

Ukraine's Propaganda War: International PR Firms, DC Lobbyists and CIA Cutouts

Dan Cohen reveals the network of foreign strategists, Washington DC lobbyists, and intelligence-linked media outlets behind Ukraine's public relations blitz.

By [Dan Cohen](#)

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Since the Russian offensive inside Ukraine commenced on February 24, the Ukrainian military has cultivated the image of a plucky little army standing up to the Russian Goliath. To bolster the perception of Ukrainian military mettle, Kiev has churned out a steady stream of sophisticated propaganda aimed at stirring public and official support from Western countries.

The campaign includes language guides, key messages, and hundreds of propaganda posters, some of which contain fascist imagery and even praise Neo-Nazi leaders.

Behind Ukraine's public relations effort is an army of foreign political strategists, Washington DC lobbyists, and a network of intelligence-linked media outlets.

Ukraine's propaganda strategy earned it [praise](#) from a NATO commander who told the *Washington Post*,

"They are really excellent in stratcom — media, info ops, and also psy-ops."

The *Post* ultimately conceded that

"Western officials say that while they cannot independently verify much of the information that Kyiv puts out about the evolving battlefield situation, including casualty figures for both sides, it nonetheless represents highly effective stratcom."

Key to the propaganda effort is an international legion of public relations firms working directly with Ukraine's Ministry of Foreign Affairs to wage information warfare.

According to the industry news site *PRWeek*, the [initiative](#) was launched by an anonymous figure who allegedly founded a Ukraine-based public relations firm.

“From the first hour of war, we decided to join the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to help them distribute the official sources to show the truth,” the nameless figure told *PR Week*. “This is a hybrid war: the mix of bloodily struggling fight with a huge disinformation and fake campaign lead by Russia [sic].”

According to the anonymous figure, more than 150 public relations firms have joined the propaganda blitz.

The international effort is spearheaded by public relations firm [PR Network](#) co-founder Nicky Regazzoni and Francis Ingham, a top public relations consultant with close ties to the UK’s government. Ingham [previously](#) worked for Britain’s Conservative Party, sits on the UK Government Communication Service Strategy and Evaluation Council, is Chief Executive of the International Communications Consultancy Organisation, and leads the membership body for UK local government communicators, LG Comms.

“We’ve been privileged to help coordinate efforts to support the Ukrainian Government in the last few days, “ Ingham [told](#) *PRovoke Media*. “Agencies have offered up entire teams to support Kyiv in the communications war. Our support for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine is unwavering and will continue for as long as needed.”

With an anonymous Ukrainian figure joining two of the top public relations figures in the Kiev government’s propaganda blitz, Ukraine’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs distributed a dossier [folder\(archived\)](#) with materials instructing public relations agencies on “key messages,” approved language, content for debunked propaganda constructs, far-right and Neo-Nazi propaganda.

The folder is run by Yaroslav Turbil, described on his [LinkedIn](#) page as “Head of Ukraine.ua — Ukraine’s digital ecosystem for global communications. Strategic Communications & Country Brand Promotion.” Turbil has worked at multiple “civil society” organizations closely linked to the U.S. government and interned at Internews, a U.S. intelligence-linked organization that operates under the guise of promoting press freedom.



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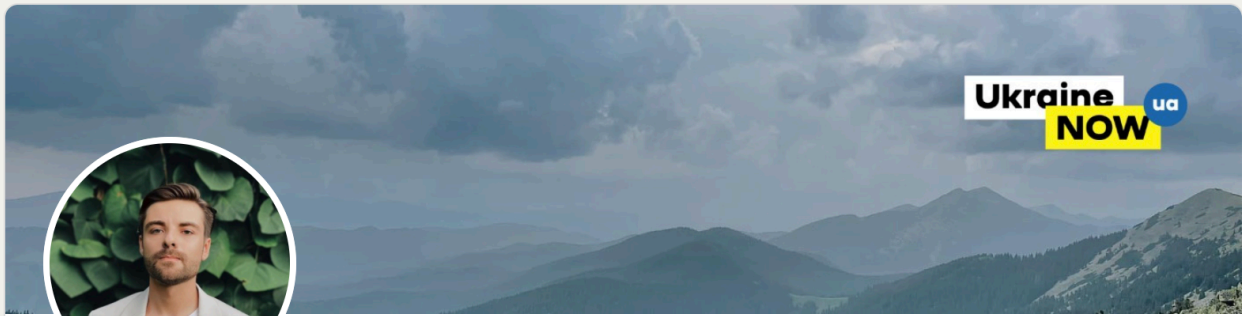
My Network



Jobs



Messaging



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The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine



Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv

Shared with me > StandWithUkraine kit



Folders

Name ↓

World's support

Visuals

Videos

International Legion of Defe...

Files

Russian President Vladimir Putin has signed an official statement that Ukraine is a "neo-Nazi regime" and "a threat to the security of the Russian Federation". This is a clear attempt to delegitimize Ukraine's sovereignty and to justify its aggression against the Ukrainian people.

Having declared independence in 1991, Ukraine has successfully chosen a completely different path — an independent path of democratic development, which has become a model for the world.

