



# Transatlantic Dialogue Center

## Weekly briefing

**February 20 – 26**

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# International support

20.02

- **Biden** decided to make a risky visit to Kyiv on February 20. This visit is "unprecedented in our time" because, for the first time, the US president visited "the capital of the country at war where the US military does not control the critical infrastructure". During the meeting with Zelenskiy, Biden declared his solidarity and friendship with the freedom-loving people of Ukraine.
- **The Pentagon** announced the details of a new package of **military aid to Ukraine** worth \$460 million. The package included ammunition for HIMARS, artillery, and mortar shells, about 2,000 anti-tank missiles, four radar systems, four Bradley infantry fighting vehicles, and more.
- Another shipment of **military-technical aid** was sent from **Latvia** to the Defense Forces of Ukraine. This time, the package included sleeping bags, sets of military uniforms (including winter ones), chemical light, charging stations, and generators. In addition, the aid package included off-road vehicles with a machine gun platform.
- Prime Minister of **Japan** Fumio Kishida announced a new package of **financial support** for Ukraine in the amount of 5.5 billion dollars. "Ukraine is still suffering from the Russian invasion, and its people need help to restore their daily lives and infrastructure, which was severely damaged by the Russian attacks," Kishida said.
- The head of EU diplomacy Borrell called on the members of the European Union to **urgently hand over the stockpiles of ammunition** that the Ukrainian army urgently needs to confront the Russian Federation to Ukraine.
- According to La Republica, **Italy** is discussing the possibility of transferring its own **fighter jets** to Ukraine but is ready to do so only in case of the first similar step by other countries.

21.02

- Prime Minister of Italy **Giorgia Meloni arrived in Kyiv** by train. During a joint press conference, the Prime Minister of Italy announced the sixth package of **military aid to Ukraine**. The new aid package includes three air defense systems: SAMP/T, Spike and Skyguard. She also added that Italy would help Ukraine in **demining** and handed over **generators** to support the civilian population.
- US President Joe Biden, speaking in Warsaw, said that **Ukraine's allies will not "get tired" of supporting it** in the face of Russia's full-scale aggression, and Kyiv will "never be a victory" for the Russian Federation. "There should be no doubt. Our support for Ukraine will not waver. NATO will not be divided. And we will not tire. President Putin's craven lust for land and power will fail. And Ukrainian people's love for their country will prevail," Biden said.
- Vice-President of the European Commission Frans Timmermans expressed reservations about the **peace initiative announced by China** in the war in Ukraine. Timmermans said the peace plan can only work if the Russian army would leave Ukraine. The only way to a peace plan is through respect for Ukraine's sovereignty and borders.

22.02

- During the meeting in Warsaw, the **leaders of the Bucharest Nine** confirmed their support for Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic aspirations and called **Russia "the most significant and direct threat to Allies' security"**
- According to Minister of Defense Margarita Robles, **Spain** will hand over 6 repaired Leopard 2A4 tanks to Ukraine. Though she has not specified a delivery date, Robles has repeatedly said the goal is to get the tanks ready by the end of March or early April.
- During a meeting with Ukrainian journalists, **British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said that long-range weapons and the acceleration of support** for Ukraine can speed up the decisive advantage of Ukrainian troops on the battlefield. He also confirmed that London is ready to help other countries that decide to provide aircraft to Ukraine, noting that this task is difficult for Britain itself.
- **Hungarian** Foreign Minister Szijarto **called for an immediate ceasefire** in Ukraine and **direct talks** between the presidents of the US and Russia to end the war. "They could have done a much greater service to humanity if they had talked to each other yesterday," he said, commenting on the separate speeches of Biden and Putin.

