

Forum: Committee

Issue: The Question of Russian-Ukraine Border”

Student Officer: Martino Domenicali

Position: Head Chair

INTRODUCTION

130.000 Russian soldiers, more than 1200 tanks and other military weapons have been settled by Russia on Ukraine's eastern border. Russia declared that this is only military training but this has been seen as a threat of invasion, leading to a diplomatic crisis between East and West. The Ukrainian armed forces commander declared Russia also has about 2100 troops in the country's eastern region, Dombass, held by rebel forces, and that Russian officers hold leading positions in the separatist forces. Russian soldiers have also been sent to Belarus, a country between Ukraine and the Eu.

KEY DEFINITIONS OF TOPICS

130.000 Russian soldiers have been sent on Ukrainian Estefan border, in the region of Donbass

BACKGROUND INFORMATION



In 2014 the Ukrainian and pro-Russia president Viktor Yanukovich suspended the free trade agreement with the Eu. A popular protest called Euromaidan rose, forcing the president to leave the country. In the peninsula of Crimea, predominated by Russian speakers, a group of rebels incited and armed by Russia, rose and proclaimed independence asking, after a referendum won with over 90 percent of the votes, the annexation to Russia, recognized also by Putin. Another armed protest rose in the eastern region of the country, Dombass, leading to a civil war between the provinces of Donetsk and Lugansk that already causes 14000 deaths. Both the Eu and Ukraine accused Russia of having supported the protests, sending soldiers and military weapons, but the Russian government denied the accusations, declaring that Russians who joined the separatists did so voluntarily. A 2015 peace agreement called “Minsk-2” was reached and it declared that Kiev ensures the autonomy to the separatist regions and the amnesty for the rebel groups, while Russian soldiers disappeared from the territory. Neither condition has been met.

Major Countries and Organizations Involved

Ukraine and Russia. Ukraine is supported by the Eu and other IGOs such as NATO.

Relevant UN Treaties and Events

More than taking control of Ukraine, the impression is that Putin wants to force the West to negotiate and accept a strong reduction if its military presence in the region, considered a threat. Moscow declares that this is a response to the massive presence of NATO’s military troops near its borders, in the Eastern European countries that joined the union after 1997 such as Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Poland, Romania, and Bulgaria. Putin’s concerns also regard the fact that Ukraine is applying to join NATO.

Western countries have condemned any prospect of Russian’s invasion of Ukraine and they are using diplomatic methods to try to solve the issue. The Us Secretary of State, Anthony Blinken and the Russian foreign minister, Sergei Lavrov, met in Geneva. French president Emmanuel Macron and Italian prime minister Mario Draghi both contacted Putin. Also the prime minister of the Uk Boris Johnson went to Kiev to meet the president Volodymir Zelensky. However, some states such as the Uk are offering military support to Kiev, while others have sent soldiers and vehicles in the Baltic Sea and in NATO Eastern countries. Moscow has also been threatened with intent economic sanctions and retaliation such as stopping the purchase of gases from the country.

3000 Us soldiers have been deployed to strengthen the eastern border and other 8500 have been put on “high alert” by Washington for a possible dispatch always in Eastern Europe. However, the states are divided between those who want a harder use of power and those who are trying to achieve a diplomatic resolution.

Timeline of Events

2013

- Yanukovich's government suspends trade and association talks with the EU in November and opts to revive economic ties with Moscow, triggering months of mass rallies in Kyiv.

2014

- The protests, largely focused around Kiev's Maidan square, turn violent. Dozens of protesters are killed
- In February, parliament votes to remove Yanukovich, who flees. Within days, armed men seize the parliament of the Ukrainian region of Crimea and raise the Russian flag.
- Moscow annexes the territory after a March 16 referendum which shows overwhelming support in Crimea for joining the Russian Federation.
- In April, pro-Russian separatists in the eastern region of Donbas declare independence. Fighting breaks out and has continued sporadically, despite frequent ceasefires, into 2022.
- In May, businessman Petro Poroshenko wins a presidential election with a pro-Western agenda.
- In July, a missile brings down passenger plane MH17 en route from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur, killing all 298 people on board. The weapon used is traced back by investigators to Russia, which denies involvement.

2017

- An association agreement between Ukraine and the EU is passed, opening markets for free trade of goods and services, and visa-free travel to the EU for Ukrainians.

2019

- A new Ukrainian Orthodox church wins formal recognition, angering the Kremlin.
- Former actor and comedian Volodymyr Zelenskyy defeats Poroshenko in an April presidential election, promising to tackle corruption and end the simmering conflict in eastern Ukraine. His Servant of the People party wins a July parliamentary election.
- Then-US President Donald Trump asks Zelenskyy in July to investigate Joe Biden, then his rival in the US presidential race, and Biden's son Hunter Biden over possible business dealings in Ukraine. The call eventually leads to a failed attempt to impeach Trump.

March 2020

- Ukraine goes into its first lockdown to curb COVID-19.

June 2020

- The International Monetary Fund (IMF) approves a \$5bn lifeline to help Ukraine stave off default during a pandemic-induced recession.

January 2021

- Zelenskyy appeals to Biden, who is now US president, for Ukraine to join NATO.

February 2021

- Zelenskyy's government imposes sanctions on Viktor Medvedchuk, an opposition leader and the Kremlin's most prominent ally in Ukraine.

Spring 2021

- Russia masses troops near Ukraine's borders. They are partly dispersed after what Russia says was a training exercise.

October 2021

- Ukraine uses a Turkish Bayraktar TB2 drone for the first time in eastern Ukraine, angering Russia.

Autumn 2021

- Russia again begins massing troops near Ukraine.

December 7, 2021

- Biden warns Russia of sweeping Western economic sanctions if it invades Ukraine.

December 17, 2021

- Russia presents detailed security demands including a legally binding guarantee that NATO will give up any military activity in eastern Europe and Ukraine.

January 10, 2022

- US and Russian diplomats fail to narrow differences on Ukraine, and subsequent talks also bring no major breakthrough.

January 14, 2022

- A cyberattack warning Ukrainians to "be afraid and expect the worst" hits Ukrainian government websites.

January 17, 2022

- Poroshenko returns to Ukraine to face charges in a treason case. Russian forces start arriving in Belarus, to the north of Ukraine, for joint drills.

January 24, 2022

- NATO puts forces on standby and reinforces eastern Europe with more ships and fighter jets. Some Western nations start evacuating non-essential embassy staff from Kyiv.

January 26, 2022

- Washington presents a written response to Russia's security demands, repeating a commitment to NATO's "open-door" policy while offering a "principled and pragmatic evaluation" of Moscow's concerns.

January 28, 2022

- Putin says Russia's main security demands have not been addressed but that Moscow is ready to keep talking.

PAST SOLUTIONS (history)