



**THE GROUND**



# WE ARE A JOURNALISM PLATFORM DEDICATED TO THE TRUTH.

Our mission is to fight propaganda  
by sharing the unfiltered stories of people  
on both sides of the conflict.

Today, we are sharing Ukrainian and Russian stories.

## THE PROBLEM

# TRADITIONAL MEDIA SOURCES ARE CREATING UNTRUSTWORTHY PROPAGANDA

The major Ukrainian and Russia newspapers and television news channels are often purposefully inflammatory and divisive.

Large segments of the public are consuming programming where people with opposing political opinions are demonized and stigmatized.

And, the on the ground media presence from other countries is extremely limited and reporting is rare and often incomplete.

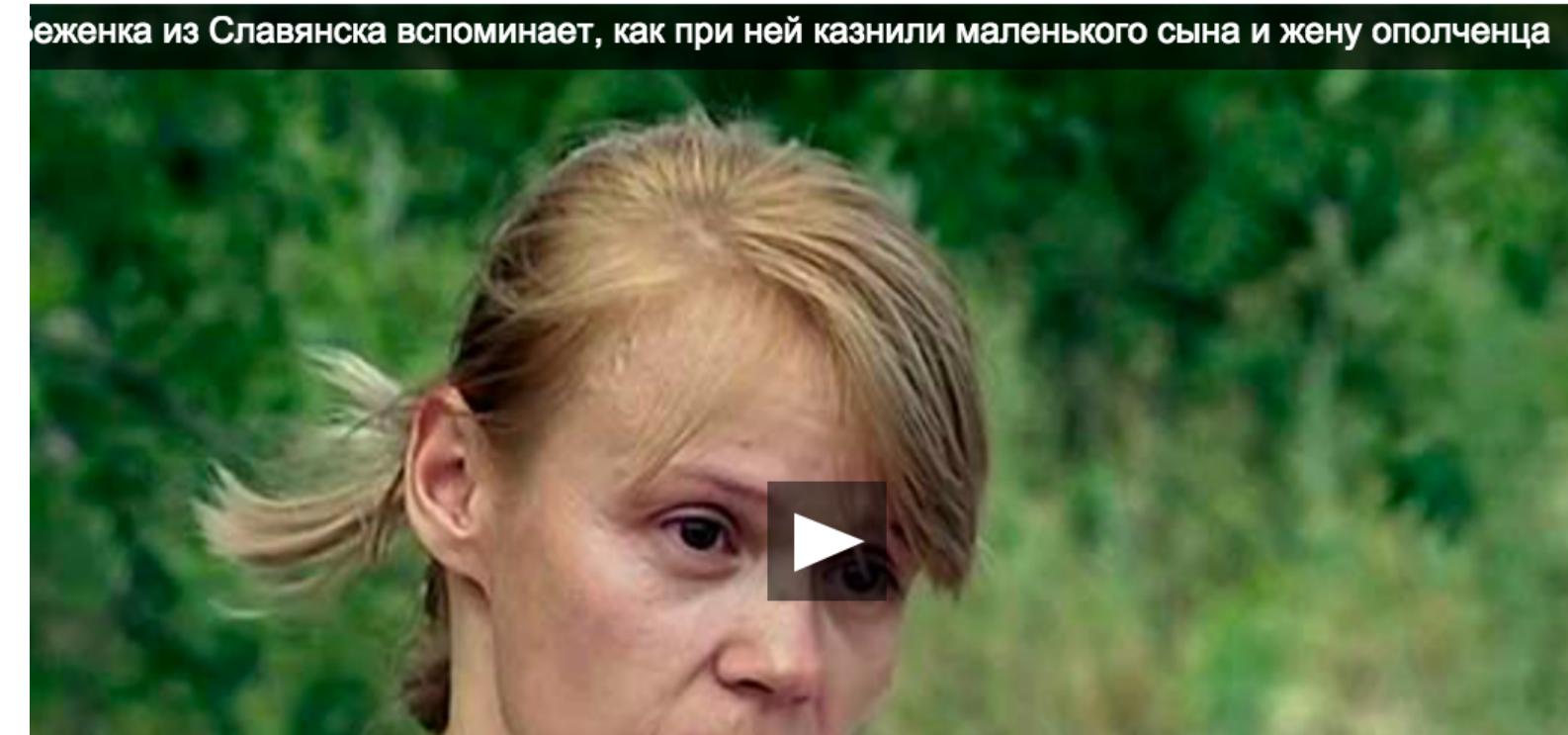
