

# MALCONTENT NEWS RUSSIA-UKRAINE SITUATION REPORT

September 28, 2023



# Malcontent News

## Russia-Ukraine War SITREP

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## SUMMARY – DAY 581

It has been 3,502 days since Russia occupied the Crimea Peninsula on January 27, 2014, and one year and 217 days since Russia expanded its war against Ukraine. Today's War Crimes and Human Rights section has an image showing the abuse of a prisoner of war. If you find this content disturbing, we recommend you skip the section. The picture has a page before and after that is left intentionally blank. We are including the photo, as we have in the past, because it is in the public domain, and we believe this person is in grave danger.

[Jump to the Action Report.](#)

- Russian bombs the Senkove Bridge in Kharkiv
- Ukrainian forces are confirmed to be east of the railroad grade southeast of Andriivka and advancing on the T-513 Highway
- The iron coke plant in Avdiivka was bombed by the Russian VKS
- Russian forces used a VBIED near Novomykhailivka, and we have the promised video
- A Russian attack east of Urozhaine ended in failure with heavy losses

- There are signs the operational pause south of Orikhiv is coming to an end
- Russia has moved part of the Black Sea Fleet to Feodosia in occupied Crimea and Novorossiysk, Russia
- New pictures show the extent of damage to the Black Sea Fleet Headquarters
- Kherson had the heaviest day of shelling since the November 13, 2022 liberation
- The ammo depot in Bohdanivka, Kirovograd hit by Shahed-136 kamikaze drones was almost certainly a Cold War site, and even Russian propagandists are asking, "why"
- Belarus accuses Poland of violating its airspace
- The Freedom of Russian Legion conducted border raids in Belogord
- The Ministry of Energy denied a Ukrenergo report that a drone hit a power plant in southern Ukraine
- Ukraine was elected to the Board of Directors of the International Atomic Energy Agency
- Moldovan officials found debris of what is believed to be an air-to-ground missile in a lake
- The NATO Secretary-General, the Minister of Defense of France, and the Chief of the Defense Staff of Great Britain made unannounced visits to Kyiv
- NATO has signed contracts to provide 2.4 billion euros of ammunition to Ukraine

- Ukrainian pilots have officially started training to fly the F-16 in the United States
- Ukrainian pilot training in the United States will likely end tomorrow until Congress can agree on a federal budget
- Switzerland has approved the transfer of 25 Leopard-2A4 main battle tanks to Rheinmetall, but there's a catch
- Ukraine is operating Finnish M-46 130 mm howitzers
- Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy denied an ISW report that Iran is supplying ballistic missiles to Russia
- Russian Major General Vyacheslav Lobuzko was found guilty of fraud over the failed VZG early warning radar
- The Shahed-136 kamikaze drone has evolved and includes a new engine from Canada
- Russia is going to conduct a nationwide civil defense drill just hours before the United States does a nationwide test of the emergency broadcast system, and it has some people going down deep conspiracy rabbit holes
- Russian flight reservation system crashed due to a DDoS attack
- Chechen Colonel Zelimkhan Agmerzoyev is accused of multiple war crimes in Melitopol

- Russia is conducting show trials of Ukrainian troops who surrendered at Azovstal, and their physical condition is shocking
- Hungary recognizes Belarusian self-declared president Lukashenko as the legitimate leader of Belarus
- Kazakhstan said will join the nations enforcing sanctions against Russia
- Two countries recognize Russia's sham elections in the TOT
- Russia's national debt jumped 10% in the last six months
- Gazprom reported production is down almost 25% due to nations not wanting to buy Russian natural gas
- U.S. company Iridium is accused of supporting Russia

## **DAILY ASSESSMENT**

We assess the following:

1. The Russian Ministry of Defense remains in a chaotic state, incapable of creating mission cohesion between penal units, mobiks, conscripts, elite forces, and proxy forces.
2. The inability of Russian military leaders to stop the ongoing Ukrainian offensive and retake the battlefield initiative has put significant pressure on Russian Chief

of Staff Valery Gerasimov, who has been in charge of all Russian forces in Ukraine since January 2023.

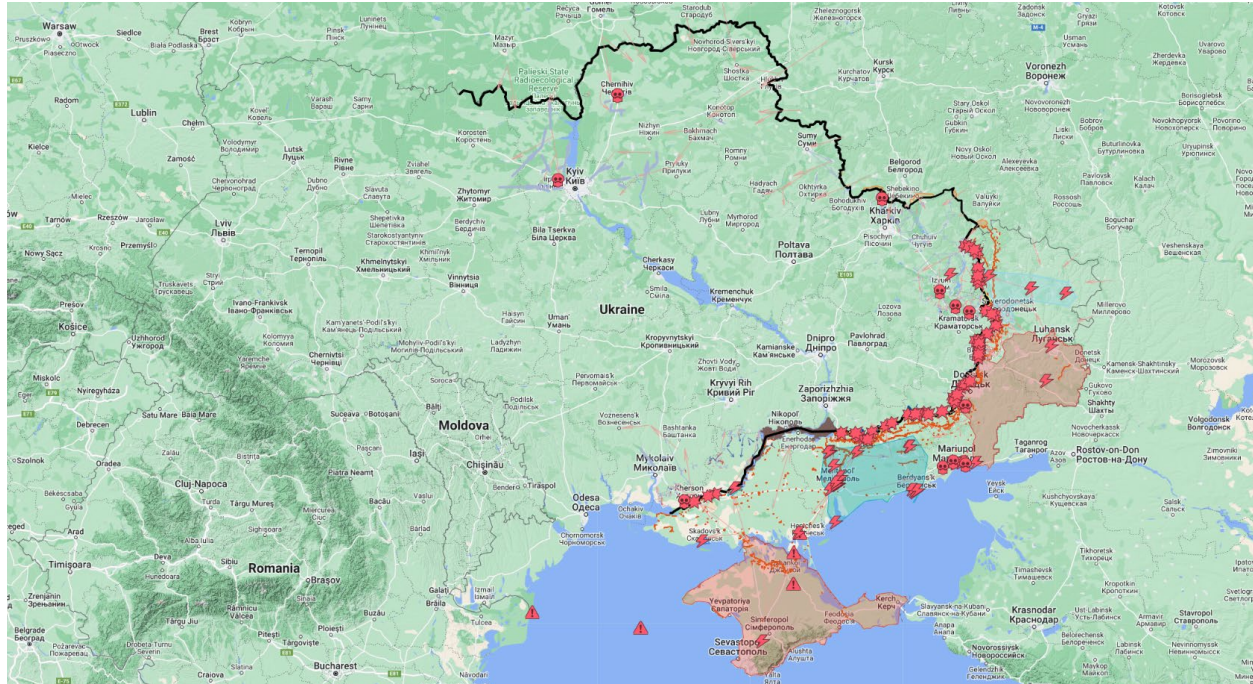
3. Ukraine continues to hold the initiative theaterwide, and the number of combat ineffective and combat destroyed Russian units is growing, eroding Russian combat potential in numerous areas of operation.
4. Russian Chief of Staff Gerasimov and Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu are some of the best allies available for the Ukrainian Ministry of Defense due to their acceptance of systemic corruption, political infighting, waste of military resources, and refusal to accept the realities within the theater of war.
5. The perceived slow progress of the Ukrainian summer-fall offensive, questions about the capabilities of Ukrainian military commanders at the battalion and brigade level, and ongoing anticorruption measures highlighting the problems within the Ukrainian government are unfairly straining Western support.
6. Western partners are not meeting their promised military training, heavy equipment, and ammunition delivery dates, and these continued delays are negatively impacting Ukraine's military capabilities.
7. We maintain that Russia will attempt to destroy Ukraine's energy infrastructure over the fall and winter.



8. The repeated soft response by Ukraine's allies after Russian aggression on Ukraine's border will continue to encourage Moscow to take additional risks, with the potential to cause an international incident that could lead to a military response.
9. While the possibility of an intentional nuclear accident caused by Russian occupiers at the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant remains low, the threat should be taken seriously.



