

Permanent Peoples' Tribunal Against Imperialist War and NATO (TPPCGIO). Second Sessions.

Ukraine Panel / Eastern Europe.- RESOLUTION

## INTRODUCTION

The Ukraine Panel has begun by drawing up a chronology to help understand the events that have unleashed an armed conflict and raised tensions in Eastern Europe to worrying heights.

On that basis the Panel has developed a preliminary account of the crisis underlining the main points.

In compiling the narrative the Panel identified three planes of analysis, each one framing a "war objective" or a particular enemy:

1. First, the political conflict culminating in the expulsion of the legally-elected President of Ukraine, Viktor Yanukovich, and his replacement by a government subservient to Western interests.
2. Following up the coup d'état, unleashing of repression by the new government against the opposition, with the attendant consequences of increased sectarian violence and the emergence of secessionist movements in Novorossiya and war in Donbass.
3. Fitting the Ukraine crisis into the framework of a strategy of attrition against Russia by the imperial powers through NATO.

Alongside this preliminary narrative, the Panel has identified some occurrences or activities as decisive elements in the course of events. The Panel has documented each of these elements and contextualised them in a list which clearly identifies the agents responsible, with ample documentary evidence supporting the accusation.

All these elements have been incorporated in turn in a table of agents/aggressions that presents the standard sequence (criminalisation—creation of an enemy—isolation, and destruction of the enemy), each pointing to the war goal pursued on each of the three analytical planes noted above: the legitimate government of Ukraine, resistance to the coup d'état and Russia as the ultimate strategic enemy. The heading of the element appearing in each box leads to the relevant information sheet. The updated table can be viewed here:

<https://forocontralaguerra.org/portal-del-tppcgio/segundas-sesiones/mesas-de-trabajo/4-ucrania-este-de-europa/tabla-actoresagresiones-ucrania/>

The Panel has identified some other elements for which headings are included in the table but for which the supporting documentation is not yet available.

During the Second Sessions, a total of 11 people came forward to join in the Panel's work, as a result of which some additional elements were incorporated in the initial narrative. Since the Tribunal is a permanent one, the Panel has left room to keep filling in the knowledge data base, which it has made available to anyone wishing to use it.

The Panel also drew up the final Account, a seven-part document which sets out the various elements comprising the Specific Resolution. It appears as Annex 1 of this Resolution.

During the debates at this meeting, both within the Panel and at the Plenary Session, members set out the points of indictment in this Specific Resolution in the "Conclusions" section. In addition, the

Panel has clearly identified the chief culprits of that criminal aggression and exposed them to public scrutiny with a brief mention of the actions for which they should be held to account, in the "Indictments" section put to the Plenary Session for approval as condemnations in the General Resolution from the Tribunal's Second Session.

## CONCLUSIONS

- The Ukraine crisis may have been sparked by a struggle between two local elites, but it was deliberately fuelled by the USA to sabotage the Russian initiative to create a common Eurasian economic area, using as excuse Russia's refusal to go along with its strategy of destroying Syria. Incapable of forming an alternative discourse, the EU has slavishly followed the diktat of the USA to draw Ukraine into the western orbit.
- To this end the US and EU authorities did not hesitate to brazenly interfere in Ukraine's internal affairs, blatantly supporting the opposition to the legitimate government and destabilising its political and social system in flagrant violation of the UN Charter.
- To achieve their goal, the elites in the US and EU countries have resorted to all kinds of devices, including operations by foreign services, "democracy promotion" foundations, public appearances by political figures in support of opposition activists during the riots, and a large-scale campaign of disinformation and psychological warfare to gull their populations.
- Among the main criminal activities are the financing, arming and training of ultra-nationalist paramilitary groups ("Banderists", followers of Stepan Bandera who collaborated with the Nazis during their occupation and genocide in the USSR), to provoke bloody violence as a means of pressuring the government.
- The political crisis, initially a confrontation of supporters and opponents of a EU Association Agreement, was triggered by the intransigence of the opposition, which refused to accept an agreement—approved by the EU—to postpone signature of the accord pending negotiations with Russia.
- The deaths in the Maidan square (over 60) were perpetrated by mercenaries, among them Georgians and Ukrainian neo-Nazis. It was the Bandera groups that invaded the Supreme Rada and used threats to force the resignation of the legitimate President Yanukovich, in a *de facto* coup d'état.
- Despite all this, the USA and the EU had no qualms about recognizing the new government, thus accepting its accession by means of a coup in yet another violation of the UN Charter.
- The new authorities unleashed a wave of repression, with genocidal connotations, against minorities, especially Russian-speaking, and against popular left organizations and those opposing the coup d'état.
- The formation of self-defence forces in Crimea and the Donbass was a legitimate act for protection of the majority populations in these areas. The situation was settled in Crimea following a referendum in which the population voted overwhelmingly for reunion with Russia; in the case of Donetsk and Lugansk, proposals for a referendum on federalisation were confronted by a military campaign directed from Kiev, which developed into a cruel war on the Donbass.
- In pursuit of their revanchist campaign, the new government encouraged uncontrolled action by the same Banderist groups that had helped it into power. Their criminal acts have included massacres in Odessa, Mariupol and elsewhere, and also punitive operations against resisting populations, which have earned them the label of "punishment battalions".

