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PULSE OF PEACE IN DONBASS

Results of monitoring current occurrences related to the hybrid war in Eastern Ukraine

On 4th December 2017 in Vienna, civil society organizations and activists from Ukraine, Russia and other European countries founded a joint international [platform CivilM+](#) to push for peace and the rule of law in eastern Ukraine.

The platform's aim is to streamline civic actors' efforts in spheres like human rights protection, peacebuilding, education and information, humanitarian work, and to work on rebuilding the territories of Donetsk and Luhansk as peaceful, integrated and developed regions of a democratic Ukraine and united Europe. CivilM+ seeks to promote the involvement of the regions' population as well as refugees and displaced persons in these activities. CivilM+ offers its participants opportunities for cooperation, elaboration of joint positions, mutual support and solidarity, improvement of qualification and close coordination of work.

The newsletter is devoted to the work carried out by civil society organizations and initiative groups from Ukraine, Russia, as well as international organizations, to overcome the consequences of the hybrid military conflict in the eastern regions of Ukraine.

This newsletter will be published regularly; the next issue will be published in May 2018.

You can send your information for the newsletter or ask any questions at: newsletter@civilmplus.org

The selection of news presented in the Newsletter is subjective. The opinions expressed in the published materials may not coincide with the opinion of the authors and participants of CivilM+.

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1. Political processes and the situation in the conflict zone

- Petro Poroshenko said that the [ATO will finish in May](#), after which command will pass

to military officials (*text in Russian*)

- On April 9, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, [the President of Turkey, announced his readiness to support the deployment of a UN peacekeeping mission](#) in Donbass during a meeting with Petro Poroshenko (*text in Ukrainian*)
- On April 18, another [round of negotiations of the Tripartite Contact Group](#) took place in Minsk. At the previous meeting on April 4, the [exchange of captives](#) was discussed (*text in Ukrainian*)
- On April 22, a [meeting between the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the G-7 countries](#) was held. As reported by Reuters, the agreement on joint opposition to Russia's aggressive policy was confirmed during the meeting, which, however, does not exclude the possibility for a dialogue with Moscow (*text in English*)
- The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe adopted a resolution "[On the state of emergency](#)", which included the assumption on the actual control of Russia over the territories of the so-called "DPR" and "LPR". Opinions of experts on the [significance](#) and [consequences](#) of this document (*text in Russian and Ukrainian*)
- The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe also adopted a resolution "[Legal challenges related to hybrid war and human rights obligations](#)". Special attention in the resolution and the previous [report](#) is paid to hybrid war, fake news and propaganda issues (*text in English*)
- Ertuğrul Apakan, the Head of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine, stated that [the safety of civilians should be the main priority](#) (*text in Russian*)
- On April 27, [US officials denounced the recent escalation of the conflict in eastern Ukraine](#) (*text in Ukrainian and English*)
- On April 27, on the eve of the meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of NATO countries, Jens Stoltenberg, [the Secretary General of NATO, announced the further readiness of NATO](#) to seek ways of supporting Ukraine (*text in Ukrainian*)
- On April 30, the "anti-terrorist operation" (ATO), was formally ended in the conflict zone in eastern Ukraine. On the next day, the regime of the [Joint Forces Operation](#) was launched, with the participation of the armed forces of Ukraine and other law enforcement agencies. More on the [difference](#) between the JFO and ATO. List of [settlements](#) located in the JFO zone (*text in Russian*)
- On April 30, Kurt Volker, the U.S. Special Representative for Ukraine, said [he will champion the idea of a UN peacekeeping mission](#), despite possible "doubts" from President Trump's team. Earlier in April, Kurt Volker received a [statement from Ukrainian NGOs about political prisoners from Ukraine](#), who are being held in prisons in the Russian Federation (*text in Ukrainian*)
- Alexander Hug, [the Principal Deputy Chief Monitor of the OSCE SMM, reported on the possible establishment of patrol bases](#) along the border with Russia (*text in Russian*)
- [The leaders of Ukraine, France and Germany may meet in Aachen in May to discuss the deployment of a UN peacekeeping mission](#). Russia is not expected to participate in the

meeting (*text in Russian*)

- At the end of March 2018 in Donetsk, the [so-called "Ukrainian People's Tribunal for the Investigation of War Crimes of Petro Poroshenko's Regime against the People of this Country" was created](#) (*text in Russian*)

2. Public initiatives dedicated to overcoming the consequences of war and searching for opportunities for dialogue

- [More than 1000 ATO military veterans have committed suicide](#), said Oleksandr Tretyakov, the head of the Parliamentary Committee for Veterans' Affairs (*text in Ukrainian*)
- From April 18 to 25, the ["Refraction" documentary film and dialogue festival was held in Kyiv](#), organized by the Free Russia House in Kyiv with the support of People in Need. The public history of human rights in the Soviet past, the post-Soviet present and its impact on Ukrainian-Russian relations was the main subject of the festival. The videos of the discussions are [here](#) (*text in Russian*)
- [Activists from St. Petersburg conducted a social experiment "I'm from Ukraine, let's hug!"](#) - see how it was in the video (*text in Russian*)
- ["We do not need war!" music festival was announced in St. Petersburg in May](#). The "anti-Army" pacifist movement is the organizer of the festival. "To be an imperial militarist is not OK for a rock musician!" stated the announcement of the festival (*text in Russian*)

