



# MALCONTENT NEWS RUSSIA-UKRAINE SITUATION REPORT

October 8, 2023



# Malcontent News

## Russia-Ukraine War SITREP

### 10/08/23 23:59\* PST

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## **SUMMARY – DAY 591**

It has been 3,512 days since Russia occupied the Crimea Peninsula on January 27, 2014, and one year and 227 days since Russia expanded its war against Ukraine.

[Jump to the Action Report.](#)

### **DAILY ASSESSMENT**

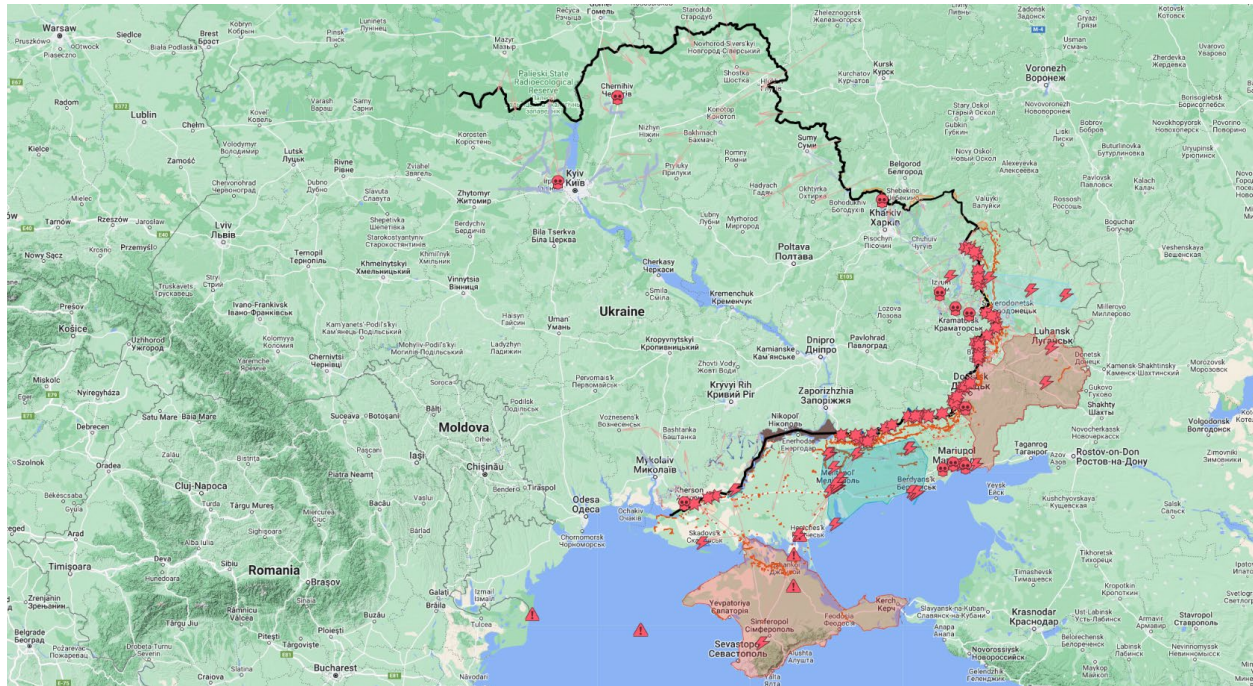
We assess the following:

1. The soft response by Ukraine's allies after Russian aggression on Ukraine's border will eventually lead to a significant incident that could result in military intervention.
2. The Institute of the Study of War has aligned with our analysis that Russian forces have increased their ground attacks theaterwide in an attempt to exhaust Ukrainian resources before a resolution on continued United States aid is reached.
3. The Kremlin is attempting to use the Israel-Hamas War as a distraction in the information space to fracture support for Ukraine further and has engaged in large-scale disinformation campaigns.

4. The removal of the United States Speaker of the House, Kevin McCarthy, has put the ongoing Ukrainian offensive at extreme risk. We further assess that the abrupt ending of U.S. military aid will be catastrophic if a resolution is not reached within the next 18 to 25 days.
5. 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.
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 has started its campaign to destroy Ukraine's energy infrastructure despite the current lull in drone and missile attacks.
8. 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.