- The Kiev government has connived with Banderist groups, sanctioning ever more provocative military actions and legitimising them by integrating them in the forces of the Interior Ministry.
- The shooting-down of flight MH17 could not have been perpetrated by the Donetsk self-defence forces given the weaponry in their possession; nonetheless, Western sources claim that they are undoubtedly responsible, without waiting for the findings of the investigation or allowing Russia to take part in it.
- The impasse in the Donbass war has prompted up to three truces, with Russian mediation. The Minsk II accords have been systematically violated by Kiev, and Russia is routinely accused by the West of breaching the agreement, when its role has been one of intermediary and not a party to the accords.
- The crisis has unleashed a recurring campaign of sanctions, decreed by the USA, the EU and other countries, against Russia as the supposed responsible party, whose consequences have to be borne by the Russian people.
- The entire Ukrainian crisis—but particularly the reunion of Crimea with Russia and the Donbass war—has been utilized by NATO to conjure the Russian bogey-man and so justify the largest campaign of rearmament and military deployment in Eastern Europe since the Cold War.
- The Ukrainian crisis is thus a part of the strategy pursued by US elites and institutions, with the backing of their NATO allies and against the will of their peoples, to tighten the encirclement of Russia as the only player on the geopolitical board capable of matching it in nuclear capacity.
- The strategy of tension-building fostered by NATO has put the entire planet at extreme risk—any wrong decision could trigger nuclear holocaust.
- It is worth comparing the different attitudes adopted by the West and by Russia, the one aggressive and mendacious, the other prudent and open to dialogue, despite the seriousness of the events taking place on its own borders.
- Shocking and criminal is the role played by mouthpieces of the worst kind of war propaganda, and taken up by mainstream Western media, in distorting and misrepresenting the information received by people in Western countries, justifying acts of destabilisation wrought by their governments, and blaming the victims for acts of violence that they have promoted. What their action amounts to is a return to the Cold War discourse, and the denial of any possibility of developing movements of solidarity among peoples and growing a culture of peace.
- Western governments are clearly striving to rewrite history, deliberately concealing the central role of the Soviet army in liberating Europe from the Nazi terror and whitewashing the latter, while accusing the Red Army of atrocities akin to those perpetrated by the Nazis as a means of legitimising their connivance with the forces of the extreme right.
- In this scenario, we should point out the part played by Spain as an unconditional follower of US political diktats and an obedient supplier of military materiel for attrition against Russia, in a war that bears no relation to the needs of the Spanish people.

The list of persons bearing some responsibility for the outbreak and spread of the crisis in the Ukraine is a very long one; in this section, the Panel wishes to point the finger particularly at those persons, not Ukrainian nationals, who have blatantly and criminally interfered in favour of Western interests. The chief Ukrainian culprits are listed in Annex 2.

