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03.09.22

Turkey and Israel talk of natural gas pipeline to Europe; Turks want EU control

03.09.22

With much fanfare, presidents of Turkey and Israel meet in Ankara

Accompanied by Israel's national anthem, Herzog arrives at presidential complex for talks with Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan in first visit of Israeli leader to Turkey in 14 years

Ynet, News agencies | Published: 03.09.22, 15:49

President Isaac Herzog on Wednesday was greeted with a rousing fanfare when he arrived Turkey's capital of Ankara, becoming the first Israeli leader to visit in 14 years, as the two countries move to turn a new page in their troubled relationship.

Accompanied by Israel's national anthem, Herzog arrived at the Presidential Complex in Ankara where he was to hold talks Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan before traveling to Istanbul for meetings with Turkey's Jewish community there.

"We will not agree on everything, and the relationship between Israel and Turkey has certainly known ups and downs and not-so-simple moments in recent years," Herzog told reporters at Tel Aviv's Ben Gurion airport. "But we shall try to restart our relations and build them in a measured and cautious manner, and with mutual respect between our states," he said.

"I always emphasize that my vision is that Jews, Muslims, and Christians will live in peace in our region in a manner that will bring them prosperity and perfect lives.

"My visit is completely coordinated with Prime Minister Naftali Bennett and Foreign Minister Yair Lapid and their offices, and I hope that in the wake of my visit, a serious process will begin with Turkey, an in-depth dialogue at various levels, and that ultimately we will see, so I hope, progress in our relations and positive results. Thank you very much, everyone."

One particular area of interest for Turkey and Israel is natural gas. Erdogan has said the visit will herald a "new era" and that the two countries could work together to carry Israeli natural gas to Europe, reviving an idea first discussed more than 20 years ago. Gas supplies from the Mediterranean could ease European dependence on Russian gas, a hot topic following Russia's invasion of Ukraine and subsequent calls from European leaders to reduce the continent's reliance on Russian gas. Plans for a subsea pipeline from the east Mediterranean to Europe, excluding Turkey, have stalled after the United States expressed misgivings in January.

A senior Turkish official said Russia's invasion of Ukraine had shown that concrete steps were needed to diversify energy sources in the market.

"It is critically important to transport gas resources in Israel to Turkey and from there to European markets," the official said. "It should be a critical and supportive step for Europe in terms of resource diversity. Turkey is ready to take the necessary steps and do its part in this regard."

Turkey and Israel were once close allies, but the relationship frayed under Erdogan, who is an outspoken critic of Israel's policies toward the Palestinians. Israel, for its part, has been angered by Erdogan's embrace of Hamas, the militant group that controls the Gaza Strip. Israel considers Hamas a terrorist group.

The countries withdrew their ambassadors in 2010 after Israeli forces stormed a Gaza-bound flotilla carrying humanitarian aid for the Palestinians that broke an Israeli blockade.

The incident resulted in the deaths of nine Turkish activists.

Relations broke down again in 2018 when Turkey, angered by the U.S. moving its embassy to Jerusalem, once more recalled its ambassador from Israel, prompting Jerusalem to also recall its envoy.

The two countries have not so far reappointed ambassadors.

03.09.22

Russia's police regime on Ukraine faces economy crisis by EU & US sanctions

03.09.22

Shelling continues to hamper civilian flight as Kremlin decries U.S. oil sanctions

Occupying Russian National Guardsmen reported to have detained 400 Ukrainians for protesting their presence in Khereshon, while Ukraine's Foreign Minister says expectations low ahead of Lavrov meeting on Thursday

Agencies| Published: 03.09.22, 15:26

The governor of Ukraine's Kharkiv region said on Wednesday that evacuation of civilians was not immediately possible due to Russian shelling as the Kremlin slams oil sanctions imposed on it by the United States and some of its allies.

In Kherson, Ukraine's military high command said that members of Russia's National Guard have detained more than 400 people who protested against the occupation of their town by Russian forces.

"Due to the furious resistance of the residents of Kherson, the occupiers are attempting to introduce an administrative-police regime," it said in a statement.

In the meantime, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba said he had limited expectations of planned talks with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov on Thursday. Kuleba confirmed he would attend the talks in Turkey and urged Lavrov to approach them "in good faith, not from a propagandistic perspective."

"But I will say frankly that my expectations of the talks are low," Kuleba said in a video statement. "We are interested in a ceasefire, liberating our territories and the third point is to resolve all humanitarian issues."

The Kremlin, meanwhile, accused the U.S. of declaring an economic war on Moscow, that was sowing mayhem through energy markets. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov put the U.S. on notice that it was thinking carefully how to respond to a ban on Russian oil and energy.

Russia's economy is facing the gravest crisis since the 1991 fall of the Soviet Union after the West imposed crippling sanctions on almost entire Russian financial and corporate system following Moscow's invasion of Ukraine.

Peskov cast the West's sanctions as "hostile bacchanalia" which had roiled global markets and pointedly warned that it was unclear how far turbulence on global energy markets would go.

"You see the bacchanalia, the hostile bacchanalia, which the West has sown - and that of course makes the situation very difficult and forces us to think seriously," Peskov said. Asked about a ban on Russian oil and energy imports announced by U.S. President Joe Biden, Peskov said Russia had been, was and would be a reliable energy supplier.

"The situation demands a rather deep analysis - those decisions announced by President Biden," Peskov said. "If you are asking me what Russia is going to do - Russia is going to do what is necessary to defend its interests."

Meanwhile, European Union governments are preparing a new round of travel bans and asset freezes on some 100 Russians over the invasion of Ukraine and a decision could come later on Wednesday, the EU's top diplomat said.

"Member states are working on a package of sanctions, around 100 people responsible at different levels of government," Borrell told the European Parliament in Strasbourg. He said he hoped for agreement "by the end of this session today", without giving more details.