3. Legal initiatives and analytics on war conflict

- An [interview with Arsen Avakov](#), the Minister of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, on the prospect of the adoption of "Law on Collaborators" (*text in Ukrainian*)
- [The report "Civilian casualties due to military conflict in the east of Ukraine"](#) was published by the "Alternative" Luhansk human rights center, the Civil Committee for the Protection of Constitutional Rights and Freedoms of Citizens, the Coalition "Justice for Peace in Donbass" and the Kharkiv Human Rights Group (*text in Ukrainian*)
- [The annual US State Department report on the human rights situation in Ukraine was published](#). According to the report, the worst situation is on territories beyond the control of the Ukrainian government, in Donbass and Crimea. Significant human rights violations include torture, the inhumane treatment of prisoners, arbitrary arrests and detentions, the transfer of prisoners to the territory of Russia, political prisoners, intrusions into private life, the violation of freedom of speech and a lack of court independence (*text in English*)
- "East-SOS" Charitable Foundation report [on the human rights situation](#) in some areas of Donetsk and Luhansk regions for March 2018 (*text in English*)
- Analysts of the YouControl company have researched the data of the Ukrainian Derzhstat. According to the analysis, [Ukraine increased the volume of trade with Russia, both export and import, in 2017](#) (*text in Ukrainian*)
- The results of the sociological study ["Investigation into the particularities of the identity](#)

[of residents on controlled and occupied territories](#)" are presented by Radio Liberty (*text in Russian*)

- The "New Europe" Center together with Carnegie Ukraine held [a round table "How to deal with the uncontrolled territories"](#). The experts exchanged opinions on Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Transnistria, Donbass and Crimea scenarios (*text in Ukrainian*)

4. Assistance to internally displaced persons (IDPs), refugees and affected civilians

- Danish Refugee Council - Danish Demining Group continues [a series of trainings for the staff of the Ukrainian Ministry of Temporarily Occupied Territories and IDPs](#). (*text in Ukrainian*)
- Six [informational campaigns on the prevention of domestic violence caused by the consequences of war](#) has started with the support of DRA e.V. (*text in Russian*)
- [In 2018, the International Committee of the Red Cross will discontinue the program of assistance to those who moved to Crimea from the Donbass region](#). The reason is the "improving the situation", as stated by the head of the Simferopol office (*text in Russian*)
- [The UN has less than 5% of the \\$ 187 000 000 needed to provide humanitarian assistance to inhabitants of the southeast of Ukraine in 2018](#). This was [stated by Neal Walker](#), the UN humanitarian program coordinator for Ukraine in an interview with the Ukrainian service of "VoA". The publication from the TV channel "Dozhd" [on humanitarian issues in the east of Ukraine](#) (*text in English and Russian*)
- The International Organization for Migration [has asked the international community to allocate \\$ 38 000 000 to help Ukrainian civilians](#) living in the conflict zone (*text in Ukrainian*)
- "Postup" Human Rights Center has created a [hotline for reports of human rights violations by representatives of the Ukrainian security forces](#) in the Joint Forces Operation zone (*text in Russian*)
- [#ОкупованіАлеНаші information campaign was launched](#) in Kyiv to draw attention to the issues of social payments for residents of the uncontrolled territories (*text in Ukrainian*)
- "East-SOS" Charitable Foundation on the [contest of reconstruction projects for schools](#) located near the contact line and about Krasnohirka school in Donetsk region (*text in Russian*)
- It will take about [20 years to demine Donbass](#), experts say (*text in Ukrainian*)
- The [functioning of the Donetsk Filter Station](#), which supplies water to 345 000 people, is in doubt. After shelling in early April, the station [resumed](#) its work on April 22, but faced [renewed shelling](#) on April 28 (*text in Ukrainian and English*)
- [Pavlo Hryb, the Ukrainian political prisoner, has complained about conditions of his detention in SIZO-5 of Krasnodar](#) (Russia). He is accused of terrorism. Specifically, he does not receive necessary medical care, needed due to his congenital liver disease (*text*

in Russian)

- Stanislav Klykh sent a [letter](#) to “Novaya Gazeta”, in which he expressed the [opinion that efforts by Ukrainian authorities are insufficient to release him and other political prisoners](#) (*text in Russian*)
- [A fundraising call was opened for the "May 32nd" festival in the city of Shchastya \(Luhansk region\)](#). The festival will be dedicated to the life of the small town, which happens to be on the front line (*text in Russian*)
- Experts discussed a [possible environmental threat and the risk of radioactive contamination](#) due to the commitment of the so-called "DPR" to stop draining water from the closed "Yunkom" mine, where a nuclear explosion occurred 40 years ago (*text in Russian*)

5. Interviews and opinions

- The residents of small settlements in the front-line zone [on the future of Donbass and Ukraine](#) (*text in Ukrainian*)
- ["The illusion of control: why the OSCE mission is blind to Russian tanks on the border"](#) - an investigation by "Ukrainska Pravda" (*text in Ukrainian*)
- The story of Alexei Filippov, a former Special Rapid Deployment Force Officer from Vladivostok (Russia), who spent three years in the "Right Sector", spying in favor of the so-called "DPR", and who was under investigation in the extremism case in Russia and received a prison term - "Mediazona" [publication](#) (*text in Russian*)
- ["Soviet nostalgia"](#). How the traditions of the USSR were revived in the uncontrolled territories of Donbass (*text in Ukrainian*)
- Vitaly Fomenko, a former soldier with the “Donbass” battalion, [on his captivity in the so called “DPR”](#) (*text in Ukrainian*)
- People in Need launched the ["Ukraine not forgotten" multimedia project dedicated to the inhabitants of Donbass](#) (*text in English*)
- [Interview with Marie Yovanovitch, U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine](#), on the prospects of the country's development and further cooperation (*text in Ukrainian*)
- Media project "Nakipelo"’s team - [on the visit to the "gray zone"](#) and uncontrolled territories (*text in Russian*)

Supported by the government of Germany as a part of the DRA project "Dialogue for mutual understanding and rule of law: European NGOs together to overcome the Donbass conflict"



Federal Foreign Office

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