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For news and information consideration, please send to News@scdaily.com or contact
John Robbins 281-965-6390
Jun Gai 281-498-4310

Publisher: Wea H. Lee
President: Catherine Lee
Editor: John Robbins

Address: 11122 Bellaire Blvd., Houston, TX 77072
E-mail: News@scdaily.com



Inside C2

Southern DAILY

Make Today Different

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Russia promises to scale back Ukraine war but West sceptical

ISTANBUL/KYIV OUTSKIRTS/ MARIUPOL, Ukraine, March 29 (Reuters) - Russia promised on Tuesday to scale down military operations around Ukraine's capital and north, while Kyiv proposed adopting neutral status, in confidence-building steps that were the first signs of progress towards negotiating peace.

Their talks took place in an Istanbul palace more than a month into the largest attack on a European nation since World War Two. Russia's invasion has been halted on most fronts by stiff resistance from Ukrainian forces who have recaptured territory even as civilians are trapped in besieged cities.

Thousands of people have been killed or injured, nearly four million have fled Ukraine, and Russia's economy has been pummelled by sanctions.

"In order to increase mutual trust and create the necessary conditions for further negotiations and achieving the ultimate goal of agreeing and signing (an) agreement, a decision was made to radically, by a large margin, reduce military activity in the Kyiv and Chernihiv directions," Russian Deputy Defence Minister Alexander Fomin told reporters.

He made no mention of other areas that have seen heavy fighting, including around Mariupol in the southeast, Sumy and Kharkiv in the east and Kherson and Mykolaiv in the south.

Some analysts noted that Russia's promise to reduce fighting mostly covered areas where it has been losing ground.

"Does 'we'll drastically reduce military operations around Kyiv' = 'we're getting our ass kicked, transitioned to a hasty defense?'" tweeted Mark Hertling, a retired U.S. lieutenant general and former commander of U.S. forces in Europe.

A U.S. official, speaking on condition of anonymity, also struck a sceptical note, saying further major Russian offensives elsewhere in Ukraine should be expected.

"We believe any movement of Russian forces from around Kyiv is a redeployment, not a withdrawal... They are shifting gears and probably because they failed with their initial offensive," the official said.



PROPOSALS

Ukrainian negotiators said that under their proposals, Kyiv would agree not to join alliances or host bases of foreign troops, but would have security guaranteed in terms similar to "Article 5", the collective defence clause of the transatlantic NATO military alliance.

They named Israel and NATO members Canada, Poland and Turkey as countries that may give such guarantees. Russia, the United States, Britain, Germany and Italy could also be involved.

The proposals, which would require a referendum in Ukraine, mentioned a 15-year consultation period on the status of Crimea, annexed by Russia in 2014. The fate of the southeastern Donbas region, which Russia demands Ukraine cede to separatists, would be discussed by the Ukrainian and Russian leaders.

Kyiv's proposals also included one that Moscow would not oppose Ukraine joining the European Union, Russia's lead negotiator Vladimir Medinsky said. Russia

has previously opposed Ukrainian membership of the EU and especially of NATO.

Medinsky said Russia's delegation would study and present the proposals to President Vladimir Putin.

To prepare a peace agreement, Medinsky later told the TASS news agency, "we still have a long way to go".

The Ukrainian negotiators called for a meeting between Putin and President Volodymyr Zelenskiy. Medinsky said that could take place when foreign ministers were ready to initial an agreement.

U.S. President Joe Biden spoke by phone about Ukraine with the leaders of Britain, France, Germany and Italy, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson's office said in a statement.

"They agreed there could be no relaxation of western resolve until the horror inflicted on Ukraine has ended," it said.

A source familiar with the situation told Reuters the allies discussed more financial aid of up to \$500 million for Ukraine.

SCAVENGING

In Mariupol, besieged for weeks by Russian forces, nearly 5,000 people have been killed, according to figures from the mayor which cannot be verified.