03.07.22

Ukraine's Zelensky pleads to Conference of Presidents of American Jews for support

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Ukrainian leader says Russian hostility akin to 'pure Nazi behavior', Russia seeks to 'exterminate' millions of Ukrainians as shelling of civilian buildings continues, including a children's hospital in Kyiv

Reuters| Published: 03.07.22, 22:35

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky appealed to American Jews for support on Monday with an unsparing account of Russian destruction in his country that he compared to the Nazi German army marching across Europe.

"This is just pure Nazi behavior. I can't even qualify this in any different manner," Zelensky told the Conference of Presidents of American Jewish Organizations, an umbrella group, as he continued to press for more fighter planes from the West and a no-fly zone that NATO has so far rejected.

Zelensky ran through a list of the cities and towns he said had been destroyed by Russian forces, while outnumbered Ukrainians were fighting with everything they had, even when they had no weapons.

"They are throwing themselves under the tanks - just for you to understand what's happening here," the Ukrainian leader, who is Jewish, said in a Zoom call. The Russians are not letting people leave towns and cities they have attacked, are not allowing food and water to be brought in and are disconnecting the internet, television and electricity, he said.

"All of this happened during Nazi times," he said. "The survival of the Ukrainian nation - the question will be the same as antisemitism... All of these millions of people are going to be exterminated."

Zelensky said 13 people died in the bombing of a bakery in Kyiv on Monday and on Sunday, 50 children with cancer had to be moved after a missile hit a pediatric hospital in the city.

Russia calls the campaign it launched on Feb. 24 a "special military operation" to disarm Ukraine and remove leaders it describes as neo-Nazis. Ukraine and its allies call this a pretext for an invasion to conquer the nation of 44 million.

The scope and scale of the Russian assault on his country were as unexpected and devastating as the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks were for Americans, he said.

"They're bombing the life out of everything that is moving."

03.08.22

Israel permits 5,000 non-Jew refugees; is prepared to absorb 100 thousand Jews

03.08.22

Israel will grant 5,000 permits to non-Jewish Ukraine refugees, Shaked says  
Interior minister announces it will increase the cap of non-Jews arriving from Ukraine, but since the start of the war with Russia, 3,456 already entered the country, less than 2,000 additional slots remain

Sivan Hilaie| Updated: 03.08.22, 20:49

Interior Minister Ayelet Shaked said on Tuesday that Israel will allot 5,000 entry visas to non-Jewish Ukrainian refugees fleeing the war.

Speaking to the press in Tel Aviv, Shaked announced the new policy towards those arriving from Ukraine in the wake of the Russian invasion, which is the biggest ground offensive in Europe since World War II.

"Israel will host temporarily about 20,000 Ukrainian citizens who resided, most of them illegally, in Israel before the fighting broke out," Shaked said, referring to visitors and workers, such as caregivers for the elderly, who overstayed their visas.

"In addition, if, God forbid, the battles don't end within a reasonable time, we will allow them to work in Israel," she said.

Israelis will no longer be required to post a monetary sum in the name of relatives who are seeking shelter in the country, but will be asked to sign a commitment that their guests will leave the country when the emergency is over.

Shaked has come under criticism from ministers in the cabinet after refugees were stopped for hours at the airport and some were turned away.

Despite increasing the cap of non-Jews allowed into the county to 5,000, in reality since the breakout of the war, 3,456 non-Jewish Ukrainians have arrived in Israel, leaving open less than 2,000 additional slots before the threshold is reached.

Once the limit of 5,000 is reached, a Ukrainian citizen will be allowed to enter for every Ukrainian that leaves.

Shaked said that any Ukrainian citizen who wants to come to Israel will fill out a digital request form in the Foreign Ministry website, and as long there are open slots, they will be permitted temporary entrance to Israel.

The new rule will take effect at midnight Sunday. Shaked emphasized that Israel is facing a unique challenge, in which thousands of Jews are expected to come to Israel from Ukraine and Russia as a result of the war, in addition of non-Jewish refugees.

"The images of war in Ukraine and the sufferings of civilians are shocking, and make it impossible to remain indifferent," Shaked said in her statement. "These terrible events have a direct impact on Israel, that is preparing to absorb about 100 thousand Jews and those eligible under Israel's law of return and are escaping from the war."

Shaked said that despite the significant challenge this will pose, Israel has proven in the past that it can rise to the challenge.

"The clearer the situation becomes, the more obvious it is that Israel cannot continue to absorb Ukrainians with no limit," Shaked said.

"Any logical person can understand that this kind of reality demands consideration and a balanced and sustainable policy. It's easy to criticize and laugh, it's harder to carry the responsible of the future of Israel and make the right decisions," she said.

Earlier today, Immigration and Absorption Pnina Tamano-Shata congratulated Shaked for "listening to the voices in the government and cancelling the deposit demand as a condition for entering Israel".

"We, as Jews, must open our gates unconditionally - come from a place of understanding that its time to save lives, Jewish or not," Tamano-Shata said.

03.08.22

Oldest member of Israel's Kibbutz movements dies at 110

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Oldest member of Israel's Kibbutz movements dies at 110

Hayanka Gilad, one of the original founders of Kibbutz Dafna, working in various fields until the age of 97; 'She knew everything, remembered everything and continued to be the life of the party,' her son says

Ahiya Raved | Updated: 03.08.22, 17:33

Hayanka Gilad, the oldest member of Israel's historic Kibbutz Movement, passed away Monday at the age of 110.

Hayanka immigrated to Israel from Lithuania in 1937. Two years later she and her family moved to the Upper Galilee, where she helped establish Kibbutz Dafna - one of Israel's most successful and well known communal communities.

According to Hayanka's son Erik, his mother worked tirelessly around the Kibbutz in various fields until she reached the age of 97.

"She worked all her life. She worked at the chicken coops, in the kitchen, and for almost 60 years was a caregiver and worked in education."

"Until the age of 97, she would get up every morning at 6 am and stay active until 11 pm or even midnight. She continued to work at the kibbutz's shoe factory, until one night she fell and then decided to retire," Erik added.

Hayanka eventually moved to the kibbutz's sheltered housing. And though she stopped working, she never stopped being an active member of the kibbutz's community.

