

**INTERNATIONAL SECURITY / MIDDLE EAST UPDATE**  
**March 27 - April 2, 2014**

1. [Hagel: ASEAN Meeting Reflects Commitment to Asia-Pacific \(04-02-2014\)](#)
2. [U.S. Looking to Reassure NATO Allies about Ukraine \(04-01-2014\)](#)
3. [Kerry's Press Conference at NATO Headquarters in Brussels \(04-01-2014\)](#)
4. [Dempsey Sees Possibility of New Alliances in Mideast \(03-31-2014\)](#)
5. ['No Decisions about Ukraine without Ukraine,' Kerry Says \(03-31-2014\)](#)
6. [Kerry on Anniversaries of NATO Enlargement \(03-31-2014\)](#)
7. [Ambassador Power on U.N. General Assembly Resolution on Ukraine \(03-27-2014\)](#)
8. [Russia Reinforcing Units on Border with Ukraine \(03-27-2014\)](#)

-----

**1. [Hagel: ASEAN Meeting Reflects Commitment to Asia-Pacific \(04-02-2014\)](#)**

By Cheryl Pellerin  
American Forces Press Service

HONOLULU, April 2, 2014 – At a hotel here, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel will join defense ministers from 10 Asia-Pacific countries for the official start of an unofficial meeting of defense ministers of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, their first in the United States.

Hagel himself invited the ministers here, he told reporters traveling with him on the military plane that brought him yesterday to the April 1-3 ASEAN meeting and will later take him on to Japan, China and Mongolia -- a 10-day trip that will be his fourth official visit to the Asia-Pacific region in less than 12 months.

Last June, at a luncheon for the ASEAN defense ministers during the Shangri-La Dialogue meeting in Singapore, Hagel invited them to Hawaii this year. All 10 ministers -- from Burma, Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam -- immediately accepted his invitation.

“When I invited the ASEAN defense ministers last year to Hawaii, the thought I had then ... is it's more and more important that the United States, as we've moved over the last three years into a rebalancing to the Asia-Pacific, be clear in our intent,” the secretary said.

The purpose of the rebalance, he said, is to strengthen U.S. relationships in the Asia-Pacific with treaty allies and partners, and coordinate efforts.

“ASEAN represents the one organization in the Asia-Pacific where there is a cohesiveness, a consolidation, a coordination among 10 nations and among the ASEAN Defense Ministers-Plus organization,” Hagel said.

The ADMM-Plus is made up of the 10 ASEAN defense ministers and eight dialogue partners, who are the defense ministers from the United States, China, Japan, South Korea, Australia, India, New Zealand and Russia.

Hagel said the United States has been participating in the ADMM-Plus since 2010, representing “a tremendous opportunity to connect, to coordinate, to communicate, to reinforce the U.S. message about our intent and our cooperation.”

The secretary added, “When we designed the two-and-a-half days of informal meetings for the ASEAN defense ministers, I wanted to ensure that it was more than military-to-military events and I think we’ve done that.”

In attendance will be U.S. Agency for International Development Administrator Dr. Rajiv Shah, and the head of the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Dr. Kathryn Sullivan, he said. Tours will be held in a new U.S. Department of Commerce technical facility and several of the events will focus on humanitarian-assistance and disaster-relief activities, Hagel added.

“All of this is about a more stable, secure Asia-Pacific,” he said. “That means a prosperous region of the world, one that presents possibilities and hope for all its people.”

Over the past 25 years the Asia-Pacific region has done well, the secretary added, with a population of more than 600 million people and huge emerging economies.

“They’ve done that essentially because they’ve had wise leadership in how they have handled their differences and their areas of competition,” said Hagel, adding, “It’s imperfect -- there’s been conflict. There are still issues and disagreements and we’ll talk about those. I intend to talk about those when I go to China and Japan as well.”

Hagel said at the defense ministers’ meeting he would also discuss the United States’ ongoing fiscal constraints and its commitment, nevertheless, to the Asia-Pacific rebalance.