Step of voting for Declaration of Independence of Ukraine on 24 August 1991

Since the Soviet Union collapsed, the pace of change has varied from one Post-soviet country to another. Some, such as **Russia**, have discarded almost or fully on their Soviet heritage. Others have chosen to go forward as quickly as possible. The latter, such as the former states that continue to reject off their Soviet past and have chosen to engage with NATO and EU in the early 1990s, comprising the process by 2004 — just before Russian aggression began its rampage. Unfortunately, Ukraine and Georgia had not yet completed their path. But, even in such a difficult situation, they have been able to begin their path towards independence.

Ukraine has the very values and DNA of European society — values of freedom, democracy, free thinking and human values — and values that are antithetical to Putin. He can neither comprehend nor tolerate these values, and is determined to destroy them.

As a result, the military aggression and outright violation of international norms and laws is the only thing that Russia is able to propose to encourage independent states to move within the orbit of the Russian world — the imperial project.

Why is Russia invading Ukra...

You can save lives, no matter where you are in the world. A simple donation. A few clicks on your keyboard. A message to the right person. Everything you need to help Ukrainians in their fight for peace and freedom — in one place.

Donate

platform for foreign instances concerning the war in Ukraine war.ukraine.ua

The main goal of war.ukraine.ua is to provide verified information about the situation in Ukraine. In order to do this, we will use a thoroughly collected archive of Russian news, comments and bloggers, and more importantly — the business and state of the Russian people.

This website is designed to be a live documentation of war developing before the eyes of the entire world. We will use the Editor of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine Oleksiy Arestovych. Others are welcome to do this, but will require a thoroughly collected archive of Russian news, comments and bloggers, and more importantly — the business and state of the Russian people.

On the website you can currently find information and answers to the following key questions and themes:

- Understand why Russia is invading Ukraine
- Find out, through verified information, what is happening to Ukraine right now. This also provides the latest updates from official sources.
- Learn how you can help the Ukrainian people. This includes world maps and instructions on how to donate to the Armed Forces of Ukraine, join the Foreign Legion of the Territorial Defense of Ukraine, provide humanitarian assistance or organize protests against the war, taking your fight home in the heart of Europe.
- Discover the real faces behind Ukraine's resistance. What is...

War.ukraine.ua_Release.docx

The Ukrainian people will never forget the generosity and support of the international community at a time of greatest need. Every single donation — no matter how small — helps us to defend ourselves and to protect our cherished freedom.

Making a secure donation is easy to do using your existing bank card or through Google Pay.

All proceeds received go directly to supporting the front-line defense of Ukraine.

#StandWithUkraine

How you can help Ukraine

Learn how you can help the Ukrainian people. This includes world maps and instructions on how to donate to the Armed Forces of Ukraine, join the Foreign Legion of the Territorial Defense of Ukraine, provide humanitarian assistance or organize protests against the war, taking your fight home in the heart of Europe.

Verified and official sources...

Official sources	Official sources	Official sources
1. Official sources	2. Official sources	3. Official sources
4. Official sources	5. Official sources	6. Official sources

StandWithUkraine kit

Details Activity

Who has access

Manage access

System properties

Type: Google Drive Folder

Owner: Yaroslav Turbil

Modified: Feb 24, 2022 by Yaroslav Turbil

Opened: Mar 17, 2022 by me

Created: Feb 24, 2022

No description

Among the propaganda constructs distributed in the dossier, is a video of the Snake Island incident, which was quickly proven false, in which Ukrainian border guards stationed on a small island were reported to have been killed after they told an approaching Russian warship that had urged them to surrender to “Go f*** yourself.” President Zelensky held a press conference announcing he would award the men the Hero of Ukraine medal as mainstream media spread the story widely. However, the supposedly-dead soldiers quickly [turned up](#) alive and well, proving their heroic stand to be a farce.

Despite the story being proven as fake, the dossier contains a propaganda video promoting it.

Another folder in the dossier is run by Ukrainian MFA graphic artist [Dasha Podoltseva](#) and contains hundreds of propaganda graphics submitted by artists in Europe and the United States.

