

УКРАЇНА VS РОСІЙСЬКА ФЕДЕРАЦІЯ

РФ

Президент РФ

Телефонный разговор с Президентом США Бараком Обамой

По инициативе американской стороны состоялся телефонный разговор Владимира Путина с Президентом Соединённых Штатов Америки Бараком Обамой.

7 марта 2014 года, 03:30

Было продолжено обсуждение острой ситуации, сложившейся на Украине. В ходе дискуссии выявились различия в подходах и оценках причин возникновения нынешнего кризиса и текущего положения дел.

Владимир Путин, в частности, отметил, что пришедшее в результате антиконституционного переворота, не обладающее общенациональным мандатом нынешнее украинское руководство навязывает Восточным и Юго-Восточным регионам и Крыму абсолютно нелегитимные решения. Россия не может игнорировать обращённые к ней в этой связи призывы о помощи и действует адекватно, в полном соответствии с нормами международного права.

Президент России акцентировал первостепенную важность российско-американских отношений для обеспечения стабильности и безопасности в мире. Эти отношения не должны приноситься в жертву разногласиям по отдельным, пусть и весьма значимым, международным проблемам.

Руководители двух стран условились, что главы внешнеполитических ведомств Сергей Лавров и Джон Керри продолжают интенсивные контакты.

МЗС РФ

СООБЩЕНИЕ ДЛЯ СМИ

О телефонном разговоре Министра иностранных дел России С.В.Лаврова с Госсекретарем США Дж.Керри

487-07-03-2014

7 марта по американской инициативе состоялся телефонный разговор Министра иностранных дел Российской Федерации С.В.Лаврова и Государственного секретаря США Дж.Керри. В соответствии с договоренностью Президента России В.В.Путина с Б.Обамой, накануне обсудивших по телефону обстановку на Украине, главы внешнеполитических ведомств условились продолжить рассмотрение проблематики острого политического кризиса, охватившего эту страну.

С.В.Лавров предостерег от поспешных и необдуманных шагов, способных нанести ущерб российско-американским отношениям, особенно в том, что касается санкционных мер, которые неизбежно ударят бумерангом по самим США.

Комментарий Департамента информации и печати МИД России по ситуации вокруг Украины

485-07-03-2014

Последние озвученные в европейских столицах – Брюсселе, Вене, Страсбурге – решения, заявления и планы европейских и евроатлантических организаций по украинскому кризису заставляют задуматься о том, какие задачи реально преследуют наши партнеры, какие средства они готовы инвестировать во имя их достижения и, одновременно, какие жертвы готовы понести они сами. Тем более, что на уровне двусторонних отношений с

теми же членами этих организаций нам нередко говорят о понимании, желании работать действительно сообща, не создавать новых барьеров. Но, видимо, когда все их участники собираются вместе, в поиске взаимоприемлемых решений верх берут наиболее крикливые, ставящие собственные политические, экономические и историко-архивные интересы выше общих задач. Разумные голоса и малых, и больших стран, дорожащих нашими двусторонними отношениями и реально понимающих общность ценностей наших народов, теряются в голосе толпы.

Кроме того, западные партнеры, активно продвигая свои идеи по учреждению контактной группы по Украине, одновременно идут на сворачивание работы в традиционных форматах и наиболее важных направлениях нашего взаимодействия.

Цепь событий, свидетелями которых мы стали, показывает, что для достижения своих целей наши партнеры не брезгают никакими средствами. Упорное втягивание Украины в ассоциацию с ЕС, игнорирующее реальное состояние украинского общества, осуществлялось путем провокационной поддержки антиправительственных выступлений на Майдане. На смену подписанию соглашения между Президентом и лидерами оппозиции от 21 февраля, поспешного уже на следующий день, пришло поспешное признание нелегитимного киевского режима. Теперь – подыгрывают попыткам Киева переключить внимание как «комиссаров» «евромайдана», так и общественного мнения с реальных проблем с демократией, соблюдением прав человека и экономикой на «крымский кризис». Как будто другой, западной части Украины с ее очевидными проблемами, не существует.

6 марта в Брюсселе на внеочередном заседании Европейского совета была вновь упущена возможность дать объективную и честную оценку происходящим на Украине событиям. В Москве с недоумением ознакомились с его итогами, особенно в части, касающейся угрозы введения санкций в отношении России. Евросоюз должен четко понимать, что любые рестриктивные меры не только не останутся без ответа, но и ударят по интересам самого ЕС и его стран-членов.

В равной степени это относится и к попыткам санкций со стороны НАТО.

В худших традициях двойных стандартов применительно к ситуации на Украине повели себя ряд государств-участников и исполнительные структуры ОБСЕ. Вопреки своему мандату, ни слова они не сказали о росте националистических и неонацистских настроений и, конечно же, «не заметили» они силовых действий экстремистских сил.

Плохо прикрытые попытки закрыть глаза на преступления, совершаемые в Киеве и на Западной Украине, сопровождаются стремлением плотно отслеживать действия законных крымских властей по самостоятельному определению своего будущего, причем в обход краеугольного для ОБСЕ принципа консенсуса, без учёта мнений и рекомендаций российской стороны, не дожидаясь официальных приглашений от властей Крыма.

Убеждены, международное содействие стабилизации ситуации на Украине может быть полезным и эффективным, но только в том случае, если оно будет объективным. А для этого, прежде всего, ОБСЕ должна осудить все насильственные действия т.н. «майдановцев», признать незаконным госпереворот в Киеве и начать планомерную, последовательную работу по содействию различным политическим силам на Украине в выполнении Соглашения от 21 февраля с.г.

Непонимание и глубокое разочарование вызывают заявления некоторых членов Парламентской ассамблеи Совета Европы, которые не гнушаются говорить даже о «желательности» прекращения взаимодействия с российскими парламентариями в ПАСЕ путем лишения их права голоса или полномочий, а наиболее далекие от реальной жизни грозят и отлучением России от Совета Европы. Выражаем надежду, что в позиции Комитета министров Совета Европы сохранится ответственный и достаточно сбалансированный подход, основанный на трезвой оценке ситуации и готовности к открытому диалогу.

Рассчитываем, что в европейских и евроатлантических организациях в целом возобладает

здравый смысл и они смогут реализовывать свою главную роль по достижению большего европейского единства. И что Евросоюз, пытающийся не всегда успешно поиграть на Украине лидирующую роль, не пойдет на шаги, которые могут подорвать доверие к нему как к стратегическому партнеру.

Комментарий Департамента информации и печати МИД России в связи с итогами внеочередного заседания Евросовета по Украине

482-07-03-2014

В Москве с недоумением ознакомились с итогами внеочередного заседания Европейского совета 6 марта в Брюсселе, посвященного ситуации на Украине. Трудно отделаться от впечатления, что конъюнктурные подходы возобладали над здравым смыслом, диктующим необходимость как минимум прислушаться к принципиальной позиции стратегического партнера Евросоюза – России.

В этот деликатный момент, когда международное сообщество прилагает все усилия, чтобы найти решение по выходу из кризиса на Украине, Евросоюз занял крайне неконструктивную позицию, отказываясь от сотрудничества с Россией по важным для граждан и деловых кругов наших стран направлениям, включая либерализацию визового режима и заключение нового базового соглашения.

По этим направлениям проделана большая совместная работа, достигнут немалый прогресс по спорным моментам, однако если в Брюсселе считают, что успешное завершение этой работы России нужно больше, чем Евросоюзу, то они заблуждаются.

Россия не приемлет язык санкций и угроз, однако в случае реализации их на практике без ответа они не останутся.

Комментарий Департамента информации и печати МИД России в связи с состоявшимся консультативным заседанием Совета Безопасности ООН по событиям на Украине

481-07-03-2014

В связи с появившимися в СМИ сообщениями о том, что Совет Безопасности ООН будто бы «считает крымский референдум незаконным», хотели бы сообщить следующее.

Прошедшая 6 марта дискуссия в Совете Безопасности носила неофициальный характер, никакого решения Совета по ее итогам принято не было.

Брифинговавший членов Совета по видеоконференции из Киева заместитель Генерального секретаря ООН Я.Элиассон вопроса о легитимности проведения референдума в Крыму не касался.

Более того, выступивший накануне заседания СБ в ходе ежедневного брифинга для журналистов официальный представитель Генерального секретаря ООН подчеркнул, что вопросы признания легитимности референдумов относятся к компетенции государств-членов ООН.

Таким образом утверждения о том, что СБ ООН считает референдум о статусе Крыма нелегитимным, не соответствуют действительности.

Ответ официального представителя МИД России А.К.Лукашевича на вопрос СМИ о решении НАТО приостановить сотрудничество с Россией в связи с ситуацией на Украине

478-07-03-2014

Вопрос: Как в Москве воспринято объявленное 5 марта с.г. решение НАТО о приостановке сотрудничества с Россией в связи с событиями на Украине?

Ответ: Решение Совета НАТО приостановить проведение встреч в рамках практического сотрудничества с Россией свидетельствует о предвзятом и тенденциозном подходе в

анализе причин и следствий событий на Украине.

Намерение ограничить работу по согласованным направлениям и проектам взаимодействия в реагировании на общие для стран-членов СРН вызовы и угрозы – терроризм, пиратство, кризисы, экстремизм, природные и техногенные катастрофы, а также по Афганистану и сирийскому химоружию – противоречит здравому смыслу. В СРН нет проектов и программ сотрудничества, которые были бы в интересах только России или стран-членов альянса.

В развитие «всепогодного» политдиалога на площадке СРН с нашей стороны неоднократно давались необходимые разъяснения, в т.ч. по мероприятиям для обеспечения безопасности объектов Черноморского флота в Крыму.

Но, судя по всему, возобладали рефлексы прошлого, которые не позволили объективно разобраться в происходящем. Считаю крайне опасными попытки привнести в и без того сложную и хрупкую ситуацию на Украине «фактор НАТО», который создает дополнительный элемент напряженности, подрывая перспективы нормализации обстановки.

УКРАЇНА

**В.о. Президента України – Голова Верховної Ради України
ВР України**

Звернення Голови Верховної Ради України, в.о. Президента України Олександра Турчинова до народу у зв'язку із ситуацією в Автономній Республіці Крим

Верховна Рада Криму, яка повністю контролюється військовими Збройних Сил Російської Федерації, прийняла незаконне рішення про проведення референдуму. Референдуму в Криму з питання: "Чи виступаєте ви за входження Криму до складу Російської Федерації?"

Це рішення є нелегітимним та нікчемним.

Воно суперечить волі українського народу та інтересам громадян, які проживають у Автономній Республіці Крим. Територія України в межах визнаних усім світом кордонів є недоторканною і суверенною.

Відповідно до 73 статті Конституції України, виключно, я підкреслюю, виключно всеукраїнським референдумом можуть розглядатися питання, пов'язані з кордонами та зміною території України.

До речі, провести навіть місцевий, кримський, референдум за десять днів неможливо. Тому це не є референдум. Це буде фарс, це буде фальш, це буде злочин проти держави, який організували військові Російської Федерації.

Відповідно до наданих мені повноважень я зупинив рішення Парламенту Криму.

Верховна Рада України буде ініціювати розпуск Парламенту Автономної Республіки Крим. Ми захистимо недоторканність нашої території. Ми захистимо суверенність нашої країни.

Я переконаний, що і громадяни України, які проживають на території Криму, будуть усіляко цьому сприяти.

(Прес-служба Апарату Верховної Ради України)

КМ України

**А.Яценюк поінформував про результати позачергового саміту глав держав і урядів
країн-членів ЄС за участю України**

07.03.2014 | 12:31 ДЕПАРТАМЕНТ ІНФОРМАЦІЇ ТА КОМУНІКАЦІЙ З
ГРОМАДСЬКІСТЮ СЕКРЕТАРІАТУ КМУ

Прийнято рішення про підписання вже найближчим часом політичної частини Угоди про Асоціацію між Україною та ЄС. Країни-члени ЄС в односторонньому порядку виконуватимуть умови Угоди про ЗВТ. Загальна сума фінансової економічної допомоги з боку Євросоюзу – 15 млрд. доларів. Є рішення про підтримку подальших дій по скасуванню віз між Україною і ЄС. Такими є результати позачергового саміту глав держав та урядів країн-членів ЄС, до участі в якому було запрошено Прем'єр-міністра України Арсенія Яценюка.

У п'ятницю, 7 березня, Глава Уряду під час прес-конференції детально поінформував про результати переговорів з ЄС.

