



**MALCONTENT NEWS  
RUSSIA-UKRAINE  
SITUATION REPORT**

September 16, 2023





# Malcontent News

## Russia-Ukraine War SITREP

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## **SUMMARY – DAY 569**

It has been 3,489 days since Russia occupied the Crimea Peninsula on January 27, 2014, and one year and 204 days since Russia expanded its war against Ukraine.

[Jump to the Action Report.](#)

- The city of Kharkiv has been attacked three times in the last 24 hours by Iskander-K and S-300 anti-aircraft missiles
- A Russian command and control base was destroyed in occupied Svitlodarsk
- There was limited fighting in Kharkiv, Luhansk, and northeastern Donetsk
- Russian and Ukrainian sources are reporting that Russian troops are no longer in Klishchiivka
- Russian forces committed fratricide in Andriivka when soldiers tried to surrender
- The Russian 82nd Airborne Assault Brigade was withdrawn from the Klishchiivka area of operation (AO)
- Limited fighting continued in the Avdiivka Marinka, Vuhledar, and Staromlynivka AOs

- The Ukrainian 46th Airmobile Brigade reported that in the Orikhiv AO, units have entered an operational pause
- A Russian firebase in Kamyanka-Dniprovska was destroyed
- Russian military assets and bases in Tokmak were heavily shelled
- Two bulk carriers crossed the green shipping corridor established by Ukraine and docked in the port of Chernomorsk
- Three large landing ships of the Black Sea Fleet were deployed to the Sea of Azov
- Odesa was attacked by up to ten cruise missiles and six drones, with grain and agricultural facilities struck
- Poland is building an upgraded wall along its border with the Russian enclave of Kaliningrad
- Moscow was attacked by at least two drones, forcing the closure of regional airports
- In the Oryol region of Russia, a Ukrainian drone struck a fuel storage tank at an oil depot
- The commander of the Ukrainian 47th Mechanized Brigade was relieved of command
- The United States has provided industrial 3D printers to make replacement parts on the battlefield
- Errors and omissions: the number of factories that produce 155 mm shells in the United States
- Update: Belgium support for training F-16 pilots

- The commander of the Russian 247th Air Assault Brigade was killed in action on September 11
- Russian forces have fielded another orphan military platform – 14 BMP1-U Shkval captured in Georgia in 2008
- The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff for the United States military believes that North Korea will provide ammunition to Russia
- Private Military Company Wagner Group provides an update on how the Kremlin continues its work to destroy the mercenary group

## **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. At the direction of President Vladimir Putin, the Russian government is in the largest purge of dissident voices and perceived internal enemies since the Soviet era, including the leaders, mercenaries, and employees of PMC Wagner, objective state media journalists and war bloggers, far-right nationalists

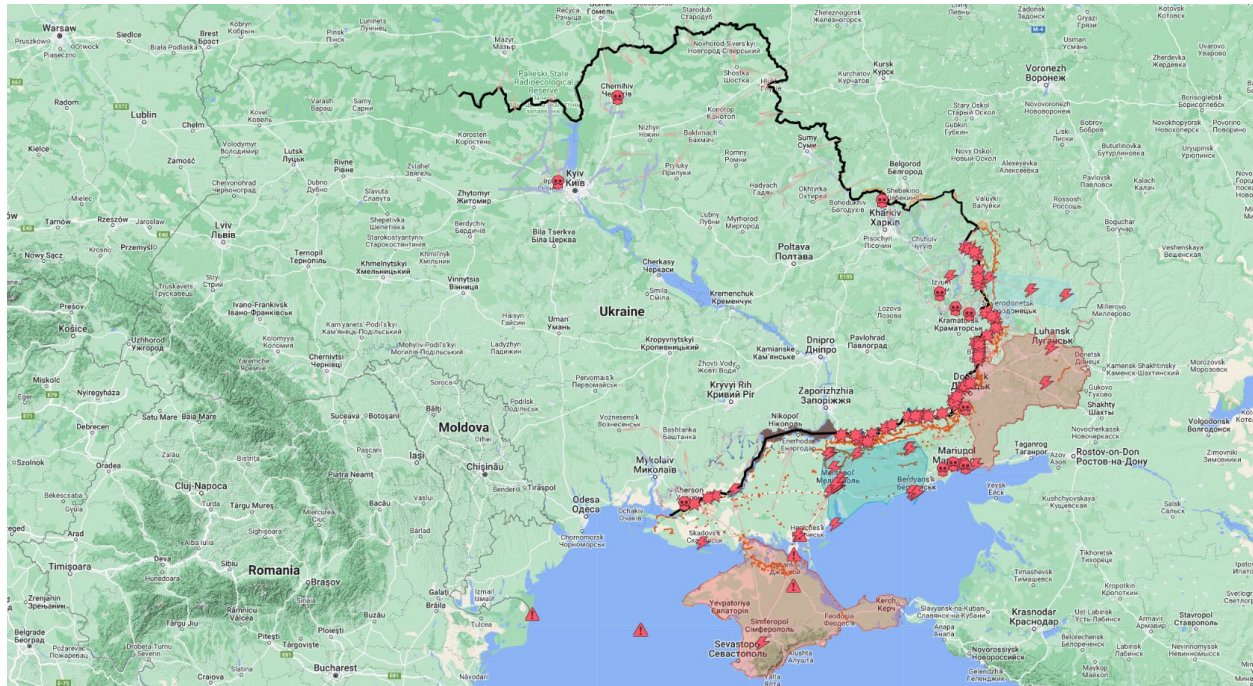
- who want the Kremlin to take more aggressive action in Ukraine, and human rights activists.
3. There remains a possibility of partisan violence within Russia after the killings of Yevgeny Prigozhin and Dmitry Utkin. President Putin's stature, both inside and outside of Russia, remains in a weakened state.
  4. We maintain that the soft response by Ukraine's allies after Russian aggression on Ukraine's border has further emboldened Moscow to take increasing risks, which could cause a significant international incident.
  5. Russian Chief of Staff Valery 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 adapt to the realities within the theater of war.
  6. 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.
  7. 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.

