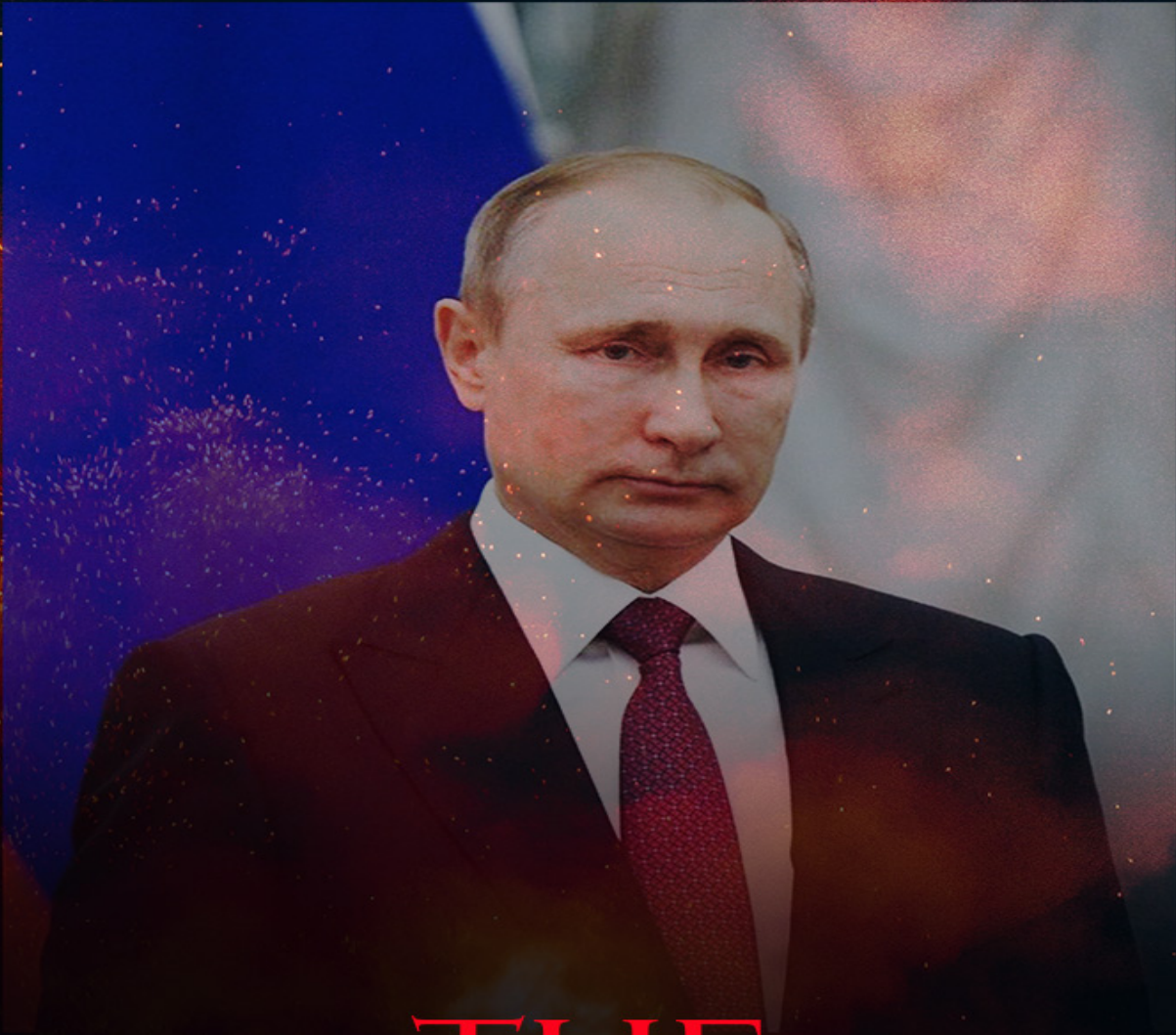


Vladimir Putin



# THE CHRONOLOGY OF TERROR

Speeches & Decisions  
That Led to War

**Vladimir Putin**

# **The Chronology of Terror: Speeches & Decisions That Led to War**

e-artnow, 2022

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# Table of Content

## **Presidential Addresses**

[Address by the President of the Russian Federation, September 21, 2022](#)

[Address by the President of the Russian Federation, February 24, 2022](#)