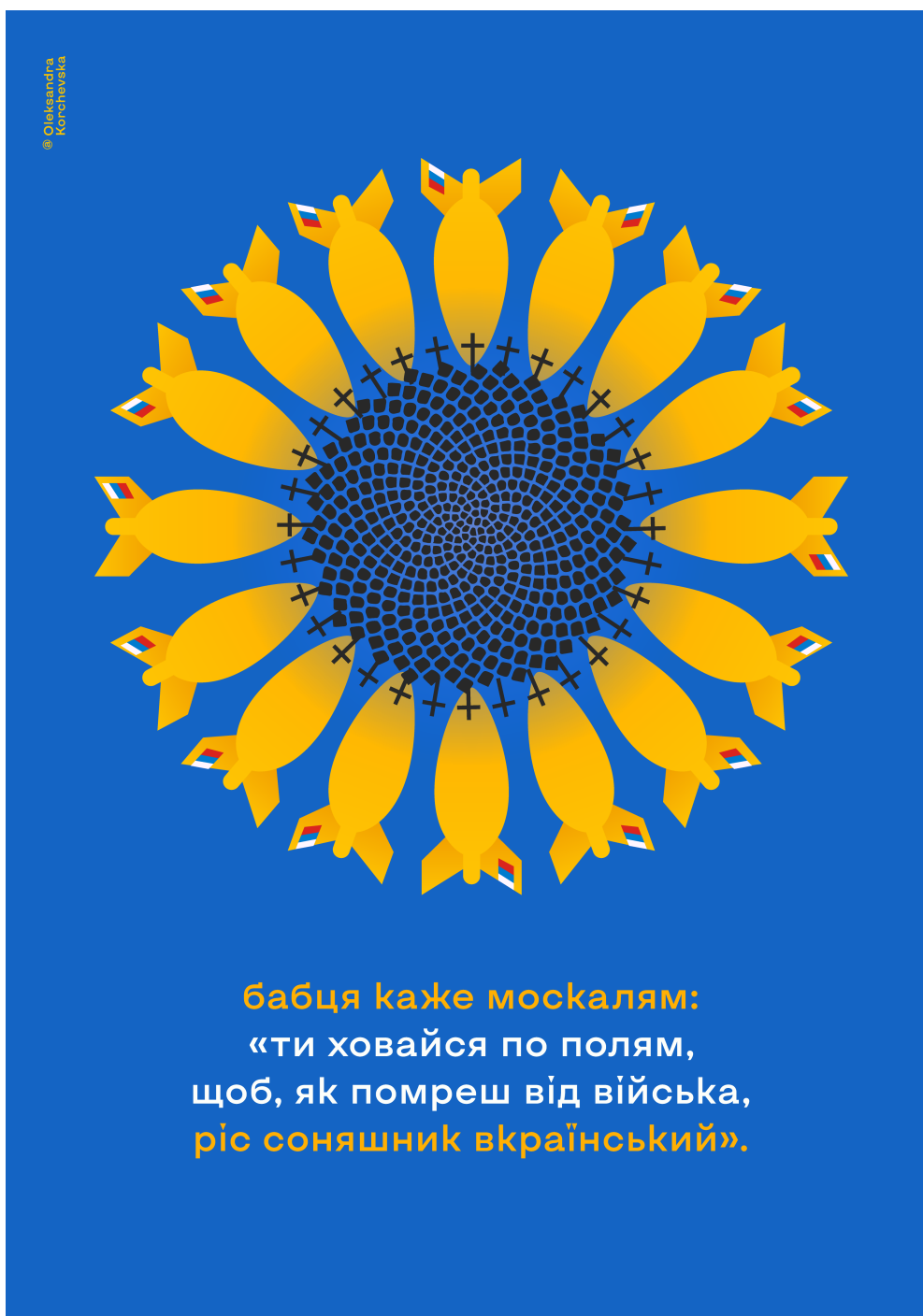
Some feature generic “no war” messages, while dozens of other images celebrate “The Ghost of Kiev” – a heroic Ukrainian pilot who turns out to be [non-existent](#) – and the phony “Snake Island 13” incident.

Many use xenophobic and racist language, and some are explicit in their praise of prominent Ukrainian Neo-Nazis, including C14 leader Yevhen Karas, the Right Sector fascist paramilitary, and the Neo-Nazi Azov Battalion.

Multiple images call for “Banderite smoothies” – a reference to Molotov cocktails named for the late OUN-B commander Stephan Bandera, who collaborated with Nazi Germany in the mass murder of Jews and ethnic Poles during World War II. Another image depicts a book titled the: “Encyclopedia of Incurable Diseases,” listing Russia, Belorussia, North Korea, Syria, and Eritrea.



“I love NLAW” – Next Generation Light Anti-tank Weapon, provided by western governments to the



Graphic implying fertilizing the fields with bodies reads, "Grandma advice to Moskovites: Hide in the fields, When you die in hands of our army, Sunflowers will grow better"