“I have been very clear and direct in what I’ve said about the fiscal restraints we are dealing with and working through,” Hagel said, “and I’ve made very clear the prioritization for the Asia-Pacific rebalance in the president’s budget that I presented to Congress and that Congress will be dealing with for the next few months.”

The secretary added that the department’s recent Quadrennial Defense Review also prioritizes the rebalance to the Asia-Pacific region and named ongoing military activities in the region -- rotating littoral combat ships to Singapore, rotating 1,150 Marines and four CH-53E Super Stallion helicopters to Australia, continuing negotiations with the Philippines to use Subic Bay resources on a rotational basis, progress made with the AN/TP2 missile defense radar site in Japan, a breakthrough late last year on the Futenma replacement facility when the governor of Okinawa approved a critical landfill permit, and continuing efforts and posturing of assets in the Asia-Pacific.

“I think it’s pretty clear, even with budget constraints ... that this is a priority and we’ll fulfill the commitments we’ve made,” Hagel said, “and I do look forward to talking about this with our ASEAN partners.”

The secretary added, “I want the defense ministers, after they leave Hawaii, to feel even more clarity about the U.S. commitment to the Asia-Pacific, our coordination, our communications and the areas where we can cooperate more and more -- and certainly humanitarian assistance and disaster relief is one of those.”

There is a tremendous amount of capability and capacity in the Asia-Pacific region, Hagel said, and the United States represents a good amount of it.

“This is not about crowding anybody out,” he said, “but it is about assuring the freedom of the sea lanes and the openness of our skies and cyber, and we’re going to continue to help do that.”

Biographies:

[Chuck Hagel](#)

Related Sites:

[Special Report: Travels with Hagel](#)

Related Articles:

[Hagel Begins Asia-Pacific Trip with U.S.-ASEAN Forum](#)

---

## **2. U.S. Looking to Reassure NATO Allies about Ukraine (04-01-2014)**

By Jim Garamone

American Forces Press Service

ABOARD A U.S. MILITARY AIRCRAFT, April 1, 2014 – The Russian takeover of Crimea from Ukraine has NATO allies worried, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff said today.

Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey told reporters traveling with him that one of Russia’s reasons for invading Crimea was to protect ethnic Russians living there.

“These populations are intermingled,” Dempsey said as he flew home from Israel.

“If Russia were to assert a right to protect ethnic Russians inside other countries it could be incredibly destabilizing,” Dempsey said. “That’s why the Baltics are worried and why we are reassuring our NATO allies -- especially the Baltics, Poland, Romania.”

The Soviet Union forcibly incorporated the Baltic republics of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania and many ethnic Russians moved to the area.

In Latvia and Estonia, roughly a quarter of the population is ethnically Russian. In Lithuania, it’s about 14 percent.

The United States, Dempsey said, has standing unilateral plans to reinforce Europe if asked to do so.

The plan concentrates on logistics, the chairman said, which includes reception, staging, onward movement and integration.

The U.S. military is doing the logistics work that would be required to move the force if that ever became necessary, Dempsey said.

This is not a war plan, the chairman said, but even to increase the scope and scale of exercises there is a significant logistics footprint.

“What we are planning is the logistics aspects of reassurance activities,” he said.

Biographies:

[Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey](#)

Related Sites:

[Special Report: Travels with Dempsey](#)

Related Articles:

[Defense Officials in Ukraine for Consultations](#)

[Dempsey Pleased at U.S.-Israeli Review of Threats](#)

---

### **[3. Kerry's Press Conference at NATO Headquarters in Brussels \(04-01-2014\)](#)**

*Secretary of State John Kerry*

*Press Availability at NAT, Brussels, Belgium*

SECRETARY KERRY: Well, good evening to everybody. This obviously could not be a more important time for NATO allies to come together and to reaffirm our commitment to each other, to the transatlantic treaty and transatlantic security, and especially to our common values. As we mark the 65th anniversary of the strongest alliance on earth, we are all facing a new challenge, a critical moment, a new reality on the Euro-Atlantic landscape at a time when some of the basic principles underlying the international system have been violated and, frankly, our alliance has been put to the test.

