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In July 2014 FPRI (<http://www.fpri.org/about>) The Foreign Policy Research Institute published a post titled "Ukraine Crisis Timeline: Talk of Peace, Acts of War." This updated version of that post makes clear the pattern of Vladimir Putin's strategy of iterative deception and aggression.

According to the United Nations human rights office, the death toll from the war in Ukraine has reached over 5,000 with 10,948 wounded and over half a million Ukrainians displaced due to the continuing conflict.

FPRI marked in brackets the elapsed time between key events to highlight the hypocrisy of Putin's words versus his actions in Ukraine. Details on next page.

I. Yanukovich's Downfall; Putin's Countermeasures

November 21, 2013: Yanukovich backs off from his tentative agreement to initial an association agreement with the EU at the Vilnius Summit ❖ contrary to his campaign promises when he was elected in 2010. Popular protests in Kiev begin immediately and grow larger with each passing week. Yanukovich uses increasing violence to suppress the protesters, and Russian media portray the Maidan protesters as Western-instigated fascists. This deception and escalation continue for three months.

February 21-22, 2014: Yanukovich flees Ukraine; Maidan protesters take control of Kiev government buildings; an interim, pro-EU government is formed. [3 months]

February 27: Pro-Russian separatists seize their first official building in Crimea; each day, new government buildings and military bases are surrounded and taken over by pro-Russian separatists backed by "little green men" (covert Russian troops). [5 days]

March 5: U.S and reluctant Europeans announce minor sanctions against Russia for its actions in Crimea; Russia continues to deny involvement in supporting separatists; Ukraine military forces in Crimea crumble.

March 16: Self-appointed Crimean officials, also backed by anonymous green-uniformed men with guns, hold a referendum on Crimea's secession from Ukraine; allegedly, 97 percent of voters wish to join Russia; Moscow quickly agrees to the request and moves to annex Crimea. [17 days]

March 20: U.S. and EU announce financial sanctions against additional Russian individuals close to Putin, in reaction to Moscow's annexation of Crimea.

March 31: In response, Putin promises to withdraw most Russian troops from Ukrainian-Russian border (but fails to do so). [11 days]

April 7: Separatists occupy government buildings in the eastern cities of Donetsk, Luhansk and Kharkiv, calling for referenda on independence for these three major regions, and asking Russia to send "peacekeepers" to protect them. [7 days]

II. Ukraine Fights Back; Russia Escalates and Claims "Historic" Rights

April 15: Start of Ukrainian military operations against pro-Russian separatists in Luhansk and Donetsk (Kharkiv uprising fizzles); EU remains hesitant to apply increased sanctions despite mounting evidence of Moscow's backing for the separatists. [8 days]

April 17: Putin announces his concept of the historic "Novorossiia," attempting to provide historical rationale for Russia's aggression in eastern Ukraine. [2 days]

April 20: US sends 600 troops temporarily to Poland and the Baltic States as a gesture of reassurance that NATO allies will be defended against similar Russian incursions.

April 24: In response to Kiev's "anti-terrorist operations" Russia begins new military exercises near its border with Ukraine. [4 days]

April 26: Russian political operative Alexander Borodai, the self-declared political leader of the separatist Donetsk People's Republic cedes control of separatist fighters to Russian military intelligence officer Igor Girkin, alias Ivan Strelkov ("The Shooter"). [2 days]

May 2: Clashes develop between the separatist minority and the pro-unity majority in Odessa (very far from the Dombass enclaves), leaving at least 42 dead.

May 11: Self-appointed pro-Russian separatists in Donetsk and Luhansk hold referenda, not recognized by Kiev or the West; they declare

independence.

May 25: Petro Poroshenko elected as Ukraine's president on a reformist, pro-EU platform, with a 54.5 percent majority; but he also says he seeks negotiations with Putin.

May 26: Putin says he will respect the results of Ukrainian elections.