The Panel accuses the following persons of the acts indicated:

- José Manuel Durao Barroso, President of the EU Commission, who stated that Ukraine could not sign an Association Agreement with the EU while being a member of the Customs Union. This argument was instrumental in provoking the Euromaidan riots, with the aim of getting the agreement signed, isolating Russia and inserting NATO in the Ukraine, at whatever cost.
- Victoria Nuland, Spokesperson for the US State Department. She appeared in Maidan Square on 11 December 2013 to show her support for the opponents of the Yanukovich government, an act of interference, and intrigued with Ambassador Pyatt to draw up a strategy to achieve a change of government on 28 January 2014.
- US Senator John McCain, who made a speech to the opposition calling for a revolt.
- The EU Representative for Foreign Affairs Catherine Ashton, who was perfectly well aware that the Maidan snipers belonged not to the Yanukovich government but to the opposition, but refused to say so.
- Geoffrey Pyatt, US Ambassador in the Ukraine. In a telephone conversation with Victoria Nuland on 28 January 2014, they discussed who would be the best candidate for President and the strategy for installing him in office. In that conversation Victoria Nuland disparaged the idea of EU mediation in the crisis, with the words “fuck the EU”.
- Anders Fogh Rasmussen, ex-Secretary General of NATO. He promoted the unwarranted return to a policy of aggression towards Russia starting at the Wales summit. He was later appointed presidential adviser to Poroshenko, the new Ukrainian President.
- Jens Stoltenberg, current Secretary General of NATO. He has been one of the most extreme promoters of NATO's eastward push in the campaign of attrition against Russia, and he has organised the rearming and training of the Ukrainian army with a view to early incorporation in NATO.
- Phillip Breedlove, NATO Supreme Commander from May 2013 to May 2016. He conspired against the authority of President Obama himself to force greater military involvement against Russia in the Ukraine crisis.
- Barack Obama, as the person with chief and final responsibility for the strategy of rearmament and attrition, for deployment of the Anti-missile Shield and the new nuclear bombs in the European theatre, placing the entire planet at risk. For the violation of the treaties on limitation of tactical weapons in Europe and for the adoption on 21 September 2014 of a billion-dollar plan to manufacture a further 400 intercontinental ballistic missiles, 12 submarines and 100 strategic nuclear attack bombers.

## ANNEX 1: The "narrative" on the Ukraine crisis

### 1. Background

The history of Ukraine is inseparable from that of Russia itself. The first state formed by the Eastern Slavs, known as Kievan Rus, came into being in the 9th century, while the state of Russia was first formed in the 10th century. The fates of Russia and Ukraine have been closely intertwined over the centuries, in the modern age at the cost of a shrinking Ukrainian and an expanding Russian territory.

Ukraine was one of the founding republics of the Soviet Union in 1922, when it was expanded eastwards into the Novorossiia region. During the civil war that followed the Revolution, Poland occupied western Ukraine, which territory was recovered during the Second World War in the wake of the Nazi occupation. During the war, collaborationist groups, led by Stepan Bandera, joined the Wehrmacht and the SS and carried out some of the worst acts of punishment and extermination on the Soviet population. In 1954 Khrushchev decided to transfer the Crimea from the Russian Socialist Republic to the Ukraine, given that it was not contiguous to the former.

Ukraine achieved independence following the break-up of the Soviet Union in 1991. The Russian and Ukrainian governments agreed to retain Sevastopol, in the Crimea, as the main base for the Russian fleet, guaranteed until 2042.

Following independence, Ukraine suffered a sharp economic slow-down, losing 60% of its GDP in a decade, with five-digit inflation. Dissatisfied with economic conditions, and with the widespread crime, corruption and privatisations, the Ukrainians organised protests and strikes.

The economy recovered between 2000 and 2007, with average annual GDP growth of 7.5%. Following the 2008 financial crisis, a second recession ensued, with GDP dropping by 15% in 2009 before stabilising.

Ukraine has 46.2 million inhabitants, 77.8% of whom are ethnic Ukrainians, with sizeable minorities of Russians, Byelorussians, Romanians and Tartars. Ukrainian is the only official language, although Russian is also widely spoken. A majority of the population declare themselves atheists. The dominant religion is Orthodox Christianity.

