

## WAR IN UKRAINE

# 'I wish this war would end'

**INVASION:** Russian attacks pummel Ukraine; Fox News reporter injured

By Yuras Karmanau  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

LVIV, Ukraine — Russia and Ukraine kept a fragile diplomatic path open with a new round of talks Monday even as Moscow's forces pounded away at Kyiv and other cities across the country in a punishing bombardment the Red Cross said has created "nothing short of a nightmare" for civilians.

Meanwhile, a convoy of 160 civilian cars left the encircled port city of Mariupol along a designated humanitarian route, the city council reported, in a rare glimmer of hope a week and a half into the lethal siege that has pulverized homes and other buildings and left people desperate for food, water, heat and medicine.

The latest negotiations, held via video conference, were the fourth round involving higher-level officials from the two countries and the first in a week. The talks ended without a breakthrough after several hours, with an aide to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy saying the negotiators took "a technical pause" and planned to



Lynsey Addario / New York Times

**Residents embrace after salvaging some belongings from an apartment complex in the Obolon district of Kyiv, Ukraine, that was struck by artillery shells on Monday.**

meet again Tuesday.

The two sides had expressed some optimism in the past few days. Mykhailo Podolyak, the aide to Zelenskyy, tweeted that the negotiators would discuss "peace, ceasefire, immediate withdrawal of troops & security guarantees."

Previous discussions, held in person in Belarus, produced no

lasting humanitarian routes or agreements to end the fighting.

Overall, nearly all of the Russian military offensives remained stalled after making little progress over the weekend, according to a senior U.S. defense official who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the Pentagon's assessment. Russian troops were still

about 9 miles from the center of Kyiv, the official said.

The official said that Russian President Vladimir Putin's forces have launched more than 900 missiles but that Ukraine's airspace is still contested, with Russia not achieving total air superiority.

Overnight, air raid alerts sounded in cities and towns around the

country, from near the Russian border in the east to the Carpathian Mountains in the west, and fighting continued on the outskirts of Kyiv. Ukrainian officials said Russian forces shelled several suburbs of the capital.

Ukrainian authorities said two people were killed when the Russians struck an airplane factory in Kyiv, sparking a large fire. The Antonov factory is Ukraine's largest aircraft plant and produces many of the world's biggest cargo planes.

Russian artillery fire also hit a nine-story apartment building in the northern Obolonskyi district of the city, killing two more people, authorities said.

And a Russian airstrike near a Ukrainian checkpoint caused extensive damage to a downtown Kyiv neighborhood, killing one person, Ukraine's emergency agency said.

Kateryna Lot said she was in her apartment as her child did homework when they heard a loud explosion and ran to take shelter.

"The child became hysterical. Our windows and the balcony were shattered. Part of the floor fell down," she said. "It was very, very scary."

In an area outside Kyiv, Fox News reporter Benjamin Hall was injured while reporting and was hospitalized, the network said.

**REACHING SAFETY:** 2.8M Ukrainians have fled country as war continues

By Rafal Niedzielski and Justin Spike  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

PRZEMYSL, Poland — As Russia's war in Ukraine becomes a grim new reality for millions of Ukrainians, the tens of thousands who make the increasingly treacherous journey toward safety each day in the European Union are left with no sense of when, or if, they'll ever return home.

More than 2.8 million people have fled Ukraine in the wake of Russia's invasion, according to the U.N. refugee agency, the vast majority seeking refuge in Poland, which has taken in more than 1.7 million refugees in the last 19 days.

In the Polish border town of Przemysl, some of those fleeing, mostly women and children, are exhausted and express a simple wish that the war and violence would stop.

"All day crying from the pain of having to part with loved ones, with my husband, my parents," said Alexandra Beltuygova, 33, who fled from Dnipro, a city between the embattled metropolises of Kyiv and Mariupol.

"I understand that we may not see them. I wish this war would end," she said.

At a refugee center in Suceava in northern Romania, 28-year-old Lesia Ostrovska watched over her 1-year-old son as her daughter, who is 8, played nearby with other children displaced by the war.

