



<http://civilmplus.org>

№ 24, February 2020

## PULSE OF PEACE IN DONBASS

Results of monitoring actual occurrences, related to the hybrid war in Eastern Ukraine

The newsletter is devoted to the work carried out by civil society organizations and initiative groups from Ukraine, Russia, as well as international organizations, to overcome the consequences of the hybrid military conflict in the eastern regions of Ukraine.

This newsletter will be published regularly; the next issue will be published in March 2020.

You can send your information for the newsletter or ask any questions at: [newsletter@civilmplus.org](mailto:newsletter@civilmplus.org)

*The selection of news presented in the Newsletter is subjective. The opinions expressed in the published materials may not coincide with the opinion of the authors and participants of CivilM+.*

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#### 1. News of the CivilM+

- A statement from the international platform CivilM+ called for the Normandy Four to promptly discuss the deteriorating situation in eastern Ukraine on February 18, 2020 (text in [Ukrainian](#), [Russian](#) and [English](#))

## 2. Political processes and the situation in the conflict zone

- A [thermobaric charge has been discovered during mine clearance work](#) in the area of Stanitsa Luganskaya. Such a charge is not produced in Ukraine and is not in service with the Armed Forces of Ukraine. The obtained material evidence was attached to the materials of the criminal proceedings under Part 2 of Art. 437 (conducting an aggressive war), part 1 of article 438 (violation of the laws and customs of war) of the Criminal Code of Ukraine (*text in Ukrainian*)
- January 27, 2020 - [Deputies of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe stopped the automatic approval of the powers of the Russian delegation](#) in connection with the actions of Russia in Ukraine and Georgia (*text in Russian*)
- January 28, 2020 - representatives of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the [coordinators of the Trilateral Contact Group and other experts discussed the OSCE's cooperation with Ukrainian partners to improve the position of Kyiv](#) in matters of the rule of law, as well as possible solutions to the crisis provoked by the Russian aggression (*text in Russian*)
- February 3, 2020 - [The National Office of the Public Prosecutor of the Netherlands filed charges against four persons](#) involved in the case of the crash of the Malaysian Boeing in Donbas (*text in Russian*)
- February 6, 2020 - Head of the OSCE SMM in Ukraine, Yashar Halit Chevik, addressed the OSCE Permanent Council. He said that despite the positive impact of the recent withdrawal of forces and equipment at the three agreed sites and the reconstruction of the bridge near the Village of Luganskaya, [a comprehensive ceasefire remains a key condition for making progress](#) (*text in English, Ukrainian and Russian*)
- February 8, 2020 - Two former employees of the Ukrainian special forces Berkut, who were accused of executions on the Maidan in 2014 and exchanged for Ukrainians held in the self-proclaimed "L/DPR" at the end of last year, [returned to Kyiv](#) (*text in Russian*)
- February 9, 2020 - [Ukraine opposes the dilution of forces across the contact line in Donbas](#), the Defense Minister Andrei Zagorodnuk declared (*text in Ukrainian*)
- February 11, 2020 - the leader of the Ukrainian parliamentary faction "Public Servant (Sluha narodu)" David Arakhamia [said that Ukraine could stop the water blockade of Crimea in exchange for the withdrawal of Russian troops from the Donbas and other major concessions](#) to the Russian Federation in the east of Ukraine (*text in Russian*)
- February 12, 2020 - [The Netherlands declined Moscow's request to transfer the criminal proceedings against three Russian citizens](#) for their involvement in the crash of MH-17 to the courts in Russia (*text in Russian*)
- February 14, 2020 - a group of experts, government officials, and diplomats from the countries of the Euro-Atlantic region issued a [joint statement with a list of 12 steps needed to ensure greater security in Ukraine and in the region](#). One of the initiators of the statement was ex-Foreign Minister of Russia Igor Ivanov. A critical [review](#) was released by 27 former US Atlantic Council officials and diplomats. (*text in English*)
- February 15, 2020 - President of Ukraine Vladimir [Zelensky addressed the Munich Security Conference](#). One of the topics of his speech was insufficient international attention to the Russian occupation of Crimea (*text in Ukrainian and Russian*)

