

War in Ukraine. Daily update. 10.00 am, 17.03.2022.

**Ukraine enters into the fourth week of the war on its lands. The war continues.
It is 22 day of the war.**

Negotiations. Round 4 of the negotiations continue by going into its fourth day of the virtual talks. On the one hand, both parties indicate that there is some progress in terms of showing readiness to negotiate. On another - Russian forces increased their attacks targeting civilians. The [Kremlin said](#) negotiators were discussing Ukraine's military neutrality status similar to that of Austria or Sweden - both countries are members of the European Union but are outside the NATO military alliance. However, in his video address, Zelenskyi responded that Ukraine's priorities are crystal clear - the end of the war, guarantees of security, sovereignty, restoration of territorial integrity, real protection for our country.

International support. Address to the Congress. President Zelenskyi addressed the [US Congress](#) on Wednesday. In his speech, he called for further support for Ukraine, appealing to the events in Pearl Harbour and 9/11. Zelenskyi called for closing the sky, considering providing further military support and air-defense systems, as well as calling to create a new union "U-24. United for Peace". The union shall avoid bureaucratic procedures and allow its members to provide immediate support in 24 hours. In the evening, the US has announced its \$800 million in military aid, in addition to the \$13.6 billion that had already been approved.

The Hague. The UN International Court of Justice in Hague ordered Russia to cease hostilities in Ukraine immediately according to imposed preliminary measures. The Court did not find evidence of Russia's allegations of genocide in Ukraine. Also, Russia did not show up for the initial hearings, as well as for the preliminary decision reading, which evidently shows complete disrespect of the rule of law. The court's preliminary order is binding under international law. The decision is crucial from the perspective to serve as a kick-off point for the next legal proceedings.

Mariupol. Russian troops deliberately attack infrastructure with civilians in Mariupol. Yesterday, a bomb was thrown at [Mariupol's Drama Theater](#), where 1200 civilians were sheltering. Russian troops purposefully stroke at the building, knowing about children hiding in the premises. [MAXAR satellite image](#) shows signs "Children" written in front of the theater. Afterwards Russian armed forces fired on a swimming pool complex "Neptun Basin", where children and pregnant women were hiding. As the shelling continued it was impossible to dismantle both of the blockages. Children and pregnant women are still under the rubbles. The number of the victims is unknown.

Edgars Rinkēvičs, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia, [called](#) for Nurnberg or Hague tribunal for Russia for the crimes committed in Kharkiv and Mariupol.

Cities under the attack: In Kyiv, as a result of a missile strike in the city, two high-rise residential buildings were damaged. In **Chernihiv**, Russian troops fired at people queuing for bread. 10 people were killed. Since the beginning of the war, 57 air raid attacks have hit the Zhytomyr **region**, killing 43 people, including 20 civilians. The missile strike hit **Sarny, Rivne region**. In **Rubizhne, Luhansk region** at least 27 buildings caught fire, and entire streets were engulfed in flames. **Merefa, Kharkiv Region** has been shelled at night. As a result, a school and a cultural center were destroyed, as were the buildings in the surrounding area. In **Zaporizhzhia**, Russian troops fired at the column of cars evacuating people from Mariupol. However, 3207 managed to arrive in Zaporizhzhia late at night from Mariupol. Over 3,000 people, including 772 children, have already been resettled.

Ivan Fedorov, captive mayor of Melitopol, was released today in exchange of 9 RU conscripts. Mayor of Skadovsk and his deputy were abducted by Russian troops, but later in his video address, he informed that he was reportedly released. However, the information remains under verification.

Energy security. Ukraine becomes a member of the European Energy Union. Technical experts on Wednesday finished synchronizing Ukraine's and Moldova's power grids with continental Europe's connecting them to the ENTSO-e. Previously the grids were connected to Russian and Belarus energy networks, imposing the risk of potential blackouts and political threats. The European Commission [said](#) it is an important step in ensuring a stable electricity supply.