23.02

- According to the Ministry of Defense, **Finland** will hand over three of its **Leopard 2 tanks** to Ukraine as part of the **13th package of military aid**. The total cost of the 13th package is more than 160 million euros. In total, during the full-scale war, Finland provided weapons worth about **750 million euros**.
- During his visit to Kyiv, the Prime Minister of **Spain**, Pedro Sanchez, announced the transfer of **ten Leopard 2 tanks** to Ukraine. Their delivery will take place upon the completion of Ukrainian military exercises.
- On the anniversary of the invasion, 27 EU countries promised to achieve victory for Ukraine in the war with Russia and not to stop their support until the day justice is restored. "All Ukrainians deserve to live in peace and choose freely their own destiny. Ukraine is part of our European family," **the joint statement** said.
- The **UN General Assembly** overwhelmingly supported the **resolution**, which calls on the **Russian Federation to stop hostilities and withdraw its troops** from Ukraine, as well as enshrines the main provisions of the Ukrainian "peace formula". 141 countries out of 193 voted for it. Seven countries that voted against it were Russia, Belarus, Syria, North Korea, Eritrea, Nicaragua, and Mali. 32 countries abstained.
- According to the results of the *Eurobarometer survey*, which was conducted in January-February, **91% of EU citizens** support the provision of **humanitarian aid** to Ukraine, and **65%** of respondents approve of financing **military aid**.

24.02

- The Prime Minister of **Poland**, Mateusz Morawiecki, came to Kyiv on the anniversary of the Russian invasion. He laid a wreath at the Wall of Remembrance of the Fallen in the center of Kyiv.
- Morawiecki informed, Poland will soon send the rest of the promised **Leopard tanks** to Ukraine, and **60 PT-91 Twardy tanks** will also arrive in Ukraine in the next few days.
- **The Pentagon** announced a new package of **military aid** to Ukraine worth **\$2 billion**. It includes, in particular, additional ammunition for HIMARS, drones, 155-mm projectiles, ammunition for jet systems with laser guidance, and more.
- Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson said **Sweden** will transfer to Ukraine **ten Leopard 2 tanks** of the 2A6 and 2A5 modifications, as well as **two air defense systems**: Hawk and IRIS-T.
- German Chancellor Olaf Scholz promised to support Ukraine "as strongly and as long as necessary" and called on Putin to end the war.
- Prime Minister Trudeau announced that **Canada** is introducing **sanctions** against the deputy prime ministers of the Russian Federation, ministers, officials of the administration of the Russian president, as well as Medvedev's family. Sanctions have also been introduced against both chambers of the Russian parliament, the General Staff of the Russian Federation, the FSB, the company that operates the occupied Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, the United Russia party, etc. In addition to the sanctions, Trudeau announced the transfer of **four additional Leopard 2 tanks** and one armored recovery vehicle to Ukraine.
- EU countries late on Friday agreed on the **10th package of sanctions** against Russia. This happened exactly one year after the beginning of the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine. The sanctions include, among other things, tougher **restrictions on exports** to Russia of **dual-use products** and technologies, targeted restrictive measures **against individuals** and entities that support the war, spread propaganda or supply **drones** used by Russia in the war, as well as measures to counter Russian disinformation.
- **Estonian** Defense Minister Hanno Pevkur arrived on a visit to Kyiv and handed over a **package of aid** to Ukraine for Special Operations Forces. The pack includes assault rifles, pistols, drones, thermal imaging cameras, generators, and chargers, as well as clothing.
- Zelenskiy held a meeting with the **Minister of Foreign Affairs** of the Kingdom of **Saudi Arabia**, Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud. According to the results of the meeting, Saudi Arabia promised to provide Ukraine with an **aid package** of 400 million dollars, which includes oil products worth \$300 million and \$100 million of humanitarian help.



# Military positions

- ✓ Towards Volyn, Polissia, Chernihiv and Kharkiv, there are no major changes, and no offensive groups of the enemy have been detected.
- ✓ The offensive operations against Kupiansk and Lyman were unsuccessful. Towards Bakhmut, the enemy continued to attack the positions of Ukrainian troops, making several failed attempts near the settlements of Orikhovo-Vasylivka, Berkhivka, Ivanivske and Pivnichne of Donetsk oblast.
- ✓ The enemy launched the offensive against Avdiivka and Shakhtarske, but without success. Towards Kherson, settlements liberated by the Ukrainian forces, especially the city of Kherson, are suffering from shelling by Russian occupation troops.
- ✓ There is a risk of further Russian missile attacks throughout the whole territory of Ukraine. Russian invaders are increasing pressure on the civilian population at the temporarily occupied territories of Zaporizhzhia and Kherson oblasts, conducting house searches. The Russian military has established a torture chamber in the city of Vasylivka, Zaporizhzhia oblast and is detaining the pro-Ukrainian citizens there.

