



## Situation Room

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

**Period under review:** from **March 02 2022** to **March 04 2022**.

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

### **Situation analysis recap:**

- On 2 March, fighting flared up again in Ukraine. Russian troops advanced to capture the Ukrainian port city of Kherson. Clashes also erupted in the Ukrainian capital Kyiv, after the Russian defence ministry called on civilians in Ukraine to flee the country, while again describing the actions of Russian troops as a "special military operation" and not an invasion aimed at occupying Ukrainian territory. On the same day, new peace talks between Russian and Ukrainian delegates were announced for 3 March. Georgia also announced its application for membership of the European Union.
- On 3 March, Russian sources announced that Russian troops have taken the city of Kherson, home to around 250 000 people. It is currently the largest Ukrainian city occupied by the Russian army. Clashes continued in Kharkiv, Mariupol, and Kyiv, where residents heard several very heavy explosions. At a press conference, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky called on the West to increase its military aid to Ukraine, while warning that the possible fall of Ukraine is likely to be followed by the fall of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. President Zelensky also called for direct talks with Russian president, Vladimir Putin, which he believes is the only solution to end the war.
- On 3 March, President Putin held a phone call with French President, Emmanuel Macron, which lasted more than an hour and a half. During the conversation, the Russian leader is reported to have announced that he would continue his "uncompromising fight against the neo-Nazis in Ukraine" and that he would even step up the demands if Kyiv delays the negotiations. President Macron said after the meeting that he believes the worst is yet to come.
- Also on 3 March, new peace talks between Russian and Ukrainian delegates took place in the Brest region of Belarus. After several hours of negotiations, an agreement was reached on the establishment of humanitarian corridor areas for the evacuation of civilians, where there is also the possibility of a temporary ceasefire. On the same day, Russian Foreign Minister, Sergei Lavrov, said that Moscow would not allow Ukraine to keep infrastructure that could harm Russia, while stressing that it would not tolerate any military threat coming from Ukraine. He also said that Russia was not considering a nuclear conflict and blamed the West for creating unnecessary hysteria. He also stressed that communication between Russia and the West must be based on mutual respect, while accusing NATO of looking for a way to dominate.
- On 4 March, Russian troops seized the largest nuclear power plant in Europe, in Zaporizhzhia, Ukraine. The artillery shelling also caused a fire in the power plant, which was extinguished shortly afterwards. Experts say the fire does not pose a serious threat to nuclear safety and that the radiological situation in Ukraine remains unchanged. After seizing the power plant, Russian troops began to move towards Kyiv.
- Also on 4 March, NATO Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg, said that the Alliance opposes the establishment of a no-fly zone over Ukraine, which, in his view, would mean more civilian casualties. The only way to secure the no-fly zone is to send NATO planes into Ukrainian airspace and shoot down Russian planes, which risks a full-scale war in Europe. President Zelensky, who has pushed for the establishment of a no-fly zone replied that if it does not materialise, he called on the West to "at least send them planes" as a sign of help. Stoltenberg also warned that the current conflict could last for years and that the relationship between Russia and NATO had changed fundamentally and in the long term.

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