Let me reiterate what President Obama said in this city last week: Russia today has challenged truths that only a few weeks ago appeared to be self-evident; that in the 21st century, the borders of Europe would not be redrawn with force; and that international law still guides all of us; that people and nations must always be able to make their own decisions about their own future. It's clear that the alliance is prepared for this moment. We heard that over and over again today from every participant. We are unified, and the alliance is strong.

Today, NATO allies tasked the Supreme Allied Commander to provide visible reassurance with respect to our Central and Eastern European allies, assurance that Article 5 of NATO's treaty means what it says on land, air, and sea. The United States has already begun to contribute to this mission because, as President Obama reaffirmed to Secretary General Rasmussen last week and I reiterated to my colleagues here today, the United States commitment to Article 5 obligations is unwavering.

Now in recent weeks, the United States has augmented NATO's Baltic air policing mission with six additional F-16s. We've deployed 12 F-16s to Poland. We've kept the USS Truxtun in the Black

Sea and more U.S. support is on the way. Today, many allies pledged their own contributions to assure that every ally, from the Baltic to the Black Sea, feels secure.

Just as importantly, Europe and North America have stood together in defense of Ukraine's right to choose its future and in defense of international law. Together, we have rejected any notion that there is any legality in Russia's efforts to annex Crimea and challenged – we have all challenged – the tactics of intimidation, particularly the deployment of unprecedented amounts of military forces around Ukraine's borders.

Ukraine's democratic and economic success is, in the end, going to be the best response to this challenge. Every ally here today pledged unwavering support in order to help make sure that Ukraine succeeds. This includes support through the IMF, our bilateral and multilateral assistance, the OSCE monitors, and through our support for free, fair, constitutional elections and for constitutional reform, as well as the anticorruption and demobilization efforts that are taking place.

We also reaffirmed to Foreign Minister Deshchytsia that just as Ukraine has stood in partnership for the past two decades, it's important that NATO stand in partnership now with Ukraine, and we endorsed a range of measures in order to do so. Secretary General Rasmussen has called the events in Ukraine a wake-up call – a reminder that the stability and security in NATO's neighborhood requires all of our constant vigilance. To that end, today, I made clear that many members of the alliance now need to step up defense spending. As we plan for NATO's summit in Wales this September, each of us must demonstrate by the decisions that we take and the budget commitments that we make that we are committed to each other, and by our shared security and our shared prosperity and our shared values, we will continue to maintain that strength.

This afternoon, we mark the five, ten, and fifteen-year anniversaries of NATO's post-Cold War expansions. And it is clear that each of these expansions has actually strengthened NATO by opening doors for millions of people who, through the power of this alliance, now are able to experience greater opportunity, a greater prosperity, and greater security. As free nations, we will continue to stand together and stand always in defense of international law, of our mutual security, and of the right of nations and people everywhere to freely choose their own destiny. Our meeting today underscored these principles in both words and in deeds.

I'd be happy to take a couple questions.

MS. PSAKI: The first question will be from Margaret Brennan of CBS News. Oh, right – other side.

QUESTION: Geez, wow. Thank you very much. (Laughter.) Mr. Secretary, two questions for you. NATO says there are no signs of a Russian pullback. What is it going to take for this body to have a greater show of force? Because there do seem some members wary of antagonizing Russia.

And on Mideast peace, where are we in this process, with President Abbas saying he's canceled this meeting with you? Is this brinkmanship? And has the U.S. offered the release of Jonathan Pollard?

SECRETARY KERRY: Well, that's about three questions or four, I think. But I'm happy to answer them. With respect to NATO and the presence of force and what is it going to take, I think everybody here today made it clear that the preference of NATO and the preference of all of us is to see a de-escalation, to find a diplomatic route in order to be able to work, hopefully, ultimately, together to strengthen the possibilities of Ukrainians making their own choices about Ukraine in the future. That's the goal.