8. The growing number of combat ineffective and combat destroyed Russian units has forced commanders to commit strategic reserves meant for a fall-winter counteroffensive into defensive operations. Additionally, due to declining combat potential, Russian commanders are activating the reserves from the second and third echelons of the Prigozhin and Surovikin Lines.
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.





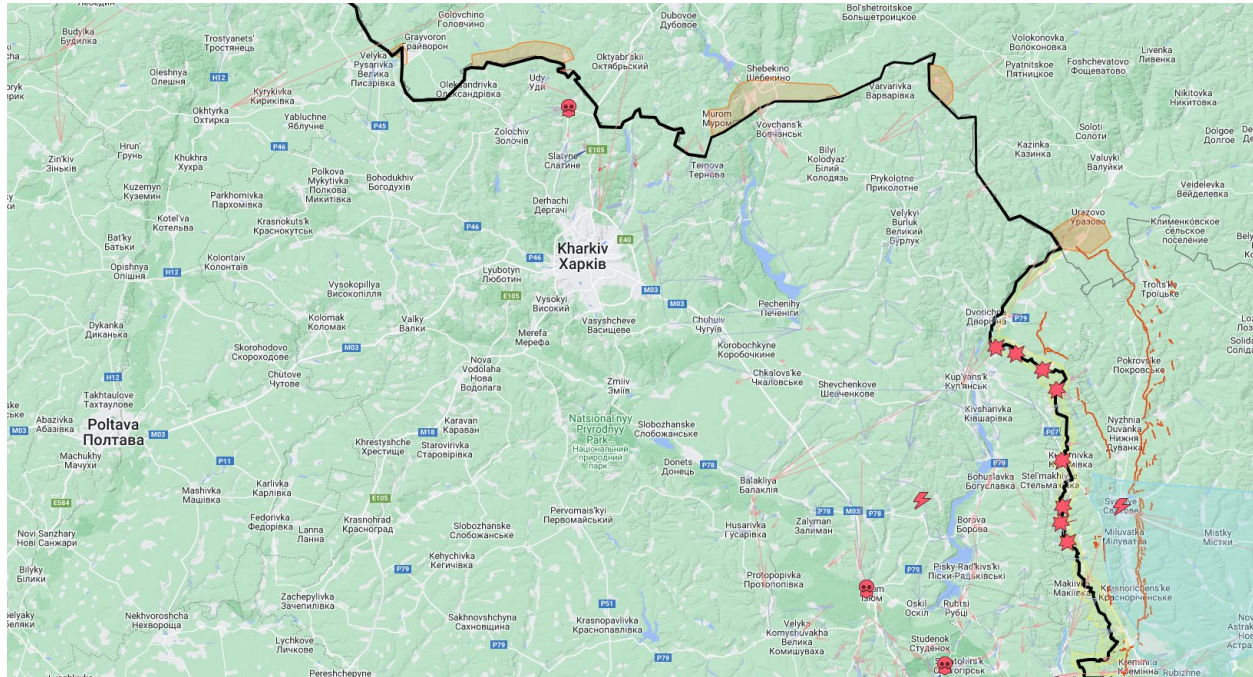
# TODAY'S WAR IN UKRAINE MAP



**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

There is conflicting information about the missile attack on Kharkiv from Ukrainian officials. Some are claiming the city

was hit by five S-300 anti-aircraft missiles used for a ground attack, fired from Belgorod, while the head of the Investigative Department of the Police for the Kharkiv Oblast, Serhiy Bolvinov, reporting that debris from Iskander-K ballistic cruise missiles was found.<sup>1</sup> Five people were wounded and required hospitalization.

At the time of publication, there were reports that four more S-300 anti-aircraft missiles had hit Kharkiv.<sup>2</sup>

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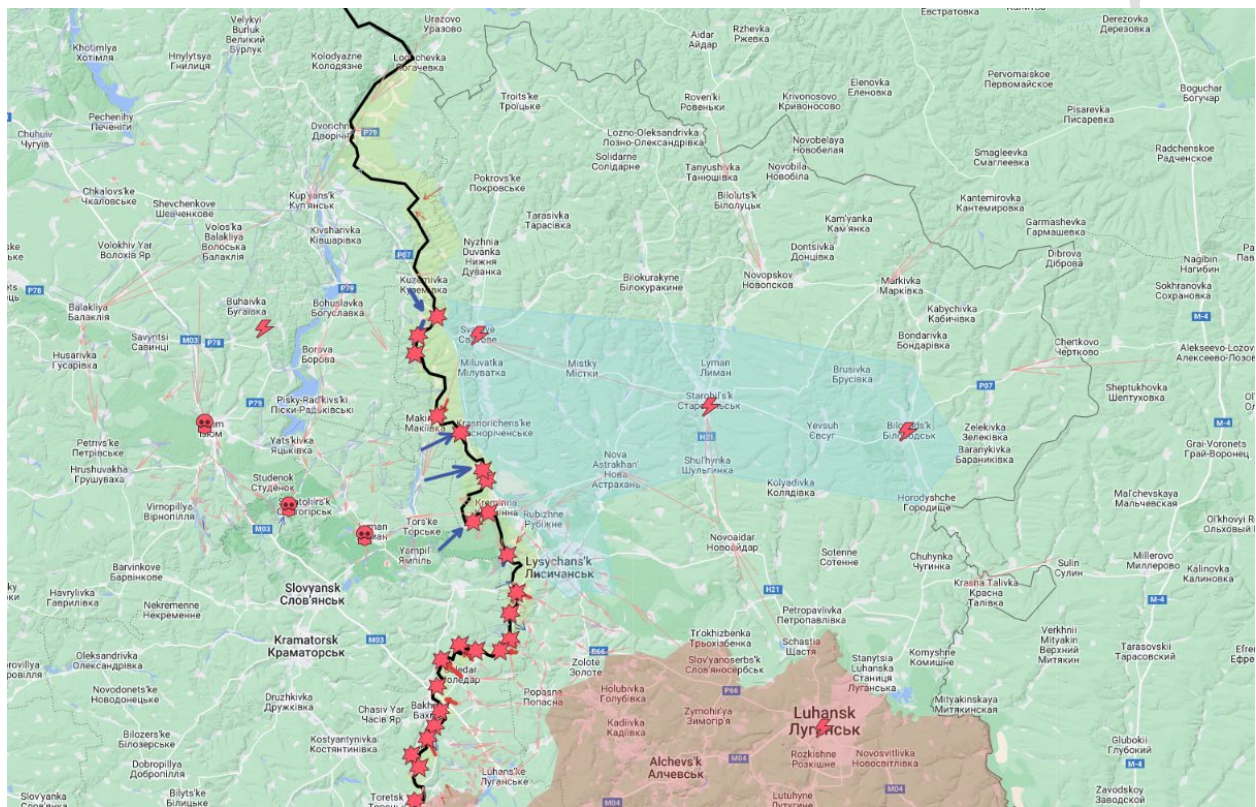
<sup>1</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/114732>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/09/17/7420162/>



