

Russia's Invasion of Ukraine: Understanding "Putin's Discourse"

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Theme: [Intelligence](#), [US NATO War Agenda](#)

In-depth Report: [UKRAINE REPORT](#)

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Today, the dangers of military escalation are beyond description.

What is now happening in Ukraine has serious geopolitical implications. It could lead us into a World War III Scenario.

It is important that a peace process be initiated with a view to preventing escalation.

Global Research does not support Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

The history of this war must be understood.

The bombing and shelling led by Ukraine's Armed Forces directed against the people of Donbass started eight years ago, resulting in the destruction of residential areas and more than 10,000 civilian casualties.

A bilateral Peace Agreement is required.

While addressing a meeting on socioeconomic support for the constituent entities of the Russian Federation on March 16, Russian President Vladimir Putin succinctly elucidated the salient reasons for pre-emptively mounting a military intervention in Ukraine in order to forestall NATO's encroachment upon Russia's security interests. Here are a few trenchant excerpts from the lucid and [eloquent speech](#) [1]:

"We are meeting in a complicated period as our Armed Forces are conducting a special military operation in Ukraine and Donbass. I would like to remind you that at the beginning, on the morning of February 24, I publicly announced the reasons for and the main goal of Russia's actions.

“It is to help our people in Donbass, who have been subjected to real genocide for nearly eight years in the most barbarous ways, that is, through blockade, large-scale punitive operations, terrorist attacks and constant artillery raids. Their only guilt was that they demanded basic human rights: to live according to their forefathers’ laws and traditions, to speak their native Russian language, and to bring up their children as they want.

“Kiev was not just preparing for war, for aggression against Russia – it was conducting it ... Hostilities in Donbass and the shelling of peaceful residential areas have continued all these years. Almost 14,000 civilians, including children have been killed over this time ... Clearly, Kiev’s Western patrons are just pushing them to continue the bloodshed. They incessantly supply Kiev with weapons and intelligence, as well as other types of assistance, including military advisers and mercenaries.

“Just like in the 1990s and the early 2000s, they want to try again to finish us off, to reduce us to nothing by turning us into a weak and dependent country, destroying our territorial integrity and dismembering Russia as they see fit. The failed then and they will fail this time ... Yes, of course, they will back the so-called fifth column, national traitors – those who make money here in our country but live over there, and live not in the geographical sense of the word but in their minds, in their servile mentality.”

Confirming Western support for Ukraine “with weapons and intelligence, as well as other types of assistance, including military advisers and mercenaries” that Putin alluded to in the speech, the [Intercept reported](#) [2] on March 17 the US military had deployed extensive ISR, or intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, assets to countries neighboring Ukraine to monitor developments within the embattled nation. The aircraft include MQ-9 Reaper drones, Boeing RC-135 Rivet Joints, and Boeing E-3 Sentry AWACS, which have been used to eavesdrop on communications and collect imagery intelligence.

“‘The U.S. is using a variety of drone and fixed-wing collection assets to obtain tactical information of the battlefield,’ the official said, adding that the intelligence is then passed on to the Ukrainians through a liaison officer. On Sunday, a Russian drone briefly crossed into Poland, a NATO member, leading to a warning from the alliance that it could respond with force — an alarming threat of direct confrontation with Russia.

“An MQ-9 drone pilot with the U.S. military also told The Intercept that Reapers had been deployed to the region. He said the U.S. was using MQ-9 services leased from private contractors before withdrawing them and replacing with government assets, which he said have been slower to stand up.

“The U.S. has particular experience with this type of indirect weapons and intelligence assistance against Russia, having previously sent arms to Syrian rebels combating the Russian-backed regime of President Bashar al-Assad.”

In many ways, the proxy war in Ukraine resembles the CIA’s Operation Timber Sycamore and the Pentagon’s \$500 million train-and-equip program to provide guerrilla warfare training and lethal weaponry to rebels battling the Syrian government in the training camps located at border regions of Turkey and Jordan during Syria’s decade-long conflict.