And at the same time, it is important for everybody in the world to understand that the NATO alliance takes seriously this attempt to change borders by use of force. So that is the wakeup call. And as a result, people here today made a commitment to be able to strengthen visibly, as a matter of deterrence and as a matter of reality, the cooperation, the deployment, and the efforts of those who are members of this alliance.

Now, with respect to the de-escalation, we were happy that yesterday Russia made an announcement, President Putin made the announcement initially, that they were going to move a battalion back. And that's obviously small compared to the numbers that are deployed, but it is a welcome gesture in the right direction. The question now is: Is there a way to build on that in order to be able to find a way to move the masses of troops back and truly deescalate?

So I think there's a delicate balance, and we're engaged in efforts with lots of different people engaged in this effort to see if there is a way forward. That's a lot of the discussion here today – it'll be some of the discussion at the dinner tonight – is to help map that road forward.

With respect to the Middle East peace process, I've heard a rumor about, a quote not being invited sort of, but I'm not sure I'm going, regardless of that, whether or not we have certain things that we're trying to figure out in terms of the logistics on the ground and what is possible.

What is important to say about the Middle East right now is it is completely premature tonight to draw any kind of judgment, certainly any final judgment, about today's events and where things are. This is a moment to be really clear-eyed and sober about this process. It is difficult, it is emotional, it requires huge decisions, some of them with great political difficulty, all of which need to come together simultaneously.

And all I can tell you is that we are continuing, even now as I am standing up here speaking, to be engaged with both parties to find the best way forward. We've been in touch with the White House and Washington during the day, as well as all of the parties. And I've talked to many people on the ground in the region, and I will continue to even tonight.

So my team is on the ground meeting with the parties even tonight. And we urge both sides to show restraint while we work with them. Obviously, it's moments like this when we all need to remember exactly what brought us to this effort in the first place, what the goal is, and where everybody wants to end up. And tonight I haven't heard yet what the public response of Israel has been, but I know that President Abbas in his comments made it clear that he intends to continue to work, even tonight, on this process that we are engaged in.

So we will see where we wind up at the end of the evening in the next days, but it is, as I said at the outset of my remarks, completely premature to draw any judgments about this at this point in time. And at this point in time, no agreement has been reached with respect to any prisoner, not even the ones that, at this moment, are at issue in terms of the transfer. The cabinet in Israel has to vote; I'm not sure exactly when that might take place or not. And so there is no agreement at this point in time regarding anyone or any specific steps. There are a lot of different possibilities in play.

MS. PSAKI: The next question will be from Lesley Wroughton of Reuters.

QUESTION: Mr. Secretary, I just wanted to be clear because there's a lot of reports going around. We also understand from a U.S. official that you're not traveling tomorrow to Ramallah. But also if it is true – I mean, I've looked at the transcript and President Abbas has signed those conventions to

join these 15 agencies – is this in your mind a breach of the understanding of the process that you launched eight, nine months ago?

On the other hand, do you – how do you see the way going forward? If this is – the way that President Abbas explained it was that the Israelis did not release those prisoners; that was the agreement. He agreed he wouldn't go to the UN until the end of April, and he's going – he's going to go now. So there seems to be a lot of disappointment.

SECRETARY KERRY: No, he's not. He is not. Let me make it absolutely clear: None of the agencies that President Abbas signed tonight involve the UN. None of them. And President Abbas has given his word to me that he will keep his agreement and that he intends to negotiate through the end of the month of April.

Now obviously, the prisoners were due on the 29th, which was Saturday. I'm not going to get into the who, why, what, when, where, how of why we're where we are today. We're where we are today – and the important thing is to keep the process moving and find a way to see whether the parties are prepared to move forward. In the end, this is up to the parties.

I mean, I want to make this crystal clear: The United States is proud and ready and willing to be a facilitator in this process. But the leaders on both sides have to make the decisions, not us. It's up to them to decide what they're prepared to do with each other, for each other, for the future, for the region, for peace. And we will do everything in our power. President Obama has been as committed to this as anybody. He has committed his personal time. He has committed my time. The President is desirous of trying to see how we can make our best efforts in order to find a way to facilitate. But facilitation is only as good as the willingness of leaders to actually make decisions when they're put in front of them.