# THIS PROPAGANDA IS CAUSING VIOLENCE ESCALATION

Overall, this growing conflict is on the path to war and the emotions are running high. People are rapidly losing the ability to listen to each other.



Message: Alexander Daniluk, an advisor to the Ukrainian Minister of Defense, claimed that Russian Kolomensk artillery school students shelled an Ukrainian town as part of their graduation exam. (This school was dismantled in 2008)

Source: reported by every Ukrainian news source other than 112.au



Message: This woman from Eastern Ukrainian town of Slavyansk tells a story about Ukrainian soldiers publicly crucifying a three year old boy and killing his mother. (This story is fabricated)

Source: First Channel TV, the largest Russian TV channel



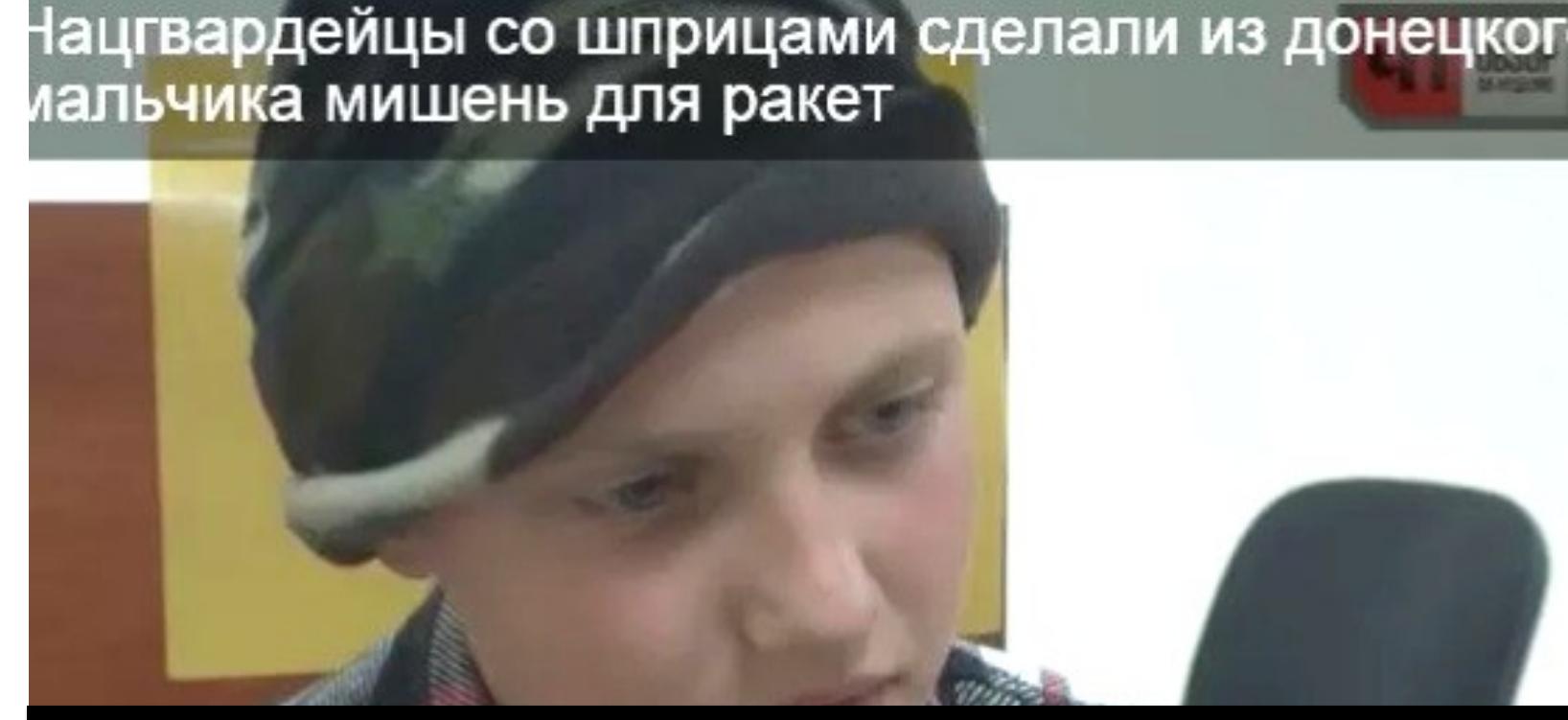
Message: Empty shelves in Crimean stores when panicked locals bought all of the food. (This image is really Manhattan pre hurricane Irene)