In fact, Russia’s military intervention in Syria in Sept. 2015 in support of the Bashar al-Assad government battling Washington’s jihadist proxies was actually in retaliation for the CIA’s

covert program initiated in 2014 for arming and training mercenaries and neo-Nazi militias in Russia's backyard in east Ukraine in order to destabilize and provoke Russia.



Russia's invasion of Ukraine last month was only a logical culmination of a long-simmering, eight-year war of attrition initiated by NATO powers against Russia in Ukraine's eastern Donbas region after the 2014 Maidan coup toppling Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich and consequent annexation of the Crimean Peninsula by Russia.

In an [explosive scoop](#) [3], Zach Dorfman reported for the Yahoo News on March 16:

"As part of the Ukraine-based training program, CIA paramilitaries taught their Ukrainian counterparts sniper techniques; how to operate U.S.-supplied Javelin anti-tank missiles and other equipment; how to evade digital tracking the Russians used to pinpoint the location of Ukrainian troops, which had left them vulnerable to attacks by artillery; how to use covert communications tools; and how to remain undetected in the war zone while also drawing out Russian and insurgent forces from their positions, among other skills, according to former officials.

"When CIA paramilitaries first traveled to eastern Ukraine in the aftermath of Russia's initial 2014 incursion, their brief was twofold. First, they were ordered to determine how the agency could best help train Ukrainian special operations personnel fight the Russian military forces, and their separatist allies, waging a grinding war against Ukrainian troops in the Donbas region. But the second part of the mission was to test the mettle of the Ukrainians themselves, according to former officials."

Besides the CIA's clandestine program for training neo-Nazi militias in eastern Donbas and the US Special Forces program for training Ukraine's security forces at Yavoriv Combat Training Center in the western part of the country bordering Poland that was [hit by a barrage](#) [4] of 30 cruise missiles killing at least 35 militants on March 13, Zach Dorfman claims in a separate [January report](#) [5] that the CIA also ran a covert program for training Ukraine's special forces at an undisclosed facility in the southern United States.

"The CIA is overseeing a secret intensive training program in the U.S. for elite Ukrainian special operations forces and other intelligence personnel, according to five former intelligence and national security officials familiar with the initiative. The program, which started in 2015, is based at an undisclosed facility in the Southern U.S., according to some of those officials.

"While the covert program, run by paramilitaries working for the CIA's Ground Branch — now officially known as Ground Department — was established by the Obama administration after Russia's invasion and annexation of Crimea in 2014, and expanded

under the Trump administration, the Biden administration has further augmented it.

“By 2015, as part of this expanded anti-Russia effort, CIA Ground Branch paramilitaries also started traveling to the front in eastern Ukraine to advise their counterparts there. The multiweek, U.S.-based CIA program has included training in firearms, camouflage techniques, land navigation, tactics like cover and move, intelligence and other areas.

“One person familiar with the program put it more bluntly. ‘The United States is training an insurgency,’ said a former CIA official, adding that the program has taught the Ukrainians how ‘to kill Russians.’ Going back decades, the CIA has provided limited training to Ukrainian intelligence units to try and shore up an independent Kyiv and prevent Russian subversion, but cooperation ramped up after the Crimea invasion, said a former CIA executive.”

Notwithstanding, at the height of the Cold War in the sixties when Russia exploded the world’s largest 50-megaton thermonuclear Tsar Bomba in October 1961 and 400,000 US forces were deployed in Europe that were still outnumbered by Soviet troops, the Soviet leadership made repeated requests for signing a “no first use” nuclear treaty precluding the likelihood of pre-emptive nuclear strike, but the United States balked at the proposal due to conventional warfare superiority of the USSR in Europe.

Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev even unilaterally pledged against the first use of nuclear weapons in 1982, though Russia has since [dropped the pledge](#) [1] in 1993 following the break-up of the Soviet Union and consequent tilting of balance of power in favor of the United States. After European powers developed their own military capacity following the devastation of the Second World War, NATO now holds conventional warfare superiority over Russia with a significantly larger number of ground troops and combat aircraft.