[Address by the President of the Russian Federation, February 21, 2022](#)

## **Executive Orders**

[Executive Order on measures implemented in Russian regions following Presidential Executive Order of October 19, 2022, on introducing martial law in the DPR, LPR and the Zaporozhye and Kherson regions, October 19, 2022](#)

[Executive Order introducing martial law in the DPR, LPR, Zaporozhye and Kherson regions, October 19, 2022](#)

[Executive Order on partial mobilisation in the Russian Federation, September 21, 2022](#)

## **Treaties**

[Signing of treaties on accession of Donetsk and Lugansk people's republics and Zaporozhye and Kherson regions to Russia, September 30, 2022](#)

[Signing of documents recognising Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics, February 21, 2022](#)

[President signed Federal Law On Ratifying the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance Between](#)

[the Russian Federation and the Donetsk People's Republic, February 22, 2022](#)

[President signed Federal Law On Ratifying the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance Between the Russian Federation and the Lugansk People's Republic, February 22, 2022](#)

[Memorandum on fulfilment of the provisions of the Protocol on the results of consultations of the Trilateral Contact Group](#)

[Minsk Protocol II. Package of Measures for the Implementation of the Minsk Agreements](#)

## **Statements**

[Joint Statement of the Leaders of the Five Nuclear-Weapons States on Preventing Nuclear War and Avoiding Arms Races, January 3, 2022](#)

[Statement by Vladimir Putin on additional steps to de-escalate the situation in Europe after the termination of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty \(INF Treaty\), October 26, 2020](#)

[The 'Putin Plan' for settling the conflict in Ukraine, September 3, 2014](#)

## **Essays**

[On the Historical Unity of Russians and Ukrainians](#)

## **Speeches and Meetings**

2022:

[Meeting with heads of CIS security and intelligence agencies, October 26, 2022](#)

[Meeting with members of the Government Coordination Council on the needs of the Russian Armed Forces, October 25, 2022](#)

[Meeting of the Security Council, October 19, 2022](#)

[Vladimir Putin answered media questions, October 14, 2022](#)

[Russia-Central Asia Summit, October 14, 2022](#)

[Meeting of the CIS Heads of State Council, October 14, 2022](#)

[Russian Energy Week International Forum plenary session, October 12, 2022](#)

[Meeting with IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi, October 11, 2022](#)

[Meeting with President of the UAE Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, October 11, 2022](#)

[Meeting with permanent members of the Security Council, October 10, 2022](#)

[Meeting with elected heads of regions, October 10, 2022](#)

[Meeting with Chairman of the Investigative Committee Alexander Bastrykin, October 9, 2022](#)

[Meeting on economic issues, October 6, 2022](#)

[Meeting with permanent members of the Security Council, September 29, 2022](#)

[Meeting with the heads of security agencies and intelligence services of the CIS countries, September 29, 2022](#)

[Gala concert devoted to the 1160th anniversary of Russian statehood, September 21, 2022](#)

[Meeting with top managers of defence industry companies, September 20, 2022](#)

[Presentation of foreign ambassadors' letters of credence, September 20, 2022](#)

[Meeting of the SCO Heads of State Council, September 16, 2022](#)

[Meeting with PRC President Xi Jinping and President of Mongolia Ukhnaagiin Khurelsukh, September 15, 2022](#)

[Meeting on economic issues, September 12, 2022](#)

[Meeting with permanent members of Security Council, September 9, 2022](#)

[Eastern Economic Forum plenary session, September 7, 2022](#)

[Visit to Patriot military-patriotic park, August 15, 2022](#)

[Meeting with President of Turkiye Recep Tayyip Erdogan, August 5, 2022](#)

[Main Naval Parade, July 31, 2022](#)

[Vladimir Putin answered media questions, July 19, 2022](#)

[Meeting with Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu, July 4, 2022](#)

[Vladimir Putin answered journalists' questions, June 29, 2022](#)

[Meeting with President of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko, June 25, 2022](#)

[BRICS Summit, June 23, 2022](#)

[Meeting with graduates of higher military schools, June 21, 2022](#)

[St Petersburg International Economic Forum Plenary session, June 17, 2022](#)

[Meeting on economic issues, June 7, 2022](#)

[Interview with Rossiya TV, June 3, 2022](#)

[Meeting with families awarded the Order of Parental Glory, June 1, 2022](#)

