

Obama is Escalating the Crisis. US War Ships Sent to the Black Sea

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By Kells Hetherington

The situation in Ukraine intensified March 6 as President Barack Obama imposed visa restrictions and economic sanctions on Russians suspected of involvement in military action in Ukraine. The White House is also working with allies on a set of international sanctions on Russia. Meanwhile, the Crimean parliament voted to leave the Ukraine for Russia and hold a referendum to affirm the decision.

University of Illinois College of Law professor Francis Boyle criticized the United States for its handling of diplomatic conversations about the crisis held yesterday in Paris.

“The decision by President [Vladimir] Putin to stand down the 150 thousand troops on war exercises off the border of Ukraine was very positive and it should have been taken up immediately by Secretary of State Kerry ... yet unfortunately, rather than building on this, it seems that the Obama administration is escalating the crisis,” he said.

The U.S. has dispatched more forces to Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Poland, according to Boyle, despite the fact these four countries are not under threat.

“[The U.S.] already have two warships in the Black Sea and they are sending another one ... they have the George Bush aircraft carrier taskforce steaming towards the Eastern Mediterranean so it does not really appear that the United States government is trying to de-escalate,” said Boyle.

The U.S. wants to escalate the crisis in Ukraine, according to the professor.

“If Kerry had wanted to he could have had reasonable good faith negotiations with [Russian] Foreign Minister [Sergei] Lavrov,” explained Boyle. “Instead, he insisted that Lavrov had to meet with his little proxy there from Kiev.”

Kerry should go to Russia and meet with Putin, according to Boyle, who also said the terms of the 1994 Budapest Memorandum don't promise Ukraine military protections.

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