Source: numerous Ukrainian media outlets

A screenshot of a fake news article from a Russian website. The headline reads "EVACUATION FROM CRIMEA: HOTLINE OPENED TO SHELTER R". The article contains text in Russian and English, describing a supposed mass exodus from Crimea. A small image in the bottom left shows a group of people, which is actually a photo of Syrian refugees.

Message: These are refugees fleeing from Crimea in 2014. (This image is really Syrian refugees)

Source: numerous Ukrainian media outlets



Message: Ukrainian soldiers drugged a 12 year old boy and used him as a target for missiles. (This story is fabricated)

Source: NTV and LifeNews TV, 2 major Russian TV stations



Message: These are refugees fleeing from Ukraine in 2014, (This image is really Kosovo refugees in 2009)

Source: Mir 24, major Russian TV station

## THE WORLD NEEDS AN UNBIASED AND RELIABLE INFORMATION SOURCE

We are creating an unbiased web based storytelling platform. We will accept no political contributions and we have no political affiliation. Our goal is to mitigate the effects of propaganda.

200+  
people interviewed  
and photographed

8  
hours with  
each person

3  
languages

1  
interactive  
platform

## WE SHARE UNFILTERED STORIES FROM UKRAINIANS AND RUSSIANS.

We are interviewing hundreds of Ukrainians, Russians and other nationals from different geographical, social, political, and cultural spectra. We spend about 8 hours interviewing and photographing the lives of each individual.

The interviews are presented from the first person perspective and edited to preserve as much of the original content and style as

possible, without introducing any of the biases and limitations such as style, presentation, space and word-count limits, and policies typical for traditional reporting. We share these stories on a multilingual interactive website. And we present each story on a timeline of events so that readers can understand how the peoples' stories evolve over time.

## WE SHOW HUMANITY FROM BOTH SIDES TO HELP PREVENT MISINFORMED VIOLENCE

Our hope is that Ukrainians, Russians and others will read each other's stories and realize that they can disagree but still find common ground.



# THE GROUND

✓ UKRAINE + RUSSIA

Our mission is to fight propaganda by sharing the unfiltered stories  
of people on both sides of the conflict.

We work in areas of the world that lack trustworthy and objective journalism.  
We tell the stories of farmers and financiers, passivists and soldiers,  
grandmothers and children, and villagers and public figures.

МАРИУПОЛЬ КІЕВ СЛАВЯНСК СЕВАСТОПОЛЬ ЛУГАНСК ДОНЕЦК ИЛЛОВАЙСК ДНЕПРОПЕТРОВСК ОДЕССА ЛЬВОВ ФЕОДОСІЯ ЛУЦК КРИВОЙ РОГ ЗАПОРОЖЬЕ СЧАСТЬЕ НІКІ

Більшість міст та селищ в Україні зазнали обстрілів або бомбардувань з повітря та наземно. Важливі транспортні вузли, промислові центри та міські центри є найбільшими мішенями. Під час обстрілів та бомбардувань відбуваються масові евакуації населення, знищення житла та інфраструктури.

