EVRO-ATLANTSKI SVET SLOVENIJE
EURO-ATLANTIC COUNCIL OF SLOVENIA

Situation Room

** *UKRAINE CRISIS* **

Period under review: from **October 2021** to **09 February 2022.**

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

Situation analysis recap:

- Last autumn, the United States, based on its intelligence reports, issued a public warning regarding the extensive deployment of Russian troops on the Ukrainian border and accused Russian president Vladimir Putin of planning to invade Ukraine.
- On 17 December, Russia presented a series of security demands, including a formal guarantee that NATO will give up any military activities in Eastern Europe, especially in Ukraine.
- In early 2022, talks between Russia, NATO and the OSCE on Ukrainian tensions were held in Geneva, Brussels, and Vienna, but no consensus was reached. NATO then called Russia's demands about its presence in Eastern Europe unrealistic.
- On 14 January, a large-scale cyber-attack against Ukrainian government websites took place. The perpetrators have not yet been identified.
- On 17 January, Russia launched large-scale military exercises in Belarus, on Ukraine's northern border.
- On 26 January, Washington presented a response to Russia's security demands, reiterating NATO's open-door policy and calling on Russia to resolve disputes peacefully. Two days later, Moscow replied that the US had not presented its preferred outcome in the document, but was ready for further negotiations. Russia allegedly also dispatched a supply of blood to the Ukrainian border to be used in case its soldiers are injured.
- On 2 February, US President Joe Biden approved the deployment of around 3,000 troops to Eastern Europe. He stated that this act was only a response to the current situation and not a permanent transfer. The Pentagon has ordered an additional 8,500 troops on high alert for possible deployment to Europe.
- On 4 February, the US accused Russia of planning a pretext for an attack on Ukraine. This was to be achieved by producing a graphic video showing Ukraine's attack on the Russian-speaking population in eastern Ukraine. Russia would allegedly use fake corpses, Turkish-made drones, pictures of bombed buildings and actors of grieving Russians to make the footage. The video would then circulate around the world and justify Russia's invasion of Ukraine.
- Also on 4 February, the US media outlet Bloomberg News published a fake news story, claiming that Russia had launched an invasion of Ukraine. The news was removed from the web shortly afterwards and an apology was issued. They explained that they had only prepared the headlines in advance, whereas Moscow claims that the news was deliberate and aimed at escalating tensions.
- On 5 February, Russia sent two nuclear-capable Tu-22M3 long-range strategic bombers over Belarus as part of joint military drills.
- On 6 February, the Presidency of Ukraine argued that a diplomatic solution to the Ukrainian crisis was far more likely than a full-scale Russian invasion. They also issued a statement that Ukraine has a strong military and plenty of international support. Washington reiterated its warning that, according to intelligence reports, Russia is accelerating steps to invade Ukraine.
- On 7 February, Russian President Putin and French President Emmanuel Macron met in the Kremlin. During the five-hour talks, Macron warned that both sides must act swiftly if they want to avoid further escalation of tensions. He believes there are still ways to resolve the conflict peacefully. Putin praised Macron's efforts to resolve the Ukraine crisis, but criticised NATO's open-door policy,

saying it only works in favour of the US. At the same time, the White House held talks with German Chancellor Olaf Scholz to discuss the supply flow of energy resources into Europe, should Russia cut off the flow of natural gas. They also talked about shutting down the Nord Stream 2 project in the event of a Russian invasion. Biden has been very firm and decisive on this sanction, while Scholz has not yet given a clear answer on whether Germany agrees.

- On 8 February, President Macron also met with the Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky. He said that he sees concrete solutions to the Ukraine crisis, part of which is respect for the Minsk peace agreements. After the meeting, Mr Zelensky urged for a meeting with Russia, Germany and France.
- Russian troops arrived to Belarus on 9 February for a massive military exercise amid Western alarm that it could provide cover for a full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Canada is also considering sending reinforcements to eastern Europe because of the security situation, Defence Minister Anita Anand said during a visit to Latvia on Thursday.

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