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# THE UKRAINIAN WEEKLY

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## Ukraine sees breakup among television news broadcasters

**Suspilne announces it will broadcast beyond telemarathon**

by Roman Tymotsko

LVIV – The Ukrainian public broadcaster Suspilne announced on May 21 that it has begun broadcasting news on the Pershyi nationwide television channel separate from its programming on the United News Telemarathon.

The move is a significant step for television news in Ukraine. Shortly after Russia launched a full-scale war on the country in February 2022, six of the country's top channels came together to produce round-the-clock programming shared by all participants of the what is called the telemarathon. The project was created in cooperation with high-ranking government officials.

The project's supporters argued that the war necessitated a joint response from television news in Ukraine. Its critics have long said the project excluded several major players known to be critical of the government, and they argued that Ukrainians need different viewpoints and information, even during the war.

Mykola Chernotytskyi, the head of Suspilne's Managing Board, clarified to Ukrains-

ska Pravda that the public broadcasting company remains part of the telemarathon, but it will no longer be represented in its time slots.

Suspilne said it will enhance the telemarathon's news block by broadcasting on the Pershyi channel with additional content from Suspilne News and Suspilne Studio, including in-house produced documentaries and investigations, while continuing to share content with all participants of the telemarathon.

"The Suspilne team is expanding the production of its own content on the Pershyi channel as an integral part of the United News #UArazom telethon. For our part, we are ready to strengthen our broadcasting as much as possible, share high-quality documentaries, regional stories and investigations, and use the capabilities of the largest network of correspondents in Ukraine across the country," Mr. Chernotytskyi said.

Svitlana Ostapa, chair of Suspilne's Supervisory Board told Detector Media

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## White House pressured to change policy to let Ukraine hit military targets in Russia



General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine

**Ukrainian Marines patrol the waterways of their country on May 23.**

by Mark Raczkiewycz

CHICAGO – Top U.S. officials and lawmakers this week have mounted added pressure on the White House to reverse its policy on not allowing weapons that the U.S. has given Ukraine for it to launch attacks on Russian targets inside the country.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, House of Representatives Speaker Mike Johnson (R-La.) and House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Michael McCaul have urged President Joe Biden and his national security adviser Jake Sullivan to alter official U.S. policy.

After a sobering trip to Kyiv last week, Mr. Blinken urged the president to lift those restrictions given that Russia constantly conducts cross-border aerial attacks and that ground forces re-invaded the Kharkiv region in a new offensive that took more Ukrainian land and that began in Russia.

Moscow is poised to do the same in the neighboring Sumy region where Ukraine's defense intelligence says the Kremlin's forces are massing across the border in Russia.

"I think they [White House officials] need to allow Ukraine to prosecute the war the way they see fit," Mr. Johnson told reporters. "They need to be able to fight back. And I think us trying to micromanage the effort there, it's not a good policy for us."

Speaking at the House Foreign Affairs Committee this week, Mr. Blinken also said that "Ukraine will have to make its own decisions, and I want to make sure it gets equipment that it needs."

The mounting pressure comes as Kharkiv, Ukraine's second most populous city, has come under Russian aerial attack for three straight days, with seven civilians killed and more than a dozen injured after non-military targets were struck overnight on May 23.

A collective Congressional letter signed by House Intelligence Committee chairman Mike Turner (R-Ohio) was also released this week. It was addressed to U.S. Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin and it urged

## Ukrainian boxer Usyk beats Fury in split-decision

**Becomes undisputed heavyweight champion**

by Mark Raczkiewycz

CHICAGO – When Ukrainian heavyweight boxer Oleksandr Usyk held a news conference in Kyiv in 2013 to announce that he was transitioning to professional fighting after a long amateur career with the ultimate goal of becoming the undisputed heavyweight champion a year after winning a gold medal for his country in the summer Olympics, many sports journalists scoffed at him.

A mere 15 fights later in 2018, he became the undisputed cruiserweight champion before ascending to the heavyweight division to complete his journey.

Now, heavier and more experienced, Usyk's goal became reality in Saudi Arabia on May 18 when he earned a split-decision victory over Tyson Fury in a thrilling bout that saw the British so-called "King of Gypsies" hold on to the ropes during a standing eight-count before being saved



Courtesy of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky  
Ukrainian heavyweight boxer Oleksandr Usyk (left) connects with a straight left cross against his opponent, Briton Tyson Fury, on May 18 in Saudi Arabia during their undisputed title fight to unite all four major belts in their division.

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## NEWS ANALYSIS

## Examining bilateral security agreements as part of Ukraine's NATO accession

## Part I

by **Vladimir Socor**  
Eurasia Daily Monitor

The presidents of the United States and Ukraine are set to sign a bilateral security agreement during the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) summit that will take place in Washington from July 9 to 11. U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken confirmed this publicly for the first time during his trip to Kyiv on May 14 and 15. Mr. Blinken, however, omitted any mention of opening Ukraine-NATO accession negotiations or even a hypothetical timeframe for such a process (President.gov.ua, State.gov, May 14, 15). Most NATO member states and some partner states – more than 30 in total – have decided to sign bilateral security agreements with Ukraine, nine of which have been signed between January and April this year in Kyiv. The Biden administration has scheduled the signing of the U.S.-Ukraine bilateral agreement during NATO's summit as a "deliverable" there in lieu of advancing Ukraine's accession to the alliance.

Political and nonbinding agreements are being developed outside of NATO's framework. Their signing is a poor substitute for the firm membership prospect and invitation to accession that Ukraine has long and ardently sought. The invitation to accession remains, nevertheless, Kyiv's political objective and that of supportive NATO members in the run-up to the Washington summit. The Biden administration and the German government remain the most influential naysayers, Berlin since 2008 and the Biden White House since 2021 (see Eurasia

Daily Monitor, May 6, 10, 27, June 1, 2021).

The current profusion of bilateral agreements originates in a Group of Seven (G-7) statement on the sidelines of NATO's 2023 summit in Vilnius, not as part of it and not included in NATO documents since (see Eurasia Daily Monitor, July 13, 17, 19, 2023). Limited in their scope, enforcement power and lifespan, these bilateral agreements could morph into an alternative to Ukraine's NATO membership instead of a shortcut. This risk could increase so long as the bilateral agreements are de-coupled from an invitation to Ukraine to commence accession negotiations and a timetable for accession.

"Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic Future: Paving the Path to Peace and Security," a report by the International Task Force on Ukraine's Security and Euro-Atlantic Integration, addresses the limitations of the emerging system of bilateral security agreements. The report proposes effective remedies and calls for linking the bilateral agreements firmly to Ukraine's accession to NATO (President.gov.ua, May 14). Former NATO Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen chairs this task force, with Ukrainian Presidential Office Chief Andriy Yermak as co-chair.

Launched, fortuitously or otherwise, on the day of Mr. Blinken's Kyiv visit, this is the task force's second major report on guaranteeing Ukraine's security through NATO member states pending – and leading to – Ukraine's accession to the alliance. An earlier report, "The Kyiv Security Compact: International Security Guarantees for

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## Grain becoming Russia's tacit weapon in confrontation with the West

by **Sergey Sukhankin**  
Eurasia Daily Monitor

Since February 2022, Russia's grain industry has struggled to meet its returns on investment and has faced problems selling supplies abroad. Increasing the role of BRICS (a loose political-economic grouping originally consisting of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) in the grain trade, however, could help ease Moscow's frustrations. In early March, Russian President Vladimir Putin enthusiastically supported creating a BRICS grain exchange (Interfax.ru, March 5). This came as a response to the formal request of Eduard Zernin, chair of the Russian Union of Grain Exporters, at the end of 2023. That union accounts for almost 80 percent of Russian grain exports. In his formal letter, Mr. Zernin complained that BRICS countries are compelled to act as price takers, while Western companies and trading platforms make all the critical decisions (Kommersant.ru, December 29). Moscow's use of grain as a tacit weapon is an aim to place itself in a dominant position on the global stage to prevent further degradation of its economy due to its war in Ukraine.

Russian experts increasingly complain that the global grain trade established after World War II – when the United States was the leader in agricultural trade – put the Chicago Mercantile Exchange (the United States) in charge of international operations. Today, they argue that these realities

seem outdated and warrant drastic changes, as the BRICS countries represent up to 40 percent of the worldwide grain trade (M24.ru, April 11). Some Russian analysts openly state that the U.S. and Western rules of the international grain trade only benefit the so-called "golden billion" – a conspiracy theory that argues that the top billion people in the world are hoarding the Earth's resources while the rest of the globe is left to suffer. These commentators argue that the current grain order should be dismantled by the collective efforts of non-Western countries (RIA Novosti, April 11).

Sanctions and restrictions resulting from Russia's war against Ukraine have forced the Kremlin to look for ways to sustain war expenses and bolster domestic grain producers. Moscow is employing several tactical approaches with food, and grain in particular, to increase geopolitical pressure. For example, Russia aims to undermine Ukraine's role as a key global supplier of grain and related commodities (see Eurasia Daily Monitor, July 24, September 7, 2023). The Kremlin has two main strategies to curb Kyiv's exports: occupying Ukraine and spreading disinformation. The occupied regions of Ukraine represent some of the most fertile land in the country. Russian forces and puppet regimes are terrorizing the local population and obstructing their ability to harvest grain. If Russia manages to keep a hold of these territories, it could

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## NEWSBRIEFS

**Russia begins tactical nuclear weapons drills**

Russia has begun the "first stage" of exercises in the Southern Military District to increase the readiness of tactical nuclear forces near the Ukrainian border, the Defense Ministry said on May 21. The ministry said the "exercise is aimed at maintaining the readiness of personnel and equipment of nonstrategic nuclear weapons combat units to respond to and unconditionally ensure the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Russian state." Plans for the drills were announced on May 6. The West has accused President Vladimir Putin of "saber-rattling" and undertaking a "continuation of Russia's irresponsible behavior." (RFE/RL's Russian Service)

**EU approves use of frozen Russian assets**

The European Union has given official approval for the use of proceeds from frozen assets of the Russian central bank to beef up the defense of Ukraine, the European Council announced on May 21, a move that could see as much as 3 billion euros (\$3.23 billion) diverted to Kyiv's military this year. The news comes as Ukraine continues to urge its Western allies to ramp up and accelerate military aid for its troops, who are struggling to stave off an offensive in the east by the much more numerous and better-armed Russian forces. It also comes as President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on May 21 insisted that Ukrainian troops in the Kharkiv region were fighting back with "tangible" results against Russian forces amid reports of fierce battles and territorial setbacks in the northeast. "In the Kharkiv region, our forces are destroying the occupier, the results are tangible," Mr. Zelenskyy said in his nightly video address while acknowledging that the situation in some areas was "extremely difficult at the moment." Battlefield claims could not immediately be verified. The E.U. decision was announced in Brussels by the Belgian government, which currently holds the 27-member bloc's rotating presidency. "The European Council has confirmed its agreement to use windfall profits from Russia's immobilized assets to support #Ukraine's military self-defense and reconstruction in the context

of the Russian aggression," it said on X, formerly Twitter. Some 210 billion euros (\$225 billion) of assets belonging to Russia's central bank were frozen by the E.U. following Moscow's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 – an amount estimated to generate interest of some 3 billion euros (\$3.23 billion) annually. Some 90 percent of the proceeds would be placed in the European Peace Facility fund used by most E.U. members to obtain reimbursement for military equipment delivered to Ukraine. Separately, Reuters reported, quoting an unnamed source, that Germany – the bloc's largest economy – plans to increase its military aid for Ukraine by another 3.8 billion euros (\$4.13 billion) this year, confirming a report by the German newspaper Bild. The news came as German Foreign Affairs Minister Annalena Baerbock traveled to Kyiv for a previously unannounced trip – her seventh since the start of Russia's invasion. Ms. Barbock called for more international support for Ukraine's air defenses in light of the current Russian offensive. At the end of last month, Germany delivered Ukraine a fresh package of military aid, including weapons and ammunition. Meanwhile, regional officials reported that four people were wounded and a transport infrastructure facility was damaged in a series of drone strikes on Ukraine's northeastern city of Kharkiv early on May 21. Meanwhile, regional officials reported that four people were wounded and a transport infrastructure facility was damaged in a series of drone strikes on Ukraine's northeastern city of Kharkiv early on May 21, regional officials reported. "Regarding the morning attack, the target was a transport infrastructure facility," Kharkiv Mayor Ihor Terekhov wrote on Telegram. Gov. Oleh Synyehubov also said on Telegram that an infrastructure facility had been damaged, and added that debris from fallen drones damaged several private houses in Ukraine's second-largest city. Earlier on May 21, a general air raid alert was declared for the whole territory of Ukraine. (RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service, with reporting by AFP)

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## Protesters in Chicago mark second anniversary of Russia's capture of Mariupol Azov warriors

by Mark Raczkiewycz

CHICAGO – When multiple units from Ukraine's Armed Forces and security services, most of whom were in the Azov battalion, started to evacuate the Azovstal Steel Plant in May 2022 where they were sheltered during Russia's 82-day siege of the Donetsk regional city of Mariupol they thought they would be exchanged as prisoners of war in a few months.

Their exact number is not known, though it is estimated that between 900 and 1,600 Ukrainian soldiers are still being

held, according to various sources.

The United Nations, the International Red Cross Society and a number of countries, including North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) member Turkey, brokered an "evacuation" with the Kremlin to free the beleaguered soldiers inside the sprawling premises situated near the Azov Sea. However, most of them have not been released or exchanged.

Protesters in Chicago, the third most populous city in the U.S., said on the second anniversary since the steel plant was evacuated that they remain captives and that



Mark Raczkiewycz

Protesters stand along Chicago Avenue in the eponymous city's Ukrainian Village neighborhood on May 19.

many had been killed and tortured during a Russian false flag bombardment of the Olenivka prison where many were forcibly held in the occupied part of Donetsk in July 2022.

It was described as a "deliberate Russian war crime" at that time by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

Not much is known of their fate, although a handful have been released during periodic prisoner exchanges that have taken place since Russia's February 2022 all-out invasion of the war-torn country.

"There were guarantees about their evacuation, about their treatment; ... there are questions about their health conditions and what kind of medical care they are receiving," said Roman Hryva, who organized a rally in the Ukrainian Village of Chicago that saw an automobile caravan rally as well as

March to a local Ukrainian church where the event culminated on May 19.

He said there is no contact with the Azovstal defenders and knowledge of their current whereabouts.

As The Ukrainian Weekly spoke with the organizer, Mr. Hryva, 28, of Ternopil, a simultaneous auto caravan protest that he orchestrated circled the neighborhood. That caravan started at Saint Joseph Catholic Church on the outskirts of the city. It included people riding Harley Davidson motorcycles and waving Ukrainian flags.

Also attending the rally was 23-year-old Oleksiy Shulyk of Kropyvnytskyi (formerly Kirovohrad) who served in the 12th Azov Special Forces Brigade of the National Guard. He had his left arm partially amputated.