And we're going to continue to do our work. We're going to continue because this matters – matters to the region, matters to the parties, matters to us, matters to the world. Everywhere I go, people ask me: Is there any progress? Can you get anywhere? Can you move? The one thing that I keep in the center of my mind is that, even tonight, both parties say they want to continue to try to find a way forward. And so we will continue to work with them in order to try to do that.

MS. PSAKI: Thank you, everyone.

SECRETARY KERRY: Thank you, everyone.

---

#### **4. Dempsey Sees Possibility of New Alliances in Mideast (03-31-2014)**

By Jim Garamone  
American Forces Press Service

JERUSALEM , March 31, 2014 – The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff says he sees the possibility of new alliances emerging in the Middle East, springing from the on-going instability across much of the region.

Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey is in Israel to discuss issues of mutual strategic interest with Israeli defense officials.

Dempsey told reporters that current instability across the Middle East provides opportunities, to include “an outreach to other nations who may not have been willing to be partners in the past.”

Dempsey arrived in Israel yesterday and immediately went into meetings with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Moshe Yaalon. Israeli Army Lt. Gen. Benny Gantz, the chief of the Israeli General Staff, is hosting Dempsey.

In his meetings with Israeli officials, Dempsey said he's trying to step away from reacting to the daily headlines in order to look at the region strategically.

The Middle East is experiencing a period of instability affecting Egypt, Syria, Iran and other areas, which is having an impact on the strategic landscape.

This, Dempsey said, is causing countries that may not have agreed on much in the past to realize they have a common cause toward regional instability.

Dempsey pointed to the Persian Gulf states as an example. They "may not have been as open-minded about the potential for cooperation with Israel in any way," he said.

"What we discussed," he added, "was the possibility that there were opportunities that would present themselves because of the instability around them that could create a different web of alliances than existed before.

"What I'm suggesting," Dempsey continued, "is the possibility of new and different alliances in the region in response to this instability."

The chairman said he's neither optimistic nor pessimistic about the Mideast situation.

"I think there are enough issues across the region in common that it should provide an opportunity for greater cooperation," Dempsey said. "So our allies become allies with each other."

For example, many nations have discussed strategy to counter al-Qaida. "Al-Qaida is adapting regionally because we've succeeded in putting pressure where they used to operate with impunity," Dempsey said. "What you see now is al-Qaida core is much less capable, but there are other organizations that have branded themselves with the al-Qaida ideology."

The al-Qaida network crosses the region, and this has caused the United States to come together militarily with like-minded and interested parties to discuss everything from intelligence sharing to capacity building to foreign military sales. All of these things put pressure on the group.

The chairman called this just one example of an opportunity that didn't exist before.

Combating Iranian moves in the region could provide other opportunities, he said. Iran is involved with arms trafficking, building surrogate networks and launching cyber attacks.

"It seems to me that as threats evolve so, too, do our systems of alliances to deal with them," Dempsey said.

Military officials from many countries and at many levels are having these conversations "so we can be a network to confront networks," he said.

"Sometimes we've been accused of not leading enough," he said. "I have found both a great appetite and a great acceptance for our military leadership, especially in things like building partner

capacity, which ultimately is the greatest strategic hedge against risk in the future -- far more so than any direct action.”

Biographies:

[Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey](#)

Related Articles:

[Dempsey to Discuss Range of Issues During Israel Visit](#)

[Dempsey, Gantz Look to Countering Mideast Threats](#)

---

## **5. 'No Decisions about Ukraine without Ukraine,' Kerry Says (03-31-2014)**

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.  
Staff Writer

Washington — After meeting with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov in Paris, Secretary of State John Kerry says they agreed that the crisis in Ukraine requires a diplomatic resolution and that further talks must include the Ukrainians.