"I left my husband, my father, my mother, my grandparents," said Ostrovska, who is from Cher-



Omar Marques / Getty Images

**Ukrainian refugees wait to enter the "Wardrobe of Good," an initiative offering free clothes created in collaboration with IKEA, Strabag and Diverse on Monday in Krakow, Poland.**

nivtsi in western Ukraine. "It's hard with kids, in the bus, here in this situation. We hope that the war is finished soon and we can go back home."

As the fighting, now in its third week, continues to exact a grievous human toll in Ukraine with Russian troops bombarding many of the country's most populous cities, the number of those crossing into the EU has begun to slowly wane in recent days.

In Hungary, where around 255,000 refugees have entered so far, only 9,000 people crossed the border with Ukraine on Sunday, compared to more than twice that March 1, according to police.

In Slovakia, where more than 200,000 people have fled, fewer than 9,000 crossed the border on Sunday, down from more than 12,000 four days earlier. In Poland, about 82,000 refugees were admitted, down from an earlier daily peak of around 129,000. Also Sunday, 14,475 Ukrainians entered Romania, down 13% compared to the previous day, border police said.

Gabriela Leu, spokesperson for

UNHCR in Romania, said it was difficult to determine what is causing the slowdown in the exodus from Ukraine, but said "I can see the possibility of this being something temporary."

"The situation is very fragile and very fluid. It's maybe more difficult for people to move, but it's just speculation," Leu said. "But the bottom line is that the numbers continue to grow."

Even as the pace of those leaving Ukraine has slowed, people fleeing the violence continued to arrive in large numbers in countries on Ukraine's western border.

In Przemysl, some recounted seeing military attacks on civilians, something that Russia continues to deny.

"I saw destroyed houses and fighting. I saw a lot of tanks when I was driving from Kyiv. I know that a house near us was completely destroyed this morning," said Inessa Armashova, 40, a resident of the Ukrainian capital of Kyiv. "Many people fled. But many cannot leave, sick children or sick elderly people."

**PROPAGANDA:** Russia says Putin ordered troops to refrain from storming big cities

By Ivan Nechepurenko and Marc Santora  
THE NEW YORK TIMES

ISTANBUL — Confronting a determined Ukrainian resistance and heavy losses on the battlefield, the Kremlin sought Monday to portray its failure to capture most major cities in Ukraine as an act of restraint.

Responding directly to U.S. and European statements that Russian forces were making "slow progress" in large cities, the Kremlin spokesman, Dmitri Peskov, said that President Vladimir Putin had ordered Russian troops to "refrain from storming large cities including Kyiv" before the invasion.

The reason Russia had not seized large cities was that "armed clashes in urban areas would inevitably lead to big losses among civilians," Peskov said. But he added that Russian forces could still do so because Ukrainian cities are "already practically encircled anyway."

Russia has bombarded Ukrainian towns and cities with ferocity, increasingly targeting civilian areas. Kharkiv, a thriving metropolis only three weeks ago where tens of thousands of students attended more than a dozen universities, is a wasteland. People seeking to flee fighting on the outskirts of Kyiv have been killed by Russian shelling, and hundreds of thousands are without food or clean water in the industrial hub

of Mariupol, where Russian forces have laid siege to the city from its outskirts.

U.S. officials have accused Russia of targeting civilians with cruel and indiscriminate weapons, including cluster munitions. Last week, Linda Thomas-Greenfield, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, told the U.N. Security Council: "We have seen videos of Russian forces moving exceptionally lethal weaponry into Ukraine, which has no place on the battlefield."

According to the Russian narrative, the human suffering in Ukraine is the work of Ukrainian "nationalists" and "Nazis" who use civilians as "human shields."

Peskov made his statements at the same time as Russian and Ukrainian negotiators were meeting for talks. Although both Russian and Ukrainian representatives indicated before the meeting that their positions were coming closer to one another — and President Volodymyr Zelenskyy of Ukraine said again that he was willing to meet with Putin — the Kremlin seemed intent on pushing Ukraine further to the brink in order to extract more concessions.

Making no mention of Russian losses or setbacks, Peskov insisted that the war was going as intended.

"All plans set out by the Russian leadership will be realized in full, within the approved time frame," he said.

