Kyiv, Ukraine, is an old city in a new country. Despite the city’s more than 1,500-year history, Ukraine only celebrated 30 years of independence in 2021. After two revolutions and dozens of lives lost, Ukraine ousted then-President Viktor Fedorovich Yanukovych in 2014 after Yanukovych, who had already been suspected of corruption and election tampering, rejected a pending European Union association agreement. Yanukovych — supported by Russian President Vladimir Putin — flew to Russia and Oleksandr Turchynov became acting president until the election of Petro Poroshenko in June 2014. Poroshenko lost his bid for reelection to former actor and current Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelenskyy in May 2019. After months of accumulating troops and equipment at Ukraine’s borders, Russia invaded last week, prompting President Joe Biden and other NATO countries including Germany, Poland and the U.K. to respond with sanctions and stern warnings that the unprovoked attack would be met with decisive action, inching the U.S. toward conflict with Russia. In the extra issue of the Spartan Daily, we examine the crisis and escalating violence between Russia and Ukraine. We also unfold some of the complicated history between Russia, Ukraine, the U.S. and NATO allied countries as it relates to the country’s current strife.
Alexander Smirnova  
**SJSU alumna**

By Eva Martín  
**STAFF WRITER**

In a live television speech that aired before 6 a.m. Moscow time Thursday, Russian President Vladimir Putin addressed Russians announcing the start of a “special military operation” in Ukraine.

Alexandra Smirnova, an SJSU alumna from Russia who came to the United States in 2011, returned home earlier this year, and said people in her home country didn’t anticipate a military invasion in Ukraine.

“Most people thought the whole troop buildup was just a bluff and it would be crazy to actually invade Ukraine,” Smirnova said. “It came as a shock for everyone I know [in Russia].”

Pinnell said the North Atlantic Treaty Organization is sending in military for war readiness.

“Whoever tries to hinder us, or threaten our country or our people, should know we will not give in to pressure, ‘Kuleba said. ‘But we will not give in to pressure, “Kuleba said. ‘But we will not give in to pressure, “Kuleba said. ‘But we will not give in to pressure, “Kuleba said. ‘But we will not give in to pressure, “Kuleba said. ‘But we will not give in to pressure, “Kuleba said. ‘But we will not give in to pressure, “Kuleba said. ‘But we will not give in to pressure, “Kuleba said. ‘But we will not give in to pressure, “Kuleba said. ‘But we will not give in to pressure, “Kuleba said. ‘But we will not give in to pressure, “Kuleba said. ‘But we will not give in to pressure, “Kuleba said. ‘But we will not give in to pressure, “Kuleba said. ‘But we will not give in to pressure, “Kuleba said. ‘But we will not give in to pressure, “Kuleba said. ‘But we will not give in to pressure, “Kuleba said. ‘But we will not give in to pressure, “Kuleba said. ‘But we will not give in to pressure, “Kuleba said. ‘But we will not give in to pressure, “Kuleba said. ‘But we will not give in to pressure, “Kuleba said. ‘But we will not give in to pressure, “Kuleba said. ‘But we will not give in to pressure, “Kuleba said. ‘But we will not give in to pressure, “Kuleba said. ‘But we will not give in to pressure, “Kuleba said. ‘But we will not give in to pressure, “Kuleba said. ‘But we will not give in to pressure, “Kuleba said. ‘But we will not give in to pressure, “Kuleba said. ‘But we will not give in to pressure, “Kuleba said. ‘But we will not give in to pressure, “Kuleba said. ‘But we will not give in to pressure, “Kuleba said. ‘But we will not give in to pressure, “Kuleba said. ‘But we will not give in to pressure, “Kuleba said. ‘But we will not give in to pressure, “Kuleba said. ‘But we will not give in to pressure, “Kuleba said. ‘But we will not give in to pressure, “Kuleba said. ‘But we will not give in to pressure, “Kuleba said. ‘But we will not give in to pressure, “Kuleba said. ‘But we will not give in to pressure, “Kuleba said. ‘But we will not give in to pressure, “Kuleba said. ‘But we will not give in to pressure, “Kuleba said. ‘But we will not give in to pressure, “Kuleba said. ‘But we will not give in to pressure, “Kuleba said. ‘But we will not give in to pressure, “Kuleba所述。
Groups protest U.S. intervention

By Jennifer Schields & Madilynne Medina
STAFF WRITER & EXECUTIVE EDITOR

More than 30 community members gathered at San Jose City Hall Saturday to protest U.S. intervention after Russia invaded Ukraine on Thursday morning. The rally began at 2 p.m. with attendees chanting, “negotiate don’t escalate.”

According to a Thursday AP News article, the attack against Ukraine, anticipated for weeks by U.S. and Western allies, is the largest ground war in Europe since World War II.

President Joe Biden said in a Thursday statement that the U.S. along with allies, imposed financial sanctions on Russia “in response to Putin’s war of choice against Ukraine.”

Biden said the U.S. targeted all ten of Russia’s largest financial institutions, imposing full blocking and correspondent and payable-through-account sanctions, and debt and equity restrictions.

David Almeida, president of the San Jose State Students for a Democratic Society chapter, said he condemns “the refusal of our elected officials to de-escalate the situation” and demands an end to “warmongering in Eastern Europe.”

“We hope that by protesting we show our government that we don’t support any sort of sanctions on Russia. Sanctions, although they’re promoted as a more peaceful resolution, they end up hurting normal people in that country by depriving them of economic essentials,” Almeida said.

