

Current Intelligence Report Circular

CLASSIFICATION: DECLASSIFIED AND APPROVED FOR PUBLIC RELEASE

Report Topic: Russian political, military and economic developments

Production Date: 28 February 2022

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Anti-War Protests in Russia

On 24 FEB, several thousands of people took to the streets across Russia to protest Russian President Vladimir Putin's order for a military attack on Ukraine. There have been protests in over 50 Russian cities, including: St. Petersburg, Moscow, Samara, Perm, Novosibirsk, Yekaterinburg and Nizhny Novgorod. In St. Petersburg, a crowd of mostly young Russians gathered on Nevsky Prospect with candles and banners chanting "no to war", "Ukraine is not our enemy" and "Russia is against war". A young woman at the protest stated her thoughts with the press, "I have no words, it's just disgusting", "What is there to say? We feel powerless, anguish". Another protest participant, Nikita Golubev, expressed his thoughts: "I am embarrassed for my country. To be honest with you, I am speechless. War is always scary. We don't want this". Later on in the night, members of the crowd expressed their feelings towards Putin, shouting "Putin is a killer! Putin is the shame of Russia!". In response to the protests, President Putin and the Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation (SKR) warned that they an order would be issued to arrest the anti-war protestors for illegally organizing and conducting unauthorized actions. According to OVD-Info, a rights group that tracks political arrests, nearly 6,000 people have been detained in Russia since 24 FEB. END

CMCD Note

The increasing presence of anti-war protestors throughout Russia indicates some disapproval of the invasion of Ukraine among Russians. We can assess that the security and stability of the Putin administration is going to face challenges the longer the conflict in Ukraine is drawn out. The arrest of thousands of protestors for speaking out against government action only reinforces the idea that President Putin is taking an authoritarian approach in this situation. We estimate that, without a ceasefire, the negative consequences for the Russian government will most likely continue to increase, with lasting effects on the citizens of Russia.

Sources

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