Арсеній Яценюк підкреслив, під час вчорашнього саміту країнами-членами ЄС був одностайно схвалений пакет економічної і фінансової допомоги для України: «У цьому пакеті загальна сума фінансової економічної допомоги становить 15 млрд. доларів. У першу чергу мова йде про макрофінансову допомогу, яку Україна повинна отримати в найкоротші терміни. Це 1,6 млрд. євро, або 2 млрд. доларів. Це та макрофінансова допомога, яка допоможе Україні провести реформи і стабілізувати економічну ситуацію».

Він повідомив, що окремим пунктом цього пакету є значні інвестиції в українську економіку. Так, Європейський інвестиційний банк та Європейський банк реконструкції і розвитку пропонує Україні загальні обсяги інвестицій розміром 8 млрд. доларів: «Це ті кошти, які ми зможемо направити на створення нових підприємств та нових робочих місць, на модернізацію української економіки і на підвищення її конкурентоздатності».

Друге рішення, яке вчора було прийнято європейськими партнерами, стосується одностороннього виконання країнами-членами ЄС угоди про зону вільної торгівлі: «Учора країни-члени ЄС заявили, що вони в односторонньому порядку відкривають європейський ринок для українських товарів і виробників».

Як наголосив Арсеній Яценюк, за експертними оцінками вже за перший рік від ухвалення цього рішення українська економіка додатково отримає кошти в розмірі принаймні 400 млн. доларів: «Прогнозується зростання експорту зернових культур, сільськогосподарської, кондитерської продукції».

«Європа сказала наступне: ми відкриваємо вам європейський ринок, приходьте зі своїми товарами, ми прийняли це рішення в односторонньому порядку», – додав він.

Що стосується відкриття українського ринку для європейських товарів, як підкреслив Арсеній Яценюк, зараз проводяться додаткові консультації, «аби зняти будь-які спекуляції, що це може негативно вплинути на українську економіку»: «Після цих консультацій буде прийняте відповідне рішення».

«Схід повинен бути спокійний – усе, що йде по двосторонній кооперації між Україною і Росією повинно далі іти. Жодних підстав для застосування Росією торговельних бар'єрів до українських товарів не було, немає і не повинно бути», – наголосив Прем'єр-міністр.

Арсеній Яценюк зазначив, що вчора також було прийнято найбільш важливе рішення, якого очікувала вся країна – щодо підписання політичної частини Угоди між Україною і ЄС: «Зараз проходять виключно технічні консультації про дату такого підписання».

«Для цього люди вийшли на майдан. І для цього українці боролись за свою свободу і за європейське майбутнє», – зазначив він.

Арсеній Яценюк нагадав, що федеральний канцлер Німеччини Ангела Меркель, з якою Прем'єр-міністр учора також провів двосторонню зустріч, заявила про найкоротші терміни підписання цієї Угоди – «буквально декілька тижнів».

«Також є рішення про підтримку подальших дій по скасуванню віз між Україною і ЄС», – повідомив Арсеній Яценюк і наголосив, що дасть доручення членам Уряду негайно виконувати план дій щодо безвізового режиму, «адже ми здатні зняти всі візові бар'єри для українських громадян».

А.Яценюк: Ми готові відбудувати відносини з РФ. Але підлеглими Росії ніколи не будемо

07.03.2014 | 13:02 ДЕПАРТАМЕНТ ІНФОРМАЦІЇ ТА КОМУНІКАЦІЙ З ГРОМАДСЬКІСТЮ СЕКРЕТАРІАТУ КМУ

На позачерговому саміті глав держав і урядів Європейського Союзу за участю України було зазначено, що ЄС чітко стоїть на позиціях територіальної цілісності, недоторканності та незалежності української держави. Про це повідомив Прем'єр-міністр України Арсеній Яценюк на прес-конференції у п'ятницю, 7 березня.

Арсеній Яценюк зазначив, що під час саміту обговорювалося питання військової ескалації, військової агресії на території Криму і прийняття рішень так званими органами Автономної Республіки Крим.

«У рішенні ради ЄС чітко зазначено, що так звані органи Автономної Республіки Крим прийняли незаконне і неконституційне рішення про проведення референдуму», – сказав він.

«Хочу попередити сепаратистів і інших зрадників української держави, які намагаються працювати проти України: будь-яке ваше рішення, яке буде прийняте, є завідомо незаконним та неконституційним, і ніхто в цивілізованому світі не визнає рішення так званого референдуму так званої кримської влади», – підкреслив Арсеній Яценюк.

Прем'єр-міністр також наголосив, що Уряд України чітко задекларував свою готовність вести переговори з Урядом Росії: «Але для цього наші російські сусіди, які все-таки мають стати російськими партнерами, повинні вивести війська, виконувати свої двосторонні та багатосторонні зобов'язання, перестати підтримувати сепаратистів і терористів, які перебувають на території Криму, і всьому світу заявити, що Україна і Росія почали будувати новий тип відносин».

«Уряд України чітко декларує: ми готові відбудувати відносини з Російською Федерацією. При цьому ми ніколи не будемо ні підлеглими Росії, ні філією Росії на території України. Це російське керівництво повинно зрозуміти», – заявив Арсеній Яценюк.

Прем'єр-міністр також повідомив, що зробив запит на другу телефонну розмову з Головою Уряду Російської Федерації Дмитром Медведевим.

Щодо ситуації на кордоні з Росією та в АР Крим

07.03.2014 | 12:44 Прес-служба Державної прикордонної служби

Державна прикордонна служба України продовжує виконувати свої обов'язки в умовах ускладнення військово-політичної обстановки в АР Крим та на українсько-російській ділянці кордону.

Ситуація в Азово-Чорноморському управлінні Державної прикордонної служби (підрозділи базуються в АР Крим) залишається напруженою, але контрольованою. Основні зусилля командування відомства та керівництва регіонального управління направлені на недопущення реагування на провокації з боку військових ЗС РФ та агресивно налаштованих прихильників так званого «кримського уряду», підтримання високого морально-психологічного стану особового складу, організації охорони кордону в умовах блокування підрозділів Держприкордонслужби України іноземними спецпризначенцями. Сьогодні Держприкордонслужбі вдалося зберегти корабельно-катерний склад морської охорони відомства (23 кораблі та катери передислоковані у порти Одеси та Бердянська), не допустити захоплення зброї та військової техніки в АР Крим, забезпечити високий морально-психологічний дух у військових колективах.

Разом з тим наразі заблокованими залишаються 11 підрозділів, що розташовані в АР Крим: управління Азово-Чорноморського РУ, Севастопольський загін морської охорони

(ЗМО), Сімферопольський прикордонний загін, відділ прикордонної служби (ВПС) «Керч», мобільна застава «Масандра», ВПС «Євпаторія», ВПС «Сімферополь-авіа», ВПС «Щолкіно», Керченський ЗМО, ПТС «Мис-Фонарь», ВПС «Севастополь». Напруженою залишається ситуація у пункті пропуску «Крим». Практично щодоби має місце повне блокування російськими озброєними військовими у кількості до 150 осіб роботи пункту пропуску (склад прикордонного наряду у пункті пропуску – 15 осіб, значна частина з них жінки) для забезпечення безперешкодного провозу особового складу, зброї та військової техніки.

Персоналу АЗЧРУ доводиться виконувати поставлені завдання в умовах колосального морально-психологічного тиску з боку представників спецслужб РФ. Їм погрожують фізичними розправами, дезінформують, залякують.

Щодо ситуації на сухопутній ділянці українсько-російського кордону. Охорона державного кордону на цьому сегменті здійснюється посилено. У тісній взаємодії зі співробітниками МВС, СБУ проводиться операція «Кордон». Її основна мета – недопущення провокацій на державному кордоні та недопущення проникнення на територію України осіб, що можуть брати участь у заходах по дестабілізації ситуації в країні. Спільними зусиллями лише за три минулі доби у перетині Державного кордону України відмовлено близько 1,5 тисячі громадянам Росії. 15 із них заборонено в'їзд на територію України. «Зелений кордон» посилено додатковими прикордонними нарядами, спільно з підрозділами ЗС України, МВС та СБУ здійснюється патрулювання на основних шляхах, що ведуть із дестабілізаційної зони – АР Крим.

Державна прикордонна служба України продовжує здійснювати заходи щодо організації охорони кордону в умовах присутності військового контингенту Росії у АР Крим та нарошування щільності охорони на інших ділянках.

Віталій Ярема провів офіційну зустріч із Джеффері Пайеттом
07.03.2014 | 19:11 Прес-служба Першого віце-прем'єр-міністра

У п'ятницю, 7 березня, Перший віце-прем'єр-міністр України Віталій Ярема провів офіційну зустріч із Надзвичайним та Повноважним Послом США в Україні Джеффері Пайеттом та військовим аташе США в Україні полковником Джозефом Хікоксом.

Під час зустрічі сторони обговорили поточну ситуацію в Україні, окремо сконцентрувавши увагу на тих подіях, що нині відбуваються на Сході та Півдні країни.

Джеффері Пайетт запевнив Віталія Ярему, що Україна має повну підтримку американського уряду і суспільства у намаганні розбудувати демократичну країну та встановити миру. Водночас, він зауважив, що одним із найбільш нагальних питань на сьогодні є питання внутрішньої безпеки в Україні та вирішення проблеми взаємодії організованих загонів самооборони з силами української міліції.

Віталій Ярема поінформував Надзвичайного та Повноважного Посла, що реформування правоохоронних органів та судової системи стоїть на порядку денному нинішнього Уряду в першочергових задачах. Він повідомив, що новопризначеним керівникам силових відомств були поставлені завдання негайно відновити діяльність офіційних правоохоронних органів та розслідувати всі зловживання як підрозділу «Беркут», так й інших підрозділів, які були задіяні у побитті людей, переслідуванні політиків та інших протиправних діях.

В. Ярема підкреслив, що «ніхто не уникне відповідальності відповідно до чинного законодавства». «Вимога суспільства не зміна обличчю владі, а зміна влади», – наголосив він. «І до того часу, доки правоохоронні органи, органи державної влади не зміняться, а суспільство не відчує, що дійсно в країні відбулися реальні демократичні зрушення, люди з Майдану не підуть», – сказав В. Ярема.

Говорячи про ситуацію на Сході та Півдні України, Джеффері Пайетт високо оцінив

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втримку українських військових у Криму. Він назвав дуже важливим те, що українські військові ніяким чином не піддалися на ті провокації, які мають місце наразі та висловив сподівання, що й надалі збройні сили не дозволять себе втягнути у будь-які провокації.

Прогнозуючи розвиток подій на півострові, Перший віце-прем'єр-міністр наголосив, що Уряд України не визнає результати так званого референдуму 16 березня, який призначила нелегітимна влада Криму. «Зрозуміло, що ніякий референдум ми не визнаємо і його результат не матиме для нас ніякого значення», – сказав він.

Підсумовуючи, Віталій Ярема подякував Надзвичайному та Повноважному послу за підтримку та висловив сподівання, що ті зусилля, яких США докладає до мирного врегулювання ситуації в Україні, дозволять запобігти ескалації збройного протистояння.

МЗС України

В.о. Міністра закордонних справ Андрій Дешиця зустрівся з Помічником Генерального секретаря ООН Іваном Шимоновичем

07 березня 2014, 18:42

В.о. Міністра закордонних справ Андрій Дешиця прийняв Помічника Генерального секретаря ООН, керівника відділення Управління Верховного комісара ООН з прав людини (УВКПЛ) в Нью-Йорку Івана Шимоновича.

У ході зустрічі В.о. Міністра подякував співрозмовникові за постійну увагу ООН до процесів, що відбуваються у нашій державі, та активне залучення механізмів Всесвітньої організації до врегулювання кризових ситуацій, зокрема, на Кримському півострові. Андрій Дешиця ознайомив Помічника Генсека з останнім розвитком подій в Україні, наголосивши на необхідності попередження грубих порушень прав людини, які може спричинити російська агресія на території Автономної Республіки Крим. Він висловив сподівання, що присутність ООН, ОБСЄ та інших міжнародних організацій на півострові сприятиме деескалації напруженості в АРК.

Letter of Ambassador of Ukraine to the USA O.Motsyk to the US Congress

(Посольство України в США)

07 березня 2014, 03:35

Dear Members of Congress:

I would like to begin by thanking the United States of America, and specifically the U.S. Congress, for the unwavering support of Ukraine at these challenging times.

For the past couple of months Ukraine has been in the world's headlines.

The whole world saw the determination of hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians who took to the streets to stand for a better life, for freedom, democracy and end of blatant corruption that stifled our country for far too long.

