



Newsletter of the

## **Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Donetsk People's Republic**

02. 03. 2021

### **Main news of the Republic (from February 23 to March 2)**

#### ***Pushilin said that the use of force by Kiev to resolve the conflict will not work***

Forces of the People's Militia of the DPR are ready to repel the attack of the Ukrainian troops and launch a counteroffensive. The Head of the Republic Mr. Denis Pushilin told reporters about it today.

"The people's militia of the DPR is ready for an adequate response. If armed provocations take place from the Ukrainian side, our troops are suppressing the enemy's firing points. And they do it so accurately and effectively in the way that even the Ukrainian media and politicians can no longer hide the losses. But at the same time they do not have the opportunity to accuse us of breaking the truce, - said Pushilin. "I am absolutely sure that our fighters can handle any task: filigree suppression of firing points, protection of civilians during hostilities and lightning-fast offensive."

Pushilin recommended to the leadership in Kiev "not to flirt with the war", by stressing that Donetsk chooses to preserve peace.

The situation at the front has recently become aggravated. The Kiev army is firing in all directions. Two days ago, the village of Yelenovka, where the checkpoint linking the DPR with Ukraine is located, came under attack. The Foreign Ministry linked the shelling with the planned delivery of humanitarian aid to Donetsk from the ICRC and the UN.

"The Ukrainian security forces have already staged provocations at the checkpoint in Volnovakha in 2015 in order to blame the republics for the deaths of civilians. It is likely that they will try to play this scenario again. But we will not allow this, "Pushilin commented on the situation.

#### ***DPR intelligence recorded the deployment of a dozen Ukrainian tanks near residential buildings in Konstantinovka***

The Armed Forces of Ukraine (VFU) have deployed about fifty units of weapons and military equipment near residential buildings in the territory of Donbass controlled by Ukraine. This was announced today by the DPR People's Police Department.

"In violation of the third point of additional measures, the deployment of 51 units of weapons and military equipment of the VFU near residential buildings and municipal facilities in the territory controlled by Ukraine was revealed," the message says.

In particular, according to UNM, 12 T-72 tanks from 35 separate brigades of marines were found at the railway station in Konstantinovka.

Earlier it was reported that the DPR intelligence recorded the deployment of more than a dozen artillery pieces of Ukrainian troops near residential buildings in Slavyansk.

From July 27, 2020, a package of additional measures to strengthen and control the ceasefire regime has formally been in effect in Donbass. The document, in particular, prohibits the use of any type of weapon, the contraction of equipment, sabotage, engineering work, and UAV flights.

### ***Ukraine continues to fight with civilians in Donbass***

While the Ukrainian side is blocking the approval of an updated package of measures to strengthen the ceasefire regime, the situation on the contact line continues to deteriorate every day.

Three days ago, shelling of the armed formations of Ukraine in the Gorlovka area led to the death and injury of servicemen of the People's Militia of the DPR. And yesterday the VFU fired at Aleksandrovka, as a result of which a young man received multiple penetrating shrapnel wounds, who, moreover, in November last year was wounded by a rupture of a VFU shell that flew into the house.

It is especially cynical that this outrageous incident took place in the line of sight of the armed formations of Ukraine, in the same place where three weeks ago a Ukrainian sniper wounded a civilian in the village. Today, residents of Staromikhaylovka were injured - two houses were damaged during shelling from Ukraine.

All these facts confirm that Kiev is deliberately raising the degree of tension: a young man from Aleksandrovka has become the third wounded among the civilian population in just 53 days of this year. The practice of armed aggression, sabotage and terrorist methods of the armed formations of Ukraine leads to new victims: a week ago, the car of the commander of the People's Militia of the DPR was blown up, in which his 12-year-old daughter was also present.

All this suggests one thing - the representatives of Kiev in the Contact Group will continue to block all our peace initiatives, trying to reduce the situation in Donbass to a scenario of force. This is also evidenced by yesterday's statement of the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine Ruslan Khomchak about the preparation of troops for battles in urban development. However, Ukrainian officials should clearly realize that further escalation can lead to irreparable consequences on all fronts, and the responsibility for this will fall on them personally.

***Natalia Nikonorova: The cynicism of the Ukrainian side has no boundaries***

The cynicism of the Ukrainian side has no borders: the increased frequency of shelling with the use of heavy weapons, the injury of civilians in the Republic, the destruction of infrastructure facilities clearly demonstrate the true attitude towards Donbass.

This time, for the sake of its political ambitions, official Kiev decided to prevent the delivery of humanitarian supplies by the UNHCR and the International Committee of the Red Cross to the residents of the Republics.

Having been informed about the planned transit of humanitarian convoys of the UNHCR and the ICRC to the territory of the Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics, the Ukrainian side staged a carefully planned targeted anti-humane action, for two days in a row, shelling Yelenovka, where through the checkpoint "Yelenovka - Novotroitskoe" a human convoy was supposed to enter the territory of the Republic.