Mike Paradela, SJSU alumnus, Freedom Road Socialist Organization member and main organizer of the event said he sought “like-minded folks” when planning the rally.

Freedom Road Socialist Organization is a Marxist-Leninist organization in the U.S., according to the group’s website.

“We feel it is really important to have an anti-war voice that is specifically articulating the middle position that mass-benefits 99% of the country,” he said after the event.

Several other community organizations also attended the event including Code Pink Women for Peace and Act Now to Stop War and End Racism.

Many attendees also called for the cancellation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

NATO is an international military alliance which includes 28 European countries and two North American countries, including the U.S. The alliance was founded in 1949 in the aftermath of World War II to prevent the spread of the Soviet Union, according to the U.S. Office of the Historian website.

The organization provides a link between two continents, enabling international leaders to consult and cooperate in defense and security and conduct multinational crisis-management operations together, according to its website.

Almeida and several other speakers said they feel NATO “has been used as U.S. imperialism.”

“The Ukrainian people will pay the horrible price of war that was caused by the self-serving interests of U.S.-led NATO forces,” Almeida said.

Biden met with NATO leaders on Friday and said the U.S. will defend “every inch of NATO territory,” according to a Friday statement.

“I strongly welcome the decision to activate NATO’s defensive plans and elements of the NATO Response Force to strengthen our collective posture, as well as the commitments by our Allies to deploy additional land and air forces to the eastern flank and maritime forces from the High North

We hope that by protesting we show our government that we don’t support any sort of sanctions on Russia. Sanctions, although they’re promoted as a more peaceful resolution, they end up hurting normal people in that country by depriving them of economic essentials.

David Almeida
president of SJSU Students for a Democratic Society

Local advocates Jeanine Cornelussen and Charlotte Casey protest Saturday.
Nancy Robles, a member of various advocacy groups, holds protest sign at a San Jose community rally.

An SJSU sociology senior who wished to go by “Nava” for privacy concerns, said they feel the U.S. “drags countries into its complex of larger powers.” “This was something that could have been handled diplomatically,” Nava said during the event. “That could have been handled over fucking email. But no, we had escalated to this point.”

Almeida said he was pleased with many of the attendees’ shared perspectives. “Although it’s a low turnout, it’s still inspiring to see that there’s a handful of people that care enough about this issue and want to make their voices heard as American people and students,” Almeida said. Nancy Robles, one of the lead organizers for many working class citizens would be affected. “Yeah, well, I think you’ve seen it every single time America has been involved in a war and if it were to happen again with Russia, who has to go to war? ‘The working class,’ she said. “And in San Jose there’s working people here, there’s working people across the globe.

Locally, I think we are all mentally affected by the war hysteria. All the news we’re getting, we’re constantly being told the world is in ruins. The United States knows what it’s doing, it’s trying to sell us war.

San Jose for the Party for Socialism and Liberation (PSL) and Act Now to Stop War and End Racism (ANSWER) said that it’s important that people continue to attend anti-war rallies because she believes it is going to become “more and more urgent.”

“Locally, I think we are all mentally affected by the war hysteria. All the news we’re getting, we’re constantly being told the world is in ruins,” she said. “The United States knows what it’s doing, it’s trying to sell us war.”

Event attendee Emily Iverson of San Jose said she came to the demonstration to better understand the Ukraine-Russia conflict and hopes community members continue discussions regarding the conflict. “I’d encourage people to spread the message at least to people who wouldn’t usually turn up to events like these and spread [information] to different types of students and parts of our community that would pay attention to things like this,” she said.

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Breaking down Russia’s invasion of Ukraine

Ukraine, which has around 44 million residents, was attacked by sea, land and air after Vladimir Putin announced a full-scale invasion Thursday following growing military presence near the Russia-Ukraine border, according to a Sunday BBC article.

Putin announced the same day the attack was prompted by Ukraine, which he described as a country run by Nazis preventing Russia from safety and progress, according to the BBC article.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, who’s Jewish, rebuked Putin’s claims and compared Russia’s invasion to that of Nazi Germany during World War II, according to the same article.

Though countries in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, which was formed on April 4, 1949 to protect other countries from the Soviet Union, have provided Ukraine with military equipment and troops, Russia has one of the largest armies, according to the article.

On Thursday, Russian forces entered Senkivka, Ukraine from Veselovka, Belarus and headed south to the capital city of Kyiv, according to a Feb. 24 CNN article. The ground invasion was supplemented by air strikes, one of which struck a residential building in Kyiv, though no casualties were reported as a result of that missile attack according to a Saturday New York Times article. Putin called the invasion a “special military operation” and called for Ukrainian forces to surrender. The action brought immediate condemnation from the U.S., U.K. and other NATO countries. Russia has so far failed to capture Kyiv, and some Pentagon officials have suggested Russian forces may have been surprised at the amount of resistance they encountered in Ukraine, according to a Sunday Vox article.

Crimea is a peninsula on the Black Sea made up mostly of ethnic Russians with significant populations of Ukrainians & Crimean Tatars, the indigenous people of the peninsula, according to a Feb. 21 AP News article.

Crimea was a region of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic from 1954 until 1991, when Crimean officials held a referendum to become independent as their own socialist republic, according to the same article.

On March 18, 2014, Russia formally annexed Crimea into its territory.