[Meeting with President of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko, May 23, 2022](#)

[Victory Parade on Red Square, May 9, 2022](#)

[Meeting with UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, April 26, 2022](#)

[Meeting on current situation in oil and gas sector, April 14, 2022](#)

[Joint news conference with President of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko, April 12, 2022](#)

[Meeting with President of the Russian Academy of Sciences Alexander Sergeyev, March 28, 2022](#)

[Address on National Guard Day, March 27, 2022](#)

[Meeting with Government members, March 23, 2022](#)

[Concert marking the anniversary of Crimea's reunification with Russia, March 18, 2022](#)

[Meeting with President of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko, March 11, 2022](#)

[Meeting with Government members, March 10, 2022](#)

[Meeting with Security Council permanent members, March 3, 2022](#)

[Meeting with Sergei Shoigu and Valery Gerasimov, February 27, 2022](#)

[Greetings to military personnel and veterans of Special Operations Forces, February 27, 2022](#)

[Meeting with Security Council permanent members, February 25, 2022](#)

[Meeting with representatives of Russian business circles, February 24, 2022](#)

[Greetings on Defender of the Fatherland Day, February 23, 2022](#)

[Vladimir Putin answered media questions, February 22, 2022](#)

[Security Council meeting, February 21, 2022](#)

## [2021](#)

[Vladimir Putin answered questions on the article “On the Historical Unity of Russians and Ukrainians”, July 13, 2021](#)

[8th Forum of Russian and Belarusian Regions, July 1, 2021](#)

[News conference following Russia-US talks, June 16, 2021](#)

[Russian-US talks, June 16, 2021](#)

[Interview to NBC, June 14, 2021](#)

## [2014](#)

[Opening remarks by Vladimir Putin at the Security Council meeting, July 22, 2014](#)



[Message from the President of Russia to the leaders of several European countries, April 10, 2014](#)

[Meeting in support of Crimea's accession to the Russian Federation "We are together!", March 18, 2014](#)

[Address by President of the Russian Federation, March 18, 2014](#)

[Vladimir Putin answered journalists' questions on the situation in Ukraine, March 4, 2014](#)

[The World Order: New Rules or a Game without Rules](#)

[2013](#)

[Press statement following a meeting of Russian-Ukrainian Interstate Commission, December 17, 2013](#)

[Footnotes](#)

# **PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESSES**

[Table of Contents](#)

# **Address by the President of the Russian Federation, September 21, 2022<sup>1</sup>**

[Table of Contents](#)

**President of Russia Vladimir Putin:** Friends,

The subject of this address is the situation in Donbass and the course of the special military operation to liberate it from the neo-Nazi regime, which seized power in Ukraine in 2014 as the result of an armed state coup.

Today I am addressing you – all citizens of our country, people of different generations, ages and ethnicities, the people of our great Motherland, all who are united by the great historical Russia, soldiers, officers and volunteers who are fighting on the frontline and doing their combat duty, our brothers and sisters in the Donetsk and Lugansk people’s republics, Kherson and Zaporozhye regions and other areas that have been liberated from the neo-Nazi regime.

The issue concerns the necessary, imperative measures to protect the sovereignty, security and territorial integrity of Russia and support the desire and will of our compatriots to choose their future independently, and the aggressive policy of some Western elites, who are doing their utmost to preserve their domination and with this aim in view are trying to block and suppress any sovereign and independent development centres in order to continue to aggressively

force their will and pseudo-values on other countries and nations.

The goal of that part of the West is to weaken, divide and ultimately destroy our country. They are saying openly now that in 1991 they managed to split up the Soviet Union and now is the time to do the same to Russia, which must be divided into numerous regions that would be at deadly feud with each other.

They devised these plans long ago. They encouraged groups of international terrorists in the Caucasus and moved NATO's offensive infrastructure close to our borders. They used indiscriminate Russophobia as a weapon, including by nurturing the hatred of Russia for decades, primarily in Ukraine, which was designed to become an anti-Russia bridgehead. They turned the Ukrainian people into cannon fodder and pushed them into a war with Russia, which they unleashed back in 2014. They used the army against civilians and organised a genocide, blockade and terror against those who refused to recognise the government that was created in Ukraine as the result of a state coup.