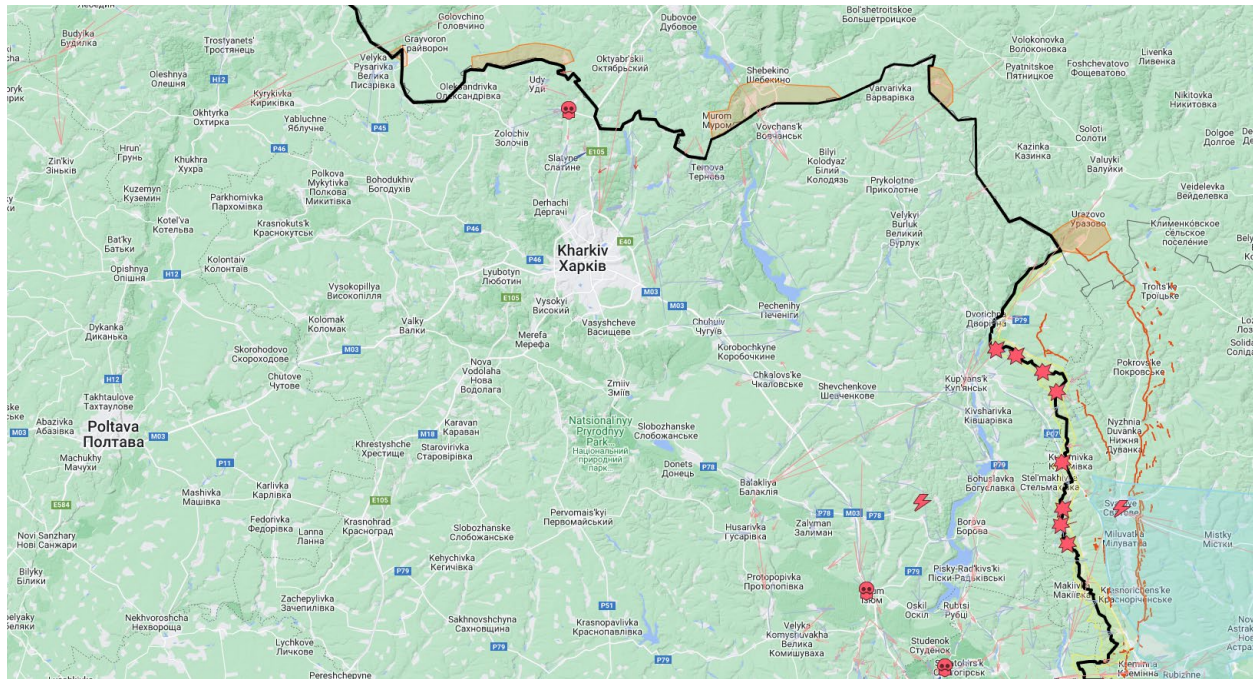
# TODAY'S WAR IN UKRAINE MAP



**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.

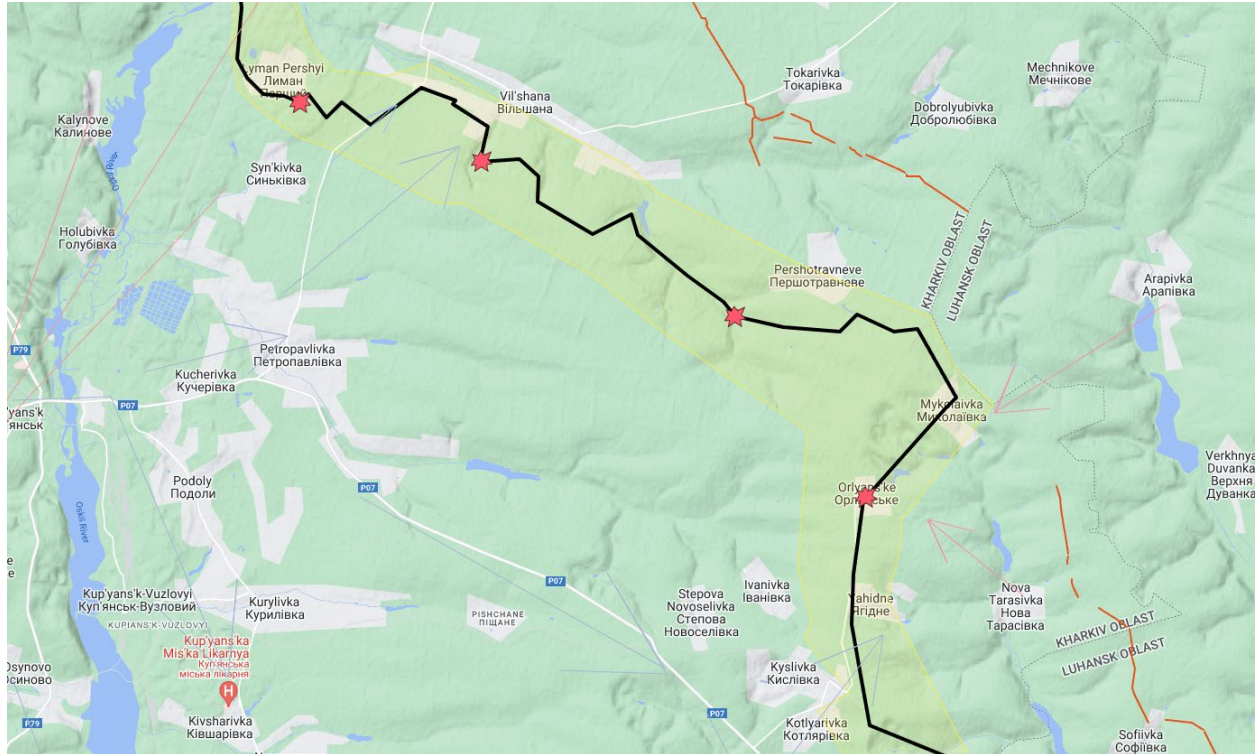
## [Russia-Ukraine War Report Map](#)

# 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



**In the Kupyansk Operational Area (AO), Russian forces continued combat operations but at a reduced tempo. Russian attacks in the direction of [Synkivka](#) and [Ivanivka](#) were unsuccessful.<sup>1 2</sup>**

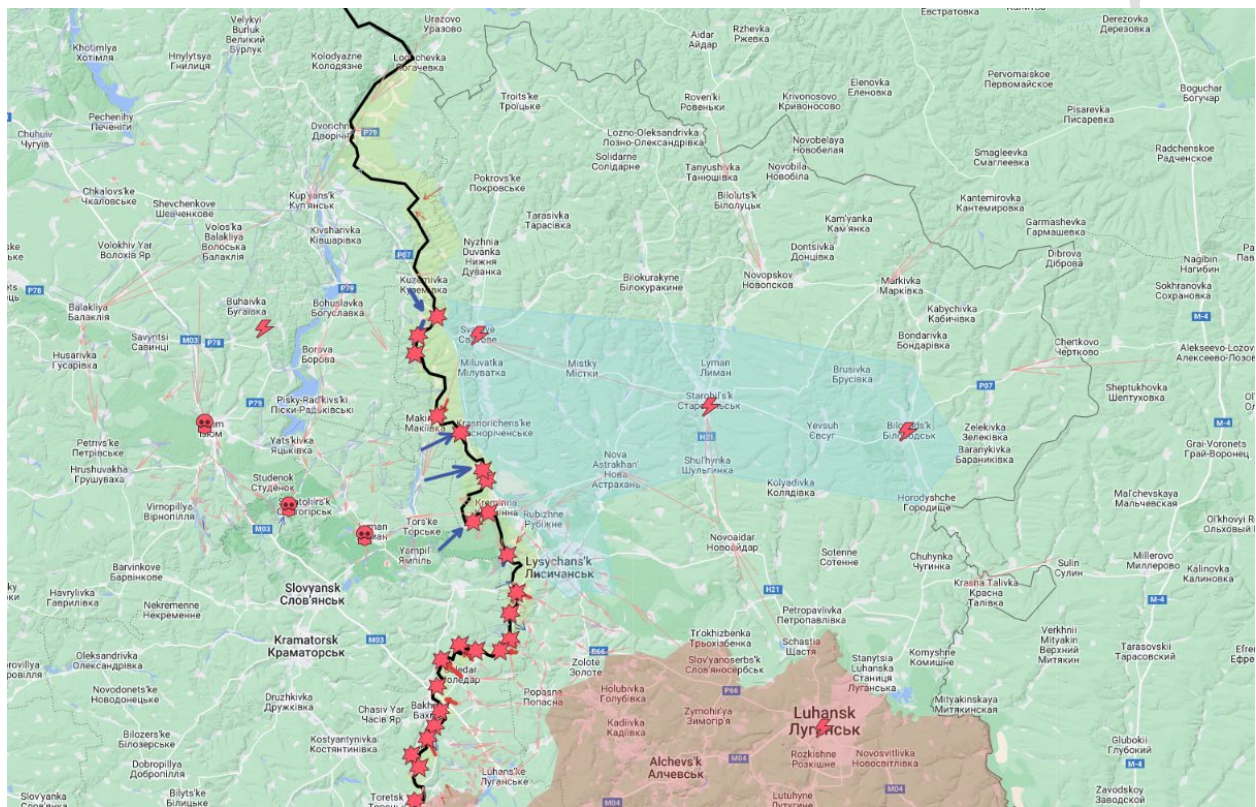
<sup>1</sup> <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/12740>

<sup>2</sup> [https://t.me/mod\\_russia/31261](https://t.me/mod_russia/31261) [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel]