Late May-Early June: Separatists begin attempts to take the strategic Donetsk airport; Ukrainian forces fight back, with heavy casualties on both sides; continuing military clashes as separatists try to consolidate control of all of Luhansk and Donetsk regions; Russian armaments and "volunteers" strongly in evidence, despite Moscow's denial of involvement.

III. Separatist Offensive; Talk of a Peace Plan

June 4: Separatist rebels take two Ukrainian military bases in the eastern border region of Luhansk and fighting continues near the key rebel-held town of Sloviansk.

June 9: Ukrainian Foreign Ministry says that Russia and Ukraine have reached an understanding on the implementation of a cease fire and peace plan for the East.

June 12: Ukrainians says three Russian tanks entered rebel areas in the east, along with other armaments; Russia denies the allegation. [3 days]

June 14: Pro-Russian rebels shoot down a military transport plane, killing 49 Ukrainian troops, showing the sophistication of weaponry now possessed by the rebels; protesters in Kiev attack the Russian embassy.

June 16: Russia cuts off all gas supplies to Ukraine, economically reinforcing pro-Russian separatist actions in eastern Ukraine. [2 days]

June 23: Poroshenko declares a temporary ceasefire based on Russian offer of negotiations for a peaceful political settlement between separatists and Kiev government; rebels officially agree one day later.

IV. Moscow Postures; Separatists Violate Ceasefire

June 24: Vladimir Putin officially rescinds power to use Russian military in eastern Ukraine as a gesture of his purported commitment to a peaceful settlement; nine Ukrainian servicemen die the same day when rebels shoot down an army helicopter.

June 27: The EU signs an Association Agreement with Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova.

June 28: Rebels release eight members of OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) who had been detained since the end of May.

June 30: Poroshenko ends his unilateral ceasefire based on continuing violations by separatists with numerous Ukrainian casualties and the strengthening of rebel positions.

Ukrainian Government Takes the Offensive

July 5: Rebels are pushed out of their strategic bastion of Sloviansk; Ukrainian flag hoisted over city council building, fostering optimism for Ukrainian victory in Eastern Ukraine; pro-Russian rebels publicly criticize Putin for "lack of support."

July 14: Ukrainian military plane shot down at 21,000 feet; Kiev government says missile came from Russian territory since pro-Russian rebels did not have adequate weaponry to hit plane at high altitude. [9 days]

July 16: Obama warns Putin of further sanctions on Russia following continued violence in eastern Ukraine, with mounting evidence that Moscow is feeding this escalation,

V. Malaysian Airlines Shoot-down; Russian Denials, European Countermeasures

July 17: Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 crashes in eastern Ukraine killing 298 civilians, mostly Dutch and other Europeans and Australians; plane was downed by a sophisticated Buk surface-to-air missile supplied by Russians; separatists initially boasted they had shot down a large "Ukrainian military aircraft"; when the civilian nature of flight discovered they instead blame Kiev for the shoot-down; Moscow denies involvement.

July 25: EU announces plans for more hard-hitting economic sanctions that target Russian state banks, as well as Russia's energy and defense sectors; Ukrainian government forces continue to push into Donetsk and Lugansk, although at the cost of hundreds of civilian casualties. [8 days]

July 28: U.S. State Department releases photographic evidence of Russian artillery strikes into Ukraine; Russia denies authenticity of photographs.

July 31: as of this date nearly

1,200 persons have been killed in eastern Ukraine, with nearly 3,500 wounded since the separatist movement began in April; over 140,000 Ukrainian refugees have fled to Russia, with over 100,000 internally displaced.

August 3: Ukrainian Defense Minister proclaims that Kiev's forces will defeat pro-Russian separatists shortly, citing success in reducing rebel controlled territory.