After the Kiev regime publicly refused to settle the issue of Donbass peacefully and went as far as to announce its ambition to possess nuclear weapons, it became clear that a new offensive in Donbass - there were two of them before - was inevitable, and that it would be inevitably followed by an attack on Russia's Crimea, that is, on Russia.

In this connection, the decision to start a pre-emptive military operation was necessary and the only option. The main goal of this operation, which is to liberate the whole of Donbass, remains unaltered.

The Lugansk People's Republic has been liberated from the neo-Nazis almost completely. Fighting in the Donetsk People's Republic continues. Over the previous eight years, the Kiev occupation regime created a deeply echeloned line of permanent defences. A head-on attack against them would have led to heavy losses, which is why our units, as well as the forces of the Donbass republics, are acting competently and systematically, using military equipment and saving lives, moving step by step to liberate Donbass, purge cities and towns of the neo-Nazis, and help the people whom the Kiev regime turned into hostages and human shields.

As you know, professional military personnel serving under contract are taking part in the special military operation. Fighting side by side with them are volunteer units - people of different ethnicities, professions and ages who are real patriots. They answered the call of their hearts to rise up in defence of Russia and Donbass.

In this connection, I have already issued instructions for the Government and the Defence Ministry to determine the legal status of volunteers and personnel of the military units of the Donetsk and Lugansk people's republics. It must be the same as the status of military professionals of the Russian army, including material, medical and social benefits. Special attention must be given to organising the supply of military and other equipment for volunteer units and Donbass people's militia.

While acting to attain the main goals of defending Donbass in accordance with the plans and decisions of the Defence Ministry and the General Staff, our troops have

liberated considerable areas in the Kherson and Zaporozhye regions and a number of other areas. This has created a protracted line of contact that is over 1,000 kilometres long.

This is what I would like to make public for the first time today. After the start of the special military operation, in particular after the Istanbul talks, Kiev representatives voiced quite a positive response to our proposals. These proposals concerned above all ensuring Russia's security and interests. But a peaceful settlement obviously did not suit the West, which is why, after certain compromises were coordinated, Kiev was actually ordered to wreck all these agreements.

More weapons were pumped into Ukraine. The Kiev regime brought into play new groups of foreign mercenaries and nationalists, military units trained according to NATO standards and receiving orders from Western advisers.

At the same time, the regime of reprisals throughout Ukraine against their own citizens, established immediately after the armed coup in 2014, was harshly intensified. The policy of intimidation, terror and violence is taking on increasingly mass-scale, horrific and barbaric forms.

I want to stress the following. We know that the majority of people living in the territories liberated from the neo-Nazis, and these are primarily the historical lands of Novorossiia, do not want to live under the yoke of the neo-Nazi regime. People in the Zaporozhye and Kherson regions, in Lugansk and Donetsk saw and are seeing now the atrocities perpetrated by the neo-Nazis in the [Ukrainian-] occupied areas of the Kharkov region. The descendants of Banderites and members of Nazi punitive expeditions are

killing, torturing and imprisoning people; they are settling scores, beating up, and committing outrages on peaceful civilians.

There were over 7.5 million people living in the Donetsk and Lugansk people's republics and in the Zaporozhye and Kherson regions before the outbreak of hostilities. Many of them were forced to become refugees and leave their homes. Those who have stayed – they number about five million – are now exposed to artillery and missile attacks launched by the neo-Nazi militants, who fire at hospitals and schools and stage terrorist attacks against peaceful civilians.

We cannot, we have no moral right to let our kin and kith be torn to pieces by butchers; we cannot but respond to their sincere striving to decide their destiny on their own.

The parliaments of the Donbass people's republics and the military-civilian administrations of the Kherson and Zaporozhye regions have adopted decisions to hold referendums on the future of their territories and have appealed to Russia to support this.

I would like to emphasise that we will do everything necessary to create safe conditions for these referendums so that people can express their will. And we will support the choice of future made by the majority of people in the Donetsk and Lugansk people's republics and the Zaporozhye and Kherson regions.

Friends,

Today our armed forces, as I have mentioned, are fighting on the line of contact that is over 1,000 kilometres

long, fighting not only against neo-Nazi units but actually the entire military machine of the collective West.

In this situation, I consider it necessary to take the following decision, which is fully adequate to the threats we are facing. More precisely, I find it necessary to support the proposal of the Defence Ministry and the General Staff on partial mobilisation in the Russian Federation to defend our Motherland and its sovereignty and territorial integrity, and to ensure the safety of our people and people in the liberated territories.