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НОЯБРЬ ДЕКАБРЬ ЯНВАРЬ ФЕВРАЛЬ МАРТ АПРЕЛЬ МАЙ ІЮНЬ ІЮНЬ ІЮНЬ ІЮНЬ

МАРТ

### Олег Губар

М. ОДЕСА, ІСТОРИК МІСТА ОДЕСА





8 МАРТА

зупинити процес підготовки  
до підписання угоди про асоціацію України та ЄС.  
На площу вийшло півтори тисячі осіб, підтримати  
активістів прийшли опозиційні політики, серед яких і  
лідери «Батьківщини» Арсеній Яценюк, «УДАРу» Віталій  
Кличко, «Свободи» Олег Тягнибок та екс-міністр  
внутрішніх справ Юрій Луценко.

8 МАРТА

Уряд України вирішив призупинити процес підготовки до  
підписання угоди про асоціацію України та ЄС. Угода мала  
бути підписана 28 листопада на саміті «Східного  
партнерства» у Вільнюсі.

8 МАРТА

Мітинг був оголошений безстроковим. У Києві  
всупереч рішенням влади міста утворився наметове  
містечко, комендантлом якого став Андрій Парубій.

8 МАРТА

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ФЕВРАЛЬ

МАРТ

АПРЕЛЬ

## Олег Губар

М. ОДЕСА, ІСТОРИК МІСТА ОДЕСА





## Oleg Gubar

ODESSA, HISTORIAN OF THE CITY OF ODESSA

SEPTEMBER 2014

In general, I don't concern myself with politics. I study the history of Odessa (a city on the Black Sea in Ukraine). If you asked me who the United States Secretary of State is, I wouldn't be able to answer you. It's not interesting to me.

I have my own fields of study, I study the layered history of the city, mainly the planned development, meaning the framework of the city, how it emerged out of small islands, how they fused together, and how the districts were appropriated. And I put these puzzle pieces together. By analyzing the situation in retrospect, the politics, and the jurisprudence, try or not you'll draw something from this, take away something useful, meaningful, and important. Or, for instance, questions about the history of the city's self-autonomy, administrative and territorial division, civil society. The community as a legal entity, because today our community is not a legal entity. This is very important. Catherine (Catherine the Great, Empress of Russia from 1762 to 1796) declared the city a legal entity in 1785, there were city regulations in Petersburg, Moscow, and Odessa, three cities in the entire empire. They had certain rights and such. Why are people talking about federalization? Because the community doesn't have status as a legal entity. In the constitution there are certain provisions laid out that allow it to get there. But it hasn't gotten there.

I mean, we have regions that didn't just randomly appear, the administrative and territorial divisions of Ukraine weren't sliced by a ruler like in Egypt, these are historically formed regions. And if, for example, we were now to elect Senators from each district, then let them make the decisions. That is, not Governors, who are appointed, but Senators, who are elected. These are completely different things. If we have an authoritative figure, we put our full trust in him and give him a huge responsibility, to give voice to the interests of our community, this legal entity, the subject of a federation. So, we





