

## **US Government Actions**

- **Designation for Wagner:** *The US Treasury Department will designate the Wagner Group as a significant Transnational Criminal Organization. Additional sanctions will be imposed against Wagner and “its support network”. The major result of this designation will be that any assets of Wagner’s in the US will be frozen, and that Americans will be banned from providing funds, goods, or services to the group (**source: Reuters**).*
- **Counteroffensive Advice:** *US officials are apparently suggesting behind the scenes that Ukraine should hold off on launching another major counteroffensive until the latest weapons are in place and soldiers have been adequately trained (**source: Reuters**).*
- **Milley On Victory:** *General Mark Milley stated today that Russia’s war with Ukraine will likely end in negotiation. He also claims that it would be difficult to eject Russian troops from all of the territory it occupies this year (**source: CNN**).*
- **Senate Delegation:** *Senators Lindsey Graham, Richard Blumenthal and Sheldon Whitehouse met with President Zelenskyy and other Ukrainian officials in Kyiv today. Senator Graham’s statement on the meeting included a plea to both to Germany and to the White House to send tanks to Ukraine (**source: CNN**).*
- **\$2.5 Billion Aid Package:** *The day before the next Ramstein Group meeting, the US announced the details of a \$2.5-billion aid package. It will include Stryker armored vehicles for the first time, as well as more Bradley armored vehicles and HIMARS ammunition (**source: CNN**).*
- **Burns Visit:** *CIA Director William Burns visited Ukraine in secret last week. He reportedly briefed President Zelenskyy on what he expects Russia will do in the*

coming weeks and months, while Zelenskyy expressed concern over how long US and other Western assistance will continue (**source: Washington Post**).

- **Administration Reconsidering Crimea:** The Biden Administration is beginning to reconsider its refusal to provide Ukraine with weapons capable of targeting Crimea, which has been a hard line up to this point. The tipping point has apparently been the fact that Russia has been using Crimea to launch strikes on Ukraine's infrastructure (**source: New York Times**).
- **Power Grid Aid:** The Biden administration is going to provide \$125 million to assist Ukraine's electrical repair crews in fixing the damage of recent Russian strikes (**source: AP**).
- **General Meeting:** General Mark Milley met with General Valeriy Zaluzhniy today at an undisclosed location in Poland; due to security reasons, the gathering was only disclosed after it had concluded. This was the first face-to-face meeting between the two. Zaluzhniy stated he extended "gratitude for the unwavering support & assistance" the US provided, and that he stated his army's needs to "accelerate our victory" (**Source: Radio Liberty**).
- **Training Operations Underway:** Two major training operations of Ukrainian soldiers by the US began today. Around 100 Ukrainian soldiers arrived at Fort Still in Oklahoma to learn how to use Patriot systems (**source: Kyiv Independent**). The US also began to train 500 troops in Germany, hopefully returning them to Ukraine in five to eight weeks (**source: AP**). General Mark Milley visited them today and met with some commanders (**source: AP**).

### **Defense and Other Arms**

- **Netherlands Patriots, Continued:** The Netherlands had announced earlier this week that it will supply Patriot systems. A letter from the Dutch defense minister to the Dutch House of Representatives clarified that it will be providing two Patriot

systems, and will also assist in the training of Ukrainian soldiers to use them. The Netherlands also signaled its willingness to send Leopard-2 tanks to Ukraine (**source: Kyiv Independent**).

- **Other Europe Aid:** More aid packages were announced today by Ukraine's European allies. Finland will provide a package worth over 400 million euros, their largest package to date. The details are not public due to security concerns (**source: Kyiv Independent**). Germany also announced an aid package totaling over 1 billion Euros, which will include a Patriot missile system, seven Gepard anti-aircraft self-propelled artillery, Iris-T systems, more missiles, troop training, and no Leopard-2 tanks (**source: Kyiv Independent**).
- **Aid Packages from Europe:** Nine European countries signed the Tallinn pledge today, which is a commitment to empower Ukraine with needed assistance to liberate all Ukrainian territory (**source: UK Government site**). Multiple countries pledged large aid packages today. Estonia's aid package, which brings their total assistance to 1% of their GDP, includes several howitzers, Carl Gustaf anti-tank weapons, and ammunition (**Source: Kyiv Independent**). Denmark will provide 19 Caesar howitzers, a project which will delay its own military build-up (**source: Reuters**). Lithuania will include anti-aircraft guns, helicopters, and ammunition (**source: Kyiv Independent**). Sweden's package includes infantry fighting vehicles, assault rifles, and Archer self-propelled guns (**source: Kyiv Independent**).
- **Soldedar Falls:** The UK Ministry of Defence has finally assessed that Soledar has fallen to Russia after several days of heroic defense (**Source: Ministry of Defence on Twitter**).
- **Tanks On Condition:** Germany has reportedly decided that they will allow German-made tanks to be sent to Ukraine if the US also agrees to send tanks. This

is a critical decision, as defense experts have stated that German Leopard tanks are the most suited for Ukraine. They have veto power over any other country's decision to send Leopard tanks, including ones which have already expressed willingness to send their tanks to Ukraine (**source: Reuters**). The European Parliament has urged Germany to provide these tanks to Ukraine "without further delay" (**source: Kyiv Independent**).

