

Military Families Speak Out

February 2022

Troops Home Now!

MFSO Members Speak Out About Ukraine:

The tension is high among military families over the crisis in Ukraine, and is causing many of our MFSO members to re-live many of the painful moments that led us into the endless wars in the Middle East. The US approved the deployment of 3,000 troops to NATO members Poland, Germany and Romania and 130,000 Russian troops have surrounded Ukrainian borders. 2,000 troops stationed at Fort Bragg, N.C. are deploying to Germany and Poland, with an additional 1,000 troops that are currently stationed in Germany, to be repositioned to Romania. We are on the edge fearing we are dangerously close to war again. In response to the possibility that our loved ones will once again be deployed, MFSO has collected perspectives on this issue from MFSO members across the country that we thought you might want to hear. The board will be meeting this week and would appreciate comments from each and every one of you so that we can formulate a position. Here is what we have heard from our members so far...

We need to learn the lessons of the past when we were told there were weapons of mass destruction in Iraq and then proven to be wrong. Many people died- troops and civilians. The president of Ukraine himself has stated that there is no threat of Russia attacking them. Let us not fall for the same line that is used by the military industrial complex to profit from war and expose our sons and daughters to the danger of losing their lives.

Rossana Cambron
Los Angeles, CA
Son active-duty Army

Our military and the Military Industrial Complex has become a monster, but why are we blaming everything on the US and not on Russia? NATO has responded to what Russia has done by surrounding Ukraine with their military and by annexing Georgia and Crimea. They have also exploited Chechnya. Biden is saber rattling to increase his approval ratings, but I don't believe he wants to go to war. I think what they are both doing is reckless. We should say we will not allow promote the UN to go into Ukraine. Both sides need to stop upping the ante and work for what's best for all, and of course that is PEACE. Meanwhile, let's not let Putin divide and conquer the peace movement in this country! Together we stand, or united we fall. 🙌❤️

Don Kimball
Portland, ME
Uncle to active-duty Marine

NATO is nothing more than an outlet for the weapons manufacturers, and those heavily invested in them. Russian has asked for 30 years to not be surrounded by NATO. It falls on deaf ears in Washington. WHERE is diplomacy?

Diane Picotte-Haberdank
Red Wing, MI
Son active-duty Army

It's a crazy and scary time once again for military families! I'm wondering if we're teetering on the verge of WW3! I listen to a lot of news and the experts and retired Generals seem to agree that sending in American troops to Europe is the right thing to do to show solidarity with NATO countries. I thought that once Trump was out of office, I wouldn't have to worry about another deployment!! It's not our place to fight Ukraines war, especially since they don't seem to be very worried. The Russian military presence at the border has been looming there for the last eight years.

I feel they are positioning US troops in Europe to be a ready presence hopefully to be used as a deterrent for Putin's war mongering. Maybe we need to be there, but NO ONE wants their son or daughter to go. Most people don't even personally know someone serving in the military!

We need to put a face on those who are serving as part of the conversation so people understand the sacrifice of what it means to go to war!! As a parent, I am sick about the idea of yet another deployment but we have to consider and be prepared for the worst-case scenario.

Melissa B.

Proud mother,
Orange County California
Son, active-duty Army

I'm really frightened by what's going on in Ukraine, Russia and Washington DC. For weeks we have been to subjected to news that "war is imminent" and that Russia is surrounding Ukraine and the US is sending more troops to Europe, but in this case, we are talking about nuclear warheads. I'm getting flashbacks from what happened when we invaded Iraq and almost 22 years later, our troops are still in Iraq. It took two decades to get out of Afghanistan. At first I followed with great relief the massive coverage about the numerous trips made by Biden, Blinken and others to show diplomatic efforts they were making, but the the accusations of Russian "false flags", which the US has engaged in itself, I am only reminded the whole lie about weapons of mass destruction. We can spiral into endless war so quickly. Both Putin and Biden are ratcheting things up. Why have we sent more troops to Ukraine? What concessions has the US actually made in an effort toward using **real** diplomacy? Military families and the country just can't stomach another war, but there is lots of pressure to feed the hungry MIC beast.

Pat Alviso

Long Beach, CA
Son, active-duty Marine

It's obvious that Russia has plans to annex Ukraine or have it back in its sphere of influence. If The West allows this to happen, Russia will go after additional nations that were formerly part of the Soviet Union. Furthermore, China will take inaction by the West as a green light to do the same with Taiwan. It is imperative that the United States and Ukraine's European allies arm Ukraine and let the world know exactly what Russia is attempting so that war, hopefully, will be averted. I think Biden is doing okay and he doesn't want combat troops there. Putting our troops in an advisory role or as NATO support sounds right to me.

