

HIGHLIGHTS

PULSE OF PEACE IN DONBAS



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HUMANITARIAN CORRIDORS. AGREEMENTS REACHED, WILL THE GUNS FALL SILENT?

The opening of humanitarian corridors over the weekend, which had been agreed during the second round of talks between representatives of Ukraine and Russia, was derailed. On March 5, it was planned to introduce a ceasefire and open humanitarian corridors for civilians to leave Mariupol and Volnovakha in the Donetsk region. The Russian side [stated that it was ready](#) to declare a ceasefire. The Ukrainian authorities [confirmed](#) the agreement: it was reported that 200,000 people were to be evacuated from Mariupol and 15,000 from Volnovakha. The International Committee of the Red Cross [was to be involved](#) in the evacuation, with [Zaporizhzhia](#) as the final point. It became apparent almost immediately that the opening of humanitarian corridors [was disrupted](#), Russian troops were [not observing the ceasefire](#) and were [shelling](#) the evacuation routes. Later, official Russian sources blamed "nationalists" for the disrupted evacuation. At the same time, the Ukrainian authorities claimed that 400 people were still able to be [evacuated](#) from Volnovakha. In the evening, the Russian Ministry of Defense [announced](#) the resumption of special operations. [On March 6](#), the evacuation attempt was again [thwarted](#). Mariupol mayor Vadim Boychenko [stated](#) that the city was in a de facto blockade and that the remaining 400,000 residents were in fact hostages. "Doctors Without Borders" [said](#) the humanitarian situation in blockaded Mariupol was disastrous, with the main problems including lack of access to drinking water, running out of food supplies, no electricity and no power supply. The British Defense Ministry [said](#) Russia's proposed

cease-fire in Mariupol was "an attempt to avoid international condemnation," while accusing Ukraine of violating the agreement was an attempt to shift responsibility for current and future civilian casualties in the city onto it. The evacuation of residents from the towns of Bucha and Gostomel (Kiev Oblast) has [so far failed](#). Also, the Russian army [seized](#) a psycho-neurological boarding school in Borodyanka (Kyiv Oblast) with 670 people in it. It was later [released](#). There was an evacuation of the residents of [Irpen](#) (Kyiv Oblast), with at least 8 [civilians killed](#) in the shelling. Russian forces also launched new airstrikes on [Kharkov](#), where they destroyed, among other things, a television tower, and on [Vinnitsa](#), where an airport building was destroyed. A third round of peace talks is [scheduled](#) for Monday, March 7.

CAPTIVE RUSSIAN SERVICEMEN CALLED ON RUSSIANS NOT TO ALLOW THE WAR AGAINST UKRAINE TO CONTINUE

On Saturday, a [press conference](#) of captive Russian servicemen was held in Kyiv. They called for a halt to the war in Ukraine, some of them said they did not want to return to Russia and feared for their families. On the same day, reports surfaced of several Russian pilots captured in Ukraine who had taken part in the shelling of peaceful cities. One of them, whose plane was shot down near [Chernihiv](#), according to the SBU, was involved in military operations in Syria. The other pilots were captured near [Nykolayiv](#). Oleksiy Arestovych, adviser to the head of the Ukrainian presidential office, [published](#) an appeal to the Ukrainian military reminding them of the need to comply with the Geneva Convention and not to give reasons to accuse Ukraine of war crimes. He stressed that cruel treatment of prisoners of war is strictly prohibited. The office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine [stated](#) that it monitors the conditions of detention of Russian military prisoners. As of the morning of March 7, the Ukrainian General Staff [stated](#) that Russian military losses in live ammunition exceeded 11,000, the number of prisoners of war was not specified.

PROTESTS IN THE OCCUPATION. UKRAINIANS CHASE THE INVADERS AWAY WITH THEIR BARE HANDS

Residents of Russian-occupied towns are protesting against Russian military actions against Ukraine. On March 5, an [anti-Russian rally](#) was held in Kherson, the capture of which the Russian Defense Ministry reported a few days ago, with up to several thousand participants. Russian servicemen fired warning shots into the air. No injuries were reported. Similar rallies took place in occupied [Melitopol](#) (Zaporizhia region), [Genichesk](#), and [Novaya Kakhovka](#) (Kherson region). Hromadske [reported](#) about the situation in other regions of Ukraine.