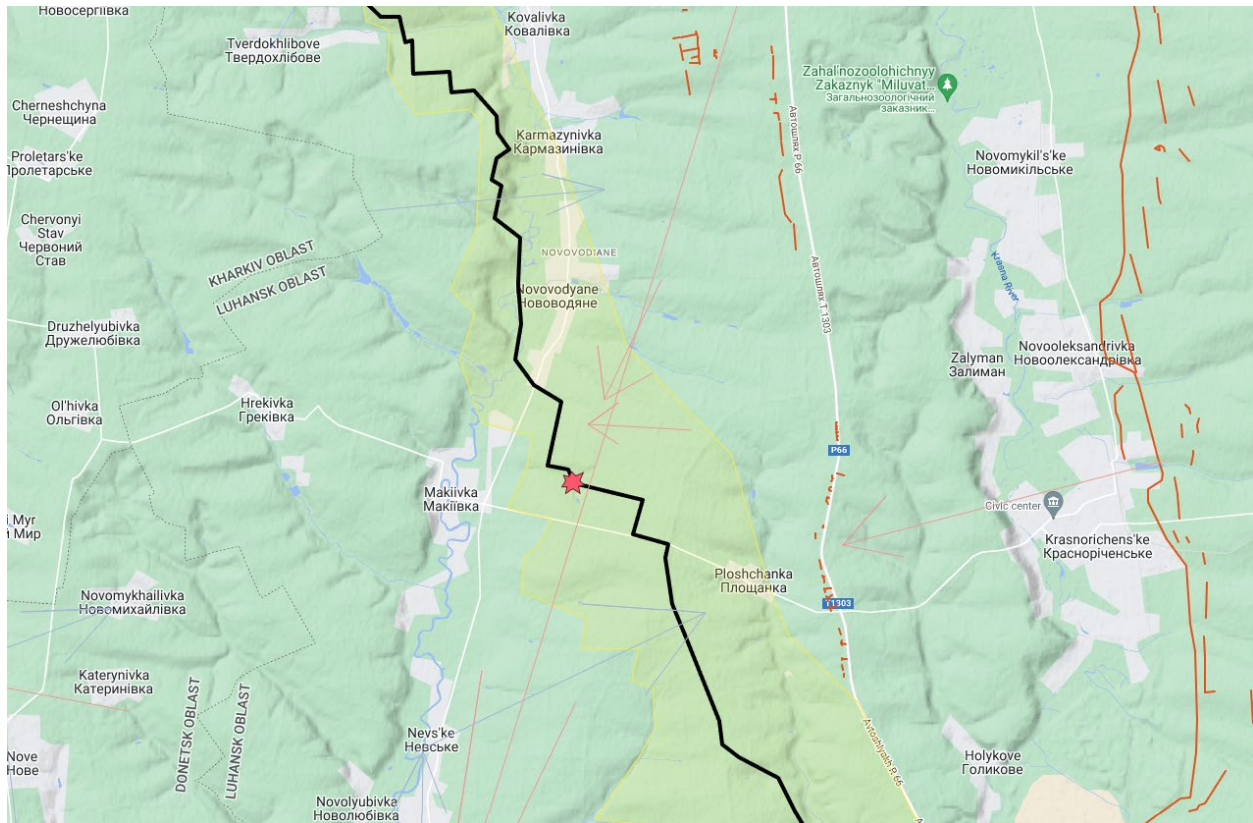
# DONBAS REGION

## 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



**In the Svatove AO, the Russian Ministry of Defense (RMOD) claimed that Ukrainian forces were on the offensive near [Novoselivske](#).<sup>3</sup> Russian forces continued attacks east and northeast of [Makiivka](#) supported by armor. Despite significant losses, Russian troops were able to make new marginal gains east of the settlement.<sup>4 5</sup>**

<sup>3</sup> [https://t.me/mod\\_russia/31261](https://t.me/mod_russia/31261) [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel]

<sup>4</sup> <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/12740>

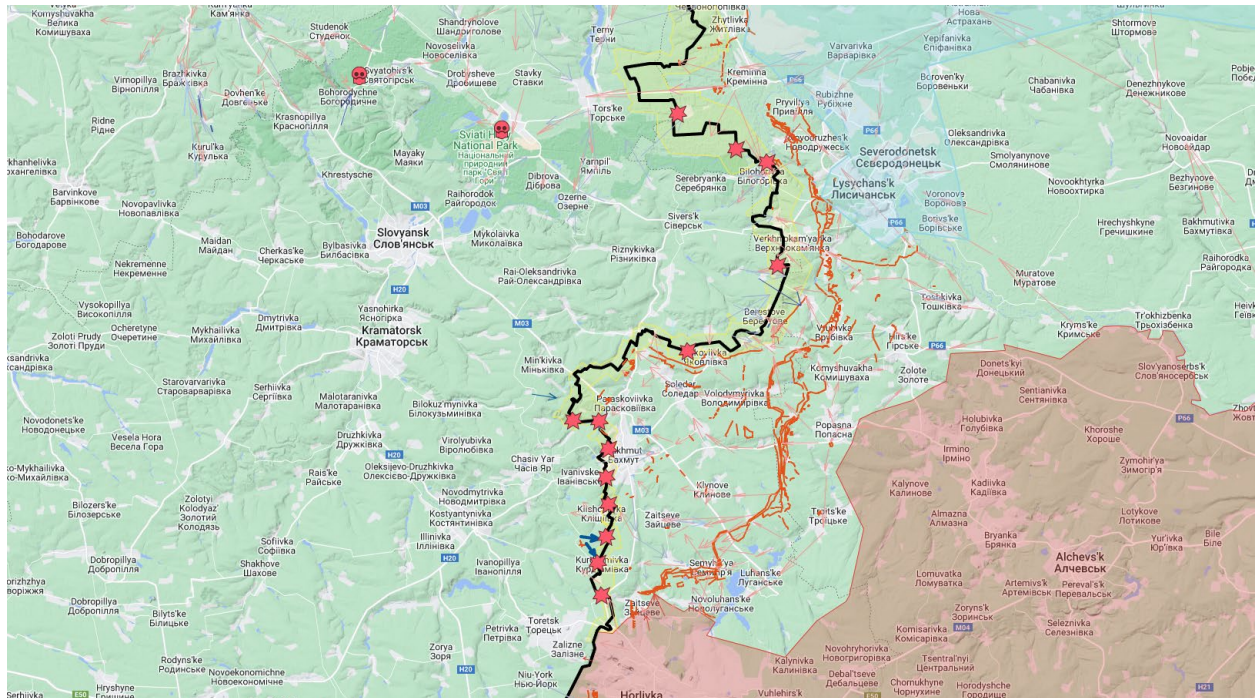
<sup>5</sup> [https://t.me/mod\\_russia/31261](https://t.me/mod_russia/31261) [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel]

**Further south in the Kreminna AO, RMOD claimed Ukrainian forces continued offensive operations near [Dibrova](#), with no change in the situation.<sup>6</sup> Russian troops are building up reserves in Kreminna, indicating that renewed offensive operations may be restarting soon.**

