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Some of Russia's Elite Oppose War in Ukraine

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Oleg Deripaska. **Remy Steinegger / WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM / flickr**

A growing number of Russia's business and political elite have publicly spoken out against the country's invasion of Ukraine, in a rare show of defiance for Russia's opaque and Kremlin-loyal elite.

On Sunday, Alfa Bank co-founder Mikhail Fridman, whose parents live in the Ukrainian city of Lviv, called the war in Ukraine "a tragedy" and said that the "bloodshed" must end.

The same day, metals tycoon Oleg Deripaska wrote on his Telegram channel: "Peace is very important. Negotiations must begin as soon as possible."

Neither attended a Friday meeting between Russian President Vladimir Putin and senior businessmen in the Kremlin on Friday, where Putin claimed he had no option but to invade Ukraine.

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Statements from business magnates were matched by signals from within Russia's political elite.

On Thursday, as the war began, Tatiana Yumashev, the daughter of Putin's predecessor Boris Yeltsin and a driving force behind his appointment as president in 1999 joined celebrities, artists and ordinary Russians in changing her Facebook profile picture to a black square, captioning it "No to war."

She was joined by a range of other well-connected figures, including the daughter of oligarch Roman Abramovich, the son-in-law of Defense Minister Sergei Shoygu, and the son of RosTech chief and longtime Putin friend Sergei Chemezov.

Putin spokesman Dmitry Peskov's ex-wife and daughter joined the anti-war chorus, with both speaking out on Instagram. Daughter Liza Peskova, 24, shortly afterwards deleted her anti-war post.

On Sunday, the anniversary of the murder of Boris Nemtsov, a Russian opposition activist and former deputy prime minister who opposed Russia's 2014 annexation of Crimea, provided a flashpoint for opposition to the war.

Anatoly Chubais, a 1990s era economic reformer who now serves as a special presidential envoy on climate change, posted a picture of Nemtsov on his Facebook page, a gesture widely interpreted as a veiled comment against the war.

Three Communist Party members of the State Duma, Russia's Kremlin-loyal parliament, have also spoken out against the invasion.

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