

Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment

Riley Bailey, Angelica Evans, Christina Harward, Grace Mappes, and Frederick W. Kagan

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Click here to see ISW's interactive map of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. This map is updated daily alongside the static maps present in this report.

Click here to see ISW's 3D control of terrain topographic map of Ukraine. Use of a computer (not a mobile device) is strongly recommended for using this data-heavy tool.

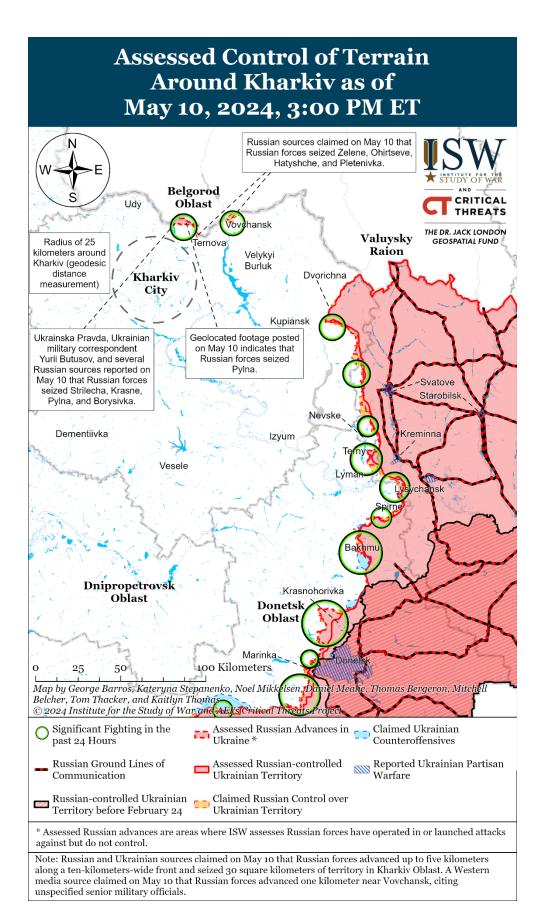
Click here to access ISW's archive of interactive time-lapse maps of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. These maps complement the static control-of-terrain map that ISW produces daily by showing a dynamic frontline. ISW will update this time-lapse map archive monthly.

Note: The data cut-off for this product was 1:15pm ET on May 10. ISW will cover subsequent reports in the May 11 Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment.

Russian forces began an offensive operation along the Russian-Ukrainian border in northern Kharkiv Oblast on the morning of May 10 and made tactically significant gains. Russian forces are likely conducting the initial phase of an offensive operation north of Kharkiv City that has limited operational objectives but is meant to achieve the strategic effect of drawing Ukrainian manpower and materiel from other critical sectors of the front in eastern Ukraine. Russian forces have so far launched two limited efforts in the area, one north of Kharkiv City in the direction of Lyptsi and one northeast of Kharkiv City near Vovchansk. The Ukrainian Ministry of Defense (MoD) reported that Russian armored assault groups of an unspecified size attempted to break through Ukrainian defenses near Vovchansk early in the morning and that fighting continued in the area after Ukrainian forces repelled the Russian assaults.[1] Russian and Ukrainian sources stated that Russian forces also began infantry-heavy assaults between Strilecha (north of Lyptsi) and Zelene (northeast of Lyptsi) on the night of May 9 to 10.[2] Russian and Ukrainian sources reported that Russian forces significantly intensified airstrikes, shelling, and MLRS strikes against Ukrainian positions, logistics, and infrastructure ahead of and during Russian offensive operations in these areas.[3]