Despite Russia’s massive nuclear arsenal, several Pentagon officials, full of hubris and evidently suffering from misplaced superiority complex, have recently made their misconceived institutional logic public that they no longer regard Russia as an equal military power, instead they contemptuously dubbed it “a second-rate regional power,” and if given an opportunity, they wouldn’t hesitate to take Russia head-on, even if the risk is as perilous as the conflict spiraling into a catastrophic nuclear war.

Total number of nuclear warheads across the world currently stands at roughly 13,000: Russia has 5977; NATO has 5943, including 5428 in the US, 290 in France and 225 in the United Kingdom; China has 350, Pakistan 165, India 160, Israel 90 and North Korea has 20 nuclear weapons, according to the Federation of American Scientists.

At the height of the Cold War in the sixties, Russia exploded the world’s largest 50-megaton thermonuclear Tsar Bomba in October 1961. A Tupolev Tu-95V aircraft took off with the bomb weighing 27 tons. The bomb was attached to a large parachute, which gave the release and observer planes time to fly about 45 km away from ground zero, giving them a 50 percent chance of survival.

The bomb was released from a height of 10,500 meters on a test target at Sukhoy Nos cape in the Barents Sea. The bomb detonated at the height of 4,200 meters above ground. Still, the shock wave caught up with the Tu-95V at a distance of 115 km and the Tu-16 at 205 km. The Tu-95V dropped 1 kilometer in the air because of the shock wave but was able to recover and land safely.

The 8-km-wide fireball reached nearly as high as the altitude of the release plane and was visible at almost 1,000 km away. The mushroom cloud was about 67 km high. A seismic wave in the earth's crust, generated by the shock wave of the explosion, circled the globe three times. Glass shattered in windows 780 km from the explosion in a village on Dikson Island.

All buildings in the village of Severny, both wooden and brick, located 55 km from ground zero within the Sukhoy Nos test range, were destroyed. In districts hundreds of kilometers from ground zero, wooden houses were destroyed, stone ones lost their roofs, windows, and doors. Atmospheric focusing caused blast damage at even greater distances, breaking windows in Norway and Finland.

In conclusion, the Ukraine conflict is clearly spiraling out of control and has the potential not only of dragging NATO powers into the war but might also spell end to the human civilization by raising the apocalyptic specter of a catastrophic nuclear war between two formidable nuclear powers that hold between themselves over 90% of the world's devastating nuclear arsenal.

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Notes

[1] [Putin's speech to a meeting published by Russian Embassy in London](#)

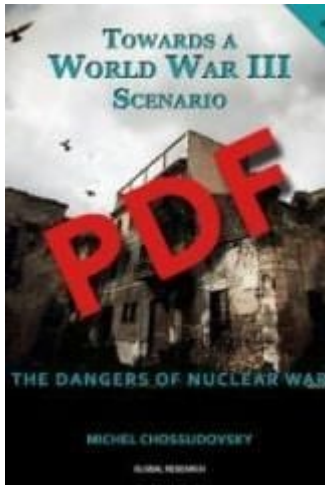
[2] [U.S. quietly assists Ukraine with intelligence](#)

[3] [CIA training program in Ukraine helped Kyiv prepare for Russian invasion](#)

[4] [Pentagon push to send more trainers to Ukraine was scrapped](#)

[5] [CIA-trained Ukrainian paramilitaries may take central role if Russia invades](#)

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[“Towards a World War III Scenario: The Dangers of Nuclear War”](#)

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[Michel Chossudovsky](#) is Professor of Economics at the University of Ottawa and Director of the Centre for Research on Globalization (CRG), which hosts the critically acclaimed website www.globalresearch.ca. He is a contributor to the Encyclopedia Britannica. His writings have been translated into more than 20 languages.

Reviews

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–Ellen Brown, author of ‘Web of Debt’ and president of the Public Banking Institute

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