

Public Diplomacy Tool Kit on Ukraine

This is the first iteration of a new product that we will be deploying to our Department messengers to assist them in promoting accurate narratives about the crisis in the Ukraine. This product has been developed by the new Ukraine Communications Task Force (UkraineNegNarrative@state.gov). We would love to have your feedback and suggestions for additional messaging tools. We've also put some visual tools on Flickr at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/120436008@N08/>

The Department is committed to promoting the narratives in this document, and asks that PAOs and Ambassadors use the tools here as much as possible. We want you to be proactive and positive, and we want you to message on this regularly.

TOP LINES

- **Ukraine must be allowed to choose its own future.** There is a legitimate government in Ukraine that is focused on bringing about an inclusive national election in May.
- **The so-called referendum in Crimea is illegal and will not be recognized** by the international community. This could have serious consequences for the future of Crimea.
- **Russia must understand it risks further international isolation if it continues down this path.** The President has made it clear that there will be consequences if Russia does not find a way to change course.
- **Diplomacy can still work**, but Russia needs to accept the proposals of the international community, return its troops to their bases, and allow international monitors into Crimea.

NEW TWITTER ACCOUNT: @UKRPROGRESS

In connection with our commitment to messaging across the globe on this, we have launched a new Russian-language Twitter account managed by the Ukraine Communications Team. This account will promote new narratives that emphasize Ukraine's independence and sovereignty and counter negative narratives from Russia. Please use these tweets to encourage your followers to follow us:

- Follow @statedept's new feed - @ukrprogress for the latest facts in Russian on the situation in #Ukraine
- Want to know @statedept's opinion on #Ukraine? Follow @ukrprogress for the latest updates in Russian!
- Proud to announce @ukrprogress, @statedept's new Russian-language feed to counter misinformation on #Ukraine.
- Time to set the record straight – Follow @ukrprogress for facts on #Ukraine and #Crimea.

Ukraine must be allowed to choose its own future.

Cleared Press Points:

Countering the Negative Narrative (cleared PG):

It is a fact that Russian military forces have taken over Ukrainian border posts. It is a fact that Russia has surrounded or taken over practically all Ukrainian military facilities in Crimea. It is also a fact that independent journalists continue to report that there is no evidence of violence against Russian or pro-Russian communities in Ukraine. There is no evidence that ethnic Russians are in danger. It is a fact that Victor Yanukovich fled Kyiv and left Ukraine of his own volition.

Yet the Russians would have you believe that the recent change of government in Ukraine constitutes such a danger to Russia's interests that Russia is justified in intervening militarily. They would have you believe that the populations of Crimea or other parts of eastern Ukraine are at risk because of the new government.

There is no evidence of this. On the contrary, the new Ukrainian government is placing a priority on and working toward internal reconciliation, free and fair elections and political inclusivity. And the new Ukrainian government has pledged to honor all of its existing international agreements, including those covering Russian bases. Moreover the Ukrainian government has proposed forming a task force to consider greater autonomy for Crimea within Ukraine.

Russian forces continue to take control of Ukrainian military installations, Aksyonov and his cohorts continue to move towards an illegal and unconstitutional referendum as a prelude to secession, there are credible reports of kidnappings of journalists, independent media has been taken off the air, and independent observers are being barred from the Crimean peninsula.

Top U.S. Officials:

President Obama: "The interests of the United States are solely in making sure that the people of Ukraine are able to determine their own destiny."

Sample Tweets

It's time for Ukraine to decide their future – NOT Russia.
#Ukraine @ukrprogress

The Referendum in Crimea is Illegal and will not be Recognized by the International Community

Cleared Press Points:

- The United States supports the unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine. The Ukrainian Constitution requires an all-Ukraine national referendum to alter the territory of Ukraine. Any discussion about the future of Ukraine must include the legitimate government of Ukraine. In 2014, we are well beyond the days when a sovereign state's borders can be redrawn over the heads of its democratic leaders.
- We find it ironic that Russia is against the Ukrainian elections in May, called by the Rada – the most representative and democratic body in Ukraine today – claiming these are too soon and the situation in Ukraine too unsettled. Yet Russia is supporting the March 16 referendum in Crimea when foreign troops have intervened and are on the streets of Crimea.
- We have consistently said that Russia's actions in Ukraine are a clear violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Any effort by Russia to annex any part of Ukraine or otherwise unilaterally alter the borders of Ukraine would be inconsistent with Russia's obligations under the UN Charter and would fly in the face of what it means to be a responsible member of the international community in the 21st Century.

Countering the Negative Narrative (cleared PG):

It is the height of double-standards for Russia to claim that this referendum is legitimate.

In Russia, this would be illegal according to Article 280-1 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation, which makes criminal "public calls for action to violate the territorial integrity of the Russian Federation." This law makes it a crime punishable by up to five years in prison for any regional parliament to call for a referendum for independence.