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Courtesy of Liliya Popovych

Rallygoers on May 19 memorialized some 900 military and security personnel that Russia still holds captive following their four-day evacuation from the Donetsk regional town of Mariupol in May 2022. The rally ended at Saint Volodymyr and Olha Greek Catholic Church on Chicago Avenue in the heart of the city's Ukrainian Village neighborhood.

## Ukrainian World Congress delivers 900 FPV drones to Ukrainian soldiers

UWC

The Ukrainian World Congress (UWC), as part of its Unite with Ukraine initiative, announced it procured and delivered 900 first-person view (FPV) "kamikaze" drones to seven brigades of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

Recipients include specialized unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) units of the 109th brigade, 110th brigade, 241st brigade and 215th battalion of the 125th brigade of the Territorial Defense Forces of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, the 2nd Mechanized Infantry Battalion of the 3rd Separate Assault Brigade, the Main Directorate of Intelligence of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine (HUR-MO), and the 1st Separate

Mechanized Battalion "Da Vinci Wolves" of the 59th Separate Motorized Brigade of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

"It was clear while in the Kharkiv region and in Izyum, where we delivered approximately 400 drones to the pilots from HUR, the 3rd Assault Brigade, and the 125th TDF brigade, that the situation on the front could become dire. FPV drones are needed now to give the UAF [Ukrainian Armed Forces] the best chance to hold back this latest Russian offensive when used in conjunction with other Ukrainian heavy equipment and weaponry. We saw that the Ukrainians aren't giving up, nor should we," said Andrew Potichnyj, director of the Unite with Ukraine initiative at the UWC.

"As the diaspora, we are obligated to



Courtesy of the UWC

Ukrainian soldiers hold a banner for the Ukrainian World Congress's Unite with Ukraine initiative.

support Ukrainian defenders now more than ever before as the situation on the frontlines is very critical. We must collectively view this as an investment in Ukraine's independence, not just as a charitable donation," Mr. Potichnyj said.

The Unite with Ukraine team, working in collaboration with drone pilots from each recipient unit, meticulously selected orders of FPV drones from Ukrainian manufacturer Verba in 7- and 10-inch frame formats. These orders were customized according to the unique combat assignments, geographic location along the front line, and combat capabilities of the recipient units. They include drones, batteries, ground communication stations, antennas and other relevant equipment and accessories.

"Our top priority at the UWC is to enhance Ukraine's battlefield capabilities with all available resources. Drones and UAVs have become invaluable tools in Ukraine's arsenal as we fight for independence. The future of warfare is unmanned, and Ukraine is at the forefront of this space. We are proud to have purchased all 900 drones delivered today from a Ukrainian manufacturer that employs Ukrainian labor, not simply because they are Ukrainian, but because they are of the highest quality available," said UWC President Paul Grod.

"Currently, in the ongoing situation of extreme artillery and mortar shell shortages, FPV drones are almost the only means



Courtesy of the UWC

Ukrainian soldiers hold a banner for the Ukrainian World Congress's Unite with Ukraine initiative and a Ukrainian flag with the Saint Javelin logo.

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# Metropolitan Archbishop Borys Gudziak receives Ellis Island Medal of Honor

by Mariana Karapinka

ELLIS ISLAND, N.Y. – The Ellis Island Honors Society convened its annual Ellis Island Medals of Honor ceremony inside Ellis Island's Great Hall on May 18 in keeping with a tradition that dates back to 1986. Among the recipients of this year's medals was Metropolitan Archbishop Borys Gudziak of the Philadelphia Archeparchy of the Ukrainian Catholic Church.

Acknowledged as one of the United States' most esteemed accolades, the award pays homage to Americans who have dedicated themselves to serving their nation and fellow citizens.

This year's awardees represented diverse sectors, including business, medicine, military, education, politics, media and show business, reflecting the vibrant tapestry of American society.

Many of these honorees have made invaluable contributions that spur job creation, ensure security for millions and bolster community health and well-being.

They included curator of TED Talks Chris Anderson; former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Joseph F. Dunford, Jr.; Princeton University President Christopher L. Eisgruber; actor Whoopi Goldberg; CEO of Fortune Magazine Alan Murray; Craigslist founder Craig Newmark; President and CEO of Montefiore Medicine Dr. Philip Ozuah;



Courtesy of Mariana Karapinka

Metropolitan Archbishop Borys Gudziak (right) of the Philadelphia Archeparchy of the Ukrainian Catholic Church is seen with past award winner Dr. Eugene Holuka (left) and Leonard Mazur during the annual Ellis Island Medals of Honor ceremony inside Ellis Island's Great Hall on May 18.

businesswoman and actress Priscilla Presley; businessman and philanthropist David Rockefeller, Jr.; award-winning documentary filmmaker, author, artist and conservationist Susan Rockefeller; and founder of CNBC and MSNBC Tom Rogers.

Metropolitan Gudziak was the sole religious leader among the 88 recipients this

year.

Cardinal Timothy Dolan, a past recipient, underscored Archbishop Gudziak's "strong and passionate voice on behalf of the suffering people of Ukraine" in a letter addressed to participants of the Ellis Island award ceremony.

Several Ukrainian Americans have been

previously recognized. This year, Ambassador Paula Dobriansky and Archbishop Gudziak represented the Ukrainian-American community, joining past recipients Bishop Emeritus Basil Losten, Dr. Eugene Holuka, Zenia Mucha, Myron Holubiak, Dr. Ihor Sawczuk and Leonard Mazur.

"As a member of the Ellis Island Medals of Honor Advisory Committee," noted Mr. Holuka, "I firmly believe it's imperative to ensure that Ukrainian-Americans making significant contributions receive national recognition beyond just our diaspora community. Our community has a rich history of involvement in diverse fields, and it's crucial that our achievements are noticed and celebrated on a broader scale."

Metropolitan Gudziak expressed gratitude for the recognition, emphasizing the importance of raising awareness and fostering solidarity amid the ongoing struggle faced by Ukraine and its people.

"For decades Ellis Island was the landing point for many immigrants. This award celebrates the legacy of immigrants who came to America and lived fruitful lives. I am most grateful for the recognition of the Ellis Island Medal Committee at a time when the people and churches of Ukraine struggle for their very existence. It is in the light of the heroic sacrifices of Ukrainians and members of our church that I have received this award."

## A new Russian offensive stretches Ukrainian forces. Possibly to the breaking point.

by Mike Eckel  
RFE/RL

Ukrainian civilians have been evacuated from border regions with Russia. An important east-west highway in the eastern Donetsk region is being threatened by encroaching Russian forces. A village captured by Ukraine during last year's counteroffensive is about to return to Russian control. Ukraine's president canceled all foreign trips.

The news from Ukraine's battlefield these days is grim: Russia is advancing, Ukraine is struggling to hold its positions, if not outright retreating.

Ukrainian forces were already under severe pressure in several locations along the 685-mile front line even before Russia launched a localized offensive north of Ukraine's second largest city, Kharkiv, last week. Troops moved into a "gray zone" – Ukrainian territory that's not fully controlled by either Ukrainian or Russian forces. On May 16, Russian units appeared to have entered the town of Vovchansk, about 3 miles from the border, and the site of the fiercest fighting in the north.

By some estimates, the amount of territory Ukrainian troops have ceded in recent months is greater than the earliest months after the full Russian invasion in February 2022.

Western military officials, however, downplay Russian chances for a wider breakthrough.

"They don't have the skill and the capability to do it, to operate at the scale necessary to exploit any breakthrough to strategic advantage," U.S. Army Gen. Christopher Cavoli said on May 17. "They do have the ability to make local advances and they have done some of that."

Still, there's little doubt that Ukraine's exhausted, outmanned and possibly still-outgunned forces are struggling in a way not seen possibly since the opening days of the invasion.

"By stretching Ukrainian forces along a wide front, Russia is overcoming the limitations of its undertrained army," Jack Watling,

a senior research fellow at the Royal United Services Institute, said in a report released this week. "Russia has now started the early phases of its anticipated summer offensive with renewed attacks on Kharkiv."

Here's where things stand at present on Ukraine's battlefield.

### What's happening on the ground?

After Ukraine's much-hyped counteroffensive fizzled late last year both sides began retooling and resupplying, girding for the next major clashes. Russia, however, seized the initiative to push into the industrial city of Avdiyivka, where Ukraine was able to threaten the Russian-controlled regional administrative center of Donetsk to the southeast. The city fell to Russian forces in February.

Last month, Russian troops took advantage of a Ukrainian troop rotation – some reports say botched – and pushed northwest of Avdiyivka to take control of the village of Ocheretyne. Creeping north and northwest, Russian forces have moved closer to threatening the N32 highway, which runs from Pokrovsk, northeast to the railway town of Kostyantynivka.

Just east of Kostyantynivka is Chasiv Yar, a village on high ground that Russia is hell-bent on capturing.

Ukrainian forces have repelled the effort so far, in part by using a water canal that runs through its eastern district as a holding line. Capt. Oleh Kalashnikov, a spokesman for the 26th Separate Mechanized Brigade, told Current Time that Russia had fielded as many as 25,000 troops, including elite paratroop units, in their push to take the city.

Seizing Chasiv Yar would allow Russia to threaten Kostyantynivka and its rail and roadway that is used by Ukraine to resupply its forces. It would crack the door toward Kramatorsk to the north, and Slovyansk, both large population centers and redoubts of Ukrainian troops and supplies.

On May 10, meanwhile, Russian infantry crossed the border north and northeast of Kharkiv, attacking in two different loca-

tions, seizing a handful of small settlements, and opening a new front. The village of Vovchansk came under some of the worst shelling, forcing rescuers to rush to evacuate civilians.

Ukraine's General Staff claimed that its forces pushed back some of the Russian units. However, on May 14, officials said troops were "moving to more advantageous positions" near Vovchansk and Lukyantsi – suggesting some sort of withdrawal, or even retreat.

Two days later, officials announced that Ukrainian troops were withdrawing to "more advantageous positions" near Kupyansk, a town east of Kharkiv that has been under pressure from Russia in recent months.

Col. Gen. Oleksandr Syrskyi, the country's top military commander, said the situation had "significantly deteriorated." "We understand that there will be tough battles ahead and the enemy is preparing for it," he said on May 17. And in a further sign of difficulties President Volodymyr Zelenskyy postponed foreign travels and visited Kharkiv a day earlier. He also dismissed the Ukrainian commander in charge of the Kharkiv front.

Hundreds of kilometers to the southwest, in the Zaporizhia region, Russian forces claimed to have retaken Robotyne, one of a handful of villages that Ukraine succeeded in capturing in its counteroffensive – their biggest to date. Ukrainian officials denied the claim, but if the village does fall, its loss would be a symbolic blow.

"It's a challenging situation on the battlefield right now in Ukraine," U.S. Maj. Gen. Pat Ryder, a Pentagon spokesman, said this week.

"The Russians have exploited the situation on the battlefield and are attempting to make advances," he said. "Incremental as they may be, it's certainly concerning."

### Why is it happening?

From Ukraine's side, there are at least two primary reasons why it's been knocked back on its heels.

First is the monthslong pause in U.S. weaponry that resulted from political dead-

lock among congressional lawmakers in Washington, D.C. A group of Republican lawmakers blocked a \$61 billion package, conditioning its passage on sweeping changes to U.S. immigration and border policies.

Ukraine scrambled to keep firing pace with Russia, then fell behind sharply, as stocks dwindled and Russia leveraged its bigger industrial capacity. Analysts said Russia was outfiring Ukraine 10-to-1 in some locations. Russia also leveraged its use of "glide bombs" – heavy-explosive "dumb" bombs retrofitted with wings and satellite navigation – to devastating effect.

The weapons package finally passed the U.S. Congress on April 23, and the Defense Department quickly announced shipments of air defense missiles, ammunition and precision artillery systems.

But it will still require time and logistics to get the weaponry to the hands of gunners or infantrymen in trenches and forests.

Just as important an explanation for Ukraine's struggles is the lack of men. Ukrainian troops are outmanned and exhausted, and casualty rates are soaring. They are for Russia as well, but Russia has a bigger population to draw from, and authorities there have come up with an improvised system of recruiting – using high wages and lucrative perks – to attract men to fight.

As many as 510,000 Russians are employed in the overall invasion at present, Mr. Watling estimated.

Ukraine has struggled to keep troop levels up, and units rotated and rested. The government dragged its feet in updating its system of mobilization, highlighted by public comments by Mr. Syrskyi's predecessor, Gen. Valeriy Zaluzhnyi, in comments to The Economist magazine last fall. Mr. Zaluzhnyi was ultimately pushed out.

The mobilization reforms were signed into law last month. But as with the weaponry, it will take time to get new troops trained, equipped and ready to deploy to the front.

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## THE UKRAINIAN WEEKLY

### Give Kyiv the green light

With Russia's full-scale war on Ukraine now well into a third year, the debate over whether Ukraine should be permitted to strike military targets within Russia using U.S.-supplied weapons has intensified. Up to this point, the U.S. has steadfastly barred Ukraine from hitting military targets inside Russia to avoid escalating the conflict and engaging Washington in a direct confrontation with the Kremlin. But this policy may soon change, as well it should. Allowing Ukraine to target Russian military sites on Russian soil is not only a strategic necessity but a moral imperative that will enable Ukraine to defend itself effectively and deter further aggression from Moscow.

The current prohibition has its roots in U.S. President Joe Biden's determination to prevent World War III, a stance he has maintained since the first shipment of sophisticated American weapons was sent to Ukraine. The administration's cautious approach has been driven by fears of triggering a retaliatory spiral with Russia, potentially escalating into a nuclear confrontation. However, the evolving dynamics of the conflict necessitate reassessing this policy. Reports indicate that U.S. officials, propelled by the State Department, are now debating the merits of relaxing the ban to allow targeted strikes on Russian military installations just across the border.

The rationale for this shift is compelling. Russia has strategically positioned weapons across its border with northeastern Ukraine, launching devastating attacks on Ukrainian cities such as Kharkiv. These attacks, carried out from the safety of Russian territory, put Ukraine at a severe disadvantage. President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has argued that the inability to respond directly to these threats gives Russia a significant tactical edge. The prohibition effectively ties Ukraine's hands, limiting its ability to protect its citizens and repel Russian advances.

Furthermore, the restriction on using American-supplied weapons inside Russia has already been lifted by some of the U.S.'s closest allies. The United Kingdom, for instance, has allowed its weapons to be used against Russian targets. This precedent underscores the recognition among Western allies of the necessity for Ukraine to have a broader scope of action to defend itself. U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, following a sobering visit to Kyiv, has reportedly shifted his stance, recognizing that Moscow's new offensive tactics demand a robust and flexible Ukrainian response.

Critics of this policy shift warn of potential Russian retaliation, including the possibility of nuclear escalation. However, historical precedents suggest Putin's threats are bluster and fearmongering. Sadly, those threats have often worked. Throughout the conflict, Moscow has often issued dire warnings without following through on them. Despite Ukraine's attacks on Crimea and other aggressive actions, Russia has refrained from massive escalatory responses. This pattern suggests that Putin's regime may be keen to avoid a direct confrontation with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), recognizing the catastrophic consequences it would entail.