"She was constantly involved in activities. She knew everything, remembered everything and continued to be the life of the party everywhere," said her son, who further spoke of his mother's well known kindness and constantly happy demeanor.

"She never quarreled with anyone. To her, everyone was a good person," he added.

In a statement, the national Kibbutz Movement stated that the entire movement is mourning Hayanka's loss.

"[She] was a symbol for all of us when she immigrated alone from Lithuania, devoted most of her life in the kibbutz to education and retired only at the age of 97, after joining the kibbutz shoe factory at the age of 63 and building a glorious family line of three children, nine grandchildren and 22 great grandchildren."

03.07.22

Lapid, Blinken discuss Ukraine-Russia diplomacy, Iran nuclear talks

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Lapid, Blinken discuss Ukraine-Russia diplomacy, Iran nuclear talks

Jerusalem's top diplomat says 'this war must be stopped... the way to stop the war is to negotiate'; parties to discuss Iran nuclear deal as talks in Vienna near endgame

Reuters| Published: 03.07.22, 21:02

Foreign Minister Yair Lapid and U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken met in the Latvian capital of Riga on Monday to discuss Israel's diplomatic initiative to end Russia's war with Ukraine.

The pair would also discuss the talks in Vienna on a possible return to the 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and world powers, Lapid said in remarks at the start of the meeting with reporters present.

The meeting comes after Prime Minister Naftali Bennett held surprise talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow last week at Ukraine's request.

"Israel is a partner in the global effort to make sure and clarify that this war must be stopped," Lapid said. "The way to stop the war is to negotiate."

Blinken said the United States appreciated any efforts of its allies "to see if there's any opening to end the war," and insisted that any solution must ensure the independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

Russia calls its campaign a "special military operation" to disarm Ukraine and remove leaders it describes as neo-Nazis. Ukraine and its Western allies have said Russia's actions were a transparent pretext for an invasion to conquer a nation of 44 million people.

Lapid said his meeting with Blinken comes at a time "when the world order is changing," referring to both the war in Ukraine and the nuclear talks.



Russia said on Saturday that Western sanctions imposed over Ukraine had become a stumbling block for an Iran deal.

While not a party to the nuclear negotiations between Iran and world powers in Vienna, Israel has conferred with the U.S. administration in hope of wielding more clout over any revival of a 2015 deal with Tehran that was reached over its objections.

"It's not a secret we have our differences on this, but it is a conversation between allies that have a common goal which is to prevent Iran from becoming a nuclear threshold country," Lapid said.

03.08.22

Biden bans Russia oil imports to US & warns gasoline prices will rise further

03.08.22

Biden bans Russia oil imports to U.S., warns U.S. gasoline prices will rise further  
'Russian oil will no longer be acceptable in U.S. ports and the American people will deal another powerful blow to Russia,' U.S. president says, pledges to minimize impact on Americans

Reuters| Published: 03.08.22, 19:00

U.S. President Joe Biden announced a ban on Russian oil and other energy imports on Tuesday in retaliation for the invasion of Ukraine, underscoring strong bipartisan support for a move that he acknowledged would drive up U.S. energy prices.

"We're banning all imports of Russian oil and gas energy," Biden told reporters at the White House. "That means Russian oil will no longer be acceptable in U.S. ports and the American people will deal another powerful blow to (Russian President Vladimir) Putin's war machine."

Biden has been working with allies in Europe, who are far more dependent on Russian oil, to isolate Russia's energy-heavy economy and Putin. Britain announced shortly before Biden's remarks that it would phase out the import of Russian oil and gas by the end of 2022.

Britain will phase out Russian imports of oil and oil products by the end of 2022, business minister Kwasi Kwarteng said on Tuesday, calling on businesses to use the transition period to ensure a smooth transition.

"This transition will give the market, businesses and supply chains more than enough time to replace Russian imports, which make up 8% of UK demand," Kwarteng said on Twitter.

Biden said sanctions imposed by the United States and its allies had already caused the Russian economy to "crater". He said the latest moves had been made in close consultation with allies and partners around the world.

The United States imported more than 20.4 million barrels of crude and refined products a month on average from Russia in 2021, about 8% of U.S. liquid fuel imports, according

to the Energy Information Administration, and the **ban is expected to send already high gasoline prices and inflation soaring**. The United States also imports a negligible amount of coal from Russia.

Biden predicted **prices would rise further** as a result of "Putin's war," but pledged to do all he could to minimize the impact on the American people. **He also warned U.S. gas companies against exploiting** the situation to engage **in profiteering or price gouging**. U.S. Senator Chris Coons said the administration was coordinating with European allies "and making sure that we've done the groundwork to understand how to effectively implement a ban on Russian energy."

"We are going to see increased gas prices here in the United States. In Europe, they will see dramatic increases in prices. That's the cost of standing up for freedom and standing alongside the Ukrainian people, but it's going to cost us," Coons told CNN.

The White House had been coordinating with U.S. congressional leaders working on fast-tracking bipartisan legislation to ban Russian imports, but the ban of Russian imports would make any such bill moot.

Republican lawmakers took to social media to welcome the decision, while criticizing Biden's green energy policies, and calling for the administration to support more oil and gas production at home.

U.S. Representative Susan Wild said Americans need to realize the larger sacrifice needed. "Obviously nobody wants to pay more for gas," Wild, a Democrat on the House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee, said on MSNBC.

In announcing that it is phasing out imports of Russian oil and oil products by the end of 2022, **Britain said it** is giving the market and businesses more than enough time to find alternatives to the imports, which make up 8% of demand.

"The government will also work with companies through a **new Task force on Oil** to support them to make use of this period in **finding alternative supplies**," British Business and Energy Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng said.

**03.08.22**

**Russian offensive would halt if annex Crimea & regions held by separatists**

**03.08.22**

**Russian offensive slows, second Russian general killed, says Ukraine**  
Ukraine intelligence says first deputy **commander of Russia's** 41st army was **killed** on **Monday** near the besieged city of Kharkiv, adds the Russian offensive continues although at a significantly slower pace; Kyiv refuses humanitarian corridors to Russia, Belarus amid ongoing civilian shelling

Reuters| Published: **03.08.22**, 09:17

Russia's offensive in Ukraine continued but at a significantly slower pace on Tuesday and a **second senior Russian commander** had been **killed**, Ukrainian military and intelligence said, as frightened residents fled bombed-out cities.