RITUAL SERVICES

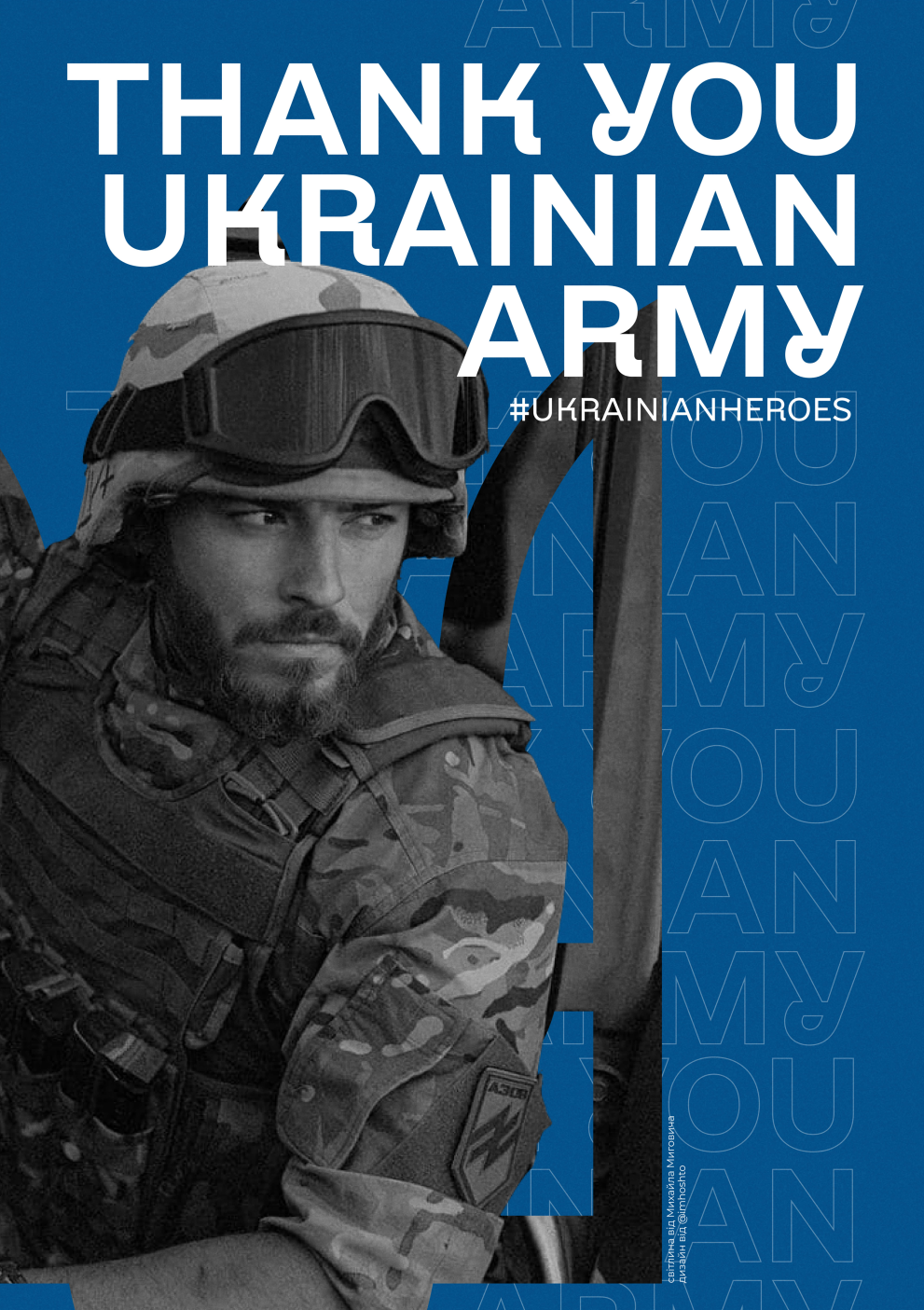


#ЯДякуюЗСУ

2022
S.M.F.C.

DEMOCRACY

IS A WEAPON



“Thank You Ukrainian Army” with an Azov Battalion Wolfsengel patch emblazoned on the sleeve”

КНИГА СПРАВОЧНИК

НЕИЗЛЕЧИМЫЕ ЗАБОЛЕВАНИЯ



Россия
Беларусь
Северная Корея
Сирия
Эритрея

ПО ДАННЫМ ООН 2022

“The Encyclopedia of Incurable Disease: Russia, Belorussia, North Korea, Syria, Eritrea”



“Against Moscovian Occupation.” Moscovian is a xenophobic term used to describe Russians



Graphic calling Czar Nicholas, Vladimir Lenin, Joseph Stalin, and Vladimir Putin incarnations of the same "Mental Moskovian Dragon"

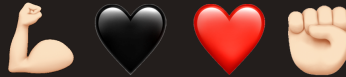
**NON-FLY ZONE
WILL BE SAVE
THE WHOLE
EUROPE FROM
NUCLEAR
CATASTROPHE!**



"Bandera Smoothie"



DEATH TO THE ENEMIES



#StopRussia #StandWithUkraine #StopWar



[Click here for more photos.](#)

Foreign extremists flock to Ukraine

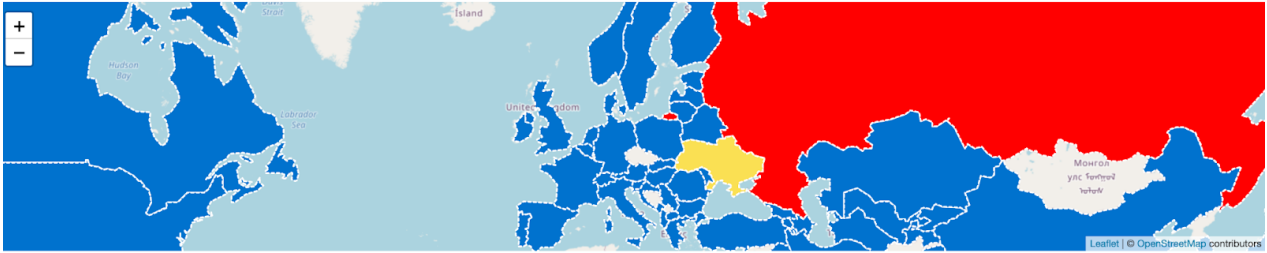
The dossier also contains a link to a Ministry of Foreign Affairs [page](#) called “Fight for Ukraine,” which provides instructions for foreigners who wish to join Ukraine’s Neo-Nazi-infested armed forces - termed the “International Defense Legion of Ukraine.”

Following Zelensky’s call for foreign fighters to form a brigade, fighters from all over the world, including the U.S., UK, Canada, Australia, Spain, Colombia, [Brazil](#), Chile, and more have traveled to face Russian forces. Others with no combat training or experience have arrived for “war tourism” - what one British soldier [called](#) “bullet-catchers.”



Official Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs recruitment graphics from the dossier

WHERE YOU CAN JOIN THE INTERNATIONAL LEGION



 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine
This is an official website of Ukraine. By the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine.