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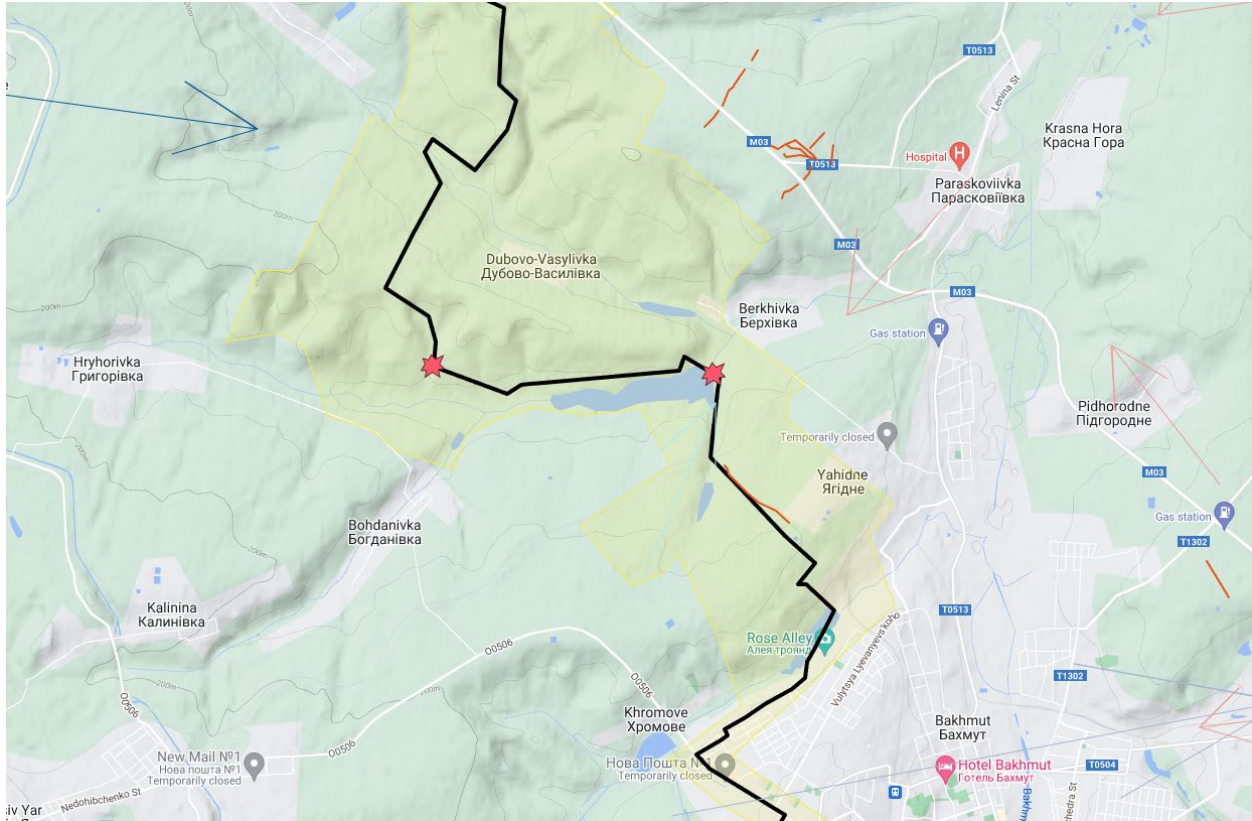
<sup>6</sup> [https://t.me/mod\\_russia/31261](https://t.me/mod_russia/31261) [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel]

# NORTHEAST DONETSK



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

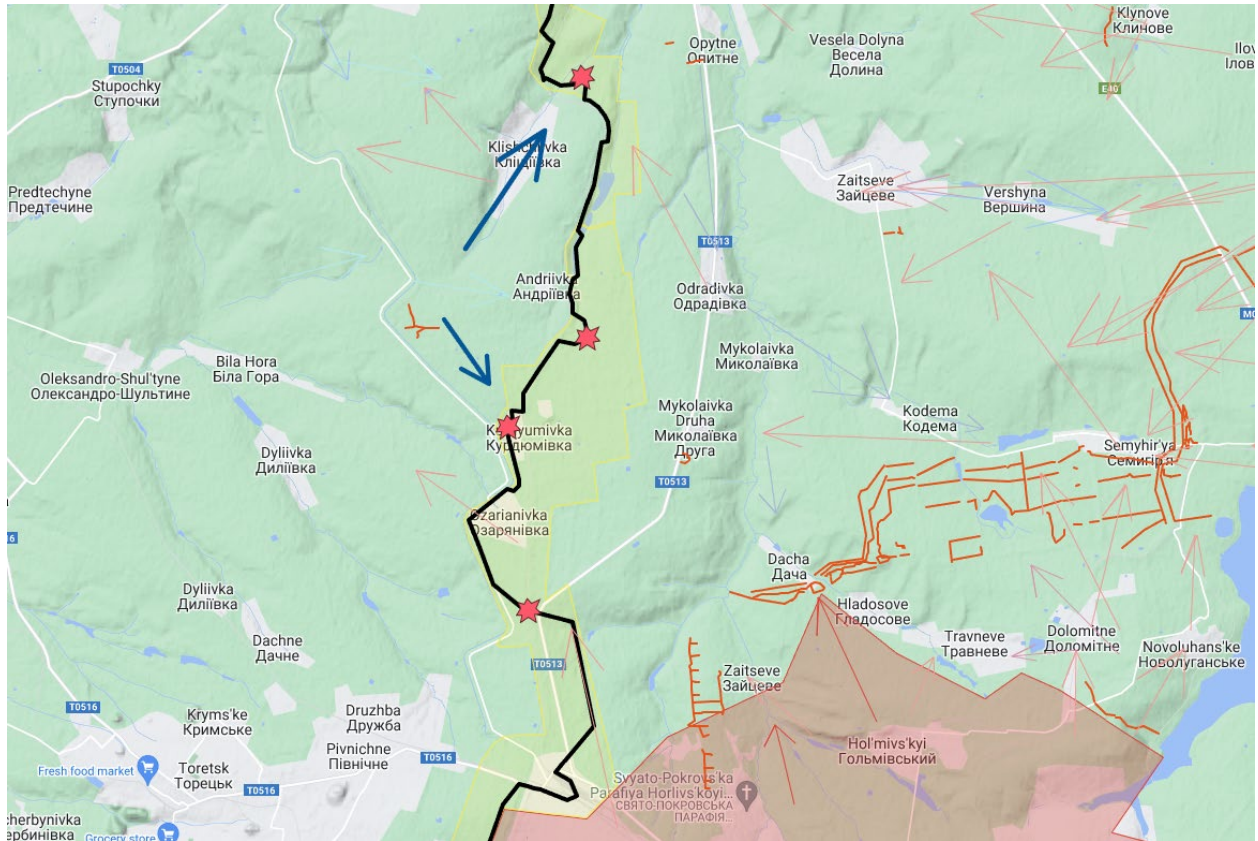
**Ukrainian Objective:** Defend Siversk, collapse the Russian flanks north of Bakhmut, capture the T-513 Highway south of Bakhmut, liberate the Bakhmut and Soledar operational areas, advance to the administrative border of Luhansk, and minimize civilian casualties



**Northwest of Bakhmut, The Russian 200th Arctic Separate Motor Rifle Brigade attempted to advance in the direction of [Bohdanivka](#), suffered losses, and returned to their well-established defensive positions.<sup>7</sup>**

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<sup>7</sup> <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/12740>