Ukraine's military intelligence said on Tuesday that Ukrainian forces killed a Russian general near the besieged city of Kharkiv, the second Russian senior commander to die in the invasion.

"Major General Vitaly Gerasimov, first deputy commander of Russia's 41st army, was killed on Monday," the Chief Directorate of Intelligence of Ukraine's defense ministry said in a statement.

Ukraine's general staff of the armed forces said the Russian offensive continues although at a significantly slower pace.

Russia's defense ministry could not be immediately reached for comment and Reuters could not verify the reports.

Russia's invasion, the biggest attack on a European state since World War Two, has thus far created 1.7 million refugees, a raft of sanctions on Moscow, and fears of wider conflict as the West pours military aid into Ukraine.

Russia calls its actions in Ukraine a "special operation" that it says is not designed to occupy territory but to destroy its southern neighbor's military capabilities and capture what it regards as dangerous nationalists.

Kyiv has rejected Moscow's offer of possible humanitarian corridors to Russia and Belarus amid reports that in the encircled southern port city of Mariupol, hundreds of thousands of people remained trapped without food and water under regular Russian bombardments.

However, Moscow has since proposed giving the residents of the cities of Sumy and Mariupol the choice of moving elsewhere in Ukraine on Tuesday, setting a deadline in the early hours for Kyiv to agree, Russian news agencies reported.

After the third attempt to ease the bloodshed at talks in Belarus, negotiators warned not to expect the next round to bring a final result. The Russian and Ukrainian foreign ministers are expected to meet in Turkey on Thursday.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Moscow would halt operations if Ukraine ceased fighting, amended its constitution to declare neutrality, and recognized Russia's annexation of Crimea and the independence of regions held by Russian-backed separatists.

A senior U.S. defense official said Putin had now deployed nearly 100% of the more than 150,000 forces that he had pre-staged outside Ukraine before the invasion.

03.08.22

Ukraine war divides Mideast nations, blaming US provocation & betrayal of allies

03.08.22

Ukraine war highlights internal divides in Mideast nations

In Israel, thousands rallied against Moscow despite officials' reluctance to do the same, while in Lebanon, Hezbollah railed against government's condemnation of Russia's invasion

Associated Press, Ynet| Published: 03.08.22, 12:04

The Russian invasion of Ukraine sent shockwaves not only through Europe, but also in the Middle East, where Moscow has embedded itself as a key player in recent years, making powerful friends among state and non-state actors while America's influence waned.

In a neighborhood of Iraq's capital of Baghdad, a gigantic poster of Russian President Vladimir Putin with the words, "We support Russia," was up for few hours before a security force arrived and hurriedly took it down. Then came the security directive: All public displays of Putin's pictures shall be banned.

In Israel, thousands, including some Russian and Ukrainian-born Israelis, rallied against the ongoing Russian onslaught of Ukraine, despite the government's initial reluctance to condemn Moscow outright, mainly due to the two countries' military coordination in Syria.

In Lebanon, the powerful Hezbollah militia railed against the government's condemnation of Russia's attack on Ukraine, calling for neutrality.

Political elites in the Middle East closely allied with the West are wary of alienating Russia or the U.S. and Europe. But other forces - from Shiite militia factions in Iraq, to Lebanon's Hezbollah group and Houthi rebels in Yemen - vocally support Russia against Ukraine.

These groups are considered to be Iran's boots on the ground in the so-called anti-U.S. "axis of resistance." Putin won their backing largely because of his close ties with Tehran and his military intervention in Syria's civil war in support of President Bashar Assad.

They see Putin as a steady, reliable partner who, unlike the Americans, does not drop his allies. In their circles, they even have an affectionate nickname for Putin "Abu Alia" which is a common name among Shiite Muslims and meant to portray a certain camaraderie.

Meanwhile, governments are walking a tightrope.

"Iraq is against the war but has not condemned it nor taken a side," said political analyst Ihsan Alshamary, who heads the Political Thought Think Tank in Baghdad. Iraq needs to remain neutral because it has shared interests with both Russia and the West, he said. He said Iran's allies in the region are outspokenly with Russia "because they are anti-American and anti-West and believe that Russia is their ally."

Russia has invested up to \$14 billion in Iraq and the northern Kurdish-run region, mainly focusing on the energy sector, Moscow's ambassador Elbrus Kutrashev told the Iraqi Kurdish news agency Rudaw in a recent interview.

Supporters of the Lebanese Shiite militant movement Hezbollah wave the group's flag during a commemoration marking the 13th anniversary of the end of the 2006 war with

Iraq also maintains close ties with the U.S., but Western companies have steadily been plotting to exit from Iraq's oil sector.

Iraq's strongest move so far came after its central bank advised the prime minister against signing new contracts with Russian companies or payments in light of U.S. sanctions.

The decision will impact new Russian investment in the country, but little else, Russian industry officials said.

Israel, meanwhile, was attempting to assist in mediations between Russia and Ukraine, as well as in mediations between Moscow and the West amid worsening sanctions.

In Lebanon, an unusually blunt Foreign Ministry statement denouncing Russia's invasion of Ukraine caused an uproar and upset the Russians, forcing the minister to clarify that Lebanon did not intend to take sides and would remain neutral.

"They distance themselves and claim neutrality where they want, and they interfere and condemn where they want," Hezbollah lawmaker Ibrahim Moussawi wrote on Twitter, taking aim at the Foreign Ministry. "What foreign policy does Lebanon follow, and what is Lebanon's interest in that? Please clarify for us, foreign minister."

Hezbollah, which also sent thousands of fighters to neighboring Syria to shore up Assad's forces, has seized on Russia's invasion of Ukraine to portray it as an inevitable result of U.S. provocations and yet another betrayal by the United States of its allies - in this case, Ukraine.