In parts now held by Russian troops, the few visible residents appeared ghostlike among charred apartment blocks.

One little girl played with a stick in ruins as explosions crackled in the distance. Two youths scavenged through rubble.

"We are eight people. We have two buckets of potatoes, one bucket of onions," said Irina, an engineer, in her apartment where windows had been blasted out. Her group boiled soup on a makeshift stove in the stairwell.

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WEA LEE'S GLOBAL NOTES

03/30/2022

Education Is A Centuries-Old Plan



The training courses for junior reporters of Southern News Group is about to start in our new International Studio. We are so grateful that many youngsters will join our team.

Education is a centuries-old plan. School education, social education, family education and ethical education affects everyone's life. Over the years, Asian Chinese families living in United States have given priority to their children's education. First, because there are so many talented youth among the major ethnic groups, to have the youth educated is the main reason to improve the economics of the family.

The training courses for our young reporters will last for several weeks. A select group of our senior reporters and

editors will teach them all about how to become an outstanding news reporter in the future.

We deeply feel that the most important duty of our media company is to convey accurate information to the general public. Over the years we have worked with the McDonald's Corporation to sponsor Education Workshops in different cities and have taught thousands of youngsters and their parents how to choose the right college and apply for scholarships.

For many years, I have worked with many young students. I told them to remember five simple letters: HAATS, meaning that you must have a Healthy mental and physical body; you need Ambition and need aspiration for a goal in your life; Action—you must take action to reach your goal; Time, which we all have, in a good environment to attend school; and finally, a Sincere attitude and serious spirit to face all the work and challenges that lie ahead.

We welcome these twenty young students as they join our Southern News Group family. Under the careful guidance of our team members, we want to cultivate you as a talented reporter in the future.



Wea H. Lee

Wealee@scdaily.com

Chairman of International District Houston Texas

Publisher Southern Daily Wea H. Lee

Southern News Group Chairman / CEO
Chairman of International Trade & Culture Center
Republic of Guiana Honorary consul at Houston Texas



Southern DAILY Make Today Different

Editor's Choice



Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau holds a crayon after he played, and lost, a game of tic-tac-toe against a child, following a new child care deal announcement with Ontario Premier Doug Ford (not pictured) in Brampton, Canada. REUTERS/Carlos...MORE



Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan greets Russian and Ukrainian negotiators before addressing them, ahead of their face-to-face talks in Istanbul, Turkey March 29, 2022. Murat Cetinmuhurdar/Presidential Press Office/Handout via REUTERS



Britain's Queen Elizabeth and Prince Andrew, Duke of York, arrive for the service of thanksgiving for late Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, at Westminster Abbey, in London. REUTERS/Tom Nicholson



A view shows buildings damaged in the course of Ukraine-Russia conflict in the besieged southern port city of Mariupol, Ukraine March 28, 2022. REUTERS/Alexander Ermochenko



A Ukrainian serviceman walks past the wreck of a Russian tank in the village of Lukyanivka outside Kyiv, Ukraine. REUTERS/Marko Djurica



Curtains flutter in the wind at a building that was damaged by shelling in a neighbourhood that has been largely abandoned and left without water, gas and heating, as Russia's attack on Ukraine continues, in Kharkiv, Ukraine. REUTERS/Thomas Peter



Is No More. Welcome To



Key Point

(Editor's Note: *In what may be the most ambitious and far-reaching "corporate pivots" of our time, Facebook is changing its name to Meta and introducing a corporate redo that will include features and services aimed to touch and influence every area of our lives. What this will all mean going forward is impossible to totally understand at the outset because the "Meta universe" as introduced to the media by Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg will be an offering of services ranging from gaming to altered reality that will be constantly be changing, evolving and growing right in front of our eyes. Will it be good for us, or only another array of digital distractions from our "real lives?" The company says the concept has been in the works for years and that there will be many new choices for consumers. I say give it a chance, but keep an open mind.*/John T. Robbins)

What Is The Metaverse? How Will It Change Our Lives?