Follow the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine
    

Join the International Legion of Defense of Ukraine!

For General Inquiries Regarding The Legion
 **+380443395987**
+380800507028

DONATE TO THE UKRAINIAN ARMY

Official Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs recruitment graphics from the dossier

While the Ukrainian government says tens of thousands have answered their call, some commentators expressed [doubt](#) at those figures, calling it a “PR exercise.”

However, the foreigners who have traveled to Ukraine have encountered a much more severe reality than they anticipated.

Russia’s air force bombed military installations adjacent to where the foreign fighters were sleeping. Having fled to neighboring Poland, a Spanish fighter [described](#) the bombing as a “message” that could have killed thousands.

Similarly, an American fighter who hid in an ambulance to escape the frontlines [warned](#) that Ukrainian authorities were killing foreigners who decided not to fight, calling it a “trap.”

Correct wording

One document inside the dossier delineates acceptable language on the conflict with Russia as determined by the Ukrainian government.

		<p>над територією однієї держави до іншої), анексія як міжнародно-протиправне діяння має інші правові наслідки і пов'язана із зміною суверенітету (належності) над відповідною територією.</p> <p>В офіційних документах і виступах США фігурує формулювання «спроба анексії». ЄС, у свою чергу, використовує менш прийнятний, ніж «окупація» чи «спроба анексії», проте допустимий для України термін - «незаконна анексія».</p> <p>Водночас закріплення терміну «анексія» за злочинними діяннями РФ, наслідком яких стала окупація Кримського півострова, може також трактуватися як <i>де факто</i> визнання односторонніх дій РФ з приєднання окупованої території України, що, однак, є окремим грубим порушенням міжнародного права, яке не тягне за собою жодних правових наслідків у контексті територіальних змін.</p> <p>Виходимо з того, що на АРК та м. Севастополь як на окуповану територію поширюється міжнародно-правовий режим окупації відповідно до Гаазької конвенції про закони та звичаї війни на суходолі 1907 року, а також звичаєві норми міжнародного гуманітарного права.</p>
<p>Annexation of Crimea</p> <p>Reunification of Crimea with Russia</p> <p>Such Russian clichés like “referendum in Crimea” or “will of the people of Crimea” are absolutely unacceptable</p>	<p>Temporary occupation of the territory of Ukraine – the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol</p> <p><i>(informal: occupied Crimea, occupied Crimean Peninsula)</i></p> <p>Clichés like “attempted annexation of Crimea” or “occupation and attempted annexation of Crimea” can be used to emphasize the gravity of the internationally wrongful act committed by the Russian Federation</p>	

“Such Russian clichés like ‘referendum in Crimea’ or ‘will of the people of Crimea’ are absolutely unacceptable,” the document states, in reference to the 2014 overwhelmingly successful [referendum](#) to separate from Ukraine.

The document deems unacceptable the terms “Civil war in Donbass,” “Internal conflict,” “Conflict in Ukraine” and “Ukrainian crisis” to describe the Ukrainian military’s war with the breakaway republics of the Donbass region. This, despite the fact that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights [estimates](#) that 14,200 people, including 3,404 civilians, have been killed in internal fighting in Ukraine since 2014.

In place of these phrases, the document calls for the use of the terms “Armed aggression by the Russian Federation in Donbass, international armed conflict, Russian war against Ukraine, Russian-Ukrainian conflict armed conflict.”

Key Messages

Another document titled “Key Messages” contains specific propaganda claims that were widely disseminated in mainstream western media, but which have since been discredited. One section claims the “entire Europe was put on the brink of nuclear disaster, when the Russian troops began shelling the largest in Europe Zaporizhzhya Nuclear Power Plant.”

KEY MESSAGES ON RUSSIA'S WAR AGAINST UKRAINE

as of 11.00, 22 March
(27th day of war)

1. WAR SITUATION

The **Russian troops** continue simultaneously (albeit with different intensity) **attacking Ukraine** from the territory of **Russia, Belarus** and the temporarily occupied parts of Ukraine's **Donetsk, Luhansk** regions and **Crimea**. This is a full-scale **war against Ukraine (international armed conflict), launched by Russia**, not a "conflict in Ukraine". **Proper wording** is critical. While highlighting the situation in Ukraine, a clear **reference** must always be done to **Russia as an aggressor. We protect the entire Europe**, not only ourselves, as Putin will not stop in Ukraine:

- The **main directions of Russia's invasion** remain **Kyiv, Kharkiv, southern regions** of Ukraine, **Donetsk and Luhansk regions**;
- Russia fired nearly 1000 **missiles** at residential areas and military positions, attacks with **aviation** (1403 airstrikes as of 19 March), **tanks and artillery**, and sends **subversion and reconnaissance groups**. Ukraine became a testing ground for Russian missiles of different types;
- Russian **warships** shell the coast line. Ukraine's coast of the Azov Sea now is temporarily blocked by Russia. **Amphibious landing** to the Odesa region remains possible;
- **Russia has significant air advantage**, which it actively uses by **attacking military positions and civilian objects and infrastructure, killing dozens of civilians daily, bombing Ukrainian airports**. We urgently need the **no-flight zone, or air defense systems and fighter planes**. This would significantly accelerate the end of war;
- **Several towns** were temporarily **occupied** (including Kherson and Melitopol). Some are **attacked and besieged** on the ground, with **severe damage to residential areas and numerous casualties among civilians** (Kharkiv, Mariupol, Mykolaiv, Sumy, Chernihiv);
- **As of March 21, 2022, the estimated total area of hazardous territories of Ukraine to be demined is at least 82,525 km²**;
- Russia organizes **cyber attacks** and **fake news campaigns** aimed to sow panic in Ukrainian towns and cut off Ukrainian citizens from the official information sources;
- There are **no places left in Ukraine without an overt military threat**, be it shellings or infiltration of sabotage groups, members of which continue to be detained in all regions.

