

Moscow Warns against US Plans to Continue Training Ukrainian Troopers

By [ITAR-TASS](#)

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The United States has launched a new phase of training of Ukrainian servicemen, a fact, which may have negative consequences for the future of the Donbas truce, Russian Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Maria Zakharova said on Thursday.

She recalled that 300 US instructors from the 173rd US airborne brigade had trained three battalions – 780 people – for Ukraine’s National Guard in a period from April to November. “It is noteworthy that the training completed at a time when the situation on the line of contact in Donbas started getting worse and the newly trained people were apparently sent there,” Zakharova said.

“Now the Americans and their NATO colleagues, including the Lithuanians and Canadians, will train a new group of Ukrainian troopers. It is clear that such preparations are unlikely to deescalate tensions and may have a negative impact on the fragile truce in the country’s southeast,” the Russian diplomat stressed.

“The presence of foreign paratroopers and their weapons on the Ukrainian soil means gross violation of the Minsk package of measures, point 10 in particular, by the Kiev government,” Zakharova said adding that point 10 provides for the OSCE-monitored withdrawal of all foreign units, military vehicles and mercenaries from the Ukrainian territory.

“It does not say that this provision applies exclusively to (Ukraine’s) eastern provinces. The Kiev authorities unequivocally took a commitment which does not contain any reservations and concerns the entire territory under their control,” the Russian Foreign Ministry spokesperson said.

US Navy Captain Jeff Davis, a spokesperson for the US Department of Defense, has recently said that the United States is starting a second phase of training of the Ukrainian army and is planning to train and equip six army battalions, including one special operations unit.

Ukrainian troopers will undergo training according to the US Fearless Guardian program launched in 2014. At its first stage, the United States trained and equipped the National Guard units, which are subordinate to Ukraine’s Interior Ministry. Now, the US instructors will train army battalions.

Three hundred military instructors of the 173rd airborne brigade of the United States Army based in Vicenza, Italy, will undergo training at the Yavorovsky testing ground in the Lviv region, Western Ukraine. A special operations battalion will be prepared in the West

Ukrainian city of Khmel'nitsky.

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