The basics: Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg on Thursday, October 28, 2021, said the social media giant is renaming its company that will now be called Meta.

Why it matters: The effort is meant to shift its image from a social media platform to a "metaverse" company that focuses on building virtual work and social communities.

Details: Speaking at Facebook's annual Connect AR and VR event, Zuckerberg said that Facebook's future "is beyond any one

company."

• Moving forward, he said, users will not need to log into Facebook to be able to access the company's other apps and features.

• "I've been thinking a lot about our identity as we think about this next chapter," he said. "Facebook is one of the most used products in the world. It's an iconic social media brand. but increasingly, it just doesn't encompass everything that we do."

• "Building our social media apps will always be an important focus for us, but right now our brand is so tightly linked to one

product that can't possibly represent everything we do and will be linked to in the future," he added."



The company's corporate structure is not changing. Monday it announced that it would separate its "Family of Apps" financial reporting from Facebook Reality Labs, which is spearheading the metaverse project.

• The company intends to start trading under the new stock ticker, MVRs, on December 1. Facebook says it has already reserved that ticker name.

The big picture: The rebrand comes amid one of Facebook's most dramatic public relations crises in recent memory. Over the past week, dozens of news outlets released reports about the tech giant based on leaked whistleblower documents.

• The stories suggested that Facebook has known about harms caused by its policies and products, but opted not to address them at the expense of the company's bottom line — an allegation the company vehemently denies.

Be smart: Dozens of companies have rebranded over the years, typically representing a shift in focus. For example, Apple rebranded from Apple Computers and Tesla rebranded from Tesla Motors.

• Google in 2015 famously rebranded to Alphabet and announced a restructure that made Google a subsidiary of the bigger Alphabet holding company. The new structure was meant to help separate Google's other companies and investments, like YouTube and Android, from Google.

Critics: Critics argue that Facebook's rebrand signals more than just a business shift, but also a chance to save its reputation to avoid further press and regulatory scrutiny. (Courtesy axios.com)

Meta's Formal Introduction To The Media On Thursday, October 28, 2021, CEO Mark Zuckerberg introduced Meta, which brings together our apps and technologies under one new company brand. Meta's focus will be to bring the metaverse to life and help people connect, find communities and grow businesses.



The metaverse will feel like a hybrid of today's online

social experiences, sometimes expanded into three dimensions or projected into the physical world. It will let you share immersive experiences with other people even when you can't be together — and do things together you couldn't do in the physical world. It's the next evolution in a long line of social technologies, and it's ushering in a new chapter for our company. Mark shared more about this vision in a founder's letter.

Our annual Connect conference brings together augmented and virtual reality developers, content creators, marketers and others to celebrate the industry's momentum and growth. This year's virtual event explored what experiences in the metaverse could feel like over the next decade — from social connection, to entertainment, gaming, fitness, work, education and commerce. We also announced new tools to help people build for the metaverse, including Presence Platform, which will enable new mixed reality experiences on Quest 2, and a \$150-million investment in immersive learning to train the next generation of creators.

You can watch the full Connect keynote and learn more about how the metaverse will unlock new opportunities at meta.com. You can also learn more about our work over the past several months to develop the Meta brand on our design blog. Read all our news in the posts below:

- Connect 2021: Our Vision for the Metaverse
- Horizon Home, the Future of Work, Presence Platform, and More
- Project Aria Update
- How VR Is Changing the Way We Collaborate and Get Things Done
- Gaming News
- 'Blade & Sorcery: Nomad' Is Coming to Oculus Quest
- Spark AR Roundup
- Spark AR Certification & Professional Course Preview



Our corporate structure is not changing, however, how we report on our financials will. Starting with our results for the fourth quarter of 2021, we plan to report on two operating segments: Family of Apps and Reality Labs. We also intend to start trading under the new stock ticker we have

reserved, MVRs, on December 1. Today's announcement does not affect how we use or share data.