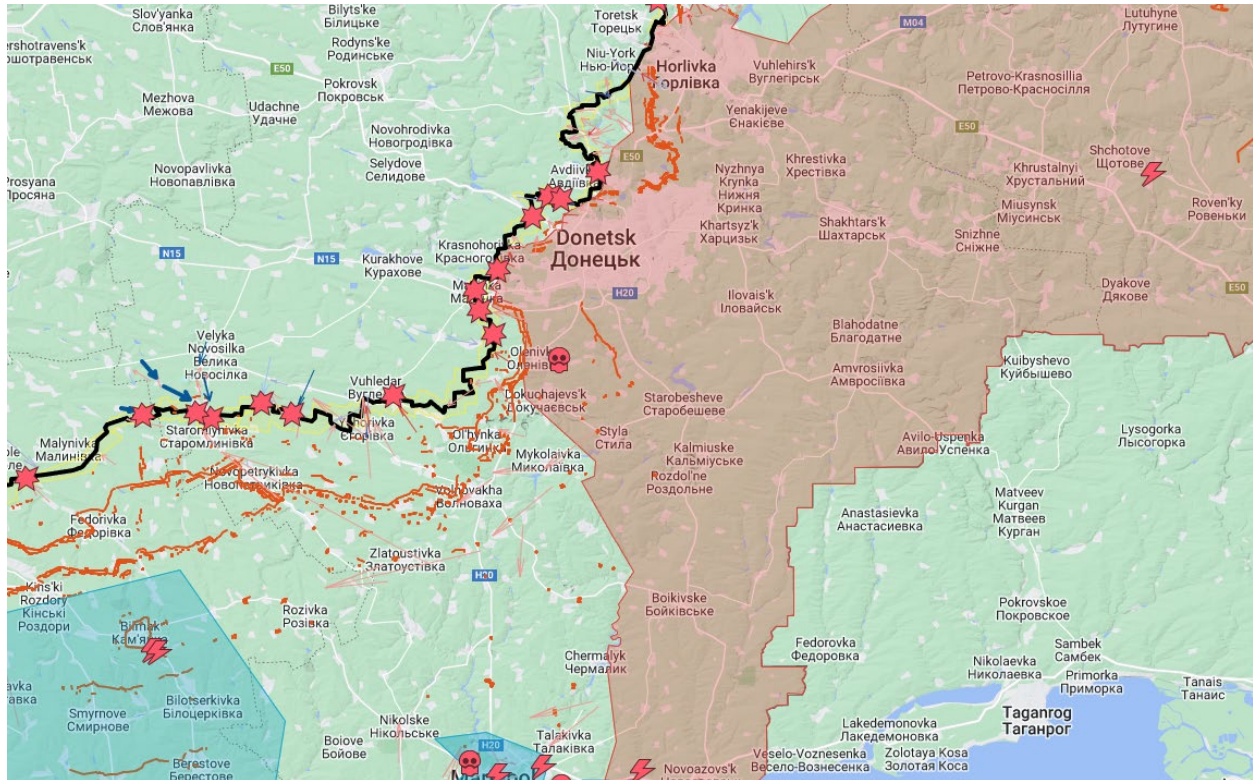
**There have been Ukrainian advances in Klishchiivka AO, but we cannot report specific details at this time due to operational security. Ukrainian troops have pushed further east of [Klishchiivka](#) and [Andriivka](#) and are pressuring [Zelenopillya](#).<sup>8 9 10</sup> We had previously assessed that Ukrainian forces would attempt to drive south through Zelenopillya after they secured positions east of the railroad grade, making the continued defense of Kurdyumivka challenging.**

<sup>8</sup> <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/12740>

<sup>9</sup> [https://t.me/mod\\_russia/31261](https://t.me/mod_russia/31261) [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel]

<sup>10</sup> <https://t.me/wargonzo/15556>

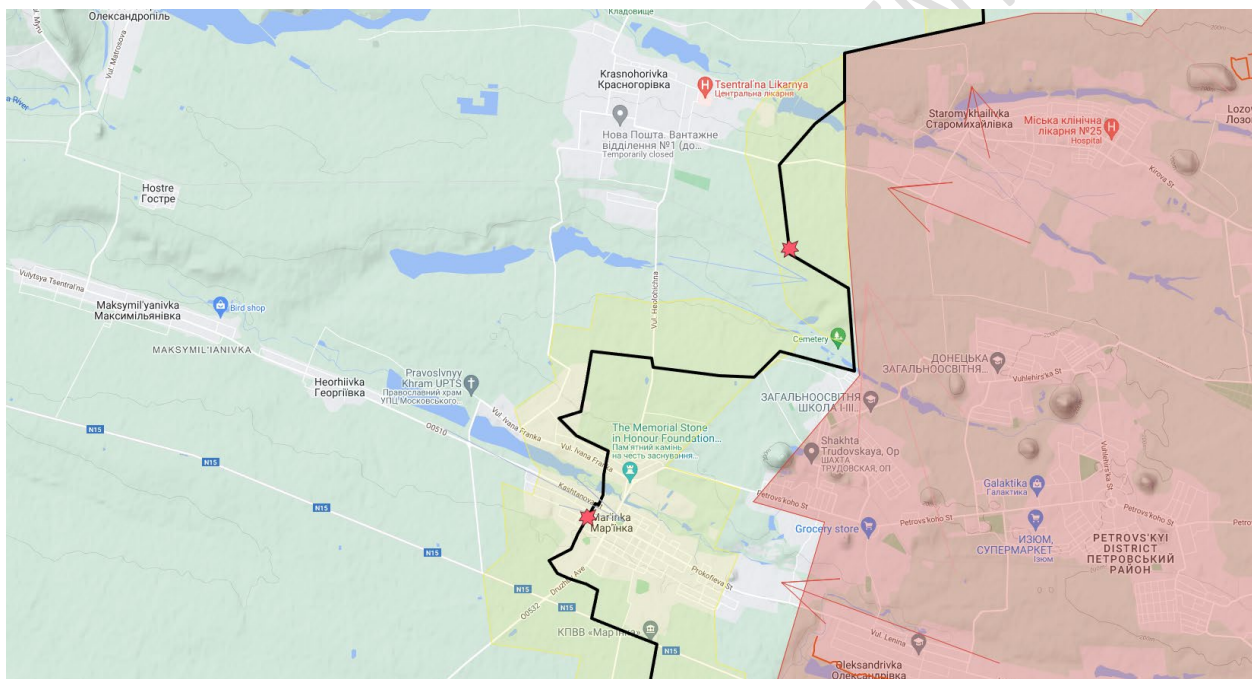
## SOUTHWESTERN DONETSK



**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

**In the Avdiivka AO, Russian commanders continue to execute piecemeal attacks over one or two days and then pause to restore combat potential. The only report of fighting came from the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, reporting the successful defense of the city of [Avdiivka](#).<sup>11</sup>**