# DONBAS REGION

## LUHANSK



**Russian Objective:** Defend against the Ukrainian offensive, maximize casualties, control insurgent activity, and set conditions to capture the rest of the region

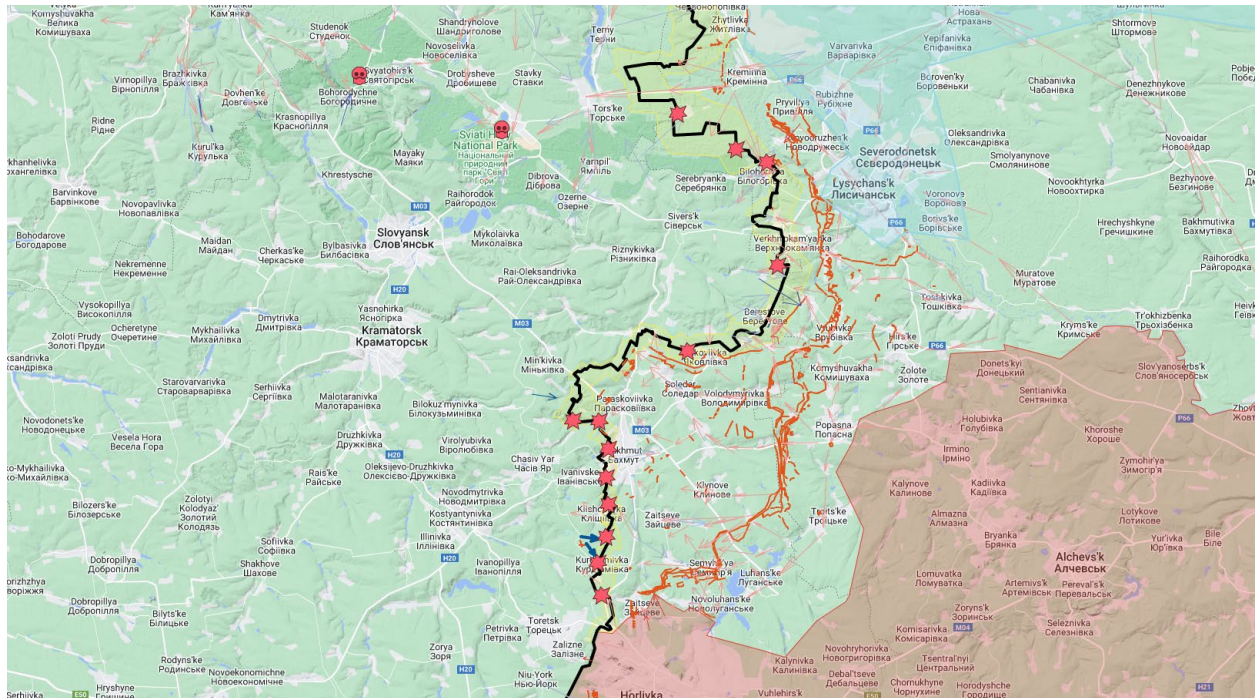
**Ukrainian Objective:** Break Russian defensive lines, advance on Svatove, Kreminna, and Lysychansk, and support insurgents



In the Svatove area of operation (AO), Russian forces conducted probing attacks east of [Novojehorivka](#). The operational tempo remains low.

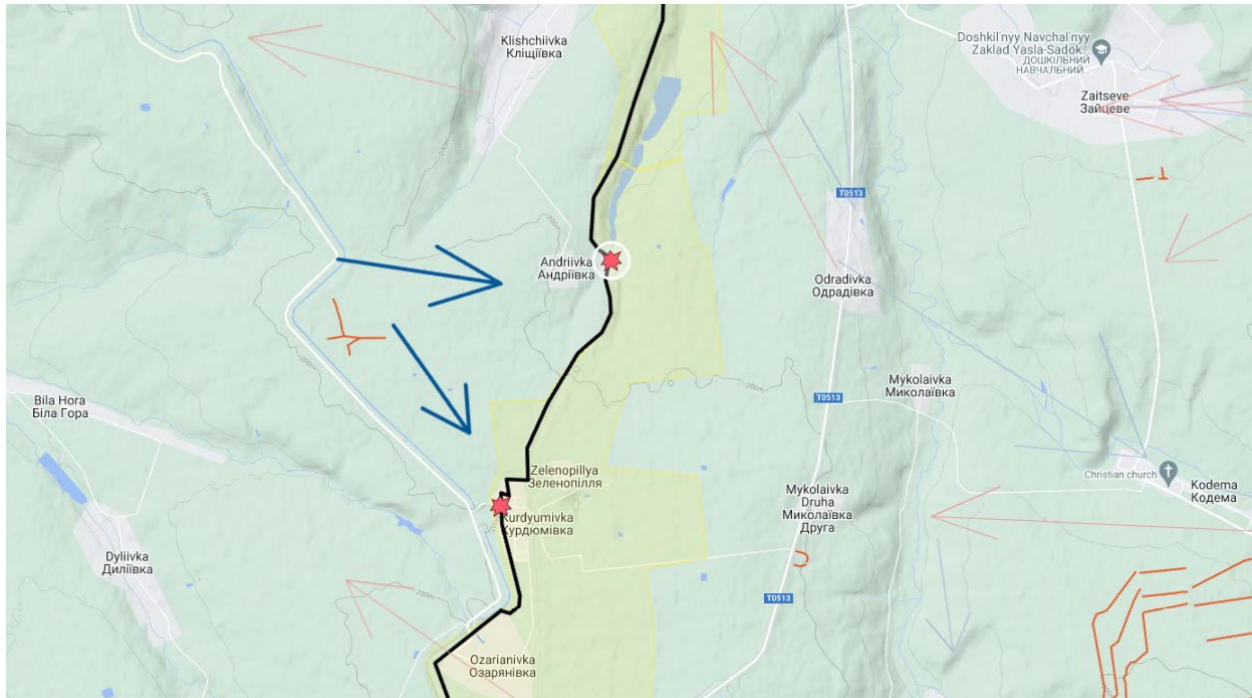
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# NORTHEAST DONETSK