## Arina Koltsova

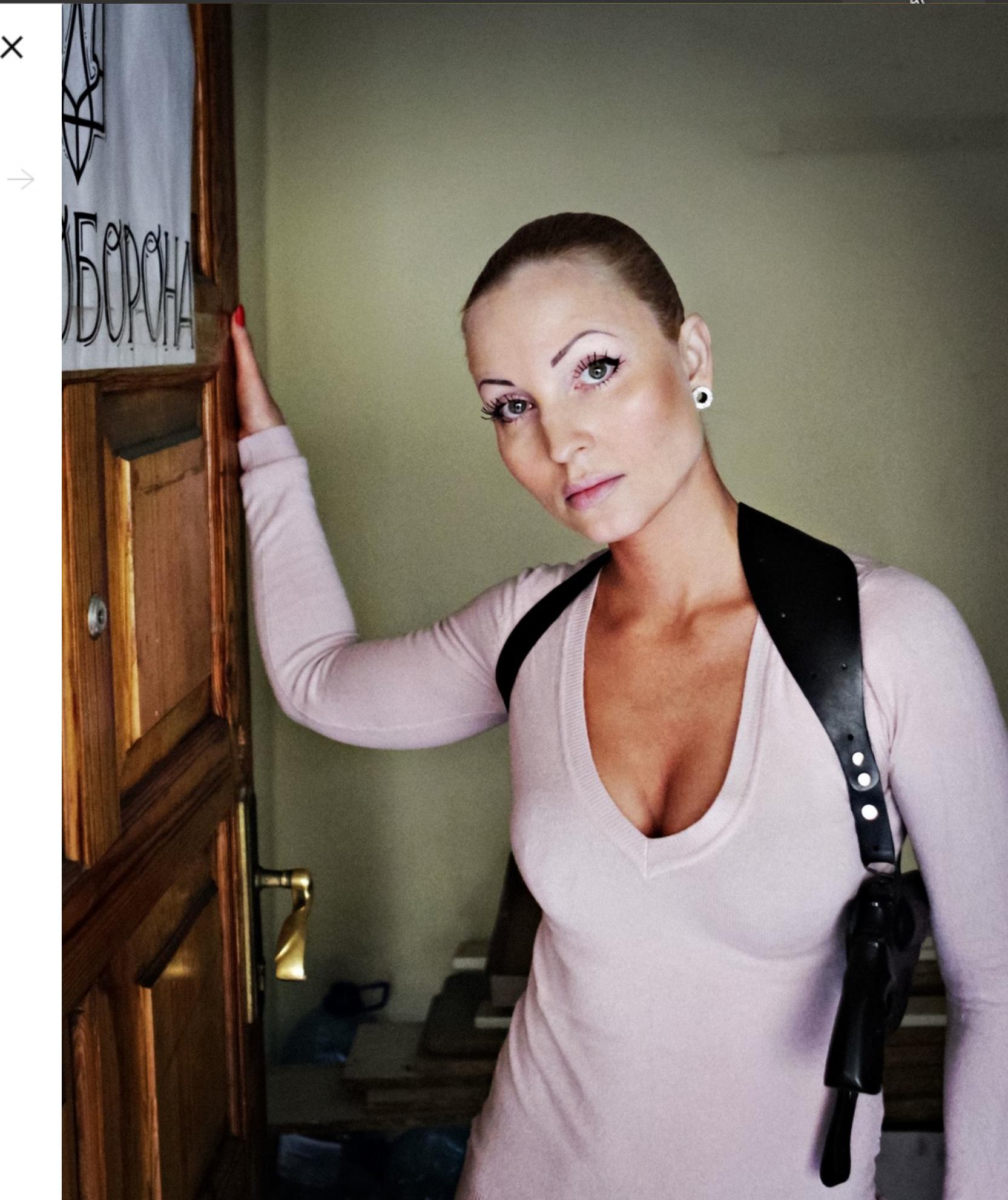
KIEV, HEAD OF THE "SAMOOBORONA" OF THE SOLOMYYANSKY DISTRICT OF KIEV

DECEMBER 2014

I arrived at the very beginning, on the first of December. While students were out getting beaten, I was sitting in "Mafia" on Khreshchatyk (the main street running through Kiev, Ukraine). It was night time. And when I walked out I saw everything with my own eyes. I ran back in terror, and from that moment on I started to care. The next day I was already on the Maidan (the Maidan refers to the central square in Kiev. It has traditionally been the location for political rallies in Ukraine). Dressed like a bum in what I could spare. And I was there virtually every night.

In 2004, during the Orange Revolution (a peaceful political rally, which took place on the Maidan in 2004, to overturn allegedly rigged election results. It was a major success and a second, more carefully watched round of voting replaced Viktor Yanukovych, President during these more recent protests, with Viktor Yushchenko), I really didn't give a shit about any of it. I love people who, seeing something they don't like, talk about it, go out and start doing something about it, and don't sit around like the rest of the herd. But I was busy with other things, the revolution was just going on somewhere nearby. But this time it didn't go like that, the instant I saw it with my own eyes, I was hooked! Injustice tends to have that effect. In the center of the city, the capital, people were beaten because they came out to express their opinions. They were beating people up without any right to do so. That should not be. Everyone has to answer for their own actions. And that's why I went to the Maidan and spent three some-odd months there.