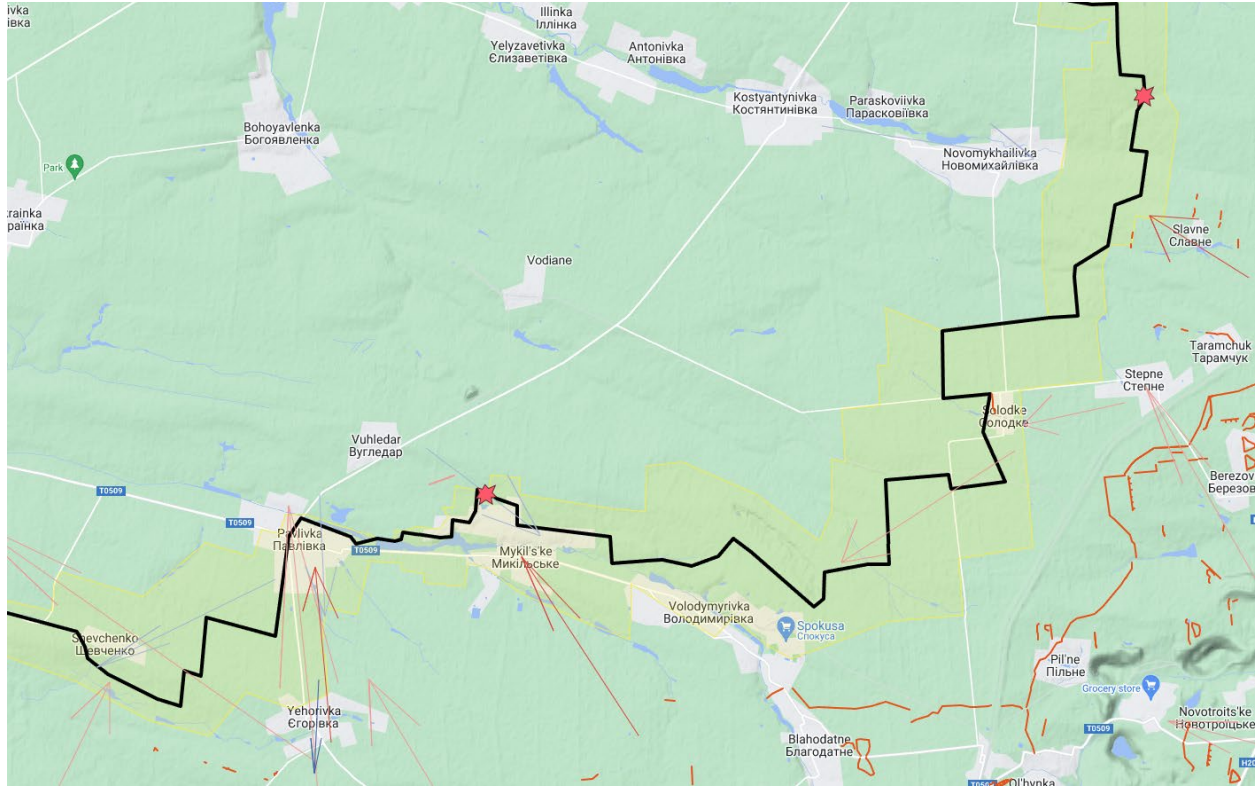


**Fighting continued in [Marinka](#), with no change to the situation.<sup>12</sup>**

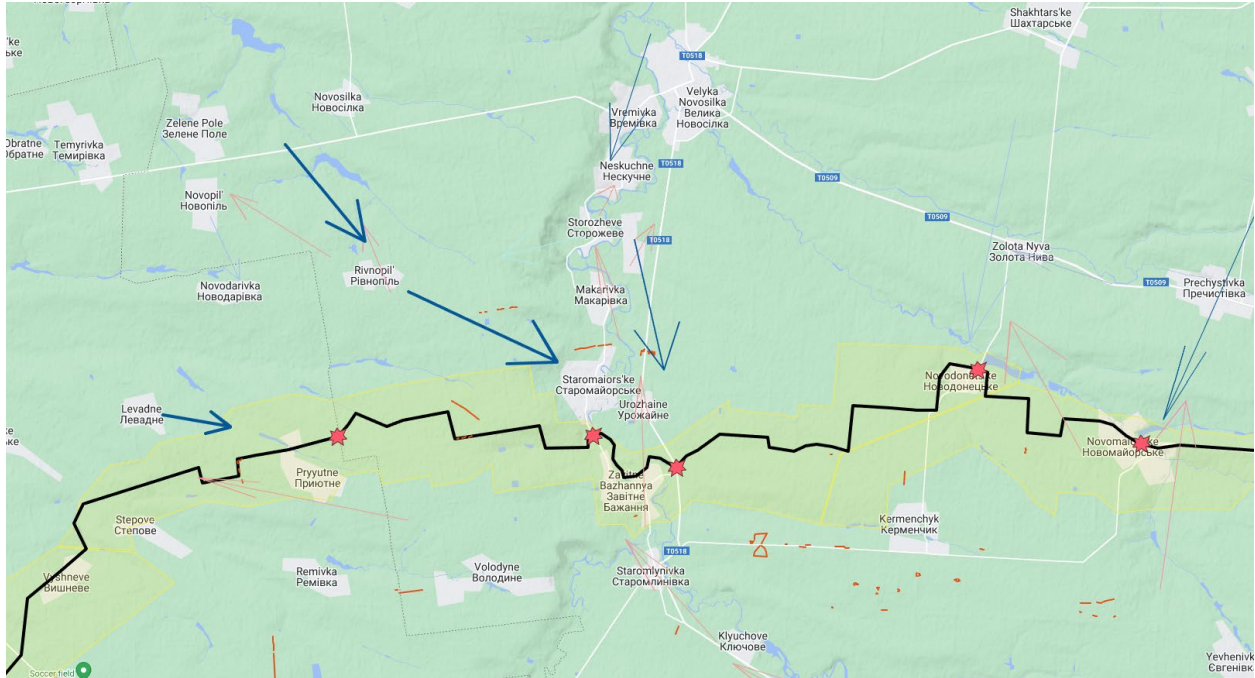
<sup>11</sup> <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/12740>

<sup>12</sup> <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/12740>





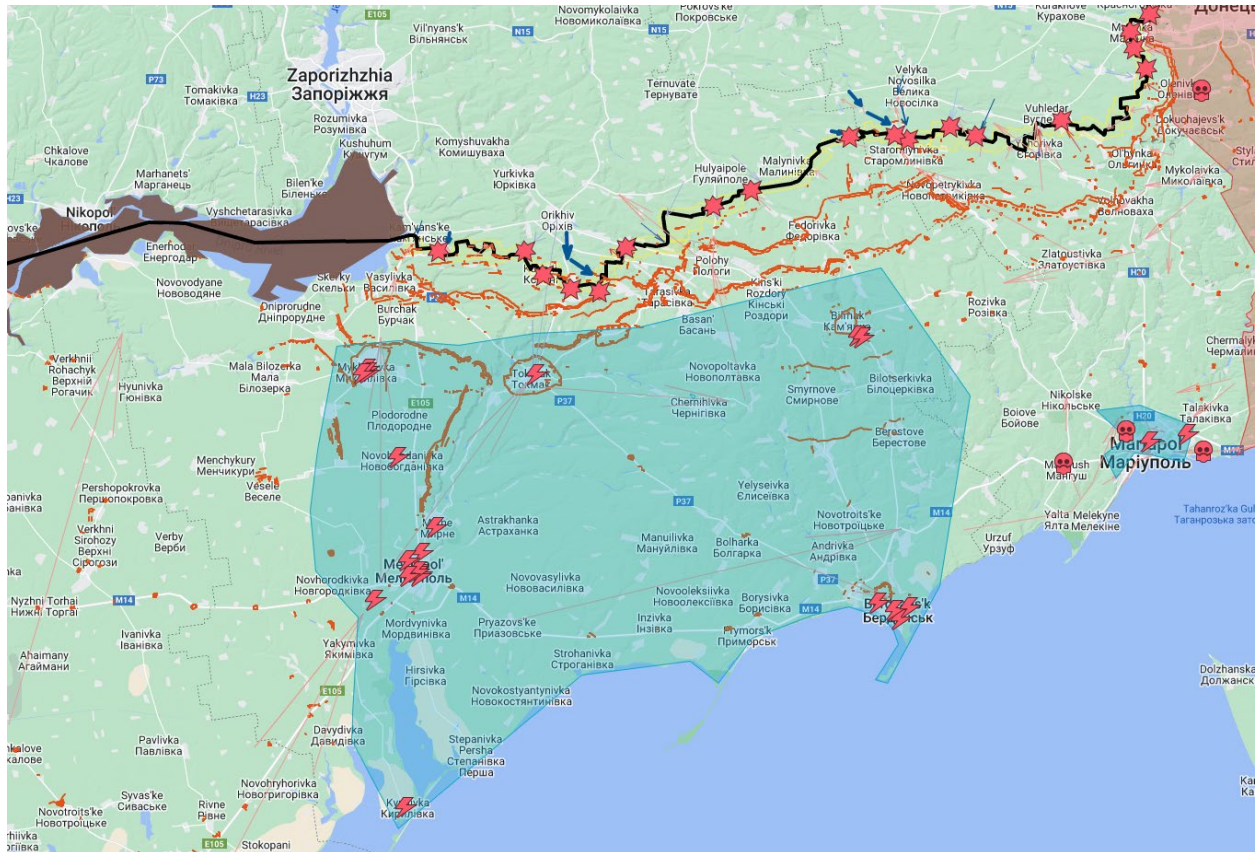
**In the Vuhledar AO, Russian forces maintained tradition by attacking [Novomykhailivka](#), suffering losses, and retreating, as they have done for 590 days.**