- February 15, 2020 - Estonian President Kersti Kaljulaid [stated that the conflict in Ukraine is not frozen](#) (text in Russian)
- February 15, 2020 - The Crimean [FSB Border Administration detained a vessel with four Ukrainian citizens](#) in the western part of the Sea of Azov (text in Russian)
- February 18, 2020 - [The OSCE SMM announced a surge in ceasefire violations](#) at the contact line in the Luhansk region (text in [Ukrainian](#), [Russian](#) and [English](#))
- February 18, 2020 - Vladislav Surkov, assistant to the President of the Russian Federation, [resigned](#). He [was responsible for issues regarding the Donbas](#) and negotiations on the settlement of the conflict in the east of Ukraine (text in Russian)
- February 18, 2020 - the Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine [opened criminal proceedings on the fact of the separatists firing on the positions of the United Forces](#) near the settlements of Novotoshkovskoye, Orekhovo, Krymskoe and Khutor Volny in the Luhansk region. According to the prosecutor's office, the weapons used are prohibited by the Minsk agreements (text in Russian)
- February 19, 2020 - A meeting was held at the UN Security Council on the fifth anniversary of the Minsk agreements. The [main topic of discussion was the situation that had been aggravated the day before along the demarcation line](#). The US representative [accused](#) Russia of supporting the conflict in the Donbas (text in Russian and Ukrainian)

### 3. Public initiatives dedicated to overcoming the consequences of war and searching for opportunities for dialogue

- January 29, 2020 - during the session of the Parliamentary Assembly Council of Europe in Strasbourg, human rights defenders from Ukraine and Russia held a joint [briefing entitled "Compliance by the Russian Federation with its obligations seven years after the previous PACE rating report"](#) (text in Russian)
- January 29, 2020 - a [discussion called "War is the pain and blood of common people"](#) took place in Ryazan (Russia). Its topic was the prevention of local conflicts, where they also discussed the causes and consequences of the conflict in the Donbas (text in Russian)
- [Oleg Sentsov spoke in support of the Russian political prisoner Konstantin Kotov](#) with the statement "I will always support those Russians who are struggling with the Putin regime and believe that the Crimea is Ukraine" (text in Russian)
- East-SOS Charitable Foundation talks about [humanitarian aid for civilians](#) in December 2019 - January 2020 (text in Ukrainian)

### 4. Legal initiatives and analytics on war conflict

- February 5, 2020 - The Parliamentary Committee of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine for law enforcement activities recommended [to support the bill №2689, which aims to bring the Criminal Code of Ukraine into accordance with the norms and principles of international humanitarian law](#) (text in Ukrainian)
- February 7, 2020 - During a [round table](#) in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, Gunduz Mammadov, Deputy Prosecutor General of Ukraine, said that the

[problems with the investigation into violations of international humanitarian law by Russia in the Donbas are legislative in nature](#) (text in Ukrainian)

- February 11, 2020 - The Verkhovna Rada has filed [bill №3057 about the creation of a National Agency for overcoming the consequences of the armed aggression of the Russian Federation](#). Experts at the ZMINA Human Rights Center [comment on](#) its problematic areas (text in Ukrainian)
- February 17, 2020 - Ukrainian human rights organizations [submitted an alternative report on Ukraine's compliance with the International Covenant](#) on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights "Ensuring the implementation of the socio-economic rights of people affected the conflict in Ukraine" to the UN (text in Ukrainian)
- February 19, 2020 - the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted a [resolution making public housing more affordable](#), including for IDPs (text in Ukrainian)
- East-SOS Charitable Foundation published a [report on the "hotline" that monitors information on human rights violations](#) by security forces in the Ukrainian-controlled part of the Luhansk and Donetsk regions in January 2020 (text in Ukrainian)
- Kharkiv Human Rights Group published the [newsletter "Human Rights in the South-East of Ukraine"](#) for January 2020 (text in Ukrainian)
- Ukrainian experts from the Monitoring Group of the Institute for Black Sea Strategic Studies, "Maidan of Foreign Affairs" and BlackSea News [said](#) on the basis of their [study](#) that Ukraine does not have an effective method of working with sanctions against Russia, and that they are formed in a non-transparent and unprofessional way (text in Ukrainian)
- "The Association of the Families of Kremlin Prisoners" states the need for an early adoption of a [bill on state guarantees for Ukrainian families of political prisoners in Russia](#) (text in Ukrainian)
- Seventy percent of Ukrainians believe that Russia takes a hostile attitude towards their country. Only 6% adhere to the opposite point of view - such are the results of a [poll conducted by the Kiev Social and Marketing Research Center Sotsis](#) (text in Ukrainian)
- [Parallel polls conducted by the Kyiv International Sociology Institute and the Russian Levada Center](#) show that Russians have a slightly worse attitude towards Ukraine (47%) than Ukrainians in Russia (39%) (text in Ukrainian)
- IOM published a [study "Life after the conflict"](#) on the socio-demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the veterans in the conflict in the east of Ukraine and members of their families. Half of them face discrimination and violation of their rights. A summary of the study is in the [publication](#) by Deutsche Welle (text in Ukrainian)
- [An overview of human rights violations in the occupied regions of the Luhansk and Donetsk regions](#) was published in January by the East-SOS Charitable Foundation (text in [Ukrainian](#), [English](#) and [Russian](#))

