

# Ukraine sees some merit in Chinese peace plan

China also criticised Western sanctions on Russia.

**Page 1 >** All parties must stay rational and exercise restraint, avoid fanning the flames and aggravating tensions, and prevent the crisis from deteriorating further or even spiralling out of control," the ministry said in its paper. The initial reaction from Kyiv was dismissive, with a senior adviser to President Zelenskiy saying any plan to end the war must involve the withdrawal of Russian troops to borders in place when the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991. However, Zelenskiy himself struck a more receptive tone in a news conference to mark the first anniversary of the conflict. Russia said it appreciated China's plan and that it was open to achieving its

goals through political and diplomatic means. Russian President Vladimir Putin has signalled he will double down on the conflict and raised the spectre of nuclear weapons, but China said nuclear weapons must be avoided. "Nuclear weapons must not be used and nuclear wars must not be fought," the foreign ministry said. "We oppose development, use of biological, and chemical weapons by any country under any circumstances." Since the war began weeks after Beijing and Moscow announced a "no limits" partnership, President Xi Jinping has spoken regularly with Putin but not once with his Ukrainian counterpart Zelenskiy. China's top diplomat Wang Yi visited Moscow for talks this week.



Brazil's new President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva stressed the need for a peace deal brokered by

outsiders. "It is urgent that a group of countries not involved in the conflict assume the

responsibility of leading negotiations to reestablish peace," Lula said on Twitter.

ispionline.it

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Peru recalls ambassador to Mexico



**AL JAZEERA** – Peru's President Dina Boluarte has ordered the "definitive removal" of the country's ambassador to Mexico after rebuking Mexico's President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador for again voicing his support for her overthrown predecessor. The move comes after Lopez Obrador told a news conference on Friday that "Mexico will continue to support [Castillo] who was unjustly and illegally removed from office". Obrador also referred to Boluarte as a "spurious president". Castillo was impeached and arrested on December 7 last year after seeking to dissolve Congress.

## Netanyahu's nightmare: Internal conflicts ...



A general view shows construction of the illegal Israeli settlement of Ramat Givat Zeev in the occupied West Bank. **REUTERS**

**Page 1 >** Also on Saturday, local media criticized Israel's security apparatus for its inability to find a tactical or strategic solution to deal with the expected wave of Palestinian operations. "There is always fear in the Israeli security apparatus, for example, that

the month of Ramadan has been turned into the month of holy war by Hamas. That is why we are always fearful," a political analyst told Israel's TV Channel 13, adding, "Gaza has imposed deterrence on Israel." The Israeli analyst pointed to Gaza's ability to deter. In the past two years, in addition to Gaza, the West Bank and the holy city of Al-Quds have also become the scene of armed conflicts and operations by Palestinians against Israelis. In other words, Gaza is not the only armed area operating against the Israelis, and now the occupied territories, under the ad-

ministration of the Israelis, have become a nightmare for them. About a month ago, following an Israeli attack on the Jenin camp in the West Bank, a major armed operation was carried out by the Palestinians in Al-Quds, which resulted in the deaths of eight Israelis. On the other hand, Israelis' widespread protests against Netanyahu's judicial reforms have raised the likelihood that the extremist cabinet might collapse or armed forces may disobey orders. "Israeli soldiers will not serve under a dictatorship and, today, more than ever I hear opposing voices against the gov-

ernment in the air force and other divisions. If there is a dictatorship in Israel, it is better to serve in Uganda or Rwanda, because they will pay more," said Dan Halutz, the former chief of staff of the Israeli armed forces. The Israeli newspaper Maariv has published the findings of a survey according to which there has been a dramatic change in relations between political groups in the wake of the approval of the "judicial reform" laws. The survey indicates that if the Knesset elections were held today, the ruling coalition parties would get only 55

seats, while the opposition parties would secure 65 seats. This means that the ruling coalition will lose its majority in parliament and the far-right cabinet would fall. This is despite the fact that before the recent elections in Israel, some hoped that Netanyahu would be able to form a stable cabinet to end several years of political instability. Now, Netanyahu's aggressive policies have dashed these hopes and Israel is facing internal unrest and protests more than ever. In addition, the power of Palestinian groups to deal with Israeli attacks has increased.

### Extremists slaughter soldiers in Burkina Faso

**AP** – The Daesh terror group has claimed responsibility for killing more than 70 soldiers, wounding dozens, and taking five hostage in an ambush on a military convoy in northern Burkina Faso. Violence linked to Al-Qaeda and the Daesh terror group has wracked the country for seven years, killing thousands and displacing nearly 2 million people. Frustration at the government's inability to stem the violence led to two coups last year, each one preceded by a major attack on the military.

## Protest in Berlin over arming Ukraine draws thousands



People take part in a protest against the delivery of weapons to Ukraine and in support of peace negotiations between Russia and Ukraine, amid the Ukraine war, in Berlin, Germany, on February 25, 2023. **CHRISTIAN MANG/REUTERS**

A demonstration against supplying Ukraine with weapons for war with Russia attracted 10,000 people on Saturday, drawing criticism from top German government officials and a large police presence to maintain order. Organised by a prominent left-wing German politician, the protest comes a day after the one-year anniversary of the Ukraine war, which drew promises of more weapons from western allies and fresh sanctions against Russia, Reuters wrote. "We call on the German chancellor to stop the escalation of arms deliveries. Now!... Because every day lost costs up to 1,000 more lives — and brings us closer to a 3rd world war," the protest's organizers said on their website. The "Uprising for Peace" was organised in part by Sahra Wagenknecht, a member of Germany's left-wing Die Linke party. Germany, along with the United States, has been one of the biggest suppliers of weapons for Ukraine. "Negotiate, not escalate," one sign held by a demonstrator said, while a banner in the crowd read "Not our war". A police spokesperson said 10,000 people gathered around Germany's symbolic Brandenburg Gate in central Berlin. Police mobilised 1,400 officials to keep the peace and to enforce bans on military uniforms, Russian and Soviet flags, Russian military songs, and right-wing symbols.

## Vote starts late across Nigeria in crucial election

Polling stations opened late across parts of Nigeria on Saturday as Africa's most populous country held presidential and parliamentary elections amid a nationwide bank note shortage that left many without transport to their voting centers. The elections come amid fears of violence, from Islamic militants in the north to separatists in the south, though officials did not postpone the vote as the last two presidential elections were, AP wrote. In northeastern Borno state, policemen deployed to protect voting units were seen trekking long distances to get to their posts. The delays raised concerns about whether voters would be disenfranchised. There were no electoral officials in more than 70% of voting units an hour before the vote was due to start, Samson Itodo, head of YIAGA Africa, Nigeria's largest election observer group, told The Associated Press. Logistic and security problems, including the snatching of some voting machines in parts of Delta and Katsina states and the inability to deploy workers to violent hotspots in the southeast contributed to delays, said Mahmood Yakubu, head of Nigeria's Independent National Electoral Commission. Still, everyone would have the opportunity to vote, "no matter how long it takes," he said. Incumbent President Muhammadu Buhari is stepping down after two four-year terms.



Members of the military keep watch near a polling station in Ikeja, Lagos, Nigeria, on February 25, 2023. **JAMES OATWAY/REUTERS**

### El Salvador transfers gang members to 'mega prison'



**REUTERS** – El Salvador's government moved thousands of suspected gang members to a newly opened "mega prison" on Friday, the latest step in a controversial crackdown on crime that has caused the Central American nation's prison population to soar. In a video posted by Bukele, prisoners stripped down to white shorts, with their heads shaved, are seen running through the new prison into cells while many bear gang tattoos.