

Russia Negotiates Ceasefire In Ukraine: NATO Responds With Troops, Warships, and Sanctions

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Global Research, September 05, 2014

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Only hours after Russian President Vladimir Putin managed to secure a fragile ceasefire between the Western-backed fascist regime in Kiev and the Russian-backed separatists in Eastern Ukraine, NATO has rewarded Russia's efforts by shipping NATO soldiers into Western Ukraine, increasing the number of NATO navy vessels in the Black Sea, and leveling new sanctions against Moscow.

According to Reuters, Western Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko and one of the main separatist leaders of Eastern Ukraine have agreed to order ceasefires on Friday, pending that an agreement is made on a new peace plan.

[Reuters states:](#)

Speaking on the sidelines of a NATO summit in Wales, Poroshenko said the ceasefire would be conditional on a planned meeting going ahead in Minsk on Friday of envoys from [Ukraine](#), [Russia](#) and Europe's OSCE security watchdog.

"At 1400 local time (0700 ET on Friday), provided the (Minsk) meeting takes place, I will call on the General Staff to set up a bilateral ceasefire and we hope that the implementation of the peace plan will begin tomorrow," he told reporters.

Alexander Zakharchenko, head of the main rebel Donetsk People's Republic, said in a statement his men would also order a ceasefire, from one hour later, provided that Kiev's representatives signed up to a peace plan at the Minsk meeting.

Still, the ceasefire is hanging by a thread.

For instance, some rebel leaders view the ceasefire with extreme suspicion since other ceasefires allegedly initiated by Kiev have fallen apart or never actually taken place. Reuters reports,

Rebels still expressed scepticism. Oleg Tsaryov, a senior rebel official, told Reuters the separatist truce would depend on the government providing guarantees, "because in the past we had some ceasefire agreements Poroshenko didn't honor".

A source close to Zakharchenko said government forces bombarded Donetsk within 15 minutes of Poroshenko's announcement of the ceasefire plan: "We'll see how the talks go tomorrow, but it won't be easy. All this talk of truce amid

more and more shelling.”

Former central banker and current Prime Minister of Western Ukraine, Arseniy Yatsenyuk, flatly dismissed the ceasefire plan, calling it a trap.

In addition, [Western media outlets](#) claim that the fighting on the ground continues in Ukraine. However, one would be justified in questioning the veracity of these reports given the track record of these operations and the obvious desire of Western media to discredit any Russian success in terms of ending the violence. On the other hand, given the track record of Kiev, ceasefire agreements do not have a great life expectancy.

There are [wild cards](#), of course. Most notably, whether or not the Western fascists such as Right Sector will abide by the terms of the ceasefire deal. Indeed, this is one of the major concerns of the Donetsk Republic Prime Minister Zakharchenko.

[Putin's seven point peace plan outline is as follows:](#)

First, end active offensive operations by armed forces, armed units and militia groups in southeast Ukraine in the Donetsk and Lugansk areas.

Second, withdraw Ukrainian armed forces units to a distance that would make it impossible to fire on populated areas using artillery and all types of multiple launch rocket systems.

Third, allow for full and objective international monitoring of compliance with the ceasefire and monitoring of the situation in the safe zone created by the ceasefire.

Fourth, exclude all use of military aircraft against civilians and populated areas in the conflict zone.

Fifth, organise the exchange of individuals detained by force on an ‘all for all’ basis without any preconditions.

Sixth, open humanitarian corridors for refugees and for delivering humanitarian cargoes to towns and populated areas in Donbass – Donetsk and Lugansk Regions.

Seventh, make it possible for repair brigades to come to damaged settlements in the Donbass region in order to repair and rebuild social facilities and life-supporting infrastructure and help the region to prepare for the winter.

In response to the Russian-brokered peace deal, NATO has responded in a typical confrontational fashion. Only hours after the ceasefire was announced, NATO and the United States announced that dynamic duo of destabilization was going ahead with planned military exercises in Western Ukraine that will see approximately 1,000 troops posted on Ukrainian soil.

Shortly ahead of the NATO meeting, [Barack Obama stated](#) from Estonia “that the U.S. and NATO would not allow a foreign country to encroach on its friends. He said this after blaming Moscow for the political turmoil in Ukraine. He was a hair away from saying that the U.S. would protect Ukraine from a Russian military attack.

If the NATO exercises were not enough to inflame tensions in the fragile country, four NATO warships are also set to enter the Black Sea this week. USS Ross, an Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer, French Commandant Birot, Canadian HMCS Toronto, a Halifax-class frigate, and Spanish frigate Almirante Juan de Borbon are all set to enter the Black Sea before September 7.

[As RT reports,](#)

The Montreux Convention of 1936 states that warships of non-Black Sea states can stay in the Black Sea for no more than 21 days. It adds that the maximum deadweight of a non-regional warship in the area should not exceed 45,000 tons.

[...]

Despite the convention limits, NATO has managed to increase its presence in the region in the wake of the Ukrainian crisis by constantly rotating warships there. Russia does not approve of what it sees as muscle-flexing by the military alliance in its backyard.

In July this year, the grouping of NATO ships in the Black Sea reached nine vessels, setting a record for the post-Soviet period.

Rounding out the provocative stance of Western leaders, the results of the NATO summit reveal the intention to impose yet more sanctions against Russia over the crisis in Ukraine. According to the New York times,

The extended European package, which was agreed to in principle by leaders, at a European Union summit meeting last week, would cover state energy and defense companies, said one British official who requested anonymity under government rules.

Restrictions on Russian banks would be extended, and there would be more measures against so-called dual-use equipment, particularly in the communications and aerospace sectors. The access of Russian banks to the European debt market would be further restricted and limited to shorter-term debt.

Clearly, the United States and NATO are not seeking a peaceful solution in Ukraine. If they were, they would be applauding the ability of Putin to secure a ceasefire and a reasonable roadmap to a sustained halt of hostilities. If the US and NATO were seeking peace in Ukraine, they never would have orchestrated the Euromaidan color revolution to begin with.

Still, as the American people buy Western propaganda hook, line, and sinker, those of us who have a grasp of current events seem doomed to be dragged ever closer to a direct confrontation with a nuclear world power. We can continue to ignore the facts and the political process now but, if such a confrontation ever happens, we will not be able to ignore it any longer.

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