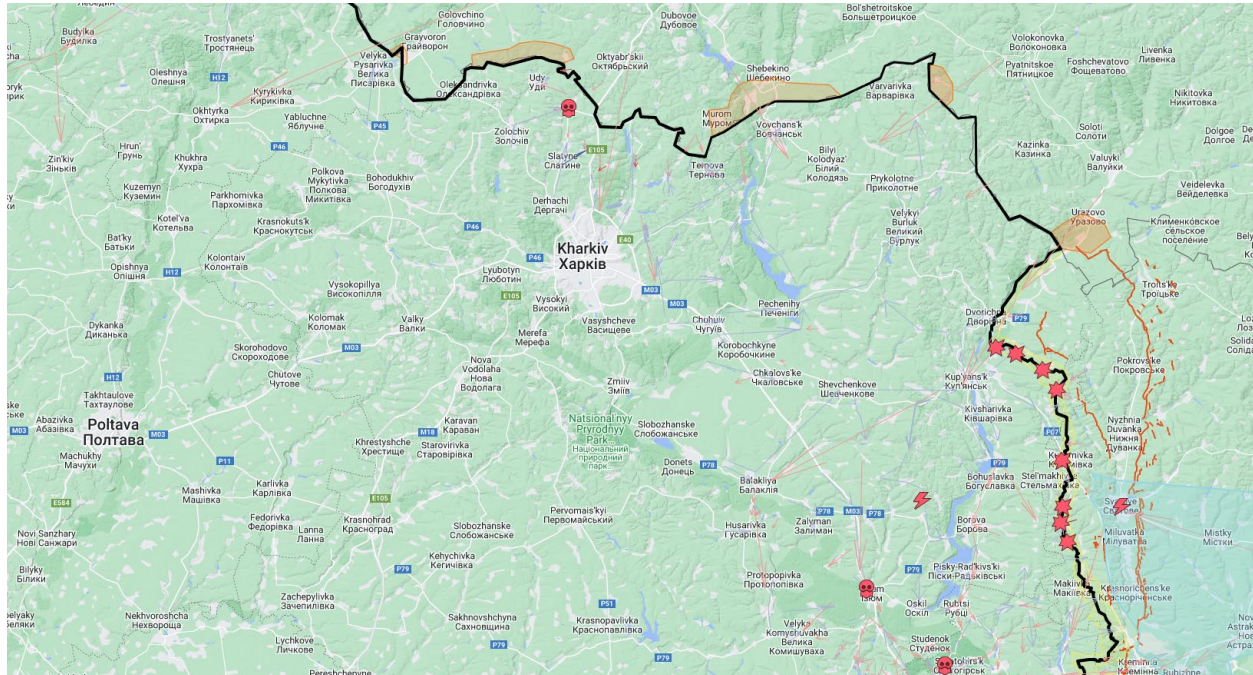
# TODAY'S WAR IN UKRAINE MAP



**About the maps:** Red triangles are sites of significant events unrelated to missile attacks, insurgencies, or ground combat, such as the sinking of the Moskva and the explosion at the Saky Naval airbase. Gray circles indicate an area where fighting has ended with no change in the line of conflict. The archived offensive layer is turned off by default, but you can toggle it on/off in the Map Legend. If you see a settlement name highlighted [like this](#), it is a link to our war map that will take you to the location explained in the Situation Report.

## [Russia-Ukraine War Report Map](#)



# KHARKIV



**Russian Objective:** Defend against the Ukrainian offensive, maximize casualties, and terrorize Ukrainian civilians near the line of conflict

**Ukrainian Objective:** Liberate the northeastern corner of the oblast, hold defensive lines in the Dvorichna and Kupyansk Operational Areas, protect civilians and civilian infrastructure

A Russian missile hit the bridge that crosses the Oskil River between Senkove and Kruhlyakivka, causing additional

damage to the structure. The western section of the bridge near the abutment was destroyed in March 2022, and a ramp had been built to permit limited use. The   [missile struck at the midspan](#), which is easier to fix.<sup>1</sup>

**ASSESSMENT:** The interruption of any ground line of communication (GLOC, supply line) will impact Ukrainian logistics, but given the condition the bridge was already in, it is unlikely this will have a significant impact.

The acting director of the Department of Application Planning of the Main Directorate of the National Guard of Ukraine, Colonel Mykola Urshalovych, at a briefing in the Military Media Center, said that Russian forces are refurbishing their defensive lines and re-staffing units in the Kupyansk and Lyman directions.<sup>2</sup>

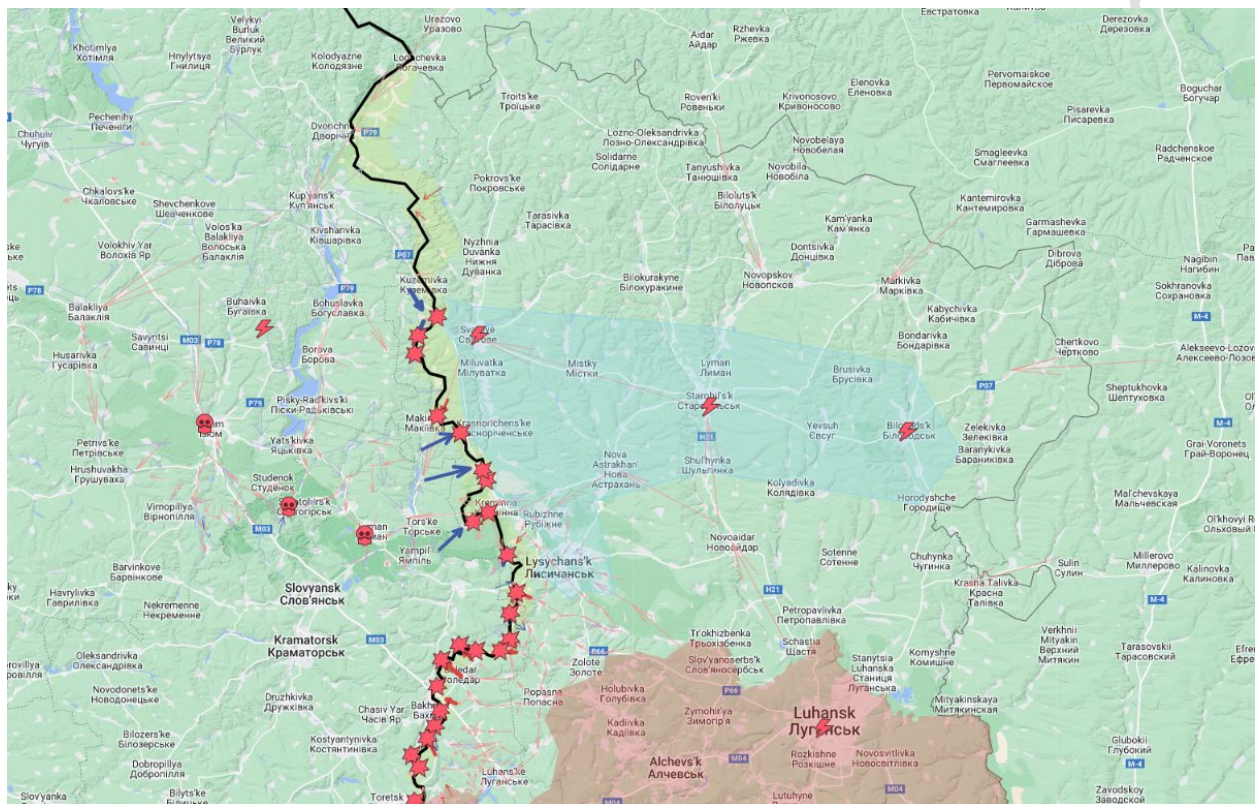
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<sup>1</sup> <https://twitter.com/EjShahid/status/1707144029756862887>

<sup>2</sup> <https://t.me/militarymediacenter/3282>

# DONBAS REGION

## LUHANSK



**Russian Objective:** Defend against the Ukrainian offensive, maximize casualties, control insurgent activity, and capture the rest of the oblast

**Ukrainian Objective:** Break Russian defensive lines, advance on Svatove, Kreminna, and Lysychansk, and support insurgents

## Svatove and Lysychansk Operational Areas

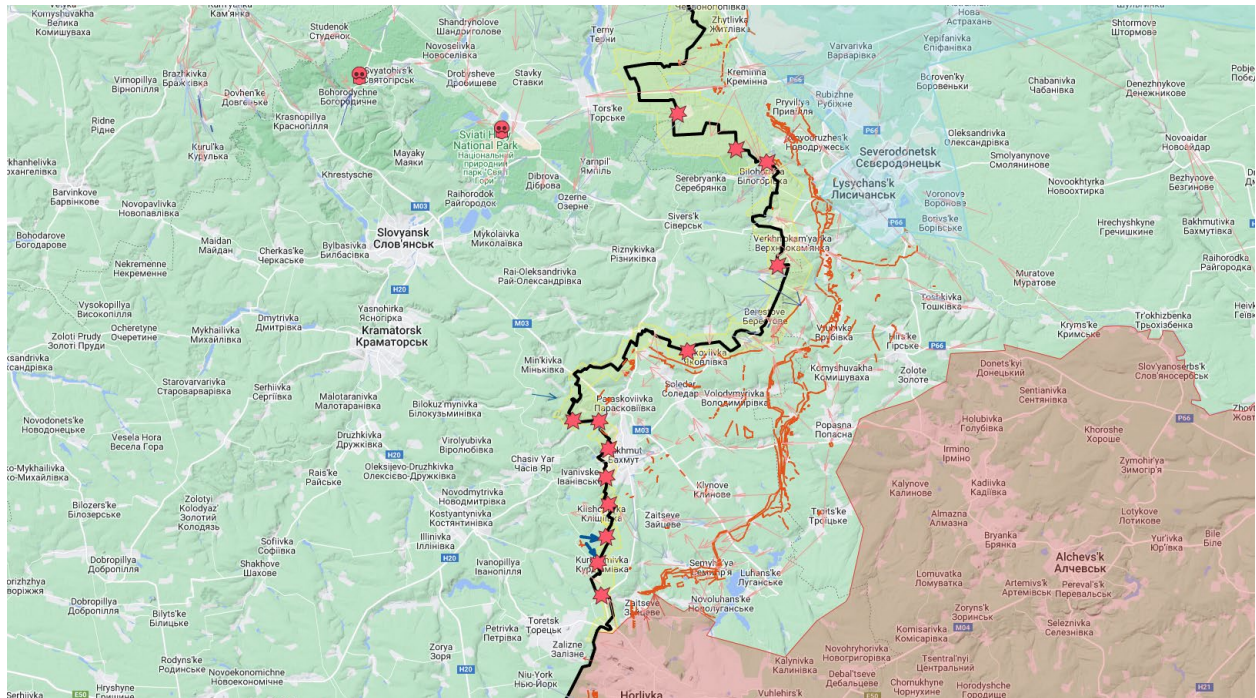
With fighting now positional and harassment near [Novojehorivka](#), the units involved in the defense of the Pershotravneve are sharing details of the mid-August to mid-September battle. For now, Russian forces have lost their combat potential in the region west of Svato