## 5. Assistance to internally displaced persons (IDPs), refugees and affected civilians

- February 19, 2020 - a report from the villages of the front-line zone from Yevgeny Kaplin, head of the Proliska Humanitarian Mission, about the [consequences for civilians of the recent escalation of the conflict](#) (text in Russian)
- About [40,000 children](#) in Ukraine have the status of victims of hostilities (text in Ukrainian)
- The Ministry of Veterans, Temporarily Occupied Territories and IDPs of Ukraine seeks to [encourage local communities to participate in co-financing housing programs for IDPs](#) (text in Ukrainian)
- [Report](#) by “Donbass.Realii” on the status of maternity hospitals in uncontrolled territories (text in Russian)
- Yevgeny Kaplin, coordinator of the Proliska Humanitarian Mission on [changes in life along the demarcation line over the past year](#) (text in Russian)
- Sakharovsky Center (Moscow, Russia) announced a [discussion between volunteers from Russia and Ukraine](#) on social projects in the Donbas and helping civilians affected by the conflict (text in Russian)
- “We must fight for these people” - a photographer from Kyiv takes [pictures of residents of the “grey zone” in Donbas](#) (text in Russian)

## 6. Interviews and opinions

- President [Vladimir Zelensky Ukraine gave an interview to "Interfax-Ukraine"](#) in which he speaks about the issues of a ceasefire in Donbass, the possibility of rapprochement between Russia and Ukraine and his relationship with Vladimir Putin (text in Russian)
- Ukrainian Helsinki Human Rights Union tells the story of Alexander Marchenko, one of 89 Ukrainian [political prisoners held by Russia](#) (text in Ukrainian)
- Ukrainian military surgeon Alexander Danyluk [speaks about the last patient he operated on in the “Debaltseve cauldron”](#) (text in Ukrainian and Russian)
- Stanislav Aseev, a Donetsk journalist who spent two and a half years in a prison of the so-called “DPR” and was freed as a result of an exchange, [writes a book about his experience](#) (text in Russian)
- How the [evacuation](#) of [civilians](#) from Debaltseve took place - in the material by Censor.net (text in Ukrainian)
- [Interviews with citizens of Kazakhstan who participated in the fighting in eastern Ukraine](#) on the side of the so-called “L/DPR” (text in Russian)
- Historians of Russia and Ukraine [comment on the statement by Russian President Vladimir Putin who called Ukrainians and Russians "one nation"](#) (text in Russian)
- Series of [photographs](#) of the people who survived captivity in the so-called “L/DPR” (text in Russian)
- The story of Marina Chuikova, who survived [captivity](#) in the so-called “DPR” (text in Russian)

*in Ukrainian)*

- The book "[Amputation](#)" on the war in the east of Ukraine published in the Czech Republic (*text in Russian*)
- The story of Alexander Grishchenko, a doctor of veterinary science, [about his experiences in captivity in the so-called "LPR"](#) (*text in Ukrainian*)
- [Did the events of the "Revolution of Dignity" that took place in Ukraine six years ago change Western civilization](#) - Reflections of Open Democracy (*text in English*)
- Truth Hounds NGO talks about the [situation along the demarcation line](#) in the Donbas, in particular near Zolote village (*text in Ukrainian*)

## About the platform CivilM+

On 4th December 2017 in Vienna, civil society organizations and activists from Ukraine, Russia and other European countries founded a joint international [platform CivilM+](#) to push for peace and the rule of law in eastern Ukraine.

The platform's aim is to streamline civic actors' efforts in spheres like human rights protection, peacebuilding, education and information, humanitarian work, and to work on rebuilding the territories of Donetsk and Luhansk as peaceful, integrated and developed regions of a democratic Ukraine and united Europe. CivilM+ seeks to promote the involvement of the regions' population as well as refugees and displaced persons in these activities. CivilM+ offers its participants opportunities for cooperation, elaboration of joint positions, mutual support and solidarity, improvement of qualification and close coordination of work.

Supported by the government of Germany as a part of the DRA project "Dialogue for mutual understanding and rule of law: European NGOs together to overcome the Donbass conflict"

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Federal Foreign Office

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