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24 February 2022 – May 2022

Key events

24 February 2022: In an early morning address on Russian state television, President Putin announces Russian forces will carry out “a special military operation” in Ukraine.

Ukraine’s President Zelenskyy introduces martial law and closes Ukraine’s airspace.

25 February 2022: President Zelenskyy decrees a full military mobilisation and all men aged 18-60 are forbidden from leaving Ukraine.

The UN Security Council rejects a draft resolution intended to end Russia’s military action after Russia uses its veto.

27 February 2022: President Zelenskyy announces Ukraine has filed a lawsuit against Russia to the UN International Court of Justice at the Hague.

President Putin orders Russia’s nuclear deterrence forces to be put on high alert.

28 February 2022: Russian forces launch rocket attacks that kill “dozens” of civilians in Ukraine’s second city, Kharkiv, and begin a renewed assault on the capital Kyiv.

President Zelenskyy signs an official request for Ukraine to join the EU immediately under a special procedure.

1 March 2022: President Zelenskyy urges Western nations to enforce a “no-fly zone” over Ukraine.

2 March 2022: Russian forces in Ukraine move to tighten their siege of key cities, including the capital, Kyiv, and the southern port of Mariupol.

The UN General Assembly votes overwhelmingly for a resolution deploring Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and calling for the immediate withdrawal of its forces.

The UK and 37 other countries formally refer reports of atrocities committed in Ukraine to the International Criminal Court (ICC).

3 March 2022: A fire breaks out at a nuclear power plant in Zaporizhzhia, after shelling by Russian forces.

The UK's Ministry of Defence says the Russian advance on Kyiv has been delayed by "staunch Ukrainian resistance, mechanical breakdown and congestion".

4 March 2022: NATO's Secretary-General rejects a "no-fly zone" over Ukraine.

7 March 2022: Ukraine rejects an offer from Russia to create "humanitarian corridors", after it emerges most of the routes lead directly to Russia or its ally, Belarus.

8 March 2022: President Zelenskyy broadcasts live to the House of Commons.

10 March 2022: The UK announces sanctions against seven Russian businessmen, including Roman Abramovich.

11 March 2022: The UK announces asset freezes and travel bans on 386 members of the Russian Duma.

15 March 2022: The leaders of Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovenia travel to Kyiv on an EU mission to show support for Ukraine.

16 March 2022: The International Court of Justice orders Russia to stop its invasion, saying it has not seen any evidence to support the Kremlin's justification to attack Ukraine.

18 March 2022: President Putin addresses a large crowd at Moscow's Luzhniki stadium, marking the eighth anniversary of Crimea's annexation.

7 April 2022: The UN General Assembly votes to suspend Russia's membership in the UN Human Rights Council.

6 May 2022: The UN Security Council issues its first statement on the war in Ukraine, but withholds from using the words "war", "conflict" or "invasion".

12 May 2022: Finland's President and Prime Minister endorse their country's application to join NATO.

16 May 2022: The Swedish government confirms it intends to apply for membership of NATO.

24 February 2022

In an early morning address (just before 3am, UK time) on Russian state television, President Putin announces Russian forces will carry out “[a special military operation](#)” in Ukraine.

Ukraine’s President Zelenskyy then makes an urgent [national address](#), introducing martial law, while urging people to remain calm. Ukraine’s airspace is also closed.

Zelenskyy decrees a full military mobilisation against the Russian military action, as he [criticises](#) the West and says Ukraine is being left on its own to fight Russia.

In a [statement](#) to the House of Commons on the situation in Ukraine, the Prime Minister updates Members on Russia’s “onslaught” and announces a further package of sanctions and asset freezes on Russian entities and individuals.

The Foreign Office [publishes](#) further details of the sanctions to be imposed and the Foreign Secretary summons the Russian Ambassador over Russia’s “unprovoked and unjustified attack on Ukraine”. The Home Secretary, meanwhile, [announces](#) visa concessions for Ukrainians.

In an [address to the nation](#), Prime Minister Boris Johnson says: “President Putin of Russia has unleashed war in our European continent,” and pledges to continue working “to ensure that the sovereignty and independence of Ukraine is restored”.