Near Lysychansk, Russian troops attacked in the direction of [Bilohorivka](#) and were unsuccessful.<sup>3</sup>

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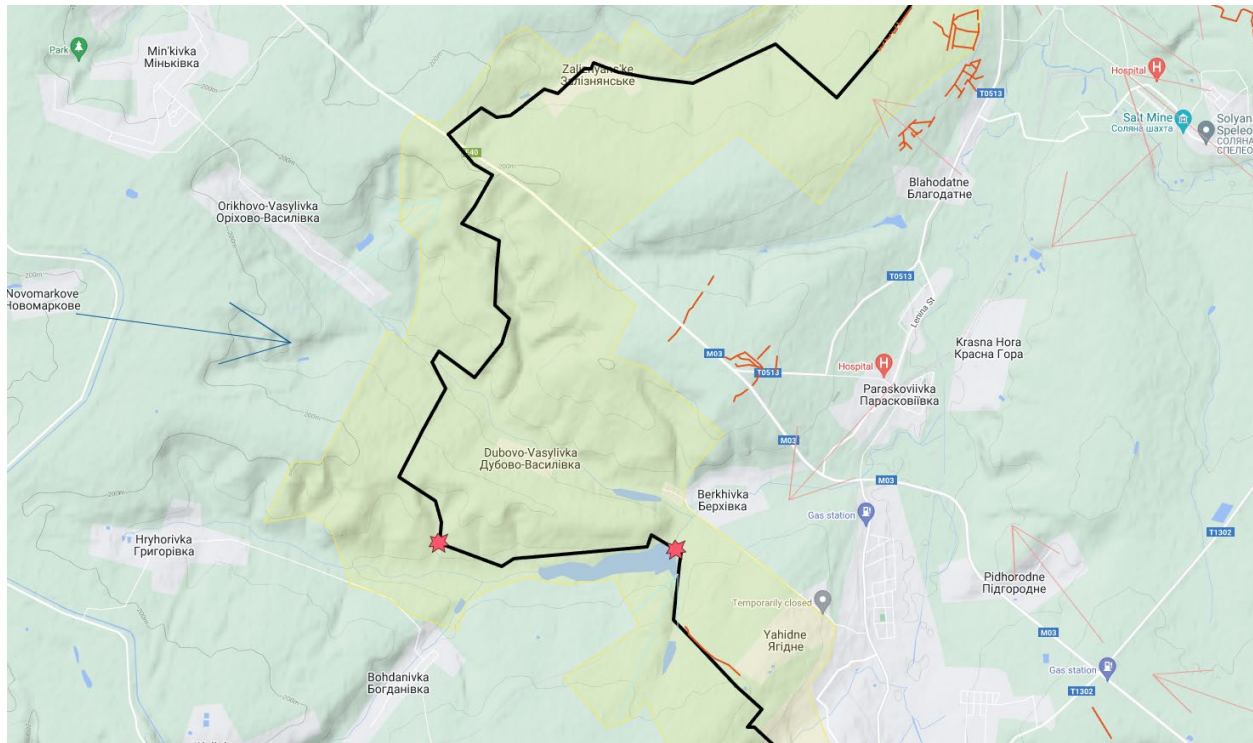
<sup>3</sup> <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/12399>

# NORTHEAST DONETSK



**Russian Objective:** Complete the capture of Bakhmut, set conditions to attack Kramatorsk, Slovyansk, and Siversk, and capture the entire Donetsk region

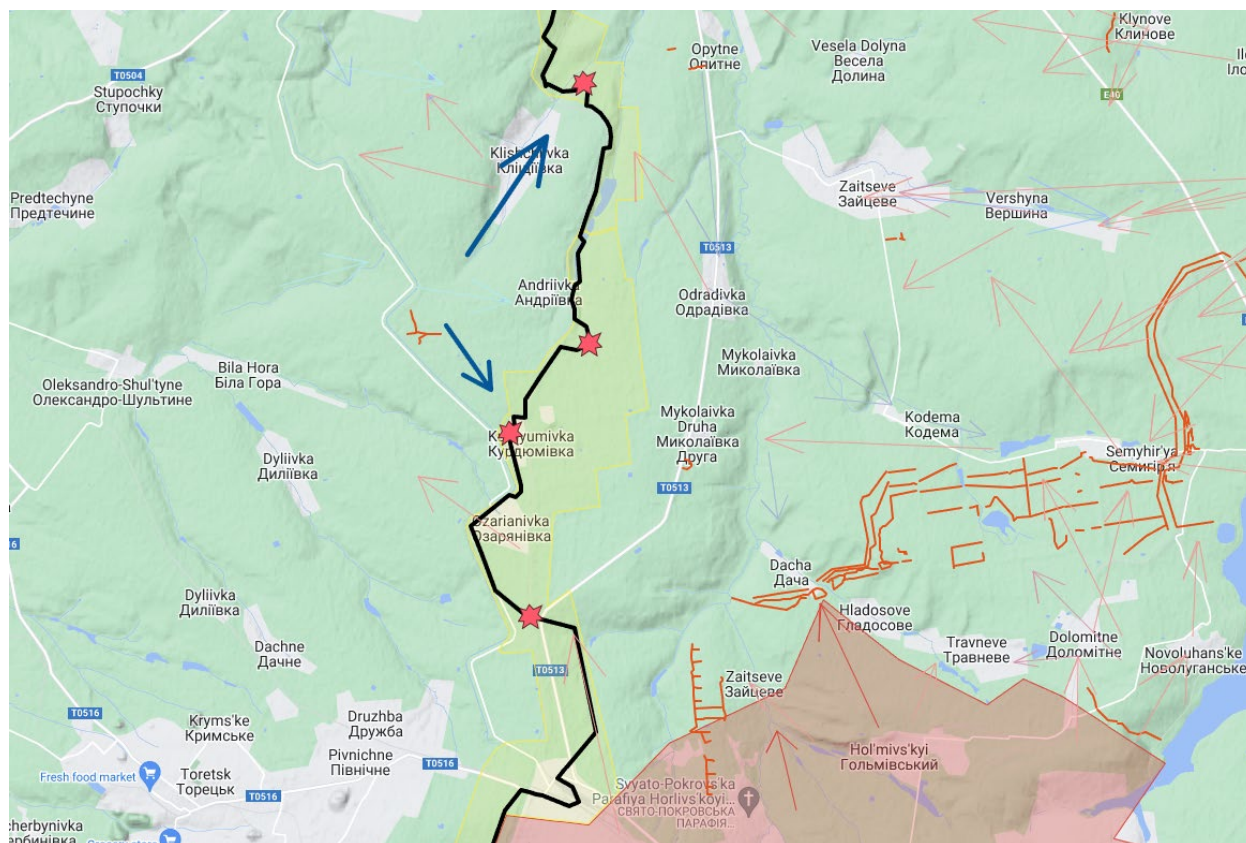
**Ukrainian Objective:** Defend Siversk, collapse the Russian flanks north of Bakhmut, capture the T-513 Highway south of Bakhmut, liberate the Bakhmut and Soledar operational areas, advance to the administrative border of Luhansk, and minimize civilian casualties



## Soledar and Bakhmut Operational Area

The Russian Ministry of Defense (RMOD) claimed Ukrainian forces were on the offensive near [Vesele](#).



