EVRO-ATLANTSKI SVET SLOVENIJE
EURO-ATLANTIC COUNCIL OF SLOVENIA

Situation Room

** *UKRAINE CRISIS* **

Period under review: from **14 March 2022** to **16 March 2022.**

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

Situation analysis recap:

- On 14 March, attacks by Russian forces continued in eastern and southern Ukraine, including the capital Kyiv. New negotiations between Russia and Ukraine took place, again without success. Both sides expressed the hope that further negotiations could lead to progress. The Ukrainian side claimed that Moscow's position was much more constructive than before. Ukrainian President, Volodymyr Zelensky, has warned NATO that if it does not close the airspace over Ukraine, it can expect Russian attacks on NATO countries. Also on that day, the US and China's High Representatives, National Security Advisers Jake Sullivan and Yang Jiechi, met in Rome. Sullivan warned Jiechi that if China supplies arms to Russia, it will make a historic mistake, for which the price will be very high. Beijing says that China has no intention of interfering in the war in this way and assured the West that its worries are unnecessary.

- On 15 March, the Slovenian Prime Minister, Janez Janša, the Polish Prime Minister, Mateusz Morawiecki, and the Czech Prime Minister, Petr Fiala, met President Zelensky in Kyiv. At the conference, they expressed their support for Ukraine's struggle for freedom and democracy, for which President Zelensky expressed gratefulness. NATO Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg, praised the visit and said it was important that NATO and EU leaders work closely with the Ukrainian President. On the same day, President Zelensky said that Ukraine must acknowledge that it will not become a NATO member and that it will have to rely on itself during this conflict.

- On 15 March, two Russian drones flew into NATO airspace in Poland and Romania. Polish air defences shot one of them down as it entered Polish airspace, and the Ukrainian Air Force Command described the incident as a provocation by Moscow. A Russian-made Orlan-10 surveillance drone, used by the Russian military to gather intelligence and identify targets for artillery and air strikes, crashed in Romania. On the same day, the EU adopted a fourth set of sanctions against Russia, including a ban on exports of certain luxury goods, which could deprive Russian elites of valuable products such as luxury cars, jewellery, and wine.

- On 16 March, Russian forces continued shelling and bombing the Ukrainian port city of Mariupol, where bombs also reportedly hit a theatre used by hundreds of civilians as a shelter. The Russian side claimed to have captured the southern part of the Kherson area. According to Ukrainian authorities, Russian soldiers also fired on people waiting for bread in front of a shop in Chernigov, to which the Kremlin reacted strongly, calling the rhetoric "unforgivable and unacceptable". On the same day, the Ukrainian and Russian sides resumed the talks that had started on Monday. The adviser to the Ukrainian President, Igor Zhovkva, said that the talks between the two sides had become more constructive and expressed cautious optimism, but also said that the war could only end if the Russian and Ukrainian Presidents negotiated directly.

- On 16 March, NATO Secretary General, Jens Stoltenberg, said that the Alliance is preparing a significant reinforcement of its military presence on its eastern flank. He stressed that NATO will not deploy troops to Ukraine. On the same day, the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers held an extraordinary meeting to expel Russia from the Council of Europe after 26 years of membership. US President Joe Biden announced $800 million worth of arms aid to Ukraine.

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