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[Presidential Administration: Russia's Federal Security Service armed Odesa separatists](#) Speaking to Channel 5 on April 2, acting presidential chief of staff Serhiy Pashynsky blamed Russia's KGB-successor agency of ultimately being behind the "provocations" in Odesa and for arming separatists that claimed the lives of 37 people in the coastal city. **Kyivpost.** [Read More](#)

[Russia Calls on U.S. to Help Stop Kiev's Military Drive](#) Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has told his U.S. counterpart John Kerry that the U.S. should use its influence to make Ukraine's government immediately stop military operations in south-east Ukraine, the Russian foreign ministry said on Saturday. Lavrov also said that it was important that the mediating role of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) was increased to secure Kiev's fulfilment of the Geneva declaration on de-escalating tensions in Ukraine. "Chances of this still exist," the ministry said in a statement, as long as all Ukrainian regions are represented in a national dialogue on constitutional reform, and "terrorists" from the Right Sector - a Ukrainian nationalist group in western Ukraine - group are curbed. **The New York Times.** [Read More](#)

[Behind the Masks in Ukraine, Many Faces of Rebellion](#) The rebel leader spread a topographic map in front of a closed grocery store here as a Ukrainian military helicopter flew past a nearby hill. Ukrainian troops had just seized positions along a river, about a mile and a half away. The commander thought they might advance. He issued orders with the authority of a man who had seen many battles. "Go down to the bridge and set up the snipers," the leader, who gave only a first name, Yuri, said to a former Ukrainian paratrooper, who jogged away. Yuri commands the 12th Company, part of the self-proclaimed People's Militia of the Donetsk People's Republic, a previously unknown and often masked rebel force that since early April has seized government buildings in eastern Ukraine and, until Saturday, held prisoner a team of European military observers it accused of being NATO spies. **The New York Times.** [Read More](#)

[Voices from Odessa: 'Nobody expected this!'](#) When violence broke out in Odessa, Ukraine, on Friday, it culminated in a fire at the city's Trade Unions House that caused the deaths of more than 30 people. The next morning, people in the south-western port city spoke to the BBC about Friday evening's events and the scene they awoke to. There is still confusion among residents and visitors over the unrest - and shock that such things could happen in Odessa. **BBC.** [Read More](#)

[Aleksander Kwasniewski: After Ukraine Putin will seize Belarus, Kazakhstan and Latvia](#) The Kremlin's goal is to revive the USSR as much as they can. Such an opinion was voiced by Poland's former president Aleksander Kwasniewski in an interview to PAP. "Putin is not hiding his intentions. In his statements he touched upon the subject of a "Great Russia". At the NATO summit in Bucharest in 2008 he claimed that Ukraine was an artificial state. There are also articles by Russian strategists, which say that the borders of the countries within the USSR were marked wrong and the post-Soviet borders should be changed. **Khartia 97.** [Read More](#)

[Tragic Loss of Life in Odesa](#) The United States today mourns with all Ukrainians the heartbreaking loss of life in Odesa. Today the international community must stand together in support of the Ukrainian people as they cope with this tragedy. The violence and mayhem that led to so many senseless deaths and injuries is unacceptable. We call on all sides to work together to restore calm and law and order, and we call on the Ukrainian authorities to launch a full investigation and to bring all those responsible to justice. **U.S. Department of State.** [Read More](#)

[Political fever rises as Ukraine breaks apart](#) Cross the Crimean sparkling wine off the list. The lingerie from Luhansk and felt boots from Donetsk could be next. Financial journalist Yulia Sarotsyna spent a year living only off products made in Ukraine for a relentlessly upbeat blog to promote local brands. On the road for five months, she found toothbrushes from Kharkiv, sausage in the north, and even snails in the capital Kiev: "I discovered that Ukraine produces absolutely everything for a comfortable life," she wrote. **Reuters.** [Read More](#)

[Security Council holds emergency Ukraine meeting](#) The U.N. Security Council on Friday for the 13th time failed to take action on the growing crisis in Ukraine, with Russian ambassador Vitaly Churkin demanding a "swift halt of all violence" and Western powers scoffing at his country's indignation. Council members accused Russia of equipping and funding the pro-Russia forces that have seized government buildings in 10 eastern cities. Ukraine on Friday launched its first major offensive against the insurgency. "Russia ... has released bands of thugs on Ukraine ... and is suddenly discovering this mixture might escape its control," French ambassador Gerard Araud said. **Yahoo News.** [Read More](#)

[Obama: Russia Directly Supports Ukrainian Separatists](#) U.S. President Barack Obama says the United States and Germany are united in their determination to impose "costs" on Russia for its actions in Ukraine, accusing Russia of providing "significant support" to "heavily armed militants" in eastern Ukraine. He said those costs include "coordinated sanctions" that will increase Russia's diplomatic and economic isolation. **Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty.** [Read More](#)

[Talbot: What We're Hearing from Putin Is Another Stunning Case of the Big Lie](#) President Obama and German Chancellor Angela Merkel pledged harsher sanctions against Russia if the situation in Ukraine doesn't stabilize in time for Ukraine's presidential election. This comes amid reports of new violence in eastern Ukraine, including the deaths of Ukrainian military personnel, pro-Russia activists and civilians. Below is a roundup of some of what Brookings experts have been saying recently on the situation and way forward. **Brookings.** [Read More](#)

[Window on Eurasia: Russian Officials Persecuting Christians as Well as Muslims in Occupied Crimea](#) The persecution of Muslims in occupied Crimea and threats to Jews in those parts of eastern Ukraine where pro-Russia groups have seized power have received a great deal of attention in the West as evidence of what these Ukrainians face if Moscow is able to maintain its control there. But the actions of Russian officials, both local and from Moscow, against Christian groups have received much less attention, even though the numbers of people affected are far larger and constitute equally clear violation of the rights of those who are the victims of such anti-religious efforts. **Window on Eurasia.** [Read More](#)

[Ukraine crisis: Dozens killed in Odessa fire amid clashes](#) Dozens of people have been killed in a fire in an official building in the city of Odessa in south-west Ukraine, local police say. The deaths came as pro-Russian protesters clashed with Ukrainian government supporters in the city. Footage shows people trying to escape from the burning building as the flames spread. **BBC News.** [Read More](#)

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