**Northwest of Staromlynivka, RMOD claimed Ukrainian forces were on the offensive near [Pryyutne](#).**<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> [https://t.me/mod\\_russia/31262](https://t.me/mod_russia/31262) [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel]

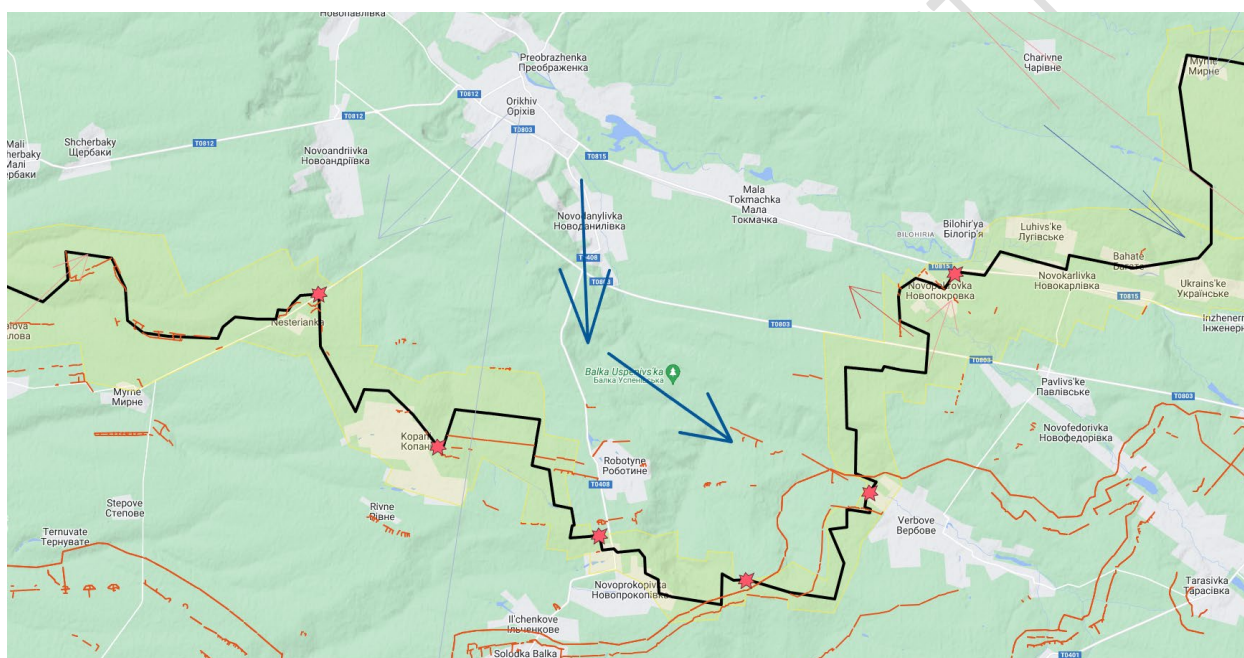
# ZAPORIZHZHIA



**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

Brigadier General Alexander Tarnavskiy, commander of the operational-strategic group of troops Tavria, reported that Ukrainian forces carried out 1,212 fire missions, more than double the number of Russian artillery strikes. The Russian Aerospace Forces (VKS) carried out 11 airstrikes.




**The situation in the Orikhiv AO remains highly dynamic.** Operational tempo has slowed, although it may be weather-related. Positional fighting continued from the western edges of [Verbove](#), along the Surovikin Line, the northern and eastern edges of [Novoprokopivka](#), and the

western edge of [Robotyne](#).<sup>14</sup> <sup>15</sup> Ukrainian forces made marginal gains on the edge of Verbove. In Novoprokopivka, Ukrainian forces once again entered the settlement but could not hold the positions. Further east, Ukrainian forces made new advances, while west of Robotyne, Russian forces made marginal gains.

The Ukrainian 46th Brigade called the situation a "temporary stalemate," with both combatants using probing attacks to find weaknesses.<sup>16</sup> They added that the Russian defense remains competent and Ukrainian forces have not exhausted their combat potential.

Russian forces are actively remotely mining the approaches to the second echelon of the Surovikin Line, taking advantage of the stalled Ukrainian offensive.<sup>17</sup>

**In occupied Zaporizhzhia**, an ammunition train in Tokmak was  [destroyed by rockets fired by HIMARS](#).<sup>18</sup> Video captured ammunition cooking off after the strike.

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<sup>14</sup> [https://t.me/mod\\_russia/31262](https://t.me/mod_russia/31262) [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel]

<sup>15</sup> <https://t.me/wargonzo/15556>

<sup>16</sup> <https://t.me/odshbr46/1329>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/10/9/7423217/>

<sup>18</sup> <https://twitter.com/FreudGreyskull/status/1711082325373808815>

## **Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant**

There was no update on the status of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant.

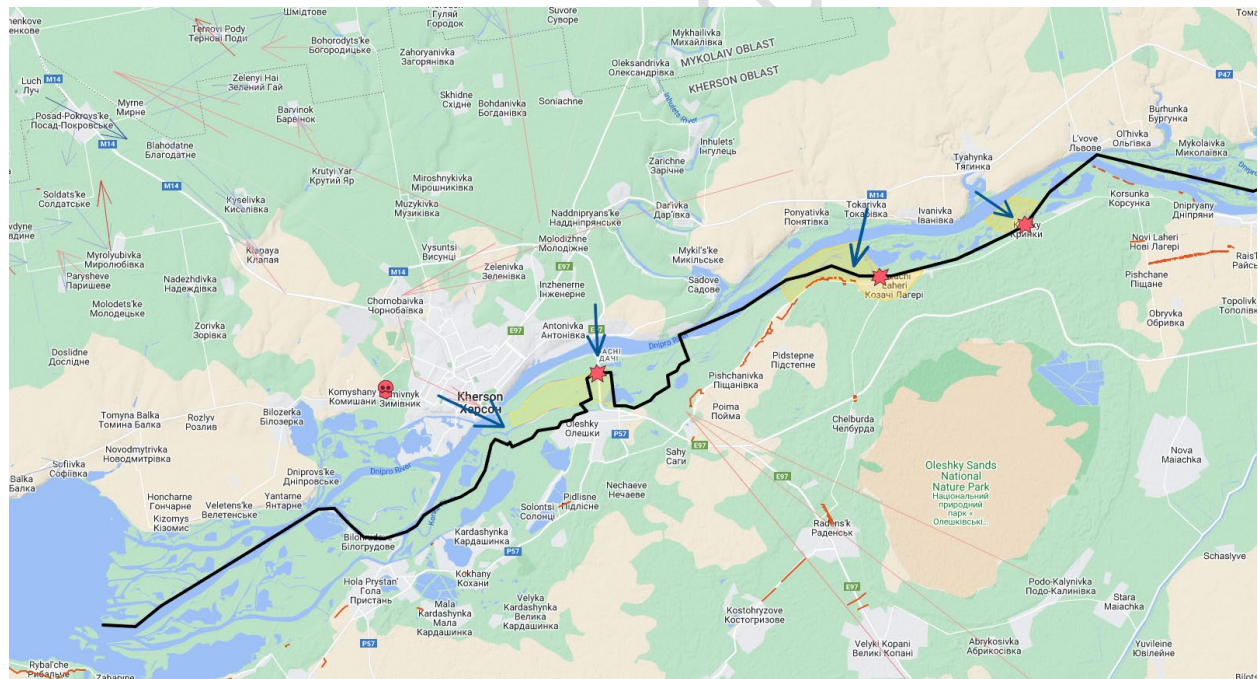
## **BLACK SEA, CRIMEA, MYKOLAIV, AND ODESA REGION**

There wasn't any significant activity in this region. This is likely due to poor weather.