Anna Berlinrut

Mom of active-duty Marine who has been deployed 8 times
Next stop: Rockport, Texas

It is extremely dangerous to provoke a crisis, with Russia over Ukraine. We must remember that the U.S. and Russia are the two countries with the world's most nuclear weapons. The U.S. sending troops, weapons and funding in support of Ukraine is escalating tensions. Stumbling into a war, where at some point supposedly "limited, useable nuclear weapons" might be used would be disastrous. The use of nuclear weapons, weapons that kill men, women, children, all living things and disintegrates infrastructure, while sending massive amounts of soot into the atmosphere possibly setting off a nuclear winter, is simply nuts. Let's remember the government's lies and disastrous wars, in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, Vietnam, and other military interventions, before we start another one. **NO MORE DUMB WARS. NO MORE WARS.** Keep our troops out of harm's way.

Ukraine is not a national security issue for the U.S. There is a solution. Ukraine does not need to join NATO.

Instead of the government trying to dominate and control the world, it needs to learn how to live within the world. Implement diplomacy and negotiations, give and take, to build a livable world for all. Redirect military funding to Investment in America and its people. There are 140 million poor and low wealth people in the U.S., our infrastructure is crumbling, COVID has exposed tremendous faults within our healthcare system, and we need to address the climate crisis. Let's demand that our government listen to its people who prefer, in vast numbers, investment in America and its people. **NO MORE WAR.**

Mary Hladky

In the News:

Islamic State head, civilians die during U.S. raid in Syria- 13 civilians dead mostly women and children- can we leave Syria now? [Link](#)

Taliban Seek Ties with US, Other Ex-Foes- Foreign minister pleas for compassionate release of frozen \$10B and Western patience for reforms [Link](#)

Waves of Suicide Hits Texas National Guard- Poor living, working conditions, treatment and mission lead to 4 suicides in a month and legislative calls for ending operation Lone Star [Link](#)

Fuel tank leak fouls Navy water supply in Hawaii Thousands of military families were sickened and relocated while activists and MFSO urge the administration to stop delaying and move forward with their promise to drain the fuel tanks here and at other bases. [Link](#)

Military Ordered to Overhaul Effort to Prevent Civilian Casualties After Botched Airstrikes- MFSO signs onto demand [Link](#)

Kabul airport attack was not preventable, military says [Link](#)

News from the MFSO Board:

- MFSO has sent a letter to the Biden Administration urging them to drain the tanks at Red Hill in Oahu and monitor and end the delay to their previous order [Link](#)
- MFSO is asking for input on a position to consider on Ukraine (see above contributions)
- MFSO signed on to a petition along with [Link](#) other organizations to ask the Biden Administration to refrain from participating in missions that result in numerous civilian deaths
- MFSO is applying for the Howard Zinn grant so that we can continue to get our voices heard
- MFSO's Yellow Ribbon Campaign has evolved into a study of military suicide programs and is set to make a recommendation to the military on how to do a better job prevent military suicide. (There are openings for additional committee members)
- The AUMF committee has presented talking points and postcard design for the campaign. We hope to kick-off the campaign by March.
- After a hearing all the way up to the California Supreme Court, Board members and countless deported veterans and allies are cheering the good news that MFSO board member Robert Vivar has finally been repatriated and is living in So Cal with his family. He continues his seamless work on the MFSO board and work to repatriate the rest of the deported veterans.

From Jeff's desk

Ukraine is not the only area you should be watching. With very little news coverage the U.S has deployed a U.S. warship and Air Force F-35s to the United Arab Emirates in response to the escalating fighting. The Houthis have carried out three attacks aimed at the U.A.E. in recent weeks, including one in mid-January that killed three people in Abu Dhabi. The Houthi strikes also pose a threat to U.S. forces stationed at Al Dhafra Air Base in Abu Dhabi, where Americans were forced to take shelter on Jan. 24 when the U.S. used Patriot missile air defenses during one missile attack.

[U.S. to Send Jet Fighters, Warship to U.A.E. After Houthi Attacks - WSJ](#)

Contributions & editing by: Mary Hladky, Jeff Merrick & Pat Alviso

4,586 American Troops killed in Iraq; 2,465 American Troops killed in Afghanistan