Top U.S. Officials:

Secretary Kerry: "Our choice is to have a respect for the sovereignty and independence and integrity of the country of Ukraine. Our hope is to have Russia join in respecting international law. There is no justification, **no legality to this referendum that is taking place. It violates international law.** It violates the constitution of Ukraine. And I don't think anybody can believe that a hastily put together, rushed referendum, taking place under imprint of 20,000-plus troops and all that has happened, without debate, without opportunity is a genuine referendum.

Sample Tweets

- There is no legality to this #referendum. It violates #Ukraine constitution. @ukrprogress
- Is it a valid vote when you have 20,000 troops telling you which way to choose? #crimea @ukrprogress
- Is a vote at gunpoint really democracy? #ukraine #referendum@ukrprogress
- The referendum ballot lacks the option for status quo – a) Russia wins b)#Ukraine loses @ukrprogress
- AndersFogh Rasmussen @AndersFoghR_ So-called referendum in #Crimea: direct violation of #Ukraine constitution & int'l law. Read my statement here <http://ow.ly/uBadf>

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- **Samantha Power** @AmbassadorPower #Crimea referendum: Illegal, dangerous, and being done while trapping Ukrainians at gunpoint. My remarks at #UNSC: <http://go.usa.gov/KXe4>

Russia Risks Further International Isolation if it Continues Down this Path.

Cleared Press Points:

- The United States, and our partners and allies, have moved together to announce substantial assistance for the government in Kyiv, as well as to impose costs on Russia for its military intervention in Crimea – and we are prepared to impose more as the situation warrants. We are united in our determination to oppose actions that violate international law and to support the government and people of Ukraine. The principle of territorial integrity is fundamental to the international system that every country in the world has a vested interest in affirming.
- There have already been costs for Russia’s actions, and there will be more if Russia continues to intervene illegally in Crimea. We have already seen how the stock and foreign exchange markets have reacted to Russia’s actions.
- If this referendum goes forward, there will be costs. If there is further military escalation, there will be more costs. Just as there will be additional costs should Russia not de-escalate and continue to refuse to engage in serious diplomacy. The choice is Russia’s.
- The Russian economy is already stagnating from a lack of investment and hindered by ongoing issues such as incomplete reforms, heavy state interference and a lack of transparency. Stability, respect for international agreements and international law, and integration within the global economy are extremely important to investors and market participants. Russia’s actions raise doubts about its commitment to all three, and you can see that investors are already worried.

Top U.S. Officials:

- **President Obama:** “We will continue to say to the Russian government that if it continues on the path that it is on, then not only the United States but the international community ... will be forced to apply a cost to Russia’s violations of international law and its encroachments on Ukraine.”
- **Secretary Kerry:** “There is a better way for Russia to pursue their legitimate interests in Ukraine.”
- **Secretary Kerry:** “We have a number of options to make it clear to President Putin the level of isolation that he might be asking for and the degree to which many of the people around him – if not him himself – could be affected by that choice in very real ways before you get to any kind of troop and other kinds of evaluation.”

Sample Tweets

- #Russia on the road to further isolations @ukrprogress
- International Community united in standing with #Ukraine @ukrprogress
- POTUS - There will costs to #Russia encroachments in #Ukraine @ukrprogress

Countering False Russian Claims

We Say (Cleared Talking Points):

- We categorically reject this comparison. The situation in Kosovo was completely different.
- Among other things, it was governed by a specific UNSC resolution (1244), adopted under chapter VII of the UN Charter, that provided for a special treatment for Kosovo, and that created a special UNSC-authorized process to resolve its status.
- It was this process, conducted in accordance with the UN Security Council's decisions, that led to Kosovo's independence.

1. *Russia says: "Crimea's referendum is analogous to the referendum in Kosovo, or the upcoming vote in Scotland."*

Resources:

- The situation in Kosovo was completely different and it is not possible to compare them. (see *Huffington Post* article by David Phillips from Columbia University: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/david-l-phillips/crimea-is-not-kosovo_b_4936365.html?utm_hp_ref=tw; Note: copyright to use article obtained by IIP.)

Suggested Tweets:

- #Ukraine is not Kosovo. Kosovo referendum took place with support of UN. #referendum @ukrprogress

We Say (Cleared Talking Points):

- As both the President and Secretary Kerry have made clear, Russia's military intervention in Ukraine unequivocally violates Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. This is unacceptable. We have repeatedly called on Russia to speak directly with the Government of Ukraine, to welcome international observers and human rights monitors, and to send troops back to their bases.
- Through its military intervention, Russia has violated a number of relevant international legal obligations and commitments. These include core obligations under the UN Charter intended to prevent threats to international peace and security, notably those in Article 2(3) (under which UN member states have agreed to "settle their international disputes by peaceful means in a manner that international and security, and justice, are not endangered") and Article 2.4 (under which member states agree to "refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State").