Yet the Yanukovich regime tried to silence the protesters with guns. Peaceful and unarmed demonstrators were met by special forces with snipers, who shot dead almost a hundred people and wounded hundreds more.

In an attempt to prevent further bloodshed and resolve the crisis, on February 21, 2014 leaders of the opposition Vitalii Klychko, Oleh Tyahnybok and Arsenii Yatsenyuk on one side and Viktor Yanukovich on the other signed an Agreement that had been negotiated with the help of foreign ministers of Poland, Germany and France. Russia's special envoy, Vladimir Lukin, was present but refused to sign it (therefore, the suggestion by the Russian side that the opposition failed to implement the Agreement is groundless).

The Agreement called for an end of violence, restoration of the Ukrainian Constitution of 2004 and early presidential elections.

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However, on February 22, 2014 Viktor Yanukovich fled the capital and de facto removed himself from his constitutional authority.

Therefore, on February 22, 2014 the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, which was the only legitimate authority in Ukraine at the time, given the resignation of the Government and the President's self-removal from exercising his functions, and restored the 2004 Constitution (approved by 386 votes out of 450), recognized that Viktor Yanukovich removed himself from his constitutional duties through unconstitutional means by 386 votes, including 140 votes from the pro-Yanukovich Party of Regions and set the early elections of the President of Ukraine on May 25, 2014 (328 votes).

According to Article 112 of the Constitution of Ukraine of 2004 in case of early termination of powers of the President of Ukraine the functions of the President of Ukraine shall be carried out by the Speaker of the Parliament until a new President is elected and inaugurated, the only legitimate supreme authority in Ukraine is the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. The Rada elected new Speaker,

Mr. Oleksandr Turchynov (by 288 votes), who acts as the President of Ukraine until the elections, and appointed Mr. Yatseniuk as the Prime Minister (by 371 votes). These actions were made in full compliance with Ukrainian laws.

However, Russia did not recognize these changes and considers Viktor Yanukovich a legitimate President.

Producing a piece of paper purporting to be Mr. Yanukovich's letter asking Mr. Putin to send Russian troops to Ukraine, the Federation Council of Russia, upon Mr. Putin's request, approved such decision.

Mr. Yanukovich is no longer the President of Ukraine, particularly after his escape from Kyiv on February 22, 2014. Therefore, none of his statements have any significance under either Ukrainian or international law.

But in any way, even if the legitimate President of Ukraine called upon a foreign country to intervene with its armed forces in Ukraine, such a statement would also be worth nothing, because under the Constitution of Ukraine (Art. 85) only the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine can approve decisions on admitting units of armed forces of other states to the territory of Ukraine. The Rada clearly stated that it had not made any such decisions.

Seeing that Ukraine is determined to pursue its European course, Russia, under the completely trumped up pretext invaded Crimea with its armed forces.

The Russian forces are seeking to establish complete control over Ukraine's military facilities in Crimea, trying to block and disarm Ukrainian military garrisons and border guard bases, blocking airports and ships. The Russian troops and armored vehicles are moving uncontrollably around Crimea, numerous Russian military planes and helicopters violated Ukrainian airspace.

By countless provocations, Russian military is seeking to instigate an armed conflict and replicate in Ukraine the Abkhazia and South Ossetia scenario. However, Ukrainian servicemen act with utmost restraint and don't react to such provocations, but there's a threat that Russia may engineer provocations against its own troops, and blame them on Ukraine.

There is also an ongoing accumulation of military equipment on the Russian territory in close proximity to the border of Ukraine in the Kharkiv, Luhansk, Donetsk and Chernihiv oblasts. These actions may indicate preparations of the Russian side for possible intervention into the Ukrainian territory across the land border.

The military intervention is accompanied by a huge outburst of fabrications. I can assure you that Russian-speaking citizens of Ukraine enjoy the same rights and freedoms as other citizens of my country. Nobody has ever forbidden, forbids or will forbid the use of the Russian language, as the Russian propaganda tries to demonstrate. As of today there is no proof of any violations of Russian minority rights in Ukraine; there were no appeals to the relevant Ukrainian authorities neither from those allegedly affected nor from Russia's officials. In accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding between the Parliamentary Commissioner on Human Rights of Ukraine and the Ombudsman of the Russian Federation in case of such appeals to the Russian

side they are transferred to the Ukrainian Ombudsman.

The actions by the Russian Federation constitute an act of aggression against the state of Ukraine. Russian Federation brutally violated the basic principles of Charter of the United Nations obliging all member states to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state.

Ukraine in the strongest possible terms protested such actions, but Russia officially rejected Ukrainian proposal to hold immediate bilateral consultations (under Article 7 of the Treaty on Friendship, Cooperation and Partnership between Ukraine and the Russian Federation of 1997).

Russia's actions pose a serious threat not only to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, but also to peace and stability in the whole region. Moreover, Russia's actions provoke a disbalance in the international security system and can lead to violations of the regime of international nuclear non-proliferation on a global scale.

When in 1994, Ukraine became a party to Non-Proliferation Treaty and voluntarily surrendered the third largest nuclear arsenal in the world it did so exclusively under certain conditions. These conditions envisaged granting security assurances to Ukraine by the 5 nuclear states. On December 5, 1994, the United States, the Russian Federation and the United Kingdom signed the Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances to Ukraine. The French Republic and the People's Republic of China supported the Memorandum by signing separate declarations.

Ukraine has thoroughly implemented its commitments under the Non-Proliferation Treaty, and has taken and fulfilled additional obligations by getting rid of all its stockpiles of highly enriched uranium.

Today we witness the situation when the Russian Federation attempts to undermine the NPT regime not only by violating the Budapest Memorandum, but also by violating the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which clearly states in its Preamble that "States must refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other manner".

Non-adherence by one Guarantor State – the Russian Federation – to its commitments under the Budapest Memorandum by the military invasion in Ukraine creates a situation when the threshold states may consider international legal instruments insufficient to ensure security, territorial integrity and inviolability of their borders.

We rely on the commitments contained in the Budapest Memorandum of 1994 and the Charter on a Distinctive Partnership between NATO in Ukraine, as well as the U.S.-Ukraine Charter on Strategic Partnership and other bilateral documents. We need help from the guarantor states, the UN, NATO, the OSCE, the European Union, all civilized nations to protect our sovereignty and territorial integrity by all available means and to prevent a war which would shatter peace in Europe and will have grave and irrevocable consequences for peace and security on a global scale.

The aggression must be stopped, and we rely on the strong and unified position of the global community.

Military units deployed from Russia must leave the territory of Ukraine immediately, and those belonging to the Russian Black Sea Fleet must return to their barracks. Armed gangs that came from Russia must also immediately leave Ukraine.

Crimea is an inalienable part of Ukraine, with citizens of all ethnic backgrounds.

All issues should be resolved through negotiations. There is no alternative to a peaceful and diplomatic solution of the crisis. We hope that wisdom will prevail.

We need America's help, and we count on it.

Sincerely yours,

Olexandr Motsyk
Ambassador of Ukraine to the United States

Посол України в Італії Євген Перелигін звернувся у телевізійному ефірі до посадовців, діячів мистецтва та громадянського суспільства Італійської Республіки (Посольство України в Італії)
07 березня 2014, 16:30

7 березня ц.р. Посол України в Італії Є.Перелигін звернувся у телевізійному ефірі до посадовців, діячів мистецтва та громадського суспільства Італійської Республіки з проханням підтримати український народ та легітимний уряд України у їх прагненнях демократії та всіма можливими способами засудити агресію Росії по відношенню до нашої держави. Посол України висловив своє обурення тим, що в 21-му столітті Росія, яка прагне бути повноправним членом великої європейської політичної родини, дозволяє собі порушувати базові принципи міжнародного права, компрометуючи територіальну цілісність та суверенітет іншої незалежної держави. Телевізійне звернення Посла України в Італії було поширено цілодобовим телеканалом новин «TGCOM24» та розміщено на Інтернет сторінці журналу «LOOKOUT», який є спеціалізованим додатком з міжнародної тематики до провідного італійського журналу «PANORAMA», та у мережі «YOUTUBE»

Промова Постійного представника України при Відділенні ООН та інших міжнародних організаціях у Женеві, Посла Ю.А.Клименка, виголошена в рамках участі у Загальному сегменті 25-ї сесії Ради ООН з прав людини.
(ПП України в Женеві)
07 березня 2014, 17:55

**25th Session of the Human Rights Council
General Segment
Statement by the Permanent Representative of Ukraine
Ambassador Yurii Klymenko
(Geneva, March 6, 2014)**

**Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Ukraine is now in the spot of utmost attention and concern over the challenges facing my country.

The most acute one is the continuing presence of a large grouping of the Russian armed forces which illegally entered the territory of Ukraine under far-fetched pretext of protecting the Russian-speaking community.

We demand from the Russian Federation to stop the military intervention and to abide by its commitments under the UN Charter, to avoid steps which could instigate extremism or provoke ethnic tensions in Ukraine.

Despite that alarming background the political crisis in my country is definitely over. Outcome of 3 months' protests has manifested a momentous change in the destiny of the Ukrainian people.

Ukrainians from every region of the country proved that values of liberty, democracy and solidarity are deeply engrained in their character. That they cannot tolerate injustice, corruption, oppression and violence and are ready to struggle for their rights and freedoms.

The new "government of technocrats" – not the "government of winners" as some called it in this room, endorsed by more than constitutional majority of members of Parliament, is focused on implementing urgent reforms.

Promotion and protection of all human rights is an integral and indispensable part of its

programme of work.

The Agreement on the Settlement of Crisis of February 21 continues to be a key roadmap for further stabilization of political situation in Ukraine.

The Parliament created a special commission, based on the principle of broad and inclusive representation, on preparation of a draft law on amendments to the Constitution of Ukraine, effectively launching a relevant reform as envisaged in the mentioned Agreement.

Another commission based on the same principle established by the Parliament of Ukraine should prepare a draft law on the language policy in Ukraine. The corresponding draft bill is to be worked out by March 30 and sent for the Venice Commission's assessment. I would also like to remind that acting President of Ukraine Oleksandr Turchynov earlier vetoed the recent Parliament's bill cancelling the 2012 Law "On the principles of the state language policy" that is currently in force.

Thorough investigations of crimes and human rights violations committed since November 2013 have been immediately initiated. Bringing all perpetrators to accountability and ensuring normalization of life in Ukraine is a principal priority for the new government.

Recently launched campaign for voluntary handing over of firearms and ammunition constitutes another important step in implementation of the said Agreement.

So far, in spite of the abovementioned challenges, we are confident that with appropriate backing of international community in guarantying the sovereignty and territorial integrity of my country as well as in resolving uneasy economic problems, Ukraine will keep the difficult but right track we are back on.

I thank you.

КРАЇНИ-ЧЛЕНИ ГРУПИ "G-7"

США

Readout of the President's Call with Prime Minister Abe of Japan

THE WHITE HOUSE, Office of the Press Secretary
March 7, 2014

The President spoke to Prime Minister Abe late last evening regarding the situation in Ukraine. The two leaders agreed that Russia's actions are a threat to international peace and security and emphasized the importance of preserving Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. They committed to work with other G-7 partners to insist that Russia abide by its obligations and commitments to Ukraine's sovereignty, including under the UN Charter and the 1997 basing agreement, but noted that there is an opportunity for Russia to resolve the situation diplomatically, in a way that addresses its interests as well as those of Ukraine and the international community. Both leaders also agreed to work bilaterally and through the International Monetary Fund to support the government of Ukraine as it works to stabilize its economy and prepare for May elections. The President noted that his April visit to Japan will offer an important opportunity to advance the many diplomatic, defense, and trade initiatives the United States and Japan are pursuing in Asia and around the globe.

Readout of the President's Call with Chancellor Merkel of Germany

THE WHITE HOUSE, Office of the Press Secretary
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 7, 2014

The President spoke with Chancellor Merkel today about Ukraine. The President welcomed the conclusions of the March 6 European Council and the unified position of the United States and

the European Union regarding Ukraine. The leaders agreed on the need for Russia to pull back its forces, allow for the deployment of international observers and human rights monitors to Crimea, and support free and fair presidential elections in May. They discussed the need for Russia to agree quickly on the formation of a contact group that will lead to direct dialogue between Ukraine and Russia to de-escalate the situation and restore Ukraine's territorial integrity. The leaders reiterated their grave concern over Russia's clear violation of international law through its military intervention in Ukraine.