These attacks cannot be called an accident or attributed to the arbitrariness of the local command of the VFU, since yesterday we learned that the day before the Ukrainian side had notified the representatives of the UNHCR and the ICRC that the passage of humanitarian supplies through the Novotroitskoye-Yelenovka checkpoint was allegedly impossible due to an "unsafe operational environment", and that the movement of convoys can be carried out only through the checkpoint "Zolotoe" and checkpoint "Schastye". However, the situation on the line of contact in the area of Yelenovka was stable until 16:20 yesterday, when the enemy opened fire from the BMP-1. Shelling continued today with renewed vigor - in the morning 20 mines of 60 mm were fired, resulting in damage to civilian infrastructure and residential buildings.

At the same time, we note that we did not receive any official notifications regarding the change of the route and the checkpoint for the passage of humanitarian cargo from the representatives of Kiev.

Such provocative actions of the Ukrainian side make it possible to conclude that the security situation in the area of the Novotroitskoye-Yelenovka checkpoint is intentionally aggravated and is aimed at exerting pressure on the Lugansk People's Republic in the acute and urgent topic of coordinating the modalities of the operation of the Zolotoye checkpoint and the Schastye checkpoint, which has been under discussion within the Contact Group for almost two years now.

We regard the blocking of the delivery of humanitarian cargo by the Ukrainian side as cynical and contrary to all international norms and principles.

On this unprecedented fact, we sent an official appeal to the OSCE SMM Special Representative in Ukraine and to the Contact Group, Ambassador Heidi Grau, with a call to influence the Ukrainian side to stop inhuman provocations and return to discussing and agreeing on the modalities of the CPVV's work within the Contact Group.

## ***Commentary of the Head of the DPR Foreign Ministry regarding the statements of Aleksey Reznikov about the Minsk process***

Aleksey Reznikov's statements demonstrate that Kiev intends to continue following the path of escalation, both on the line of contact and in the information space. Attempts to disavow their international legal obligations are a clear confirmation of this. We again have to remind that the Package of Measures was approved by the UN Security Council resolution, thus becoming a part of international law, a document that is binding. Attempts to revise it should be strictly suppressed not only by the participants in the Minsk process, but also by the entire international community.

The latest of these attempts was information about the alleged claims to paragraph 9 of the Package of Measures, expressed by Zelensky during the 2019 Paris summit. According to Reznikov, the President of Ukraine directly told international mediators in the person of Germany, France and Russia that this paragraph was written incorrectly and requires revision. However, this did not stop him from signing a final communiqué, which expresses his commitment to the Minsk agreements - in the form in which they were concluded in 2015. In the same communique, Zelensky agreed with the thesis on the need to coordinate all political and legal issues with the Republics.

No sooner had the ink dried than these obligations were disavowed by Ukraine. A number of high-profile resolutions of the Verkhovna Rada went against the agreements reached, and the subsequent speeches of Zelensky and Reznikov in the media raised doubts whether they were going to comply with them. If the Ukrainian authorities really strived for a peaceful settlement, there was no need for the Minister for the Occupied Territories to recall his law practice and defend violations of the Package of Measures.

Reznikov's attempts to tie the Budapest Memorandum to the Minsk Process are also puzzling. It is strange that such a legal expert does not understand that there is none and cannot be any relationship between these two formats. Although, taking into account the draft law on the transition period that he created, implying a one-time defeat in the rights of millions of civilians, it is likely that he has already forgotten the contents of the Package of Measures. This is most likely the case, since his latest statements speak of actual preparations for Ukraine's withdrawal from the Minsk process.

And if the official authorities of Kiev still do not want a new round of escalation, then they should abandon provocations - armed and informational - and start a direct dialogue with representatives of the Republics to resolve all issues of a political settlement. For example, a real step towards peace would be to agree on the "Road Map" proposed by the Republics for the implementation of the Minsk Agreements. Outside of these agreements, a peaceful settlement is simply impossible.

***Natalia Nikonorova: The republics are committed to the Minsk agreements, but are ready to adequately respond to any threat***

The Ukrainian authorities are expressing more and more frankly about their attitude to the Minsk process. The latest statements by Leonid Kravchuk quite logically reveal Kiev's true intentions - an imitation of negotiation activities for the sake of preserving anti-Russian sanctions. The rhetoric about the alleged impossibility of fulfilling the Minsk

agreements is just an excuse that Ukrainian politicians use to cover up their inability to negotiate. At the same time, they cannot even decide on the "line of defense". Either Russia blocks the negotiation process, or agreements turn out to be impracticable. They are ready to sacrifice the interests of people for an infinitely long time in order to harm the imaginary aggressor.

However, the subsequent words of Kravchuk dotted all the "i". Stating that the best solution would be a forceful scenario, he once again confirmed our fears, which we have repeatedly shared with the international mediators of the Minsk process. Kiev has no interest in a peaceful settlement of the conflict, and Ukrainian public opinion is gradually preparing for the resumption of hostilities.

The latest steps of the Ukrainian authorities only strengthen us in this conviction: suppression of the opposition, seizure of control over the information space, incessant provocations on the line of contact - what is this if not preparation for a new military adventure? Obviously, they have already forgotten the sad experience of previous adventures that ended in a complete fiasco. Our position has not changed since then - the Republics are committed to the Minsk agreements, but are ready to adequately respond to any threat.

We remind you that the Package of Measures remains binding, in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution No. 2202. Therefore, it should be remembered that those guilty of violating this resolution will receive deserved punishment in accordance with international law. We hope that common sense will prevail in Kiev and the resolution of the conflict will continue on the political plane.