

Ukrainian Human Rights Infringements Being Covered Up in Information War

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On April 12, US President Joe Biden described the Russian military operation in Ukraine as a “genocide”, two weeks later the Canadian House of Commons adopted a motion recognizing that Moscow has been committing acts of “genocide” against Ukrainians. The Latvian and Estonian parliaments also voted unanimously on April 21 to approve a similar declaration. This is part of a larger trend of demonizing Moscow while silencing on Kiev’s terrible human rights record.

May 2 marks 8 years since the 2014 Odessa Massacre, when Ukrainian ultranationalists forced the anti-Maidan demonstrators into the Trade Unions House and set it on fire, thus killing 42 people. [No one has been tried](#) so far. In 2015, the Council of Europe’s International Advisory Panel [concluded](#) there was indication of “police complicity” and that Kiev failed to properly investigate the matter.

In today’s war of narratives, much is being said of the humanitarian aspects pertaining to the current conflict between Moscow and Kiev. However, the fact is that in the Western world in general there has not been a fair and balanced press coverage of the situation. Amid a global wave of [Russophobia](#), Russia is portrayed as the sole aggressor to the point of demonization, while the Ukrainian government is depicted in an almost saintly light, without any basis in actual facts.

For instance, this year, on February 18, Kiev started a vicious [bombing campaign](#) on the Donbas region, targeting both the Donetsk (DPR) and Lugansk People’s Republics (LPR). That day alone, the Ukrainian government had attacked at least 47 points along the conflict zone, targeting its own population (from Kiev’s perspective), that is, the population living in the territories it claims as its own. A kindergarten in the Stanytsia Luganska town was targeted, causing the deaths of civilians.

On February 22, an El Pais [piece](#) detailed the humanitarian crisis in Donbas. On February 24, [CNN reported](#) that Ukrainian forces “destroyed” a large part of the region. This caused lots

of Donbas residents [to seek refuge](#) in the Rostov Oblast (Russian Federation). [Orphanages](#) and [schools](#) were evacuated due to the Ukrainian military campaign.

These refugees arriving in Rostov-on-Don City (Russia) received medical care, food and financial aid, and the reception of the families was urgently organized. At the time, LPR authorities denounced that Ukraine's military regularly broke the cease-fire and shelled Donbas in a series of [provocations](#) so as to instigate its People's Militia into responding, thus creating a pretext for further Ukrainian aggression while NATO kept supplying arms and [mercenaries](#) to Kiev thereby further fueling tensions. The week before that, Moscow had [withdrawn troops](#) from the region near the border, which should have de-escalated tensions.

Amid the overwhelming flood of news about the crisis, one will have a hard time finding these aforementioned pieces of news in the English-language press, and thus these events become non-events, as if they had never taken place.

For the people of Donbas, however, the war began 8 years ago, in April 2014. It was preceded by the November 2013 Euromaidan demonstrations, which culminated in the February 2014 coup (that illegally removed Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich), followed by mass riots in a polarized society and then the so called Maidan Revolution. This development marked the beginning of a series of ultra-nationalist and [chauvinistic](#) Ukrainian policies [against Russian-speaking populations](#) (in a largely bilingual country) and other ethnic minorities. This far-right wave has brought neo-Nazi groups to power, and, as a result of that, has further alienated large parts of the Eastern Ukraine's population culminating in a civil war. It has [hampered bilateral relations with Poland](#) to some extent – and, more recently, [Greek-Ukrainian relations](#) also. However, this has not affected Kiev's relations with Washington.

Moreover, Ukrainian attacks on language and culture and its violence against civilians in Donbass since 2014 have been denounced as [genocidal](#) for a while. For years, the [Western press](#) did accurately describe Ukraine's "greatest weapon", the Azov battalion, as an openly neo-Nazi organization, in contrast to today's trend of [covering-up or minimizing](#) this fact – a trend that can only be described as pro-Ukrainian propaganda war.

From a Russian perspective, the roots of the current crisis go back to [NATO's enlargement](#) since at least 1999. However, considering all the above, when President Putin claims that, among other reasons, Moscow started its military operation in Ukraine [to prevent further Ukrainian violence in Donbas](#).

Kiev has indeed an awful record regarding neo-Nazism, human rights and torture, an issue that was reported by the [Atlantic Council](#), and the [Cato Institute](#) as well as many other voices in the US, albeit it has been forgotten now. It was also the subject of Human Rights and [Amnesty International](#) reports for years. The Ukrainian state has been committing serious human rights violations that are being minimized or ignored to this day. Recent video footages show Ukrainian tortures and [shooting of Russian soldiers](#), and, according to retired US Army [Col. Macgregor](#), military consultant and analyst, while Russians have not been shooting or mistreating surrendering war prisoners the same cannot be said about the Ukrainian forces.

In the age of infowar, propaganda is actually a part of warfare itself. It is quite ironic that the genocidal nature of post-Maidan Ukrainian far-right policies is largely dismissed precisely

when the US and its allies are now flirting with the weaponization of Ukraine against Moscow. To sum it up, while [Ukraine is losing the conflict](#), the West seems to be winning the propaganda war so far.

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