As I have said, we are talking about partial mobilisation. In other words, only military reservists, primarily those who served in the armed forces and have specific military occupational specialties and corresponding experience, will be called up.

Before being sent to their units, those called up for active duty will undergo mandatory additional military training based on the experience of the special military operation.

I have already signed Executive Order on partial mobilisation.

In accordance with legislation, the houses of the Federal Assembly – the Federation Council and the State Duma – will be officially notified about this in writing today.

The mobilisation will begin today, September 21. I am instructing the heads of the regions to provide the necessary assistance to the work of military recruitment offices.

I would like to point out that the citizens of Russia called up in accordance with the mobilisation order will have the



status, payments and all social benefits of military personnel serving under contract.

Additionally, the Executive Order on partial mobilisation also stipulates additional measures for the fulfilment of the state defence order. The heads of defence industry enterprises will be directly responsible for attaining the goals of increasing the production of weapons and military equipment and using additional production facilities for this purpose. At the same time, the Government must address without any delay all aspects of material, resource and financial support for our defence enterprises.

Friends,

The West has gone too far in its aggressive anti-Russia policy, making endless threats to our country and people. Some irresponsible Western politicians are doing more than just speak about their plans to organise the delivery of long-range offensive weapons to Ukraine, which could be used to deliver strikes at Crimea and other Russian regions.

Such terrorist attacks, including with the use of Western weapons, are being delivered at border areas in the Belgorod and Kursk regions. NATO is conducting reconnaissance through Russia's southern regions in real time and with the use of modern systems, aircraft, vessels, satellites and strategic drones.

Washington, London and Brussels are openly encouraging Kiev to move the hostilities to our territory. They openly say that Russia must be defeated on the battlefield by any means, and subsequently deprived of political, economic, cultural and any other sovereignty and ransacked.

They have even resorted to the nuclear blackmail. I am referring not only to the Western-encouraged shelling of the Zaporozhye Nuclear Power Plant, which poses a threat of a nuclear disaster, but also to the statements made by some high-ranking representatives of the leading NATO countries on the possibility and admissibility of using weapons of mass destruction - nuclear weapons - against Russia.

I would like to remind those who make such statements regarding Russia that our country has different types of weapons as well, and some of them are more modern than the weapons NATO countries have. In the event of a threat to the territorial integrity of our country and to defend Russia and our people, we will certainly make use of all weapon systems available to us. This is not a bluff.

The citizens of Russia can rest assured that the territorial integrity of our Motherland, our independence and freedom will be defended - I repeat - by all the systems available to us. Those who are using nuclear blackmail against us should know that the wind rose can turn around.

It is our historical tradition and the destiny of our nation to stop those who are keen on global domination and threaten to split up and enslave our Motherland. Rest assured that we will do it this time as well.

I believe in your support.

# Address by the President of the Russian Federation, February 24, 2022<sup>2</sup>

[Table of Contents](#)

**President of Russia Vladimir Putin:** Citizens of Russia, friends,

I consider it necessary today to speak again about the tragic events in Donbass and the key aspects of ensuring the security of Russia.

I will begin with what I said in my address on February 21, 2022. I spoke about our biggest concerns and worries, and about the fundamental threats which irresponsible Western politicians created for Russia consistently, rudely and unceremoniously from year to year. I am referring to the eastward expansion of NATO, which is moving its military infrastructure ever closer to the Russian border.

It is a fact that over the past 30 years we have been patiently trying to come to an agreement with the leading NATO countries regarding the principles of equal and indivisible security in Europe. In response to our proposals, we invariably faced either cynical deception and lies or attempts at pressure and blackmail, while the North Atlantic alliance continued to expand despite our protests and concerns. Its military machine is moving and, as I said, is approaching our very border.

Why is this happening? Where did this insolent manner of talking down from the height of their exceptionalism,

infallibility and all-permissiveness come from? What is the explanation for this contemptuous and disdainful attitude to our interests and absolutely legitimate demands?

The answer is simple. Everything is clear and obvious. In the late 1980s, the Soviet Union grew weaker and subsequently broke apart. That experience should serve as a good lesson for us, because it has shown us that the paralysis of power and will is the first step towards complete degradation and oblivion. We lost confidence for only one moment, but it was enough to disrupt the balance of forces in the world.