In Syria, where Russia maintains thousands of troops, billboards proclaiming, "Victory for Russia" popped up in areas of Damascus this week. In opposition-held areas, which still get hit by Russian airstrikes, residents hope pressure will ease on them if Russia gets bogged down in fighting in Ukraine.

03.08.22

White House justifies Russian oil imports & BLM is not approving drilling permits

03.08.22

Did You Catch the White House Explanation for Buying Oil From Hostile Countries?

KatiePavlich|Posted: Mar 08, 2022 6:00 AM

Speaking to reporters at the White House Monday afternoon, Press Secretary Jen Psaki was asked to explain why the Biden administration plans to purchase oil from hostile foreign countries with abusive human rights records.

Psaki then justified the importation of Russian oil despite President Vladimir Putin's ongoing slaughter of civilians in Ukraine.

Over the weekend the State Department deployed a number of diplomats to Venezuela and are considering lifting sanctions on the country in order to purchase oil and gas. For years Russia has helped Venezuela evade U.S. sanctions and remains a close ally to the country. The administration is also entertaining the idea of buying Iranian oil.

Meanwhile, the White House has no plans to restart the Keystone XL pipeline and continues to claim domestic producers aren't taking advantage of capacity.

There are 9000 fed land permits. But each individual drill requires a permit. It can take several drills to establish a well and BLM is not approving these permits within 30 days as law requires. The admin attitude towards O&G has made capital investors shy on funding drilling.

03.07.22

Defense minister Gantz calls on the world to 'mobilize' against Iranian aggression

03.07.22

Gantz calls on world to 'mobilize' against Iran as Vienna talks continue  
Defense minister says Tehran will become direct threat to world peace if allowed to reach nuclear threshold, vows Israel will prevent Islamic Republic from becoming an existential threat

i24NEWS| Published: 03.07.22, 19:29

Defense Minister Benny Gantz on Monday called on the world "to act against Iranian aggression", adding that Israel will use all of its abilities and means to prevent Tehran and its nuclear ambitions from becoming an existential threat.

"Today, we must reiterate the warning that Iranian aggression, whether it emanates from Iranian territory or through Iranian proxies, is a threat to global peace and to regional stability, as well as a threat to the State of Israel," Gantz wrote on his Facebook page.

He noted several instances of Iranian activity and those behind it, including the claim made Sunday by the Israeli military that it intercepted an attempt by Iran to transfer arms to Gaza via drones.

"It is during this important time, when a nuclear agreement is being negotiated in Vienna, that we must remember: Today Iranian aggression is conducted without [it holding nuclear weapons]. If Iran reaches a nuclear threshold, it will become even more dangerous to world peace," Gantz said.

He declared, "Now is the time for the world to mobilize to stop it."

Last week, Gantz said a nuclear deal may be signed “in the coming weeks, perhaps even in the coming days.”

“Whether or not an agreement will be signed, it will not be the end of the road for us - nor should it be for the countries of the region and the world, which must continue to act against Iranian aggression,” Gantz said Monday, according to The Times of Israel.

03.07.22

Ukraine decries 'immoral' stunt after Moscow allows civilians flee only to Russia

03.07.22

Ukraine decries 'immoral' stunt after Moscow allows civilians flee only to Russia  
Kyiv says Russia has deceived French President Emmanuel Macron by claiming civilians will be allowed to leave war zone but preventing them from fleeing to the West; Russian delegation heads for next round of talks

Agencies| Published: 03.07.22, 12:11

Russia on Monday announced new "humanitarian corridors" for Ukrainians trapped under its bombardment to flee, but only to Russia itself and its ally Belarus, a move immediately dismissed by Kyiv as an "immoral stunt".

The announcement came after two days of failed cease fires to let civilians escape the besieged city of Mariupol, where hundreds of thousands of people are trapped without food and water, under relentless bombardment and unable to evacuate their wounded.

The new "corridors" would be opened at 10am Moscow time (0700 GMT) from the capital Kyiv and the eastern cities of Kharkiv and Sumy, as well as Mariupol, Russia's defense ministry said.

According to maps published by the RIA news agency, the corridor from Kyiv would lead to Belarus, while civilians from Kharkiv would be permitted to go only to Russia. Russia would also mount an airlift to take Ukrainians from Kyiv to Russia, the ministry said.

"Attempts by the Ukrainian side to deceive Russia and the whole civilized world ... are useless this time," the ministry said.

A spokesperson for Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky called the move "completely immoral" and said Russia was trying to "use people's suffering to create a television picture".

"They are citizens of Ukraine, they should have the right to evacuate to the territory of Ukraine," the spokesperson said.

"This is one of the problems that is causing the humanitarian corridors to break down. They seem to agree to them, but they themselves want to supply humanitarian aid for a picture on TV and want the corridors to lead in their direction."

Russia is trying to manipulate French President Emmanuel Macron and other Western leaders by demanding that any humanitarian corridors in Ukraine exit through Russia or Belarus, a senior Ukrainian official said on Monday.

Deputy Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk said Ukraine was calling on Russia to agree to a ceasefire from Monday morning to allow Ukrainians to evacuate towards the western Ukrainian city of Lviv instead.

Ukraine received Russia's proposal early on Monday morning after Macron held talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin, Vereshchuk told a televised briefing.

"I hope that French President Emmanuel Macron understands that his name and sincere desire to help ... in reality is being used and manipulated by the Russian Federation," she said.

The Russian Defense Ministry said the military shot down three Ukrainian air force planes and two UAV's on Monday.

A Russian delegation has departed for Belarus where it will meet Ukrainian negotiators for an additional round of talks about ending hostilities, the Sputnik Belarus news outlet reported.

03.07.22

Russia-Ukraine War: What to know as 11th day of fighting concludes

03.07.22

Russia-Ukraine War: What to know as 11th day of fighting concludes

Ukrainian officials again blame Russian artillery fire for halting a second attempt in as many days to evacuate civilians from besieged city of Mariupol, where pharmacies run bare and hundreds of thousands of people face food and water shortages in freezing cold Associated Press| Published: 03.07.22, 00:10

Russia's war on Ukraine, Russian troops shelled encircled cities and a second attempt to evacuate civilians from Mariupol failed as the besieged port city was shelled.