- **New Time Limits:** Vladimir Putin has ordered his new general in charge of the war in Ukraine, Valery Gerasimov, to seize the Donbas region by March (**source: Kyiv Independent**). The fiercest fighting in the war is currently going on in the region, especially around the town of Bakhmut.
- **UK Aid Package:** The United Kingdom will be sending fourteen Challenger-2 tanks to Ukraine as part of their newest aid package. These tanks are, according to the British, the most modern tank at Ukraine's disposal and is seen as an important signal to Ukraine's other allies. The head of the UK's army, General Sir Patrick Sanders, has stated that the donations will leave the UK's army "temporarily weaker", but that Ukraine would be able to put the arms "to good use" (**source: BBC**).
- **UK on Soledar:** According to the UK's Ministry of Defence, Ukraine is "almost certainly" maintaining its positions in Soledar (**source: Ministry of Defence on Twitter**). This contradicts widespread reports and analyses that Soledar has fallen to Russia.

### **Other Diplomatic Developments**

- **Breakthrough on Leopards?:** Ukrainian Defense Minister Oleksii Reznikov stated that an agreement has been reached for Ukrainian troops to start training on Leopard-2 tanks. He called the discussions on them an "optimistic breakthrough" (**source: liga.net**).

- **A Line for the Iranian Regime:** *Despite being one of the few countries to support Russia militarily, the Iranian Regime does not recognize that Crimea and the Donbas are part of Russia (**source: New Voice of Ukraine**).*
- **Israeli Visit?:** *The newly-appointed Israeli foreign minister will reportedly visit Kyiv. He would be the most senior Israeli official to visit if this news is true (**source: Times of Israel**).*
- **Zelenskyy at Davos:** *President Zelenskyy spoke virtually today at the World Economic forum, beginning his speech with a moment of silence for the victims of the helicopter crash today in Kyiv. He accused Russia of exporting terror in such recent acts as their attack on an apartment building in Dnipro and asked that Western countries speed up their deliveries of both tanks and air defense systems (**source: Reuters**).*
- **Serbia-Russia Discord:** *In a rare public break between Serbia and Russia, the Serbian president Aleksandar Vucic has asked the Wagner group to stop recruiting Serbian citizens. Serbian law bans citizens from participating in conflicts abroad, though an unknown number have been fighting in Ukraine since hostilities broke out in 2014 (**source: Reuters**).*
- **Intel Sanctions Wavering:** *After Intel and Microsoft software was unavailable to users in Russia and Ukraine for several months except via VPN, users have once again regained access to it. Intel apparently claims that these services are part of warranty obligations, and that they continue to comply with sanctions (**source: Nv Ukraine**).*

## **Other**

- **American Killed in Ukraine:** *Former NAVY Seal Daniel Swift was killed in Ukraine this week. He is at least the sixth American to be killed since the war began in the country (source: **Washington Post**).*
- **Not Much Divestment:** *A study by the University of St. Gallen has found that fewer than 9% of EU/G7 countries active in Russia prior to the war have withdrawn their business. Around 18% of US firms divested, making them likelier to leave the Russian market (source: **Kyiv Independent**).*
- **Helicopter Accident:** *A helicopter accident today in Brovary had killed seventeen people, including Interior Minister Denys Monastyrsky, his deputy, and the ministry's secretary (source: **Kyiv Independent**).*
- **Secret Aid from Bulgaria:** ***This** article details the aid provided secretly by Bulgaria to Ukraine early in the war despite its more ambiguous public stance; officials used intermediary companies to get critical fuel and munitions to the Ukrainian army in a move now being lauded as critical to Ukraine's success.*
- **Potential Number of Tanks Needed:** *Former supreme allied commander of NATO Wesley Clarke, Ukraine will need 300-500 tanks to be victorious. According to him, the West should drastically increase its aid to Ukraine after the latest strike in Dnipro (source: **New Voice of Ukraine**).*
- **Dislike Of Russia, Now With Numbers:** *A recent poll by Morning Consult has shown that global opinions on Russia have cratered since the invasion of Ukraine. The UK is the country with the most unfavorable view (-79 percentage points), while the US has an approval rating of -62. Unfortunately, in both France and Germany, the view of Ukraine is also net negative, at -4 percentage points (source: **Politico**).*
- **Arestovych Resigns:** *Ukrainian presidential advisor Oleksiy Arestovych has offered his resignation after stating that the missile which hit Dnipro was shot down by*

Ukraine's air defense forces, which he called a "fundamental error" He also offered an apology to "the victims and their relatives", as well as a wider apology to the residents of Dnipro (**source: BBC**).

- **Zelenska at Davos:** Olena Zelenska spoke today at the Davos forum in Switzerland, where she stated that Russia's invasion will contribute to "the collapse of the world as we know it" and warned that Russia will continue its aggression elsewhere if it does not lose in Ukraine (**source: Kyiv Independent**).
- **Grain Transportation Update:** Six grain-carrying ships left Ukraine over the weekend, according to the Ukrainian Infrastructure Ministry. One of the ships is bound for Libya (**source: Kyiv Independent**).
- **Trial In Absentia:** Ukraine's Prosecutor General stated today that the country will be trying Russia's Minister of Transportation in absentia. This would be the first trial of its type during this war (**source: Kyiv Independent**).
- **IAEA Mission to South Ukraine NPP:** Rafael Grossi, head of the IAEA, has reported that a permanent IAEA mission to the South Ukraine Nuclear Power Plant has begun. He claims that the IAEA will be present at all of Ukraine's nuclear Power Plants "soon" (**Source: Grossi on Twitter**).

by **Allegra Hill**