20.02	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ As reported by British intelligence air balloon usage can be Russia's new tactic. According to the summary released, the balloons likely represent a new Russian tactic to obtain information about Ukraine's air defense systems and force Ukrainian defenders to squander valuable stockpiles of surface-to-air missiles and anti-aircraft ammunition". On February 15, six such balloons with radar reflectors carrying reconnaissance equipment were discovered over Kyiv.</li> <li>➤ According to the White House, the death toll of the Wagner PMC in Ukraine has reached more than 30,000 people.</li> <li>➤ Ukrainian partisans claimed to have conducted a successful operation of eliminating the mercenaries of the Wagner PMC on the territory of the Russian Federation. In one of the training camps of Rostov oblast, 19 Wagnerites suffocated from carbon monoxide in the tent. To hide those losses, Wagner commanders threw the bodies into the trench and burned them. It is stated in the ATESH partisan movement, created by Ukrainian and Crimean Tatars, who managed to successfully infiltrate over 1000 agents to the Wagner PMC.</li> <li>➤ Head of the Avdiivka RMA says that Russia has enhanced its forces towards Donetsk from 160 to 190 battalions. According to intelligence, Russians are moving additional forces to Donetsk oblast (Avdiivka, Bakhmut, Vuhledar, and Mariinka). "Several weeks ago about 160 battalions were concentrated, now it is 190. Even without full completion, there are a lot of people. They are most likely getting ready for something and presumably will attack", noted Head of the Avdiivka RMA, Vitalii Barabash. There is information about their attempts to deliver ammo to the outskirts of Makiivka and Donetsk by small cars (not trucks, but "gazelles"). It indicates a large-scale offensive operation. At the front line, they will attack in all or major directions. For this, they have brought up reserves.</li> </ul>
22.02	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Russian forces attacked the positions of the Ukrainian Armed Forces 43 times near Vuhledar.</li> <li>➤ The Russian military was trying to break through the defense of Ukrainian troops near Kreminna and Svatove. Towards Kreminna, they advanced with a company of tanks and infantry, but were defeated by Ukrainian troops.</li> <li>➤ Russian SRGs made their way to Kharkiv oblast, one has already been pushed back to the Russian federation. In the area of Bolohivka an enemy SRG was detected.</li> <li>➤ As a result of artillery fire by Defense Forces units, the enemy retreated to the territory of the RF. Also the enemy attempted to infiltrate the SRG in Fiholivka, Kupiansk region.</li> </ul>
23.02	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ In the previous day, Ukrainian defenders repelled around 90 occupiers' attacks towards Kupiansk, Lyman, Bakhmut, Avdiivka and Shakhtarsk, where Russia has concentrated the major offensive.</li> <li>➤ The commander of the 1st battalion of the Azov regiment and the defender of Mariupol Oleh Mudrak, call sign Rusk, who spent several months in Russian capture and survived the terrorist attack in Olenivka, passed away. He died because of heart failure that appeared presumably as a result of captivity. Oleh Mudrak has been fighting for Ukraine since 2014. After being released from capture it turned out he had lost a lot of weight due to torture.</li> </ul>
25.02	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The enemy launched 6 missile and 5 air strikes, and conducted about 10 MRLS attacks, targeting peaceful settlements and their residents.</li> <li>➤ According to British intelligence, Russia has probably exhausted its stockpile of Iranian-made drones. Since approximately February 15, 2023, no messages have been received regarding the use of Iranian unmanned aerial vehicles on the territory of Ukraine. Prior to that, in late January - early February, Ukrainian Armed Forces reported about launching at least 25 Shahed-136 UAVs. Dozens more UAVs were destroyed in the first few days of the year. Apparently, the shortage of UAVs indicates that Russia has run out of its current supply and will most likely try to replenish it.</li> <li>➤ Aviation of the Defense Forces made 4 strikes on buildups of enemy personnel and military equipment. Units of rocket forces and artillery hit 2 buildups of manpower, a radar station, and a radio-electronic warfare station.</li> <li>➤ Ukraine is going to mine the borderline with the Republic of Belarus and Russia. The lane along the Ukrainian border with Russia and Belarus will be extended to two kilometers and mined. According to the State Border Service of Ukraine, this change is provided by law. The document, adopted on February 24 by Verkhovna Rada, is called "On the amendments to some legislative acts on the protection of state borders".</li> </ul>