Kerry emphasized that “diplomacy has a critical role to play in helping the people of Ukraine to achieve their goal of living in dignity and in a stable, peaceful and unified democracy.”

During a four-hour meeting with Lavrov, Kerry said he made it clear that the United States still considers the Russian actions in the Crimean Peninsula “to be illegal and illegitimate.” Kerry also said that the “Russians’ actions over the past several weeks have placed it at odds, obviously, with the rule of law and the international community, and we still believe on the wrong side of history.”

The U.N. General Assembly, the European Union, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and the Group of Seven major economies condemned Russia’s aggressive acts in the Crimean region of Ukraine.

The OSCE Permanent Council decided in a special session on Ukraine March 21 to deploy an OSCE Special Monitoring Mission of international observers to Ukraine with the aim of helping reduce tensions and fostering peace, stability and security, OSCE Chairperson-in-Office and Swiss Foreign Minister Didier Burkhalter said in Bern, Switzerland.

Kerry flew to Paris to meet with Lavrov at the Russian ambassador’s residence March 30 after Russian President Vladimir Putin called President Obama to discuss the situation in Ukraine two days earlier. During the call, Obama also urged Putin to withdraw tens of thousands of Russian combat soldiers from the border it shares with Ukraine, according to the White House.

“The United States is consulting with Ukraine at every step of this process, and we will not accept a path forward where the legitimate government of Ukraine is not at the table,” Kerry told journalists. “This principle is clear: No decisions about Ukraine without Ukraine.”

Before his meeting with Foreign Minister Lavrov, Kerry spoke with Ukrainian Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk to repeat the United States’ commitment to coordinate closely with Ukraine and to sustain support throughout this process.

Both the United States and Russia offered suggestions on how to de-escalate the security and political crisis in and around Ukraine, Kerry said. According to the secretary, they agreed to work with the Ukrainian government to implement steps that they already are taking to meet certain priorities, including these:

- Protecting the rights of national minorities.
- Securing language rights.
- Demobilizing and disarming irregular forces and what they called provocateurs.
- Ensuring an inclusive constitutional reform process.
- Holding free and fair elections monitored by the international community.

Kerry also told journalists that any real progress in Ukraine must include a pullback of the large Russian military force massed along Ukraine's borders. Kerry said that "these forces are creating a climate of fear and intimidation in Ukraine."

For its part, Lavrov told journalists, Russia seeks to create a loose federation of Ukrainian regions where each chooses its own economic, financial, social, linguistic and religious governing models. Kerry said it is not up to the United States and Russia to make decisions regarding federalization for Ukraine.

"It's up to Ukrainians, and Ukrainians will decide their future for themselves, by themselves, with respect to what kind of definitions work for them," Kerry said.

---

## **6. Kerry on Anniversaries of NATO Enlargement (03-31-2014)**

*Statement by Secretary Kerry*

### **Anniversaries of NATO Enlargement**

On behalf of President Obama and the people of the United States, I welcome the five, ten, and fifteen-year anniversaries of three rounds of NATO enlargement.

I am proud to celebrate the important milestones in NATO's history that have strengthened the Alliance.

On March 12, 1999, Hungary, Poland, and Czech Republic joined; on March 29, 2004, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia joined; and most recently, on April 1, 2009, Albania and Croatia joined the Alliance. NATO is strong today because of the common values that all its members share.

NATO's Open Door policy hasn't just allowed more members into its ranks. It has expanded democracy, prosperity and stability in Europe and opened new opportunities to advance security and prosperity around the globe.

Year after year, NATO's newest members have proved their mettle. I've seen it firsthand in Afghanistan, where our Allies in Central and East Europe have served with tremendous guts and

grit. We honor the sacrifices their troops have made, including in some cases the ultimate sacrifice, as part of NATO missions.

The United States joins our Allies in reaffirming that NATO's door remains open to any European country in a position to undertake the commitments and obligations of membership, and that can contribute to security in the Euro-Atlantic area.

Our challenge today is to work toward a Europe that is whole, free, and at peace – and to use the power of the planet's strongest alliance to promote peace and security for people all over the world.