VI. Moscow Begins New Buildup, While Still Talking of Peace; Ukrainian Elections Confirm Kiev Government's

August 5: Ukrainian military spokesman announce that Russia "has begun an enormous buildup of armored vehicles, aircraft, and personnel at the Ukrainian border" with over 45,000 soldiers, 160 tanks, 1,360 armored vehicles, 192 Russian warplanes and 137 military helicopters ready to be deployed across the Ukrainian border. [2 days]

August 7: In response to European sanctions, Russia launches retaliatory sanctions against the West, banning food imports from Europe and the United States.

August 9: Ukrainian army surrounds Donetsk, leading to hopes of success.

August 15: Ukrainian government claims to have destroyed a Russian military convoy that had crossed into Eastern Ukraine ♦ the most direct engagement to date between Ukrainian and Russian military forces. Putin continues to deny existence of Russian military convoys and troops in Eastern Ukraine.

August 22/23: A convoy of 280 Russian trucks crosses the Luhansk border claiming to provide "humanitarian aid" to the region. The Ukrainian government calls this a direct invasion; U.S. and Europe threaten additional sanctions if Russia does not cease support for separatists. Most Russian trucks return, but only after delivering substantial supplies.

August 25: Poroshenko dissolves parliament and calls for parliamentary elections to be held in October. Meanwhile, Russia escalates its operations against Ukraine, launching a new offensive in Novoazovsk, southeast Ukraine, thereby opening up a second front to create a land bridge between the Russo-Ukrainian border and Crimea.

August 26: Putin and Poroshenko meet in Minsk to discuss reconciliation, and agree on a "roadmap" to a ceasefire by closing the Ukrainian-Russian border to prevent movement of soldiers and military equipment into Ukraine ♦ but hostilities continue.

August 29: Following escalating Russian activity in eastern Ukraine, Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk announces a course towards seeking NATO membership for Ukraine.

September 2: Putin privately boasts he could take Kiev in two weeks if he so wished.

September 5: Putin and Poroshenko reach ceasefire agreement at Minsk. Agreed points include a decentralization of power, OSCE monitoring of the Russo-Ukrainian border, release of all hostages, and measures to improve the humanitarian situation in Dombass.

September 6: Only one day after the Minsk agreements, the shelling of Mariupol begins. This is a key port city in south-eastern Ukraine previously cleared of separatists by local Ukrainian miners. Fighting also continues in Donetsk and Lugansk, despite the Minsk agreement.

September 18: Poroshenko addresses the US Congress seeking aid for Ukraine. President Obama promises \$53 million aid package \$46 million for Ukraine's military, and \$7 million for humanitarian aid.

October 2: World Bank forecasts that Ukrainian economy will contract by 8 percent in 2014 due to disruptions and costs of the continuing crisis in the eastern regions.

October 12: As a purported token of de-escalation, Putin orders 17,600 Russian troops stationed in the Rostov region near the border with Ukraine to return to their bases. Putin has often shown signs of de-escalation in Ukraine right before intensifying aggression.

October 26: Ukraine holds parliamentary elections in which Ukrainians vote overwhelmingly for pro-Western parties: President Poroshenko's bloc and the People's Front headed by Prime Minister Arseniy Yatseniuk got 21.8 percent and 22.1 percent, respectively, although Poroshenko's bloc won many more seats due to its better performance in

single member districts. The other pro-Western parties were Self-Reliance with 10.97 percent, the Radical Party 6.36 percent and Fatherland (led by Yulia Tymoshenko) with 5.68 percent. Total seats in new government coalition: 303 (Of 450) The Opposition Bloc (Yanukovich party's remnants) got 9.43 percent. Total seats in opposition, including independents: 79.

October 29: NATO officials report unusual Russian aerial maneuvers, signaling continued Russian hostility and military posturing. [3 days]

October 30: Ukraine and Russia reach a deal on gas deliveries.

November 2: Pro-Russian separatists in eastern Ukraine hold elections one week after Ukraine's parliamentary elections. Kiev and the West refuse to recognize these elections.