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

**Ukrainian Objective:** Defend Siversk, collapse the Russian flanks north and south of Bakhmut, cut off the ground lines of communication into Bakhmut and Soledar and liberate both operational areas, push into the Luhansk oblast, and minimize civilian casualties




## Klishchiivka Operational Area


Multiple Ukrainian and Russian sources report that Ukrainian forces largely control [Klishchiivka](#), with Ukrainian source DeepState saying that the “mopping up operation continues.”<sup>3</sup> The General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (GSAFU) wrote, “Our soldiers are successful in the Klishchiivka area of the Donetsk region.”<sup>4</sup> While this may seem pedantic, there is a significant difference in the Ukrainian reports between “partial success” and “success.” A prominent Russian milblogger declared, “Most of Klishchiivka is also behind the Ukrainian

<sup>3</sup> <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/17604>

<sup>4</sup> <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/12033>

Armed Forces.”<sup>5</sup> Another Russian milblogger declared that Klishchiivka was under Ukrainian control. GSAFU added that Russian forces attempted multiple counterattacks on Klishchiivka, which failed.<sup>6</sup>

The Ukrainian 3rd Separate Assault Brigade released a video  [holding a flag](#) in what was once [Andriivka](#).<sup>7</sup> Some have found the flag displayed as problematic, using a sun wheel, which was retired from the Azov unit badge in 2022.

On the subject of bad looks, the 3rd Separate Assault Brigade released a drone video showing the capture of Russian soldiers during the liberation of Andriivka. As they took three soldiers into custody and a fourth emerged, Russian forces  [committed fratricide by shelling their surrendering troops](#).<sup>8</sup> The shell landed directly on one of the prisoners, obliterating them. As the smoke clears, it appears the round crashed through the rubble of a destroyed home into the basement, saving the three other Russian soldiers and the Ukrainian squad taking them into custody.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://t.me/wargonzo/15068>

<sup>6</sup> <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/12033>

<sup>7</sup> <https://t.me/uniannet/111569>


<sup>8</sup> <https://twitter.com/AleksandrX13/status/1702978701636342216>



On September 16, Russian forces counterattacked east of Andriivka and tried to push Ukrainian forces back from [Kurdyumivka](#).<sup>9</sup> Neither attack was successful.

In a further sign that the Russian Ministry of Defense sees Klishchiivka as a lost cause, the Russian 82nd Airborne Assault (VDV) Brigade is being withdrawn and redeployed to Zaporizhzhia.

## Occupied Donetsk

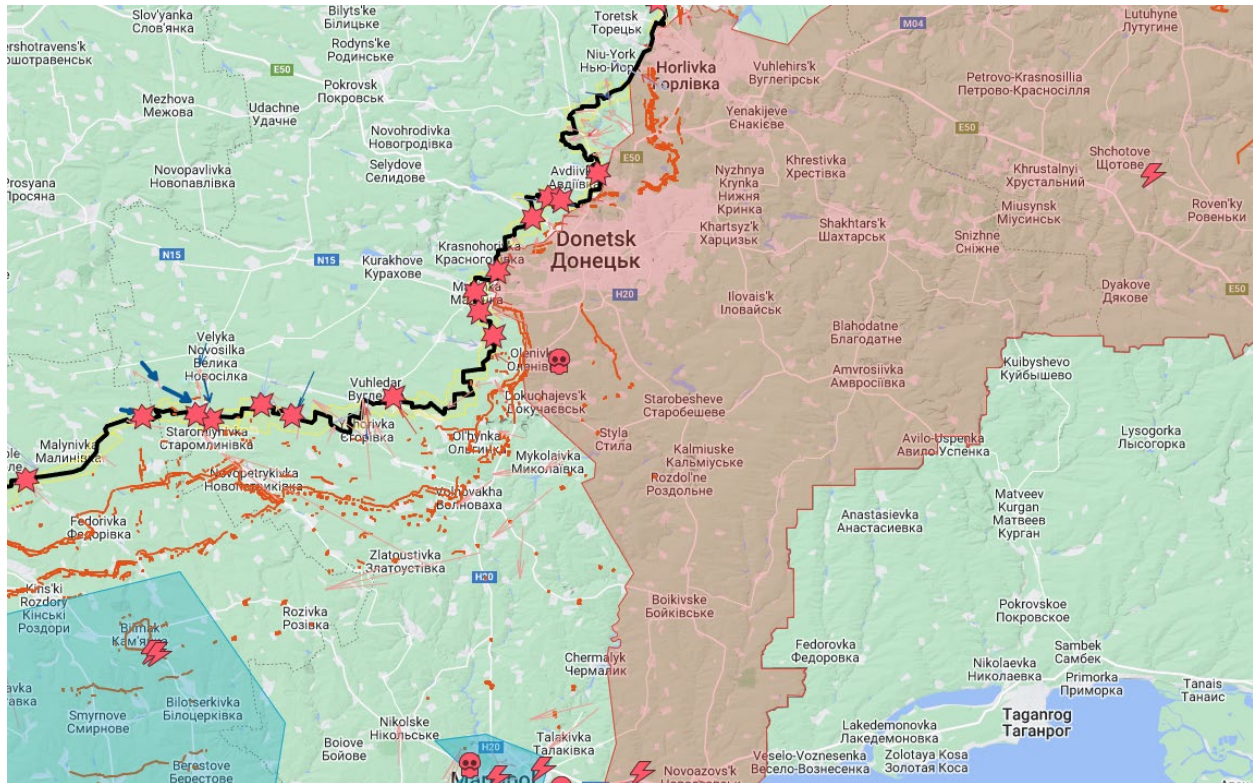
In Svitlodarsk, the Ukrainian Air Force hit a Russian command and control base embedded in a civilian area with JDAM-ER glide bombs,  [destroying the facility and a BUK air defense system](#).<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/12033>