The territory of **Belarus** is actively **used by Russia for its military purposes**:

- **Missiles** are launched from the territory of Belarus, **airfield and rail networks** are used for transportation of Russian personnel, cargo and ammunition, **fuel** is supplied to the Russian troops on Ukrainian soil;

However, International Atomic Energy Agency's director-general, Rafael Mariano Grossi, [said](#) that the building hit by a Russian "projectile" at the Zaporizhzhia plant was "not part of the reactor" but instead a training center. Russian troops also left Ukrainian workers to continue operating the plant.

"If I were a Russian worried about the potential of Nazi extremists coming up with a dirty bomb, I'd need to take control of this very facility" - [@realscottritter](#) deconstructs the Ukrainian nuclear plant takeover

With [@dancohen3000](#)

Full Interview: <https://t.co/KOMDd6018Y> pic.twitter.com/lpANwW2rt4

— MintPress News (@MintPressNews) [March 8, 2022](#)

Another section thanks Turkey for the decision "to block the access of Russian warships to the Black Sea."

However, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan [closed](#) the Bosphorus and Dardanelles straits to all military vessels, preventing both NATO and Russian vessels from accessing the Black Sea.

Among the document's key messages is a statement of gratitude to the "Anti-war demonstrations held by citizens of many nations throughout the world demonstrate strong

support to Ukraine in defending against Russia.”

This refers to large pro-Ukraine demonstrations in Europe which have featured calls for the U.S. and NATO to establish a no-fly zone over Ukraine and shoot down Russian military aircraft, potentially transforming the conflict into a world war between nuclear-armed powers.

The NED published video of its CEO, Damon Wilson, at a rally outside the White House, declaring "Glory to Ukraine" - the salute used by Nazi collaborator Stephan Bandera's OUN-B, which carried out mass murder of Jews and Poles during World War 2. pic.twitter.com/a5hWSn9txo

— Dan Cohen (@dancohen3000) [March 7, 2022](#)

“Despite Russia’s propaganda, there is no discrimination based on the race or nationality, including when it comes to the crossing of the state border by foreign citizens,” claims the Ukrainian document.

However, numerous videos and reports have documented Ukrainian authorities preventing Africans from fleeing the fighting. Even the *New York Times* - hardly a bastion of Kremlin propaganda - published a [report](#) documenting these racist practices.

One message says that “On 16 March, the Russian forces dropped a bomb on a drama theatre where up to 1300 civilians were being sheltered. The number of casualties is still unknown.”

However, as Max Blumenthal [reported](#) the explosion appears to be the result of a false flag operation designed by the Neo-Nazi Azov Battalion and aimed at triggering a NATO intervention.

NATO-backed troll farms

Another anonymously-penned [investigation](#) shows how Ukrainian public relations firms have used targeted advertisements to astroturf Russian internet and social media networks with messaging calling to economically isolate Moscow and “stop the war.” This effort is led by Bezlepkin Evgeny Vitalievich, who uses the alias Evgeny Korolev, along with Pavel Antonov of the Targetorium organization. From behind his Korolev pseudonym, the Ukrainian information warrior composed a post on his Facebook page (now private) boasting that his firm’s Facebook ads achieved 30 million hits in three days.

At the same time, Facebook has [blocked](#) Russian state-owned media outlets from running ads and monetizing content. Several fake accounts for media outlets like *Russia 24* have sprung up, burying the authentic account under a series of impostors. Facebook has also marked statements from Russian officials, including the Ministry of Defense, as “false.”

This campaign has reportedly been carried out upon recommendation from StopFake, a self-described “fact checking” outlet that is [funded](#) by the National Endowment for Democracy, [Atlantic Council](#), Czech and UK foreign ministries, and the International Renaissance Foundation, which is funded by billionaire George Soros’ Open Society Foundation.

StopFake was hired by Facebook in March 2020 to “curb the flow of Russian propaganda”

but was found to be [employing](#) multiple figures closely tied to violent Neo-Nazis. The journalist who co-authored the exposé received death threats and ultimately fled Ukraine.

Those revelations have apparently not prevented Facebook from relying on the organization for censorship guidance.

Meanwhile, Russian hackers located a public Google document (since made private, uploaded [here](#)) detailing the propaganda operation, which has been distributed in Telegram channels of “creative farms.”

“Here you can find links to Ukrainian media that need promotion, bot accounts with logins and passwords from which anti-war messages and messages with fakes about the Ministry of Defense were sent to users, theses and specific instructions on which posts and which audiences to embroider,” the investigation reads.

Another [campaign](#) is run by Nataliya Popovych, the founder of the public relations agency, One Philosophy, in Kiev. Popovych’s LinkedIn [profile](#) shows she has worked with the U.S. State Department and advised former President Petro Poroshenko. She is also co-founder and board member of Ukraine Crisis Media Center, a propaganda arm [funded](#) by the U.S. Agency for International Development, the National Endowment for Democracy, the U.S. Embassy, and NATO, among many others.