Press Gaggle with Principal Deputy Press Secretary Josh Earnest en route Florida

The White House, Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

March 07, 2014

Aboard Air Force One

En Route Florida

12:17 P.M. EST

Q A quick one on Ukraine again. Republicans have been pushing this plan to increase exports of natural gas. Does the administration see that as some type of realistic option when it comes to helping overseas?

MR. EARNEST: Let me start by saying this: There are six licenses that have been approved by the Department of Energy related to the export of about 8.5 billion cubic feet per day of natural gas to a range of countries around the world. What's important for you to understand about those licenses that have already been issued is that the projects for delivering the product would not be completed until the end of next year. So proposals to try to respond to the situation in Ukraine that are related to our policy on exporting natural gas would not have an immediate effect.

The other factor that's important to understand about the situation is the current inventories of liquefied natural gas in Europe and in Ukraine are actually above traditional levels or above normal levels. The reason for that is, unlike North America, they've had a relatively mild winter in Europe and the region. So there is no indication currently that there's much risk of a natural gas shortage in the region.

The other dynamic that factors into all this is that Russia prides itself on being a reliable supplier of natural gas to countries around the world – I would say natural gas and other sources of energy to countries around the world. Shutting off the natural gas would threaten that reputation – it certainly would undermine it, not just in the eyes of Ukraine and Europe but in countries around the world.

Finally, it's also important to recognize that Russia relies on revenue from exporting natural gas and other sources of energy. Russia currently yields about \$50 billion a year in revenue from exporting natural gas, so ending that kind of relationship with Europe would have significant financial consequences for Russia as well.

So this is a complicated situation. For a more detailed explanation of this complicated dynamic, I'd refer you to the Department of Energy. But in terms of the top lines, the United States has a long relationship with Ukraine and has actually been talking about these energy issues for some time. Vice President Biden traveled to Ukraine in 2009, and one of the items at the top of the agenda was efforts by the United States to work with Ukraine to help them reduce their dependence on Russian sources of energy, to help them reform their energy sector, to improve efficiency, to improve energy security in Ukraine. So this is a complicated issue, one that we've been coordinating with the Ukrainians on for quite some time.

So I think that mostly answers your question, but for a more detailed answer, I'd refer you to the Department of Energy.

Q Just related to that, did this come up in the call last night with the Prime Minister? Because I know that it's been really important for Japan to build a strong relationship with Russia for

natural gas. Was the President able to give any assurances to the Prime Minister about this?

MR. EARNEST: I don't want to get into a more detailed readout beyond what we issued last night and early this morning. But I will say that the executive order that the President issued yesterday put in place a structure where sanctions could be implemented. As Jay discussed during the briefing, no specific organizations have been targeted at this point, but that process is underway. So there's no immediate impact from the sanctions that the President has considered in terms of interrupting anybody's access to Russian sources of energy.

What sanctions we'll be focused on are individuals and entities that have interfered with or played a prominent role in interfering with the sovereignty of Ukraine. And those are the individuals and entities that will be targeted. And when we have additional announcements on that, we will. Let me just end this answer by saying that, as I mentioned in my previous answer, that Prime Minister Abe is committed, or voiced to the President his commitment to closely coordinating with the international community and with the other countries in the G7 in standing up for the principle of respecting state sovereignty and the territorial integrity of independent nations.

Q Josh, one more question on this. You've obviously got the Vice President out of town, the Secretary of State is still out of town, the National Security Advisor is in the Persian Gulf, and the President is heading to Florida. I'm just wondering that's four senior national security officials not in Washington, including the President. Is that an unusual set of circumstances? And does that pose any issues in terms of how the government would respond should something sudden happen in Ukraine or Crimea?

MR. EARNEST: It's hard for me to speak to the travel habits of all of those officials. Most of the people you described have as a part of their job description traveling overseas to represent the interest of the United States overseas. So I wouldn't be surprised if this is a fairly regular occurrence. I mean, it's not uncommon when the President is traveling overseas for the National Security Advisor or for the Secretary of State to be with him. So it's not uncommon.

I will say this: The President is traveling this weekend with his Deputy National Security Advisor, Tony Blinken, who has played a very important role in handling this situation in Ukraine. The President is traveling with the regular assortment of communications tools that will allow him to convene in a secure fashion meetings with his national security team, if necessary. He, of course, has a telephone, so if he needs to make calls to world leaders, whether it's President Putin or our allies, or other international leaders that are involved in this effort, he can stay in regular touch with them. So we have complete confidence that the President can handle all the responsibilities that he has, based on the resources that we have with us on the flight.

Q That said, you were quoted earlier this week I think by Politico saying that it was still up in the air, there was some debate or some internal deliberations about whether he would maintain a weekend schedule of staying down there. The decision seems that he's going to. What was the debate about then if he can do that, and you know that? Are you saying that the situation in the Ukraine is sort of calm enough that you can go reliably? In other words, what was the debate or why did it come down on this side?

MR. EARNEST: I wouldn't characterize it as a debate. I was quoted in Politico talking about the fact that the President's schedule would be a little more fluid than usual because international events were a little more fluid than usual.

I do think that what we have seen over the course of the last several days is the President has marshalled our allies to put in place a structure for responding to the situation that we're seeing on the ground in Ukraine. The President has had, again, multiple conversations with President Putin where he highlighted that there is an off-ramp here, that there is an opportunity for the Russians to sit down with the Ukrainians, facilitated by the international community, if necessary, to try to broker an agreement, to allow international inspectors into every corner of the nation of Ukraine to ensure that the rights of everybody, including the rights of ethnic Russians, are being protected.

We've described before that that is a legitimate interest of Russia and, frankly, it's a legitimate

interest of the international community to ensure that the rights of all the citizens of Ukraine are being respected.

There's an opportunity for the Russians to live up to their basing agreement in Crimea, to return their soldiers and their troops to their bases, and for the international community to come together in support of the elections that are planned for May. So there is a path to deescalate the situation. And that is a path that has been set up by – under the President's leadership. We have marshalled the international community behind – or in support of this potential off-ramp. And I think over the course of the next few days, we'll get a better indication about whether or not the Russians are open to that off-ramp.

And one of the conclusions of the call that the President had with President Putin yesterday was that Secretary of State John Kerry and his counterpart, Foreign Minister Lavrov, should be in touch to talk about steps forward on that.

So I think – the President is hopeful that we'll get a little greater clarity on the situation over the course of the next few days. And if additional steps need to be taken next week, then we can take those steps.

Q Can you characterize the tone of these lengthy conversations that the two leaders have had? I mean, you said that next few days will tell the story, but it doesn't seem that so far that something has come out of it, that –

MR. EARNEST: I don't want to set up a deadline over the next few days. I think we're hopeful that in the next few days, we'll get greater clarity about whether or not the Russians are willing to take some concrete steps toward this off-ramp here.

But in terms of characterizing the calls, we have issued readouts and I wouldn't want to get in front of those. But I do think that it's fair for you to – fair for people to take away from these readouts that at least as it relates to the view of the situation – the U.S. view of the situation versus the Russian view of the situation in Ukraine, and in Crimea in particular, there's a pretty strong difference of opinion; that there is a disagreement about the facts related to what's actually happening on the ground there.

The best example of this is you saw in the news conference that President Putin convened earlier this week that he basically denied that there were Russian troops on the ground in Crimea outside their bases. All of the available evidence indicates that's not true.

So we're having robust, direct, candid conversations between President Obama and President Putin. That means acknowledging that there are basic differences over what's actually happening on the ground in Crimea.

So the real test is whether or not the Russians are going to take advantage of this off-ramp that is available here. And we're hopeful that the Russians will take the steps necessary to deescalate the situation – by observing the basing agreements, by supporting elections, by entering into talks, facilitated by the international community, if necessary, with the Ukrainians to try to resolve all this. And again, that could also include putting international monitors all throughout Ukraine to ensure that the rights of everybody, including ethnic Russians, are being respected.

President Putin has indicated that that's part of Russia's interest in the region, and it's part of the U.S. and the international community's interest in the region. So there is some common ground here. But I don't want to paper over the differences that exist on some very basic facts on the ground.

Q It sounds like you're saying the White House is in kind of a wait-and-see mode for a few days on this?

MR. EARNEST: I wouldn't use those words, only because the President and senior members of our team remain very actively engaged in the situation. The President will continue to consult very closely with our allies around the globe, particularly the G7 nations that Jeff mentioned. Secretary Kerry will be in touch with his counterpart, having specific discussions about the way forward here. So there's still a lot of activity going on here even as we watch carefully to see what the Russian reaction might be.

Ukraine in the U.S. Department of State Daily Press Briefing

JEN PSAKI

SPOKESPERSON

WASHINGTON, DC

MARCH 7, 2014

QUESTION: And this will dovetail into Ukraine, which might –

MS. PSAKI: Okay.

QUESTION: – others might questions on, too. The White House Sent out a readout of President Obama's call with the Prime Minister of Japan –

MS. PSAKI: Mm-hmm.

QUESTION: – noting that they agreed that Russia's actions are a threat to international peace and security, and that they committed to work to insist that Russia abide by its obligations and commitments to Ukraine's sovereignty. The readout from the Japanese side is rather different and does not mention Russia at all, just mentioning that President Abe supports President Obama's efforts to resolve the Ukraine crisis. How do you explain this discrepancy?

MS. PSAKI: I can't speak to their readout, and I would point you to my colleagues in the White House, but broadly speaking this call was about engagement and broadening our engagement with a range of our close allies and partners about the situation in Ukraine. Obviously, Japan is an important global partner, and so discussing with them what we're doing, why we're doing it, why international unity is important, was the purpose, but I don't know that we have concerns about that difference in the readouts.

QUESTION: How would you characterize the state of – or the state of coordination between the U.S. and Japan on this issue, specifically?

MS. PSAKI: Well, I would let you – I would point you to Japan on how – on their engagement and level of engagement.

QUESTION: But from your perspective.

MS. PSAKI: But of course, they're an important global partner, and that's why the President called them, called the prime minister, to talk to him about what we're doing. And that reflects our relationship, it reflects what an important player they are on the global stage.

QUESTION: Mm-hmm. You've said – I mean, you've said previously that disagreements between the U.S. and Japan happen, it's part of being such a close partner and ally and that when you do, you express them. But would you say there are some –

MS. PSAKI: I would characterize this as a disagreement at all.

QUESTION: But would you say that there are some disagreements or some tensions regarding this issue, I mean –

MS. PSAKI: What – with whom?

QUESTION: Well, Japan has –

MS. PSAKI: I didn't say with Japan.

QUESTION: No, with Japan on the issue of how to approach the Ukraine crisis.

MS. PSAKI: I didn't say there was disagreement.

QUESTION: No, I know. I'm asking you –

MS. PSAKI: Okay.

QUESTION: – if you would say that there are disagreements or if there are some tensions with Japan on how you approach this issue.

MS. PSAKI: Not that I'm aware of. I would point you them if they have concerns or disagreements, but not that I've seen or that I'm aware of.

QUESTION: So – okay. Just finally, are you concerned that Japan's higher demand for fossil fuels post-Fukushima, which Russia is a very prominent supplier of, is – represents kind of an obstacle in presenting – in approaching the Ukraine crisis with Japan and with other allies who are also consumers of Russian goods?

MS. PSAKI: Sure. Well, there are a range of countries that have greater trade and economic relationships with Russia than the United States does, and we certainly recognize that. Our preference here is not to keep hyping up sanctions; our preference here is to find an end to this conflict that's happening through engagement, through discussion – Russia can take the off-ramp. So we recognize that, but we also think it's important for countries to be unified given what's happened here in Ukraine and that's certainly what the President and Secretary are expressing to a range of our global partners.

QUESTION: Staying with that –

QUESTION: (Off-mike.)

MS. PSAKI: Sure.

QUESTION: – in the phone call last night between the presidents – between the two presidents, there was some suggestion from President Obama about some kind of mediation –

MS. PSAKI: Mm-hmm.

QUESTION: – that the Russians and Ukrainians need to sit down together. Does he have any idea of or is there any idea within the – percolating within the Administration as to what kind of structure or who should lead the mediation?

MS. PSAKI: Sure. Well, there's – Secretary Kerry talked a little bit about this yesterday. But that's part of the discussion, is what – there are a range of formats that are possible. Certainly the United States is happy and willing to be a part of that. The issue here is getting Russia and the new government in Ukraine at the same table, having a discussion, and there are a range of partners and players in the international community that can be a part of that. So that's what's being talked about now.

QUESTION: But I mean, would you see it more in a kind of formal setting, such as through the United Nations, or would this be something that, perhaps, like you said, maybe the United States would be willing to be a partner to that, but would Russia necessarily want the United States involved in a mediation of this nature?

