The Moscow Times
30 YEARS
INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Ukraine Cuts Diplomatic Ties With Russia as Invasion Progresses

February 24, 2022



Ukrainian President Vladimir Zelenskiy at an emergency meeting in connection with the start of Russia's military operation against Ukraine. **president.gov.ua**

Ukraine has cut diplomatic ties with Russia after Moscow launched a full-scale invasion, President Volodymyr Zelenskiy announced Thursday.

Zelenskiy made the declaration in a live televised address, comparing Russia to Nazi Germany.

"Ukraine is defending itself and we shall not cede our freedom," he said. "Russia has attacked Ukraine in a cowardly and suicidal way, like Nazi Germany did during World War II."

Ukraine's foreign minister called on its foreign partners to follow Kyiv in cutting off diplomatic ties with Russia over "the most blatant act of aggression in Europe since WWII."

The Ukrainian leader has called on everyone with combat experience to take up arms, asked for blood donors and guaranteed an amnesty to "all those who are now under sanctions but are ready to fight with Russia."

Ukraine’s foreign ministry said it began the process of cutting diplomatic ties with Russia and has begun evacuating its embassy in Moscow, but noted that its consular services in the country continue working as normal.

Russia’s Foreign Ministry described Kyiv’s move as “a logical conclusion to [Zelenskiy’s] Russophobic policy” in comments to the state-run RIA Novosti news agency.

Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered the assault on Ukraine in the early hours of Thursday, claiming efforts to “demilitarize” and “denazify” its pro-Western neighbor, drawing severe backlash from Western countries.

Zelenskiy earlier declared martial law and ordered the military to “inflict maximum losses.”

Ukraine’s military has denied the Russian Defense Ministry’s claims that its troops were abandoning positions “en masse” amid large-scale missile and artillery strikes across the country's major cities.

Presidential adviser Mykhailo Podoliak said Ukraine's forces were "waging heavy combat" and repelling Russian advances in some parts.

AFP contributed reporting.

Original url:
https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2022/02/24/ukraine-cuts-diplomatic-ties-with-russia-as-invasion-progresses-a76563