# 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



**In Free Kherson, Oblast Administrative and Military Governor (OVA) Alexander Prokudin said Russia carried out 53 fire missions, firing 288 munitions, rockets, drone-**

delivered IEDs, and bombs.<sup>19</sup> Most of the shelling was during the overnight hours. Yesterday, we reported on strikes on apartment buildings in Kherson. Prokudin reported that 18 people were wounded, including two children. An 11-year-old girl suffered a severe head injury and is in a coma. Russian forces shelled the Church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Kherson while services were ongoing, forcing parishioners to shelter in place. Several shells landed nearby, causing light damage to the building and wounding two people.<sup>20</sup> In Antonivka, a man was killed during a Russian artillery strike. No other information was provided.

Russian milbloggers are claiming that Ukraine is planning a wet crossing attempt over the Dnipro River in the coming week. There is nothing actionable in the information space to indicate any attempt will be made, and such an attempt right before the start of the wet season seems highly improbable.

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<sup>19</sup> <https://t.me/genichua/14803>

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/10/9/7423256/>



## 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

There wasn't any significant activity in this region.

## 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

There wasn't any significant activity in this region.


## **BELARUSIAN FRONT**

There wasn't any significant activity in this region.

## **THEATERWIDE**

Where are the Shahed-136 kamikaze drones? It's been three days since the last attack. We cannot assess if this is due to

the weather, building inventory for a larger-scale attack, or a supply issue.<sup>21</sup>

Ombudsman Dmytro Lubinets announced that a criminal investigation had been launched after videos showed  [two military recruits being beaten at a training center](#) in Ternopil.<sup>22</sup> The Special Prosecutor's Office in the field of defense of the Western region spokesperson, Yulia Shevchenko, said that a criminal proceeding for abuse of official power had been opened.<sup>23</sup>

Satellite images showed that the amount of railroad freight traffic between Russia and North Korea at the Tumangan crossing has significantly increased. Seventy-three freight cars were staged at the border, the largest number since the fall of 2022 when North Korea reportedly supplied winter uniforms and other non-lethal aid to Russia.<sup>24</sup>

The table for equipment losses was **updated on September 30, 2023**, and includes the losses suffered during the Prigozhin Insurrection of June 23 – 24.

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<sup>21</sup> [https://t.me/smolii\\_ukraine/44492](https://t.me/smolii_ukraine/44492)

<sup>22</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/118141>

<sup>23</sup> <https://t.me/uniannet/113773>

<sup>24</sup> <https://t.me/uniannet/113777>

## 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 30, 2023.

12,319 Russian (including [Chef's Rebellion](#)) vs. 4,510 Ukrainian

Equipment	Russian Losses	Ukrainian Losses	Ratio	Change
<b>Main Battle Tanks</b>	2179*	292	7.55:1	—
<b>Medium Duty Tanks</b>	150	364*	0.41:1	—
<b>Armored fighting Vehicles</b>	985	327	3.00:1	—
<b>Infantry Fighting Vehicles</b>	2817	765	3.68:1	↓
<b>Armored Personnel Carriers</b>	354	347	1.02:1	↓
<b>MRAPs</b>	48	164	0.29:1	—
<b>Infantry Mobility Vehicles</b>	212	375	0.57:1	—
<b>Command and Communications Vehicles</b>	251	17	14.76:1	—
<b>Engineering Vehicles</b>	345	84	4.11:1	↑
<b>Towed Artillery</b>	310	160	1.94:1	—
<b>Self-Propelled Howitzers/Mortars</b>	538	222	2.42:1	↓
<b>MLRS</b>	278	50	5.57:1	↑
<b>SAMs</b>	182	129	1.41:1	—
<b>Mobile Radars</b>	45	79	0.57:1	—
<b>EW/ECW</b>	54	4	13.50:1	—
<b>Winged Aircraft</b>	93	73	1.27:1	—
<b>Helicopters</b>	113	37	3.05:1	↓
<b>Naval Vessels and Submarines</b>	17	27	0.63:1	—

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

There weren't any significant reports from Russia about mobiks, mobilization, and mir. Most Russian channels were completely focused on the Israel-Hamas War.

### **GEOPOLITICS**

President of Moldova Maia Sandu said Private Military Company Wagner Group was behind an attempted coup in early 2023. In an interview with the Financial Times, Sandu said that Russia has attempted to break her government by weaponizing natural gas supplies, cyberattacks, and threats from Russian separatists in the unrecognized breakaway republic of Transnistria. Sandu said that Russia is now "trying to massively interfere in our elections using big money."<sup>25</sup>

The Czech Republic is reconfiguring its national defense policy, declaring the Russian Federation as the main threat to itself and the partner countries of NATO.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/117904>

<sup>26</sup> [https://t.me/couch\\_IU/44210](https://t.me/couch_IU/44210)

The United States expelled two Russian diplomats in retaliation to two of its diplomats being ejected from Moscow in September.<sup>27 28</sup>

The United States expressed concern over the Russian State Duma's intent to withdraw from the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty of 1996.<sup>29</sup> A 1962 treaty banned open-air and undersea nuclear tests but still permitted underground blasts. While the U.S. has honored the treaty, Congress never ratified it. In August, Russia stated it would not walk away unless the U.S. restarted underground testing. Satellite images show that Russia, the United States, and China are all working on improvements at their respective underground test sites. The last underground tests were conducted in 1990 by the Soviet Union, 1992 by the U.S., and 1996 by China.

Every time we mention Elon Musk, we get at least one angry message. We don't make the news; we just report it. Russian sources claim that Musk tried to arrange a meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin in 2023, but Moscow rejected the offer.<sup>30</sup> Kremlin officials say that Musk offered to fly to a country "friendly to the Russian Federation" to

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<sup>27</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/117898>

<sup>28</sup> <https://t.me/rusbrief/161842>

<sup>29</sup> <https://t.me/rusbrief/161905>

<sup>30</sup> <https://t.me/rusbrief/161868>

discuss “the Ukrainian conflict.” The Kremlin ultimately decided not to accept the offer because Putin allegedly felt it would be “inappropriate.”

## 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.

- Is President Biden going to request a one-and-done 2024 military aid package of \$100 billion for Ukraine?
- Did Russia destroy two Mig-29s and three Su-25s at Kryvyi Rih with new long-range Lancet kamikaze drones? Probably. Last day of entry.
- Have more than 280,000 Russian soldiers died in Ukraine since February 24, 2022?
- 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.