Ukrainian officials said the attacks disrupted what was supposed to have been a cease-fire at the time that a pro-Russian official had said safe-passage corridors were to open.

The number of Ukrainians forced from their country increased to 1.5 million, and the Kremlin's rhetoric grew, with Russian President Vladimir Putin warning that Ukrainian statehood is in jeopardy. He likened the West's sanctions on Russia to "declaring war." Here's a look at key things to know about the conflict Sunday:

VIOLENCE STOPS PLANNED CIVILIAN EVACUATIONS AGAIN

Ukrainian Interior Ministry adviser Anton Gerashchenko blamed Russian artillery fire for halting a second attempt in as many days to evacuate civilians from Mariupol.



The plan agreed to with Russian forces had been to allow people fleeing the combat and shelling to leave along designated humanitarian "green corridors," but Gerashchenko said on Telegram that **Russians had not respected the truce.**

A day earlier, Ukrainian officials similarly said Russian **artillery fire and airstrikes** had **prevented residents from leaving** before the agreed-to evacuations got underway in Mariupol and the nearby city of Volnovakha. Then, **Putin** accused Ukraine of **sabotaging the effort.**

Russia has sought to cut off Ukraine's access to the Sea of Azov in the south. Capturing Mariupol could allow Russia to establish a land corridor to Crimea, which it annexed in 2014.

Oleksiy Arestovich, an adviser to President Volodymyr Zelensky, said Ukrainian officials and international humanitarian organizations were working with Russia through intermediaries to establish humanitarian corridors from the hard-hit Kyiv suburbs of Bucha and Hostomel.

#### WHAT ELSE IS HAPPENING ON THE GROUND?

Russian forces launched **hundreds of missiles and artillery attacks across the country, including powerful bombs** dropped on residential areas of Chernihiv, a city north of the capital of Kyiv, Ukrainian officials said. But a **miles-long Russian armored column** threatening the capital **remained stalled outside Kyiv.**

Zelensky said Ukrainian forces were holding key cities in the central and southeastern part of the country, while the Russians were trying to block and keep encircled Karkiv, Mykolaiv, Chernihiv and Sumy.

**Ukrainian** forces were also **defending** Odesa, **Ukraine's largest port city**, from Russian ships, Ukrainian presidential adviser Oleksiy Arestovich said.

Russian **troops took** control of the **southern port city** of Kherson **last week.**

#### ZELENSKY PUSHES CALL FOR NO-FLY ZONE

**Zelensky** pushed his **call for foreign countries to impose a no-fly zone over Ukraine.**

Establishing a no-fly zone **would risk escalating the conflict by involving foreign militaries directly.** Although the **United States and many Western countries have backed Ukraine with weapons shipments, they have sent no troops.**

Zelensky said in a video address on Sunday that "the world is strong enough to close our skies."

**NATO** countries have **ruled out policing a no-fly zone,** which would bar all unauthorized aircraft from flying over Ukraine.

Russian Defense Ministry spokesman Igor Konashenkov said Sunday that some **Ukrainian** combat **planes** had **redeployed to Romania** and other Ukraine neighbors he didn't identify. He warned an attack from planes **operating out of those nations could be deemed an engagement by them** in the conflict.

Also Sunday, European Union leader Charles Michel said **closing Ukraine's airspace could spark a world war.**

## DIRECTLY WITNESSED OR CONFIRMED BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Onlookers in Chernihiv cheered as they watched a Russian military plane fall from the sky and crash, according to video released by the Ukrainian government. In Kherson, hundreds of protesters waved blue and yellow Ukrainian flags and shouted, "Go home." In Mariupol, Associated Press journalists witnessed doctors make **unsuccessful attempts to save the lives of wounded children**, pharmacies ran bare and hundreds of thousands of people faced food and water shortages in freezing weather.

In Irpin, near Kyiv, a **sea of people on foot and even in wheelbarrows** trudged over the remains of a destroyed bridge to cross a river and leave the city. Assisted by Ukrainian soldiers, **they lugged pets, infants, purses and flimsy bags stuffed with minimal possessions**. Some of the weak and elderly were carried along the path in blankets and carts.

**Kyiv's central train station remained crowded with people desperate to leave**, and frequent shelling could be heard from the center of the capital city.

## DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS

Intense diplomatic efforts continued, with **U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken** was in Moldova **pledging** America's **support** to the small Western-leaning former Soviet republic. The country is coping with an influx of refugees from Ukraine and keeping an eye on Russia's intensifying war with its neighbor.

Blinken says the United States and its allies are having a "very **active discussion**" about **banning the import of Russian oil** and natural gas in an escalation of **sanctions**.

In a **call with Putin** that lasted nearly **two hours** on **Sunday**, French President Emmanuel **Macron** repeated **calls** for Russia **to halt** military operations, protect civilians **and allow humanitarian aid**. A French official who spoke anonymously, in line with the French presidency's practices, said **Macron** told **Putin** that nuclear facilities must not be targeted and that **Putin said he does not intend to attack nuclear plants** and agreed on the principle of "dialogue" on the issue.

The director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, **Rafael Mariano Grossi**, said **Sunday** Ukrainian staff members at the Zaporizhzhya nuclear plant **are now required to seek approval for any operation, even maintenance, from the Russians**. He said **Russians who seized** what is Ukraine's largest nuclear plant last week **have impeded** normal communications by **switching off some mobile networks and internet at the site**. **Putin** continued to **blame the war on the Ukrainian leadership** and slammed their resistance to the invasion. He said if they continued to resist, "They are calling into question the future of Ukrainian statehood."

In a call with Turkish President **Recep Tayyip Erdogan** on **Sunday**, **Putin said the invasion could be halted only "only if Kyiv ceases hostilities,"** according to a Kremlin statement on the phone call.