Enabling Ukraine to strike back at military targets within Russia could serve as a deterrent against further Russian aggression. If Russian forces and installations are no longer safe from Ukrainian retaliation, Moscow may reconsider the strategic calculus of its operations. This deterrent effect is crucial for shifting the balance of power and potentially accelerating the path to a negotiated peace.

Mr. Zelenskyy's frustration with Western caution is understandable. In his view, support from allies often comes too late and with too many restrictions, hindering Ukraine's ability to defend itself effectively. By allowing targeted strikes on Russian military sites, the U.S. and its allies can demonstrate a stronger commitment to Ukraine's sovereignty and self-defense. This policy change would not mean indiscriminate attacks on Russian infrastructure but focused strikes on military targets that directly threaten Ukrainian security. The war's battlefield extends into Russia, and the U.S. must give Ukraine the green light to take the fight to its aggressor.

May  
15  
1983

### Turning the pages back...

Forty-one years ago, on May 15, 1983, Ukrainians around the world commemorated the 50th anniversary of the Holodomor, the great famine of 1932-1933 that claimed the lives of millions of Ukrainians. Among the various commemorations, some 13,000 people, according to police estimates, gathered at the Ukrainian Orthodox Center of St. Andrew the First-Called Apostle on May 15, St. Thomas Sunday according to the Julian calendar, to pay their respects to the victims of Soviet leader Joseph Stalin's planned genocide of the Ukrainian nation.

The memorial services at the Ukrainian Orthodox Center began with an archpastoral divine liturgy celebrated by Metropolitan Mstyslav of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church with the assistance of Archbishop Mark of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and Bishop Iziaslav of the Byelorussian Autocephalous Orthodox Church.

Immediately following the liturgy, thousands congregated before the steps of St. Andrew's Memorial Church for the outdoor ecumenical requiem service that was conducted by clergy of the Ukrainian Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant faiths. The concelebrants were Metropolitan Mstyslav, Metropolitan Stephen Sulik of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, Archbishop Mark, Bishop Iziaslav and Pastor Vladimir Borowsky, executive secretary of the Ukrainian Evangelical Alliance of North America.

Metropolitan Mslyslav, who spoke in Ukrainian, delivered the sermon.

"This year's Pascha in the life of the Ukrainian nation and the faithful of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church is marked with the inexpressible painful remembrance of that which occurred only 50 years ago," Metropolitan Mslyslav said. "In 1932 and 1933, Moscow, crimson with the human blood which it shed through the ages and totally brutal in its treatment of the nations which it enslaved, guided only by designs of plunder, resolved to

(Continued on page 7)

## New Russian defense minister's tasks extend beyond Ukraine

Ksenia Kirillova  
*Eurasia Daily Monitor*

Russian President Vladimir Putin's appointment of economist Andrei Belousov as the new minister of defense surprised many (see *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, May 16). Mr. Belousov formerly served as the minister for economic development and was a presidential assistant from 2013 to 2020. In January 2020, he became first deputy prime minister. While Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin was ill with COVID-19, Mr. Belousov served as acting prime minister for three weeks from April to May (RBC.ru, May 2024). Numerous officials have noted to independent media that this appointment was an intelligent and forward-looking step as Mr. Belousov will ensure the Ministry of Defense runs more effectively. In this, the Kremlin seems to be readying for a protracted war in Ukraine and opening several other military campaigns in different parts of the world (see *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, May 20). Moscow has been struggling to maintain the economy as the war has progressed and has shifted to prioritizing the military-industrial complex (see *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, October 5, 2023). The appointment of Mr. Belousov demonstrates the Kremlin's initiative to continue expanding the military-industrial complex as part of the economy (see *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, December 4, 2023, January 16, 29, February 12).

Political analysts refer to Mr. Belousov as a "technocrat" and "a supporter of methods of harshly squeezing money out of private business" (Novaya Gazeta Europa, May 13). Ilya Grashchenkov, president of the Center for Regional Policy Development, recalls that Mr. Belousov introduced ideas related to the symbiosis of the state and the market to the Russian economy (Verstka.Media, May 12). Political analyst Abbas Gallyamov believes that the former deputy prime minister has always supported nationalizing the economy. Ivan Preobrazhenskiy, however, suggests that in his new post, Mr. Belousov "will promote the militarization of the Russian economy" (Novaya Gazeta Europa, May 13). Several federal officials agree with this analysis. An anonymous government source told journalists that the new defense minister must "together with the government, competently organize work and logistics processes, ensure the necessary production and supplies, orient the economy toward the 'special military operation,' and extract the technological maximum out of the defense industry" (Istories.Media, May 12).

Mr. Belousov has two primary tasks in his new role. On the one hand, he must, according to Presidential Press Secretary Dmitry Peskov, "integrate the economy of the military block into the economy of the country" (Meduza, May 13). This integration

will unconditionally lead to the further militarization of the entire economic system. On the other hand, he must rid the Ministry of Defense of corruption and ensure the most efficient use of government funds by introducing necessary innovations (Topwar.ru, May 14).

Russian propagandists claim that Mr. Belousov will be successful in carrying out these tasks and that his appointment is not a good sign for Ukraine. Notably, his ultimate loyalty to Putin and an absence of corruption scandals associated with him puts him in a prime position to accomplish these tasks (T.me/zhivoff, May 12). Journalists have discovered, however, that he may not be completely free of corruption. His 29-year-old son, Pavel, significantly profits from government contracts. Last year, his firm Claire&Clarté increased profits by 20-fold, though it had previously struggled (Meduza, May 13). Nevertheless, military correspondents and military analysts assess Mr. Belousov's appointment as generally positive (Istories.Media, May 12; Meduza, May 13).

Overall, the Kremlin's military expenditures are not only going toward their fight in Ukraine. At the beginning of January, a Russian military contingent was deployed to Burkina Faso (Kommersant.ru, January 25). In connection with that move, the Russian military did not conceal that the African Corps created by the Ministry of Defense plans to be active in Libya, Mali, the Central African Republic, Chad and Niger (Afrinz.ru, November 28, 2023; see *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, February 7, March 12, 18, April 11; see *Militant Leadership Monitor*, April 18; Vzglyad, May 5). Independent investigative journalists report that over the past months Moscow has actively increased its presence in Libya. The Russian military is concentrated in territory controlled by Libyan National Army commander Khalifa Haftar, who is friendly to Moscow (see *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, March 12). At least 1,800 Russian military personnel have arrived in the country over the past two weeks. Some of them were sent to Niger, the rest remain in Libya awaiting further instructions.

At the beginning of May, Russian troops entered an airbase in Niger, where U.S. troops had been stationed. Specifically, they occupied a separate hangar on Air Base 101, located contiguously with Diori Hamani International Airport in Niamey (BBC Russian Service, May 3). European Trade and Industrial Center Chair Oleg Nesterenko, in an interview with French media, explained that the military base occupied by the Russians is, in essence, a "military-logistical entryway to the country." U.S. troops have not yet left their bases in Niger, and Mr. Nesterenko does not hide

(Continued on page 13)

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### Disappointing to see spelling of 'borscht'

Dear Editor:

It was most interesting to read the article "Kyiv master chef Klopotenko adapts to war conditions as he releases second English recipe book" in the May 5 issue of *The Ukrainian Weekly*. But it was disappointing to see the spelling "borscht" throughout the article. This spelling comes from the Yiddish "borsh" and was popu-

larized in North America by Yiddish-speaking Ashkenazi Jews from Eastern Europe.

However, there is no reason to imitate this misspelling because "борш" is universally recognized as a Ukrainian culinary dish, and therefore should be transliterated as "borshch." For those who claim that the Ukrainian "щ" is foreign-sounding in English, all they have to do is say the words "fresh cheese" in order to see how easy it is to pronounce the "shch" in the Ukrainian "borshch."

Leo Iwaskiw  
Philadelphia

# Despite disowning plan, Moscow sends clear message of intentions on Baltic borders

by Paul Goble  
Eurasia Daily Monitor

On May 21, the Russian Defense Ministry published for discussion a plan to unilaterally redraw the sea borders in the Baltic region (TASS; The Moscow Times, May 21). The document sparked widespread fears that Moscow was about to move on the plan. Then, less than a day later, after criticism from Baltic, Scandinavian and Ukrainian officials and commentators and after the Kremlin claimed the plan was not government policy, Russian officials removed the document (The Moscow Times; Postimees; T.me/tass\_agency, May 22). Even so, it is clear that Vladimir Putin's regime took this step not because of the outrage against the plan but because doing so allows the Kremlin to have it both ways. On the one hand, it sent a clear message about Moscow's thinking and thus spread fears about what it might do next. On the other hand, it is fully consistent with Putin's broader policies and tactics – particularly his continuing efforts to portray those warnings against Russian aggression as irresponsible actions by alarmists who can and should be ignored (Novaya Gazeta; Kasparov.ru, May 22).

The Defense Ministry document was first published on the Russian government's legal affairs portal (originally found at Regulation.gov.ru, May 21). The post has now been taken down but was saved in part and with a screenshot on X (formerly Twitter) (X.com/TalibarFIN, May 22). It was also quoted and described in detail by journalists at The Moscow Times (The Moscow Times, May 21). Other media reports, both from the region and in the West, appear to rely exclusively on these reports (See, for example, Svoboda; Istoryes.media; Kyiv Independent, May 22).

According to the Moscow Times story, the Russian Defense Ministry believes that Moscow must, by January 2025, "declare portions of the waters in the eastern part of the Gulf of Finland as well as near the borders of Kaliningrad its internal waterways." The current delimitation lines, established by the Soviet government in 1985, no longer correspond to present-day geopolitical realities, according to the document. Therefore, they must be revised. Under the proposed plan, Moscow would unilaterally shift the coordinates of these borders around the five small islands in the Gulf of Finland and around the mouth of the Narva River, as well as areas around the Curonian Spit, Cape Taran and the Baltic Spit along the border between Lithuania and Kaliningrad, the non-contiguous Russian oblast to the west. Nothing suggests that this proposal has been coordinated with other Russian government agencies or that Moscow has approached the governments of Finland, Estonia or Lithuania about the idea. Instead of adding language regarding those elements and specifying that the plan would not affect the state borders of these countries, the Russian government portal removed the document altogether – an action that suggests at least some in Moscow viewed it as more than the idea of a single ministry.

Reactions in the countries that would be most immediately affected by this plan were swift and overwhelmingly negative. Finnish, Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian officials expressed varying levels of concern. Finnish leaders sought more clarification, their Latvian counterparts suggested it was the beginning of a Russian move against the Baltic countries, and Lithuanian officials declared that the plan, by itself,

represents a direct threat to international security (Delfi; TASS; Istoryes.media, May 22). Commentators and experts in those four countries, Scandinavia and Ukraine were even more negative, denouncing the plan as a provocation against the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the West as a whole (Ukrainska Pravda; Novaya Gazeta, May 22). Reactions likely would have been even more numerous and critical had the plan not been taken down so quickly. One Scandinavian analyst suggested that the move had occurred because Moscow was taken aback by the criticism or because there was no indication that the Russian government would do anything more than change lines on a map (X.com/The\_Lookout\_N, May 22). Others insisted that taking down the plan from a website does not mean that the plan is no longer on the minds of Putin and his officials (Ukrainska Pravda, May 22).

The environment of Putin's ongoing war against Ukraine, his staging of nuclear-capable military exercises, Moscow's increasing criticism of the Baltic states and Finland, and especially the Kremlin's moves to counter NATO in the Baltic Sea region stoked much of the alarm regarding the plan, which does not look to have subsided even with the document taken down (see Eurasia Daily Monitor, December 18, 2023, May 15; Window on Eurasia, May 17). Many analysts in the region, not surprisingly, see Moscow's proposal of a relatively limited portion of water as a harbinger of broader Russian threats to the Baltic region as a whole. This would include not only the Baltic countries and Finland but even Sweden's control of Gotland, long viewed as an unsinkable aircraft carrier in the middle of the Baltic Sea. Less than a day after the Russian Defense Ministry posted its plan to redraw sea borders, Mikhail Byden, commander of the Swedish Armed Forces, said that Putin appears intent on establishing Russian dominance over the entire Baltic Sea and the Swedish island of Gotland in particular (Rnd.de, May 22).

Perhaps the clearest warning about the ultimate meaning of the Russian Defense Ministry plan comes from Leonid Nevezlin, a Russian commentator now living in Israel. He points out that "the experience of recent years has taught Russia's neighbors" and the West as a whole to pay close attention even to the smallest signs of Putin's intentions (T.me/leonidnevezlin, May 22). Mr. Nevezlin adds, again and again, that Putin's obsession with history and old maps has led him to demand first portions of territory and then all of it – a passion and approach that recall Hitler's own and that is always "fraught with war." After the Nazi leader was defeated, both the West and the Soviet Union sought to prevent a new war by declaring all external borders in Europe "inviolable." The West continues to support that position, while it has "not stopped Russia in any way, either in Abkhazia, or in South Ossetia, or in Crimea, or in the Donbas, or in the current bloody war in Ukraine." The only limit on the Kremlin's actions, Mr. Nevezlin says, is "the strength of NATO countries."

That makes the Russian Defense Ministry plan, even if it is no longer on a Russian government website, something that the West cannot afford to ignore lest what some dismiss as a minor matter grows into a broader conflagration.

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## COMMENTARY

# Usyk triumph shines a ray of light on war-torn Ukraine

by Ihor N. Stelmach

Many people in Ukraine stayed up late into the early hours of May 19. Though many people in the war-ravaged country continue to seek shelter from incoming Russian missiles, on this early morning they were celebrating the news that Oleksandr Usyk had defeated Tyson Fury to become boxing's unified heavyweight champion of the world. The victory gave Usyk's compatriots a rare and most welcome moment of pride and joy.

As Usyk fought in Saudi Arabia, Ukraine's military continued to beat back vicious Russian attempts to advance along the war's frontlines. There are serious concerns that key villages may fall as Russian forces look to advance further into eastern Ukraine, putting the country's second largest city, Kharkiv, at risk of being overrun.

Soon after Usyk's victory, however, Ukrainian boxer Denys Berinchyk won the vacant World Boxing Organization (WBO) lightweight title, adding a bit more joy to the mood in Ukraine. And there were still the positive after-effects from Vasiliy Lomachenko's world lightweight championship victory a week earlier.

Usyk, the first undisputed world heavyweight champion in 25 years after his win in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, the Ukrainian heavyweight readily acknowledged his triumph was a lot more than a personal victory. He was quick to dedicate his crowning achievement to God, his supporters, his country, Ukraine's soldiers and Ukrainian mothers, fathers and children.

Following his loss, Fury claimed that the ring judges sided with Usyk because his homeland is fighting a devastating war with Russia. But most people throughout Ukraine paid Fury's comment little attention. They were rightly proud and elated with Usyk's performance in the ring. Fighting on another continent far from his homeland, Usyk gave Ukrainians a huge boost that seemed to uplift the country's national psyche.

