

HIGHLIGHTS

PULSE OF PEACE IN DONBAS



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As a result of heavy fighting that lasted all day, the Ukrainian armed forces [regained](#) control of the city of Kherson, which had been occupied by the Russian army earlier that day. Near the city of Chernihiv, the Ukrainian military repelled a breakthrough by Russian troops, with military equipment seized along with documents of the Russians, [according to Valery Zaluzhny](#), commander-in-chief of the Ukrainian Armed Forces.

The Ukrainian army controls the situation in Kyiv, local battles continue in the city, and it was shelled from the air several times during the day. Polish President Andrzej Duda [called](#) the bombing of Kiev by Russian troops an act of terror.

During the day, the targets of numerous artillery attacks [were](#) residential buildings, [kindergartens](#), and military and civilian infrastructure in different regions of Ukraine. The Russian Armed Forces [do not allow](#) the Red Cross into Schastye (Luhansk Region, a town near the former line of contact), where there are many dead and wounded. Evacuation is made practically impossible by multiple shelling, including of [designated vehicles](#), and the high degree of destruction of the city. Ukraine called on international partners to influence Russia to demand the provision of "green corridors" for the evacuation of children and women in Donbas, according to the Deputy Prime Minister of Ukraine for the reintegration of the temporarily occupied territories, [Iryna Vereshchuk](#). The head of the Luhansk Regional State Administration [denied Russian propaganda](#), noting that the attack on a large number of settlements in the Luhansk region was stopped.

In less than 48 hours, more than 50,000 people have left Ukraine, UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi [said](#). The UN also [reports](#) the deaths of

at least 25 civilians and more than 100 wounded. A total of 198 people were killed and 1,115 wounded, [according to the Ukrainian Health Minister](#).

In a Feb. 25 [briefing](#) by the Office of the President of Ukraine, it was confirmed that Ukrainian military forces hold control of most of the Ukrainian territory under attack by the Russian Federation. Mikhail Podolyak, advisor to the head of the Office, noted that the tactics of the Russian armed forces resemble terrorist methods – residential buildings and kindergartens are under attack. He stressed that these war crimes must receive a strict legal assessment. He confirmed that President Vladimir Zelensky is in Kyiv and is effectively leading the country and defense, while Russia's plan to create chaos in the country is failing.

Ukrainian Prime Minister Denis Shmygal reported on an extraordinary government meeting where a number of necessary decisions were taken to ensure the army, stable operation of hospitals, and critical infrastructure during martial law, and called on international partners to unite to stop Russian aggression and war against Ukraine, including imposing an embargo on oil products from Russia, banning Russian citizens from entering other countries, and disconnecting Russia from SWIFT. In addition, he called on NATO, Europe, and the US to close the skies over Ukraine. President Vladimir Zelensky [signed](#) a decree "On General Mobilization" in Ukraine.

The Ukrainian presidential office [claimed](#) 3,500 dead Russian soldiers, media and social media published photos of destroyed Russian equipment and the dead and [videos](#) of interrogations of captured Russian soldiers. The Russian Defense Ministry has not yet reported casualties.

Ukrainian President Vladimir Zelensky [denied](#) the false information spread by Russian propaganda that he allegedly called on the Ukrainian army to lay down arms. He also [called](#) on the Russian president to stop the aggression and voiced the possibility of negotiations. At the same time, Russian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Maria Zakharova [said](#) that Ukraine refused to negotiate, while Russian President Vladimir Putin [called](#) on the Ukrainian military to stage a coup d'etat.

In an [address](#) following the day's results, Ukrainian President Vladimir Zelensky said that the past day had been "difficult but brave" and stressed that he had agreed with world leaders on significant new aid.

REACTIONS OF WESTERN LEADERS TO THE WAR IN UKRAINE

The UN Security Council held a meeting at the end of which it was proposed to adopt a resolution condemning Russia's actions in Ukraine, but its adoption was [blocked](#) by Russia. Russian Permanent Representative Vasily Nebenzia [said](#) that Russia was not waging a war against the Ukrainian people, there was no reliable evidence of civilian deaths, and put the responsibility for what was happening on Ukraine and the United States.

Following an emergency NATO summit, the leaders of the Alliance adopted a [statement](#) condemning Russia's invasion of Ukraine. They reiterated unwavering support for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity, stressed

that they would continue to support Ukraine politically and practically, and urged other countries to do the same.

US President Joe Biden issued a [statement](#) following his phone call with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and the NATO summit in which he supported Ukraine and said that the United States would protect NATO allies and that NATO would continue its open door policy.

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe [suspended](#) Russia's membership in the organization, this concerns the rights of the Russian delegation to the Committee of Ministers and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.

The EU imposed a second package of [sanctions](#) against 98 representatives of the Russian leadership. Among them are Vladimir Putin, Mikhail Mishustin, Sergey Lavrov, Dmitry Medvedev and Vladimir Kolokoltsev. Dozens of companies in the banking, aircraft and space sectors also fell under sanctions. All of them are prohibited access to the capital market, any kind of financial services and technical assistance. The EU is also [suspending](#) the visa facilitation agreement with Russia.

The United States will join the European Union in imposing sanctions against Russian President Vladimir Putin, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, and members of the Russian Security Council, White House press secretary Jen Psaki [said at a briefing](#). This was also [confirmed](#) by the US Treasury Department. Discussions also continue about the possibility of disconnecting the Russian banking system from SWIFT. The sanctions were supported by Britain and Canada. How these sanctions will affect Russia's residents is covered in the [Meduza article](#).

The US also [offered](#) Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky the possibility of evacuation, which he refused.

The World Bank [has said](#) it is ready to provide immediate support to Ukraine and is preparing options for such support, including rapid financing. The World Bank Group also stands ready to support neighboring countries and people who may be affected by hostilities.

ANTI-WAR PROTESTS IN RUSSIA AND IN THE WORLD

Protests against Russian aggression are taking place in many countries. On the second day of anti-war protests in Russia, more than 500 people were [detained](#). Russian charity workers [called](#) for an end to the military actions in Ukraine – an [appeal](#) was signed by more than 40 heads of the country's leading charitable foundations and non-profit organizations. Russian psychologists and psychotherapists, [doctors](#), and teachers also published letters demanding that the war be stopped.