MS. PSAKI: Sure. It's a good question. It's what's being talked about now. It doesn't necessarily have to be through the UN. The UN has obviously been engaged what's been – with what's happening on the ground and they've been on the ground. But there are also a range of partners who have been very closely engaged in this in Ukraine as well. So that's all what's being talked about right now.

QUESTION: Did you see the presidential – the Russian president spokesman's comments about the idea of Western mediation? I think Dmitry Peskov said, "This makes us smile." He seemed – essentially seemed to find the idea risible, laughable, ridiculous. He evoked no interest in it whatsoever. Do you – is that constructive from your point of view?

MS. PSAKI: Well, I think that doesn't reflect the discussions that have been happening with the Russians, with Foreign Minister Lavrov, with other officials about a range of options for a contact group and for a discussion with the new Government of Ukraine.

QUESTION: I mean, you do see the difficulty? The Russians are obviously wary of European involvement given the history of Ukraine and why the Russians stepped into all this. And then, obviously, they'd be perhaps a bit leery of any kind of U.S. involvement. So that kind of leaves you – well, who would be in this contact group and who would be leading it?

MS. PSAKI: Well, Jo, the –

QUESTION: Anwar.

MS. PSAKI: (Laughter.) Though Russia is fairly isolated here from where the international community is, so there are not a lot of options for partners or members of the contact who have not stated that the steps they've taken are illegal and inappropriate, there are still partners who would be willing to and happy to be a part of bringing an end to this through diplomatic channels regardless of that. So we'll see what happens. But that's what was – the President was referring to in the statement.

QUESTION: Can you – on Russia –

QUESTION: Ukraine's new prime minister –

MS. PSAKI: Let's just do one at a time.

QUESTION: Related –

MS. PSAKI: Ukraine? Okay.

QUESTION: On Russia.

MS. PSAKI: Mm-hmm.

QUESTION: You were talking about Russia is isolated and so on. Today began the Paralympics and, in fact, 48 countries are participating in Sochi. The largest team is the American team. It has, like, 80 members, followed closely by Russia. So how is that – how does that work into this equation of isolation and so on, and sanctions?

MS. PSAKI: Well, the White House announced this, Said, I think a couple of days ago. But the United States is no longer sending a presidential delegation to the upcoming Winter Paralympic Games in Sochi. Of course, we continue to strongly support the U.S. athletes and we certainly don't want them to be hurt by this process, but they will participate. We wish them great success, but we won't be sending a presidential delegation which does send a strong message.

QUESTION: Okay. But in a way – I mean, no presidential delegation was sent. I mean, I understand that the President for the Winter Olympics designated a team led by, I suppose, a lower level.

MS. PSAKI: That's true, but that was before this all happened, and that was unrelated to this.

QUESTION: Did you see, then, that the Ukrainian team decided to – not to pull out of the Paralympics because they decided they wanted to have a presence there?

MS. PSAKI: I didn't see that, but that's interesting and –

QUESTION: Well, they wanted to show that they – according to their statements, they wanted to show that Ukraine is in – a sovereign nation, and as a sovereign nation, should take part in the Olympics.

MS. PSAKI: Sure. And certainly, we all support the athletes, our athletes as well. So –

QUESTION: Ukraine's prime minister said on Wednesday that Ukraine's ridding itself of nuclear weapons in agreements with Russia in part invited this intervention, and that the international community's failure to protect Ukraine was harming efforts, nuclear nonproliferation efforts. He specifically pointed to what Iran would be learning from this. Do you have a comment on that?

MS. PSAKI: I actually haven't seen those comments, so I'll check and see if we have anything to add.

QUESTION: Has Secretary Kerry spoken with Foreign Minister Lavrov since they met and since he said he was taking ideas back to Putin? And if he hasn't, are there any calls scheduled, and –

MS. PSAKI: He did speak with him this morning, but it was right before I came down, so I didn't have a chance to get a readout of the call. But we can get something around to all of you once that's available.

QUESTION: And that would have been from the plane?

MS. PSAKI: Yes, from the plane, mm-hmm.

QUESTION: Okay.

QUESTION: To Bangladesh?

MS. PSAKI: Let's just finish – do we have any more on Ukraine?

QUESTION: Ukraine.

MS. PSAKI: Ukraine, in the back.

QUESTION: What's the current thinking on the response if the referendum in Crimea goes ahead? There's been strong language about that proposal.

MS. PSAKI: Mm-hmm.

QUESTION: Is there a different or slightly separate set of options that are being considered if it happens?

MS. PSAKI: Look, I think we're taking this day by day and week by week. I think you heard the President, Secretary Kerry, a range of officials say yesterday that it's – that step is not

recognized by the constitution. It wouldn't be legitimate, according to the constitution of – the Ukrainian constitution, and that our view is that the new government needs to be a part of any conversation or discussion.

There is some irony here in that the Russians are not supporting the elections in May, or they're against the elections in May, which would be the most widespread democratic step that could be taken that reflects the views of all of the people of Ukraine. So I don't think that should be lost on anyone. But what I would – we're taking this day by day, and so obviously, our focus now is getting the Ukrainians and the new government of Ukraine and the Russians back at the table, and there are a range of formats and options for that. We'll see where we are at that point.

QUESTION: But –

QUESTION: And just one more?

QUESTION: Go ahead.

QUESTION: Putin's spokesperson has just said they fear ethnic cleansing in Crimea. What's our response to that? And what is the U.S. doing to verify these repeated claims coming from Russia?

MS. PSAKI: I don't think there is evidence of that. I know that they have been making accusations about far right ultra-nationalists and what steps they've been taking. Some respected organizations in the United States, including the Anti-Defamation League, have expressed their concerns about rhetoric being used, and we certainly condemn that. But again, I wouldn't – I think we've seen a range of comments made that are not matched with the facts on the ground.

QUESTION: Can I ask a question?

MS. PSAKI: Mm-hmm.

QUESTION: Do you think that – and forgive me if this came up –

MS. PSAKI: Sure.

QUESTION: – at some point this week and I missed it, but you all but called President Putin a liar in your fact sheet the other day. You accused him of making “false claims.” You talked about comments of his that were fiction.

MS. PSAKI: Mm-hmm.

QUESTION: Why is that helpful to your effort to secure a diplomatic solution here?

MS. PSAKI: Well, Arshad, I think the most powerful antidote to false information is the truth, and while of course we have continued to – and in every statement that's made publicly – offer an off-ramp to the Russians, there's also a range of information – misinformation that is out there. And so it's important in our view to communicate what the facts are, and that needs to be a starting point or an important point in the process as we litigate this further. Again, I don't think that anyone is really offended by a piece of paper. This really was used to convey accurate information to a range of people and a range of countries, because there's a lot of misinformation out there.

QUESTION: I think the Russian foreign ministry was offended by the piece of paper. People can be offended by a single word. And I – the reason I asked is simply whether you think this has in any way – and it may not have – made your diplomacy harder, particularly with Putin since you called him out by name.

MS. PSAKI: Not at all. Not in a – for a moment. There are multiple paths that we need to take, and we're doing that beyond that one document, including the announcement yesterday about sanctions and visa bans. And putting that necessary pressure on, we feel is essential while at the same time pursuing the diplomatic path.

QUESTION: But wait. You're saying that you don't think gratuitously insulting the president of Russia is in any way – in any way makes your job – makes the diplomatic job harder?

MS. PSAKI: I think we were putting out accurate information when there was a range of misinformation that was out there –

QUESTION: Right. Understood, but I mean –

MS. PSAKI: – and there was a void of the actual facts.

QUESTION: Yeah, but you did go out of your way, and I think you were quite – not you,

maybe not you personally, but the building itself was quite happy and pleased with itself over – with the Dostoevsky quote and this kind of thing. I mean, it was clearly something that there was some glee behind it. And I guess I'm asking, are – you say absolutely not, you don't think it's made the diplomatic work any more difficult, in response to Arshad's question. I just wonder how you can say that, that you don't believe that insulting someone like this is going to hurt.

MS. PSAKI: I don't think we look at it that way. We laid out the specific facts of what's happening, given there's a great deal of misinformation out there, Matt. At the same time, there were discussions and negotiations that were happening on the ground in Paris and Rome. At the same time, we made a decision to put in place a visa ban and move forward with the authority for sanctions.

QUESTION: Okay. So –

MS. PSAKI: This is not a unilateral exercise here where we're just taking one step at a time.

QUESTION: Well, I – yeah, and I understand that. But in the middle of all this very serious work that's going on, you guys come out with a statement that takes – let's call it what it is, it takes pot shots at the guy and insults him, which is not – which is entertaining, certainly, but not always the way, or not, certainly, in keeping with the kind of staid diplomatic striped pants kind of language and conduct of the past. So I'm just – you stand by this – you stand by – behind your statement that, no, that you don't think that this has made things – this has made the atmosphere more difficult?

MS. PSAKI: Discussions and engagement has continued –

QUESTION: Continued despite –

MS. PSAKI: – throughout the course of the last couple of days.

QUESTION: And do you know, in your conversations with Marie or with anyone else on the plane –

MS. PSAKI: Mm-hmm.

QUESTION: – has Lavrov mentioned this to the Secretary at all?

MS. PSAKI: I don't have any update on that.

QUESTION: You don't know?

QUESTION: And you probably don't know this either –

MS. PSAKI: Mm-hmm.

QUESTION: – and you are probably too smart to comment on it, but I wondered if it came up in President Obama's –

QUESTION: Try. (Laughter.)

QUESTION: I wonder if it came up in President Obama's hour-long conversation with President Putin.

MS. PSAKI: Not that I'm aware of, Arshad, but we'll let you all know if there's more to report.

QUESTION: A quick one on Russia?

MS. PSAKI: Sure.

QUESTION: Do you have more information on past U.S. sanctions against Russia other than – was it Magnitsky List that you mentioned yesterday?

MS. PSAKI: No, there's not – not since then. Obviously, there's a long history, and I'm sure you can find that information, but not since then.

Department of Defense Press briefing by Rear Adm. Kirby in the Pentagon Briefing Room

Presenter: Press Secretary Rear Admiral John Kirby

March 07, 2014

REAR ADMIRAL JOHN KIRBY: Good afternoon everybody. Just a couple of comments here at the top and we'll get right to your questions.

First, I wanted to let you know that secretary – Secretary Hagel reached out by phone this morning with his Ukrainian counterpart, Minister of Defense Ihor Tenyukh. This was the first

time that the two had chatted, and Secretary Hagel congratulated Minister Tenyukh on assuming his new post. The secretary also stressed the firm commitment of the United States to support the Ukrainian people and to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine. He praised the performance and the restraint of the Ukrainian armed forces, who have not allowed the situation to escalate. Finally, he committed himself to keeping the dialogue open with Minister Tenyukh throughout these difficult times.

For our part, here in the Defense Department, again, I'd just remind you that our efforts are focused on demonstrating our commitment to our collective defense responsibilities under the North Atlantic treaty, and as Secretary Hagel said yesterday, we will pursue measures that reinforce those commitments to include the provision of additional support to NATO's Baltic air policing mission, and to our aviation detachment in Poland.

And with that, I'll take your questions. Bob.

Q: Two follow up questions to that, the second one being the aviation detachment in Poland. Can you clarify the numbers of aircraft and personnel who are going to be sent there, and then to your previous point about the secretary's phone call: did his Ukrainian counterpart make any requests for any type of U.S. security or defense assistance?

REAR ADM. KIRBY: Okay. To your first one, we're still working our way through this with the – with Polish authorities, Bob. I know I've seen press reporting out there on – speculating on numbers of aircraft and that kind of thing, and I don't have anything to announce today. We're still in discussions with them about what the plus up is going to look like, but clearly we're committed to that. We know that the Poles are, as well, very interested in having us to add to the – to the det. As you note, 10 people right now in a support aircraft coming in on a rotational basis right now.

So, we're still working our way through that, and as soon as we have something to announce, we'll do that.

Q: Considering making it a permanent rotation, or still...

REAR ADM. KIRBY: The parameters are all still under discussion right now. I mean, I think it's – it's – we're – we're taking a look at all the various options and ways that we can plus up this det, make it more robust, but no decisions have been made yet, and soon as we have a mutual decision between us and Polish authorities, we will – of course, we'll make that public.

On your second question, it was – it was a good discussion. There – it was a – and it was a – sort of a broad-based discussion on – on terms of making sure that the – that we can keep the dialogue and the level of cooperation, and the mil-to-mil relationship with Ukraine as strong as possible now and well into the future.