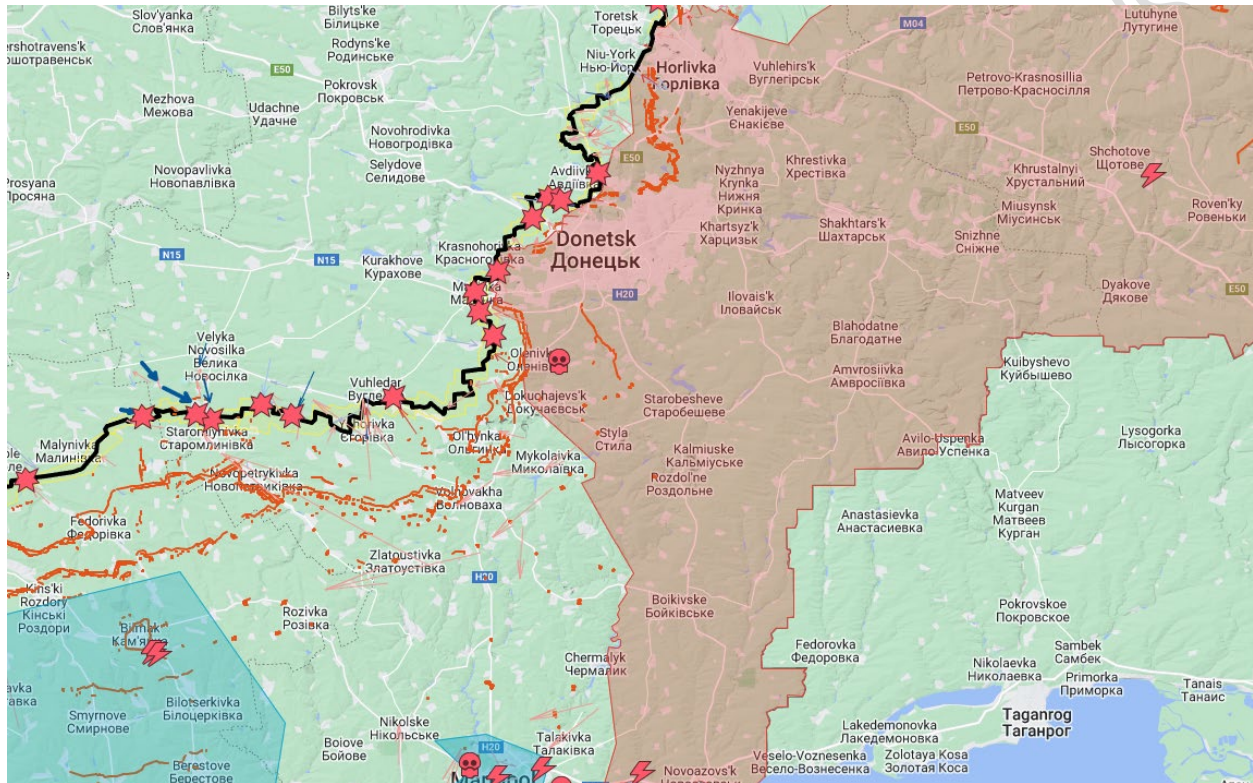


## Klishchiivka Operational Area

We updated the war map to show the Ukrainian advance southeast of Andriivka, east of the railroad grade. Fighting is now 2,500 to 3,000 meters from the T-513 Highway GLOC, and Ukrainian forces continue to interdict Russian troops, armor, and ammunition. Heavy fighting also continued north of [Klishchiivka](#). Russian forces are using multiple launch rocket systems to deploy remote mines.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/12399>

## SOUTHWESTERN DONETSK




**Russian Objective:** Defend against the Ukrainian offensive until the winter and maximize casualties

**Ukrainian Objective:** Find and exploit Russian defensive weaknesses, lock Russian troops in place, destroy troop concentrations and command and control sites, interdict supplies, and disrupt logistics

## Avdiivka, Marinka and Vuhledar Operational Areas

**Editor's Note:** *We had announced in August that if fighting in an area of operation (AO) was harassing attacks or positional fighting, we wouldn't include the map for the AO. This was done to streamline the editing process. We will continue to link to the online map if a settlement name is included in the action report. Thank you for your understanding.*

In Avdiivka, the Russian Aerospace Forces (VKS) bombed the iron coke plant, striking a workshop and storage tanks with naphthalene, a flammable byproduct of coke production. The bombing  [sparked a large fire](#), with no injuries reported.<sup>5</sup>

**Sidebar:** If you've ever smelled old-school mothballs, that's naphthalene.<sup>6</sup>


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<sup>5</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/116618>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S2451904921001864>

RMOD claimed Ukrainian forces were on the offensive near [Pervomaiske](#).<sup>7</sup>

There were no changes in and near [Marinka](#), where fighting continued.<sup>8 9</sup>

North of [Novomykhailivka](#) in the Vuhledar AO, Russian forces turned a  [T-62 medium-duty tank into a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device](#) (VBIED). The tank advanced on Ukrainian positions with the driver jumping out. Shortly after, it struck a landmine, causing a track to be knocked off. The tank continued moving in a circle, striking a second mine, causing the explosives inside to detonate.<sup>10</sup>

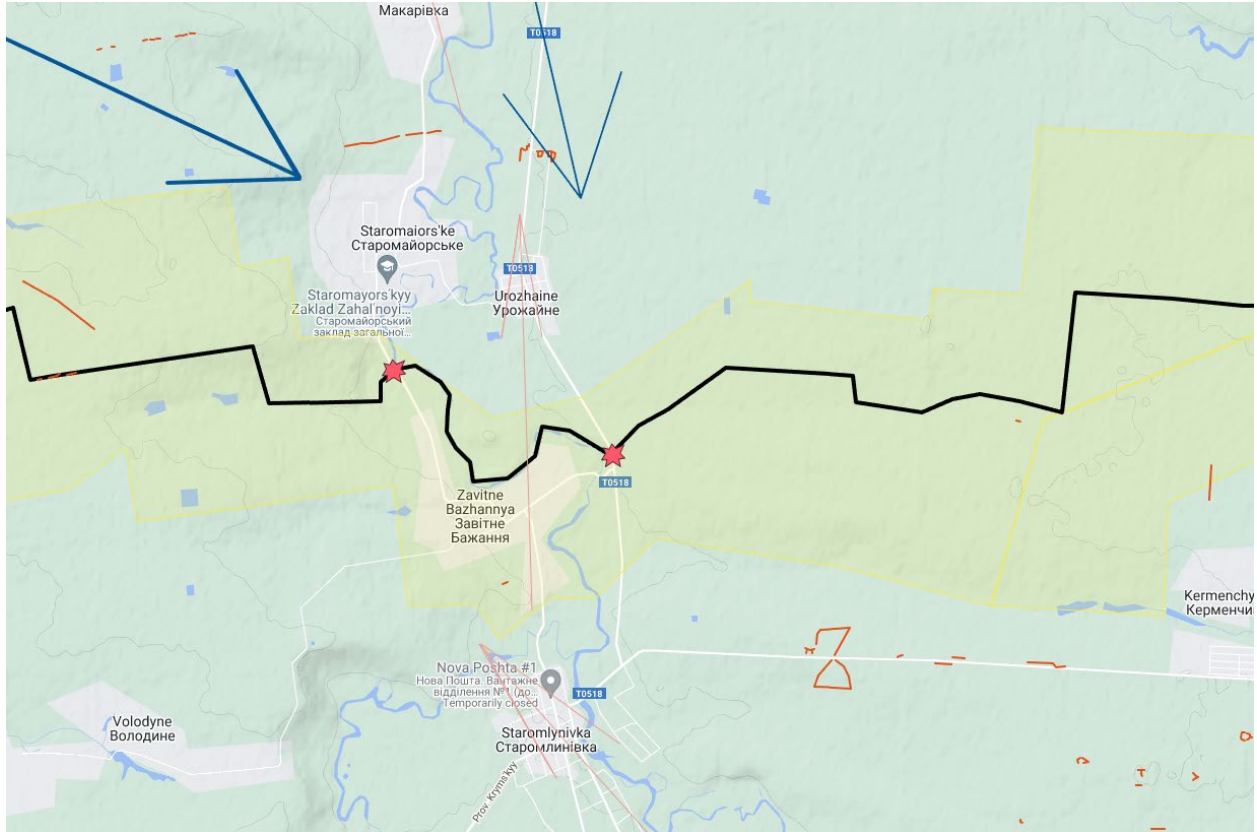
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<sup>7</sup> [https://t.me/mod\\_russia/30902](https://t.me/mod_russia/30902) [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel]

<sup>8</sup> <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/12399>

<sup>9</sup> <https://t.me/wargonzo/15328>

<sup>10</sup> [https://twitter.com/front\\_ukrainian/status/1707396760354640139](https://twitter.com/front_ukrainian/status/1707396760354640139)