Losses of the Russian army from 20.02.2023 to 26.02.2023	
Liquidated personnel	5270
Tanks	71
IFVs	70
Artillery systems / MLRS	53/6
Anti-aircraft warfare systems	4
Aircraft / helicopters	1/1
UAVs	21
Ships/boats	0
Vehicles & fuel tanks	46
Special equipment	6

- ✓ Over the week, Russians launched 45 missiles and 137 air attacks, and conducted 404 MLRS attacks.
- ✓ Over the year of the full-scale war, Russian forces launched **5,000 missile strikes**, **3,500 aircraft strikes**, and nearly **1,000 UAV strikes**.

## Kharkiv oblast

The Russian forces keep shelling the populated localities of Kupiansk (2 wounded), Chuhuiv (1 wounded) and Kharkiv regions (2 wounded). In Novoosynove, Kurylivka, Dvorichna, and Vovchansk, the buildings of an agriculture enterprise, civilian infrastructure, and educational facilities were hit. Two people were injured in the village of Strilecha in the Kharkiv region. A 40-year-old man was hurt in the village of Podoly. In Kupiansk, a missile strike caused damage to a football pitch and a stadium tribune, a kindergarten, a residence building, and an executive building. 4 people were wounded. On February 22, the adversary attacked Kharkiv's Kyivskiy district 4 times, hitting commercial facilities. On February 23, the occupiers struck a 4-story government building in the urban-type settlement of Dvorichna. Two women were killed in the debris. When the rescuers attempted to extract their bodies, the Russians struck again. No one was injured. Four vehicles of the State Emergency Service were also damaged.

## Donetsk oblast

Russian forces are shelling the settlements far from the frontline. An industrial enterprise was shelled in Kramatorsk, a car service center and a nearby 3-story building were hit in Yasnohirka, and a territory of a defunct mine was targeted in Kleban-Byk. Sloviansk and Svyatohirsk were also struck.

The shelling is underway along the entire contact line.

Towards Donetsk, Avdiivka, Marinka, Krasnohorivka, Zoriane, Kurakhivka, Hostre, Lastochkine, Vesele, Marinka, Katerynivka, Maksymilianivka, Yelizavetivka, Heorhiivka and Kurakhove were subject to airstrikes, artillery fire, Grad missile attacks and tank shelling. Civil infrastructure was damaged.

Towards Horlivka, Ivanivske, Bakhmut, Kostiantynivka, Diliivka, Mykolaivka, Chasiv Yar, Fedorivka, Vasiukivka, Ivanopillia, Bohdanivka, Krasnohorivka came under enemy fire. Residential buildings and houses, government offices, shops, and industrial facilities were damaged.

Towards Lysychansk, Siversk, Serebrianka, Yampol, Torske, Pereizne, Zvanivka, Lyman were hit. Residential areas were also damaged.

Towards Volnovakha, Russians shelled the village of Bahatyr in the Velyka Novosilka community, damaging a house. There are killed and wounded civilians in all directions.

