

# WHAT DOES THE RECOGNITION MEAN FOR THE UKRAINE CRISIS?

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: Effect of policies and politics of developed & developing countries on India's interests

On the move: People from Donetsk region heading to temporary shelters. AP Roman Yarovitycyn | Photo Credit: Roman Yarovitycyn

Russian President Vladimir Putin's decision to recognise the self-declared Donetsk and Luhansk republics practically brought the Minsk peace process to an end.

The Minsk 1 and II accords, reached in 2014 and 2015, had brought a tenuous ceasefire between the Russian-backed rebels in Ukraine's Donbas region, comprising the Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts, and put forward a formula for resolving the conflict. The civil strife in Donbas broke out after the 2014 Euromaidan protests brought down the pro-Russia regime of Viktor Yanukovich. Donbas, located on the Russian border adjoining Russia, has a majority Russian-speaking population, like Crimea, the Black Sea Peninsula which Russia annexed in 2014.

Donbas is no stranger to military conflicts. After the fall of the Russian empire, the region was incorporated into the newly created Ukrainian People's Republic in 1918. And then came the Bolsheviks, who were fighting a civil war against the remnants of the old regime. Donbas became part of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, created under Lenin. (In his speech on Monday, Russian President Vladimir Putin said modern Ukraine was "entirely created by the Bolshevik, communist Russia" and that "Lenin and his associates did it in a way that was extremely harsh on Russia — by separating, severing what is historically Russian land").

During the Second World War, the Nazis took the region. Over 3,00,000 civilians were killed in Donbas alone during the Nazi occupation. In 1943, after defeating the Nazis in Stalingrad, the Red Army took Donbas back. In 1991, with the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the region became part of the newly-born Ukraine nation. It stayed so until the 2014 Euromaidan protests.

## Minsk Accords

According to the Minsk II agreement, rebels were required to enforce a full ceasefire in the Donbas region, pull out heavy weapons and start talks on holding local elections. Ukraine was supposed to devolve more powers to the Donbas "republics", introduce constitutional reforms codifying the decentralisation of power and announce an amnesty to the rebel fighters. Rebels, in turn, should allow the Ukrainian troops to restore control of the border with Russia. These terms were never implemented, mainly because Kiev (backed by Washington) was not particularly supportive of it. But it had at least remained a path towards peace. That path was closed on Monday when Russia recognised the republics.

Right now, rebels control only parts of the two oblasts, but they have laid claims to the whole region. The conflict had been frozen since the 2015 ceasefire. But now that Russia has recognised the regions, Mr. Putin can move troops and heavy weaponry to Donbas openly. Moscow has already announced that it would send "peacekeepers" to the republics. With Russian help, the rebels could try to push the frontlines to take control of the whole of the two oblasts or even extend their reach further, as many have suggested, creating a land bridge from Donbas to the Russia-controlled Crimea.

[Our code of editorial values](#)

END

Downloaded from [crackIAS.com](https://crackias.com)

© **Zuccess App** by crackIAS.com

CrackIAS.com