<sup>10</sup> <https://x.com/markito0171/status/170329563177792347>

## SOUTHWESTERN DONETSK



**Russian Objective:** Defend against the Ukrainian offensive, maximize casualties, and capture the remainder of the oblast




**Ukrainian Objective:** Find and exploit Russian defensive weaknesses, set conditions for an offensive in the Volnovakha and Mariupol directions, destroy troop concentrations and command and control sites, interdict supplies, and disrupt logistics

## Avdiivka Marinka, Vuhledar, and Staromlynivka Operational Areas

Russian forces attempt to advance into the lost positions on the northern edge of [Opytne](#) and through the no man's land between [Vodyane and Sjevrne](#).<sup>11 12</sup>

Intense positional fighting continued in [Marinka](#).<sup>13</sup>

### Occupied Donetsk

In occupied Khartsyzk, a warehouse exploded  [and burned to the ground](#).<sup>14</sup> There was a sound   [similar to small arms ammunition cooking off](#), and the fire department was letting the fire burn out. It is important to note that other materials can pop when burning in a large fire.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> <https://t.me/wargonzo/15068>

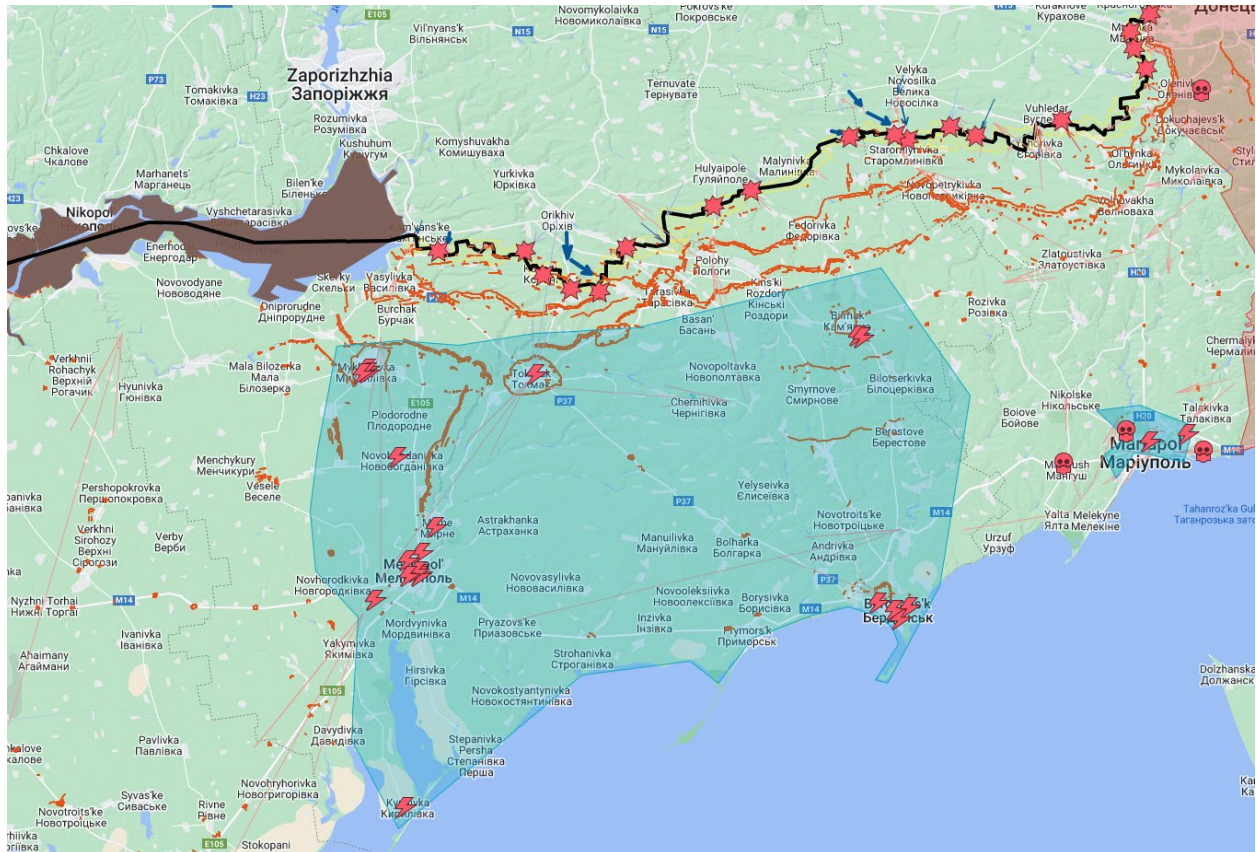
<sup>12</sup> <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/12033>