## Kherson oblast

The invaders fired more than 300 times with MLRS, mortars, artillery, tanks and UAVs at the oblast's inhabited localities, killing one person and wounding 12. In Kherson, Russian missiles targeted residential buildings, and destroyed a power grid. On February 21, there were approximately 20 explosions in Kherson. The Russians hit residential areas, critical infrastructure, a kindergarten, hospitals, private garages and cars with Grad systems. Many residential buildings, including multi-apartment complexes, a local market, and a bus stop were also shelled. Five people were killed, 21 seriously injured, including a 16-year-old girl. On the night of February 24, the occupiers attacked one of Kherson's hospitals. The maternity, emergency and oncology wards were hit. There were no casualties.

## Mykolaiv oblast

Russian forces are still shelling Kutsurub and Ochakiv communities with mortars and MLRS. Residential areas were attacked. One civilian was badly injured.

## Zaporizhzhia oblast

Russian forces are targeting the civil infrastructure of Orikhiv, Huliaypole, Vasylivka, Poholiv, Zaporizhzhia oblast, Shevchenkove, Kamianske, Bilohiria, Malynivka, Stepove, Mali Shcherbaky, Novodanylivka, Mala Tokmachka and other populated localities. Civil infrastructure was damaged.

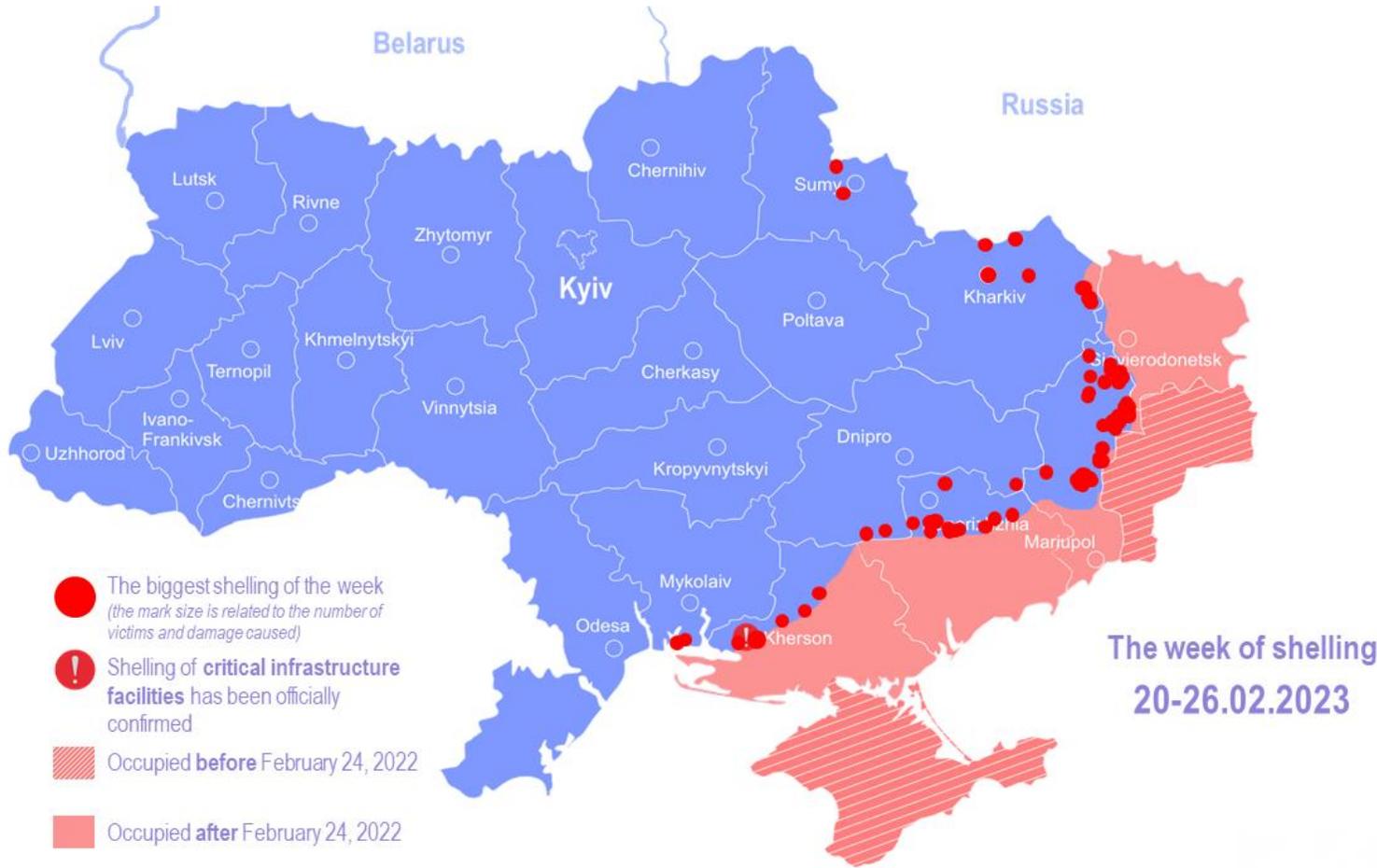
## Dnipropetrovsk oblast

Russian forces do not stop shelling the Nikopol region with heavy artillery. Houses, 3 lyceums, an executive facility, enterprises, shops and cafes were hit in Nikopol. In Marhanets, private houses were damaged. On the morning of February 25, Russian forces attacked the village of Ternove. There were no casualties and destruction.

## Sumy oblast

The occupiers are still terrorizing the oblast. Bilopillia is under constant shelling. On February 24, Russian forces shelled a bus, which was cruising between Zhuravka and Sumy. The driver and three passengers were injured. They were hospitalized to the Sumy Regional Clinical Hospital with a presumptive diagnosis of concussion.

# This week shelling and strikes



Kharkiv oblast



Donetsk oblast



Kherson City



# Humanitarian crisis



21.02

- There is currently no capacity shortage in the power system and none is forecasted. Electricity consumption is at normal working-day levels. The Ukrainian power system has not experienced a capacity shortage for 10 consecutive days. But due to constant shelling of the border areas of Kharkiv oblast, **35,000 consumers remain without electricity** in the de-occupied territories.



20.02

- Ukrainian children in the temporarily occupied territories continue to study online, as reported by the Center for Strategic Communications. The occupiers are trying to take **schoolchildren** to Russia-controlled schools, **essentially propaganda centers**, by force. They created "*commissions on juvenile affairs*" that, with the help of fake courts, issue fines to parents for educating their children in Ukrainian schools.