A native of Simferol, a city on the temporarily-occupied Crimean Peninsula, Usyk proudly represented his home, acting as a great example for a region under Russian occupation for some 10 years.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky took notice of Usyk's win, writing on Telegram immediately after the fight, "The Ukrainians hit hard! And in the end, all our opponents will be defeated." The president added that Usyk's success showed the world that "Ukrainian endurance and

strength give birth to Ukrainian victory."

Former world heavyweight champion and current Kyiv mayor Vitali Klitschko said on social media that Usyk "showed the world that Ukrainians are capable of defeating a strong opponent in a difficult fight," and he called the split decision title win "a very important victory for Ukraine today."

Wladimir Klitschko, the former heavyweight champion of the world, watched the Usyk-Fury bout ringside and he echoed his older brother's comments.

"Can you imagine how much pressure this man [Usyk] had these past weeks and here in the ring? Losing was not an option," he told Sky Sports. The younger Klitschko explained that "it doesn't matter how big, how tall, how heavy, what his reach is and how mobile Tyson Fury was, Usyk showed he is the best fighter in modern history." Wladimir Klitschko said he was proud of Usyk and he felt very proud to be Ukrainian.

Usyk's historic triumph may decrease some of the criticism he has received for supporting the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, which has maintained ties to Moscow.

In 2021, Usyk appeared in a documentary about the Pecherska Lavra, an ancient Kyiv monastery that was then inhabited by monks under the authority of the Moscow Patriarchate. He further upset some Ukrainians immediately after Russia launched its full-scale war when he echoed Russian President Vladimir Putin's words when he appealed to Ukrainians to not resist Moscow's aggression "if you consider us brotherly people."

Usyk's victory over Fury matters a great deal. He represented everything that makes Ukrainians special, starting with his stunning ring entrance to his historic victory. The new undisputed champion was powered by the spirit of his own people. As a result, he ended Fury's undefeated streak and slayed the lumbering Briton.

More importantly, Usyk's gave Ukrainians around the world a moment of pride and a reason to celebrate. As the war rages on, Ukrainians and their allies see in Usyk the strength, determination and fighting spirit they know they will need to win the war. This feel-good moment in troubling times provides hope for a better tomorrow and will inspire Ukrainians to continue fighting. Usyk's victory serves as a reminder that there are heroes who arise from beyond the front lines, and they too are doing their part for Ukraine.

## Turning...

(Continued from page 6)

erase from the face of the earth the Ukrainian nation as a separate, independent nation-state. Guided by this goal, Moscow confiscated by force from the Ukrainian farmer his ancestral land, a land made holy by his bitter sweat, a land which through the ages was the strongest fortress of the Ukrainian nation and, at the end of the year 1932, robbed from him everything which the generous Ukrainian earth had borne him during that very abundant year of harvest."

"As a consequence of this," he noted, during the Easter of 1933 "black banners already flew over Ukrainian villages,

announcing that the 'village had died out.' In the torments of death by starvation, that winter almost 7 million Ukrainians perished. The remembrance of this heart-rending event covers this year's feast of Christ's Resurrection with a black veil."

The metropolitan called on all Ukrainians: "Let us unite in fervent prayer and let us reverently bow our heads in respect before the known and unknown graves of the children of the Ukrainian nation whose lives ended in the torments of death by starvation and in the struggle for freedom and for the land of Ukraine."

Source: "13,000 attend Great Famine memorial service," *The Ukrainian Weekly*, May 22, 1983.



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## Thousands participate in annual pilgrimage to St. Andrew Cemetery



UOCofUSA.org

Archbishop Daniel (center), with clergy, faithful and committee organizers at the installation and consecration of the Pokrova Cross Monument, erected in honor of the veterans of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA), at St. Andrew Cemetery on May 12.

*UOC of the U.S.A.*

SOMERSET/SOUTH BOUND BROOK, N.J.

- Thousands gathered over the weekend of May 11-12 for the annual St. Thomas Sunday pilgrimage hosted by the Metropolia Center of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the U.S.A. at St. Andrew Ukrainian Orthodox Memorial Church and St. Andrew Ukrainian Orthodox Cemetery.

A continuation of the Paschal and Easter celebrations, the pilgrimage weekend has come to incorporate visitations and prayer services at the graves of departed loved ones, and the sharing of Paschal food items.

Metropolitan Antony was unable to be present on Sunday after a sudden illness. Archbishop Daniel of the Western Eparchy of the UOC-U.S.A. was formally greeted on

the steps of St. Andrew Memorial Church by members of the Pokrova Sisterhood of St. Andrew Memorial Church and members of the South Bound Brook, N.J., branch of the Ukrainian American Youth Association.

Subdeacon Maksym Zhuravchyk was ordained to the deaconate by Archbishop Daniel during the Hierarchical Divine Liturgy on Sunday. During his sermon, the archbishop reminded the faithful that they must live their faith through actions of love, compassion and charity, not simply by confessing their faith with their lips or through ritualistic observances.

Throughout the weekend, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada (UOCC) was represented by Fr. Charles Baxter of

(Continued on page 9)

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# SUMA Federal Credit Union opens two new branches in Florida

by Andrij Horbachevsky

NORTH PORT, Fla. – The SUMA Federal Credit Union, based in Yonkers, N.Y., formally opened two new branches in southwest Florida on April 20 and 21.

SUMA President and CEO Roman Kozicky said the new branches will help the organization better serve the Ukrainian American community in Florida.

"We are excited for the opportunity to extend SUMA's reach into southwest Florida, an area which has seen a recent increase in individuals and families resettling from Ukraine," Mr. Kozicky said. "Our two Florida locations are conveniently located in the heart of the Ukrainian-American communities in both North Port and St. Petersburg and are staffed by highly trained tellers and member service representatives. We look forward to meeting more of the residents and businesses and help them with their financial needs."

The first Florida branch opening was held on April 20 at SUMA's branch in North Port, Fla., which is located at 5400 South Biscayne Drive and on the same street as St. Andrew's Religious and Cultural Center (commonly known as the Oseredok), St. Mary's Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Ukrainian Bible Church.

The opening festivities were kicked off with introductory remarks by SUMA FCU Chairman Andrij Horbachevsky who extended his appreciation for the support of the local Ukrainian-American community of North Port, Fla., and the surrounding area.

In his remarks, Mr. Horbachevsky thanked the SUMA team that planned and executed the opening of not only the North Port branch, but also a second branch in St. Petersburg, Fla., some 80 miles to the north.

The initiative was led by SUMA Executive Vice President Andrij Burchak who served as project manager for the Florida openings.

The North Port, Fla., branch opening was capped off by a ribbon cutting and blessing of the new offices. The ribbon cutting included SUMA's co-founder, Volodymyr Kozicky, who has been continually associated with the credit union for the past 60 years.

In the past, Volodymyr Kozicky has served a director, president and CEO of the organization. He currently has the distinguished title of honorary chairman of the Board. Additionally, he is a part-time SUMA consultant reviewing and auditing the organization's various insurance programs. Mr. Kozicky, who will turn 100 in September, said as of this writing that there are no succession plans for his role in the credit union.

The SUMA offices in North Port, Fla., were blessed by local clergy, including Rev. Dmytro Kasiyan of St. Mary's Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and Rev. Oleh Saciuk of St. Andrew's Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the U.S.A.

As part of the blessing ceremony, an icon of the Virgin Mary was presented by Rev. Dmytro for display in the credit union offic-



Andrij G. Burchak

Members of the SUMA Federal Credit Union prepare to cut a ceremonial ribbon to open the organization's branch in North Port, Fla., on April 20.

es. Following the ceremonies, representatives and guests were invited to the Cultural Center for a champagne and cake toast, where they also had the opportunity to ask questions of staff and directors about the organization.

SUMA officials expressed thanks to the leadership of the Cultural Center, Victor Lisnyczyj and Daria Tomashosky, who were instrumental in welcoming SUMA to the North Port, Fla., community and for hosting the reception.

The following day, on April 21, a similar SUMA branch opening was held in St. Petersburg, Fla. The day began with a liturgy at Epiphany of Our Lord Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church officiated by Rev. Bohdan Barytskyy.

From the pulpit, Rev. Bohdan invited those present to attend the branch opening following the Devine Liturgy.

The SUMA branch in St. Petersburg, Fla., is located four blocks from Epiphany of Our Lord Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, at Gateway at Ninth, 8950 9th (MLK) Street North, Suite 130.

At the branch opening, Mr. Horbachevsky made a brief introduction that was followed by the singing of the Ukrainian national anthem, as well as the ribbon cutting and official blessing.

Rev. Bohdan officiated the branch blessing and, as part of that ceremony, an icon of The Baptism was presented by Father Bohdan for display in the credit union offices.

Those in attendance at the St. Peters-

burg, Fla., branch opening also enjoyed a champagne and cake reception in the building's common area while listening to the beautiful tunes of Zenovia Zakovorotnaya on her bandura. They also had the opportunity to tour the offices, mingle with SUMA representatives and inquire about the organization's services and product offerings.

Both branches are staffed with knowledgeable and well-trained, bi-lingual staff who underwent extensive training at the home office in Yonkers, N.Y., as well as remotely.

Back-office operations, such as loan processing will continue to be processed in SUMA's corporate underwriting offices, with direct communications with loan origination from the branch offices.

SUMA Federal Credit Union prides itself as being a leader in online banking, banking technology and security, and the organization's representatives said they look forward to servicing the new market in Florida.

The SUMA FCU, a federally insured and chartered credit union founded in 1964, has assets of \$420 million and approximately 8,500 members. In addition to the new Florida branches, the organization currently serves communities and businesses in New York and Connecticut.

More information about the organization is available online at [www.sumafcu.org](http://www.sumafcu.org), on Facebook (SUMA Federal Credit Union), Instagram (sumafederalcreditunion) or by calling or texting 914-220-4900.



Andrij G. Burchak

SUMA officials open a new branch in St. Petersburg, Fla., on April 21.

## Thousands...

(Continued from page 8)

Winnipeg, Manitoba, who is chancellor of the UOCC. He delivered greetings from the hierarchs of the UOCC to the Council of Bishops of the UOC-U.S.A., its clergy and faithful.

Memorial services were held at Holy Resurrection Mausoleum, located underneath St. Andrew Memorial Church, at the crypt of Patriarch Mstyslav I. Archbishop Daniel also led a memorial service at the Ukrainian American Veterans National Monument, erected in honor of fallen veterans of Ukrainian descent who have served in the U.S. Armed Forces.

Veterans of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) were also honored at St. Andrew Cemetery with the installation and consecration of a special cross in honor of the Protection of the Mother of God (Pokrova), which is the patron feast day of the founding of the UPA (according to the Old Julian Calendar).

The cross was installed near the central driveway, in a section of the cemetery designated for UPA veterans. The memorial cross for this section was organized by the "Soldiers of the UPA" committee, which includes descendants of members of the UPA who also maintain and care for this designated section of the cemetery. Archbishop Daniel officiated the consecration and offered memorial prayers for not only those who are buried there, but for the souls of all those who have perished in the defense of Ukraine from Russian subjugation.

Lesya Kozytka and Nadia Dubanovich thanked all those involved in the installation, as well as Archbishop Daniel for his prayers and blessing of the cross. Volodymyr Kozytka was acknowledged for his tireless work coordinating the design and production of the monument, as was the NOVA UA Federal Credit Union for its sponsorship and funding of the project.

The Pokrova cross monument is the newest among the numerous stops along a Prayer Trail throughout the cemetery grounds where different icons are featured

on similar wooden crosses. That trail includes stops for prayers and hymns associated with each particular icon.

The Ukrainian Cultural Center featured



Subdeacon MakSYM Zhuravchyk is ordained to the diaconate by Archbishop Daniel at St. Andrew Ukrainian Orthodox Memorial Church.

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## SUMA Federal Credit Union holds 60th annual meeting, re-elects previous leadership



Courtesy of the SUMA Federal Credit Union

Members of the SUMA Federal Credit Union are pictured during the organization's 60th annual meeting on April 27 at St. Michael the Archangel Ukrainian Catholic Church in Yonkers, N.Y.

by Andrij Burchak

YONKERS, N.Y. – The SUMA Federal Credit Union (SUMA FCU) held its 60th annual meeting on April 27 at St. Michael the Archangel Ukrainian Catholic Church in Yonkers, N.Y. Roman G. Kozicky, president and CEO of the credit union, called the meeting to order and welcomed all members and guests. He then asked all assembled to stand and take part in a moment of silence to honor all members who died in 2023 as well as the fallen heroes who are protecting Ukraine against the unprovoked Russian invasion.

Very Rev. Kiril Angelov, chancellor of the Ukrainian Catholic Diocese of Stamford and Pastor of St. Michael the Archangel Ukrainian Catholic Church in Yonkers, N.Y., offered an invocation.

Rev. Kiril also thanked the credit union for its continued financial support of the church and the eparchy. He specifically highlighted the large donation made to renovate the church hall in honor of St. Michael's 125th anniversary. This year's SUMA FCU annual meeting was the first event to be held in the completely redesigned space.

Andrew Horbachevsky, chairman of the SUMA FCU Board of Directors, offered a summary of the year's activities and accomplishments. In his comments, the chairman underscored his appreciation of

the management and staff of the credit union who effectively and safely met the membership's financial needs throughout a turbulent year.

Despite the challenges of 2023, SUMA FCU achieved a net income of \$1.3 million. Mr. Horbachevsky thanked all involved in all of the new innovations implemented on the digital and IT side of the business, as well as those who successfully implemented the expansion of SUMA FCU's field of membership, which as of 2023, now includes parishioners of St. Vladimir Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral in Stamford, Conn.

Mr. Horbachevsky also noted that the most important initiative for SUMA FCU in 2024 was the opening in April of two new branches in Florida – one in North Port, Fla., and the other in St. Petersburg, Fla. These expansions, he said, are an investment in the credit union's future and will include essential financial services for many recently resettled individuals and families from war-torn Ukraine.

"The credit union motto of 'people helping people' has never been more relevant," he said.

Credit union officers also noted that 2024 marks an extraordinary year of milestones for the organization. First, the SUMA Federal Credit Union is celebrating its 60th

(Continued on page 16)

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## Crimean Tatar...

(Continued from page 4)

language and learn it from our parents. I am old enough to have been born in Crimea, and my parents always spoke their native language at home. I remember that my father forbade us from speaking Russian at home, even though we were attending Russian schools and studying everything in Russian. As children, we spoke with one another in Russian. But my father insisted: "Speak a human language so that everyone can understand."

Then there was the generation that came after us, people who were already born in exile. Their level of knowledge of their language is very low. They were not capable of passing the language on to their children. As a result, according to various studies, only about 20 percent of Crimean Tatars can be said to more or less know the language. A few speak it quite well, while the rest either don't know anything or speak it very poorly.

**RFE/RL:** Do you see parallels between these experiences and what other Ukrainians have experienced since Russia's full-scale invasion in 2022? Many Ukrainians are now forced to live abroad and are struggling with matters of teaching their children Ukrainian and assimilating in the countries where they live.