When I got to the Maidan there still weren't any tents up, there were barrels. Medication, firewood, and food was brought in, all on our own dime. Mostly I worked at the kitchen where we cooked soups, pilaf, and kulish (a traditional Ukrainian soup). We peeled potatoes in the cold. But if we had to go build barricades on Hrushevskoho (the spot of many clashes between police and





## Andrey Volokita

KHARKOV, GRADUATE STUDENT

OCTOBER 2014

The views of Kharkovites (citizens of Kharkov, a city in eastern Ukraine) never changed. 90% or more are for a united Ukraine. There is simply an active segment, 5 percent from either side: 5 percent pro-Russians and 5 percent of those are prepared to defend and prove what's clear. You can walk around on the streets with a Ukrainian flag, you can say that Ukraine is united, but that's all bullshit! It's like going out and saying in Russia, in Moscow, that Russia is united and everything else.

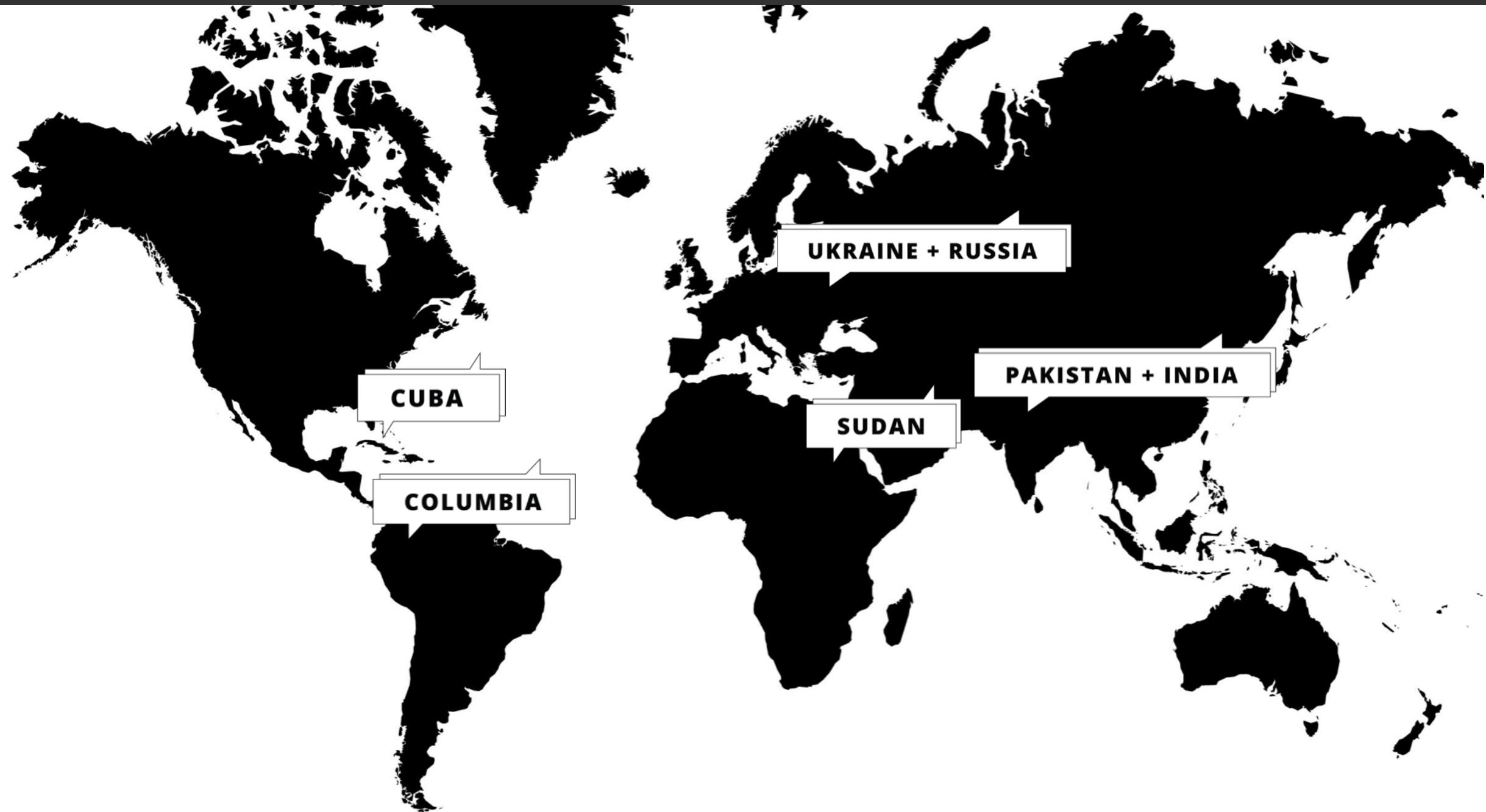
The active pro-Ukrainian faction has now come into full force, all sorts of grassroots movements, what is referred to as civil society, are popping up. They are strong enough to put the separatists in their place. That said, in the past week, literally a few days ago, the police finally started working against these separatists; they found some conspiratorial apartment and chased them out. They set up a little tent city, these separatists, on the center square near Lenin (a large statue of Lenin stands in Kharkov's "Freedom Square"). But that very day they were driven out, some were arrested. Before this the police were just standing around doing nothing, going through the motions.