As a result, the old treaties and agreements are no longer effective. Entreaties and requests do not help. Anything that does not suit the dominant state, the powers that be, is denounced as archaic, obsolete and useless. At the same time, everything it regards as useful is presented as the ultimate truth and forced on others regardless of the cost, abusively and by any means available. Those who refuse to comply are subjected to strong-arm tactics.

What I am saying now does not concern only Russia, and Russia is not the only country that is worried about this. This has to do with the entire system of international relations, and sometimes even US allies. The collapse of the Soviet Union led to a redivision of the world, and the norms of international law that developed by that time – and the most important of them, the fundamental norms that were adopted following WWII and largely formalised its outcome – came in the way of those who declared themselves the winners of the Cold War.

Of course, practice, international relations and the rules regulating them had to take into account the changes that took place in the world and in the balance of forces. However, this should have been done professionally, smoothly, patiently, and with due regard and respect for the interests of all states and one's own responsibility. Instead, we saw a state of euphoria created by the feeling of absolute superiority, a kind of modern absolutism, coupled with the low cultural standards and arrogance of those who formulated and pushed through decisions that suited only themselves. The situation took a different turn.

There are many examples of this. First a bloody military operation was waged against Belgrade, without the UN Security Council's sanction but with combat aircraft and missiles used in the heart of Europe. The bombing of peaceful cities and vital infrastructure went on for several weeks. I have to recall these facts, because some Western colleagues prefer to forget them, and when we mentioned the event, they prefer to avoid speaking about international law, instead emphasising the circumstances which they interpret as they think necessary.

Then came the turn of Iraq, Libya and Syria. The illegal use of military power against Libya and the distortion of all the UN Security Council decisions on Libya ruined the state, created a huge seat of international terrorism, and pushed the country towards a humanitarian catastrophe, into the vortex of a civil war, which has continued there for years. The tragedy, which was created for hundreds of thousands and even millions of people not only in Libya but in the

whole region, has led to a large-scale exodus from the Middle East and North Africa to Europe.

A similar fate was also prepared for Syria. The combat operations conducted by the Western coalition in that country without the Syrian government's approval or UN Security Council's sanction can only be defined as aggression and intervention.

But the example that stands apart from the above events is, of course, the invasion of Iraq without any legal grounds. They used the pretext of allegedly reliable information available in the United States about the presence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. To prove that allegation, the US Secretary of State held up a vial with white powder, publicly, for the whole world to see, assuring the international community that it was a chemical warfare agent created in Iraq. It later turned out that all of that was a fake and a sham, and that Iraq did not have any chemical weapons. Incredible and shocking but true. We witnessed lies made at the highest state level and voiced from the high UN rostrum. As a result we see a tremendous loss in human life, damage, destruction, and a colossal upsurge of terrorism.

Overall, it appears that nearly everywhere, in many regions of the world where the United States brought its law and order, this created bloody, non-healing wounds and the curse of international terrorism and extremism. I have only mentioned the most glaring but far from only examples of disregard for international law.

This array includes promises not to expand NATO eastwards even by an inch. To reiterate: they have deceived

us, or, to put it simply, they have played us. Sure, one often hears that politics is a dirty business. It could be, but it shouldn't be as dirty as it is now, not to such an extent. This type of con-artist behaviour is contrary not only to the principles of international relations but also and above all to the generally accepted norms of morality and ethics. Where is justice and truth here? Just lies and hypocrisy all around.

Incidentally, US politicians, political scientists and journalists write and say that a veritable "empire of lies" has been created inside the United States in recent years. It is hard to disagree with this – it is really so. But one should not be modest about it: the United States is still a great country and a system-forming power. All its satellites not only humbly and obediently say yes to and parrot it at the slightest pretext but also imitate its behaviour and enthusiastically accept the rules it is offering them. Therefore, one can say with good reason and confidence that the whole so-called Western bloc formed by the United States in its own image and likeness is, in its entirety, the very same "empire of lies."

As for our country, after the disintegration of the USSR, given the entire unprecedented openness of the new, modern Russia, its readiness to work honestly with the United States and other Western partners, and its practically unilateral disarmament, they immediately tried to put the final squeeze on us, finish us off, and utterly destroy us. This is how it was in the 1990s and the early 2000s, when the so-called collective West was actively supporting separatism and gangs of mercenaries in southern Russia. What victims, what losses we had to sustain and what trials we had to go

through at that time before we broke the back of international terrorism in the Caucasus! We remember this and will never forget.