**Mr. Dzhemilev:** Many Ukrainians have been leaving the country since the invasion. Of course, this is a catastrophe. I am very much afraid that many of them will not return, particularly those who made it to prosperous countries. The same thing is happening with Crimean Tatars.

Before the full-scale invasion, 99 percent of the Crimean Tatars who left Crimea went to Kyiv-controlled Ukraine. But after the invasion, those routes were cut off, and they left in various directions – through Georgia, Kazakhstan, the Baltic countries – and then onward to other countries. They simply couldn't get to unoccupied Ukraine. Now, there are about 50,000 Crimean Tatars living outside of Crimea. Maybe that figure seems small, but it is one-quarter of the entire nation.

Ukraine is also losing a very large portion of its native speakers. I am very concerned about the children of those who are living abroad.

**RFE/RL:** Since the invasion, many have been discussing the language issue. Do you think the Russian language is a threat to Crimean Tatar, Ukrainian, and other languages?

**Mr. Dzhemilev:** The threat to the Crimean Tatar nation and to Ukraine is not just the Russian language but everything Russian. We all know Russia's policies, including its language policies: Russification, both toward Ukrainians and toward Crimean Tatars.

**RFE/RL:** Could you please speak a little about your personal experience preserving your cultural identity while in exile? Your family was deported from Crimea when you were very young. When did you understand that you were a Crimean Tatar and

that Crimean Tatar was your language?

**Mr. Dzhemilev:** For the most part, the worldview of Crimean Tatars is formed in the family. That is why Soviet propaganda didn't have much effect on Crimean Tatars. We knew the truth from our parents.

I remember the day Stalin died [in March 1953] when everyone was crying. Only our small circle of Crimean Tatars in school was joking. None of them cried – rather, one girl was crying, and I remember thinking that she had a bad family.

When they announced over the loudspeaker that "the great leader of all times and all peoples" had died, my father said:

ber how my father said: "Son, the times are such that parents can't tell their children what to do. You will soon be 14 and will have to join the Komsomol [Soviet youth organization]. But if you could somehow avoid going down that road, I would be happy."

Of course, to please my father, I didn't join the Komsomol. When they kicked me out of the institute in 1965 [when Mr. Dzhemilev was expelled from an agricultural college in Tashkent], the faculty representative said there was no place in a Soviet institution for such a "renegade" as me.

I think our countrymen are doing this now. At least, there are such conversations in homes in Crimea. That is why when peo-

out liberation they have no future.

**RFE/RL:** What prospects for de-occupation do you see? Is it more likely to happen militarily or by diplomatic means?

**Mr. Dzhemilev:** After 2014, I consistently said Crimea must be de-occupied through diplomacy. Otherwise, it will become an uninhabitable peninsula, reminiscent of [the Azov Sea port of] Mariupol.

But Russia rejects everything and insists that the topic of Crimea will not be discussed because it is "Russian territory" according to the Russian Constitution. When the full-scale invasion began, there were Russian-Ukrainian talks. And in the final statement, both sides laid out their positions. We wrote that our conditions for ending the war were that Russia return to the borders of February 23, 2022, and agree to open status talks regarding Crimea and the Donbas. And during those negotiations, neither side would use force to control these territories.

And when this statement was read, they added the phrase "15 years for negotiations." All the cameras were on me, asking for a comment. Not just Turkish and Ukrainian media, but from around the world. I had heard earlier that they were mentioning those 15 years, and I told Rustem [Umerov, a member of Ukraine's delegation to the talks who is now Ukraine's defense minister]: "No way. You take that figure out or everyone will be furious with us!" I was sure that figure would not be left in.

When they asked me to comment, of course, I didn't say that I was categorically against this formulation. I said something like: "If Russia agrees to hold talks about Crimea's status, that means that Crimea is not Russian territory but rather is temporarily occupied and, under the 1949 Geneva convention that means it is subject to Ukrainian law and Ukrainian democratic rights. And if that is the case and everyone is able to say what he wants, then the de-occupation of Crimea won't take 15 years, but six months."

But this didn't save us from the anger ... I phoned [Ukrainian presidential chief of staff Andriy] Yermak and said: "What have you done? I haven't heard such angry words addressed to me in 30 years! Why are you talking about 15 years?" And he laughed and said: "Calm down. They won't even accept that."

And, in fact, the very next day Putin's spokesman [Dmitry] Peskov said there could be no talks on the status of Crimea.

As a result, now we can only talk about the military liberation of Crimea. But I think that, when Ukrainian forces enter the zone between Crimea and mainland Ukraine, we will again propose negotiations. But the topic will be how to allow Russian forces to leave Crimea without losses, without fighting. There is simply no other way.

(The interview was translated by RFE/RL correspondent Robert Coalson.)

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Visitors attend an exhibition on the 1944 deportation of the Crimean Tatars in Kyiv on May 17.

The donation, valued at over \$615,000 (24.5 million hryvnia), was funded by the Santa's Birds joint fundraising campaign of the UWC and Saint Javelin. It was supported by diaspora organizations such as the Lemko Foundation, the Canada-Ukraine Chamber of Commerce, the Ukrainian Canadian Congress – Toronto Branch, the Australian Federation of Ukrainian Organizations, and over 1,300 individual donors from 17 countries.

Unite With Ukraine is the global initiative of the UWC focused on the procurement and delivery of essential tactical medical supplies, armored vehicles, drones, UAV packages and other vital equipment to support Ukraine's defenders.

Since February 2022, the initiative has raised over \$57.5 million from donors in over 70 countries to support brigades of the territorial defense forces of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, the Ministry of Internal

Affairs of Ukraine, Special Operations Forces, the National Guard of Ukraine, the Main Directorate of Intelligence of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine, the National Police of Ukraine, brigades of the Ground Forces of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, the State Emergency Service of Ukraine, the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine, the Yavoriv International Training Center for Peacekeeping and Security and the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

## UWC delivers...

(Continued from page 3)

of striking, and they are the most accurate of all available options to us. A significant portion of the damage inflicted on enemy equipment on the front lines has been achieved using FPV drones," said one FPV operator in the 3rd Separate Assault Brigade who goes by the call sign Tourist.

## A new Russian...

(Continued from page 5)

Oleksandr Demchenko, a staff sergeant deployed to the Kharkiv region with the 516th Separate Special Purpose Battalion, said the Russian breakthrough along the border forced commanders to redeploy units exhausted after Avdiyivka.

"Instead of rest and recovery, they are again forced to take part in battles. And this will have other consequences, since in the future these brigades will not be able to be used by Ukrainian command," Mr. Demchenko, who has also worked for RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service, said in a message.

"There is a critical shortage of personnel," he said. "Big problems with ammunition."

Also problematic for Ukraine: officials were slow to build defensive networks in trouble spots. Experts say Ukraine should have prioritized digging trenches, laying minefields and erecting anti-tank barriers months before, anticipating Russian pressure on Avdiyivka and elsewhere.

### What happens next?

That depends on how quickly Ukraine musters its reserves, redeploys experienced units, stabilizes its lines and reinforces its defenses.

The size of the Kharkiv invasion force isn't large enough to capture the city, which had a prewar population of more than 1 million, experts said.

"They are likely leveraging their numeri-

cal advantage in units and personnel to extend the active front line, thereby stretching Ukrainian troops thinner and forcing Ukraine to shift units away from the Donbas region," according to Frontelligence Insight, an open-source organization run by a Ukrainian reserve officer.

Ukraine has already shown that it is using the newly supplied U.S. weaponry. Longer-range missiles known as Army Tactical Missile Systems, or ATACMS, were reportedly used to attack Russian targets in occupied Crimea on May 16; Russia's Defense Ministry claimed it shot down the missiles.

But it's unclear if it's enough to stem the new Russian advance. Adding to the grim prognosis are predictions by Ukrainian and Western analysts that a bigger Russian offensive is in the offing, possibly by summer.

"The outlook in Ukraine is bleak," Mr. Watling said in his analysis.

"However, if Ukraine's allies engage now to replenish Ukrainian munitions stockpiles, help to establish a robust training pipeline and make the industrial investments to sustain the effort, then Russia's summer offensive can be blunted, and Ukraine will receive the breathing space it needs to regain the initiative," he said.

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### Fighting In Eastern Ukraine



## New Russian...

(Continued from page 6)

that such a rapid occupation of the airbase is a message to the Americans to leave the country quickly (Topwar.ru, May 14).

Since the beginning of March, Russian military personnel and Russian equipment have been detected in at least 10 points in eastern Libya near large military bases. Additionally, over the past several weeks, deliveries of Russian weapons and shipments from Syria to Lebanon have increased. Journalists note that, in addition to Russian equipment and soldiers, Syrian military personnel are likely also being sent to Libya. Experts point out that Libya offers Moscow valuable access to the Mediterranean Sea, serves as a southern flank to put pressure on the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union, and strengthens the opportunity for

dialogue with other key Arab countries (Verstka.Media, May 10).

Russia's new minister of defense will be called on to provide adequate funding and logistics for the Russian military presence in different parts of the world. Putin's move to reorganize his cabinet demonstrates a shift in the establishment and a likely preparation for additional military projects. Mr. Belousov's economic background will make the Russian economy further dependent on the military-industrial complex and increase the militarization of Russian society. It remains to be seen how this will affect the Russian population and the discontent that continues to simmer as the war wages on (see Eurasia Daily Monitor, January 9, February 29).

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## UKRAINIAN AMERICAN VETERANS



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- ◆ Attend religious memorial services of your choice.
- ◆ Fly the U.S. Flag at half-staff until noon.
- ◆ Spend some time listening to a veteran.
- ◆ Visit local memorials.



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## NEWSBRIEFS

(Continued from page 2)

### Some convicts may serve in military

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on May 17 signed into law a bill allowing for convicts under certain circumstances to serve in the armed forces as Kyiv deals with a military personnel shortage amid Russia's ongoing invasion. Parliament approved the bill on May 8 after the government dropped its opposition to the move. Kyiv has sharply criticized Moscow for recruiting convicts from prison to fight in the war in exchange for a release from their sentences. Reports in recent months say former prisoners have committed serious crimes across the country after they served in the war. (RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service)

### New high-ranked military officer in Belarus

Belarus's authoritarian ruler Alyaksandr Lukashenka on May 23 appointed Maj. Gen. Paval Muraveyka to the post of the chief of the Belarusian Armed Forces' General Staff. Mr. Muraveyka's predecessor, Viktar Hulevich, 55, was relieved of his duties on May 10 for what was officially called "his age." Before the appointment, Mr. Muravey-

ka, 52, served as the first deputy of the country's Security Council. Mr. Muraveyka has been under European Union sanctions since December 2023 over Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Belarus has provided logistical assistance to Russia's armed forces to attack Ukraine. (RFE/RL's Belarus Service)

### Russian ship sank in Crimea

The investigative group Conflict Intelligence Team (CIT) on May 23 confirmed that a Ukrainian missile attack four days earlier hit a Cyclone missile carrier ship belonging to Russia's Black Sea fleet in Crimea, after which the vessel sank. CIT did not specify how seriously the vessel was damaged. The Karakurt-class corvette joined the fleet six months earlier. Russia has not confirmed the loss of the vessel and no information has been made public about possible casualties among the ship's crew. Since Russia launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, several Russian military vessels have been damaged or destroyed by Ukrainian attacks. (RFE/RL's Russian Service)

### Suspected Russia-linked saboteurs arrested

Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk said in a televised interview on May 20 that his

country's authorities had arrested nine people suspected of saboteur activities under the supervision of Russian secret services. According to Mr. Tusk, the suspects, who are citizens of Belarus, Ukraine and Poland, planned acts of sabotage in Poland and Lithuania. Mr. Tusk called the situation "very serious," adding that similar saboteur actions were planned by Russian secret services in Latvia and Sweden. Polish President Andrzej Duda said earlier that several recent serious fires in the country may have been caused by arson attacks. (RFE/RL's Russian Service)

### Further restrictions on Russian visitors

Norway has announced further restrictions for the entry of Russian citizens into the Nordic country in reaction to Moscow's ongoing war in Ukraine. Oslo first introduced restrictions on visas for Russian visitors in the spring of 2022, after the start of Russia's unprovoked full-scale invasion. Under the new restrictions, police can

refuse the entry of certain Russian citizens, the Justice Ministry said in a statement. "The decision ... is in line with the Norwegian approach of standing by allies and partners in the reactions against Russia's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine," it said. The new rules take effect on May 29. (RFE/RL)

### Putin appoints new deputy defense minister

Russian President Vladimir Putin on May 20 appointed Oleg Savelyev, the former minister on Crimean affairs, to the post of deputy defense minister less than 10 days after he replaced longtime ally Sergei Shoigu as defense chief. Former First Deputy Prime Minister Andrei Belousov succeeded Mr. Shoigu. Both Messrs. Savelyev and Belousov are politicians known as specializing in economic matters. The 58-year-old Savelyev also served as deputy minister for economic development

(Continued on page 15)

## Grain becoming...

(Continued from page 2)

assume control of up to 30 percent of the world's grain flow (RBC January 21).

Simultaneously, Russia is actively using disinformation to exploit intra-European Union tensions to bar Ukrainian grain from entering the E.U. market. Russian propagandists openly call to deepen the rift between the Hungarian, Polish and Slovak agricultural industries, on one side, and Ukraine, on the other (see Eurasia Daily Monitor, June 19, September 27, 2023; RG.ru, April 17). In effect, despite various sanctions, restrictions and disruptions in trade, the amount of Russian grain sold to the European Union in 2023 increased 10 times, reaching 180,000 tons and making Russia the fourth-largest grain exporter to the 27-member bloc. Its exports, however, are still incomparable to Ukraine's, which is the lead exporter of grain to the European Union at 1.2 million tons (RBC, December 2).

Moscow sees grain as a critical element in strengthening its partnership with Beijing. In the first quarter of 2024, Russia emerged as one of the top grain suppliers to China, earning a record revenue of \$125 million, an increase of 1.7 times from the previous year (Alta.ru, April 23). China's demand for food imports is high, and a steady and uninterrupted supply of Russian agricultural products remains crucial. The grain trade is beginning to form a fundamental pillar of the Sino-Russian partnership and is one of the few commodities that China does not have the upper hand over Russia.

Russia is also funneling more of its grain primarily to the countries in the Global South. After Moscow's full-scale invasion of Ukraine and the ensuing sanctions, Russian grain exports to Algeria grew six-fold. Exports to Saudi Arabia grew by 3.2 times. A significant share of grain exports went to Egypt (22.5 percent of overall sales) and Turkey (19.3 percent). Notably, adverse climate conditions and bad harvests pushed some countries, including Brazil and Mexico, to increase their imports of Russian grain (Finmarket.ru, July 5, 2023; Interfax, September 5, 2023).

Food exports (and fertilizers) are one of Russia's best advantages in dealing with the economically unstable countries of the Global South, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa. After February 2022 both African experts and international organizations, such as the United Nations, were terrified that Russian and Ukrainian foodstuffs and fertilizers would not reach the African continent promptly (African Development and Bank Group, May 20, 2022). Russia is constantly exploiting the issue of potential famine in Africa as a means to apply pres-

sure on the European Union, hinting that a possible famine could lead to a migration crisis and widespread destabilization in Europe.

