

U.S. Should Send Troops to Quell Ukraine Crisis

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Apr 15, 2014

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



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Putin remains skeptical about America's willingness to use force, and that doubt creates a much more dangerous situation than the prospect of deploying small numbers of troops to Poland, the Baltic states, and Romania.

Despite much diplomatic effort, the situation in Ukraine worsens. A coordinated Russian campaign -- including an invasion threat, special operations destabilization in eastern Ukraine patterned on the Crimea model, and warnings of gas cutoffs -- documents ever more clearly Vladimir Putin's aim to cripple the Ukrainian government and control much or even all of this strategically vital European country.

The West's reaction has been weak. The sanctions imposed and contemplated are not dramatic, regardless of immediate Russian losses in volatile stock and currency exchange markets. Europe's dependence on Russian hydrocarbons and affinity for Russian investments were apparent last week when the German foreign minister feted Russian Deputy Prime Minister Igor Shuvalov for trade talks, even as NATO photos of Russian military equipment stockpiled near Ukraine emerged. While European foot-dragging is the biggest obstacle to an effective response, some of Washington's initial comments and actions suggested unwillingness to face the reality of Putin's actions. The Obama administration also bears the burden of its Middle Eastern policy of avoiding military conflicts. NATO member states in Eastern Europe are asking the same question many in the Middle East have: Can we rely on Washington to make hard military decisions?

The best way to send Putin a tough message and possibly deflect a Russian campaign against more vulnerable NATO states is to back up our commitment to the sanctity of NATO territory with ground troops...

[View the full article on the Washington Post website. \(http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/us-should-send-ground-troops-to-ukraine/2014/04/15/aa40b238-c408-11e3-bcec-b71ee10e9bc3_story.html\)](http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/us-should-send-ground-troops-to-ukraine/2014/04/15/aa40b238-c408-11e3-bcec-b71ee10e9bc3_story.html) ❖

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