### 2. Postponement of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the European Union

The Association Agreement between Ukraine and the European Union was the product of more than two decades of negotiations and pressures from the EU and the USA. Its purpose is to prevent Ukraine joining the Euro-Asian Customs Union with Russia, Byelorussia and Kazakhstan, and most importantly to bring it into NATO, as a means of reaching militarily into the heart of Russia and denying it access to its most important military base (Sevastopol, Crimea) in the Black Sea.

Thus, in these negotiations, whereas Ukraine sought to reactivate its economy, what the EU sought was political, economic and military control of Ukraine, and above all to cut off its economic, political and cultural relations with Russia.

The largest step towards the agreement came in 2004 following the so-called "orange revolution", a series of protests organised by extreme right-wing Ukrainian nationalist groups and Ukrainian-Americans descended from Nazi collaborators sheltered by the CIA during the Cold War. Following an intense international campaign, the pro-Western candidate Yushchenko prevailed over the pro-

Russian Yanukovich. A number of conflicts with Russia ensued over the price of natural gas, leading to periodic shortages in other European countries.

However, negotiations stalled in 2010 after the decisive electoral defeat of Yulya Tymoshenko and the formation of a new government by Viktor Yanukovich. Yanukovich resumed negotiations with Russia in pursuit of a formula that would allow both the agreement with the EU and cooperation with Ukraine's principal trading partners in the Byelorussia-Kazakhstan-Russian customs union. In February 2013 the President of the European Commission, José Manuel Durão Barroso, declared that "a country cannot belong to the Customs Union and be in the European Union's free trade area at the same time".

While exerting all the pressure at its disposal, the European Union laid down a number of conditions for conclusion of the agreement, including legal changes and political advantages for the opposition. Ukraine's Supreme Rada accepted some of these, but eventually in November 2013 the Ukrainian government postponed signing of the Free Trade Agreement with the European Union (EU) pending the results of a trade commission between Ukraine, the European Union and Russia to deal with common problems of trade and security.

### 3. Coup d'État in Kiev

Following an intense international campaign by institutions, governments and above all media, violent protests began in Kiev. The protests were initially joined by various sectors of the population unhappy with the performance of Yanukovich's Party of Regions. The fascist group Pravy Sektor was one of the chief organisers of the movement in Kiev and instigator of the riots, supported by the extreme right parliamentary part Svoboda and the Ukrainian churches. Both movements had historically received support from the United States.

In November 2013 the Ukrainian population was virtually split between the advocates of an association with Europe and those who preferred to associate with the Customs Union. The main source of support for joining the EU was Kiev (around 75%) and western Ukraine (81%). Supporters elsewhere ranged from 56% in central Ukraine to 30% in the south and Crimea and 18% in the east, the latter largely Russian-speaking.

In January 2014, the protests intensified. Kiev's Independence Square was occupied day and night; elaborate barricades were set up and protesters first began to use sticks, shields and helmets, escalating later to firearms, which were used against police and counter-demonstrators, and numerous police were captured. Dozens were killed. On 20 February, extreme-right snipers started to indiscriminately shoot demonstrators and police. That day more than 60 were killed. Media world-wide showed footage of the events, blaming the Ukrainian government. However, independent investigators have shown that the Maidan massacre was planned by the backers of the coup.

In fact the people involved themselves revealed that the riots were intended. A recording was made public of a conversation between the EU's head of foreign relations, Catherine Ashton, and the Estonian Foreign Minister Urmas Paet, in which the latter stated that "There is now stronger and stronger understanding that behind the snipers, it was not Yanukovich, but it was somebody from the new coalition". Paet acknowledged that the recording was genuine.

With EU mediation, on 21 February the Yanukovich government signed an agreement with the opposition which included the formation of a coalition government, early elections and constitutional reform. Despite this agreement, however, on the morning of 22 February opposition forces took advantage of the absence of President Yanukovich from the Parliament to occupy the principal institutions with headquarters in Kiev.

With the parliament occupied by paramilitary forces of Pravy Sektor and Svoboda, the President was removed for "failure to perform his functions", with the vote in favour of 328 out of 450 deputies. In voting, members of parliament were under menaces from the governing party and due legal process was ignored in removing the President.