Russia's intentions to increase its role in the global grain trade have led Moscow to expedite the process of increasing the role of BRICS in global operations. Two major factors are driving this approach. First, while Russia's grain exports are reportedly increasing, it is unclear whether revenues are growing proportionally. Russian sources have claimed that the average return on equity for grain production has been progressively diminishing. For instance, in 2021, returns stood at 63.4 percent, but by 2023 they had sunk to 28.1 percent. This slump was caused by a range of factors, including sanctions, which have increased the costs of foreign-produced machinery and spare parts, and growing wages and salaries in Russia's agricultural industry (Morvesti.ru, October 12, 2023).

Second, Russia continues to face problems selling and transporting its grain abroad. To maximize profits, in September 2023 the Russian Ministry of Agriculture "recommended" that Russia not sell its grain for less than \$270 per ton (while the market price was \$245). Reportedly, this resulted in the fallout of an Egypt-Russian deal for the sale of 480,000 tons of grain when Cairo refused to buy overpriced Russian grain and opted instead for French grain (RBC, September 21, 2023). In effect, negative comments about the growing problems that Russia's agricultural industry faces have become commonplace. Alexander Yaroshenko, head of the agricultural holding group "Ural-Don," among others, has said that, if this situation continues for the next four years, Russia should forget about remaining a top global grain exporter (Zerno.ru, October 3, 2023). Overall, Moscow is trying to speed up grain cooperation among BRICS countries to sustain mounting war expenses, prop up domestic grain producers and remain a dominant player in the international market.

The Kremlin's obsessive desire to change the so-called "rules-based order" has found a new dimension. Using grain and fertilizer, which play to Russia's comparative advantage, Moscow seeks to realign the global financial system and international trade. Russian experts claim that the first step in this direction will be to empower the BRICS countries and compromise the West's ability to make critical decisions, including about suppliers, in the global grain trade (RIA Novosti, April 11).

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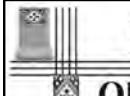
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- Serving the tri-state area
- 5 minutes from St. Andrew Ukrainian Cemetery  
in South Bound Brook, NJ

## NEWSBRIEFS

(Continued from page 14)

and as the auditor at the Audit Chamber, a parliamentary group that serves as a financial watchdog. (RFE/RL)

### 13 years in prison for distributing leaflets

A court in Siberia on May 23 sentenced a teenager to 13 years in prison for distributing

leaflets containing the symbol for the Free Russia Legion, which is fighting alongside Ukrainian armed forces against Russian troops. A military court in Novosibirsk sentenced Vladimir Belkovich, 19, after finding him guilty of treason, attempting to participate in a terrorist group's activities, and inducing an individual to commit terrorism. Mr. Belkovich was initially arrested in July last year and handed 15 days in jail for distributing leaflets propagating the

Free Russia Legion, which comprises mainly Russian citizens. (RFE/RL's Siberia. Realities)

### Facilities closed in Tatarstan over drone attack

Authorities in Russia's Republic of Tatarstan on May 23 suspended operations at several industrial facilities and airports in Kazan, the capital, and Nizhnekamsk "for security reasons" over "possible drone attacks." Last week, the two airports were

shut for several hours after authorities said "a Ukrainian drone" was shot down over Tatarstan on May 15. Last month, drones hit an oil refinery in Tatarstan and a dormitory in the Alabuga special economic zone in Nizhnekamsk that hosts more than 20 industrial enterprises, including chemical, mechanical engineering and metal treatment factories. It also reportedly houses a facility producing drones. (RFE/RL's Idel. Realities)

## White House...

(Continued from page 1)

the U.S. to allow Kyiv to fire weapons into Russian territory.

"The congressional lawmakers emphasized that, in order for Ukraine to better defend itself against Russia, the United States should authorize the use of weapons by Ukraine that would allow its military to strike strategic targets within Russia," the letter said.

Some \$95 billion of Western military aid to Ukraine has been allocated to Kyiv, Mr. Austin said at the latest contact group meeting at the U.S. military base in Ramstein, Germany. The 22nd meeting this week said the group is doing its best "to meet Ukraine's most urgent needs."

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelens-

ky recently asked for more air defense systems amid constant Russian attacks on civilian targets and critical infrastructure that has seen rolling power blackouts reintroduced due to power stations being struck.

Kyiv is expected to receive F-16 jets next month after months of training for pilots and maintenance personnel. That move could help Ukraine erase Russia's air superiority over the battlefield.

Mr. Zelenskyy said this week that Russia has about 300 active aircraft in the skies and that five Su-25 bombers were shot down this month. Russia's last missile carrier vessel in the Black Sea, the Cyclone, was reportedly sunk with a surface drone, the Ukrainian Armed Forces said on the morning of May 23.

Momentum is also gaining on giving frozen Russian assets to Ukraine, which would



U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken (right) is seen on May 18.

## Ukraine sees...

(Continued from page 1)

that the time had come for the country's public broadcaster to take a step away from the telemarathon.

"In my opinion, this is a civilized divorce that was achieved as part of the expansion of content production. We have received written guarantees from the National Security and Defense Council that we are not violating the Security Council's decision [on regulating news broadcasting in Ukraine]. The *Suspilne* team is ready to resume round-the-clock broadcasting on the First [Pershyyi] Channel. I hope we will succeed," Ms. Ostapa said.

Initially, the telemarathon included the parliamentary channel Rada, *Suspilne* and four commercial channels – *ICTV/STB*, *1+1*, *Inter* and *Ukraine 24*, which are controlled by or closely tied to oligarchs Viktor Pinchuk, Ihor Kolomoyskiy, Dmytro Firtash and Rinat Akhmetov, respectively.

The initiative was launched at the onset of the invasion to provide timely, accurate continuous news coverage. Over time, however, public trust in the telemarathon has fallen. As of the beginning of February, 36 percent of Ukrainians trust information broadcast by telemarathon participants, while 47 percent said they do not, according to a survey conducted by the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology (KIIS).

"The idea of the United News telethon was widely supported in 2022, but since 2023 there has been a steady decline in trust, and as of February 2024, we have recorded a negative balance of trust and distrust for the first time. Thus, in December 2023, 43 percent trusted the United News telethon, while 38 percent did not. As of the beginning of February 2024, the share of those who trusted it dropped to 36 percent. At the same time, the share of those who distrusted the organization increased to 47 percent," the KIIS said.

The U.S. State Department included the telemarathon in its 2023 report on human rights violations in Ukraine. The document's text was published on the State Department's website in April.

The State Department said that both Ukraine's Constitution and its legislation

provide for freedom of expression, including for the press and other media, but it said that authorities in Ukraine do not always respect these rights.

But the State Department also recognized that the implementation of martial law in Ukraine allowed for restrictions on the media and press freedom.

"For example, the national television marathon – a rotating platform of channels that follow the government line in covering the war – has enabled unprecedented control over prime-time television news," the document says.

"In 2022, six TV channels began broadcasting around the clock in Ukrainian to convey a single wartime message to the public. Each of the six stations that produced content had several hours a day; they produced their own content but coordinated it with each other to avoid broadcasting the same commentators," the report says.

It noted that participants of the telemarathon mutually agreed to limit the number of politicians, political commentators and public figures appearing on air. But it also pointed out the concerns of media experts who believe a single television news broadcast could ultimately make it much easier for the government to take control over television news broadcasting.

"Television stations perceived to be affiliated with opposition parties, including Channel 5, *Pryamyi*, and *Espresso*, did not participate in the merged broadcasting, although these three channels voluntarily showed the other channels' 24-hour programs occasionally. If a channel refused to reduce its own broadcasting to less than 12 hours to accommodate the live broadcast, officials responded by removing the network from the national digital terrestrial frequencies. In June 2022, *Pryamyi* and Channel 5 filed a lawsuit against the State Concern for Radio, Television and Radio Broadcasting and the State Service for Special Communications and Information Protection of Ukraine. As of the end of the year, these three channels were operating on a paid basis on the Internet," the State Department report says.

In addition, the State Department report states that "the government banned, blocked or imposed sanctions on media

outlets and individual journalists who were considered a threat to national security or who expressed positions that the government believed undermined the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity."

"Investigative journalists who criticized the authorities were sometimes targeted by negative social media campaigns, sometimes through government-friendly channels. Other practices, including self-censorship, continued to affect media freedom," the State Department said.

Yaroslav Yurchyshyn, chairman of the parliamentary Committee on Freedom of Speech, told *Suspilne* that the U.S. State Department "clearly stated that the telemarathon reflects the government's line" on news in Ukraine.

"That is, it stated that in the United News marathon it is critically important to have more balanced information, that is, to have critical assessments of what the government and the authorities are doing. They

also pointed out that the disconnection of certain channels from the airwaves, including *Pryamyi*, Channel 5 and *Espresso*, was not justified, and this could also be seen as a violation of freedom of speech, as we knew ourselves. And in this case, the Ukrainian authorities have once again lost the chance to level the playing field and not have these comments," Mr. Yurchyshyn said.

He said the authorities must develop an information policy to "balance the presentation of material."

"Allow those channels that were cut off to broadcast, or wait for even harsher statements. This is not a recommendation yet; it is a call for attention, but we understand that if the situation remains unchanged the statements will most likely be more severe, and criticism of non-compliance with certain standards in the field of freedom of speech may be a condition for receiving or not receiving certain assistance," Mr. Yurchyshyn said.



With deep sorrow we announce that

**Jaroslaw Stadnyk**

passed away on May 10, 2024.

He was born on October 1, 1926 in Chernykhivtsi, Ukraine

Jaroslaw had received his education in art in 1950 at the Academy of Arts in Rome, Italy, where he also participated in exhibitions of the organizations of international artists.

After arriving to the US, Jaroslaw served for two years in the US army, after which he continued his higher art's studies at the university in Ann Arbor, Michigan. After receiving a teaching position, he continued his studies and graduated in 1956 with a diploma in fine arts (drawing and painting).

He held personal exhibitions of oil and pastel paintings in various cities across the US, Canada and Australia.

Left in deep sorrow: wife Ulana, son Mark with his wife Patty and their sons Spencer and Kenny; daughter Irena Khrysanta; son Paul with his wife Isabel and children Sebastian, Bea and Emilia; extended family in Ukraine, USA, Canada and Australia.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to UNWLA Branch 56 (UNWLA Branch 56, c/o Inia Tunstall, 4000 Aston Garden Drive, Venice, FL, 34292)



May his memory be eternal.

## UNA Branch 414 holds 19th annual Easter egg hunt

by Gloria Horbaty

NEW HAVEN, Conn. – Members of the Ukrainian National Association (UNA) Branch 414 held their 19th annual Easter egg hunt on the grounds of St. Michael's Ukrainian Catholic Church in New Haven, Conn., on March 24.

Although it was a cold and windy day, children aged 1 to 12 had fun collecting plastic eggs and candy.

All participants received a UNA backpack filled with candy and gifts.

Winners in three age groups received a large chocolate bunny.

Tatianna Kebalo, age 4, collected 53 eggs and took home the chocolate bunny.

Assisting Branch Secretary and UNA Fraternal Advisory Board Advisor Gloria Horbaty were branch members Halia Lodynky and Donald Horbaty.



Halia Lodynky

**Tatianna Kebalo, age 4, collected 53 eggs and took home the chocolate bunny that was presented to her by Gloria Horbaty.**



Halia Lodynky

**Members of Branch 414 of the Ukrainian National Association take part in an Easter egg hunt at St. Michael's Ukrainian Catholic Church in New Haven, Conn., on March 24.**

## SUMA...

(Continued from page 10)

anniversary. The members in attendance were extremely pleased that one of SUMA's founders – former president, CEO and honorary chairman Volodymyr Kozicky – is still a vibrant contributor to SUMA operations.

This year Mr. Kozicky will reach his own special milestone and will celebrate his 100th birthday. Additionally, SUMA congratulated Chief Operating Officer Ihor Makarenko on 40 years of service for SUMA FCU. He was presented with an award from the Ukrainian American Credit Union Association (UACUA) and a gift signed by all SUMA employees (an authenticated framed photograph of Chuck Bednarik of the National Football League's Philadelphia Eagles in an infamous moment after he laid out and stood over Frank Gifford of the Giants).

Also recognized and presented with a gift was Manager and Loan Officer Kristine Didyk-Skalski for her 35 years of continuous service with the credit union. The members sadly noted the passing of the long-term manager of the Spring Valley Branch, Julie Szozda, who will always be fondly remembered.

Treasurer and COO Ihor Makarenko provided additional 2023 financial details in his report to the membership, which can be found on the SUMA FCU website at [www.sumafcu.org/annual-meeting-for-2023](http://www.sumafcu.org/annual-meeting-for-2023). Mark Pawliczko, SUMA FCU loan director, reported 264 loans were approved for a

total of \$52 million.

Greetings were acknowledged from Bishop Paul Chomnycky, O.S.B.M., and Michael Sawkiw, Jr., the director of the Ukrainian National Informational Service (UNIS) in Washington, D.C. In-person greetings were presented by Michael Kapitula (president of the Ukrainian Youth Association in Yonkers, N.Y.), Tymish Hankewicz (president of the Yonkers branch of Plast Ukrainian Scout Organization), and Valentin Labunsky (publisher and editor-in-chief of Nova Gazeta).

The following directors were ending their terms this year: Lubomyr Shchur, John Olijarczyk and Steven Kapitula. Similarly, Basil Kocur, a member of the credit union committee, also ended his term. The nominating committee, headed by Orest Kozicky, offered a proposition to re-elect the named individuals to an additional term and the members present unanimously voted in favor of the slate as presented.

In closing, Mr. Kozicky expressed his gratitude to the staff of SUMA FCU for their professionalism in service to the credit union's membership. He also thanked SUMA FCU's members for their continued trust and confidence in the credit union as a financial partner. Lastly, he wished for a quick and successful end to the war in Ukraine and the safe return home of all the defenders as well as all the Ukrainian refugees. Very Rev. Kiril Angelov closed the annual meeting with a benediction and a prayer for Ukraine followed by everyone in attendance singing the Ukrainian national anthem.

## Ukrainian American Heritage Foundation to hold 35th annual Folk Dance Workshop

by Paula Holoviak

LEHIGHTON, Pa. – The 35th annual Ukrainian Folk Dance Workshop, sponsored by the Ukrainian American Heritage Foundation of the Lower Anthracite Region (UAHF), will be held at the Ukrainian Homestead on July 1-5.

The camp runs daily from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and includes dance instruction, folk singing, sports, crafts and swimming. Beginner instruction is offered to children aged 7 and older, and advanced workshop instruction is available for experienced dancers aged 11 and older. The workshop is under the artistic direction of Roman Mykyta.

The camp will conclude with a performance on July 6 at 7 p.m. That performance is open to the public and free of charge. This year's performance is dedicated to the children of Ukraine.

