

## Ukraine: 'Welcome to hell'

Our Politics Editor discusses the current protests in Ukraine, looking at US and Russian Policy as well as Yatsenyuk's takeover



By [Yvonne-Stefania Efstathiou](#), Politics Editor (2013/14)

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Credit: Orion Alexis

### US response

The US Secretary of State John Kerry announced that the United States plan to offer Ukraine loan guarantees up to \$1 billion (£600 million) in an attempt to stabilise the country's economy which is facing a default.

On another note, the United States have warned Russia that military intervention would be a "grave mistake" and pledged to respect Ukraine's territorial integrity.

Kerry said: "This is not a zero-sum game, this is not West versus East. It is not Russia or the United States, this is about the people of Ukraine and Ukrainians making their choices about the future and we want to work with Russia and other countries, with everybody available, to make sure this is peaceful from this day forward."

He has warned Russia that it faces expulsion from the Group of Eight.

### Russia's policy

Moscow is questioning the legitimacy of Ukraine's interim leader and has recalled its ambassador from Kiev. President Vladimir Putin ordered a snip drill to test the combat readiness of his troops in central and Western Russia, near the border with Ukraine. At the beginning the event was not considered uncommon, yet it was viewed with suspicion. Russia has warned the rights of the ethnic Russians in Ukraine are being infringed. Soon after, rumours of a possible Russian intervention intensified when Ukraine on 28 February accused Russia of carrying out an armed invasion by sending naval forces to occupy Sevastopol airport in the Crimea region. Russia has acted similarly in 2008, when it first moved its troops close to Georgia for a military drill and then invaded the country.

On the other hand, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States signed an agreement in 1994 in which it pledged to respect and uphold Ukraine's territorial integrity, reducing the likelihood of invasion. Moscow's primary focus would probably be to support the emergence of a new political leader who would

provide a nationwide appeal, particularly in Eastern Ukraine. In addition, splitting the country does not seem plausible at the moment. Invading and fighting for partition would mean open war with the European Union and the United States, which has already warned Kremlin.

Russia has now approved the deployment of its troops.

### Yatsenyuk's profile

Arseniy Yatsenyuk was named the new Prime Minister by the Maidan Council, soon after the Former Ukrainian Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich left on 22 February.

On 28 February, the Parliament approved him and he will serve this position until the presidential elections that are scheduled for 25 May.

He is the leader of the Fatherland Party and a former speaker at the Parliament. Yatsenyuk has been a main opposition leader since the protests first erupted in late November.

The new Ukrainian Prime Minister told the BBC: 'We are to undertake extremely unpopular steps as the previous president was so corrupted that the country is in a desperate financial plight' and warned that Ukraine is 'on a brick of disaster, and this is the government of suiciders! So welcome to hell!'

Yatsenyuk takes over at a crucial moment for Ukraine. The country's strong division might even lead to partition of the state, between those in the West side aspiring EU integration and those in the East that favour ties with Russia due to their ethnic heritage. Ukraine is facing the risk of losing some of its territories.



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## One comment

Good

5 Mar '14 at 3:37 pm

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