Israel's prime minister spoke with **Putin** on **Sunday**, a day after they met directly in Russia. **Naftali Bennett was in Moscow on Saturday to met with Putin, then spoke to Zelenskyy** and on **Sunday** with **German Chancellor Olaf Scholz**.

Israel is one of the few countries that has good working relations with both Russia and Ukraine.

Also Sunday, Pope Francis said he had dispatched two cardinals to Ukraine -- a highly unusual move -- saying "the Holy See is willing to do everything to put itself in service for peace."

#### THE HUMANITARIAN SITUATION

The death toll of the conflict has been difficult to measure. The U.N. human rights office said at least 364 civilians have been confirmed killed since the Feb. 24 invasion, but the true number is probably much higher.

The World Health Organization said it verified at least six attacks that have killed six health care workers and injured 11 others.

Attacks on health care workers are a violation of international humanitarian law, WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said on Twitter.

The U.N. World Food Program says millions of people inside Ukraine, a major global wheat supplier, will need food aid "immediately."

Ukrainian refugees continued to pour into neighboring countries, including Poland, Romania and Moldova. The number of people who have left since fighting began has now reached 1.5 million, according to U.N. refugee agency.

#### BUSINESS IN RUSSIA

TikTok said Sunday users won't be able to post new videos in Russia in response to the government's crackdown on social media, and American Express announced it was suspending all operations in Russia and Belarus.

TikTok, part of the larger Chinese tech company ByteDance, said it was suspending livestreams and new content while it considers the implications of Russia blocking some social media platforms and adopting a law that criminalizes the intentional spreading of what are deemed to be "fake" reports.

American Express said its globally issued cards will no longer work at merchants or ATMs in Russia, while AmEx cards issued locally in Russia by the country's banks will also no longer work outside of Russia.

03.06.22

IDF F-35i shot down two Iranian drones making their way to Gaza

03.06.22

Israel shot down Iranian drones en route to Gaza, IDF says

F-35s intercept Iranian aircraft far from Israeli territory in coordination with neighboring countries; defense sources estimate this was an attempt by the Iranians to smuggle weapons into Gaza

Yoav Zitun| Published: 03.06.22, 23:25

Israel shot down two Iranian unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) that were making their way to the Gaza Strip, the Israeli military confirmed Sunday night.

"In March 2021, the Iranian regime launched two UAVs toward Israeli territory. The UAVs were successfully intercepted by the Israeli Air Force's F-35i 'Adir' aircraft," a military spokesperson said in a statement, adding that this was the first time an F-35i aircraft shot down a drone in an operational setting.

"The interception of the UAVs was carried out prior to them entering Israeli airspace, in coordination with neighboring countries. The UAVs were detected and tracked throughout their flight by ground control units."

Defense sources estimate this was an attempt by the Iranians to smuggle weapons into Gaza.

The announcement comes as Tehran inching ever closer toward signing a new nuclear deal with world power in Vienna.

Iran has significantly improved its drone fleet in recent years, although its capabilities still lag far behind Israel's.

Tehran has developed drones of various sizes and for a variety of missions, from reconnaissance to carrying explosives for offensive operations many hundreds of miles away.

The project is led by the Iranian Air Force, along with Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guards group and its elite Quds Force, who export the technology to their proxies across the Middle East in Iraq, Yemen, Syria and Lebanon.

03.06.22

Israel to revise refugee policy of 15,000 refugees by end of March

03.06.22

Israel to revise refugee policy amid Ukraine influx, minister says

Ayelet Shaked says Israel has taken in 'more refugees than any other country that doesn't share a border with Ukraine', says country on course to receive over 15,000 refugees by end of March

Einav Halabi, Sivan Hilaie | Published: 03.06.22, 17:48

Israel will reevaluate its resettlement policy of refugees fleeing fighting in Ukraine as the country faces a massive influx of asylum seekers, Interior Minister Ayelet Shaked said on Sunday.

Shaked will meet later on Sunday with Foreign Minister Yair Lapid to draw up a "more balanced" policy on the issue, according to her, given that 90% of the refugees arriving in Israel are not eligible to immigrate according to Israel's Law of Return, which gives Jews,

their children and grandchildren the right to relocate to Israel and acquire Israeli citizenship.

This apparent shift in policy comes despite harsh criticism voiced by Ukraine's Ambassador to Israel Yevgen Kornichuk last week, who said Kyiv was "disappointed in the Israeli government for not allowing entrance to the war refugees."

Under the current policy, first-degree relatives of Israeli citizens who aren't eligible to relocate under the Law of Return will only be allowed to enter Israel under a 90-day tourist visa, contingent upon their Israeli host's signature and their commitment to return to Ukraine at the end of the approved period of stay.

Ukrainians that do not fall under this category will be questioned by border control upon arrival in order to ensure they have family in Israel. The refugee's host family will be asked to guarantee their departure from Israel, and put down a NIS 10,000 deposit per person to avoid overstaying.

Shaked said she believes that under the current policy, Israel had taken in more refugees than any other Western country that doesn't share a border with Ukraine, stating that 2,034 Ukrainian nationals have already entered the country's borders since fighting began late February.

"In the first days of the war, we took in only a few dozen, but if we look at data from the last 3 days, we can see that 351 entered on Wednesday, 521 on Thursday, and 605 Ukrainians entered Israel over the weekend."

The minister said that Israel was on course to take in more than 15,000 Ukrainian nationals by the end of March, 90% of whom aren't eligible under the Law of Return.

"Every reasonable person understands that we can't keep up at such a pace, that's why I intend on creating a more balanced policy," she said.

Shaked also rejected criticism leveled at Israel for the country's alleged mistreatment of refugees.

"Israel, as opposed to what's reported by the media, has a broader policy than almost every Western country that can't be accessed from Ukraine overland," she said.

"Israel is most likely the country that took in the most Ukrainians per capita compared to any other Western country that doesn't share a border with Ukraine. There is no other country in the world without a visa waiver that allows such a broad policy like Israel does. We're already dealing with 26,000 Ukrainian nationals that live in Israel, most of whom illegally."