The new government's Interior Ministry issued a warrant for the arrest of Viktor Yanukovich, whom it accused of culpability for the killings during the fascist rebellion in Kiev.

Russia refused to recognise the new Poroshenko government, insisting that Viktor Yanukovich was the only legitimate power in the Ukraine, and taking the position that none of the decisions of the Rada were valid since the legitimate President had been overthrown by a coup d'état. Nevertheless, the EU countries, NATO and the USA all immediately recognised the new government.

The Poroshenko government immediately signed up to the disputed Ukraine-EU Association Agreement. It is important to note that the agreement obliges the Ukraine to undertake economic, judicial and financial reforms to bring its policies into line with the European Union. For its part the EU provides Ukraine with political and financial support, access to European research and knowledge, and preferential access to EU markets. The agreement also implies Ukraine's convergence with EU security and defence policies.

#### 4. Crimea: independence and return to Russia

Following Yanukovich's ouster, authorities in Eastern and Southern Ukraine called for resistance and accused the opposition of breaking the agreement that had been signed with the deposed President on 21 February.

Early on 27 February a group of armed men belonging to the self-defence forces took over the Presidency building and the Parliament of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, without meeting any resistance. That day, the same parliament announced a regional referendum on the political future of the Crimea region.

On 1 March, the demonstrations against the new coup-installed government in Kiev spread to the Donbass, a largely Russian-speaking industrial region. In the meantime, Crimea's prime minister authorised the Russian army to enter the peninsula and keep order until the referendum could be held.

On 16 March the referendum was held among the million-and-a-half inhabitants of Crimea. With 83.1% participation, the option to rejoin Russia won 96.77% of the votes. A total of 135 observers from 23 countries announced to the media that the referendum had proceeded normally and peacefully.

In a ceremony held in the Kremlin on 18 March, the leaders of the Crimean Republic, Sergei Axionov and Vladimir Konstantinov, Russia's President Putin and the Mayor of Sebastopol, Alexei Chaly, signed the treaty of union with the Russian Federation.

With Crimea's independence and adhesion, Russia was subjected to diplomatic and economic sanctions by the USA, the EU and the Ukrainian government, which were answered in kind.

Also, Ukraine proceeded to cut off Crimea, disconnecting communications and electricity supplies via the only terrestrial link. The disconnect was wrought both by the sanctions and restrictions imposed by the Ukrainian government and through sabotage by neo-Nazi groups with the latter's consent.

## 5. Massacres in Odessa, Mariupol and elsewhere

On 2 May 2014, 42 people were killed in the streets in attacks with Molotov cocktails and firearms by Ukrainian Nazis of the Right Sector on the Trade Union House where pro-Russian demonstrators had taken refuge following confrontations with the supporters of the Kiev regime. Scenes of utmost cruelty ensued when fascist paramilitaries finished off wounded demonstrators by bashing their heads in to cries of "glory to Ukraine".

Russian President Vladimir Putin's spokesman accused the Kiev authorities and their Western backers of being directly responsible for the "bloodbath" in the city of Odessa. To date, the Ukrainian authorities have initiated no serious investigation to determine who was responsible for the massacre.

On 9 May, as part of the "anti-terrorist" operation mounted by the new government, Kiev troops and paramilitaries from the fascist militias attacked demonstrators in Mariupol who were celebrating World War Two victory day. The forces from Kiev set siege to the police headquarters that had been occupied by members of the anti-fascist resistance. The headquarters was attacked by armoured vehicles and heavy weapons and set on fire, accompanied by indiscriminate shooting, leaving over 20 dead.

Other similar massacres were perpetrated in the course of the government crackdown on the resistance in the Donbass region, with fascist militias at the forefront.

## 6. The war in Donbass

The war in the Donbass region in eastern Ukraine began in March 2014 following protests by the Russian-speaking population demanding autonomy in reaction to the coup in Kiev.

Groups from the Ukrainian police and army sided with the protesters against the new Kiev government or later deserted with their weapons, setting up anti-fascist "self-defence" groups alongside civilians and international volunteers, mostly from Russia. This process intensified following the adhesion of Crimea and Sebastopol to the Russian Federation.

