



CIVIC SECTOR OF EUROMAIDAN GRASSROOTS MOVEMENT

EuroMaidan Newsletter # 57

Ukrainian President Signs Law Allowing NATO Membership Bid

Ukrainian crisis the most difficult since Cold war

“The year that passes was the hardest one for the past seven decades, since 1945. An aggressive enemy put our lives, territory, freedom and independence at risk. But the whole nation, young and old, stood up to protect the motherland. We will certainly win this war for our native land, because for us it is fair. The truth is on our side! God is with us!” *President Petro Poroshenko's speech broadcasted on Dec. 31 as a New Year greeting.*

<http://goo.gl/NHonMg>

Jan.5. Representatives of Ukraine, Russia, France, and Germany are meeting in Berlin to discuss efforts to end the conflict between government forces and pro-Russian separatists in eastern Ukraine. <http://goo.gl/YEjvZH>

President Petro Poroshenko has signed a law abandoning Ukraine's neutral "non-bloc" status, and said Ukrainians will decide whether the country should seek NATO membership once it meets the standards of the Western military alliance. <http://goo.gl/V6oyjD>

The majority of Ukrainians (53%) support the country's accession to NATO, 22% are against, and 25% have no opinion on the matter. <http://goo.gl/W16Hrp>

Swiss Foreign Minister, the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office Didier Burkhalter considers the crisis in Ukraine the most difficult in the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian zone since the end of Cold war. <http://en.censor.net.ua/n318732>

600 children from conflict areas in eastern Ukraine will spend the Christmas holidays in the Carpathian Mountains located in Ukraine's westernmost region. (Video) <http://goo.gl/DCMj6G>

On Jan 1, up to 2500 people according to the police estimates marched through Khreshchatyk, Kyiv's main street, celebrating the 106th birthday of Stepan Bandera, a

leader of Ukraine's nationalist movement during World War II. <http://goo.gl/6DSgBD>

Immense relief for the 150 Ukrainian soldiers and civilians released by the Kremlin-backed militants was marred by ongoing concern for the at least 534 people still in captivity, many 'arrested' on the basis of 'denunciations' like those in the worst Soviet times.

<http://goo.gl/uWnKmR>

Ukrainian civil society in all its forms is increasingly doing what the state cannot. Where the state fails to deliver, the people make up the difference; where it is slow and flabby, they are quick and lean.

<http://goo.gl/AS23vK>

Transport blockade of Crimea a Gift to the Kremlin?

<http://goo.gl/GFxF0w>

Putin's propaganda machine utilizes a number of tactics. Chief among them is seeking out chinks in the armor of the perceived opponent and penetrating their ranks to attack from within. Russia hires hordes of American lobbyists (including former senators), spends millions on Public Relations representatives and spares no expense to maintain the presence of Putin's problem fixers in the West. PR firm Ketchum interacts with the New York Times, AP, Bloomberg, the Washington Post, Politico, CNBC, CNN, and PBS, promoting Russia's interests. Read more at <http://goo.gl/tAzndW>

In addition to hundreds of peaceful protesters outraged by the conviction of Alexei and Oleg Navalny, Russian police have also detained three artists attending the showing of "Stronger than Weapons", a new film about EuroMaidan. The event was in solidarity with Ukrainian film director and Russian political prisoner Oleg Sentsov.

<http://goo.gl/j6ZNHR>

Crimea must have a cost.

“We have no energy left for half-feelings and halftones, only for love and hate.”

“The departing year has opened Ukraine's chest cavity and forced it to feel the world with an open heart. We have no energy left for half-feelings and halftones. We only have the energy for love and hate. But both the one and the other are piercingly sincere.” Dmitry Tymchuk: Military summary of 2014.

A new threat is emerging in Ukraine: independently operating warlords and armed groups. <http://goo.gl/Lwxcgu>

Ukraine Budget Limits Independence of Central Bank Monetary Policy. <http://goo.gl/k1lwMZ>

The Russian aggression in Donetsk and Luhansk regions is likely to continue to be a top priority issue, costing

thousands of human lives and weighing heavily on the Ukrainian economy. Each day of the Anti-Terrorist Operation (ATO) in Eastern Ukraine costs UAH 100 million with UAH 90 billion budgeted in total for national security (approximately 5% of Ukraine's GDP) in 2015. Yet the cost will more than likely run in the hundreds of billions of hryvnia. How should Ukraine finance these expenditures?