<sup>13</sup> <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/12033>

<sup>14</sup> <https://t.me/itsdonetsk/101765>

<sup>15</sup> <https://t.me/itsdonetsk/101766>

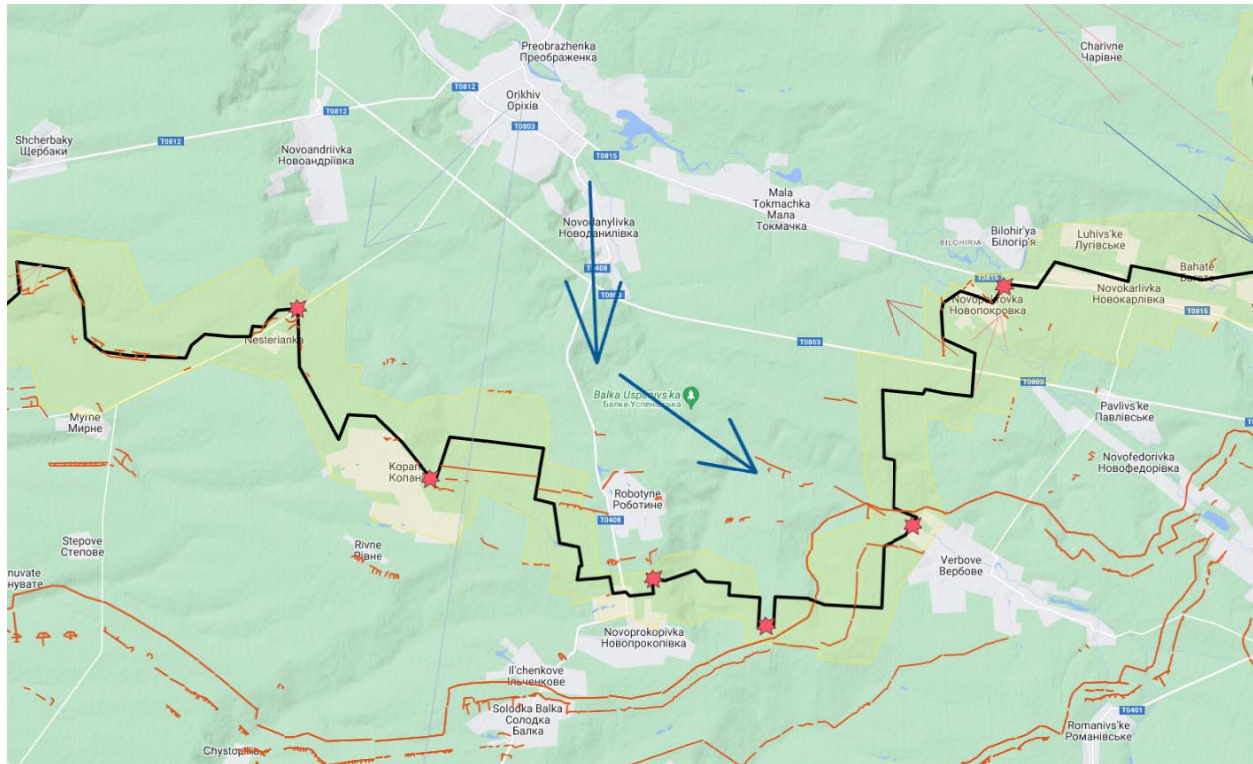
# ZAPORIZHIA



**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:** Break through the Surovikin Line and sever the Russian landbridge from Crimea to Donetsk, liberate Russian-occupied areas, and protect civilians





## Orikhiv Operational Area


The Ukrainian 46th Airmobile Brigade reported that Ukrainian troops were in an operational pause throughout the AO.<sup>16</sup> Ukrainian forces continue to make tactical gains west of [Verbove](#) and in the direction of [Novoprokopivka](#).<sup>17</sup> Russian forces still control part of the heights northeast of [Novoprokopivka](#). A Russian milblogger reported that

<sup>16</sup> <https://t.me/odshbr46/1318>

<sup>17</sup> <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/17604>

Russian forces were attempting to advance in the direction of Novodanylivka from [Kopani](#).<sup>18</sup>

## Occupied Zaporizhzhia

In Kamyanka-Dniprovska, a Russian firebase and ammunition depot that has been firing across the Dnipro River into the Nikopol raion in Dnipropetrovsk  [was destroyed by Ukrainian counterbattery](#).<sup>19</sup>

The exiled mayor of Melitopol, Ivan Fedorov, reported that Ukrainian forces heavily shelled the occupied city of Tokmak, a key Russian logistics hub.<sup>20</sup>

## Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant

There was no change in the status of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant.

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<sup>18</sup> <https://t.me/wargonzo/15068>

<sup>19</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/114734>

<sup>20</sup> [https://t.me/ivan\\_fedorov\\_melitopol/3196](https://t.me/ivan_fedorov_melitopol/3196)

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

### **Black Sea**

There were no reports on the number and type of vessels from the Black Sea Fleet on patrol.

The Minister of Infrastructure of Ukraine, Alexander Kubrakov, reported that the bulk carriers Resilient Africa and Aroyat became the first vessels to run Russia's unenforced blockade and arrived in Chernomorsk to take on grain bound for Africa and Asia, respectively.<sup>21 22</sup> At the time of publication, both vessels had completed loading and were at the mouth of the Danube River, heading toward Romanian territorial waters.

The Russian Navy positioned three of the six remaining large landing ships in the Sea of Azov, likely in an attempt to shield them from missile and drone attacks.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> <https://t.me/uniannet/111539>


<sup>22</sup> <https://t.me/astrapress/37901>

<sup>23</sup> [https://t.me/couch\\_IU/42647](https://t.me/couch_IU/42647)

## Occupied Crimea

There weren't any significant developments.

### Odesa

The Russian Aerospace Forces (VKS) launched 10 Kh-101/Kh-555 cruise missiles from Tu-95 strategic bombers. After flying a complex course across Ukraine, the missiles targeted the Berezivka Raion, destroying grain  [and hitting an agricultural enterprise](#).<sup>24</sup>

Operational Command South (OKS) reported air defenses  [shot down six cruise missiles](#) and six Shahed-136 kamikaze drones.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> [https://t.me/our\\_odessa/53902](https://t.me/our_odessa/53902)