The – the minister did ask, you know, for – he asked the secretary to consider providing some advice and counsel to his troops with respect to humanitarian assistance and disaster relief efforts. He made – he said that – that he knows the United States military is really good at that and that that's the kind of advice and counsel that they could use. And so it was – it was a broad-based discussion about – about sort of the advice and counsel that might be able to give them over the long term. And I think I'd leave it at that for...

Q: Just telephonically or sending some people over there...

(CROSSTALK)

REAR ADM. KIRBY: Well, they didn't get into that level of detail. He just said, look, you're very good at this. And there was – you know – you know, technical assistance issues that – that he raised, and I don't want to get into all the details right now, but, again, you know, we'll keep you posted if there's something to let you know.

Q: Can I just follow up on that? So he asked for these things, and you – if I understood you right, there's the discussion about doing it over the long term. But does – when Secretary Hagel speaks about doing it in the long term, does this current crisis have to be resolved before you can do this with the Ukraine military? Why long term? If they need humanitarian...

REAR ADM. KIRBY: Well, the – the – the specific issue on humanitarian assistance support was something that – I mean, he just – and I won't – I won't speak for the minister. Just he

believed that this is an expertise that they could – they could benefit from and so asked for – asked for, you know, some counsel on that.

Q: But is that for now? Is he asking for it in the near term?

REAR ADM. KIRBY: They didn't get into dates and specifics. It was – again, it was sort of a broad discussion of assistance and things that the United States military could provide. Again, I don't – I'm not going to get into the details of the – of everything they talked about. And the secretary said that he would – you know, that he appreciated the interest and that – that he would – that he would take their requests under consideration.

Q: Can I just ask you then, does this phone call become the, if you will, formal U.S. military endorsement – you said mil-to-mil – the formal – formal U.S. military endorsement of the Ukraine military as it exists today after the – now that the interim government and all of these issues are now in play? Is this now the endorsement of this Ukraine military with this government?

REAR ADM. KIRBY: I don't know that I'd characterize that. I mean, we – we've had a longstanding relationship with the Ukrainian military. That has continued throughout this crisis and – and to today. I think that would be putting too fine a point on the conversation that they had today. We remain interested in maintaining a close relationship with the Ukrainian military, and I suspect that that will continue. Did that answer your question? Okay.

Yeah?

Q: Admiral, do you have any comments in regards with the interview of General Michael Flynn with NPR, where he was talking about the (inaudible) in regards with the movement of Russian troops?

REAR ADM. KIRBY: I did not see or hear his interview, so, I mean, I – I'd be loathe to speculate on an interview I didn't hear. But I think to your question, this came up on the Hill today [sic Tuesday, March 4], and Secretary Hagel was very clear in questioning with senators that – that there was nothing sudden or new about Russian activity in Crimea or near the border of Ukraine. We were monitoring it. We were aware of it. We were tracking that.

Q: Are you still monitoring the situation in...

REAR ADM. KIRBY: The best we can, yes. We're still watching the situation very closely, of course.

Q: And something in regards to, the – the destroyer that went to the Black Sea?

REAR ADM. KIRBY: The Truxton. Yeah, she's, as you've probably seen live footage of her transiting into – into the Black Sea. U.S.S. Truxton's a guided missile destroyer. She's part of the strike group of the carrier U.S.S. George H.W. Bush. She's right now planned to be in the Black Sea for about a week or so, to conduct port visits and routine exercises with – with partner nations there, and I think we've been very clear that this was – this was an excursion for her that was planned well before her departure from the United States.

Yep.

Q: Admiral, is the Bush in the Med?

REAR ADM. KIRBY: Yes. The Bush is in the Mediterranean. The Bush is on a regularly scheduled deployment to the Middle East, and since she's out of Norfolk, she went through the Med to get there.

Q: When you said before you're closely monitoring the situation in Ukraine, have you seen the continued influx of Russian troops into Crimea? And what's the range of estimates of how big of the force actually is there right now?

REAR ADM. KIRBY: I'd – I don't know that I'd characterize a continued flow. I mean, they have added forces over the last week or so. We don't have perfect visibility into the rate of change there, but – and – and our ability to provide an estimate is – is somewhat limited, just based on our knowledge of the situation – the situation on the ground.

But clearly, they have thousands of soldiers in the Crimea. Some estimates are up to near 20,000 of them. Again, we don't have perfect – I can't give you a perfect number on that, but that's the – that's the range at which we – we believe they're at.

It's less important the number than it is what they're doing. It's – it's a clear violation of lots of international obligations Russia has, not to mention the 1997 basing agreement with Ukraine, which prohibits them from the kind of activities they're doing.

So we're much more concerned about the activities, you know, blocking off Ukrainian naval bases by sinking patrol boats into the waterways and essentially establishing operational control of the Crimea.

Q: So the 20,000 (OFF-MIC there right now, including the...
(CROSSTALK)

REAR ADM. KIRBY: I'd say that's a – that's a good estimate right now, but it's just an estimate. And as I said, we don't have perfect visibility on the numbers.

Q: There's another report out that the Pentagon commissioned a study of Vladimir Putin, his body language a couple of years ago. Can you verify that? And has that report been used in – because of the recent crisis?

REAR ADM. KIRBY: Well, the answer to your second part is no. This isn't – we did not commission a study to study Vladimir Putin's body language. What you're referring to is a – is a program that is resourced through the Office of Net Assessments here in the Pentagon that – it's a research program by a body language expert to – to study the body language and movements of various world figures.

The – the individual – the researcher that determines this – determines the identity of the individuals that she wants to look at on her own, there's no guidance from DOD to – you know, to tell her to go look at a certain person. As I understand it, they reviewed Mr. Putin back in '08, along with Russian President Medvedev, and again in 2012, but there's been no study of Vladimir Putin with respect to the recent crisis in Ukraine.

Q: There was a subsequent study in 2012...

REAR ADM. KIRBY: 2012, yeah.

Q: And you're saying that as of right now that no one has even looked at these – at these studies?

REAR ADM. KIRBY: I have not seen it. I don't know who else has seen it. The reports are given right to the Office of Net Assessment. As I understand it, that is where they – that is where they stayed.

Q: And what is the point of this study again (OFF-MIC)

Q: Can we release it?

REAR ADM. KIRBY: It's a – it's a research program that examines the – the researcher examines the body movements and body language of various world figures to determine, you know, a better understanding of their decision-making process, as I understand it.

Q: For use in – in what – for the secretary to read and analyze...

REAR ADM. KIRBY: The secretary has not read these reports. And I don't believe that they've – I can tell you for sure that they have not informed any policy decisions by the Department of Defense. They go right to the Office of Net Assessment, as I understand it, and they have not been used to inform any policy or program decisions here at the Department of Defense.

Q: Have you shared it with other departments or the White House, for instance?

REAR ADM. KIRBY: I don't – I don't know, but I don't believe they have been shared outside the Pentagon.

Q: Can you find out how much money we spent on this before Senator Grassley or Coburn write a letter to you about this? What a waste of money, this sounds like. Can you find out how much that's been spent in the last five years on this?

REAR ADM. KIRBY: My understanding is it's in the neighborhood of \$300,000 a year.

Q: Jesus. Really?

(CROSSTALK)

REAR ADM. KIRBY: They're not classified. We don't release them.

(CROSSTALK)

Q: You don't?

Q: That's what – I just want to follow up on all of this. They're – they're not classified?

REAR ADM. KIRBY: They're not classified.

Q: Why can you not release them?

REAR ADM. KIRBY: I didn't say I couldn't release them, I said we do not release them.

Q: Will you explain why you do not release them?

REAR ADM. KIRBY: They – they are – the – the Office of Net Assessment procures, has many research projects that go on. This is just one of them. Mr. – Mr. Marshall is an out of the box thinker who likes to study all kinds of issues, and many of them never go beyond his office. This is one of them.

Q: Can you – so we will have to FOIA it, then?

REAR ADM. KIRBY: We don't have any intention of – of actively making them public.

Q: But why? Is there a reason? If it's not classified...

REAR ADM. KIRBY: There's plenty of things we do in the Pentagon that's not classified that we don't hang on our website and publicly release.

Q: What if we ask for it?

REAR ADM. KIRBY: Well, we'll certainly take the request under consideration.

Q: Can you add to that, can we get a list of who has been studied under this program?

REAR ADM. KIRBY: I'll see if we can get you a list.

Q: And is the secretary going to let this program continue? Does he think it has value?

REAR ADM. KIRBY: The secretary was interested in the press coverage of it. Asked some questions about it this morning. And I suspect he'll be asking more questions about it.

Q: Is he indicating he is thinking about stopping it?

REAR ADM. KIRBY: I'm going to leave it where I – where I just said. He's – he's saw the press report of it. He asked for some – he asked for some more information about it, and I think he'll continue to ask for some more information about it.

Q: Can I just ask you to explain your other remark on Ukraine, if I might, about the Russian troops, just for clarity.

You said they've added forces in the last week or so. Is that, when you say "added forces," is that different than the roughly 5,000 to 6,000, which was...

REAR ADM. KIRBY: I just meant that over the last, as we've all been watching this crisis unfold, you've seen it, you've reported it, they have continued to add troops into the Crimea.

Q: It's not beyond that.

REAR ADM. KIRBY: Not that I'm aware of.

Q: On Ukraine, I want to ask you, besides the F-15 and the F-16 movements to Poland and Lithuania, does the United States – is the Pentagon planning anything else in the next three or four days, symbolic moves of aircraft or vessels?

REAR ADM. KIRBY: Well, first of all, I wouldn't characterize it as symbolic. These are – these are real missions here, the aviation det in Poland and the Baltic air policing mission. Those are the only two that we have to announce right now.

Q: Are there others in the works, though?

REAR ADM. KIRBY: None that I'm aware of, but I think we're going to continue to look for ways to demonstrate our commitment to NATO, so I'm not – I'm not aware of any new ones now. Those are the two that we're focused on right now.

(END UKRAINE-RELATED BRIEF)

U.S. Embassy to Assist Ukraine with Asset Recovery

March 7, 2014

The U.S. Embassy in Kyiv is pleased to announce that following-up Secretary Kerry's announcement, the United States has deployed an interagency team of experts to Kyiv to begin working with their Ukrainian counterparts to identify assets that may have been stolen by the Yanukovich regime. The full team is now on the ground. These experts are in contact with their

counterparts within the Ukrainian government and will assist Ukrainian investigators in documenting stolen assets and identifying their current location, in order to facilitate the future return of assets to Ukraine. While asset recovery is a lengthy and complicated process, we are happy to be able to contribute to the effort.

КАНАДА

Prime Minister Stephen Harper calls President Hollande of France and Prime Minister Cameron of the United Kingdom

Ottawa, Ontario

7 March 2014

Prime Minister Stephen Harper spoke separately today with President François Hollande of France and Prime Minister David Cameron of the United Kingdom regarding the situation in Ukraine.

The leaders strongly condemned Russia's unprovoked violation of Ukrainian sovereignty, noting that its territorial integrity must be respected. They agreed that a de-escalation of the situation is in the best interest of the entire international community.

The leaders also exchanged views on actions to support Ukraine and encourage an immediate withdrawal of Russia's military to its bases. They highlighted the importance of continued coordinated actions by members of the G-7, noting the joint statement that was issued on March 2 that included the G-7 nations' decision to suspend preparations for the G-8 Summit planned in Sochi in June.

Prime Minister Harper concluded each conversation by committing to continue working closely together on these issues.

Statement by the Prime Minister of Canada on the situation in Ukraine

Ottawa, Ontario

7 March 2014

Prime Minister Stephen Harper today issued the following statement on the situation in Ukraine:

"Canada continues to condemn in the strongest terms President Putin's military invasion of Ukraine.

"Today, our Government is taking additional measures to further increase pressure on President Putin and the Russian Federation to withdraw its troops to their bases by imposing a travel ban against a number of individuals responsible for threatening the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine. This ban will prevent these individuals from travelling to Canada.

"We remain extremely concerned about the ongoing crisis and continue to call for Russia to respect Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity."

Speaking notes for Chris Alexander, Canada's Citizenship and Immigration Minister for a Keynote Address in honour of International Women's Day

Canadian Club

Toronto, Ontario

March 7, 2014

As delivered

<...>

And of course, the contrast couldn't be starker on a day like today when so many of us are thinking about Ukraine and about the fact that a European state, a permanent member of the Security Council, has had the temerity and has been misguided enough to send its troops across,

with its president denying that, sometimes denying that they're actually Russian troops and sometimes acknowledging it, to occupy an autonomous republic, a part of a neighbouring sovereign state.