Ukrainian journalist Yuriy Butusov and Ukrainian outlet *Ukrainska Pravda* reported that Russian forces seized Strilecha, Krasne, Pylna, and Borisivka (all north to northeast of Lyptsi), and Butusov reported that Russian forces have established a foothold in the area five kilometers deep and 10 kilometers wide.[4] Geolocated footage confirms that Russian forces have seized Pylna and advanced south of the settlement, and Russian sources have also widely claimed that Russian forces seized Strilecha, Krasne, and Borisivka.[5] NASA Fire Information for Resource Management (FIRMS) data

from May 10 indicates that heavy fighting has likely occurred in and near these four settlements.[6] ISW assesses with high confidence, based on credible Ukrainian reporting and the preponderance of evidence, that Russian forces have seized Strilecha, Krasne, and Borisivka, but has yet to observe geolocated confirmation of this assessment. Russian milbloggers also claimed that Russian forces seized Zelene, Ohirtseve, and Hatyshche (both west of Vovchansk), although ISW has not observed confirmation of these claims.[7] *Reuters* reported that a senior Ukrainian military source stated that Russian forces advanced at least one kilometer in depth near Vovchansk.[8] ISW assesses that Russian forces have advanced in the direction of Vovchansk but has not observed enough evidence to assess an approximate frontline trace in the immediate area. Ukrainian sources reported that fighting continued near Krasne, Morokhovets (northeast of Lyptsi), Oliinykove (northeast of Lyptsi), and Hatyshche later in the afternoon.[9]



Russian forces will likely leverage their tactical foothold in northern Kharkiv Oblast in the coming days to intensify offensive operations and pursue the initial phase of an offensive effort likely intended to push back Ukrainian forces from the border with Belgorod Oblast and advance to within tube artillery range of Kharkiv City. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky stated that Russian forces have started "a new wave of offensive actions" in the Kharkiv direction, and Ukrainian officials have been warning about a Russian offensive effort in the direction of Kharkiv City in recent months.[10] Available combat footage suggests that Russian forces committed relatively limited manpower and a limited number of armored vehicles to their initial assaults.[11] Russian forces have been establishing the Northern Grouping of Forces along Ukraine's northern border with Bryansk, Kursk, and Belgorod oblasts and have reportedly concentrated between 35,000 and 50,000 personnel in the area.[12] Russian and Ukrainian sources did not specify the Russian elements that launched the offensive operations along the border, but it is highly likely that Russian forces have reserves ready to commit to intensify their offensive operations north of Kharkiv City in the coming days. Western and Ukrainian media reported that Ukrainian military sources stated that Russian forces intend to establish a 10-kilometer buffer zone along the northern border in Kharkiv Oblast, a zone likely intended to push Ukrainian forces out of tube artillery range of Russian logistics in Belgorod Oblast and bring Russian forces within tube artillery range of Kharkiv City.[13] Russian forces are unlikely to deploy tube artillery right along the frontline, so Russian forces likely intend to advance closer to Kharkiv City than the 25-kilometer range of most Soviet tube artillery systems. Russian forces are currently approximately 30 kilometers from the outskirts of Kharkiv City, and a Russian advance to within 20 kilometers of the city would likely allow Russian forces to conduct routine indirect fire against Kharkiv City with tube artillery. Routine indirect fire, in combination with continued glide bomb and missile strikes, would likely be intended to set conditions for a larger offensive effort against Kharkiv City at a later date.

The limited efforts that Russian forces are currently conducting do not suggest that Russian forces are immediately pursuing a large-scale sweeping offensive operation to envelop, encircle, and seize Kharkiv City, however. Russian operations in the Vovchansk direction do not immediately support an advance towards Kharkiv City since Vovchansk is located on the eastern side of the Siverskyi Donets River and Pechenizkyi Reservoir. *Ukrainska Pravda* reported that Ukrainian military sources are considering that Russian offensive actions near Vovchansk may be diversionary.[14] Russian offensive operations near Vovchansk may intend to draw defending Ukrainian units from the area north of Kharkiv City to the other side of the Siverskyi Donets River and Pechenizkyi Reservoir or may intend to draw Ukrainian elements currently defending against resumed Russian offensive operations in the Kupyansk area away from that line. Russian advances in the Vovchansk area could also allow Russian forces to pressure the operational rear of Ukrainian forces defending in the Kupyansk direction. The Russian effort in the Lyptsi direction could support a narrow frontal assault against Kharkiv City, although it is highly unlikely that the Russian military command, which has been improving its operational planning in recent months, would pursue such a vulnerable avenue of advance towards Kharkiv City.[15] Russian forces are likely conducting offensive operations in the Lyptsi area because it offers the most direct route to advance to within effective tube artillery range of Kharkiv City.

