

# Putin backs separatist claims to Donbas

Russian president Vladimir Putin has endorsed the claims of Russian-backed separatists to the entire Donbas region of eastern Ukraine, taking both countries closer to full-blown conflict



## Russian positions

■ Ground forces

⊕ Air bases

▨ Claimed by separatists, held by Ukraine

■ Held by pro-Russian separatists

## Separatist forces:

35,000 personnel,  
481 tanks, 914  
armoured vehicles\*

**Svitlodarsk:**  
Shelling intensifying  
in area of key  
infrastructure

RUSSIA

Boguchar ■

LUHANSK

Starobilk

Lysychansk

Millerovo

Kramatorsk

Luhansk

Alchevsk

Horlivka

Donetsk

DONETSK

Shakhty

Line of  
contact

Rostov-  
on-Don

Persianovskiy

Melitopol

Berdiansk

Mariupol

Yeysk

**Feb 21: Putin orders  
troops into Donbas  
after recognising  
breakaway republics**

40km  
25 miles