Properly speaking, the attempts to use us in their own interests never ceased until quite recently: they sought to destroy our traditional values and force on us their false values that would erode us, our people from within, the attitudes they have been aggressively imposing on their countries, attitudes that are directly leading to degradation and degeneration, because they are contrary to human nature. This is not going to happen. No one has ever succeeded in doing this, nor will they succeed now.

Despite all that, in December 2021, we made yet another attempt to reach agreement with the United States and its allies on the principles of European security and NATO's non-expansion. Our efforts were in vain. The United States has not changed its position. It does not believe it necessary to agree with Russia on a matter that is critical for us. The United States is pursuing its own objectives, while neglecting our interests.

Of course, this situation begs a question: what next, what are we to expect? If history is any guide, we know that in 1940 and early 1941 the Soviet Union went to great lengths to prevent war or at least delay its outbreak. To this end, the USSR sought not to provoke the potential aggressor until the very end by refraining or postponing the most urgent and obvious preparations it had to make to defend itself from an imminent attack. When it finally acted, it was too late.

As a result, the country was not prepared to counter the invasion by Nazi Germany, which attacked our Motherland



on June 22, 1941, without declaring war. The country stopped the enemy and went on to defeat it, but this came at a tremendous cost. The attempt to appease the aggressor ahead of the Great Patriotic War proved to be a mistake which came at a high cost for our people. In the first months after the hostilities broke out, we lost vast territories of strategic importance, as well as millions of lives. We will not make this mistake the second time. We have no right to do so.

Those who aspire to global dominance have publicly designated Russia as their enemy. They did so with impunity. Make no mistake, they had no reason to act this way. It is true that they have considerable financial, scientific, technological, and military capabilities. We are aware of this and have an objective view of the economic threats we have been hearing, just as our ability to counter this brash and never-ending blackmail. Let me reiterate that we have no illusions in this regard and are extremely realistic in our assessments.

As for military affairs, even after the dissolution of the USSR and losing a considerable part of its capabilities, today's Russia remains one of the most powerful nuclear states. Moreover, it has a certain advantage in several cutting-edge weapons. In this context, there should be no doubt for anyone that any potential aggressor will face defeat and ominous consequences should it directly attack our country.

At the same time, technology, including in the defence sector, is changing rapidly. One day there is one leader, and tomorrow another, but a military presence in territories

bordering on Russia, if we permit it to go ahead, will stay for decades to come or maybe forever, creating an ever mounting and totally unacceptable threat for Russia.

Even now, with NATO's eastward expansion the situation for Russia has been becoming worse and more dangerous by the year. Moreover, these past days NATO leadership has been blunt in its statements that they need to accelerate and step up efforts to bring the alliance's infrastructure closer to Russia's borders. In other words, they have been toughening their position. We cannot stay idle and passively observe these developments. This would be an absolutely irresponsible thing to do for us.

Any further expansion of the North Atlantic alliance's infrastructure or the ongoing efforts to gain a military foothold of the Ukrainian territory are unacceptable for us. Of course, the question is not about NATO itself. It merely serves as a tool of US foreign policy. The problem is that in territories adjacent to Russia, which I have to note is our historical land, a hostile "anti-Russia" is taking shape. Fully controlled from the outside, it is doing everything to attract NATO armed forces and obtain cutting-edge weapons.

For the United States and its allies, it is a policy of containing Russia, with obvious geopolitical dividends. For our country, it is a matter of life and death, a matter of our historical future as a nation. This is not an exaggeration; this is a fact. It is not only a very real threat to our interests but to the very existence of our state and to its sovereignty. It is the red line which we have spoken about on numerous occasions. They have crossed it.

This brings me to the situation in Donbass. We can see that the forces that staged the coup in Ukraine in 2014 have seized power, are keeping it with the help of ornamental election procedures and have abandoned the path of a peaceful conflict settlement. For eight years, for eight endless years we have been doing everything possible to settle the situation by peaceful political means. Everything was in vain.

As I said in my previous address, you cannot look without compassion at what is happening there. It became impossible to tolerate it. We had to stop that atrocity, that genocide of the millions of people who live there and who pinned their hopes on Russia, on all of us. It is their aspirations, the feelings and pain of these people that were the main motivating force behind our decision to recognise the independence of the Donbass people's republics.