SANCTIONS TO DETER THE AGGRESSOR AND INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT FOR UKRAINE

The extraordinary sanctions against Russia continue.

IBM [announced](#) the cessation of technology sales to Russia, the payment service PayPal, the international payment systems [Visa and Mastercard](#) and many other companies [announced](#) their [withdrawal](#) from the country. The oil company Shell [said](#) that all revenues from the sale of Russian oil will go to a special fund, which will be used for humanitarian aid to the affected inhabitants of Ukraine.

[Montenegro](#) has joined the closure of airspace for Russian planes. Thus, in Europe, only the airspace of Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Belarus, Moldova and Turkey remained open for Russian planes. After visiting the Polish-Ukrainian border and a refugee detention center, US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken said that the United States planned to allocate another \$2.75 billion for support of refugees. UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi [said](#) more than 1.5 million refugees from Ukraine have crossed the border into neighboring countries in ten days of war, the fastest growing migration crisis in Europe since World War II. The Washington Post [published](#) an article about what support measures Ukraine's allies are preparing. The article cites sources in US and European power circles. It notes that even if Russia seizes part of Ukraine's territory, Western countries will continue to recognize Volodymyr Zelensky as the only legitimate president, relying, among other things, on a UN General Assembly resolution condemning Russian aggression. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky [noted](#) in his address that agreements have now been reached with the World Bank, the IMF, and other financial institutions to allocate tens of billions of dollars to Ukraine for reconstruction after the war. British Prime Minister Boris Johnson [called](#) on leaders of other countries to join the six-point list of demands in response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. In his view, the unprecedented sanctions imposed are not enough to shield Ukraine from the Kremlin's attempts to "rewrite the rules by military force. Among the demands are an agreement to "create an international humanitarian coalition" in support of Ukraine, its self-defense, and maximum economic pressure on Moscow.

He also called for finding diplomatic ways of de-escalation with the involvement of the Ukrainian government, strengthening security in the Euro-Atlantic space and stopping Russia's military actions in Ukraine.

RUSSIA: ISOLATION AND PROTESTS

Russia is increasingly shut down from the inside: more than 40 [media outlets](#) have blocked, ceased operations, or announced their refusal to cover the war actions. The Federal Air Transport Agency [recommended](#) Russian airlines to suspend flights to and from abroad; Aeroflot, S7 and a number of other companies have announced the suspension of flights. The restrictions do not affect foreign airlines of countries that have not restricted air traffic with Russia. For the first time, repressive laws prohibiting "discrediting the Russian military" were [applied](#). For example, an administrative case was initiated against an activist from the city of Kostroma for a poster with the text "This (war) is a special operation for your taxes, and we fund children's medical care by text message" for "making public appeals to impede the

use of the Russian armed forces and its citizens and support international peace and security by means of visual propaganda, holding a poster and demonstrating it to surrounding citizens passing by". A repeat violation of this kind would result in criminal liability.

Presidential spokesman Dmitry Peskov [said](#) that the law on criminal penalties for fakes about the actions of the Russian armed forces is necessary in connection with the "information war unleashed against Russia. At the same time, it is [planned to expand its effect](#) to include not only information about the army, but also other security agencies involved in the war in Ukraine.

Vladimir Putin [commented](#) on the possibility of introducing martial law in Russia: according to him, there are no grounds for this, as it is "possible in case of external aggression". He also said that Russia would consider attempts by third countries to establish a no-fly zone over Ukraine as their participation in the war. He also compared the sanctions imposed on Russia to a ["declaration of war"](#) and said that the Russian armed forces fighting in Ukraine did not include conscript soldiers. At the same time, during a meeting of the Federation Council, member of the Russian Federation Council Lyudmila Narusova earlier [cited](#) data about significant losses among conscript soldiers, with whom contracts had been forcibly signed before the Russian invasion of Ukraine began.

On March 6, more than [5,000 people were detained](#) at [anti-war rallies](#) in Russia.