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**SEEKING ASYLUM:** Russians flee as Putin silences opposing opinions

By Elliot Spagat and Eugene Garcia  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

SAN DIEGO — Maksim Derzhko calls it one of the most terrifying experiences of his life. A longtime opponent of Russian President Vladimir Putin, he flew from Vladivostok to the Mexican border city of Tijuana with his 14-year-old daughter and was in a car with seven other Russians. All that separated them from claiming asylum in the United States was a U.S. officer standing in traffic as vehicles inched toward inspection booths.

The emotions are "hard to put into words," he says. "It's fear. The unknown. It's really hard. We had no choice."

The gamble worked. After spending a day in custody, Derzhko was released to seek asylum with his daughter, joining thousands of Russians who have recently taken the same route to America.

Even before Russia's invasion of Ukraine led to punishing sanctions from the U.S. and its allies, the United States was already seeing an increase in Russian asylum-seekers. More than 8,600 Russians sought refuge on the U.S. border with Mexico from August through January —

35 times the 249 who did so during the same period a year earlier. Nine in 10 used official border crossings in San Diego.

Migrants from other former Soviet republics follow the same route in lower numbers, though some authorities are now anticipating more Ukrainians. The U.S. admitted a Ukrainian family of four on humanitarian grounds Thursday after twice blocking her.

Russians do not need visas to visit Mexico, unlike the U.S. Many fly from Moscow to Cancun, entering Mexico as tourists, and go to Tijuana, where they pool money to squeeze into cars they buy or rent. Adrenaline rushes as they approach San Diego's San Ysidro border crossing, where about 30,000 cars enter the United States daily.

Concrete barriers funnel 24 lanes of traffic to a border marked by a few rows of yellow reflector bumps — like the ones that divide highway lanes — before vehicles reach inspection booths. A buffer zone separates the bumps from the inspection booths.

Migrants just have to reach that buffer zone to claim asylum on U.S. soil. But U.S. officers stationed on the Mexican side of the border first try to block them, peering into ve-

hicles, motioning motorists to flash travel documents and stopping cars they deem suspicious.

"It was a very scary moment for all of us to experience," Derzhko, who crossed in August, said in an interview at his home in Los Angeles. "The children with us, everyone was very worried, very much."

Russians swap travel tips on social media and messaging services. One unidentified man narrated his trip from Moscow's Red Square to a San Diego hotel room, with layovers in Cancun and Mexico City. His YouTube video shows him confessing to nerves after buying a used car in Tijuana, but he says later in San Diego that everything went smoothly — despite two days in U.S. custody — and that others considering the journey shouldn't be afraid.

Russians are virtually guaranteed a shot at asylum if they touch U.S. soil, even though President Joe Biden has kept sweeping, Trump-era asylum restrictions. Border agents can deny migrants a chance to seek asylum on the grounds that it risks spreading COVID-19. But cost, logistics and strained diplomatic relations make it difficult to send people of some nationalities home.

**ZELENSKY:** Ukrainian president to virtually address Congress in efforts to shore up help

By Michael McAuliff and Dave Goldiner  
NEW YORK DAILY NEWS



**Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy will address Congress on Wednesday.**

Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has been invited to address the U.S. Congress via video on Wednesday as the charismatic leader cements his role as the inspirational face of resistance to the Russian invasion.

"The Congress, our country and the world are in awe of the people of Ukraine," said House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer in a statement Monday.

Although only lawmakers will be allowed to watch the unprecedented remote address in person, it is expected to be streamed live and aired on national news channels.

"We look forward to the privilege of welcoming President Zelenskyy's address to the House and Senate and to convey our support to the people of Ukraine as they bravely defend democra-

cy," the powerful lawmakers wrote to all 535 lawmakers.

The former actor-turned-politician has emerged as the unexpected global hero with his defiance towards Russia's brutal invasion of the sovereign nation.

He brought members of the European Parliament to tears with a plea for help and wowed Britain's House of Commons in similar video addresses.

Zelenskyy is expected to thank lawmakers for their support and plead with them to stay the course as outnumbered Ukrainian troops seek to repel the Russian invaders.

Congress recently approved \$13.6 billion in emergency military and humanitarian aid for Ukraine.