



Putin Delivers Address on Decision To Recognize Breakaway Republics in Ukraine

Feb. 22—In a televised address delivered shortly after signing the decrees grant recognition to the Donetsk and Luhansk People’s Republics, Russian President Vladimir Putin effectively charged the US with aiming to break Russia up into pieces. “Ok, you do not want to have a friend and ally like us, but why depicting us as an enemy then? The answer is one. Our political regime or something else does not matter. They simply do not want to see such a large and independent country as Russia,” Putin said, adding that this answered all questions. “This is a source of traditional US policy on the Russian track.

Putin also said that Ukraine will serve as a NATO foothold for a strike against Russia, should it join the alliance. “I will explain, that the US strategic planning documents [...] stipulate an option of the so-called preemptive strike on enemy’s missile systems. And we know who the main enemy for the US and NATO is. It is Russia. NATO documents officially, straightforwardly declare Russia as the main threat for Euro-Atlantic security. And Ukraine will serve as a foothold for such a strike,” he said.

Even without alliance membership, Ukraine is already in practical terms already integrated into its military command structures, Putin continued. “This means that the command of the Ukrainian armed forces and even separate formations and units can be directly exercised from NATO headquarters. The United States and NATO have already begun shamelessly exploiting Ukrainian territory as a theater of potential military operations,” he said.

“We see how the Kiev regime is being persistently beefed up militarily,” Putin stressed. “The United States alone has channeled billions of US dollars for these purposes since 2014, including the deliveries of armaments, ammunition and specialist training. In recent months, Western weapons have been continuously flowing into Ukraine demonstratively as seen by the entire world,” he said.

The activity of the Ukrainian armed forces and special

services is directed by foreign advisers, Putin continued. “We know well about that. Military contingents of NATO countries have been present actually constantly on the territory of Ukraine under various pretexts in recent years,” the Russian president said. “Regular joint drills [of Ukraine and NATO] have a clear anti-Russia bias,” Putin pointed out. In fact, the Kiev regime has already passed a law permitting the presence of foreign forces in Ukraine for ten major exercises in 2022.

Earlier in the speech, Putin provided a historical overview in which he argued that Ukraine has never had real statehood any time in its modern history, particularly from the time of the October 1917 Revolution and the Civil War of 1922. Without actually using the term, Putin described what amounts to the creation of a failed state in Ukraine after the fall of the Soviet Union, one that has never had true sovereignty, particularly in the realm of the economy which has been dominated by external interests only concerned with removing as much loot as they can from the country. As examples, Putin cited the shutting down of major Soviet-era industrial complexes such as the Nikolayev shipyard on the Black Sea, which has gone out of business; the Antonov aviation concern which hasn’t produced an aircraft since 2016; Yuzhmash, a factory specialising in missile and space equipment, which is bankrupt; and the Kremenchug Steel Plant, which is also bankrupt.

“This situation begs the question: poverty, lack of opportunity, and lost industrial and technological potential—is this the pro-Western civilisational choice they have been using for many years to fool millions of people with promises of heavenly pastures?” Putin said. “It all came down to a Ukrainian economy in tatters and an outright pillage of the country’s citizens, while Ukraine itself was placed under external control, directed not only from the Western capitals, but also on the ground, as the saying goes, through an entire network of foreign advisers, NGOs and other institutions present in Ukraine.”

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