25 February 2022

Ukraine’s President, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, gives an early morning [address](#) and confirms multiple reports of Russian missile strikes. He again asserts that his country has been left to fight Russia alone, saying: “We have been left alone to defend our state. Who is ready to fight alongside us? I don’t see anyone. Who is ready to give Ukraine a guarantee of NATO membership? Everyone is afraid.”

President Zelenskyy decrees a full military mobilisation and all men aged 18-60 are forbidden from leaving Ukraine.

The 47-nation [Council of Europe announces](#) Russia will be suspended with “immediate effect” from the

organisation's Committee of Ministers and parliamentary assembly, "as a result of the Russian Federation's armed attack on Ukraine."

The UN Security Council [rejects a draft resolution](#) intended to end Russia's military action against Ukraine. The draft, submitted by Albania and the United States, wins support from 11 member states but Russia's veto ensures the draft resolution falls. China, India and the United Arab Emirates all abstain.

The leaders of NATO Member States [meet](#) to discuss Russia's attack on Ukraine; additional deployments to the alliance's eastern flank are announced. The Prime Minister [outlines](#) details of the UK's new offer to NATO.

In a third wave of sanctions in four days, the UK Government [announces](#) Russian President Vladimir Putin and Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov will be hit with an assets freeze.

The Prime Minister addresses a NATO leaders' meeting in the afternoon, to update allies on the UK's next steps following Russia's bombardment of Ukraine.

26 February 2022

Fierce [fighting breaks out](#) in Kyiv as Russian forces try to push their way towards the city centre from multiple directions. President Zelenskyy rejects a US offer to evacuate him from the Ukraine's capital.

The US, Canada and key European countries [agree to remove](#) "selected Russian banks" from the Swift payment system.

27 February 2022

Responding to claims that the Russia is "ready for talks" with Ukraine, President Zelenskyy says his country is [ready for peace talks](#) with Russia, but not in Belarus. He describes the country as a staging ground for Russia's invasion.

President Putin makes a televised address, [saluting](#) the "heroism" of Russian special forces in what he [describes](#) as a "special operation to provide assistance to the people's republics of the Donbas".

President Zelenskyy announces [Ukraine has filed a lawsuit against Russia](#) to the UN International Court of Justice at the Hague.

The UN Refugee Agency says [the number of people fleeing Ukraine has reached 368,000](#), and more than 4.5 million more could follow if the fighting spreads. There are also reports of tens of thousands on the move within the country itself.

President Putin orders Russia's military to put the country's [nuclear deterrence forces on high alert](#) in response to "aggressive statements" by NATO countries.

Jens Stoltenberg, NATO Secretary-General, [responds](#) to Putin's move: "This is dangerous rhetoric. This is a behaviour which is irresponsible."

A referendum in Belarus reportedly [approves a new constitution](#) renouncing the country's non-nuclear status. The move theoretically allows Russia to place nuclear weapons on Belarusian soil for the first time since the country gave them up after the fall of the Soviet Union.

The UN Security Council [votes](#) to call for a rare emergency special session of the UN General Assembly the following day, to discuss Russia's military operation in Ukraine. The vote follows the veto of the draft Security Council resolution by Russia on 25 February.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson [announces](#) £40m of additional aid will be released to provide vital medical supplies and other help to Ukraine.

28 February 2022

Forty Ukrainian civil society groups come together to [call on the West](#) to establish safe zones for refugees inside Ukraine, and provide technology to help document Russian war crimes as part of a plan to make Russia's President Putin and his inner circle face justice at the International Criminal Court.

The first round of [Ukraine-Russia talks](#) aimed at ending the fighting between Russia and its neighbour conclude with no immediate agreement.

The prosecutor of the International Criminal Court in The Hague announces he will [launch an investigation into possible war crimes or crimes against humanity](#)

in Ukraine. The move comes amid mounting evidence of Russia's use of indiscriminate cluster munitions on Ukrainian cities.

President Zelenskyy [signs an official request](#) for Ukraine to join the European Union immediately under a special procedure.

Turkey, a NATO member with good ties to both Russia and Ukraine, pledges to implement parts of an international pact that would potentially [limit the transit of Russian warships](#) from the Mediterranean to the Black Sea.

1 March 2022

President Zelenskyy [tells the European Parliament](#) Ukraine is “giving away its best people for a desire to be treated as equals” and for the price of freedom. He calls on EU member states to prove their loyalty to Ukraine.