I would like to additionally emphasise the following. Focused on their own goals, the leading NATO countries are supporting the far-right nationalists and neo-Nazis in Ukraine, those who will never forgive the people of Crimea and Sevastopol for freely making a choice to reunite with Russia.

They will undoubtedly try to bring war to Crimea just as they have done in Donbass, to kill innocent people just as members of the punitive units of Ukrainian nationalists and Hitler's accomplices did during the Great Patriotic War. They have also openly laid claim to several other Russian regions.

If we look at the sequence of events and the incoming reports, the showdown between Russia and these forces cannot be avoided. It is only a matter of time. They are

getting ready and waiting for the right moment. Moreover, they went as far as aspire to acquire nuclear weapons. We will not let this happen.

I have already said that Russia accepted the new geopolitical reality after the dissolution of the USSR. We have been treating all new post-Soviet states with respect and will continue to act this way. We respect and will respect their sovereignty, as proven by the assistance we provided to Kazakhstan when it faced tragic events and a challenge in terms of its statehood and integrity. However, Russia cannot feel safe, develop, and exist while facing a permanent threat from the territory of today's Ukraine.

Let me remind you that in 2000–2005 we used our military to push back against terrorists in the Caucasus and stood up for the integrity of our state. We preserved Russia. In 2014, we supported the people of Crimea and Sevastopol. In 2015, we used our Armed Forces to create a reliable shield that prevented terrorists from Syria from penetrating Russia. This was a matter of defending ourselves. We had no other choice.

The same is happening today. They did not leave us any other option for defending Russia and our people, other than the one we are forced to use today. In these circumstances, we have to take bold and immediate action. The people's republics of Donbass have asked Russia for help.

In this context, in accordance with Article 51 (Chapter VII) of the UN Charter, with permission of Russia's Federation Council, and in execution of the treaties of friendship and mutual assistance with the Donetsk People's Republic and the Lugansk People's Republic, ratified by the Federal

Assembly on February 22, I made a decision to carry out a special military operation.

The purpose of this operation is to protect people who, for eight years now, have been facing humiliation and genocide perpetrated by the Kiev regime. To this end, we will seek to demilitarise and denazify Ukraine, as well as bring to trial those who perpetrated numerous bloody crimes against civilians, including against citizens of the Russian Federation.

It is not our plan to occupy the Ukrainian territory. We do not intend to impose anything on anyone by force. At the same time, we have been hearing an increasing number of statements coming from the West that there is no need any more to abide by the documents setting forth the outcomes of World War II, as signed by the totalitarian Soviet regime. How can we respond to that?

The outcomes of World War II and the sacrifices our people had to make to defeat Nazism are sacred. This does not contradict the high values of human rights and freedoms in the reality that emerged over the post-war decades. This does not mean that nations cannot enjoy the right to self-determination, which is enshrined in Article 1 of the UN Charter.

Let me remind you that the people living in territories which are part of today's Ukraine were not asked how they want to build their lives when the USSR was created or after World War II. Freedom guides our policy, the freedom to choose independently our future and the future of our children. We believe that all the peoples living in today's

Ukraine, anyone who want to do this, must be able to enjoy this right to make a free choice.

In this context I would like to address the citizens of Ukraine. In 2014, Russia was obliged to protect the people of Crimea and Sevastopol from those who you yourself call “nats.” The people of Crimea and Sevastopol made their choice in favour of being with their historical homeland, Russia, and we supported their choice. As I said, we could not act otherwise.

The current events have nothing to do with a desire to infringe on the interests of Ukraine and the Ukrainian people. They are connected with the defending Russia from those who have taken Ukraine hostage and are trying to use it against our country and our people.

I reiterate: we are acting to defend ourselves from the threats created for us and from a worse peril than what is happening now. I am asking you, however hard this may be, to understand this and to work together with us so as to turn this tragic page as soon as possible and to move forward together, without allowing anyone to interfere in our affairs and our relations but developing them independently, so as to create favourable conditions for overcoming all these problems and to strengthen us from within as a single whole, despite the existence of state borders. I believe in this, in our common future.

I would also like to address the military personnel of the Ukrainian Armed Forces.

Comrade officers,

Your fathers, grandfathers and great-grandfathers did not fight the Nazi occupiers and did not defend our common