A *Campaign Asia* [article](#) profiles several public relations firms involved in the effort. Among them is Richard Edelman, CEO of Edelman PR. Edelman is also a [member](#) of the Atlantic Council’s Board of Directors and the [World Economic Forum](#).

“Geopolitics has become the new test for trust. We saw this with the allegations of human rights abuses in Xinjiang and the war between Ukraine and Russia has only reinforced it,” he [said](#), linking the U.S. propaganda campaign surrounding China’s deradicalization campaign for Uyghur Muslims.

PR approved media outlets

An [article](#) in *PRWeek* profiles several figures partaking in what they describe as a “PR army” that is “fighting on the informational frontline” against Russia’s “barbaric genocide of Ukrainians.”

“Propaganda is the same as real lethal weapons,” declares Marta Dzhumaha, PR manager at healthcare company BetterMe.

Julia Petryk, head of public relations at MacPaw, offers a [list](#) of approved media outlets, authored by her [colleague](#) Tetiana Bronistka, a former employee of Ukraine’s Prosecutor General’s Office. The list includes Russian and English language sources, as well as Telegram channels. However, these “verified sources that objectively cover what is happening in Ukraine” are anything but independent. Most of them are tied to the U.S. and European governments and billionaire foundations.

Sources in English

- Vox
- BBC
- Politico
- The Washington Post
- Foreign Affairs
- The Economist
- CNN
- The Guardian

Telegram-channels

- NEXTA
- Медуза
- Медиазона
- Радио Свобода
- Дождь
- Журнал "Холод"
- Украинская Правда

We have selected for you a list of verified sources that objectively cover what is happening in Ukraine. Follow the links and draw your own conclusions.

Sources in Russian

- Новая Газета
- Новое Время
- Медуза
- Дождь
- Журнал "Холод"
- Медиазона
- Русская служба BBC
- Настоящее Время
- Цензор
- Зеркало Недели
- Эспрессо TV
- Солидарность (BY)
- 200RF

She also lists several Russian-language websites:

- Novaya Gazeta – [Tied](#) to and [reportedly](#) funded by the National Endowment for Democracy
- Meduza – Funded by the government of [Latvia](#), [OAK Foundation](#), [Open Society Foundation](#) oil tycoon [Mikhail Khodorovsky](#), and [Sweden](#)
- Dozhd – [SREDA foundation](#), [European Commission](#)
- Holod Media – [Offshoot of Meduza](#) – praised in [PBS](#) and [CNN](#) as “independent media”
- [Proposed](#) that Leningrad should have been surrendered to the Nazis in World War 2 and has [complained](#) that they are called a “fifth column” for being funded by western powers
- BBC Russia – British government media
- Current Time TV – [Created](#) by [CIA-founded](#) propaganda outlet Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty in collaboration with Voice of America
- [Censor](#) – funded by, editor in chief Yuri Butusov, former [advisor](#) to the Minister of Defense of Ukraine
- [200RF](#) – A Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs website that claims to publish publishes photos and documents of the Russian soldiers captured and killed in action

Among the Telegram channels listed are:

- Radio Svoboda – CIA-founded propaganda organ Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty
- Espresso TV, largely [owned](#) by the wife of former Ukrainian member of parliament Mykola Knyazhytsky
- Censor.net, formerly the largest media site in Ukraine, whose [motto](#) is “To bring down Russia”, and whose owner operates a “parade of international trolls.”

Intelligence operations

While the public relations firms distribute content, CIA cutouts and billionaire foundations

run the media outlets they derive it from. At the core of this operation is a [project](#) called the Russian Language News Exchange that was the product of a network of opposition media outlets founded in 2016 that operate in post-Soviet countries, as revealed by an investigation by the Russian media agency, *RIA FAN*.

In July 2021, a group of journalists flew to Warsaw for media training after being exempted from coronavirus-related restrictions and quarantine orders by Poland's top medical authorities.

Among the six journalists were Andrey Lipsky, deputy editor-in-chief of *Novaya Gazeta*, and Yuliia Fediv, CEO of Hromadske TV media, one of the most-watched networks in Ukraine.

Hromadske's financial [reports](#) show it is funded by numerous governments and foundations, including the U.S. embassy in Ukraine, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, the European Endowment for Democracy, and Free Press Unlimited. Silicon Valley billionaire Pierre Omidary was also [involved](#) in creating the outlet.

Hromadske recently hosted a commentator demanding genocide of ethnic Russians in the Donbass, saying it is populated with 1.5 "superfluous" people that "must be exterminated."

The training, held behind closed doors from July 19 to July 21, was titled "Media Network 2021+" and closely tied to Mediaset, also known as the Russian Language News Exchange, a network founded in 2015. Russian Language News Exchange's website is sparse, with little available information on its activities – apparently made private since the publication of *RIA FAN*'s investigation.

While it claims to be independent, Russian Language News Exchange is a project of Free Press Unlimited, [funded](#) by the Dutch government and the European Commission.

Today, it includes 14 media outlets that act as "nodes," cross-publishing each other's articles in various countries.