Russian offensive operations along the Kharkiv international border likely have the strategic objective of drawing and fixing Ukrainian forces to this axis to enable Russian advances in other areas of eastern Ukraine. Ukrainian Khortytsia Group of Forces Spokesperson Lieutenant Colonel Nazar Voloshyn stated that Russian forces are attempting to incite panic in

Ukrainian forces to cause them to divert resources and manpower from Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts to Kharkiv Oblast.[16] Russian forces have sought to take advantage of opportunities to advance in multiple sectors of the frontline in eastern Ukraine due to Ukrainian manpower and materiel shortages in recent weeks, achieving tactical gains northwest and west of Avdiivka as well as intensifying efforts towards Chasiv Yar.[17] Resuming offensive efforts in northern Kharkiv Oblast and achieving even tactically significant gains could cause the Ukrainian military command to dedicate manpower and materiel to the defense north of Kharkiv City that it could otherwise dedicate to defending elsewhere. Ukrainian Commander in Chief Colonel General Oleksandr Syrskyi reported on April 28 that Ukrainian forces deployed artillery and tank units to the "most threatened" areas in the Kharkiv direction, and the Ukrainian MoD reported on May 10 that Ukrainian forces have already deployed additional reserves to defend against the Russian offensive operation in northern Kharkiv Oblast.[18] This Russian offensive effort likely aims to stretch Ukraine's limited resources and worsen Ukrainian manpower constraints by forcing Ukraine to respond to ongoing Russian offensive operations across a wider swath of territory in eastern Ukraine. The Russian military command likely hopes that this strategic effort to draw and fix Ukrainian forces in the Kharkiv direction will weaken the Ukrainian defense in aggregate and allow Russian forces to achieve a breakthrough in any area that becomes the most vulnerable. Russian forces will likely attempt to exploit this intended theater-wide effect to intensify efforts to expand the breach northwest of Avdiivka and push to seize Chasiv Yar, especially as Ukrainian forces continue to wait for US and other Western aid to reach the frontlines at scale.

ISW continues to assess that Russian forces will likely struggle to seize Kharkiv City **should they aim to do so.** A Russian effort to seize Kharkiv City would require long drives across open terrain on a scale that Russian forces have not conducted since the start of the full-scale invasion.[19] Some reported elements of the Russian Northern Grouping of Forces may not be highly combat-effective. Elements of the 6th Combined Arms Army (Leningrad Military District) are reportedly operating as part of the Russian Northern Grouping of Forces, but these forces failed to make significant tactical gains despite repeated mass infantry and mechanized assaults over a months-long offensive in the Kupyansk direction.[20] The Russian Northern Grouping of Forces likely also lacks the quantity of personnel required to conduct an operation as ambitious as the seizure of Kharkiv City successfully. Russian opposition outlet *Verstka* reported in March 2024, citing a Kremlin source, that the Russian military assesses that it needs 300,000 additional personnel (roughly 60 percent of the approximately 510,000 personnel Russian forces currently have in Ukraine) in order to launch an operation to encircle Kharkiv City.[21] Ukrainian sources have indicated that Russian forces in the international border area are far below this quantity, however. Ukrainian Main Military Intelligence Directorate (GUR) Deputy Chief Major General Vadym Skibitskyi stated on May 2 that Russian forces have currently concentrated roughly 35,000 personnel in the international border area and plan to concentrate a total of 50,000 to 70,000 personnel in this area.[22] Ukrainian military observer Kostvantyn Mashovets stated on May 5 that the Russian military has gathered about 50,000 troops in the Northern Grouping of Forces in Kursk, Belgorod, and Bryansk oblasts, with 31,000 troops in Belgorod Oblast.[23] Russian forces have previously demonstrated an inability to conduct large-scale offensive operations in multiple directions simultaneously, and the Russian military does not appear to have established a "strategic reserve" on a scale that would be able to support two or more large-scale offensive operations in the near future.[24] A large-scale Russian effort to seize Kharkiv City would therefore likely require Russian forces to deprioritize other critical sectors of the front and redeploy a significant quantity of forces to the international border area, which Russian forces are highly unlikely to do given the Russian military's longtime objective of seizing the remainder of Luhansk and Donetsk oblasts.