November 7: Russia sends a column of 32 tanks, 16 pieces of heavy artillery, and 30 trucks ferrying fighters and supplies into the eastern Ukrainian region of Luhansk. [5 days]

November 8: Former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev states that the world is "on the brink of a new Cold War." Gorbachev blames the west for victimizing Russia and says, "I am absolutely convinced that Putin protects Russia's interests better than anyone else."

November 15: Putin meets with his fellow world leaders at the G-20 conference in Australia, where he receives heavy criticism and leaves early.

November 30: Russia sends another "humanitarian" convoy into Eastern Ukraine despite Ukrainian protest that humanitarian aid is a guise for further military assistance to separatists. This is the eighth such convoy Russia has sent into Eastern Ukraine.

December 4: Putin holds his annual state of the nation address in which he blames the Ukraine crisis on the "unlawful" ouster of Yanukovich and on Western support for "far-right factions" controlling the Ukrainian government. He calls Western sanctions a plot to keep Russia from achieving great power status.

December 8: After a nearly six months hiatus, Russia resumes gas supplies to Ukraine, providing approximately 43.5 million cubic meters per day.

December 16: Despite a rise in interest rates from 10.5 to 17 percent, the ruble loses nearly half of its value. Although Western sanctions are an important part of the reason, the primary cause is the low price of oil (which stands well below \$60 a barrel, when Moscow needs \$100-plus to finance government budget and trade balance). Meanwhile, the U.S. implements additional sanctions on Russia.

December 18: In a three-hour television conference, Vladimir Putin blames foreign interference for the conflict in Ukraine and for Russia's economic troubles.

December 24: Ukraine pays off \$1.65 billion to Russia as agreed upon in gas deal signed in October. A bomb destroys a railroad track outside Odessa.

December 26: Eastern Ukrainian separatists and Ukraine exchange hundreds of POWs.

December 29: Ukraine signs a bill that drops its non-aligned status. Moscow calls this move a threat to Russia's national security.

December 30: Opposition Leader Alexander Navalny and hundreds of protesters are arrested after an anti-Putin demonstration in Manezh square.

January 4, 2015: An explosion destroys the door and windows of the Euromaidan Coordination Center in Odessa. Ukrainian officials call the incident a terrorist attack. This attack is just one of five similar attacks in Odessa in the past month.

January 5, 2015: French President Francois Hollande suggests that international sanctions should be lessened if Russia makes progress on upholding peace in Eastern Ukraine. Similar statements are made by two top German officials the previous day.

VII. Separatists Return to the Offensive, Bolstered by Increasingly Visible Russian Military Intervention

January 11: Pro-Russian separatists begin an aggressive new offensive in the area surrounding the Donetsk Airport.

January 13: A rocket believed to be fired by pro-Russian separatists hits a bus in Volnovakha in the south of Donetsk, killing 13 civilians.

January 14: Federica Mogherini, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy,

proposes an end to sanctions if Russia ceases to destabilize eastern Ukraine. Key EU leaders quickly disown her statement, which she quickly "re-interprets".

January 22: Under increasingly heavy assault Ukrainian military forced to retreat from the Donetsk Airport, which had served as a center of conflict since September 2014, due to both its symbolic and strategic value. [11 days]

January 23: Alexander Zakharchenko, head of the Donetsk People's Republic announces that separatist forces reject all forms of a ceasefire.

January 24: Grad and Uragan rockets fired by pro-Russian separatists kill 30 civilians and wound 100 others in Mariupol, in south-eastern Ukraine. Increasing evidence of direct Russian military intervention, involving more and heavier weaponry and as many as 9000 Russian troops.

January 27: The Ukrainian parliament formally labels Russia as an aggressor state and the Donetsk and Lugansk People's Republics as terrorist organizations.

January 28: Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov states that Ukraine must remain neutral in order to avoid further territorial divisions. [1 day]

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