<http://goo.gl/fQGzku>

Crimea must have a cost. Alas for the moment it is not worth trying to get Moscow to surrender Crimea. But there must be a real and serious cost to Russia as a result. The claims of Kyiv and Moscow cannot be considered comparable. Kyiv is the injured party. - Dr Mark Galeotti <http://goo.gl/MNSIsR>

Ukraine reports first military death of 2015

Russia continues to increase its military presence in the occupied Donbass

5 Jan. Situation in Eastern Ukraine. <http://goo.gl/lh7RDM>

Ukraine reported its first military death of 2015. More than 4,700 people were killed in 2014 in the conflict, which has provoked the worst crisis in relations between Russia and the West since the Cold War. <http://goo.gl/Jhj7st>

4 Jan. Russia continues to increase its military presence in the occupied territory of the Donbas. <http://goo.gl/N7KhoO>

4 Jan. The situation in the ATO area has not changed significantly. Illegal armed groups provoked Ukrainian soldiers 10 times and fired on ATO positions, including rocket artillery. <http://goo.gl/jGESud>

Seven corridors set up in eastern Ukraine as terror threat rises. Ukraine is tightening control over transport in and out of the eastern Ukrainian regions currently occupied by Russian-backed insurgents as the threat of terror attacks rises. <http://goo.gl/1DZxHR>

In areas controlled by separatists, local militants are being replaced with regular Russian Federation armed forces in an attempt to subordinate all illegal armed groups to a unified command center. In order to staff the existing illegal armed groups, “DNR” leaders are holding “voluntary” enlistment of local 16- to 18-year-olds. <http://uacrisis.org/andriij-lisenko-10/>

More than 1,000 Ukrainian POWs held in Russia — human rights activist. <http://goo.gl/hzicHE>

Fresh evidence has emerged that Russia is continuing to send military hardware into Ukraine to support militants in Luhansk and Donetsk regions. <http://goo.gl/v5DtI0> ; <http://goo.gl/EyJQtr>

2 Jan. About 300 Russian servicemen arrived in Horlivka, Donetsk oblast, to assume control of the city. <http://goo.gl/LTE4wF>

OSCE report as of 2 Jan 2015. The SMM received reports about a deterioration in the relative calm since 9 December 2014, with an increase in ceasefire violations and casualties reported by the JCCC in the Donetsk region. <http://goo.gl/bBRpez>

Four more Ukrainian soldiers were freed from captivity on Friday Jan.2. They include three soldiers from the Ukrainian Army and one from the 'Donbas' battalion. <http://goo.gl/PFXLLa>

Among the insurgents killed during their attempted attack on Ukrainian troop positions near Pisky on December 31, 2014, four of them, disguised as so-called “militia,” turned out to be Russian marines from the Black Sea Fleet of the Russian Federation. All four were contract soldiers. <http://goo.gl/K0rHVc>

Former insurgent leader Igor Girkin has advised militants to get out of east Ukraine and abandon their war. Video <http://goo.gl/TjL23k>

Jan 1: A tank battalion received Ukraine flags with their battalion logo as a New Year gift from volunteers. - Olena Sharhovska



21st day of hunger strike by Nadiya Savchenko

Nadiya Savchenko, former first lieutenant of the Ukrainian Army and now a Member of Parliament of Ukraine, and the beloved heroine of Ukrainians across the planet, today marks her 21st day on hunger strike in a Russian prison. She has not been allowed to see her lawyer until January 12. <http://goo.gl/BMO4RO> ; <http://goo.gl/6s0NKY>

Report on the human rights mission to the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts. <http://goo.gl/Y0FgKf>

Leaders of the self-proclaimed Luhansk People’s Republic (LPR) announced they had liquidated an “illegal” torture centre in Luhansk on Jan. 2, highlighting recent infighting

between various groups of Russian-backed separatists in the east of Ukraine. The LPR leader responsible for the prison is reported to have been killed by LPR chief Igor Plotnitsky. <http://goo.gl/zKUTr9> ; <http://goo.gl/vOJfvL>

Thousands have fled eastern Ukraine since the conflict erupted in April. Some have since returned. Other people chose to stay and tough it out. From teachers to pensioners to families with children, residents of rebel-held towns are struggling to get on with their lives amid the chaos and uncertainty. Testimonies. <http://goo.gl/dp8DcW>

A Ukrainian soldier decorates a Christmas tree in a shelter in the village of Piski, eastern Ukraine



Can a group of young reformers fix a broken country?