Related Site:

[Press Availability - Paris, France](#)

---

## **7. Ambassador Power on U.N. General Assembly Resolution on Ukraine (03-27-2014)**

*Statement by Ambassador Samantha Power, U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations, On the Adoption of the General Assembly Resolution on Ukraine, March 27, 2014*

Today, countries from every corner of the world made clear their support for Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty, their support for international law, and for the foundational norms that underpin the United Nations and international cooperation in the 21st century. The world has made clear that the international community will not accept Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea

The resolution adopted by the General Assembly is a clear call from the international community for all states to desist and refrain from actions that undermine Ukraine's national unity and territorial integrity. The resolution also stresses the importance of maintaining an inclusive political dialogue in Ukraine that reflects the diversity of its society.

I welcome the support from member states in every region who have joined together in condemning an act that blatantly undermines the UN Charter. The vote shows the strong global conviction, grounded in international law, that nations and peoples have the right to chart their own course free from external influences or fear of invasion. Many of today's votes were cast in recognition that while we may currently be discussing Ukraine, if such a blatant violation of a nation's borders is left unchecked, the consequences for other nations could be severe.

It is important to note that, in the face of international isolation, only a handful of states joined with Russia in defending its violation of Ukrainian sovereignty and territorial integrity. Many of these votes came from regimes that, like Russia, fear free expression and peaceful assembly. Today's vote shows that despite significant misinformation spread by Russia, the truth of what Russia has done in Crimea has penetrated to all the regions of the world.

The United States continues to encourage a resolution to this crisis through direct dialogue between Russia and Ukraine as supported by the international community; international monitors to ensure the rights of all Ukrainians are protected including vulnerable minorities in occupied Crimea; a free and fair presidential election in May; and an inclusive constitutional reform process. The United States stands with the people of Ukraine and will continue to support them as they build a democratic, stable and prosperous future.

Related Sites:

[Ambassador Power at U.N. General Assembly on Ukraine Resolution](#) *Remarks by Ambassador Samantha Power, U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations, at a United Nations General Assembly Meeting on Ukraine*

[White House on Economic Support for Ukraine](#)

[U.S. Envoy on Russia's Violations of OSCE Commitments in Ukraine](#)

---

## **8. Russia Reinforcing Units on Border with Ukraine (03-27-2014)**

By Jim Garamone  
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, March 27, 2014 – Russia continues to reinforce units along the eastern and southern Ukraine border, Pentagon Press Secretary Navy Rear Adm. John Kirby said during a news conference today.

Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu told Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel last week that the Russian troops were massing for regularly scheduled exercises.

“The minister said it was exercises, no intent to cross the border,” Kirby said. “They need to live up to that word.”

The build-up on the Russian side of the border does nothing to de-escalate the tensions between Russia and Ukraine, Kirby said. “It’s doing nothing to assist in the stability of that part of Europe,” the admiral said.

The United States is concerned about the build-up and is monitoring it closely, he said.

The United States has added aircraft and personnel to the aviation detachment in Poland. The United States and other NATO nations have added to the force comprising the Baltic air police mission.

“I would tell you that the staff here in the Pentagon, both the civilian and uniformed, are constantly looking at other ways that ... we can further reassure our allies and partners in Europe to potentially look at either adding to or reinforcing existing operations or exercises or even adding on additional opportunities,” Kirby said. “We’re looking at that very closely right now.”

There has been no indication of any Russian exercises in the region, the admiral said. “The way it was explained was that these were springtime exercises,” he said.

He urged reporters to call the Russian Ministry of Defense for more information.

“Our concern is for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine and for the Ukrainian people and their nation,” Kirby said.

Moscow has violated Ukraine’s sovereignty. “The forces they have in Crimea and the forces they have along the border with Ukraine are doing nothing to deescalate the tension,” he said. “And that’s the concern.”

Related Sites:

[Department of Defense Press briefing by Rear Adm. Kirby in the Pentagon Briefing Room](#)

---