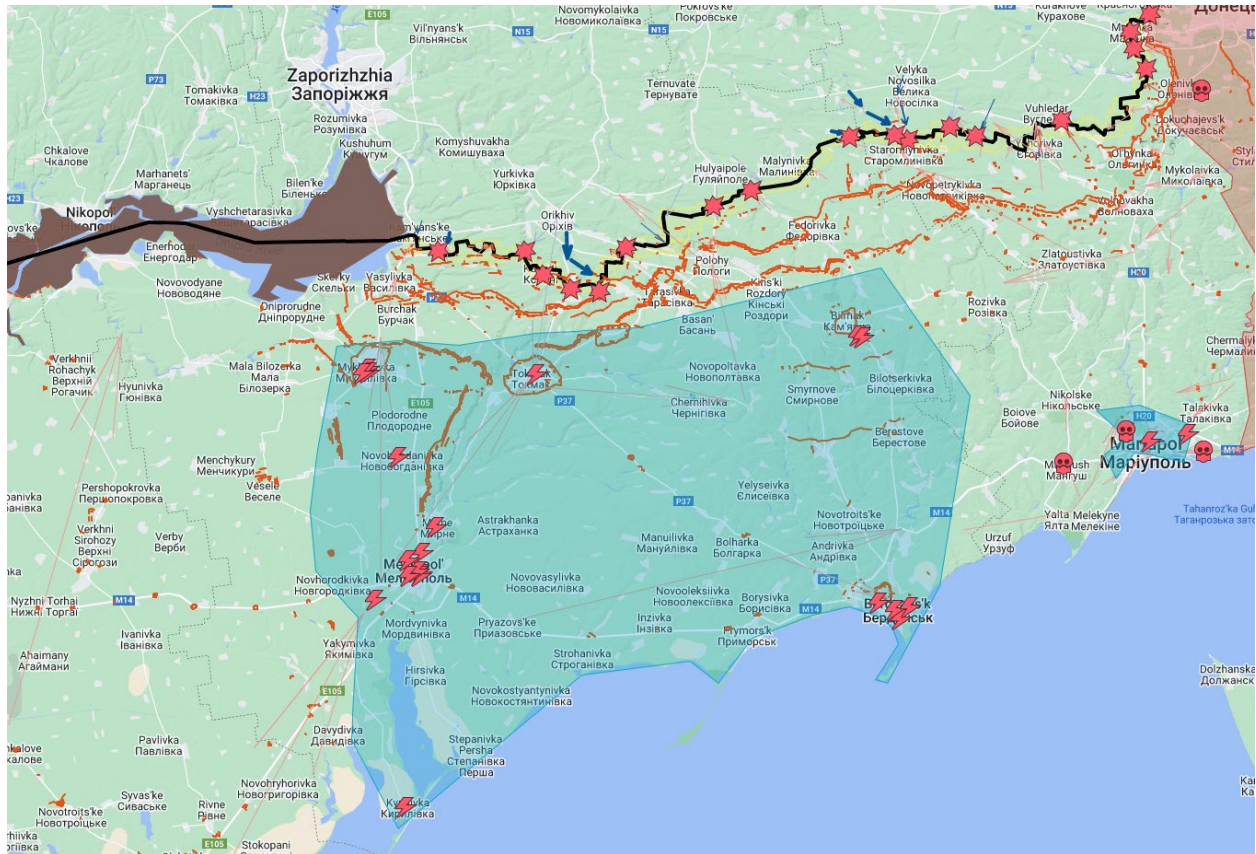
## Staromlynivka Operational Area

Near [Staromlynivka](#), up to two platoons of Russian forces attempted to advance on Urozhaine from the east, suffered heavy losses, and returned to their defensive positions.<sup>11</sup>

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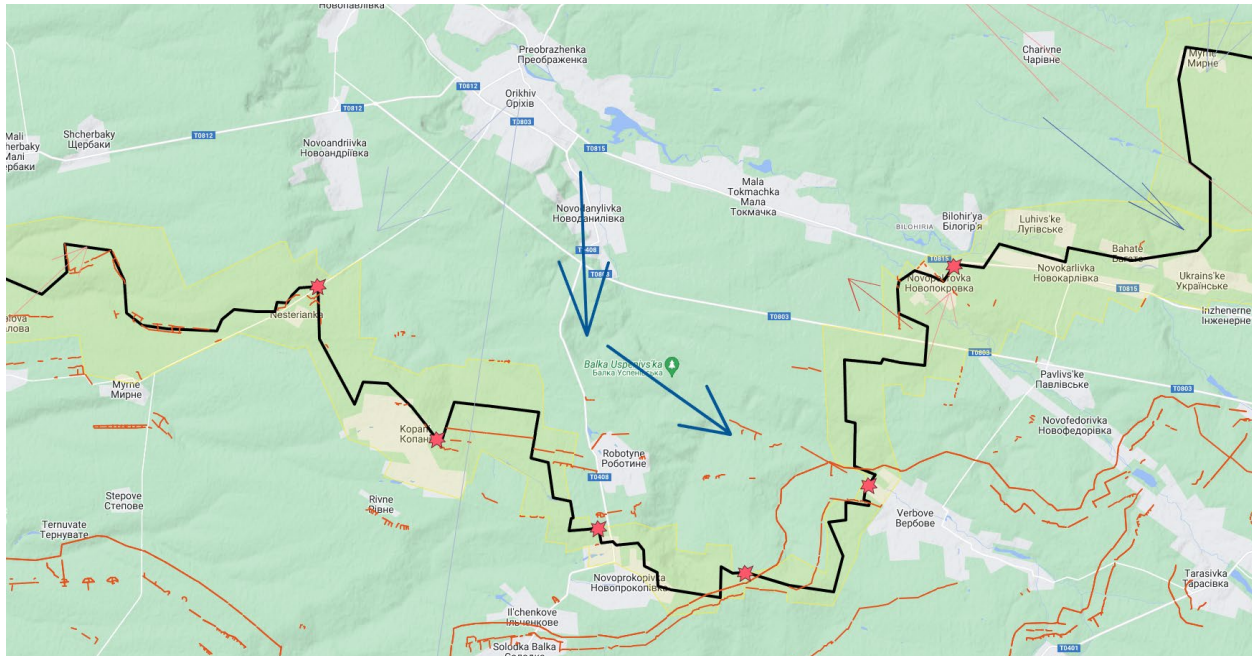
<sup>11</sup> <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/12399>

# ZAPORIZHZHIA



**Russian Objective:** Defend against the Ukrainian offensive, maximize casualties, prepare to launch a fall-winter offensive to capture the remainder of the oblast, and terrorize Ukrainian civilians with continued attacks

**Ukrainian Objective:** Expand the breakthrough at the second echelon of the Surovikin Line, sever the Russian landbridge from Crimea to Donetsk, liberate Russian-occupied areas, and protect civilians



## Orikhiv Operational Area

Ukrainian forces conducted 1,085 fire missions, a 20% increase from the last five to seven days, suggesting the operational pause is coming to an end.<sup>12</sup>

Fighting continued from [Verbove](#) to [Novoprokopivka](#), with Ukrainian forces making marginal gains on the outskirts of Novoprokopivka.<sup>13</sup> Colonel Urshalovych, at a briefing in the Military Media Center, said the Russian VKS had increased the number of airstrikes.

<sup>12</sup> <https://t.me/otarnavskiy/256>

<sup>13</sup> <https://t.me/wargonzo/15328>



## **Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant**

There were no updates on the status of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP).


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## BLACK SEA, CRIMEA, MYKOLAIV, AND ODESA REGION

### Black Sea

OCS reported seven Russian Black Sea Fleet ships on patrol, with two missile carriers capable of launching up to 14 Kalibr cruise missiles.<sup>14</sup>

Satellite images shared by analyst MT Anderson showed that Russia is  [redeploying warships to the port in Feodosia](#), which is on the southern coast of occupied Crimea and is likely believed to be a safer location.<sup>15</sup> <sup>16</sup> On September 25, the pictures showed two project 21631 Buyan-M-class corvettes, one project 22800 Karakut-class corvette, two minesweepers, and a Ropucha-class project 775 large landing ship.

