

Ukraine War: Open Disagreement between the US and the EU

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Region: [Europe](#), [Russia and FSU](#), [USA](#)

Theme: [US NATO War Agenda](#)

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There now is open disagreement between three Western leaders regarding how to move forward with regard to Ukraine: Barack Obama of the United States, versus Francois Hollande of France, and Angela Merkel of Germany.

On Friday, August 29th, this split became public concerning whether the Minsk II accords for ending the Ukrainian civil war should remain in force. Obama supports the view of Ukrainian President, Petro Poroshenko, to violate the Minsk II accords, which would end it; the same day, Hollande and Merkel agreed with Russia's President Vladimir Putin, that the Minsk II agreement needs to be implemented in full.

Merkel and Hollande had arranged the Minsk II accords without U.S. President Obama's participation, because [Obama's Administration had installed the new, anti-Russian, government in Ukraine in a February 2014 coup](#), which sparked the breakaway from Ukraine by two former Ukrainian regions that had voted heavily for the man whom Obama had just overthrown, Viktor Yanukovych: first, [Crimea, which had voted 75+% for Yanukovych](#); then [Donbass \(comprising "Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts"\)](#), which had voted 90%+% for [Yanukovych](#). Obama's agent overseeing the coup, [Victoria Nuland, selected Arseniy Yatsenyuk to run the post-coup government](#) and he became the newly appointed Prime Minister when the coup (called ["the most blatant coup in history"](#)) occurred 18 days later.

Then, on 25 May 2014, [the parts of Ukraine that had not separated from Ukraine](#) elected as Ukraine's new President, Petro Poroshenko. Mr. Poroshenko [had informed the EU's investigators on 25 February 2014 that the overthrow of Yanukovych had been via a coup instead of by a revolution](#) (such as the Obama Administration claimed); but, now, on 25 May 2014, he himself became the new Ukraine's President. In order to protect himself against the possibility of being violently overthrown as his predecessor Yanukovych had been, [he filed a case with Ukraine's supreme court, the Constitutional Court, to recognize officially that Yanukovych had illegally been removed from the Presidency](#). (That case is still pending.)

The current split concerns the provision in the Minsk II accords that requires the Ukrainian government to grant to the breakaway Donbass region a position within a new federal Ukrainian system in which the residents of Donbass will elect their own local leaders, instead of having their leaders imposed upon them (as the coup was) by the central Ukrainian government in Kiev. Donbass will then rejoin Ukraine, and the war will be officially over.

On August 29th, Russia's Interfax News Agency headlined, ["Poroshenko: Ukrainian](#)

[constitution won't envision special status for Donbass,"](#) and reported that Poroshenko said (referring to the current Ukrainian Constitution, and which he will not change), "No matter how you look for it there, there is no special status [for Donbass]. ... That would lead to a parade of sovereignties. My amendments to the constitution eliminate this article, and there will be no right to such special status."

A few hours later the same day, Interfax bannered, ["Merkel, Hollande Inform Putin on Adherence to Minsk Agreements,"](#) and reported that Putin had phoned both EU leaders about this and received from them reassurance that they, like he, remained committed to full implementation of Minsk II. (Putin [does not want Donbass to become part of Russia](#), but he also doesn't want the [invasion of it by the Ukrainian Armed Forces](#) to continue, especially because it has caused nearly a million refugees into Russia from Donbass. So: he needed to know whether they were behind Poroshenko's statement, or whether it reflected only Obama's view.)

This is an international continuation of the disagreement within the Obama Administration regarding Poroshenko's recent repeated threats to re-invade and forcibly take back Donbass despite the Minsk accords. At first, Kerry said that the U.S. would not support such an invasion, but his nominal subordinate, the Assistant Secretary of State for the area, Victoria Nuland, contradicted that, and [President Obama sided with Nuland; she had been instructed to contradict Kerry on this.](#)

One can only speculate as to why Poroshenko has now said that there is no way he will carry through the "special administrative status" provision, provision #11, of the [Minsk II Accords](#). That provision demands specifically what Poroshenko now specifically rejects: "Constitutional reform in Ukraine, with a new constitution to come into effect by the end of 2015, the key element of which is decentralisation (taking into account peculiarities of particular districts of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, agreed with representatives of these districts), and also approval of permanent legislation on the special status of particular districts of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts in accordance with the measures spelt out in the attached footnote,[note 1] by the end of 2015."

Putin does not want Donbass to be in Russia, but Poroshenko now refuses to grant Donbass "special administrative status" within Ukraine. The only way that Poroshenko wants to take back Donbass is by force. On April 30th, Poroshenko had said, "The war will end when Ukraine regains Donbass and Crimea," and on May 11th, he said, "I have no doubt, we will free the [Donetsk] Airport [in Donetsk oblast], because it is our land."

On August 27th, Edward Basurin, a military official of the Donetsk People's Republic had announced ["UAF Massively shelling DPR — Drastic Deterioration,"](#) saying that, "The fascists have used heavy artillery prohibited by the Minsk Agreements against the civilian areas of Aleksandrovka and Marinka. The outskirts of Donetsk have been struck." Thus, when Poroshenko, two days later, announced that he would not continue with the Minsk II accords, Putin immediately got back into direct contact with Hollande and Merkel, to ask whether they still fully supported the accords.

The result is a now-open split between the U.S. and Europe, over Ukraine. The split between Nuland and Kerry is now a split between the U.S. and Europe; or, as Nuland had said on 4 February 2014 while providing her subordinate in Kiev her instructions about the preparations and outcome of the coup: ["F—k the EU!"](#) Perhaps EU officials are getting increasingly cold feet about the entire matter, now a year-and-a-half later.

Investigative historian Eric Zuesse is the author, most recently, of [They're Not Even Close: The Democratic vs. Republican Economic Records, 1910-2010](#), and of [CHRIST'S VENTRILOQUISTS: The Event that Created Christianity](#).

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