



## Situation Room

### **\*\* UKRAINE CRISIS \*\***

**Period under review:** from **24 February 2022** to **26 February 2022**.

[This report is based on publicly available sources to describe a changing SITUATION. Information subject to change.]

### **Situation analysis recap:**

- On 24 February, Russia launched a large-scale invasion of Ukraine. Russian President, Vladimir Putin, said in a statement that he had decided on a "special military operation" to be conducted in the Donbas region. Meanwhile, he called on the Ukrainian army to stand down and warned that if anyone failed to do so, Russia would respond in an unprecedented manner. After the attack, US President Joe Biden said that President Putin holds full responsibility for the attack and that his ambitions reach beyond Ukraine. Biden also announced new sanctions against Russia, including action against several Russian banks and the freezing of Russian assets in the US. NATO Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg, announced strong response by the Allies, which are already reinforcing their land, air and naval defence forces in the eastern flank of the Alliance. He also stressed that Ukraine is not a member of the Alliance and therefore there will be no NATO troops on its territory.
- Also on 24 February, the Russian army penetrated as far as two major cities in Eastern Ukraine, Kharkov and Chernihiv, and has reached the Dnieper River in the south, while also moving closer to the capital. After heavy fighting, Russian troops occupied, among other things, the Chernobyl nuclear power plant. Ukraine's President, Volodymyr Zelensky, warned that the attack on Chernobyl was a "declaration of war on the whole of Europe". The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has expressed concern about the Russian occupation of Chernobyl. According to the Director General, Rafael Mariano Grossi, it is crucial that the Chernobyl exclusion zone, where radioactive contamination is highest, is not affected or disturbed in any way. Russia has also destroyed almost all of Ukraine's air defence systems. Meanwhile, a curfew was declared in Kyiv between 10 pm and 7 am, and residents were advised to seek shelter in case of an air strike. On that day, President Zelensky reported the deaths of 137 Ukrainian citizens, both civilians and soldiers. Ukrainian sources have claimed that up to 800 Russian soldiers have been killed, along with 30 tanks, seven aircraft and six helicopters destroyed, although no independent sources have been able to confirm these numbers as of yet.
- On 25 February, fighting resumed in Ukraine. Several missile strikes in Kiev caused civilian casualties. The people of Kyiv were urged to make Molotov cocktails, for the sake of defending the capital. Ukrainian authorities have warned that Russian troops are preparing an attack on the Ukrainian government, with their main goal being the death of President Zelensky. The Ukrainian government has called on all hackers in the country to volunteer and help protect critical infrastructure, and participate in spying on Russian troops.
- Also on 25 February, the Ukrainian Nuclear Agency has recorded an elevated level of radioactivity in the Chernobyl Exclusion Zone. Experts say that there is no cause for alarm at this point, and that the higher levels of radioactivity in the air are simply the result of radioactive dust rising due to the movement of large numbers of Russian troops.
- The UN Security Council did not approve a draft resolution condemning the Russian attack on Ukraine, as Russia, a permanent member of the Security Council, exercised its veto right. The draft resolution was prepared by the US, together with other Security Council members. India, the United Arab Emirates, and China abstained. President Putin's proposal of peace negotiations and ceasefire has been accepted in principle by President Zelensky.

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## EVRO-ATLANTSKI SVET SLOVENIJE EURO-ATLANTIC COUNCIL OF SLOVENIA

- On 26 February, heavy fighting was reported overnight from the outskirts of Kyiv and several other Ukrainian cities. The Ukrainian Ministry of Health reported that around 200 civilians have been killed in the fighting so far. According to Russian reports, Russian troops have also taken the Ukrainian town of Melitopol, located in the south-eastern part of the country. Fighting is also taking place near the CHP-6 power plant in the Troieschyna district which, if successful, would give Russia the ability to cut off a significant part of the electrical supply to Kyiv.. Meanwhile, President Putin accused President Zelensky of refusing to negotiate peace with Russia, and Ukraine replied that it would not accept any ultimatums or unacceptable conditions. On the same day, President Putin ordered the advance of Russian troops from all sides, citing Ukraine's refusal to negotiate. The list of countries that have announced they are sending arms to Ukraine is growing and now includes Slovenia.

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