On September 25, when Russia fired 12 Kalibr cruise missiles at the Odesa area, one Kilo-class submarine launched from the bay in Novorossiysk, Russia. In our assessment, launching its missiles within the bay instead of a designated firing area indicates the attack was hurriedly

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<sup>14</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/116716>

<sup>15</sup> [https://t.me/smolii\\_ukraine/43462](https://t.me/smolii_ukraine/43462)

<sup>16</sup> [https://twitter.com/MT\\_Anderson/status/1706413473318727680](https://twitter.com/MT_Anderson/status/1706413473318727680)

ordered or there is a deep concern about Ukraine's asymmetrical warfare capabilities.<sup>17</sup>

## Occupied Crimea

New pictures showed the extent of damage to the Black Sea Headquarters. The  [north building is completely gutted](#), and the  [west wing is heavily damaged](#).<sup>18 19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> [https://t.me/smolii\\_ukraine/43451](https://t.me/smolii_ukraine/43451)

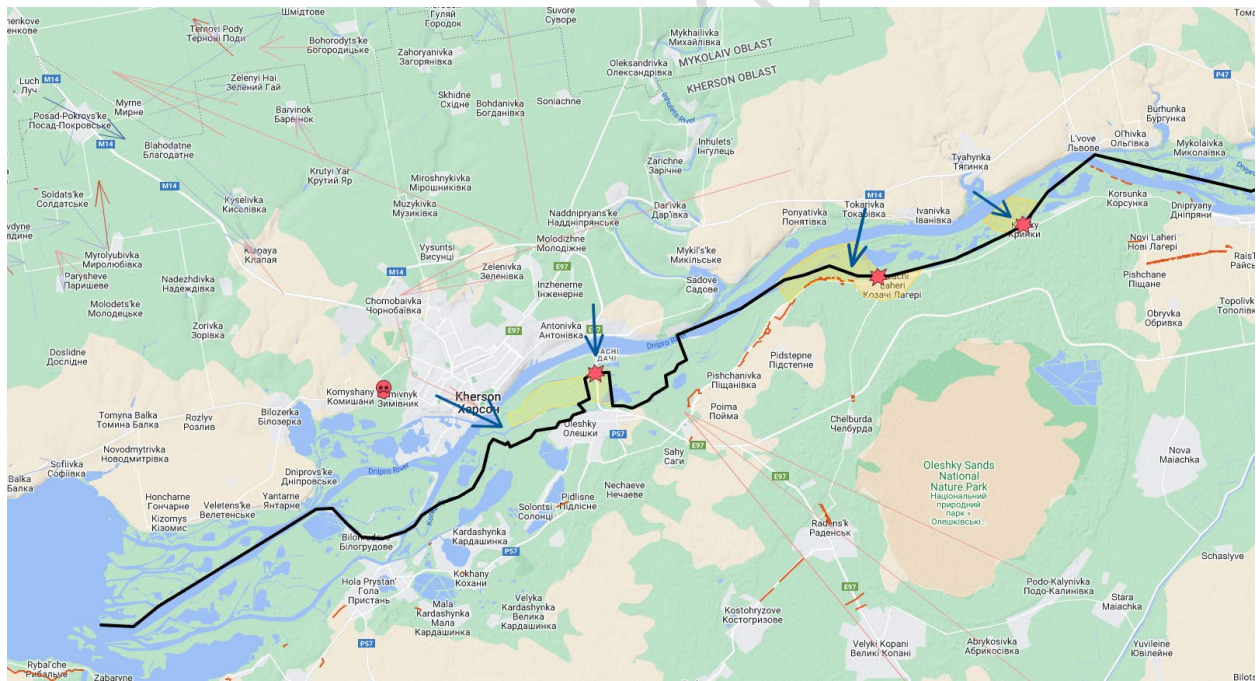
<sup>18</sup> <https://t.me/Crimeanwind/43843>

<sup>19</sup> <https://t.me/Crimeanwind/43830>

# KHERSON

**Russian Objective:** Prevent Ukrainian advances into eastern Kherson, terrorize the civilian population in free Kherson, and maintain GLOCs to Zaporizhzhia

**Ukrainian Objective:** Deter attacks on Ukrainian civilians, lock Russian troops and military assets in place, and protect civilian lives



**Kherson Oblast Administrative and Military Governor (OVA) Alexander Prokudin said Russia carried out 96 fire missions on free Kherson, firing 671 munitions, rockets, drone-**

delivered IEDs, and bombs.<sup>20</sup> It was the largest number of munitions used in a single day since we started tracking. An artillery shell struck three women walking in Kherson, killing them instantly.<sup>21</sup> A woman walking to the post office in Antonivka was hospitalized with shrapnel wounds.<sup>22</sup> Four other civilians were injured.

## WESTERN AND CENTRAL UKRAINE

**Russian Objective:** Launch terror attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure to break morale

**Ukrainian Objective:** Deter attacks and protect civilian lives

### Kirovohrad

We're puzzled about what Russia was trying to accomplish by striking the Cold War-era Military Unit A1201 storage facility in Bohdanivka, Kirovograd. The Russian Ministry of Defense didn't report on the strike, nor did the usual suspects of larger Russian milbloggers. The consensus among even the most strident propagandists is this was a

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<sup>20</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/116695>

<sup>21</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/116658>

<sup>22</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/116565>

site with outdated munitions, and anything useable or restorable had been removed years ago. There weren't any social media discussions about explosions, pictures, or videos of a distance glow or flash. Pictures or videos of a large ammunition depot explosion should have appeared even in an environment of tight operational security. It will be two to three days before there is a satellite pass. Our preliminary assessment is this was a Cold War site with outdated materials.

## **NORTHERN AND NORTHEASTERN UKRAINE**

**Russian Objective:** Lock Ukrainian military resources into place and launch terror attacks on civilians in an attempt to break morale

**Ukrainian Objective:** Maintain the integrity of the international border, deter attacks, and protect civilian lives


There wasn't any significant activity in this region.

## RUSSIAN FRONT

**Russian Objective:** Stabilize government control and civil order, prevent renewed insurrections, repel Russian partisan attacks, secure the state border

**Ukrainian-Backed Russian Partisan Objective:** Motivate other Russians to fight against the Putin regime, accelerate the downfall of the Russian government, foment civil unrest

### Belgorod

The Freedom of Russia Legion  [conducted border raids](#) in Starosele and Terebreno, Belgorod.<sup>23</sup> They didn't provide details on the purpose of the raid or if it was successful.<sup>24</sup> Russian officials in Belgorod acknowledged attacks by sabotage and reconnaissance units and provided a questionable account of glorious victory.<sup>25</sup> Russia has repeatedly claimed they killed members of the Legion by name, only for the allegedly deceased to reappear. Aspiring dentist and Colonel General Ramzan don don Kaydrov didn't make any claims Chechen Akhmat, which was

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<sup>23</sup> <https://t.me/legionoffreedom/948>

<sup>24</sup> <https://t.me/uniannet/112748>

<sup>25</sup> <https://t.me/astrapress/38932>

deployed to Belgorod to defend the border, was involved in fighting.

## **Kursk**

Local officials claim they shot down 11 Ukrainian drones, with one striking an electrical substation, knocking out power in five settlements.<sup>26</sup>

## **BELARUSIAN FRONT**

The Ministry of Defense of Belarus claimed that Polish helicopters violated their airspace twice in the last 24 hours.<sup>27</sup> Over the span of 80 minutes, they accused Poland of flying 1,500 meters over the border in the first incident and 300 meters in the second. At the time of publication, Polish officials had not released a statement.

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<sup>26</sup> <https://t.me/vchkogpu/42131>

<sup>27</sup> [https://t.me/couch\\_IU/43689](https://t.me/couch_IU/43689)

## THEATERWIDE

The Ministry of Defense of Ukraine revised the number of Shahed-136 drones used during the September 27 – 28 attacks to 39 launched and 31 shot down.<sup>28</sup> Colonel Urshalovych, during his press briefing, said the sharp increase in attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure is “Due to failures at the front.”<sup>29</sup>

The Ministry of Energy refuted a report from Ukrenergo that a power plant was hit by a Russian drone on September 28, knocking out power to 400 settlements.<sup>30</sup> <sup>31</sup> The combined heat and power plant in the southern region of Ukraine was offline, and the drone hit an adjacent warehouse but did not damage the facility.

Ukraine was elected to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Board of Directors. After hearing the news, president Volodymyr Zelenskyy Tweeted, “The country remains a reliable international partner in the field of nuclear energy, and we will make every effort to strengthen the important role of the IAEA and strengthen

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<sup>28</sup> <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/12399>

<sup>29</sup> <https://t.me/militarymediacenter/3282>

<sup>30</sup> <https://t.me/uniannet/112751>

<sup>31</sup> <https://t.me/suspilnenews/24631>



nuclear safety and security. We must all work together - everyone in the world who values safety - to end all forms of nuclear blackmail, which Russia is trying to make the norm."<sup>32</sup>

Missile debris was found in Lake Hârbovăț in southeast Moldova near the settlement of Anenii Noi.<sup>33</sup> The wreckage has tentatively been identified as parts of an air-to-ground missile, and there is no danger. It is unclear how long the debris was in the water or its point of origin.

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg was in Kyiv for an unannounced visit, meeting with president Zelenskyy, which was described as "meaningful." Stoltenberg called Ukraine a "de facto ally" and said it was only a matter of time before the nation became a member of the Alliance.<sup>34</sup>

In addition to Stoltenberg, the Minister of Defense of France, Sébastien Lecornu, with up to 20 defense industry executives, and the Chief of the Defense Staff of Great Britain, Admiral Sir Tony Radakin, were in Kyiv for

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<sup>32</sup> <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/17704>

<sup>33</sup> <https://news.yahoo.com/missile-wreckage-found-lake-moldovas-101033860.html>

<sup>34</sup> <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/17699>

unannounced meetings with Zelenskyy and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, General Valerii Zaluzhnyi.<sup>35 36</sup>

Reuters-Thompson reported that NATO has signed €2.4 billion in contracts to supply Ukraine with ammunition.<sup>37</sup>

Pentagon Deputy Press Secretary Sabrina Singh told reporters that Ukrainian pilots officially started their F-16 training in Texas. Their training will likely end tomorrow, with the United States government set to shut down on October 1 due to the inability of Congress to pass the 2024 budget.<sup>38</sup>

Switzerland has approved the transfer of 25 Leopard 2A4 main battle tanks (MBT) to German arms manufacturer Rheinmetall, provided they aren't transferred to Ukraine.<sup>39</sup> In our assessment, the Leopard 2 will be used in a future circular trade agreement. Another nation will transfer its tanks to Ukraine in exchange for the ones received by Rheinmetall.