We haven't seen that at least since 1968 in Europe, and if this is an annexation that is being attempted, if the referendum whose results we are going to reject and most of the world is going to reject, but which may still be held in 12 days is an attempt to cause the cessation of Crimea from Ukraine and join it to another country, that will be the first military-backed annexation of a part of Europe since the 1930s and 40s, ladies and gentlemen.

And so the parallels here are truly chilling. The violation of international law is clear for all to see. And the importance of countries like ours that have enjoyed peace within our borders for 200 years, no mean achievement, no, not replicated in many parts of the world, the importance of our standing on principle and telling this story as it is and ensuring that there are consequences, moral, political, economic and otherwise, for those that break the rules on the international stage has never been greater.

<...>

ФРАНЦІЯ

Ukraine – Entretien avec le Premier ministre canadien – Communiqué de la présidence de la République (Paris, 07 mars 2014)

Le président de la République, François Hollande, s'est entretenu aujourd'hui avec Stephen Harper, Premier ministre canadien. Ils ont souligné la gravité de la situation actuelle en Ukraine, alors que son intégrité territoriale est remise en cause. Ils ont marqué la nécessité pour la Russie d'accepter une solution de sortie de crise, conforme au droit international. Ils ont souligné qu'à défaut, les relations entre la communauté internationale et la Russie pouvaient connaître une dégradation dommageable pour tous. Ils ont rappelé, par ailleurs, leur plein soutien aux nouvelles autorités en Ukraine, ainsi qu'au processus de transition politique, notamment à la préparation, sous contrôle international, de l'élection présidentielle du 25 mai./ (Source: site Internet de la présidence de la République)

Ukraine – Entretien de M. Laurent Fabius, ministre des affaires étrangères, avec «France Info» (Paris, 07 mars 2014)

Q – En Ukraine la situation est donc de plus en plus tendue, la Russie ne cède rien. Est-ce que Vladimir Poutine a gagné?

R – Non, et notre attitude dans toute cette crise c'est à la fois de faire preuve de fermeté, parce qu'on ne peut pas accepter que l'intégrité d'un pays, en l'occurrence l'Ukraine, soit bafouée et, en même temps d'essayer de trouver les voies du dialogue. Avant-hier, il y avait eu une certaine désescalade. Lors de la réunion à Paris, on avait fait se rencontrer tout le monde et il y avait une certaine piste qui était trouvée. Mais hier, cela a été l'inverse puisque le Parlement de Crimée a voté l'annexion, si l'on peut dire.

Q – C'est une annexion ce qui se passe actuellement en Crimée?

R – Il y a de la part du Parlement de Crimée la volonté d'être rattachée à la Russie. Mais cela ne trompe personne. La démarche est évidemment faite en liaison avec les autorités russes. J'ai fait le relevé d'un certain nombre de choses qui convergent et qui ont été faites ces derniers jours. D'abord les soldats Russes en Crimée, puis une décision qui est passée un peu inaperçue – alors qu'elle est très importante – de M. Medvedev, le Premier ministre russe, disant: «on va construire un pont entre la Russie et la Crimée pour franchir le détroit de Kertch». Ensuite, l'appel du Parlement de Crimée. Puis une loi de la Douma disant: «si une région d'un pays étranger vote son rattachement, nous les Russes, on se laissera faire». Enfin, le texte du référendum qui est proposé, qui est totalement inconstitutionnel et illégal en droit international,

qui dit: «soit plus d'autonomie, soit le rattachement à la Russie» avec une date qui a été avancée. Tout cela démontre qu'il y a évidemment une manoeuvre.

Q – Une manoeuvre de Vladimir Poutine?

R – Bien sûr. Je veux être tout à fait clair. Je suis un ami de la Russie et j'ai toujours défendu le partenariat entre la Russie et la France, qui est quelque chose d'historiquement très important et souhaitable. Cela se traduit par l'effort que nous faisons pour la désescalade. Mais le partenariat ne veut pas dire faiblesse et l'amitié ce n'est pas l'aveuglement. Il faut donc être clair et je trouve qu'il est très important que l'Europe soit unie – et c'est le cas – dans cette crise, qui est, peut-être, l'une des plus graves depuis la Guerre froide. Nous travaillons, en particulier, très étroitement avec nos amis allemands – c'est une instruction du président de la République que nous suivons – et nous travaillons aussi avec les Américains. J'étais hier à Rome pour une conférence sur la Libye, où j'ai vu Sergueï Lavrov et John Kerry et j'y étais avec mon ami Steinmeier, le ministre allemand des affaires étrangères. Il faut que les Européens soient ensemble, c'est le cas.

Q – Et vous vous sentez en phase! Je vous repose la question très clairement, Monsieur le Ministre, est-ce que la Russie aujourd'hui a annexé la Crimée?

R – Pas encore de fait, mais elle la contrôle. Elle est présente avec ses militaires et, si le référendum a lieu, son esprit c'est de dire que la Crimée et la Russie c'est la même chose. Il faut bien voir que, au-delà de cette question de l'Ukraine, qui est déjà une question très grave, il y a une question plus générale.

Q – Vous craignez que les Russes aillent plus loin?

R – Non, pas seulement ça. Mais si une région dans le monde, que ce soit en Europe, en Asie, en Afrique ou ailleurs, peut – parce qu'elle est sollicitée par un pays voisin – décider de changer les frontières et de se rattacher au pays voisin, cela veut dire qu'il n'y a plus aucune stabilité internationale.

Q – C'est ce qui s'est passé en Géorgie il y a quelques années...

R – Oui, et ce n'est pas du tout un bon exemple.

Q – Les Russes contrôlent de fait aujourd'hui l'Ossétie du Sud et l'Abkhazie?

R – Et on nous avait dit, à l'époque, que cela ne se passerait pas et cela se passe. Mais il y a une différence – je ne veux pas faire de juridisme – entre le contrôle de fait et le rattachement, c'est-à-dire la disparition d'un pays, le rattachement d'une région à un autre pays. En Géorgie il s'agit de l'Ossétie du Sud et de l'Abkhazie et, de fait, les Russes sont restés là alors qu'ils avaient dit le contraire, mais il n'y a pas eu de rattachement de ces deux provinces à un autre pays.

Q – Laurent Fabius vous protestez encore ce matin contre l'attitude de la Russie, disons les choses très simplement, est-ce que ce n'est pas trop tard? Est-ce que le sort de la Crimée n'est pas scellé?

R – Non.

Q – Est-ce que vous avez encore des moyens d'empêcher ce qui est en train de se passer aujourd'hui en Ukraine...

R – Oui! Et c'est la stratégie...

Q – Et lesquels?

R – ...que nous poursuivons. Hier vous avez vu qu'une première salve de sanctions ont été prises par les chefs d'État ou de gouvernement. Et s'il n'y a pas des résultats très rapides, il y aura alors de nouvelles mesures en direction des responsables et des entreprises russes.

Q – Y compris en visant personnellement Vladimir Poutine?

R – Cela peut être des gels d'avoirs, cela peut être des annulations ou des refus de visa. Et, si une autre tentative est faite, alors là on entre dans tout à fait autre chose, c'est-à-dire des conséquences graves relatives aux relations entre l'Europe et la Russie.

Q – Qu'est-ce que c'est les conséquences graves?

R – Cela veut dire que, si un pays agit d'une manière telle qu'il ne respecte pas les frontières et l'indépendance des autres pays – et nous ne sommes pas loin de l'Union européenne –, cela veut dire que l'on ne pourrait pas du tout, compte tenu de cette hypothèse que je ne souhaite

absolument pas et on essaie de faire la désescalade, avoir les mêmes relations que nous avions auparavant. Et l'on reviendrait à ce qu'on connaissait il y a de longues années avec les problèmes énormes que cela va poser pour la Russie.

Q – Mais qu'est-ce que cela signifie pour ceux qui nous écoutent, c'est un retour à la Guerre froide? C'est l'option d'une guerre? Qu'est-ce que c'est?

R – Je ne vais pas à la fois plaider pour la désescalade et en même temps citer des exemples apocalyptiques. Mais cela veut dire que, sur le plan économique, évidemment les relations ne pourraient pas être du tout les mêmes. Cela veut dire que ce serait un coup très dur porté à la Russie parce qu'il ne faut pas oublier que la Russie sur le plan économique est une puissance fragile. La traduction de ce qu'ils sont en train de faire c'est une chute massive du rouble et, probablement, un retrait des investissements étrangers en Russie. Hier, les États-Unis ont discuté de la perspective de pouvoir exporter du gaz pour réduire la dépendance énergétique, donc cela veut dire un changement total de nos relations. Nous n'en sommes pas là, nous voulons à la fois être fermes – parce que ce qui se passe est inadmissible, il faut que les peuples puissent être soutenus – et, en même temps, nous voulons la désescalade.

Q – Vous ne m'avez pas répondu sur des sanctions possibles contre Vladimir Poutine lui-même?

R – Il y a une première liste de sanctions qui a été prise par les Européens contre dix-huit personnes ukrainiennes proches de l'ex-président Yanoukovitch et les Américains, eux, ont pris une deuxième liste de sanctions qui peuvent viser soit des Russes, soit des Ukrainiens.

Q – Donc, vous n'excluez pas des sanctions contre Vladimir Poutine?

R – S'agissant d'un dirigeant d'un État, c'est une affaire différente. En revanche, pour tout ce qu'on appelle le milieu proche, c'est tout à fait possible si les Russes ne comprennent pas qu'il faut revenir à une relation normale, internationale.

Q – Je vous pose la question parce que François Fillon par exemple vous reproche, reproche au gouvernement français, de traiter les Russes – je le cite – comme si c'était une sorte de dictature sud-américaine d'un million d'habitants... de mépriser les Russes finalement?

R – Oui! J'ai le souvenir, vous l'avez peut-être aussi, de M. Fillon appelant M. Poutine par son prénom et expliquant que tout cela était parfaitement pacifique. Je ne veux pas personnaliser les choses mais je crois que, dans cette affaire, il vaut mieux soutenir son propre pays que d'apporter un soutien à ceux qui sont en train de violer l'intégrité territoriale de l'Ukraine.

Q – Nous sommes vendredi, les Jeux Paralympiques commencent tout à l'heure à Sotchi, est-ce que vous nous confirmez que le gouvernement français va boycotter la cérémonie d'ouverture de Sotchi?

R – Nous prenons une attitude qui me paraît très raisonnable. Il n'est pas question de pénaliser les athlètes, car ils ont travaillé dans des conditions très difficiles pour être présents là-bas, ils ont travaillé pendant des mois et il est normal qu'ils puissent concourir. Mais qu'il y ait en plus des ministres français là-bas cela aurait été très inopportun, donc ils ne seront pas là.

Point de presse du porte-parole – Ukraine (Paris, 07 mars 2014)

(...) Ukraine Q – Le référendum en Crimée est-il légal?

R – Il est à la fois contraire à la constitution ukrainienne et au droit international. C'est non seulement la position de la France, que le ministre des affaires étrangères a rappelée ce matin, mais également celle de tous les membres de l'Union européenne, réaffirmée hier à l'issue de la réunion des chefs d'État et de gouvernements sur l'Ukraine.

Q – Comment cela se trouve-t-il être contraire au droit international? Il y a le droit à l'auto-détermination...

R – Ce qui se déroule aujourd'hui en Crimée est contraire au droit international. Il y a un risque d'annexion d'une partie d'un État souverain. Il y a eu une violation de la souveraineté ukrainienne et nous avons appelé la Russie à faire revenir ses troupes vers leurs bases permanentes. Cette violation a été condamnée à la fois par la France, à titre national, et par

l'Union européenne.

Q – Y a-t-il aujourd'hui en Crimée des troupes russes supplémentaires à celles qui y étaient déjà stationnées?

R – Il y a une violation par la Russie de son accord bilatéral avec l'Ukraine. La demande que nous formulons est que les troupes russes retournent dans leurs casernes. Nous sommes également préoccupés par les entraves aujourd'hui opposées aux observateurs militaires de l'OSCE en Crimée. Un libre accès doit leur être garanti.

Q – Et si la Crimée dit oui au référendum le 16 mars?

R – Nous considérons que le référendum est contraire à la fois à la constitution ukrainienne et au droit international.

Q – Vladimir Poutine évoque le cas du Kosovo pour légitimer l'auto-détermination en Crimée.