Russian forces likely decided to launch offensive operations along the international border area to take the best advantage of the relatively brief time left before Western aid arrives at the Ukrainian frontline at scale. Ukrainian officials have recently stated that Russian forces may plan to seize Kharkiv or Sumy cities in a Russian offensive effort in late May or early June 2024.[25] The Russian military command may have decided to begin offensive operations in the Kharkiv direction before this late May-June period in order to take advantage of the limited time window before Western military aid reaches Ukrainian frontline units in sufficient quantities to complicate Russian offensive capabilities. ISW has recently assessed that Russian forces are trying to take advantage of this closing window in order to pursue tactical gains throughout eastern Ukraine.[26]

Ukrainian Ground Forces Commander Lieutenant General Oleksandr Pavlyuk stated that the war in Ukraine will enter a critical phase in the next two months and commented on recent Russian advances around Chasiv Yar and Avdiivka. [27] Pavlyuk stated during an interview with the *Economist* published on May 10 that Russia is currently committing all its combatready materiel and troops to the frontline before substantial quantities of US military assistance reach frontline Ukrainian units. Pavlyuk reiterated Ukrainian assessments that Russia's summer offensive operations will likely focus on Luhansk and Donetsk oblasts and warned about the possibility of a largescale Russian offensive operation against Kharkiv and Sumy oblasts aimed at further stretching Ukraine's already taxed defensive lines.[28] Pavlyuk noted that he is working to stand up 10 new Ukrainian brigades ahead of the anticipated summer 2024 Russian offensive operation and noted that equipment, and not manpower, is the main bottleneck in Ukraine's defensive operations. Pavlyuk attributed recent Russian advances near Ocheretyne (northwest of Avdiivka) to "insane" Russian pressure on Ukrainian positions, "overwhelming [Russian] air superiority," and a 20-to-one Russian artillery advantage in that area.[29] ISW has previously observed a report that Russian forces initially advanced near Ocheretyne when Russian forces exploited an alleged mistake during a tactical rotation of Ukrainian forces, a mistake that the Ukrainian brigade involved in the situation later denied having made, although ISW cannot confirm either report.[30] Russian forces may have broken through the gap left by Ukrainian forces rotating in and out of the defensive line by chance and were able to exploit the opportunity because of the advantageous location of their breakthrough and Russia's overwhelming air and artillery advantage in the area, as Pavlyuk highlighted. While ISW is unable to confirm whether Ukrainian forces did make a mistake during a rotation, tactical mistakes occur periodically on any battlefield, and the advantages Russian forces had resulting from Ukraine's manpower and materiel shortages made any mistake far more dangerous than it normally would be.

Pavlyuk argued during his interview that the possible future loss of Chasiv Yar will have no "decisive significance" for the Ukrainian war effort, which is consistent with ISW's running assessment that the Russian seizure of Chasiv Yar would be operationally significant.[31] ISW uses the expression "operationally significant" to describe an advance that can alter the course of a campaign composed of multiple individual battles. ISW refers to advances that merely push the frontline back some distance without securing major objectives or significantly increasing the odds of securing major objectives as "tactically significant." The seizure of Chasiv Yar would shift the frontline further west and create a large and defensible Russian salient from which Russian forces could launch further offensive operations north, west, or south. A possible Russian seizure of Chasiv Yar would not result in the immediate collapse of the Ukrainian eastern line but would change the configuration of the frontline to a degree that would set much more favorable conditions for future Russian offensive operations against Ukraine's belt of "fortress" cities, which runs from Slovyansk to Kostyantynivka and form the backbone of Ukraine's defense of Donbas.[32]

