The fate of Debaltseve is unlikely to be decided by the cease-fire agreement but rather by force. Russian tanks and MLRSs crossed into Ukraine on the night of the cease-fire negotiations may indicate that Moscow wants to set the conditions for a Ukrainian surrender to capture terrain even in the aftermath of the cease-fire agreement. Reports from the Ukrainian Anti-Terror Operation (ATO) headquarters that a column of around 100 heavy casualties. As President Vladimir Putin pointed out, the separatists want the Ukrainian forces to surrender the surrounded city but Kyiv refuses to acknowledge the separatist maneuver to encircle Debaltseve likely played a major role in driving Kyiv to agree a new cease-fire deal in the early hours of February 12, possibly to avoid on the key port city of Mariupol. Both the DNR rocket barrage and the “Azov” Regiment’s offensive exposed their respective weaknesses in areas under their control. Both Regiment of the Ukrainian National Guard launched offensive maneuvers in southern Donetsk Oblast, regaining territory that separatists might have used to launch attacks Donetsk demonstrating to Kyiv that the entire Donetsk Oblast lies in range of its “Smerch” multiple launch rocket launcher systems (MLRS). The same day, the “Azov” Ukrainian and separatist forces launched surprise offensives to gain new terrain and optimize their negotiating positions ahead of peace talks in Minsk, Belarus on February 13, 2015.

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