On 8 April the Kiev government set in motion an "anti-terrorist" operation against the anti-fascist resistance. This unleashed massive bombings of civilian targets, while battalions of fascists and mercenaries (Aidar, Azov, Donbass, etc.) pillaged, tortured and executed any inhabitant of the region who fell into their hands, as punishment. Some of these battalions were directly financed and trained by the USA, and all would eventually be absorbed into the Interior Ministry's forces in an attempt to legitimise them. The operation failed thanks to the Ukrainian army's refusal to take part in the repression, so that the initiative was left to the fascist militias and mercenaries.

On 12 April 2014, Donetsk and Lugansk declared independence and the formation of the Federal Republic of Donbass. The escalation of the conflict brought an armed clash between the self-defence forces of the Peoples' Republics of Donetsk and Lugansk and the Ukrainian army.

In conversations at Geneva between the USA, Russia, the EU and Ukraine on 17 April, the parties agreed on the disarming of all militias in Ukraine and an amnesty, a reform of the Constitution and the dispatch of OSCE observers. Ukraine failed to observe the agreement, while sanctions against Russia were increased, despite Putin's support for elections in Ukraine and his opposition to referendums on secession. These referendums were held on 1 May, with massive participation and 90% support, but they were not recognised by Kiev or the Western countries.

On 6 June, Putin and Poroshenko met for the first time, and a cease-fire was called. The situation was unstable, with fierce resistance by the Donbass self-defence forces, until on 17 July Malaysian Airlines flight MH17 was shot down (298 dead), an act of which the self-defence forces were

accused. The Western powers claimed that a ground-to-air missile had been used, without a shred of proof. There were numerous indications, including analyses by former US officials and a BBC documentary, that the responsibility lay with the Ukrainian ground or air forces. The EU imposed fresh sanctions and an arms embargo on Russia, while NATO prepared to deploy a rapid intervention force on its eastern flank.

By autumn 2014 the insurgents had managed to recover much of the ground they had controlled prior to the Ukrainian army's offensive. On 5 September 2014, the Minsk Protocol was signed, establishing the withdrawal of heavy weaponry and a cease-fire to be overseen by the OSCE. This cease-fire was violated on numerous occasions.

On 12 February, following a further outbreak of hostilities, the Minsk II agreements were concluded by Russia, Ukraine, France, Germany and the Donbass republics, calling for a cease-fire. The thirteen points in the agreement included the withdrawal of heavy weaponry by both sides, complete control by Ukraine of its borders with Russia in the area of conflict, and recognition of the status of the federated republics of the Donbass in the Ukrainian constitution.

During the summer of 2015 there were repeated violations of the Minsk II accords; Kiev did not withdraw its heavy weaponry from the front, from whence there were occasional bombardments of the besieged cities. On 2 November John Kerry himself declared that Donbass should be granted special status and that the heavy weaponry should be withdrawn from south-eastern Ukraine.

A year after the Minsk II agreements, in February 2016, Kiev persists in its policy of gaining time and avoiding reforms that could acknowledge the identity of the eastern provinces, and continues to use heavy weapons. Meanwhile, the western powers keep on accusing Russia, which is not a party in the conflict, of violating these agreements.

According to the UN, by December 2015 the war had produced at least 9,000 dead and 20,700 wounded, while the parties daily accuse each other of violating the truce. The Ukrainian government is currently bringing back heavy weaponry to the area in conflict, and clashes are increasing.

According to a recent report by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, between 16 November 2015 and 15 February 2016—i.e. while the Minsk agreements were in force—extra-judicial killings and forced disappearances continued in Ukrainian territory (around 1000 people, whom the Ukrainian government is in no hurry to find). The UN mission has concluded that undoubtedly secret prisons and torture are not isolated incidents in Ukraine. They are part and parcel of the system set up by the new State, and of its policy.

## 7. Harassing Russia

It is important to note that, as in past "colour revolutions" or destabilisation operations in the Caucasus, the western intervention in Ukraine—led as always by the USA—is designed to ever tighten the encirclement of Russia.