Central bank says economy fell by 7.5 percent amid Donbas war

Can a group of young reformers fix a broken country? That is the question that Dmytro Shymkiv, the first deputy head of Ukraine's presidential administration, is getting a lot these days. About a year ago, Mr. Shymkiv was running Microsoft in Ukraine and pondering accepting a promotion to the company's offices in Latin America. <http://goo.gl/jHF0D0>

Coal-short Ukraine has secured 1.3 million tons of coal supplies a month to avoid power blackouts during the winter. <http://goo.gl/4P2m7s>

The Ukrainian economy shrank by 7.5 percent this year, which is a figure 0.5-percentage points more pessimistic than forecast, said Head of the National Bank of Ukraine Valeriya Gontareva during the Dec. 30 news conference. <http://goo.gl/Ge43AC>

Ukraine's biggest television channel is under fire after broadcasting a New Year's Eve concert featuring Russian singers who have publicly supported separatists in eastern Ukraine. <http://goo.gl/035d13> ; <http://goo.gl/IKpOuJ>

Authorities have ample reasons to shut down Inter TV channel. <http://goo.gl/PkIKvE>

Both KHPG's Gennady Tokarev and Mykola

Khavronyuk, a leading specialist in criminal law and member of the board of the Centre for Political and Legal Reform, have written blistering critiques of the draft bill tabled by Yury Lutsenko on amendments to legislation regarding the planned National Anti-Corruption Bureau. <http://goo.gl/h5NNhU>

While many talented tech students from Ukraine choose to pursue studies abroad at some point in their career, local market players launched a BrainBasket Foundation this year to fund free trainings for those who wish to study programming. <http://goo.gl/07BIHI>

Breaking trade and transportation ties with Russia-annexed Crimea and parts of the Donbas region controlled by the separatists is a bad idea, said Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk during a news conference on Dec. 30. The comment followed previous government intentions to cut supplies of gas and electricity to the territories taken over by the Kremlin. <http://goo.gl/OOS3r4>

Dec 31.
Ukrainians mark
the upcoming
New Year near
St. Sophia's
Cathedral, by the
main Christmas
tree, Kyiv



It has been the most tumultuous year in Ukraine's history since World War II, but Ukrainians persevere with humor and pride

If you happen to get a Christmas or New Year gift that you find useless, do not rush to toss it away – there are people for whom those presents might bring joy. <http://goo.gl/zXGUII>

It has been the most tumultuous year in Ukraine's history since World War II, and Levko Stek of RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service has followed it with his camera every step of the way. From the squares of Kyiv, to the seizing of Crimea, and the war that followed in Donbas, Stek looks back on a year that saw a president ousted, Europe's first annexation in decades, and Russian troops fighting on Ukrainian soil. Video (6 min) <http://goo.gl/V1uggj>

Ever since Russia started its aggression against Ukraine, Ukrainians have maintained a sense of humor and pride that has been evident in a variety of

internet memes over the past year. Ukraine Today takes a look at the 2014's top 5 Ukrainian internet memes. <http://goo.gl/n1CvPw>

“Next year will be complex. The country is in the midst of a war. We face a difficult winter in the economic and energy areas, and also in moral terms that guide our values as a nation. Our thoughts are focused on defending our country – on the students who have been sheltered by Kyiv Mohyla Academy this year, on the residents and internal refugees of Crimea and Donbas, on the large number of social-volunteer projects that were organized at the initiative of our students, alumni, faculty, and staff. But let us consider next year as a year of opportunities, or rather, not only the upcoming year, but the next five.”
A.Meleshevych, President of the national University of “Kyiv-Mohyla Academy” during inauguration.
Read more at <http://goo.gl/opM7cX>

CONTACT INFORMATION

Press-center of Civic Sector of EuroMaidan
Kateryna Maksym +38(066) 6906927
katerynamaksym69@gmail.com

www.facebook.com/hrom.sektor.euromaidan

<http://euro-revolution.org>

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