

Dueling East-West Agendas on Ukraine: America Wants War

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Region: [Russia and FSU](#)

Theme: [US NATO War Agenda](#)

Washington's Ukrainian agenda is polar opposite Moscow's. It's irresponsible. It's unjustifiable.

Reports suggest it's in two parts. It calls for Moscow to halt Crimean annexation efforts.

It wants demobilization of legitimately deployed Russian troops related to its Black Sea Fleet as well as Crimea's self-defense force.

It wants a so-called contact group established. Included would be Washington, representatives of EU nations, Russia and Ukraine's illegitimate Kiev government.

It wants sham May 25 elections endorsed. State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki said:

"We want a cessation of Russian military activities in Ukraine. We want to see an end to the annexation of Crimea. I don't think it's a secret of what we're talking about here."

Russia rejects Kiev's illegitimate government. "How can we come up with a mechanism for the Russians and the Ukrainians to talk," asked Psaki?

"Obviously, the Russians haven't agreed to that or we'd be having those discussions now."

On Saturday, a State Department official commented on John Kerry's phone discussion with Sergei Lavrov, saying:

"He made clear that continued military escalation and provocation in Crimea or elsewhere in Ukraine, along with steps to annex Crimea to Russia would close any available space for diplomacy, and he urged utmost restraint."

On Saturday, Obama spoke with Britain's David Cameron, France's Francois Hollande, Italy's Matteo Renzi, as well as presidents Berzins, Grybauskaite and Ives of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia respectively.

An Office of the Press Secretary [statement](#) followed, saying:

"Obama welcomed the strong, unified stance of the United States and the

European Union regarding Russia's military intervention in Ukraine, including in the conclusions of the March 6 European Council."

"The leaders reiterated their grave concern over Russia's clear violation of international law and reaffirmed their support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity."

"He told Baltic country leaders of Washington's "unwavering commitment to our collective defense commitments under the North Atlantic Treaty and our enduring support for the security and democracy of our Baltic allies."

"All of the leaders agreed on the need for Russia to pull its military forces back to their bases, allow for the deployment of international observers and human rights monitors to the Crimean peninsula, and agree quickly on the formation of a contact group that could lead to direct dialogue between Ukraine and Russia to de-escalate the situation and restore Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity."

"The leaders rejected the proposed referendum in Crimea as a violation of Ukraine's constitution and underscored that all decisions about the future of Ukraine must include the government in Kiev."

"The leaders made clear that Russia's continued violation of international law will isolate it from the international community."

"They also discussed the need for the international community to provide strong support to the government of Ukraine as it works to stabilize its economy and prepares for elections in May."

Moscow rejects Washington's proposal. It wants Kiev putschists declared illegitimate. It takes the "situation created by the coup as a starting point," Lavrov stressed.

He said Russia's Security Council prepared its own. Moscow wants international law respected.

It wants all Ukrainians treated equitably, fairly and justly. "We are not just passively receiving proposals from our colleagues," said Lavrov.

"We have prepared our own," he added. "The idea is to bring the situation back into the framework of international law with due account taken of the interests of all Ukrainians without exception, given the current deep state crisis in that country."

"The US Secretary of State John Kerry last Friday handed me the paper that I have already made public." It "raises many questions."

"There is a concept in this document that we are not quite happy with, because everything has been formulated as though there is some kind of conflict between Russia and Ukraine, as though we admit certain facts really exist."

On March 6, Obama's [Executive Order](#) "Block(ed) Property of Certain Persons Contributing to the Situation in Ukraine."

It includes what he calls "military intervention in Crimea." His action doesn't preclude

further steps. Expect more to follow.

On Sunday, Deputy National Security Advisor Tony Blinken issued a statement saying:

“First, if there is an annexation of Crimea, a referendum that moves Crimea from Ukraine to Russia, we won’t recognize it, nor will most of the world.”

“Second, the pressure that we’ve already exerted in coordination with our partners and allies will go up.”

“The president made it very clear in announcing our sanctions, as did the Europeans the other day, that this is the first step and we’ve put in place a very flexible and very tough mechanism to increase the pressure, to increase the sanctions.”

Former US Russian ambassador Michael McFaul said annexation will “isolate Russia from the rest of the world for years to come, maybe even decades to come.”

