



**Crisis in Ukraine: Daily Briefing**

**17 July, 2014, 8 PM Kyiv time**

**1. Malaysian aircraft shot down over eastern Ukraine**

At approximately 4:20 PM Kyiv time, a Malaysian Airlines Boeing 777 en route from Amsterdam to Kuala Lumpur crashed in Donetsk oblast. According to reports 295 people were on board. According to President Poroshenko's Press Secretary, the President stated: "This is not an incident, this is not a catastrophe, this is a terrorist act." The press service of the President of Ukraine emphasized "that the Armed Forces of Ukraine didn't commit any actions to strike the targets in the air. On behalf of the state, the President of Ukraine expressed the deepest and the most sincere condolences to friends and relatives of the deceased in this dreadful tragedy. All possible search-and-rescue operations are being conducted. The Head of State addressed the Cabinet of Ministers to immediately establish the State commission to investigate the given tragedy. The President offered to involve experts from ICAO and other international structures, as well as representatives of Netherlands and Malaysia in the work of the given Commission. We are confident that those responsible for the given tragedy will be brought to justice."

On the Vkontakte social media page of the Russian terrorist "leader" Igor Girkin (aka Strelkov), Strelkov stated that "In the Torrez area an An-26 plane was just downed, somewhere near the mine 'Progress'... We warned them not to fly 'in our sky'" as the first reports surfaced that the Malaysian plane went down. There are no reports of any missing or downed AN-26 aircraft in Ukraine today.

**2. Russian Federation's escalation of conflict in Eastern Ukraine**

Ukraine's Ministry of Defense stated that on 16 July, at about 7PM Kyiv time, near Amvrosiyivka, Donetsk oblast, "a Ukrainian armed forces SU-25 aircraft was carrying out duties. While turning, the plane's tail section was fired upon from the side of the border of the Russian Federation. In this way Russia has carried out another provocation. It is likely that the firing was from air-to-air missiles from military aircraft of the armed forces of the Russian Federation, which were patrolling the border in the area in pairs. The SU-25 plane was downed. The pilot ejected and has been evacuated to a safe place. The National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine (RNBO) stated that "Terrorists are increasing their forces on our territory; in this regard in their ranks groups of personnel in uniforms of the armed forces of the Russian Federation without identifying insignia have been identified. Such a group was observed near Izvaryne. The group is armed with artillery and a 'Grad' [truck-mounted multiple rocket launcher]." The State Border Service of Ukraine reported that "Firing on positions of border personnel frequently takes place from the territory of the Russian Federation. In particular, during the day terrorists stormed the border checkpoint Marynivka, Donetsk oblast. During this (attack), the positions of Anti-Terrorism Operation forces were shelled by artillery from the side of Kyibishevo (Russian Federation)."

**3. Kremlin-backed violence in Eastern Ukraine**

The National Security and Defense Council (RNBO) stated that near Marynivka, Ukrainian forces repelled four attacks of Kremlin-backed armed extremists. 3 tanks and 2 armored personnel carriers of the Kremlin-backed armed extremists were destroyed. At 12:00 p.m. Kyiv time, the RNBO stated that the Ukrainian air force flew 12 missions and army helicopters flew 17 missions in the last 24 hours with the goal of hitting positions of Kremlin-backed armed extremists, delivery of humanitarian goods, and search and rescue missions. The RNBO reports that 5 Ukrainian soldiers were killed and 11 wounded in battles on 16 July.

**4. US imposes new sanctions on Russian Federation**

On 16 July the United States announced new sanctions against the Russian Federation. Gazprombank, the funding arm of state gas monopoly Gazprom, state-owned Vnezheconombank, Novatek and Rosneft, the largest petroleum company, were among the entities sanctioned. The new sanctions also froze US assets of eight Russian defense firms and prohibited dealings with them.