Shaked added that Israel was preparing to receive over 100,000 Jewish immigrants and their families from Russia and Ukraine and the consequent housing and employment challenges that may arise as a result.

Aliyah Minister Pnina Tamano-Shata said that Israel was working to provide optimal conditions to Jewish refugees and others eligible to relocate to Israel under the Law of Return.

Meanwhile, Diaspora Minister Nachman Shai urged Prime Minister Naftali Bennett to scrap the NIS 10,000 deposit requirement for arrivals from Ukraine, calling it "inhumane and immoral."

03.06.22

Bennett says It is moral duty to mediate & prepare for Jewish refugees

03.06.22

It is our moral duty to continue mediation efforts, Bennett says

Prime Minister told ministers human suffering will increase unless change achieved in Russia - Ukraine war, says despite low chance of success will continue to offer his help; Israel prepares to absorb growing number of Jews, he says

Itamar Eichner | Published: 03.06.22, 12:55

Prime Minister Naftali Bennett said on Sunday that he was attempting to assist in mediations between Russia and Ukraine in the wake of the Russian invasion of their neighbor to the West.

Speaking at the start of the weekly cabinet meeting Bennett said his meeting on Saturday with Russian President Vladimir Putin had received the go ahead from "all the players," although the chances for success were not great.

"I returned from Moscow and Berlin a few hours ago. I traveled there to help," Bennett said shortly after completing a telephone conversation with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, the third between the two leaders in less than 24 hours.

"As we all know, the situation on the ground is not good," he said. "Human suffering is great and could be greater if things continue on the same track."

The UN said on Sunday that some 1.5 million Ukrainians have already left the country and are refugees.

The prime minister added that despite the low chances of success, "Even the slightest in, and we have access to all sides to the conflict, our moral duty is to leave no stone unturned."

Bennett said Israel was preparing for a substantial increase in Jewish immigration. "Authorities are preparing scenarios for absorbing different amounts of immigrants and they will present them to the cabinet later in the week," he said.

"This is a challenge, but one that Israel has faced several times in the past," he said.

"Moments such as these, when the world faces a crisis and Jews are no longer safe where they are, remind us all of the importance of a homeland for Jews."

03.06.22

Bennett met Putin, then Zelensky, then Scholz of Germany to mediate Ukraine war

03.06.22

Bennett returns from surprise trip to Russia amid Ukraine war

PM lands in Israel and is expected to convene his cabinet later in the day; Bennett's visit to the Kremlin appears to be latest attempt at mediation between Moscow and Kyiv; visit said to have been made in coordination with U.S. and Ukraine

Associated Press, Ynet | Published: 03.06.22, 09:14

Prime Minister Naftali Bennett has returned from a surprise trip to Russia where he met President Vladimir Putin and discussed the war in Ukraine.

Bennett flew to Moscow on Saturday, where he met the Russian leader at the Kremlin for three hours. The trip was made "in coordination and with the blessing" of the Biden administration as well as Kyiv, according to Bennett's office.

Bennett spoke to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky after his meeting with Putin. He then flew to Germany to meet Chancellor Olaf Scholz.

The prime minister landed in Israel on Sunday morning and is expected to convene his cabinet for its weekly meeting later in the day.

Bennett's trip was the latest attempt at diplomacy in the Russia-Ukraine crisis. Israel is one of the few countries that has good working relations with both Russia and Ukraine.

Israel, at the behest of Zelensky, has offered to mediate in the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, though officials have previously played down expectations of any breakthrough.

Israel has delivered humanitarian aid to Ukraine, but also maintains ties with Moscow to make sure that Israeli and Russian warplanes do not come into conflict in neighboring Syria.

Bennett's meeting with Putin makes him the first Western leader to meet with the Russian president since Moscow's offensive began last Thursday. The Russian assault is the biggest offensive on a European state since World War II.

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Ynet-News, Mar 06, 2022 – Sunday

03.03.22 – Th - - News

Bennett urges; UN Inaction will destroy Ukraine, making millions of refugees

03.02.22 – We - - News

President Herzog Turkey visit touched a nerve in Cyprus over mineral rights

03.02.22 – We- - - News Placed in Mar 05 spot – Saturday  
Germany to send anti-tank & surface-to-air missiles to Ukraine conflict zones

03.01.22 – Tu- - - News  
Israel hands out food to Kyiv residents amid dwindling supplies

03.04.22 – Fr- - - News  
Ukraine says Russian forces seize Europe's largest nuclear plant by shelling

03.03.22 – Th- - - News Placed in Mar 04 spot – Friday  
Putin praised his troops, seize 2<sup>nd</sup> nuclear power plant & adds Belarusian troops

03.01.22 – Tu- - - News  
Israel focus on Vienna Iran nuclear deal as Ukraine invasion enters 6<sup>th</sup> day

03.01.22 – Tu- - - News Placed in Mar 03 spot – Thursday  
Israel court suspends PA evictions from east Jerusalem legal battles, for now

03.01.22 – Tu- - - News  
Ukraine disappointed, Israel will not accept refugees from different countries

03.01.22 – Tu- - - News Placed in Mar 01 spot – Tuesday  
Rescue flights of Israeli nationals arrive from Ukraine, Poland and Romania

03.01.22 – Tu- - - News  
Israel begins sending 100 tons of humanitarian aid to Ukraine

03.01.22 – Tu- - - News  
GPG.org gives \$10 million for food & aid assistance to Jews in Ukraine

02.28.22 – Mo- - - News Placed in Mar 01 spot – Tuesday  
Israel supports UN; sends Ukraine 3-planes of refugee supplies & medical equipment  
Israel sends Ukraine 3-planes of supplies & medical equipment

03.01.22 – Tu- - - News  
Russia shelling Ukraine's 2nd largest city hospitals, emergency vehicles & refugees

03.01.22 – Tu- - - News  
Iran leader says Ukraine crises concocted by US; they cannot trust such countries

03.01.22 – Tu- - - News Placed in Mar 02 spot – Wednesday  
Russian 40-mile Convoy 31-miles from Kyiv, using thermo-bombs in urban areas