Now we've got a new police chief, Avakov (the Minister of Internal Affairs of Ukraine) appointed him. He's made some new nominations; there really are some true patriots up in the ranks. It's difficult to pick out the ordinary working patriots from the huge number of policemen. It's not written on their faces.

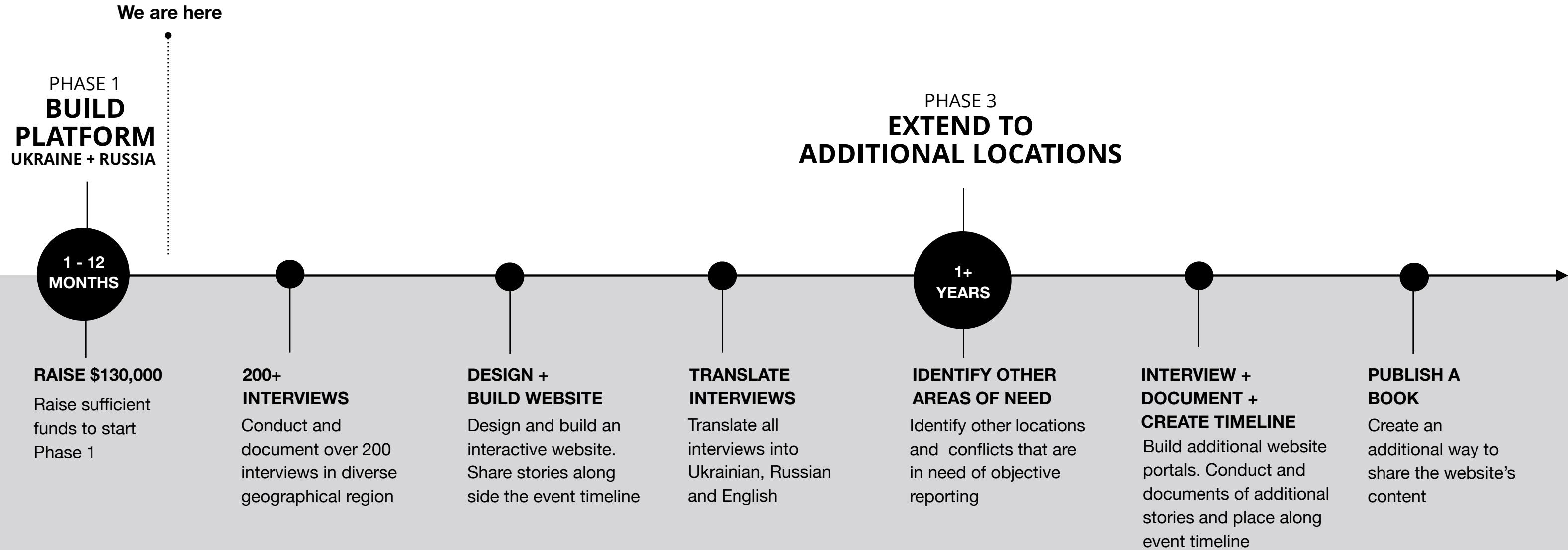
There have been other changes, too. We have some traffic cops, policemen who contrived to walk around with those ribbons of St. George. This was going on for a long time, but then Avakov said: "You either turn in your badge, or you only wear Ukrainian insignia." And that was that, now there are cars with a little