US President Joe Biden approved up to \$400 million worth of military assistance for Ukraine as part of the Presidential Drawdown Authority Fund on May 10.[33] The US Department of Defense reported that the assistance package will include: air defense missiles for Patriots and National Advanced Surface-to-Air Missile Systems (NASAMS); Stinger anti-aircraft missiles; equipment to integrate Western launchers, missiles, and radars with Ukrainian systems; HIMARS ammunition; 105mm and 155mm artillery rounds; Bradley infantry fighting vehicles; M113 armored personnel carriers; Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles; Tube-Launched, Optically-Tracked, Wire-Guided (TOW) missiles; Javelin and At-4 anti-armor missiles; HARM missiles; and other equipment and weapons.[34]

Ukrainian forces conducted a drone strike on the night of May 9 to 10 against an oil refinery in Kaluga Oblast that Ukrainian forces previously struck in March 2024. Ukrainian outlet *Suspilne* reported on May 10 that sources within Ukraine's Main Military Intelligence Directorate (GUR) stated that the GUR conducted a drone strike against an oil refinery in Kaluga Oblast and that a fire broke out at the facility.[35] Geolocated footage published on May 10 shows a fire at the Perviy Zavod Refinery in Dzerzhinsky Raion, Kaluga Oblast.[36] The Pervyi Zavod refinery is reportedly the largest petrochemical complex in Kaluga Oblast.[37] Kaluga Oblast Governor Vladislav Shapsha stated that a fire broke out overnight at an unspecified enterprise in Dzerzhinsky Raion following a drone strike.[38] Ukrainian forces struck the Perviy Zavod oil refinery on the night of March 14 to 15.[39] Ukrainian forces conducted a second drone strike on an oil refinery in Ryazan Oblast on the night of April 30 to May 1 after first striking the facility in mid-March 2024.[40]

Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin is retaining his position in the Russian government for Russian President Vladimir Putin's new term of office, and there have been speculations but no confirmations of changes to Putin's cabinet. The Russian State Duma voted overwhelmingly in support of Mishustin's renomination as prime minister, and Putin signed the corresponding decree reappointing Mishustin on May 10.[41] Russian outlet *RBK*, citing three sources familiar with personnel consultations in the Kremlin, reported that Russian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Industry and Trade Denis Manturov will retain his title as Deputy Prime Minister but will relinquish his post as Minister of Industry and Trade, and *RBK* reported that Kaliningrad Oblast Head Anton Alikhanov will take over this position.[42] Putin publicly embarrassed Manturov in January 2023, and Russian Defense Minister Sergey Shoigu heavily criticized Manturov on May 2, 2024, but *RBK*'s source stated that the new appointment is "logical and expected" as all the possible candidates for the Minister of Industry and Trade are "in one way or another, from Manturov's team."[43] Russian State Duma Chairperson Vyacheslav Volodin stated that the Duma will consider appointments for deputy prime ministers and ministerial positions on May 14.[44]

Russian Federation Council Chairperson Valentina Matvienko announced on May 10 that she delivered a list of candidates to Putin for the head of the Federation Council Accounts Chamber, which notably includes Presidential Control Directorate Deputy Head Boris Kovalchuk.[45] Boris Kovalchuk is the son of Putin's "personal banker" Yuri Kovalchuk, who is often credited with being Putin's close confidant and influential ideologue, including reportedly being one of three Russians to convince Putin to launch the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.[46] Yuri Kovalchuk is also a close associate of Russian Presidential Administration Deputy Head Sergey Kiriyenko, whose own influence has expanded following the start of the full-scale invasion.[47] Putin only recently appointed Boris Kovalchuk to his post in the Presidential Control Directorate on March 15, before which Boris Kovalchuk headed the Russian energy company Inter RAO for 15 years.[48] The other two candidates

