Koenig where P. Tchaikovsky once worked.** Rumours on the preparation for a missile strike on St. Sophia Cathedral in Kyiv are circulating. **Ukrainian troops have in turn taken over part of Horlivka** (a town in the CADLR, one of the key towns under the control of the “DPR”). In general, the front line in the Donetsk region is well fortified without any reported breaches to date. **Today the Ministry of Defence of the RF has officially recognised 498 Russian casualties.** It is the first time that casualties are reported by RF since February 24th. In turn, Ukraine authorities report 15 times more Russian casualties.
- 2. INFORMATION SPACE.** The Russian army continues to try to destroy Ukraine’s telecommunications capabilities. On March 2nd, several TV towers were struck by missiles, including in Lysychansk. It is likely that the goal is to prevent Ukrainians from accessing the news to spread panic among the population. Starlink equipment is currently being deployed in Ukraine, with the objective of maintaining satellite communications in the events of large-scale interruption of telecommunications. **In Russia itself and in the territories of Crimea and the CADLR under its control, large-scale propaganda of flag-wavers** (‘hurrah-patriots’) **is unfolding.** An order was introduced in Crimea today for all local councils to adopt resolutions in support of the actions of Putin. The narrative “Kherson is ours” is spreading, despite the city not fully yet under Russian control. In Kemerovo region in Russia, the authorities ordered for the name of the region – Kuzbass – to be written in official documents with the Latin letter ‘Z’. The letter has become a symbol of this military campaign, known as the sign painted on Russian military equipment. D.Pushylin, head of the “DPR”, urged citizens to display the letter ‘Z’ on their cars. A few days ago, a pro-Russian rally took place in Serbia, where participants also painted ‘Z’ on their cars. A propaganda narrative is spreading according to which the CADLR provides humanitarian aid to Ukrainians turning to them en masse.
- 3. NEGOTIATIONS.** In the evening of March 2nd, reports circulated on a possible **second round of negotiations between Ukraine and Russia on the territory of Belarus.** The Bilovezka (Belovezhskaya) Pushcha was announced as the venue for the talks, which is known as the location of the agreement on the dissolution of the USSR in 1991. **During the first round of talks the Russian representatives repeated the points expressed by the President of the RF V.Putin,** insisting on the "denazification" and demilitarisation of Ukraine, the recognition of the L/DPR’s independence and Russia’s annexation of Crimea in 2014. These points are unacceptable for the Ukrainian delegation.
- 4. INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT FOR UKRAINE.** At its emergency session, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution requesting Russian forces to lay down weapons and withdraw military units from the territory of Ukraine. The resolution was adopted by 141 countries, while 5 voted against, and 35 abstained. Sanctions against the RF are being imposed, leading to its international isolation. On March 2nd **the EU banned the import of euros in cash to Russia.** In turn, the RF limited the ability to export cash. It also introduced additional incentives to maintain the ruble exchange rate by forcing exporters to exchange up to 80% of foreign exchange earnings.
- 5. ENVIRONMENT.** **Risks associated with attempts of the Russian troops to seize all Ukrainian nuclear power plants remains high.** During the assault on the city of Enerhodar, where the Zaporizhzhia NPP is located, members of the families of NPP employees came out to meet the Russian troops trying to stop the column. It was reported that in response, Russians fired on civilians. An emergency meeting of the IAEA is scheduled tomorrow on March 3rd, to address the protection of nuclear facilities in Ukraine.
- 6. HUMANITARIAN DIMENSION.** The humanitarian crisis is intensifying in cities/towns where combat operations are taking place, and in cities/towns captured by Russian troops. These cities/towns are relatively small, without much potential for autonomous existence in the absence of supplies of basic products. This leads to a catastrophic shortage of food, medicine, in particular bread. In Kyiv, products

remain available in large supermarkets, while smaller ones run out of supplies, especially bread and flour. There is also a shortage of medical supplies, becoming more urgent. In particular, 1.2 million people in Ukraine suffer from diabetes and cannot procure insulin. A list of pharmacies has been established where one can buy this medication, but it is limited. The situation with COVID-19 has not changed, but according to official information oxygen therapy is being provided to everyone who needs it. Limitations on testing and vaccination are likely. The humanitarian crisis is deepening in cities under attack by the Russian army. Kherson's Mayor Ihor Kolykhaiev called for the creation of a humanitarian corridor to prevent a disaster in the city, to transport the wounded and the casualties out of the city, and to transport medicines and food into the city.