More information on the camp can be obtained by contacting Paula Holoviak at 570-708-1992 or Sandra Duda at 610-377-7750, or by emailing Ms. Holoviak [holoviak@kutztown.edu](mailto:holoviak@kutztown.edu). Forms and information are also available online at [www.ukrhomestead.com](http://www.ukrhomestead.com).

The camp is supported by the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency, through its regional arts funding partnership, Pennsylvania Partners in the Arts (PPA). State government funding for the arts depends upon an annual appropriation by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and



Sandra Duda

**Assistant instructors Colleen Prince and Joseph Hutzayluk perform a traditional Ukrainian dance at the Ukrainian Homestead.**

support from the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency. PPA is administered in the region by the Lehigh Valley Community Foundation.

The Ukrainian Homestead has been owned and operated by the Central Executive Committee of the Organization for the Rebirth of Ukraine (known by the Ukrainian-based acronym ODWU) since 1958.

## Protesters...

(Continued from page 3)

tated after fighting in the Kremenna Forest in the Luhansk region of the country.

Minnesota-based Protez Foundation will provide him with a prosthetic. The non-profit group has an office in the western-most region of Zakarpattia in the town of Svalyava. The foundation's website says that 59,000 Ukrainians require prosthetics.

A documentary film about the first 20 days of Russia's siege of Mariupol, co-produced by the Public Broadcasting System, won an Academy Award this year.

That documentary is based on the daily dispatches from Associated Press correspondent Mstyslav Chernov, who managed to flee the city with his crew as Russian forces descended on it. Yet many others remained behind to report longer.

Before the full-scale invasion, about a half million people resided in the region's second-largest city, which is home to the country's two largest steel and iron works.



Mark Raczkiewycz

**Oleksandr Shulyk, 23, of the 12th Azov Special Forces Brigade of the National Guard and a native of Kropyvnytskyi (formerly Kirovohrad), attends a rally in Chicago on May 19 in memory of his comrades in arms. He is waiting for a prosthetic for his left arm, a procedure that will be performed at the Protez Foundation in Minnesota.**

When the Russian siege began in early March 2022, "the fighting had seriously impaired critical infrastructure, including electricity, running water, heating systems and telecommunications, bringing the city to its knees," Human Rights Watch said this year.

The group's investigation found that 4,844 buildings were destroyed or damaged during the siege.

"A clear war crime" that Russia committed during that time was dropping two 500-kilogram bombs on a theater on March 16, 2022, that was sheltering civilians, Amnesty International says.



Mark Raczkiewycz

**Protesters hang a banner atop the Tryzub restaurant in the Ukrainian Village neighborhood of Chicago on May 19.**

## Ukrainian pro sports update

by Ihor N. Stelmach

# Ukraine dominates U-18 MMA European Championships

The 2024 GAMMA European Championships took place in Vysoke Tatry, Slovakia, from May 16-19. The MMA tournament was organized by the Global Association of Mixed Martial Arts (GAMMA).

Competitions in the U-10/U-12/U-14, U-16 and U-18 age groups were held on the first day with Ukraine topping the medal table with 28 gold, 23 silver and five bronze medals. Ukrainians won 16 gold medals in the youngest category, eight gold in U-16 and four gold medals in U-18. Ukraine added six medals (two gold) in the senior competition, finishing with 62 total medals, good for first place overall, well ahead of the Czech Republic's 35 total medals.

### Bilodid flashing a new killer smile

A 16-year-old Daria Bilodid won the 2017 European Judo Championships in Warsaw, Poland. She competed in the 48-kilogram weight class and it was the start of a phenomenal run of victories in the senior ranks. In 2018 she won both the senior and junior worlds. One year later, she won the European and world titles, making her a double world and continental champion at 18.

The 2021 Tokyo Olympics required intense training and preparation, full of extreme pressure. The incredibly competitive and goal-driven young lady dedicated herself to achieving her ultimate objective of Olympic gold. Unfortunately, her goal was not realized and the disappointment was evident, though she did take home an Olympic bronze medal.

After Tokyo, Bilodid did not compete for nine months, returning to the mat in Bulgaria at the 2022 European Championships in a new weight category. After five years at 48 kilograms, a change was in order and expected, creating a fresh buzz and new excitement around the Ukrainian judoka. What was not expected, however, was a jump of two weight classes when she came to Sofia, Bulgaria, and competed at 57 kilograms for the first time.

After debuting in Sofia, Bilodid went on to compete 16 times at 57 kilograms without winning a single gold medal. The champion faced a series of challenges, but she never veered from her path and was completely committed to achieving her goal. She won five bronze medals at Grand Slam,

World Masters and Grand Prix events, but always responded positively to gaps in her game with a willingness to improve and continue working hard.

The dedication and effort proved worthwhile in Zagreb, Croatia, at the 2024 European Championships, when on the first day of the competition Bilodid finally won a major title once again, her first major victory since Paris 2020 (IJF Grand Slam) or the 2019 Worlds. Her reaction for all to see was to shine with a wide smile. Bilodid hugged her coach, Svetlana Kuznetsova, and her mother, radiantly cheerful for the first time in a long while.

A photographer present at the 2024 European Championships described Bilodid's smile as a "face illustrating the pure joy that can only be felt when something was strived for in such a totally committed way." Emanuele DiFeliciantonio, a regular at IJF events, said it had been a long time since he saw Bilodid so happy.

Hopefully, it was the start of a whole new collection of gold-winning performances from a Ukrainian prodigy who never gives up and vividly demonstrates to the judo world what a true champion's mindset and smile look like.

### Russia and Ukraine reject Macron's ceasefire plea

Vladimir Putin and Volodymyr Zelensky both rejected French President Emmanuel Macron's request for a ceasefire during the upcoming 2024 Paris Summer Olympics.

In a May 17 interview with AFP, Zelensky wondered, "Who can guarantee that Russia will not use this time to bring its forces to our territory? We don't trust Putin. We are against any truce that plays into the hands of the enemy. If it's a land truce, they will have an advantage and no one will be able to stop them."

Putin's argument against an Olympic truce was based on his belief that "today's international sporting officials are themselves disobeying the principles of the Olympic charter," arguing that sports federations are not allowing Russian athletes to compete under their flag and anthem. Putin said the actions are "violations against us" and said this was no way to reach an agreement.



<https://dniprokids.com>

**Steven Carr, founder and chairman of the Dnipro Kids charity who lives in Perth, Australia, was awarded the Royal Scottish Geographical Society's Livingstone Medal on May 12 for his work with orphans from Dnipropetrovsk, Ukraine.**

### Dnipro Kids chairman receives award

Dnipro Kids Chairman Steven Carr was awarded the Royal Scottish Geographical Society's (RSGS) Livingstone Medal for his charity work helping Ukrainian orphan families. Carr, currently serving as a Perth and Kinross councilor in Scotland, earned the honor for his outstanding services of a humanitarian nature.

The Hibernian F.C. (also known as Hibs, a professional football club in the Scottish Premiership) fan founded Dnipro Kids after the club played Ukrainian side Dnipro in the UEFA Cup in 2005. Since then, the charity has supported orphans in Dnipropetrovsk, Ukraine. In March 2022, one month after Russia invaded Ukraine, Mr. Carr drove a bus full of Ukrainian orphans and their guardians across Europe to safety in Scotland.

Mr. Carr was presented with the award by the Royal Scottish Geographical Society on May 12.

In accepting the award, Carr expressed pride in being involved with the charity

since 2005. He said he is "privileged to have been involved in bettering the lives of hundreds of Ukrainian children during that time." He did not hesitate to ensure their safety when Ukraine was dragged into a devastating war. He promised to continue doing all he could to help Ukraine's children, whether in Scotland or Ukraine.

### Rebrov confirms Euro 2024 squad

Ukrainian national football team coach Serhiy Rebrov on May 17 confirmed his 26-man squad that will be competing at Euro 2024. Ukraine's first match is on June 17 against Romania. Rebrov's side will prepare for the tournament by playing friendly away matches against Germany and Poland in early June.

Rebrov named no uncapped players, choosing to go with more experienced veterans. The two youngest players, Heorhiy Sudakov and Illya Zabarnyi, will turn 22 in September. Ukraine's least experienced players on the squad are Volodymyr Brazhko and Maksym Taloverov, each with two caps.

Four on Ukraine's Euro 2024 team play in the English Premier League: Mykhailo Mudryk (Chelsea), Vitaliy Mykolenko (Everton), Oleksandr Zinchenko (Arsenal) and Zabarnyi (Bournemouth). Zinchenko will be the team's captain.

Ukraine's roster for Euro 2024 is as follows:

Goalkeepers – Heorhiy Bushchan, Anatoliy Trubin, Andriy Lunin  
Defenders – Yukhym Konoply, Bohdan Mukhaylichenko, Maksym Taloverov, Illya Zabarnyi, Vitaliy Mykolenko, Valeriy Bondar, Mykola Matviienko, Oleksandr Tymchyk, Oleksandr Svatok

Midfielders – Serhiy Sydorchuk, Taras Stepanenko, Ruslan Malinovskiy, Mykhailo Mudryk, Volodymyr Brazhko, Viktor Tsyhankov, Oleksandr Zinchenko, Mykola Shaparenko, Heorhiy Sudakov

Attackers – Andriy Yarmolenko, Roman Yaremchuk, Artem Dovbyk, Oleksandr Zubkov, Vladyslav Vanat.

(Based on reporting by the International Judo Federation, Inside the Games, Daily Record and From The Spot.)

*Ihor Stelmach may be reached at [ihorgenia@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ihorgenia@sbcglobal.net).*

## Examining...

(Continued from page 2)

"Ukraine," was launched in late 2022 in the wake of a successful Ukrainian counteroffensive (President.gov.ua, September 13, 2022; see Eurasia Daily Monitor, December 16, 2022). It seeded the idea to create a system of bilateral security agreements between individual NATO member states and Ukraine.

The system now evolving is built on bilateralism without the benefit of a framework agreement, such as the "Compact" proposed in 2022, which had envisaged ensuring the system's coherence. Operating by design outside NATO's framework, the planned system of more than 30 bilateral agreements lacks a coordinating body. The currently conceived system seems to lack a common strategic purpose beyond the participant countries' efforts to address Ukraine's war matériel shortages on an emergency basis. The Ramstein Group (the Ukraine Defense Contact Group) coordi-

nates material supplies to Ukraine, operating outside NATO, as will the bilateral security agreements between allied states and Ukraine. It is not yet clear how, or whether, the Ramstein Group would coordinate the execution of bilateral security agreements between allied states and Ukraine.

Allied leaders have yet to integrate these agreements into a strategy to defeat Russia in Ukraine and contain Russia in Europe. The report just released responds to Ukraine's steadily worsening military and demographic situation. It warns that "the current level of support is not sufficient to guarantee the viability of Ukraine as a sovereign and independent country." The report recommends major quantitative and qualitative changes to current policies. Recommendations are apparently addressed to putatively willing allies or ad hoc groups of allies, not to NATO "as NATO." The recommendations include the following items:

Signaling that the presence of allied ground troops inside Ukraine, even engaging Russian forces, is not off the table and

resorting to strategic ambiguity in this respect as a standard approach (apparently encouraged by French President Emmanuel Macron's recent suggestions);

Spending 0.25 percent of NATO allies' aggregate gross domestic products on military assistance to Ukraine, amounting to some \$100 billion per year (an amount coinciding with that proposed by NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg recently in a different context);

Allocating the \$300 billion in frozen Russian assets to finance Ukraine's defense and reconstruction;

Lifting restrictions on the types of weapons delivered to Ukraine and allowing the use of allied-delivered weapons on targets on Russian territory;

Creating an extended air defense shield over a clearly defined area of western Ukraine, thus allowing Ukraine's own air defense systems to be transferred from there to the frontlines or to protect cities in eastern Ukraine;

Undertaking a freedom of navigation operation and demining mission in the

Black Sea (no suggestion about persuading Turkey to allow access through the Straits, bearing in mind that Turkey has not yet offered to sign a bilateral security agreement with Ukraine);

Envisaging a possible mission of allied countries to train Ukrainian troops on Ukrainian territory (such a mission operated successfully before Russia's all-out invasion of Ukraine); and

Deploying civilian contractors or military technicians to service military equipment in Ukraine rather than sending that equipment to NATO territory for servicing.

Allied political leaders will need to consider such recommendations seriously to turn the tide of the war in Ukraine. Starting accession talks with Ukraine at the Washington summit is the twin side of a strategy to turn the tide – in both Ukraine's and NATO's favor.

*The article above is reprinted from Eurasia Daily Monitor with permission from its publisher, the Jamestown Foundation, [www.jamestown.org](http://www.jamestown.org).*

## Berinchyk wins WBO lightweight championship

Ukrainian Denys Berinchyk waited five years for a shot at the World Boxing Organization (WBO) lightweight title. He finally got his chance on May 18 in San Diego, Calif., when he took on reigning super featherweight champion Emanuel Navarette, who was making his 135-pound debut. It was Berinchyk's first bout since defeating Anthony Yigit of Sweden in 12 rounds in Poland in August 2023.

In what was called a sloppy, yet down-to-the-final bell 12-round battle, Berinchyk (19-0, 9 KO) emerged as the WBO lightweight champion when he defeated Navarette (38-2-1, 31 KO) on a historic day for Ukrainian boxing. Two judges scored the fight in Berinchyk's favor (116-112, 115-112), one judge for Navarette (116-112), giving the Ukrainian a split decision upset win. Berinchyk joined fellow countrymen Vasily Lomachenko and Oleksandr Usyk as champions from Ukraine.

Berinchyk was able to move around in the opening rounds, not allowing the Mexican to put any punches together. Those that hit their mark did not seem to affect the Ukrainian.

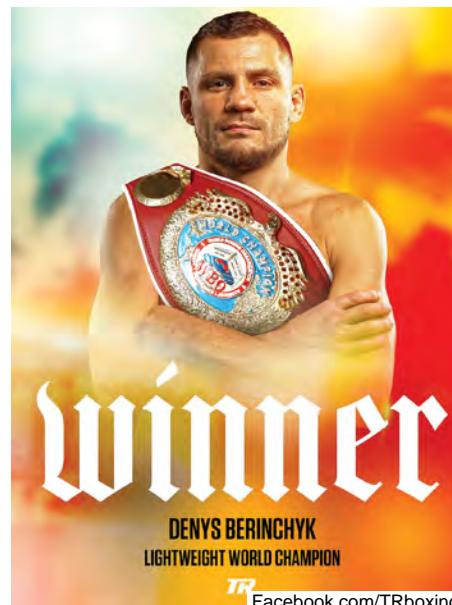
In the middle rounds, both fighters connected more, although Berinchyk's constant movement allowed him to avoid many of Navarette's shots and outbox his opponent.

The final two rounds saw Navarette have moments, but he still could not trouble Berinchyk. Fighting at a new weight class prevented the Mexican from asserting his style. Berinchyk's stymied his opponent's attacks throughout the bout, convincing two judges that he was the victor.

