

# EURASIA DIGEST

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## **Kazakh President's Mediation Offer in Ukraine Crisis**

On 1 March 2022, Kazakhstan President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev [expressed](#) his readiness to act as the mediator for peace between Russia and Ukraine. He appealed to both the nations to reach a mutual understanding. In his address to the extraordinary congress of the ruling party, he stated, "We call on both states to find a common ground and reach agreements. For its part, Kazakhstan is ready to provide all possible assistance, including mediation services if necessary." This was the first major reaction from any Central Asian state since the conflict began.

## **Turkmenistan Presidential Elections**

Serdar Berdimuhamedov, the son of Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, [became](#) the President of the Republic of Turkmenistan on 14 March 2022. Serdar won the elections with 72.97 percent of the votes.

## **Russia's Military Drills in Southern Tajikistan**

A five day [military drill](#) for the servicemen of the Russian military base deployed in Tajikistan was launched on 14 March 2022 at Harbmaidon training ground. The exercise involved more than 1,000 military personnel. The Russian military base deployed in Tajikistan is a part of the Central Military District and is Russia's largest military deployment abroad.

## **Hypersonic Missiles Used in Ukraine**

Russia has used its [Kinzhal hypersonic missiles](#) for its first time on 18 March 2022. It was used to destroy an underground

missile and ammunition storage site in western Ukraine bordering Romania. Analysts say a weapon of this kind was used for the first time.

## **Uzbekistan and India Hold Joint Military Drills**

The 3rd edition of the joint [training exercise](#), named EX-DUSTLIK, between the Indian army and Uzbekistan armies began at Yangiariq, Uzbekistan from 22 to 31 March 2022. The 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of the drill was held in India in the state of Uttarakhand. The Indian contingent is represented by the Grenadiers Regiment. Uzbekistan Army contingent is represented by troops of the North-Western Military District. The main focus of the exercise is on the counter-terrorism operations in a semi-urban terrain. The exercise aims at enhancing understanding, and interoperability between the two armies.

## **Russia Clarifies Stand on Use of Nukes**

[Kremlin spokesperson](#) Dmitry Peskov said on 23 March 2022 that Russia will only use nuclear weapons, if it were facing an "existential threat". He added "we have a concept of domestic security, and it's public. This statement was made, in the context of the Ukraine conflict.

## **European Commission and Japan Bilateral on Energy**

European Commissioner for Energy, Kadri Simson and Japan's Minister for Economy, Trade and Industry, Koichi Hagiuda held a [bilateral meeting](#) in Brussels on 25 March, 2021. Major themes discussed in the meeting were climate-neutrality by 2050 and green energy transition.

## **No Immediate Gas Payments in Rubles for Russia**

The Kremlin has said that Russia [will not immediately](#) require its natural gas buyers to pay in rubles. Earlier, President Vladimir Putin had warned "unfriendly" countries, including all EU members that they would be cut off from Russian gas unless they opened an account in rubles to pay for the deliveries.

## **British Foreign Secretary Visits India**

United Kingdom Foreign Secretary Elizabeth Truss [visited](#) India on 31 March 2022. This visit is a part of the UK's wider diplomatic push, ahead of key NATO and G7 meetings in April. The Foreign Secretary stated "Deeper ties between Britain and India will boost security in the Indo-Pacific and globally, and create jobs and opportunities in both countries. The two sides also discussed bilateral, regional, and global issues of mutual interest.

## **No Top leadership Meeting on Ukraine**

[Russia's key negotiator](#) with Ukraine, Vladimir Medinsky said on 3 April 2022, it is too early for a top-level meeting on ending the conflict. He stated "the Ukrainian side has become more realistic in its approach to issues related to the neutral and non-nuclear status of Ukraine but the draft agreement is not ready for submission to a summit meeting".

## **Victor Orbán Emerged Victorious in Hungary Elections**

Viktor Orbán [won a](#) fourth successive term as Hungary's prime minister on 3 April 2022. The ruling party Fidesz Party has retained its two-thirds super majority. Orbán, who enjoys a close relationship with Vladimir Putin has declared to stay out of the Ukraine conflict insisting that Hungary has nothing to do with it.