The activities that have been coming to light reveal the desperate need of the west to limit Russia's freedom of movement, pushing NATO right up to its borders. This movement, which clearly violates the Reagan/Gorbachov agreements on dismantling of the Warsaw Pact, has been going on for a quarter of a century, reaching paroxysm with the aim—utterly unacceptable to any Russian government with the slightest sense of sovereignty—of gaining control of the Crimea and Russia's principal strategic base.

The USA already suffered a setback in its Middle Eastern policy when it came up against Russia's refusal to follow its policy of demolishing the structure of the Syrian state. Since then, Washington's

strategy has ever been aimed at weakening the Russian state.

Quite aside from other geostrategic issues or control of energy sources and transit, the irresistible rise of the BRICS countries' economies clearly presents a challenge to US supremacy. Given its inability to challenge these new competitors economically, the USA feels compelled to pursue supremacy by the only means at its command—i.e. military force.

On that plane, Russia is obviously the only power with a nuclear arsenal comparable to the US's and is hence the enemy to beat. And that is why the crisis in Ukraine was used to force an outcome favourable to US interests, utterly unconcerned with the human and political costs of its action. Rather than trying to mediate between the parties, it has favoured the most corrupt, fascistic sectors, helping a docile government into power without any thought for the serious risk to social peace entailed by letting loose the extreme right.

The USA has accused Russia of all sorts of things, precisely the kind of things that they rather than Russia do—e.g. mount destabilisation operations. It is obvious that Russia has a legitimate interest in maintaining stability and room for manoeuvre in the countries bordering it. Moreover, Ukraine has a large population of Russian extraction.

In this crisis President Putin has been extremely prudent. The destabilisation and coup promoted by the west was a flagrant provocation for Russia. Imagine an operation of that on US borders! Putin's response has been consistently measured, ever seeking to avoid escalation. The loss of Crimea, historically a part of the country and vital for its security, was obviously quite unacceptable to Russia. And in fact the procedure for its recovery was a model of consideration, carried out with the greatest tact and without provoking conflict.

Russia's involvement in the Donbass war has been very limited, basically confined to providing moral and humanitarian support for the self-defence forces genuinely seeking to reach a peaceful settlement between the parties, despite the open hostility of the Kiev government.

As a result, all the western propaganda has been devoted to demonising Russia, accusing it of responsibility for the Ukraine crisis and the war in Donbass. And the USA has seized this as an excellent opportunity to embark on the greatest campaign of rearmament and military deployment in Eastern Europe since the cold war.

As well as tightening the encirclement of Russia, this strategy demands increased military spending from US allies, continuing the trend over the last decade of deluging the planet with weaponry in a policy of controlled chaos which benefits the USA in two ways—it is the biggest arms seller while remaining better able to withstand the conflict, secure in its continental isolation.

The irresponsible and reckless strategy pursued by the US and its NATO allies has brought Europe and humankind to the brink of a nuclear war, with disastrous consequences given the degree of automation in the control of strategic arsenals, such that some unforeseen event, however apparently insignificant, could trigger an uncontrolled response.

Finally, we should draw attention to our own country's follow-my-leader role in this game of dares, slavishly following the US in its foreign policy and fully on board with the rearming of NATO's eastern flank. This involves, among other things:

- a part in the tripling of fighter-bombers stationed in the Baltic countries
- allowing use of the base at Rota for the stationing of destroyers for the Antimissile Shield, the land-based part of which is now being deployed in Romania and Poland
- allowing use of the Moron base for stationing of the US Marines rapid deployment force, in addition to serving as a strategic supply point for US forces in transit to Eastern Europe

- command and supply of up to 3/5 of the manpower for the Very High Readiness Joint Task Force (VJTF), designed to be ready for deployment on 48 hours alert throughout 2016, and currently taking part in the Anakonda manoeuvres in Poland
- the Combined Air Operations Centre (CAOC) at Torrejón, covering all the south-eastern flank.