Meta builds technologies that help people connect, find communities, and grow businesses. When Facebook launched in 2004, it changed the way people connect. Apps like Messenger, Instagram and WhatsApp further empowered billions around the world. Now, Meta is moving beyond 2D screens toward immersive experiences like augmented and virtual reality to help build the next evolution in social technology.

"Connection is evolving and so are we."

The metaverse is the next evolution of social connection. Our company's vision is to help bring the metaverse to life, so we are changing our name to reflect our commitment to this future.

"The metaverse will be social."

Virtual reality, Augmented reality, Smart glasses



Discover all you can do with virtual reality.



For additional information, go to <https://about.facebook.com/meta>

(Courtesy facebook.com)

(Article continues below.)

(Article continues from above.)

Founder's Letter, 2021



Screen shot of CEO Mark Zuckerberg at the company's "Connect" virtual event.

(Editor's Note: *Below is the complete, unedited Founder's Letter as delivered by Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg on Thursday, October 28, 2021, as published on the internet. The only addition to Mr. Zuckerberg's statement has been photos and graphics for the purpose of emphasizing his announcement.*)

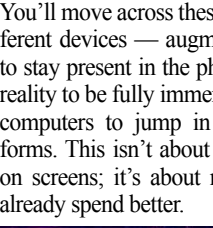
(October 28, 2021) We are at the beginning of the next chapter for the internet, and it's the next chapter for our company too.

In recent decades, technology has given people the power to connect and express ourselves more naturally. When I started Facebook, we mostly typed text on websites. When we got phones with cameras, the internet became more visual and mobile. As connections got faster, video became a richer way to share experiences. We've gone from desktop to web to mobile; from text to photos to video. But this isn't the end of the line.

The next platform will be even more immersive — an embodied internet where you're in the experience, not just looking at it. We call this the metaverse, and it will touch every product we build. The defining quality of the metaverse will be a feeling of presence — like you are right there with another person or in another place. Feeling truly present with another person is the ultimate dream of social technology. That is why we are focused on building this.

In the metaverse, you'll be able to do almost anything you can imagine — get together with friends and family, work, learn, play, shop, create — as well as completely new experiences that don't really fit how we think about computers or phones today. We made a film that explores how you might use the metaverse one day. In this future, you will be able to teleport in-

stantly as a hologram to be at the office without a commute, at a concert with friends, or in your parents' living room to catch up. This will open up more opportunity no matter where you live. You'll be able to spend more time on what matters to you, cut down time in traffic, and reduce your carbon footprint. Think about how many physical things you have today that could just be holograms in the future. Your TV, your perfect work setup with multiple monitors, your board games and more — instead of physical things assembled in factories, they'll be holograms designed by creators around the world. You'll move across these experiences on different devices — augmented reality glasses to stay present in the physical world, virtual reality to be fully immersed, and phones and computers to jump in from existing platforms. This isn't about spending more time on screens; it's about making the time we already spend better.



Our Role and Responsibility

The metaverse will not be created by one company. It will be built by creators and developers making new experiences and digital items that are interoperable and unlock a massively larger creative economy than the

one constrained by today's platforms and their policies.

Our role in this journey is to accelerate the development of the fundamental technologies, social platforms and creative tools to bring the metaverse to life, and to weave these technologies through our social media apps. We believe the metaverse can enable better social experiences than anything that exists today, and we will dedicate our energy to helping achieve its potential.

As I wrote in our original founder's letter: "we don't build services to make money; we make money to build better services."

This approach has served us well. We've built our business to support very large and long term investments to build better services, and that's what we plan to do here. The last five years have been humbling for me and our company in many ways. One of the main lessons I've learned is that building products people love isn't enough.

I've gained more appreciation that the internet's story isn't straightforward. Every chapter brings new voices and new ideas, but also new challenges, risks, and disruption of established interests. We'll need to work together, from the beginning, to bring the best possible version of this future to life.