- For example, schoolchildren are forced to sing the national anthem of Russia before the start of classes in schools in Tokmak, Zaporizhzhia oblast. Also, schoolchildren are forced to make **postcards** for the anniversary of the large-scale invasion **with words of support and gratitude to the Russian invaders**.
- In the temporarily occupied areas of southern Ukraine, the captured enterprises are unable to operate at full capacity due to the exodus of good workers and the refusal of the locals to work for the Russian authorities. Since the Kremlin does not have enough collaborators, the Russians have initiated a program to train 6,000 'specialists' from the Russian Federation to work in the local administration.
- The General Staff reports that in some settlements of Kherson oblast, in administrative buildings the invaders are setting up places for illegal **detention of Ukrainians** who are suspected of cooperation with the Defense Forces of Ukraine and have a pro-Ukrainian position.
- Energoatom reported that Russia placed more than **600 mobilized cadets** from the Russian Federation in the bomb shelter of the **Zaporizhzhia NPP**. On the roof of the fifth power unit, the Russians set up a machine gun position, and also placed block posts at all entrances to the flyovers. The Russians also continue to construct fortifications and build military structures around the plant's power units and its dry spent nuclear fuel storage facility. Such actions are strongly unacceptable and violate all norms of nuclear and radiation safety.
- In this regard, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine reports that Russia blocks the rotation of IAEA experts at the Zaporizhzhia NPP, and also continues active **militarization of the nuclear plant** and the surrounding area.
- The Russian occupation 'authorities' in Skadovsk and Kalanchak, threatening to confiscate personal property, are **forcing locals** to quickly **obtain Russian passports and re-register their businesses**. In the absence of a Russian passport, pensioners are threatened to be left without retirement payments, which has caused social tension and fears among local citizens about the **loss of their property**. In this way, Russia is trying to destroy the self-identification of Ukrainians, because upon receiving a Russian passport, the Ukrainian one is confiscated, despite the fact that dual citizenship is not prohibited in the Russian Federation. Passports are also taken from those who were sent to the torture chamber and are not returned after release.
- In addition, in the occupied territories of Kherson oblast, the Russian forces announced the "re-registration" of **agricultural plots**. Thus, all landowners are forced to register in the occupation registry. Otherwise, the **land will be 'nationalized'**. When submitting an application, they must have a Russian passport, and the application itself must be submitted in person.