R – Il s'agit de deux situations très différentes: – premièrement, au Kosovo, il n'y avait pas de risque d'annexion d'une partie d'un État souverain par un autre État; – deuxièmement, une résolution du conseil de sécurité des Nations unies (résolution 1244 du 10 juin 1999) avait impliqué toute la communauté internationale et mis en place sur le terrain, pour de nombreuses années, une administration provisoire des Nations unies; – troisièmement, la cour internationale de justice avait été saisie. Elle a rendu en juillet 2010 une décision concluant à la conformité au droit international de la déclaration d'indépendance du Kosovo de 2008.

Q – S'agissant des sanctions à l'encontre de Moscou, de quoi parle-t-on exactement? M. Laurent Fabius a parlé d' «annulation»... Quelles sont les mesures décidées ou envisagées?

R – Une première série de mesures a été prise hier par l'Union européenne. La suspension des négociations avec la Russie sur les visas et sur l'accord global a été décidée. Cela va être mis en oeuvre tout de suite. Ensuite, s'il n'y a pas de désescalade, il y aura des mesures additionnelles, notamment des sanctions ciblées. Il peut s'agir de gel d'avoirs et de refus de visas. Nous n'en sommes pas encore là: ce que nous souhaitons, c'est une désescalade. Nous sommes ouverts au dialogue et souhaitons convaincre la Russie qu'il faut apaiser les tensions et privilégier la voie diplomatique.

Q – Quelles sont les possibilités diplomatiques dans les jours à venir pour parler directement avec les Russes?

R – Il n'y a pas de rencontre prévue à très court terme, mais nous sommes en contact permanent avec les autorités russes. Le dialogue est constant pour trouver une issue diplomatique à cette crise.

Q – Avez-vous une réaction à l'affaire des écoutes téléphoniques du ministre des affaires étrangères estonien et de Mme Ashton?

R – Je n'ai pas de commentaire à formuler sur des propos qui auraient été enregistrés à l'insu des intéressés.

(...)

ЯПОНІЯ

Abe, Obama discuss Ukrainian crisis

07 march 2014, 11:10

Japan's Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and US President Barack Obama have agreed on the importance of maintaining Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Abe spoke with Obama over the phone on Friday.

The United States has imposed sanctions on Russia, which has effectively taken control of Ukraine's Autonomous Republic of Crimea. The measures include visa restrictions for high-ranking Russian officials.

Abe said the Japanese government supports the Obama administration's efforts to improve the situation in Ukraine. He added that Japan also hopes to see early improvements.

The White House said Obama and Abe share the view that Russia's actions pose a threat to

global peace and security.

It said the leaders confirmed that Japan and the US will cooperate with their Group of 7 partners to ensure that Russia will respect Ukraine's sovereignty on the basis of the UN Charter.

The White House said the 2 leaders also agreed to help the Ukrainian interim government to achieve economic stability and to hold a successful presidential election in May.

Press Conference by Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida

Friday, March 7, 2014, 8:28 a.m. Prime Minister's Office

This is a provisional translation by an external company for reference purpose only.

Situation in Ukraine

Nakamura, Nippon TV: Regarding Ukraine, the Crimea decided to hold a referendum as to whether to join Russia. Please tell us the Government of Japan's stance on this move.

Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida: As for the situation in Ukraine, as mentioned in the Statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, I have stated: Japan strongly expects that the situation in Ukraine will be settled in a peaceful manner and strongly urges all the parties concerned to behave with maximum self-restraint and responsibility, to fully observe the relevant international laws, and to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine. With respect to the referendum you asked about, we are closely monitoring the situation with concerns and anxiety from the aspect of territorial integrity.

Nakamura, Nippon TV: Does that mean that the Government of Japan is against Ukraine joining Russia?

Minister Kishida: From the aspect of territorial integrity, we are paying a close attention to the situation with grave anxiety and concern.

Nakamura, Nippon TV: In response to such a move, the EU and the U.S. have decided to impose sanctions on the Russian side. Please tell us the Government of Japan's stance on the sanctions.

Minister Kishida: On the point you raised, Japan will respond appropriately, giving consideration to the further development of the situation in Ukraine and other countries' moves. That is our current policy.

Nakamura, Nippon TV: You held telephone conferences with the UK and German counterparts yesterday. Are you planning telephone conferences with the U.S. and Russian counterparts as well?

Minister Kishida: That is under coordination, of course. Acting in concert with other countries and closely communicating with them are both very important points. In that context, communication with Russia and the U.S. is also important. Foreign ministerial telephone conferences are under coordination.

Watanabe, NHK: In relation to the first question, the Supreme Council of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea voted unanimously for joining Russia. How do you evaluate such a voice, so to speak a locals voice or public opinion? To be sure, territorial integrity must be respected by all means. On the other hand, however, the Supreme Council of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea made a resolution in favor of joining Russia. How does Japan evaluate such a situation?

Minister Kishida: I believe that this is an issue that has to do with Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Such matters, the sovereignty and territorial unity, must be respected. From this viewpoint, as various further moves are planned, we will closely observe them.

Mizuuchi, Sankei Shimbun: Yesterday, U.S. President Barack Obama decided to impose sanctions. Please tell us your view on that and whether the Government of Japan will respond in line with such a move. I understand that you promised Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov that you would meet with him in Moscow in April. I would like to ask once again whether that appointment is unchanged at this point.

Minister Kishida: As for the U.S. move for sanctions, in the current situation, Japan's policy is

to respond appropriately while closely monitoring the move you mentioned and the changing situation in Ukraine. My schedules, such as my visit to Russia, have been unchanged in the current situation. Nevertheless, I intend to closely monitor further developments of the situation.

Torinari, Kyodo Press: Last night, you indicated your intention to consider extending assistance to Ukraine going forward. Please tell us the expected field and scale of assistance currently under deliberation.

Minister Kishida: The current situation in Ukraine poses various challenges. The greatest one, however, is apparently the harsh financial situation. I have been briefed that an IMF inquiry team will go to the country to conduct survey on the financial situation. I believe concrete figures and other elements of the assistance will come to be identified based on talks with the IMF and Ukraine. Looking at those moves, Japan will decide in specific terms, the content and scale of our assistance. That is my view. In any event, I intend to give positive consideration to such financial assistance. In conjunction with such assistance, I expect political dialogue will be held.

Watanabe, NHK: Concerning the current interim Ukrainian Government, Russia insists that the interim Government lacks constitutional grounds and that it is not founded on the Constitution. How does Japan look at the Government at this point?

Minister Kishida: I believe the interim Government was formed by Ukraine's internal moves. I am aware that the interim government was established based on current Ukrainian procedures.

ОСНОВНІ МІЖНАРОДНІ ОРГАНІЗАЦІЇ

ОБСЄ

United States Mission to the OSCE: Statement on Ukraine

As delivered by Ambassador Daniel B. Baer to the Special Permanent Council

Vienna

March 7, 2014

Thank you very much Madam Chair, and thank you again to the Chairmanship for holding this meeting. I think it does afford us a useful opportunity to discuss the ongoing crisis.

I share the perspective of our distinguished Russian colleague that our distinguished Turkish colleague just remarked on, that obviously there are conversations happening elsewhere, at a very high political level, that have a bearing here on what we can do and when. So I'd like to comment about the broader context of the U.S. position first, and then say a little bit more about what we might be able to do here.

As President Obama has made clear, the United States is pursuing and reviewing a wide range of options in response to Russia's ongoing violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, actions that constitute a threat to peace and security and a breach of international law, including Russia's obligations under the U.N. Charter and of its 1997 military basing agreement with Ukraine, and that are inconsistent with the 1994 Budapest Memorandum and the Helsinki Final Act.

In addition, the so-called "referendum" that was announced yesterday, President Obama has also made clear that as such a referendum is inconsistent with international law and with Ukraine's own constitution, it will not be recognized as anything other than an act of theater taking place against the backdrop of military incursion.

At the same time, as the President has said, we seek to work with all parties to achieve a diplomatic solution that de-escalates the situation and restores Ukraine's sovereignty. We call on Russia to take the opportunity before it, to resolve this crisis through direct and immediate dialogue with the government of Ukraine; the immediate pullback of Russia's military forces to their bases; the restoration of Ukraine's territorial integrity; and support for the urgent deployment of international observers and human rights monitors who can assure that the rights of all Ukrainians are protected, including ethnic Russians, and who will provide support for the

Ukrainian government efforts to hold a free and fair election on May 25th.

That is the backdrop of the U.S. position at the highest level. Now I want to say a little bit about what we can do here.

I saw last night on CNN, Foreign Minister Lavrov commented that the OSCE was not proving a fruitful forum for dialogue right now, and I got a little bit worried that my Russian colleague Andrey had been calling him and telling him about me. But I think the OSCE can prove a fruitful forum for dialogue right now. We should have a dialogue about what actions we can take – what we can do – because while Ambassador Kelin is quite right that there are political conversations happening that we are not part of right now, we, the individuals around this table, can have our own conversations about what actions are available, and serve up the actions and tools to more senior political levels so they are available to them to help resolve the situation. And we should be able to have a dialogue about that.

In this respect, I think it's important to underscore that monitors really are the way forward. We have heard time and again – and we've heard a little bit more of it today – that there are different representations of facts that are happening. That's part of our dialogue. Monitors help address this. There is, I think, a shared perception that there are instability and tensions on the ground. Monitors can help address this. There's a shared perception that there are wrongs being committed. Monitors can help address this as well, not only in the sense of investigating, but simply being eyes and ears can provide a dissuasive force that calms the situation and prevents bad things from happening.

With respect to monitors, I think it's important that we all understand and reaffirm that the whole idea behind monitoring is that it is politically neutral; it is an opportunity to get eyes and ears on the ground, and it should not be seen as aggressive in any way by anyone. It is a politically neutral tool in order to get facts straight.

Secondly, as others have said, access is critically important. We know there is the Vienna Document team on the ground, and we've heard that it has been denied access now three times to the Crimean peninsula. This is both unacceptable and unfortunate. The purpose behind the visit is to provide impartial reporting and to assist in eliminating concerns about the situation on the ground. So we encourage everyone around this table to support maximum access for the team to all of Ukraine, including the Crimean peninsula, in order to provide transparency and unbiased reporting on the situation in the region.

And just as a practical suggestion, we heard Ambassador Kelin raise his concerns with the suggestion that the Russian Federation was somehow obstructing this mission. I agree that we should have real facts about that, so people should go back and check where they're hearing things like this, and we should try to get real facts. Obviously part of it would be to ask the monitors themselves, which we can't do right now.

On a positive note, one of the things the Russian Federation could do – and I think that Ambassador Kelin could do this even – is to talk to the press after this meeting, saying that of course the Russian Federation supports access for monitors that are being carried out under the Vienna Document, which we all are signatories to. And just offering public support for that access, even if it doesn't resolve the questions on the ground, would be an affirmative and constructive engagement that would, I think, show a spirit of cooperation with us all on what is really a shared endeavor.

Finally, and that leads to my last point, which is that this is not a good time for Europe, for peace and security in Europe, and we shouldn't call this a good time. But it is an opportunity for this organization. This is a regional security organization; there is a security crisis right now. This is an opportunity for us to work constructively and to take action – to not just talk, but to act. And we should see that this is an opportunity. But while it is an opportunity, if we don't take that opportunity it's quite damning. This is a regional security organization that has a major crisis, and if it cannot act – and I know that there are a range of actions underway already – but if it cannot act at both the functional level and the political level, if we cannot work together to address this crisis at both the functional level and the political level, it will lead to bigger

conversations about the future of this organization.

I want to close by thanking all of those delegations that have so far volunteered resources to support the efforts already underway. I think your leadership is to be commended, and certainly we are reporting back to Washington about the positive contributions that so many have been willing to make in a spirit of support for all of the people on the ground in Ukraine.

Thank you.

ЄС

EXME 14 / 07.03

DAILY NEWS

07 / 03 / 14

Ukraine

"Our first priority is a negotiated and peaceful outcome to the current crisis. Europe is willing to do everything in its powers to contribute to a negotiated solution which respects the will of the Ukrainian people", said President Barroso following yesterday's extraordinary meeting of Heads of State and Government.

"The European Union has conveyed a strong message of support to the Prime Minister Yatseniuk and his government. And through them to the Ukrainian citizens", he added. "We have expressed our readiness to support Ukraine to stabilise the economic and financial situation. I am pleased that the European Commission's presentation of a European Union aid package of a total amount of 11 billion Euros has been welcomed by all Heads of State and Government today. The Prime Minister of Ukraine has also expressed his gratitude for this very substantive package of support. Now implementation is key."

Read the full remarks by President Barroso at the press conference. Watch the video of the press conference. Review the photos of the meeting.