Russia's defence ministry [warns Kyiv residents](#) to leave their homes as it plans to strike targets in the Ukrainian capital.

President Zelenskyy [urges Western nations](#) to enforce a “no-fly zone” as a measure to stop any further bombardment by Russia, but the US rules out such a measure.

The UK Government [pledges](#) a further £80 million in aid to help Ukraine deal with humanitarian crisis and [announces](#) further sanctions against Russia, including banning Russian ships from UK ports and additional economic measures. The Foreign Secretary also unveils the first tranche of [sanctions against Belarusian individuals and organisations](#), in response to Belarus' role in supporting Russia's military action against Ukraine.

2 March 2022

The UN [votes](#) overwhelmingly for a resolution deploring Russia's invasion of Ukraine and calling for the immediate withdrawal of its forces. The emergency session of the UN's General Assembly sees 141 of the 193 member states voting for the resolution, 35 abstaining, and five voting against. The five countries voting no were Russia, Belarus, North Korea, Eritrea and Syria.

The UK and 37 other countries formally [refer reports of atrocities](#) committed in Ukraine to the International Criminal Court (ICC).

Filippo Grandi, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, says [more than one million people have fled Ukraine](#) since Russian forces invaded the country a week earlier.

3 March 2022

A [war crimes investigation is launched](#) into Russia's invasion of Ukraine, after an unprecedented number of countries backed the move. Karim Khan, chief prosecutor for ICC, says he will begin work "as rapidly as possible" to look for possible crimes against humanity or genocide committed in Ukraine.

In a second round of talks, Ukraine and Russia [agree to create humanitarian corridors](#) to evacuate civilians.

Ukraine's President Zelenskyy [calls for direct talks](#) with the Russia's President Putin, saying it is "the only way to stop this war".

UK Foreign Secretary Liz Truss [announces](#) sanctions against Russian oligarchs Alisher Usmanov and Igor Shuvalov, with a full asset freeze and travel ban imposed.

4 March 2022

President Zelenskyy appeals to Europe for help following the attack on the Ukrainian nuclear plant and [accuses Russia of nuclear terrorism](#), saying; "For the first time in the history of humankind, the terrorist state commits nuclear terrorism."

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) puts its Incident and Emergency Centre in "[full 24/7 response mode](#)" due to the "serious situation" unfolding at Zaporizhzhia.

NATO foreign ministers discuss a "no-fly zone" over Ukraine but, [speaking after the meeting](#), the NATO Secretary-General says: "Allies agree that we should not have NATO planes operating over Ukrainian airspace or NATO troops on Ukrainian territory."

President Zelenskyy [criticises NATO's decision](#), saying: "The alliance has given the green light to the bombing of Ukrainian cities and villages by refusing to create a no-fly zone." He adds: "All the people

who die from this day forward will also die because of you, because of your weakness, because of your lack of unity.”

5 March 2022

The UK [urges British nationals to consider leaving Russia](#) if their presence in the country is not essential.

A planned evacuation from Mariupol and Volnovakha is [thrown in chaos](#) as Russia continues to attack despite agreeing a humanitarian corridor.

President Putin [describes](#) sanctions imposed by Western nations over his invasion of Ukraine as "akin to a declaration of war".

He also [says](#) Russia will consider any country that imposes a no-fly zone over Ukraine as having entered the conflict: "Any movement in this direction will be considered by us as participation in an armed conflict by that country."

Prime Minister Boris Johnson issues a [six-point plan](#) which he hopes will ensure Russia fails in its military action against Ukraine:

1. we must mobilise an international humanitarian coalition
2. we must do more to help Ukraine to defend itself
3. we must maximise the economic pressure on Mr Putin's regime
4. no matter how long it takes, we must prevent any creeping normalisation of what Russia does in Ukraine
5. we should always be open to diplomacy and de-escalation
6. we must act now to strengthen Euro-Atlantic security

6 March 2022

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken [speaks](#) with Chinese foreign minister Wang Yi, who tells him Beijing opposes any moves that "add fuel to the flames" in Ukraine.

David Arakhamia, one of Ukraine's negotiators, says his country is [not willing to compromise on its territorial integrity](#) in talks but Russia, but is open to discussing "non-NATO models" for its future.