МАРИУПОЛЬ КИЕВ СЛАВЯНСК СЕВАСТОПОЛЬ ЛУГАНСК ДОНЕЦК ИЛЛОВАЙСК ДНЕПРОПЕТРОВСК ОДЕССА ЛЬВОВ ФЕОДОСИЯ ЛУЦК КРИВОЙ РОГ ЗАПОРОЖЬЕ СЧАСТЬЕ НІКІ



## OUR TIMELINE



## WHAT WE NEED

# WE HAVE RAISED \$11,000

### THIS FUNDING WAS USED TO:

Interview and photograph 80 people
Transcribe, edit and translate 5 interviews
Identify and recruit designers and coders

Due to the time-sensitive nature, large amount of material, and lack of proper journalistic standards in Ukraine and Russia, professional editors for this project will be hired in the US to insure the integrity of the material and to avoid endangering anyone who is closely involved with the conflict (kidnapping of journalists and fixers/drivers are common in the DonBass region).

# WE NEED \$119,000 TO COMPLETE PHASE 1

### THIS FUNDING WILL BE USED TO:

ACTIVITY	COST \$	TOTAL \$
<b>Interviewing 100+ people</b>		
Manager salary	4,500 / month	27,000
Producer salary	1,200 / month	7,200
Journalist salary	1,200 / month	7,200
<b>Transcribing, editing and translating</b>		
Transcribing	30 / interview	3,000
Ukrainian editor salary	1,000 / month	6,000
Russian editor salary	1,000 / month	6,000
English editor salary	1,500 / month	9,000
<b>Travel and lodging - 150 days</b>		
Base in Kiev	1,000 / month	6,000
Transportation	30 / person / day	4,500
Accommodation + food	40 / person / day	6,000
Fixer	50 / day	5,000
Equipment	2000 / person	4,000
Insurance	500 / person	1,000
<b>Website design + coding,</b>		
Website design		10,000
Website coding		17,000

## OUR TEAM



### Dima Garvysh

Dima has worked as a documentary photographer with major publications and news agencies such as the Associated Press, Bloomberg News, and European Press-Photo Agency. He has also worked on multiple projects around

the globe, including collaborations with Doctors Without Borders and the United Nations Population Fund. He has worked in numerous embeds with the US Army in Afghanistan. Dima's work has appeared in a variety of international publications, including the New York Times, Stern, Paris Match, and Time.

Over the past two years, Dima has been exploring the American war in Afghanistan through video installation, photography, and data visualization. Currently, Dima is working on publishing his first book.

Dima received his Master of Fine Arts degree with honors from the Rhode Island School of Design in 2012. He obtained his first degree in Kiev, Ukraine in 2000 as a Director of Photography in Motion Picture Imaging. See his work at [dimagavysh.com](http://dimagavysh.com)



### Olga Kravets

Olga is a documentary photographer and filmmaker. She was a Prix Bayeux-Calvados for War Correspondents winner in 2014 in web journalism category, Magnum Emergency Foundation grant recipient in 2013, and a

winner of the PDN Photo Annual in 2012. Her work has been published worldwide in El País, Financial Times, Helsingin Sanomat, Le Monde, NRC Handelsblad, Internazionale, The Globe and Mail, The New York Times, The Observer, and Vice, among others.

She has worked on a number of documentaries in various capacities and is now directing her first full-length documentary. She lives in Paris and works primarily in the Caucasus, Balkans, and the Middle East.

She holds an MA from the University of the Arts in London.



THANK YOU  
FROM

THE GROUND

contact us at  
[info@theground.org](mailto:info@theground.org)

