Kyiv Declares Nationwide Emergency, Urges Ukrainians to Leave Russia 'Immediately'

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The Ukrainian Embassy in Moscow. **Sergei Vedyashkin / Moskva News Agency**

Ukraine has declared a nationwide emergency and [told](#) its citizens to leave Russia immediately, pointing to the threat of a Russian invasion.

The announcements come after Russian President Vladimir Putin recognized eastern Ukraine's two breakaway territories and ordered Russian troops to "maintain peace" there.

Ukraine's national security and defense council announced a 30-day state of emergency in all regions excluding Luhansk and Donetsk, where Kyiv's forces have been at war with the pro-Russian separatists since 2014.

Its spokesman said the state of emergency can be extended up to 60 days.

The Ukrainian parliament approved the decision later Wednesday.

The Ukrainian foreign ministry also said it is calling on citizens currently in Russia to leave "due to increased Russian aggression against Ukraine which, among other things, may lead to a significant restriction of the ability to provide consular assistance" to Ukrainians in Russia.

More than 2.5 million Ukrainian citizens are [estimated](#) to be living in Russia.

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Around the same time, Ukraine's military [said](#) it has started calling up reservists aged 18–60 for up to one year.

Ukraine's border service also [announced](#) temporary restrictions on movements in areas bordering Russia and Belarus.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy said Tuesday he was considering cutting diplomatic ties with Russia over its recognition of the self-proclaimed Donetsk and Luhansk people's republics.

Putin signed military cooperation treaties with Ukraine's pro-Moscow separatists and dispatched so-called "peacekeepers" to Donetsk and Luhansk, while Russian senators green-lighted Putin's request to deploy troops there.

The United States, which along with its Western allies announced a new package of sanctions on Russia, described those moves as "the beginning of a Russian invasion of Ukraine."

Several Western embassies have relocated from Kyiv to the city of Lviv near the Polish border, as the U.S. and its allies have for months accused Russia of planning an attack on Ukraine.

Russia on Wednesday started to evacuate its diplomatic staff from Ukraine, the state-run TASS news agency [quoted](#) a Russian Embassy official as saying.

News agencies reported that the flag has been taken down from the Russian Embassy in Kyiv.

Russia's Foreign Ministry had earlier said that its diplomatic staff had received threats and were under "repeated attacks."

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