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<sup>35</sup> <https://t.me/AFUStratCom/20235>

<sup>36</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/116582>

<sup>37</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/116612>

<sup>38</sup> <https://t.me/rsotmdivision/10853>

<sup>39</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/116569>

The Armed Forces of Ukraine released a video showing a  [Finnish M-46 130 mm towed howitzer in service](#).<sup>40</sup> The Soviet-designed M-46 was built from 1946 to 1950 and has a range of up to 38 kilometers. The Soviet Union ended production of the M-46 despite the longer range and accuracy, choosing the 152 mm D-20 as their primary field gun.

The table for equipment losses was **updated on September 24, 2023**, and includes the losses suffered during the Prigozhin Insurrection of June 23 – 24.

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<sup>40</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/116621>

## RUSSIA VS. UKRAINE HEAVY EQUIPMENT LOSSES

Russian and Ukrainian visually confirmed heavy equipment losses sourced from the [Oryx Database](#) from February 24, 2022, to September 24, 2023.

12,286 Russian (including [Chef's Rebellion](#)) vs. 4,486 Ukrainian

Equipment	Russian Losses	Ukrainian Losses	Ratio	Change
<b>Main Battle Tanks</b>	2182	289	7.55:1	↓
<b>Medium Duty Tanks</b>	150	366	0.41:1	—
<b>Armored fighting Vehicles</b>	982	327	3.00:1	—
<b>Infantry Fighting Vehicles</b>	2797	755	3.70:1	↓
<b>Armored Personnel Carriers</b>	354	344	1.02:1	↓
<b>MRAPs</b>	48	161	0.30:1	—
<b>Infantry Mobility Vehicles</b>	210	373	0.56:1	—
<b>Command and Communications Vehicles</b>	251	17	14.76:1	—
<b>Engineering Vehicles</b>	343	84	4.08:1	↓
<b>Towed Artillery</b>	308	160	1.93:1	↑
<b>Self-Propelled Howitzers/Mortars</b>	536	220	2.44:1	—
<b>MLRS</b>	275	50	5.50:1	↑
<b>SAMs</b>	181	129	1.40:1	—
<b>Mobile Radars</b>	45	78	0.58:1	—
<b>EW/ECW</b>	54	4	13.50:1	—
<b>Winged Aircraft</b>	92	72	1.28:1	—
<b>Helicopters</b>	112	35	3.20:1	—
<b>Naval Vessels and Submarines</b>	17	27	0.63:1	—

## **RUSSIAN MOBIKS, MOBILIZATION, AND MIR**

President Zelenskyy denied an Institute for the Study of War report that Iran would supply ballistic missiles to Russia starting in October. "Currently, there are no facts of Iran selling missiles to Russia. Our services are in contact with partners and are dealing with this issue."<sup>41</sup>

Russian President Vladimir Putin met with Andrey Troshev, a former Private Military Company Wagner Group Council of Commanders member.<sup>42 43</sup> Putin confirmed that he had requested Troshev, who heads Kremlin-aligned PMC Redut, to prepare units for deployment to Ukraine. Previously, he was the chief of staff for Wagner Group and was the first member of the Council of Commanders to pledge loyalty to the Russian Ministry of Defense after the Prigozhin Insurrection.

The General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces restated that there would not be another wave of mobilization.<sup>44</sup> Vladimir Tsimlyansky, deputy head of the main organizational and mobilization department of the Russian

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<sup>41</sup> [https://t.me/smolii\\_ukraine/43472](https://t.me/smolii_ukraine/43472)

<sup>42</sup> <https://t.me/rsotmdivision/10857>

<sup>43</sup> <https://t.me/rsotmdivision/10856>

<sup>44</sup> <https://t.me/rsotmdivision/10858>

General Staff, said, "Those who wish to enter military service under a contract and who have entered into contracts for military service in the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, as well as volunteers who have decided to participate in a 'special military operation,' are sufficient to fulfill the assigned tasks."<sup>45</sup>

Russian Major General Vyacheslav Lobuzko, who was one of the leaders of the VZG early warning radar system project to detect a nuclear strike on Russia, was sentenced to five years, with the sentence suspended, and fined 34,155,000 roubles.<sup>46</sup> Lobuzko ran into trouble due to embezzling funds from the project and the fact that the Voronezh radar system he signed off on didn't work.

Ukraine has noticed manufacturing changes to Shahed-136 drones, hinting that serial production has started in Russia.<sup>47</sup> The warhead has changed and now contains tungsten bb's. The engine is now from the Canadian company MicroPilot, the body is composite instead of a solid molded piece, and the foam filling has changed.<sup>48</sup> The navigation system is a Russian-made Comet block.

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<sup>45</sup> <https://t.me/rsotmdivision/10858>


<sup>46</sup> <https://t.me/vchkogpu/42128>

<sup>47</sup> <https://t.me/militarymediacenter/3279>

<sup>48</sup> <https://t.me/investigatoua/7170>

Captain Andriy Rudyk, a representative of the Center for the Research of Trophy and Prospective Weapons and Military Equipment of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, criticized existing sanctions as ineffective and said that the changes don't change the capabilities of the Shahed-136, but have likely lowered production costs.

United States company Iridium is reportedly still supporting Russia, providing navigation and GPS service UAVs, including the Kartograph surveillance drone. Iridium still has a Moscow office and has contracts with the Ministry of Defense and the Rosgvardiya.

Look, aspiring dentist and Colonel General Ramzan don don Kadyrov  [is 100% alive](#) as he met with Russian President Putin today.<sup>49</sup>

Russia will hold a civil defense readiness drill on October 3, simulating that the nation was under martial law and 70% of the housing had been destroyed.<sup>50</sup> Hours later, on

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<sup>49</sup> <https://t.me/uniannet/112735>

<sup>50</sup> <https://t.me/uniannet/112757>

October 4, the United States will hold a national test of the emergency broadcast system via text. The two events have QAnon adherents claiming that The Storm will be on October 4 with a combination of 5G activation by the United States text and global war. We're not making this up – it's a real thing. We're not building a backyard bunker; you'll be among the first to know if you need to start digging.

Sanctions required Russia to develop its own reservation system for commercial airlines called Leonardo, which was knocked offline for multiple airlines due to a distributed denial of service (DDoS) attack.<sup>51 52</sup> The outage caused flight delays and cancelations across Russia, with Pobeda and Aeroflot the hardest hit.

## **WAR CRIMES AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

The Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) collected evidence that Chechen Akhmat Colonel Zelimkhan Agmerzoyev was responsible for the torture and execution of Ukrainian POWs and civilians and blackmailed family members.<sup>53</sup> Agmerzoyev, commander of the 3rd Company of the Police

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<sup>51</sup> <https://t.me/astrapress/38936>

<sup>52</sup> <https://t.me/bazabazon/21783>

<sup>53</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/116581>



Regiment of the federal Department of Extra-departmental Protection of the Rosgvardiya troops in the Chechen Republic, led black ops squads in Melitopol. While civilians and soldiers were tortured, he demanded as much as \$13,500 to close family members to end the abuse and another \$10,000 for their release. He threatened to cut off body parts if people didn't pay as proof of their captivity.

In Rostov-on-Don, Russia, show trials are ongoing for 24 Ukrainian soldiers who defended Azovstal in Mariupol. They are among the almost 2,000 soldiers, territorial guards, police, and volunteers who surrendered on May 12, 2022, as part of a United Nations and International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) brokered deal between Ukraine and Russia. The Red Cross and Russian and Western press monitored and recorded the surrender. Almost 300 have been released since June 2022, and 56 were killed in an explosion at Olenivka Penal Colony. It is widely believed that Russia intentionally killed the prisoners. After stating they would accept a third-party investigation, they blocked the ICRC and the United Nations from accessing the site. The ICRC later stated they could not assure the proper treatment of the prisoners in Russian custody and were only granted brief access to Olenivka once.

Today, Russia released a shocking photo of a skeletal Azovstal defender who appeared shirtless in the Rostov-on-Don courtroom. We have decided that this is an important photo that should be viewed. We have left the page and, after, intentionally blank if you want to skip the image. As you look at the photo, we ask you to consider that the Russian government considered this acceptable to show the world. The truth matters. If this is acceptable, what is happening that no one sees?

**THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY BLANK. THE PICTURE ON THE NEXT PAGE IS A GRAPHIC DEPICTION OF ABUSE OF A PRISONER OF WAR. WE ARE SHARING THIS PICTURE BECAUSE IT IS IN THE PUBLIC SPHERE, AND WE BELIEVE THIS INDIVIDUAL IS BEING SUBJECT TO HARM AND IS IN GRAVE DANGER, IN ALIGNMENT WITH OUR EDITORIAL POLICIES.**





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## GEOPOLITICS

Hungary presented the self-proclaimed President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, with his credentials, becoming the first European nation to recognize the dark potato prince as a legitimate leader.<sup>54</sup> Hungary joins Kazakhstan, Egypt, Zimbabwe, Equatorial Guinea, Angola, Uganda, Cambodia, the Philippines, Jordan, and Columbia to embrace uncool Lando Calrissian.

On the subject of Kazakhstan, President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev said that his nation would support international sanctions against Russia during a press conference in Germany.<sup>55</sup>

The numbers are in, the election results shared, and reunification day is coming on September 30. After Russia held illegal elections in the occupied territories of Ukraine, two countries came forward and stated they accepted the results – North Korea and Syria.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> <https://twitter.com/DevanaUkraine/status/1707483567264075917>

<sup>55</sup> [https://t.me/ukrarmed\\_forces/6469](https://t.me/ukrarmed_forces/6469)

<sup>56</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/116677>

## ECONOMICS

Russian state news agency Izvestia reported that Russia's national debt grew by 10% in the last six months.<sup>57</sup>

According to its quarterly report, Gazprom reduced production by almost 25% due to “a number of countries” refusing deliveries of Russian natural gas.<sup>58</sup> In 2020, the United States Energy Information Administration reported that 48% of Russian natural gas exports went to Europe, with 22% of all exports going to two countries – the Netherlands and Germany.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> <https://t.me/izvestia/144166>

<sup>58</sup> <https://t.me/astrapress/38994>

<sup>59</sup> <https://www.nextbigfuture.com/2022/01/get-off-russian-oil-and-gas.html>

## RUMORS

Many messages and e-mails we receive ask why we didn't cover a certain story or whether we are aware of a report and what we think. The rumor section is a list of claims or stories we are aware of but not reporting on because there isn't enough information to support or discover the truth.

- Did Russia destroy two Mig-29s and three Su-25s at Kryvyi Rih with new long-range Lancet kamikaze drones?
- Have more than 260,000 Russian soldiers died in Ukraine since February 24, 2022?
- North Korean ammunition is coming to Russia?
- Will Ukraine get Taurus cruise missiles?
- Were two Russian generals seriously wounded and one admiral killed in Sevastopol?




## Notes on Sourcing Information


**Malcontent News** uses a wide range of sources to create our daily Situation Report, the foundation for the Russian-Ukraine War Report Podcast. There are some notable sources that we frequently use and others that we don't. The most common sources currently, or in the past, we have used for the Theater of War section of the Situation Report include the following.


**⚠ Russian Ministry of Defense Morning Report:** We use the RMOD Morning Report to identify combat reports, shelling locations, and territorial control change claims. We do not consider claims of Ukrainian troops killed, equipment destroyed, or military resources destroyed valid without videos and pictures that can be confirmed by date, time, weather, and geolocation, or third-party confirmation from recognized Western news outlets or trusted Ukrainian sources.


**🛡 Rybar:** We consider Rybar a mercenary organization because they are staffed by former Russian Ministry of Defense public relations officers who actively provide target information to the Russian military. Their operational budget is \$20,000 a month, while they claim they receive no government funding. We only use their reports to identify combat locations. We no longer consider their territorial control changes due to a three-month pattern from June to August 2023 of repeated publication of blatant disinformation and a years-long pattern of denying all Russian war crimes.


**⚠ War Gonzo:** We consider War Gonzo a mercenary organization because their employees have recorded themselves actively engaging in direct combat, specifically in Marinka. Recently, War Gonzo admitted in their daily report to leveraging the information from the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. They intermix combat reports with their own on a 24-hour delay. We use their reports for **unique claims** about combat, territorial control change claims, and troop movement reports. Although the War Gonzo daily reports are moderately accurate, they occasionally engage in blatant disinformation and misinformation.

 **Readovka:** We consider Readovka to be a Kremlin-aligned propagandist organization. Their daily reports are a word-for-word repeat of the RMOD Morning Report and provide no value to our analysis. They occasionally provide credible information through videos and pictures that can be confirmed by date, time, weather, and geolocation. This is by no means a complete list of the sources we monitor.

 **Igor "Girkin" Strelkov:** We consider Strelkov to be a convicted war criminal who is highly informed, specifically about the situation in the Donbas. We use his combat reports, territorial control change claims, and troop movement information. In the Donbas, we consider his reports to be highly accurate. The fidelity of information he provides in Zaporizhia, Kherson, and Kharkiv appears to come from other social media channels with a history of spreading misinformation and is of lower quality. Reports he shares outside of the Donbas provided by Russian Federation 1st Army Corps units have greater fidelity.

 **Andrei Morozov:** Morozov is a pro-Russian milblogger and a radio communications and logistics specialist with the Russian 2nd Army Corps. We consider him a provider of high-quality information, especially within his fields of specialty. In the fall of 2022, Morozov was detained by OMON for up to three weeks due to his content and has had his online material censored by the Kremlin several times over the last 11 months.

 **Private Military Company Wagner Group Social Media:** We consider reports from PMC Wagner of Russian victories as overstating gains and reports of Russian failures, particularly among the Russian Ministry of Defense and the 1st and 2nd Army Corps of the Russian Army, as overstating problems. We do not consider claims of territorial control changes from Wagner as authentic without pictures, videos, or **unique** Russian State Media reports that include a video that can be geolocated.

 **Luhansk People's Republic Joint Center for Control and Coordination:** The organization has not posted any update since June 9, 2023, and we have ceased monitoring.

⊖ **Leonid Pasechnik:** We do not use any combat, territorial control changes, troop movements, casualty claims, or equipment destroyed claims from the illegitimate leader of the so-called Luhansk People's Republic.

⚠ **Donetsk People's Republic People's Militia:** We only use their reports for videos and pictures that can be confirmed by date, time, weather, and geolocation.

⊖ **Donetsk People's Republic Territorial Defense:** We do not use combat, territorial control changes, troop movements, casualty claims, or equipment destroyed claims from their public relations and social media channels. They have repeatedly engaged in misinformation and disinformation.

⊖ **Denis Pushilin:** We do not use any combat, territorial control changes, troop movements, casualty claims, or equipment destroyed claims from the illegitimate leader of the so-called Donetsk People's Republic.

⚠ **Ramzan Kadyrov:** The contribution and impact of Chechen forces in Ukraine have become minimal, and Akhmat no longer produces large volumes of video content that can be geolocated. We continue to monitor his channels.

✅ **General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine:** We consider the morning and evening reports, specifically combat reports, territorial control changes, and troop movements, from GSAFU to be high quality. The Ukrainian General Staff uses clever wording to create plausible deniability of battlefield failures. Combat reports start with "repelled attacks of the occupant forces in the vicinities of," which negates reporting fighting in areas where territory was lost. Instead of misinformation or disinformation, GSAFU engages in omission. Reports about problems within the Russian military are given more weight if the SBU or GUR reinforces them or if there is added confirmation in the Russian milblogger information space.

✅ **DeepState:** We use the Daily Report from DeepState for combat reports and territorial control changes. They frequently support their claims with geolocated, time, date, and weather-confirmed pictures and videos, making them a high-quality Ukrainian-based source. They occasionally overstate Russian territorial control claims but never present disinformation or

misinformation. Combined with the reports from GSAFU, gaps in combat reports are filled. We support DeepState through their Patreon at \$10 a month.

✔ **Institute for the Study of War:** We occasionally leverage the map and territorial control change information produced by the ISW when there is conflicting data. Their presentation of Russian-assessed, Ukrainian-assessed, and Russian-claimed information is helpful when our analysts have to make a judgment call due to the absence of verifiable information. We do not copy from their map but take their territorial control information as an additional data point when assessing our own changes.

⚠ **Ivan Fedorov:** We use information about insurgent activity and HIMARS strikes in Zaporizhia provided by Fedorov, the exiled mayor of Melitiopol.

✔ **Vitaly Kim:** When there are reports of potential air raids in Ukraine, we monitor Kim, the Mykolaiv Oblast Administrative and Military Governor, for realtime reports. Kim is consistently one of the first, if not the first, Ukrainian government officials to confirm kamikaze drones or missiles have been launched toward Ukraine.

⊖ **Oleksiy Arestovych:** We no longer use the information provided by Arestovych after being fired from his role as the Chief Advisor to the President of Ukraine. Before being terminated, Arestovych had developed a reputation for providing exaggerated, unverified, and false claims for Ukrainian successes and failures.