Possible future opponents for Berinchyk include Shakur Stevenson, Keyshawn Davis and fellow countryman Vasiliy Lomachenko.

Navarette landed a higher percentage of punches (21 to 17 percent), jabs (16 to 13 percent) and power punches (23 to 21 percent), yet he lacked the attacking power he'd displayed at lighter weights. When he did land a power punch, it did not have the same effect that it did in lower weight classes.

Navarette was described as looking bloated and lacking his usual energy with



**Ukrainian lightweight World Boxing Organization champion Denys Berinchyk won by majority decision after 12 rounds against Emmanuel Navarette of Mexico on May 18 in San Diego, Calif.**

his belly floating over his trunks, which appropriately advertised his sponsorship deal with Winchell's Donut House. He never recovered from his lethargic start.

Eight thousand miles away from Saudi Arabia where fellow countryman Oleksandr Usyk was fighting and beating Tyson Fury, the No. 9 ranked lightweight Berinchyk was bidding to become a four-weight world champion. He was plenty motivated to bring the title to his homeland Ukraine. Berinchyk described his victory in the ring as being of great importance for his career, Ukrainian boxing and the Ukrainian people.

May 18 turned out to be a huge day for Ukrainian boxing with two Ukrainian compatriots fighting and winning world titles. Berinchyk was on the same Ukrainian national boxing team with Usyk and Vasiliy Lomachenko. He won a silver medal at the 2012 London Olympics. After beating Yigit, Berinchyk traveled across the border and returned to active duty in Ukraine's Armed Forces to help defend his country.

(Based on reporting by Big Fight Weekend, ESPN and Boxing Scene.)

## Despite world champion status, some Ukrainians divided over Usyk

by Ihor N. Stelmach

People in Ukraine generally view heavyweight champion Oleksandr Usyk with admiration and pride for his boxing prowess and his humanitarian efforts since the Russian invasion. He has drawn some criticism for his attachment to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, a branch of the Orthodox community loyal to the Moscow Patriarchate. The head of the Russian Orthodox Church, Patriarch Kirill, and Russian President Vladimir Putin have argued that the shared faith of the two warring countries validates his claim that Russia and Ukraine are indivisible.

In 2021, the Crimea-born Usyk was criticized for appearing in a documentary about the Pecherska Lavra, an ancient Kyiv monastery complex once loyal to the Moscow Patriarchate. The series was produced by pro-Kremlin Ukrainian politician Viktor Medvedchuk, who was sanctioned in 2021 for allegedly financing terrorism. The Medvedchuk currently live in Russia.

In February 2022, immediately after Russia's full-scale unprovoked invasion of Ukraine began, Usyk posted an emotional appeal to Russians to call off their invasion "if you consider us brotherly people" – to some degree echoing Putin's words.

He then joined his local territorial defense unit in Kyiv and has worked tirelessly in raising awareness for Ukraine's cause, including by establishing the Usyk Foundation (<https://usykfoundation.org>) that has raised nearly \$750,000 for Ukraine's Armed Forces.

Some say he is entitled to his religious convictions and opinions, while others in Ukraine claim he may be under Russian influence. Others, however, say they've seen a change in Usyk.

### Usyk launches fundraising campaign for ambulances

The Usyk Foundation launched a major fundraising campaign to raise 1 million euros (\$1,082,090) to purchase 50 ambulances. The Foundation will raffle off three pairs of boxing gloves autographed by Usyk and an exclusive collector's box from his



Facebook.com/Trboxing

**Following the title unification bout against Tyson Fury of Great Britain on May 18 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Oleksandr Usyk became the undisputed heavyweight champion who now holds four title belts (International Boxing Organization, International Boxing Federation, World Boxing Association and World Boxing Council).**

May 18 title unification fight against Tyson Fury of Great Britain.

In an interview with Mail Online Sport the International Boxing Federation (IBF), World Boxing Association (WBA) and World Boxing Council (WBC) heavyweight champion hopes to help his fellow countrymen, to give back to his native homeland, especially after receiving "many words of support from all over the world" ahead of his clash with Fury.

He said that he begins each morning with a check of how many rockets have landed in Ukraine before contacting his family to make certain they are still alive. He specifically searches for news updates about missiles attacking larger cities, such as Kyiv and Kharkiv.

The Usyk Foundation is a charitable organization created to assist the Ukrainian Armed Forces and Ukrainians adversely affected by Russian aggression. The foundation's leadership is looking to provide Ukrainian military units with vehicles and equipment they need to continue defending Ukraine. The foundation is also trying to cover the basic needs of affected Ukrainian civilians.

In an exclusive interview with Mail Sport, Usyk spoke about the ongoing conflict and shared his thoughts heading into his bout with Fury.

"At this very moment, we are fighting for our lives. Either we are going to be free or

(Continued on page 19)



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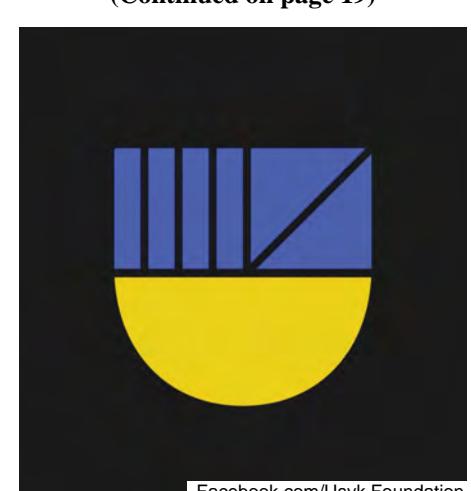
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The logo for the Usyk Foundation, which produces monthly reports of its activities supporting Ukraine's Armed Forces on its website, <https://usykfoundation.org>.

# OUT & ABOUT

May 29 Stanford, CA	Presentation by Ambassador Kristjan Prikk and Michael McFaul, "Russia's War in Ukraine and its Implication on European Security: Why Should America Care?" Stanford University, <a href="https://creees.stanford.edu">https://creees.stanford.edu</a>	June 16 Horsham, PA	Father's Day Heritage Fest, featuring Ukrainian cultural program, Ukrainian American Sports Center - Tryzub, <a href="http://www.tryzub.org">www.tryzub.org</a> or 267-664-3857
May 30 New York	Retrospective, "Teura: A Celebration of the Life and Legacy of Sofia Yablonska," World Federation of Ukrainian Women's Organizations, Ukrainian Institute of America, <a href="http://www.ukrainianinstitute.org">www.ukrainianinstitute.org</a>	June 16 Horsham, PA	U.S. Amateur Soccer Association Region 1 Open and Amateur (men's, women's over 30, etc.) National Cups Championship Finals, and Northern Pennsylvania Soccer League match between the Philadelphia Ukrainian Nationals and the PA Classics, Ukrainian American Sports Center - Tryzub, <a href="http://www.tryzub.org">www.tryzub.org</a>
June 8 Jamison, PA	47th annual golf outing, Ukrainian American Sports Center - Tryzub, The Bucks Club, <a href="http://www.tryzub.org">www.tryzub.org</a>	June 17 New York	Performance, "Mariupol: Diaries of War and the Tree of Life," Yara Arts Group, Bohemian National Hall, <a href="http://www.yaraartsgroup.net">www.yaraartsgroup.net</a>
June 8 Maplewood, NJ	Maplewood Ukrainian Day 2024, picnic featuring cultural program, food items and vendors, Holy Ascension Ukrainian Orthodox Church, <a href="https://ukraineorthodoxchurchmaplewood.com">https://ukraineorthodoxchurchmaplewood.com</a>	June 18 Jersey City, NJ	Performance, "Mariupol: Diaries of War and the Tree of Life," Yara Arts Group, Jersey City Theater Center, <a href="http://www.yaraartsgroup.net">www.yaraartsgroup.net</a>
June 9 New York	Performance, "Unheard Voices: An Immigrant's Dream," featuring Caravan Duo, presented by Encompass New Opera Theatre, The Greene Space, <a href="http://www.EncompassTheatre.org">www.EncompassTheatre.org</a> or 212-594-7880	June 22 Chicago	Benefit Gala, Ukrainian Institute of Modern Art, <a href="http://www.uima-chicago.org">www.uima-chicago.org</a>
June 11 Lancaster, PA	Performance, "Daniel," Ukrainian American Senior Citizens Association in Philadelphia, Sight and Sound Theater, 215-699-6068		
June 14-16 Yonkers, NY	Yonkers Ukrainian Heritage Festival, St. Michael the Archangel Ukrainian Catholic Church, <a href="http://www.yonkersukrainianfestival.org">www.yonkersukrainianfestival.org</a>		

Entries in "Out and About" are listed free of charge. Priority is given to events advertised in *The Ukrainian Weekly*. However, we also welcome submissions from all our readers. Items will be published at the discretion of the editors and as space allows. Please send e-mail to [mdubas@ukrweekly.com](mailto:mdubas@ukrweekly.com).

## Ukrainian boxer...

(Continued from page 1)

by the bell in the ninth round.

The two previously undefeated boxers went toe-to-toe after a six-month delay because Tyson had claimed he suffered a cut to his eye during a sparring session while training.

Southpaw Usyk (22-0, 14 knockouts), 37, entered the ring adorned in kozak attire that resembled a hetman, or leader of the warriors of Ukraine, who roamed the country's vast steppes in the 15th-18th centuries.

His promoter, Alex Krassiyuk, said that "this outfit was inspired by those leaders. ... He [Usyk] has culture in his heart; ... it's not just an outfit, it's his mindset."

Based on his moniker – "the Irish traveler" – Fury (34-0-2) entered dressed in green and looked slimmer and quicker on his feet than usual after the prolonged training period for the reported \$100 million prize, 70 percent of which he allegedly received regardless of the fight's outcome.

Usyk, weighing in at a career-high 232 pounds, won the early rounds, mostly with body blows as his adversary appeared to

have prepared for Usyk's boxing style.

The tempo was quick and the Ukrainian's opponent, weighing 252 pounds with a six-inch height and seven-inch wingspan advantage, started to turn the tide in the middle rounds.

Fury kept Usyk at a distance with swift left jabs, followed by one-two combinations with sneaky right hands that peppered the Ukrainian's face and body – the latter of which seemed to aim at his liver, a classical boxing blow that would send any fighter to the canvas.

The Crimean native was visibly hurt in the sixth round and had his right eye cut, but in the eighth round Usyk fought back and bled the British boxer's nose as the pace of the bout heated up.

At stake for the two boxing titans, both of whom are at the pinnacle of their careers, was to unite the four major titles in their division: the World Boxing Council (WBC) belt held by Fury, and the World Boxing Association (WBA), International Boxing Federation (IBF) and World Boxing Organization (WBO) belts held by the Ukrainian.

Usyk's superior agility led to a standing knockdown count in the ninth round for the previously undefeated British boxer who was visibly rattled and was seen wobbling across the ring after a series of combinations.

He was saved by the bell at the eighth count and never recovered.

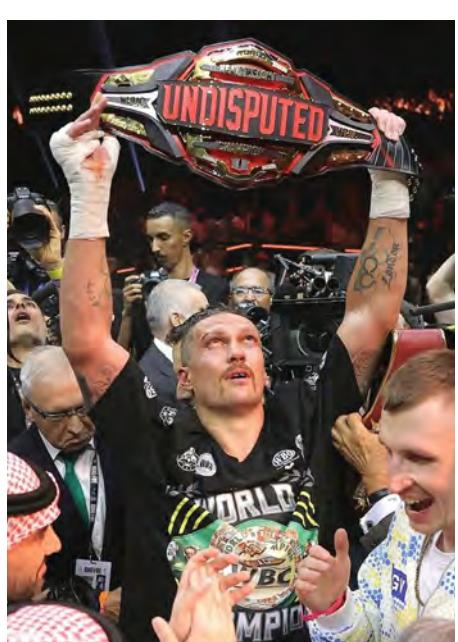
Usyk won the ensuing rounds, giving him a 115-112 and 114-113 victory with two judges, while the third judge scored the fight 114-113 in Fury's favor.

The 12-round fisticuff duel that went the distance saw Usyk stay on the offensive the entire bout, often cornering his opponent, who appeared to lure him into counter-strike combinations with no significant affect.

Despite round after round of jeers and taunting from Fury, who often put his hands behind his back or stuck his neck out in front of the Crimean native, Usyk stayed focused and composed.

In a sign of respect for the Ukrainian, Fury kissed Usyk on the forehead after the final bell, but afterward said he thought he won the fight.

"You know, his country is at war, so people are siding with a country at war. But make no mistake, I won this fight in my



Official Facebook page of Oleksandr Usyk  
Ukrainian heavyweight boxer Oleksandr Usyk (center) of Crimea enters the ring dressed in kozak attire before his fight against Briton Tyson Fury in Saudi Arabia on May 18 to unite all four major belts in their division.



Mark Raczkiewycz

A standing-room-only crowd in Chicago watches heavyweight boxers Oleksandr Usyk of Ukraine and Tyson Fury of Britain fight to unite all four major belts in their division on May 18.

opinion and I'll be back," Fury said.

A rematch clause is included in their fight contract and both are obligated to box again in October.

Usyk landed 41 percent of his 407 punches, while Fury landed just 31.7 percent of his 496 punches, according to CompuBox statistics. Usyk both threw (260 to 210) and landed (122 to 95) more power punches, based on the data.

Lennox Lewis, who was the last heavyweight boxer to hold all four belts 24 years ago, was on hand to pass the "undisputed" belt on to Usyk.

"Tonight, we witnessed a cracking fight

and history made," Lewis said on X, formerly Twitter.

Usyk joined an exclusive club of heavyweight boxers who've united all four major belts: Jack Dempsey, Joe Louis, Floyd Patterson, Muhammad Ali, Mike Tyson and Lewis.

Also among the audience were former world heavyweight champion boxer Volodymyr Klitschko – whom Fury defeated – soccer legend and current Ukrainian football federation chief Andriy Shevchenko, Portuguese soccer legend Cristiano Ronaldo and Usyk's former opponent whom he defeated twice, Anthony Joshua.

## Despite...

(Continued from page 18)

we will be destroyed. I believe in Ukraine even more than myself and I do believe in myself and that I will beat Tyson Fury.

"For me, the fight is important. Winning four belts is important. Being undisputed is important. But, more importantly, it's about giving that emotion and feeling of joy to my Ukrainian people, my Ukrainian friends, my Ukrainian soldiers. It's an opportunity to share some positivity with them and I want to do that."

Usyk said the war has personally affected him, adding that his family is in Kyiv where rockets and missiles target the city almost every day. The extent of the damage cannot be accurately seen on European television, Usyk said.

Usyk said his daughter experienced a Russian rocket exploding next to her school. The students felt the building's walls shake.

(Based on reporting by Yahoo!Sport via The Guardian and Give me sport.)

Ihor Stelmach may be reached at [ihorgenia@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ihorgenia@sbcglobal.net).



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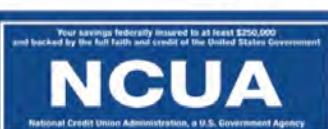
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