Hardball is longstanding US policy. Bullying is standard practice. Rule of law principles don’t matter. Washington rules alone apply.

Russia won’t roll over for America. It didn’t invade Crimea. It’s going all-out to protect its legitimate interests. It has every right to do so.

[Putin](#) was unequivocal calling what happened in Kiev “an anti-constitutional takeover, an armed seizure of power.”

He wants “fratricidal war for the sake of peace (stopped), for the sake of justice and for the sake of Ukraine’s future.”

He addressed Crimea. He denounced claims of deployed Russian forces. None were sent besides those legally related to its Black Sea Fleet.

“So far, there is no need for (them), but the possibility remains” to protect Russian nationals if necessary, he said.

His biggest concern is “rampag(ing) reactionary forces, nationalist and anti-Semitic forces going on in certain parts of Ukraine, including Kiev.”

They “chained and handcuffed” an eastern Ukraine governor. They “poured water over him in the cold of winter.”

“After that, by the way, he was locked up in a cellar and tortured. What is all this about? Is this democracy? Is this some manifestation of democracy?”

Compare Crimea to out-of-control Kiev violence, he said. Compare democracy to neo-Nazi putschists seizing power. Russia hasn’t interfered in Ukraine’s internal affairs, he stressed.

“(W)e firmly believe that all citizens of Ukraine, I repeat, wherever they live, should be given the same equal right to participate in the life of their country and in determining its future.”

Crimeans have the same right as other Ukrainians, he said. Moscow supports them.

“Putin underlined in particular that the steps taken by Crimea’s legitimate authorities are based on international law and aimed at guaranteeing the legitimate interests of the peninsula’s population,” an official Kremlin statement added.

“We are often told our actions are illegitimate,” Putin said. No one explains how responsibly.

Contrast Russia to America’s lawless aggression. He cited Afghanistan, Iraq, and Libya. He omitted numerous other examples.

French Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius said European sanctions could be imposed next week if Moscow doesn’t accept Western proposals.

“If they respond positively, John Kerry will go to Moscow and then sanctions will not be immediate,” he said.

“If they do not respond or if they respond negatively, there will be a series of sanctions that could be taken as early as this week.”

On Tuesday, Western officials met in London. Asset freezes and travel bans on targeted Russian officials were discussed.

Last week, visa talks were suspended. So was halting negotiations on a new EU/Russian investment agreement. An arms embargo and trade sanctions could follow.

Washington threatened to expel Russia from G-8 participation. Other harsh measures were suggested.

EU/Russian trade is nearly half a trillion dollars annually. Targeting Moscow cuts both ways. Will EU leaders shoot themselves in the foot? Will they harm their own interests?

Energy is a major issue. Europe is heavily dependent on Russian resources. Gazprom supplies Ukraine with over half its gas.

Europe gets 40% from Russia. Germany gets one-third of its oil and gas from this vital source. It remains to be seen where realpolitik overrides bluster.

Ukraine’s illegitimate Foreign Minister Andrii Deshchytsya’s hyperbole matches his Western counterparts.

We are practically in a state of war with Russia, he claimed. “We have to cope with an aggression that we do not understand.”

Russia’s Foreign Ministry denounced Right Sector neo-Nazi lawlessness. Its elements “now rule in eastern regions of Ukraine as a result of the actions of fighters of (its) fighters..with the full connivance” of Kiev putschists,” it said.

“The shamefaced silence of our Western partners, human rights organizations and foreign media is surprising.”

“It raises the question – where is the notorious objectivity and commitment to democracy?”

Russian citizens trying to enter Ukraine are blocked. Independent media voices are silenced. Kiev putschists want their message alone heard.

Washington plans provocative Black Sea drills with Bulgaria and Romania. Imagine if Russia or China held their own in America's Gulf.

US controlled NATO announced AWACS reconnaissance flights over Poland and Romania to monitor conditions in Ukraine.

Washington is waging geopolitical war on Russia. It wants it weakened and isolated.

It wants what remains of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) eliminated. It wants control over all former Soviet republics and Warsaw Pact countries. It wants them incorporated into NATO.

It wants new eastern European military bases established. It wants them targeting Russia and China.

It wants long-range multiple nuclear warhead-armed missiles targeting their heartlands.

It's playing with fire. It risks global conflict. It risks the unthinkable.

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