The website's introductory video is hosted by [Maxim Eristavi](#), a former *Radio Free Europe* reporter and founder of Hromadske. Today, he heads the Millennium Leadership Program at the NATO and arms industry-backed think tank, the Atlantic Council.

Since its inception, Mediaset has coordinated between outlets in Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Moldova, Russia, and Ukraine. In March 2021, Mediaset expanded with the [Colab Medios Project](#), created through the Free Press Unlimited Viable Media for Empowered Societies (VIMES) program. This program created training for journalists and saw articles from the El Salvadoran outlet [El Faro](#) published in [Euroradio](#) (Belarus), [Coda](#) (Georgia), and [Ziarul de Garda](#) (Moldova).

On March 4, several days after Russia launched its military offensive, a new project called the Media Lifeline Ukraine was created.

The next day, Free Press Unlimited held an emergency [conference](#) for Ukraine featuring Hromadske co-founders Maxim Eristavi and Nataliya Gumenyuk. The meeting called to raise 2 million euros for the [project](#). "Only with ongoing external support, will local media entities be able to continue to do their work," its introductory page asks.

Days later, Free Press Unlimited announced a partnership to support a new [joint](#) project of Reporters Without Borders and its Ukrainian partner, the Institute for Mass Information, called The Lviv Press Freedom Center. The Institute for Mass Information is [headed](#) by USAID communications officer [Oksana Romaniuk](#) and funded by [USAID](#) and the [UK government](#).

Washington DC lobbyists wag the dog

While public relations firms and intelligence-linked propaganda operations target the public, Washington DC lobbyists are agitating in Congress to extend the war in Ukraine

Daniel Vajdich, a registered foreign agent and [lobbyist](#) for the Ukrainian Federation of Employers of the Oil and Gas Industry, the largest in Ukraine, is [working](#) on behalf of Volodymyr Zelensky to [lobby](#) members of Congress to approve more weapons shipments to Ukraine. Now the head of Yorktown Solutions, he previously [advised](#) Ted Cruz and Scott Walker's campaigns and is a [nonresident senior fellow](#) at the Atlantic Council.

"Stingers, Javelins, and let's figure out the fighter aircraft issue," he told [Politico](#), claiming Russia is attempting to carry out a "genocide" and "depopulate certain areas of Ukraine."

Vajdich also wrote Zelenskyy's March 16 speech to U.S. Congress, in which he [quoted](#) Martin Luther King Jr. 's 'I Have a Dream' speech to call for a no-fly zone over Ukraine.

Ukrainian Permanent Representative at the United Nations Sergiy Kyslytsya's February 23 speech to the United Nations General Assembly was [written](#) by DC lobbying firm SKDKnickerbocker Managing Director [Stephen Krupin](#), a former senior speechwriter to President Barack Obama who [worked](#) extensively on Biden's 2020 campaign.

Most prominent among the registered lobbyists promoting Ukrainian government and business interests is Andrew Mac, who also [contributed](#) to writing Zelenskyy's speech to Congress. Mac registered as a lobbyist for Zelensky in 2019 and runs the Washington DC office of Ukrainian law [firm](#) Asters Law.

The lobbying firm Your Global Strategy, [founded](#) by Shai Franklin, who has been affiliated with numerous Zionist organizations including the World Jewish Congress and Anti-Defamation League, is also using its influence with local officials in the U.S. Franklin has set up [meetings](#) between Kharkiv Mayor Ihor Terekhov and U.S. mayors, including Eric Adams in New York City, Michelle Wu in Boston and Lori Lightfoot in Chicago. He is also attempting to set up a meeting between U.S. officials and the mayors of Odessa and Kiev. A media outlet owned by the mayor of Kiev's wife recently featured a presenter calling for [genocide](#) against Russians, beginning with children.

Franklin said he's working with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's administration to help set up virtual meetings between mayors of Odessa and Kiev and U.S. counterparts.

Maryland-based lawyer Lukas Jan Kaczmarek is also [working](#) on behalf of the Ukrainian Ministry of Defense to increase U.S. weapons shipments, specifically seeking to arrange shipments of guns from Kel-Tec CNC Industries based in Cocoa, Florida, to the city of Odessa, Ukraine.

Former U.S. ambassador to Russia Michael McFaul described the network of public relations professionals and lobbyists surrounding Zelenskyy.

“These are people around Mr. Zelenskyy who are like the intermediaries and interlocutors. They’ve been interacting with the American elites and American media for a long time,” he [said](#).

McFaul and John E. Herbst, former U.S. ambassador to Ukraine and senior director of the Atlantic Council’s Eurasia Center, act as informal advisors to Zelenskyy. McFaul told *Politico* that he speaks to Ukrainian government officials “probably everyday,” and “has helped them make connections with NBC or MSNBC producers.”

McFaul recently told *MSNBC*’s Rachel Maddow that “Hitler did not kill German-speaking people, facing accusations of Holocaust denial.

Zelenskyy also held a “strategic video call” with McFaul before he spoke to House democrats.

With a powerful Russian military fighting alongside DPR and LPR forces, the Ukrainian military’s defeat seems to be imminent unless the United States and NATO directly confront Russian forces, a scenario President Biden has already [ruled out](#). Lobbyists nevertheless persist in their campaign to portray the Ukrainian military as underdogs scoring blow after blow against Russian hordes. In doing so, they help extend the war and continue the carnage.

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