2. *Russia says: "There are no Russian troops in the Crimea other than those of the Black Sea Fleet in Sevastopol."*

3. *Russia says: "The Russian military is allowed conduct its recent activities in Crimea under bilateral agreements with Ukraine."*

Resources:

- Multiple media outlets have posted video of soldiers in Crimea admitting they are from the Russian military, along with video and photos of military vehicles in Crimea – far from the base of the Black Sea Fleet – that have Russian military license plates, and of so-called "self-defense forces" with

weapons that are not only unavailable in Crimea but issued to the Russian military.
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TRvdmwwoeQE> (From Euronews)

Possible Tweets:

- Time to set the record straight – troops in Crimea admit to being Russian soldiers. #Ukraine @ukrprograss
- Without a doubt, Russia’s military incursion into Crimea is illegal #Ukraine @ukrprograss
- It’s time to set the record straight – Russian bases do not justify large scale military intervention #Ukraine @ukrprograss
- Basing agreement does not allow for aggressive military acts #Ukraine @ukrprograss

We Say (Cleared Talking Points):

Reports make it clear that pro-Ukrainian demonstrators were attacked by pro-Russian demonstrators, and one of the pro-Ukrainian group was killed. We have seen a number of Russian “tourists” traveling to eastern Ukraine with the intent to foment discontent. We condemn the use of violence by any party, and call for a halt to such Russian meddling in Ukraine’s internal affairs.

4. Russia says: Protests in Ukraine against the new Ukrainian Government are grass-roots efforts, arranged solely by local residents.

Resources:

- Ukrainian daily *Segodnya* reported that more than 400 Russian men were stopped trying to cross the border in Ukraine with tear gas, knives and Russian propaganda. The men claimed they were attending weddings.
- Numerous Russian social network sites have asked for volunteers to travel to Ukraine to “help out.”
- On March 6, Russian Nation Unity leader **Alexander Barkashov** wrote a plea on V Kontakte for Russian volunteers to cross the border into Eastern Ukraine, especially Donetsk. His V Kontakte post at <http://vk.com/barkashov1953> gave explicit instructions on how to lie to the border guards about their intentions.

Suggested Tweets:

- Press reports indicate that Russia has bussed hundreds of Russian provocateurs to #Ukraine @ukrprograss
- Time to set the record straight - Russian “tourists” and Russian government must stop meddling in #Ukraine internal affairs. @ukrprograss

We Say (Cleared Talking Points):

- There is no evidence of this. On the contrary, the new Ukrainian government is placing a priority on and working toward internal reconciliation, free and fair elections and political inclusivity. And the new Ukrainian government has pledged to honor all of its existing international agreements, including those covering

5. Russia says: Protests in Ukraine against the new Ukrainian Government are grass-roots efforts, arranged solely by local residents.

Russian bases. Moreover the Ukrainian government has proposed forming a task force to consider greater autonomy for Crimea within Ukraine.

- We reject these Russian justifications for their actions. There is no evidence of refugee flows from Ukraine, nor is there evidence of attacks or discrimination against ethnic Russians. What we have seen is attempts by Russia to foment ethnic unrest in eastern Ukraine, which could raise tensions beyond the breaking point.
- According to international humanitarian organizations, Russian claims of asylum seekers fleeing Ukraine into Russia appear to be groundless.
- The best way to address any legitimate concerns over the treatment of ethnic Russians in Ukraine is to send an international monitoring mission to Ukraine, including the Crimea region and eastern Ukraine, either under the UN or OSCE.

Resources:

The OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities reported that she found no evidence of violations or threats to the rights of Russian speakers during her visit to Ukraine, including Kyiv and the Crimean peninsula, March 4-6.

The Russian Migration Service said on March 7 that there is no mass exodus of Ukrainians of Russian ethnicity to Russia. Moreover the Ukrainian government has proposed forming a task force to consider greater autonomy for Crimea within Ukraine.

We Say (*Cleared Talking Points*):

- There are credible reports of kidnappings of journalists, independent media has been taken off the air, and independent observers are being barred from the Crimean peninsula.
- It is in Crimea – not in Kyiv – where non-Russian journalists have been threatened, beaten, and attacked, and had their equipment stolen or damaged by pro-Russian protestors and Russian military. These journalists include BBC, Associated Press, CNN, Inter channel, STB, Argumenti nedeli-Krym, and several freelancers.
- It is Russia that is attacking media freedom. Dept. Spokesperson Marie Harf noted today “the rapidly shrinking space for independent and free media in Russia. The recent closure of RIA-Novosti, the changes in leadership at Lenta.ru and other outlets, and the decision to block a number of independent websites and blogs, are unfortunately just the most recent examples of this harmful trend. In the last year, the Russian government has passed laws imposing unprecedented censorship and restrictions on media and online publications. These developments effectively stifle the expression of alternative views, restrict the space for independent discussion, and facilitate the spreading of government controlled narratives that are patently false.”

6. Russia says: *Protests in Ukraine against the new Ukrainian Government are grass-roots efforts, arranged solely by local residents.*

Resources:

- Footage of one of these instances – where pro-Russian forces put a gun to a Bulgarian journalist’s head – can be seen at <http://t.co/7oqJcAhqL1>.

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- *CCTV footage shows paramilitaries and Russian Cossacks attacking journalists after taking cameras and equipment from another news team.* <http://www.channel4.com/news/russia-cctv-crimea-journalists-attacked-paramilitaries>