24.02

- Ukraine needs to raise about \$5 billion to fully finance its \$38 billion **national budget** deficit for 2023. The government expects the **International Monetary Fund** to provide it.
- The General Staff reports that in the occupied Nova Kakhovka, Russians are illegally breaking into the homes of local residents in order to check registration and home ownership documents. In the absence of relevant documents, **residents are evicted within a week**, and Russian occupiers are settled there.
- Kateryna Rashevskya, an expert at the Regional Center for Human Rights, reports that during the deportation to the Russian Federation, Ukrainian children had their personal data changed and sent to 're-education camps'. So far, it has been possible to identify **16,000 children** who were taken to the Russian Federation against their will. The children's age was changed before they were moved to the territory of Crimea, where they were kept without being able to return because according to their documents, they were no longer children, and their freedom of movement was illegally restricted by the Russian Federation. Rashevskya added that in 2022, the occupiers sent at least 400 of the children to Russian families.

23.02

- Bloomberg reported that even the **collapse of the Soviet Union did not affect Ukraine's economy as much as the Russian invasion**. The Ukrainian economy fell by a third, its losses due to a full-scale war reaching **\$136 billion**. The most destroyed were the houses in which Ukrainians used to live. Infrastructure, the environment, shares of Ukrainian companies and the educational system are also affected. Ukrainian exports of goods and services have decreased by almost a third - from 73.2 to 52.2 billion dollars. Of all Ukrainian export sectors, only the IT sector increased within 11 months of 2022.
- In the school of the temporarily occupied Melitopol, Zaporizhzhia oblast, the Russians are planning to organize an oath of allegiance for junior soldiers. Meanwhile, the situation is difficult in Mariupol, Donetsk oblast, where the Russians have caused a humanitarian crisis. The occupiers encourage the population to equip military positions around the city for food rations.
- **Two new residential areas will be built in Kharkiv** for citizens who lost their homes due to Russian shelling.
- The Russian invaders are deliberately draining the Kakhovka Reservoir. This poses a threat to the environment, water supply, and agriculture of Zaporizhzhia and Kherson oblasts.

22.02

- During the year of the full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation, there were **707 brutal attacks on Ukrainian hospitals**, other medical infrastructure, and personnel.
- As of today, February 22, 2023, the registry of **civilian hostages** of the National Information Bureau (NIB) records **963 people** who are **in Russian captivity**.
- The Prosecutor General's Office reported that since the beginning of the full-scale invasion, Russia has launched 255 missile strikes on **112 energy facilities** in Ukraine. More than 77% (197) of these strikes were carried out from October to February. The Russian forces destroyed more than **62,000 residential buildings, more than 2,300 educational institutions, and more than 450 medical institutions**.
- The UN confirmed the death of **more than 8,000 Ukrainians** during the year of the full-scale war. In addition, at least 13,000 people were injured. According to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, at least 487 children were among the victims, and 954 more were injured. The actual **death toll is much higher**, as it is difficult or almost impossible to get information from places where intense fighting is going on. The UN added that most of the recorded casualties were caused by the use of **explosive weapons** with a large impact zone, including shelling from heavy artillery and multiple rocket systems, as well as missile and airstrikes.