Russian troops continue to detonate shells and mines in front of the Zaporizhzhia NPP which undermines the safety of the plant. Ukrainian personnel remain at the plant without rotation for 21 days in order to avoid Russian personnel

taking over the plant. Formally, the occupiers do not interfere in the work of nuclear power plants, but the staff is forced to agree with all technical solutions of the invaders' commander.

Sanctions. More than [6000 sanctions](#) have been introduced against Russia. Switzerland [imposes sanctions](#) against Russian individuals. Federal Councillor Guy Parmelin has approved the sanctioning of over 200 further individuals and entities in connection with serious violations of international law by Russia in Ukraine. The decision concerns oligarchs and representatives of business, whose assets will be reportedly frozen. From now on the sanctions comply with the list of the ones previously introduced by the EU. Canada banned Russian and Belarus aircraft from entering Canadian airspace. AirSerbia halts its flights between Serbia and Russia after continuous pressure.

Disinformation. Russia stated that almost all citizens evacuated from **Mariupol** refused to move to the territories controlled by Kyiv. In fact, about 11,000 people left Mariupol for Zaporizhia in one day. The Russian Ministry of Defense stated that they did not carry out an airstrike on the drama theater in Mariupol. They assure that the militants of the Azov National Battalion committed «a new bloody provocation» by blowing up the theater building mined by them. Russia continues to divert attention from its war crimes with claims about developing **chemical and biological weapons** in Ukraine. Russian media report that the Security Service of Ukraine, with the support of Western countries, is preparing a provocation using poisonous substances against civilians. They spread information that a detailed map of the country's territory with objects and types of stored poisonous substances was found among the captured Ukrainian combat documentation.

While almost all of **Chernihiv** has been destroyed by shelling, the Russian Ministry of Defense says that there are no Russian troops in Chernihiv and never have been. They claim «All units of the Russian armed forces are outside Chernihiv, blocking the roads, and they are not conducting any offensive operations on the city». At the same time, they recently stated that there were no road blockages, but they were supposedly carried out by the Ukrainian military. Russian media claims that all the dead people are victims of «Ukrainian nationalists», or these video frames are staged by the Security Service of Ukraine.

Culture. In preparation of the possible shelling, Ukrainian cultural institutions are working on protecting art across the country. While museum collections are hidden in the basement, statues and buildings on the streets are covered with sandbags and wood. Read more [in the Washington Post reportage](#).

The Berlin Film Festival [will not host](#) Russian delegations and representatives of state institutions, while Russian independent artists will be permitted.

Support Ukrainian culture - message from Olesia Ostrovska-Liuta, Mystetskyi Arsenal Director General “*On February 24, Russia started a full-scale war against Ukraine and all of Europe. Since then, the Russian army bombed Ukrainian cities and villages daily, destroying our cultural heritage. That's why we decided to co-launch Ukrainian Emergency Art Fund. Two of our top priorities is to promote Ukrainian culture as a powerful instrument for strengthening Ukraine's position among democratic nations of the world and to provide support for independent artists, curators, arts managers, researchers, art writers and cultural NGOs in Ukraine.*” Find out more how to support, following [the link](#).

Statistics.

- General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine announced the total estimated losses of the Russian military as of 6 a.m., March 17, 2022: troops - around 14,000, tanks – 444, APV – 1435, artillery systems – 201, MLRS - 72, anti-aircraft warfare systems - 43, aircraft – 86, helicopters – 108, vehicles – 864, light speed boats – 3, fuel tanks – 60, UAV operational-tactical level – 11, special equipment - 10.

Every action counts, no contribution is too small!

- **Support the humanitarian [center](#) next to you.**
- **Share up-to-date information about the situation in Ukraine, either on social media, with local media or by spreading around this brief note.**
- **Subscribe to our daily updates on [Twitter](#) and [to our website](#).**
- **Share the truths - share information about this update and website.**

Thank you for supporting Ukraine! Slava Ukraini! Glory to Ukraine!