## ANNEX 2: Ukrainians indicted by the Panel

- Arseni Yatseniuk, former prime minister of Ukraine and foreign minister in the second Yanukovich government, for betraying his people and his country by organising an armed coup for the benefit of foreign powers
- Pyotr Poroshenko, oligarch and president of Ukraine since 2014. For heading a government that came to power through a violent coup d'état. And as the person ultimately responsible for carrying out a military operation against his own people, in which sectors of the population have been isolated, deprived of any social support and subjected to constant bombardments merely for belonging to an ethnic minority.
- Alexandr Turchinov, secretary of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine, leader of the “Popular Front” fraction in Ukraine's Supreme Rada, for leading the opposition that carried out the violent coup d'état, sponsored by foreign powers, leading to the removal of the legitimate government; and for heading the provisional government and starting up military operations against the ethnic minority in the south-east of the country.
- Dmitro Yarosh, former leader of the far-right nationalist organisation “Right Sector” in 2013-2015 during the coup, responsible for numerous violent deaths, gross attacks and disappearings as shock troops during the coup d'état.
- Valeriy Giletey, Ukrainian defence minister, for planning and execution of military operations against the Russian-speaking ethnic minority, labelled an "anti-terrorist operation" in Ukraine.
- Stepan Poltorak, defence minister since 14 October 2014, Commander of the Interior Army (28 February—12 March 2014) and Commander of the National Guard (19 March—14 October 2014). Between 31 May and 1 September 2014 he ordered artillery bombardments against civil infrastructure, causing 45 deaths.
- Valentin Nalivaichenko, Head of the SBU (Ukrainian Security Services) from 24 February 2014 to 18 June 2015 and previously delegate of the Supreme Rada of Ukraine for control of the SBU, for acting as CIA agent in directing Ukraine's secret services after the coup.
- Vasiliy Gritsak, lieutenant-general of police and currently Coordinator of the SBU Anti-Terrorist Centre. There have been numerous allegations about him for repeated false accusations against Russia, such as the attempt to blow up a SBU prison or being behind the Brussels attacks in 2016.
- Andrey Parubiy, president of Ukraine's Supreme Rada, 7th Session. In 1991 he, along with Oleh Tyahnybok, was one of the founders of the social-nationalist Svoboda party. He was appointed secretary of security and national defence of Ukraine by the interim coup-installed president Turchinov. He has been President of the Supreme Rada of Ukraine since 14 April 2016.
- Arsen Avakov, Ukrainian Foreign Minister in the Yatsenyuk government. An oligarch, number 67 in the Forbes list (data from 2008) and former Governor of Kharkov, he has been repeatedly accused of corruption, to the extent of having appeared in Interpol's wanted list. He continues to hold the position of Foreign Minister in Vladimir Groisman's cabinet.
- Anton Gerashenko, adviser at the Ukrainian Interior Ministry. Was involved in the creation of the National Guard, and in December 2014 he announced the setting-up of the “Mirotvorets” web portal with a list of over 9000 “terrorists and collaborators”, many of whom later turned up dead in suspicious circumstances.
- Oleh Tyahnybok, member of the Supreme Rada and leader of the ultra-right, ultra-nationalist Ukrainian Svoboda party, which the EU has described as extremist and xenophobic, in conflict with European values.
- Oleg Lyashko, president of the Radical Party fraction of the Supreme Rada of Ukraine, for his part in the creation and arming of the “Azov” National Guard regiment (responsible for

the Mariupol killings and other war crimes). He has presented a bill proposing that demonstrators calling for closer relations with Russia and no to the European Union be considered separatists and collaborators with the "occupants", and prohibition of the Communist Party and Yanukovich's Party of Regions.

- The “Aidar” Battalion, absorbed into the Defence Ministry, and commanders past (Sergey Melnichuk) and present (Evgeniy Ptashnik), for their responsibility in the vile crimes committed against the civil population of Donbass.
- The “Donbass Battalion” (Dniepropetrovsk), incorporated in the National Guard on orders from the Interior Ministry, and its commander Semyon Semyonchenko, for their part in the heinous crimes against the civilian population of Donbass.
- Igor Kolomoiskiy, oligarch and financier of the “Donbass” battalion, for his part in the creation and maintenance of a fascistic paramilitary group that acts as a force of shock troops and engages in large-scale military actions. This battalion was subsequently absorbed into the Interior Ministry so as to be able to use heavy weaponry.