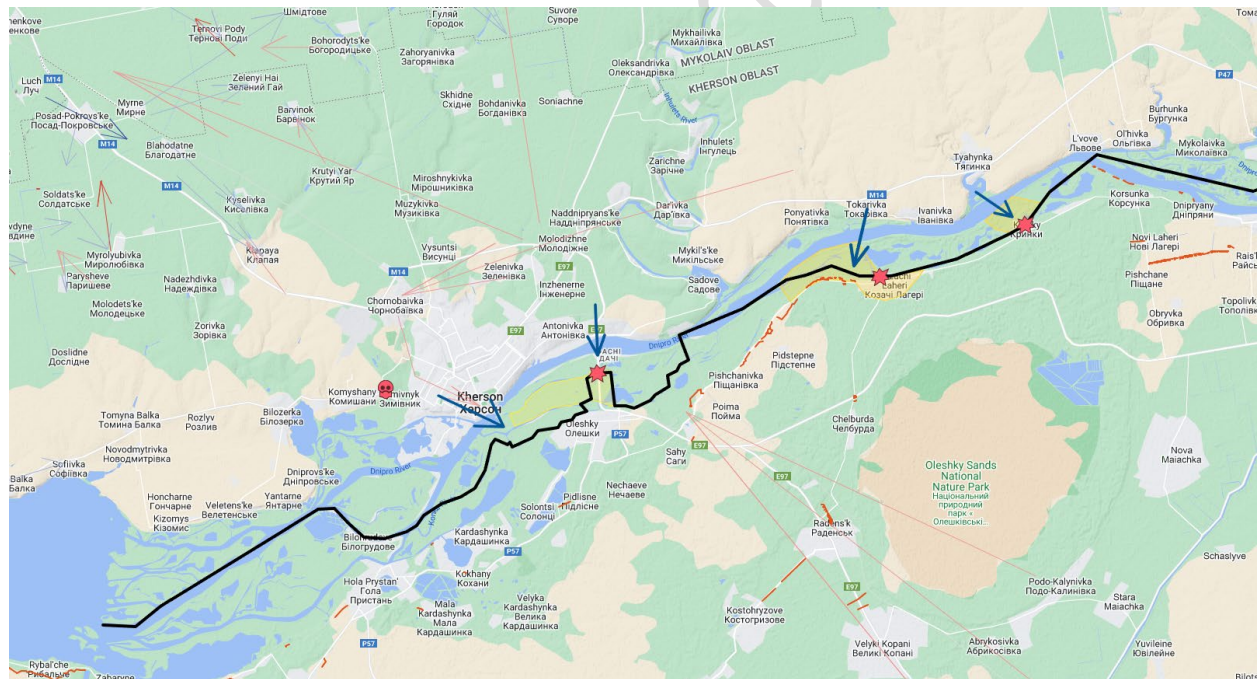
<sup>25</sup> <https://t.me/DPSUkr/13656>



# 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



There weren't any significant events.

## 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 weren't any significant events.

## 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 weren't any significant updates 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


### **Kaliningrad**

Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki said Poland would build an improved wall on its border of the Russian enclave of Kaliningrad. Poland built a barbed wire fence after Russia expanded its war of aggression against Ukraine and threatened to attack Poland through the Suwalki Gap in 2022. Morawiecki said the barbed wire will be replaced by a wall similar to the one on the border with Belarus.

## Moscow

The mayor of Moscow, Sergei Sobyenin, reported that Russian air defenses shot down Ukrainian drones in the Istra and Ramensky districts without incident.<sup>26 27</sup>

## Oryol

A Ukrainian drone struck a fuel depot in the Zheleznodorozhny district of Oryol,  [setting the tank on fire](#).<sup>28 29</sup> Russian officials dismissed the damage as minimal despite facing an increasingly worsening fuel shortage.

## BELARUSIAN FRONT

There were no significant developments.

## THEATERWIDE

The Ukrainian 47th Separate Mechanized Brigade commander, Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Sak, was relieved of command and replaced by Colonel Alexander

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<sup>26</sup> <https://t.me/vchkogpu/41843>

<sup>27</sup> [https://t.me/shot\\_shot/57005](https://t.me/shot_shot/57005)

<sup>28</sup> [https://t.me/shot\\_shot/57005](https://t.me/shot_shot/57005)

<sup>29</sup> <https://t.me/vchkogpu/41843>



Pavliy. The Ministry of Defense of Ukraine did not respond to a request for comment.<sup>30</sup>

***Errors and Omissions:*** Yesterday, we reported that the United States has a single factory that produces 155 mm artillery rounds. That information is technically inaccurate. The Army Ammunition Plant in Scranton, Pennsylvania, and the General Dynamics Ordnance and Tactical Facility in nearby Wilkes Barre produce 155 mm shells. The shells are then transferred to a U.S. Army facility in Iowa, where they are filled. The U.S. has contracted to build two more facilities to produce 155 mm shells in the state of Texas and Canada. The Iowa facility is also being expanded. We thank you for your understanding and appreciate the feedback from a keen-eyed reader.

The U.S. has provided Ukraine with industrial-level 3D printers capable of printing spare parts for military equipment at forward operating bases on the battlefield.<sup>31</sup>

There were more details about Belgium's support for training Ukrainian pilots to fly the F-16. Belgium will provide two F-16s for the training program and 50 military

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<sup>30</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/114716>

<sup>31</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/114709>

personnel, mostly technical, to service Belgium and coalition aircraft.<sup>32</sup>

The table for equipment losses was **updated on September 13, 2023**, and includes the losses suffered during the Prigozhin Insurrection of June 23 – 24.

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<sup>32</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/114701>

## 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 13, 2023.

12,153 Russian (including [Chef's Rebellion](#)) vs. 4,433 Ukrainian

Equipment	Russian Losses	Ukrainian Losses	Ratio	Change
<b>Main Battle Tanks</b>	2165	283	7.65:1	↓
<b>Medium Duty Tanks</b>	148	366	0.40:1	—
<b>Armored fighting Vehicles</b>	977	325	3.01:1	—
<b>Infantry Fighting Vehicles</b>	2781	746	3.73:1	—
<b>Armored Personnel Carriers</b>	351	345	1.02:1	↓
<b>MRAPs</b>	47	157	0.30:1	—
<b>Infantry Mobility Vehicles</b>	207	370	0.56:1	—
<b>Command and Communications Vehicles</b>	251	17	14.76:1	↓
<b>Engineering Vehicles</b>	342	81	4.22:1	↓
<b>Towed Artillery</b>	299	159	1.88:1	↑
<b>Self-Propelled Howitzers/Mortars</b>	521	215	2.42:1	↑
<b>MLRS</b>	269	50	5.38:1	↑
<b>SAMs</b>	169	129	1.31:1	↑
<b>Mobile Radars</b>	45	77	0.58:1	↓
<b>EW/ECW</b>	54	4	13.50:1	↑
<b>Winged Aircraft</b>	91	71	1.28:1	↑
<b>Helicopters</b>	112	35	3.20:1	↓
<b>Naval Vessels and Submarines</b>	17	27	0.63:1	↑