Privacy and safety need to be built into the metaverse from day one. So do open standards and interoperability. This will require not just novel technical work — like supporting crypto and NFT projects in the community — but also new forms of governance. Most of all, we need to help build ecosystems so that more people have a stake in the future and can benefit not just as consumers but as creators.

This period has also been humbling because as big of a company as we are, we've also learned what it's like to build on other platforms. Living under their rules has profoundly shaped my views on the tech industry. I've come to believe that the lack of choice for consumers and high fees for developers are stifling innovation and holding back the internet economy.



We've tried to take a different approach. We want our services to be accessible to as many people as possible, which means working to make them cost less, not more. Our mobile apps are free. Our ads model is designed to

provide businesses the lowest prices. Our commerce tools are available at cost or with modest fees. As a result, billions of people love our services and hundreds of millions of businesses rely on our tools.

That's the approach we want to bring to helping to build the metaverse. We plan to sell our devices at cost or subsidized to make them available to more people. We'll continue supporting side-loading and streaming from PCs so people have choice, rather than forcing them to use the Quest Store to find apps or reach customers. And we'll aim to offer developer and creator services with low fees in as many cases as possible so we can maximize the overall creative economy. We'll need to make sure we don't lose too much money along the way though.

Our hope is that within the next decade, the metaverse will reach a billion people, host hundreds of billions of dollars of digital commerce, and support jobs for millions of creators and developers.

Who We Are

As we embark on this next chapter, I've thought a lot about what this means for our company and our identity. We're a company that focuses on connecting people. While most tech companies focus on how people interact with technology, we've always focused on building technology so people can interact with each other.

Today we're seen as a social media company. Facebook is one of the most used technology products in the history of the world. It's an iconic social media brand.

Building social apps will always be important for us, and there's a lot more to build. But increasingly, it's not all we do. In our DNA, we build technology to bring people together. The metaverse is the next frontier in connecting people, just like social networking was when we got started.



Right now our brand is so tightly linked to one product that it can't possibly represent everything we're doing today, let alone in the future. Over time, I hope we are seen as a metaverse company, and I want to anchor our work and our identity on what we're building towards.

We just announced that we're making a fundamental change to our company. We're now looking at and reporting on our business

as two different segments: one for our family of apps and one for our work on future platforms. Our work on the metaverse is not just one of these segments. The metaverse encompasses both the social experiences and future technology. As we broaden our vision, it's time for us to adopt a new brand.

To reflect who we are and the future we hope to build, I'm proud to share that our company is now Meta. Our mission remains the same — it's still about bringing people together. Our apps and their brands aren't changing either. We're still the company that designs technology around people.

But all of our products, including our apps, now share a new vision: to help bring the metaverse to life. And now we have a name that reflects the breadth of what we do.

From now on, we will be metaverse-first, not Facebook-first. That means that over time you won't need a Facebook account to use our other services. As our new brand starts showing up in our products, I hope people around the world come to know the Meta brand and the future we stand for.

I used to study Classics, and the word "meta" comes from the Greek word meaning "beyond". For me, it symbolizes that there is always more to build, and there is always a next chapter to the story. Ours is a story that started in a dorm room and grew beyond anything we imagined; into a family of apps that people use to connect with one another, to find their voice, and to start businesses, communities, and movements that have changed the world.



I'm proud of what we've built so far, and I'm excited about what comes next — as we move beyond what's possible today, beyond the constraints of screens, beyond

the limits of distance and physics, and towards a future where everyone can be present with each other, create new opportunities and experience new things. It is a future that is beyond any one company and that will be made by all of us. We have built things that have brought people together in new ways. We've learned from struggling with difficult social issues and living under closed platforms. Now it is time to take everything we've learned and help build the next chapter.

I'm dedicating our energy to this — more than any other company in the world. If this is the future you want to see, I hope you'll join us. The future is going to be beyond anything we can imagine. — Mark Zuckerberg (Courtesy facebook.com)