## RUSSIAN MOBILIZATION, MOBIKS, AND MIR

Lieutenant Colonel Vasilij Popov, the Commander of the Russian 247th VDV Regiment, was killed in action on September 11, 2023.<sup>33</sup> Popov was the 251st Lieutenant Colonel or Colonel killed in action in Ukraine since February 24, 2022, and the 257th senior officer killed. Since Russia expanded its war of aggression against Ukraine, 2,828 officers have been confirmed killed, not including officers of the 1st Army Corps of the so-called Donetsk People's Republic or the 2nd Army Corps of the so-called Luhansk People's Republic.<sup>34</sup>

Russia has deployed BMP-1U Skhval infantry fighting vehicles (IFVs) that they captured during their war of aggression against Georgia. Russia captured 14 of the Ukrainian upgraded IFVs during the 2008 war. This is the second military platform observed in Ukraine over the last week, where Russia has very limited numbers in inventory and no practical way to service in the field or replace losses.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/114713>

<sup>34</sup> <https://x.com/KilledInUkraine/status/1702650074394706036>

<sup>35</sup> [https://t.me/couch\\_IU/42642](https://t.me/couch_IU/42642)



U.S. General Mark Milley, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said that North Korea would likely provide Russian with 152 mm ammunition but did not believe that it would change the course of the war. "Will it have a huge impact? I'm skeptical about it. I doubt it will be decisive."<sup>36</sup>

Private Military Company Wagner Group Telegram channel Gray Zone wrote a lengthy update about the situation within the mercenary group and how the Kremlin is dismantling the company in Africa. We are publishing the translated post in its entirety with only minor edits for readability.

*"Among the top management of the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation who visited the African countries, we saw Deputy Minister of Defense Colonel General Yunus-Bek Yevkurov and Army General Sergei Surovikin, and even the deputy head of the Main Directorate (GRU) of the General Staff, the head of 'one of the main' areas of intelligence – General Lieutenant Vladimir Alekseev."*

*"And it would seem much more mysterious, but now Major General Andrei Averyanov, commander (according to open*

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<sup>36</sup> <https://t.me/uniannet/111563>

*data) of military unit No. 29155, recently known in the world, has been spotted in MaliGU General Staff on the basis of the 161st training center for specialists. Andrei Averyanov was also previously spotted at the Russia-Africa summit, where Yevgeny Prigozhin was once present behind the scenes."*

*"From the moment after the death of the leadership of the Wagner Group, analysts began to note the activity of the Russian military leadership in Africa. A number of cases have occurred in the countries where the Wagner Group operates, which many connect with the reshaping of spheres of [political] influence."*

*"Recently, on public display, we saw the story of what happened in Syria, when a plane with 'Wagner contractors' was returning from Africa to Syria, it was decided to prevent its landing at a Syrian airfield by any means, even using military aircraft. The 'musicians' [a term Wagner uses to describe their mercenaries – Ed.] were ready to strike the ministry's facilities in Libya in response. A number of representatives of the ministry came to the other 'orchestra' [a term Wagner uses to describe a group of mercenaries – Ed.] facilities in Syria, where they set the conditions for staying in the country or rather the lack*

*thereof. Some were told almost verbatim – we will crush you here.”*

*“Now, in just over a week, two Wagner Mi-8 helicopters, one Su-25 attack aircraft, and an An-26 transport aircraft have crashed in Africa. Some of the aircraft suddenly crashed due to technical malfunctions, while others struck the ground. [it is unclear what the difference is – Ed.] Moreover, local Islamic militants did not rush to make statements about the downing of our aircraft [and learned about] the incident only after discovering the remains of [our] aircraft on the ground. And according to the guys from the ‘orchestra’ in Africa, many thoughts creep into their minds about why such a massive air attack suddenly occurred.”*

*“All of this is aggravated by information about the expansion of the ‘Russian Expeditionary Force’ (REC), which continues to be formed by the 45th Separate Special-Purpose Brigade of the Russian Airborne Forces (not being one whole). And not so much by the formation of the Redut PMC but by its recently increased staff. The increase in staff from 2,500 to 12,000 personnel was surprising, now the number of planned staff has exceeded 20,000, and in the future should increase to 40,000.”*

*“Many at the front in the Northern Military District Zone [Ukraine – Ed.] are now looking at these plans with amazement when there is already a shortage of personnel in the confrontation with the Ukrainian Armed Forces. And then a second front opens, which now has mediocre significance and could be a trick of Western countries for us to fail in Africa, tying us up in another Afghanistan.”*

*“The ‘Musicians’ are surprised by the number of staff of REC. The Wagner Group carried out tasks in African countries with 5 to 10 times less personnel than REC and when the situation in the region was much more difficult. Both sides are inclined to believe that REC will become another toy for [personal] enrichment and a waste of resources – material, technical, and human. And all this [is happening] when we have a full-scale war on our border, where it’s impossible to say that everything is going according to plan.”*

## **RUMORS**

Many of the 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.

- Drone strikes in Crimea
- ATACMS is coming to Ukraine
- Taurus cruise missiles are coming to Ukraine
- Aspiring dentist and Colonel General Ramzan don don Kadyrov is still in a coma with some claims that he died




## 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.

 **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:** We only use their reports about large-scale artillery and HIMARS strikes in the occupied territories.

⊖ **Leonid Pasechnik:** We do not use any combat, territorial control changes, troop movements, casualty claims, or equipment destroyed claims from the self-declared 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 self-declared 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 Melitopol.

✔ **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 official 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.