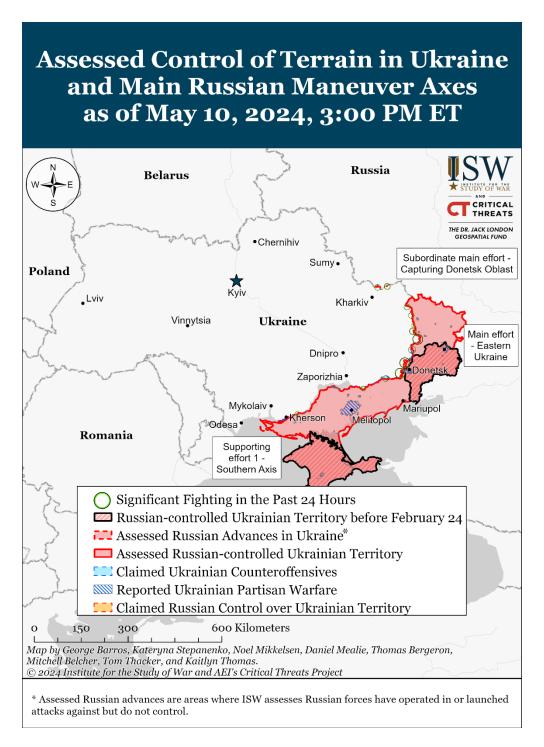
for Federation Council Accounts Chamber head include Accounts Chamber Acting Head Galina Izotova, who has served in this position since the former head resigned in 2022 and served as deputy head since 2019, and Anatoly Artamonov, chairperson of the Federation Council Committee on Budget and Financial Markets.[49] Boris Kovalchuk is the only one of these three candidates to lack a doctorate in economics and extensive experience in the field.[50] Boris Kovalchuk's candidacy for a Federation Council post given his lack of experience and newness to the presidential administration is notable given Yuri Kovalchuk's closeness to Putin, indicating that Kovalchuk's favor with Putin may be increasing. Putin will consider Matvienko's list of candidates and choose one for the Federation Council to consider in the coming days.[51]

US Assistant Secretary of Defense for Space Policy John Plumb stated that US defense officials partnered with SpaceX to stop the Russian military's unauthorized use of Starlink internet terminals in frontline areas of Ukraine. Bloomberg reported on May 9 that Plumb warned that Russia will likely continue to look for ways to exploit Starlink and other commercial communications systems but stated that the US has found "good solutions" for Russian Starlink use in Ukraine.[52] Several Western media outlets reported in March 2024 that investigations indicated that Russian forces may be using Starlink terminals in Ukraine.[53]

Key Takeaways:

- Russian forces began an offensive operation along the Russian-Ukrainian border in northern Kharkiv Oblast on the morning of May 10 and made tactically significant gains. Russian forces are likely conducting the initial phase of an offensive operation north of Kharkiv City that has limited operational objectives but is meant to achieve the strategic effect of drawing Ukrainian manpower and material from other critical sectors of the front in eastern Ukraine.
- Russian forces will likely leverage their tactical foothold in northern Kharkiv Oblast in the coming days to intensify offensive operations and pursue the initial phase of an offensive effort likely intended to push back Ukrainian forces from the border with Belgorod Oblast and advance to within tube artillery range of Kharkiv City.
- The limited efforts that Russian forces are currently conducting do not suggest that Russian forces are immediately pursuing a large-scale sweeping offensive operation to envelop, encircle, and seize Kharkiv City, however.
- Russian offensive operations along the Kharkiv international border likely have the strategic objective of drawing and fixing Ukrainian forces to this axis to enable Russian advances in other areas of eastern Ukraine.
- ISW continues to assess that Russian forces will likely struggle to seize Kharkiv City should they aim to do so.
- Russian forces likely decided to launch offensive operations along the international border area to take the best advantage of the relatively brief time left before Western aid arrives at the Ukrainian frontline at scale.
- Ukrainian Ground Forces Commander Lieutenant General Oleksandr Pavlyuk stated that the war in Ukraine will enter a critical phase in the next two months and commented on recent Russian advances around Chasiv Yar and Avdiivka.

- US President Joe Biden approved up to \$400 million worth of military assistance for Ukraine as part of the Presidential Drawdown Authority Fund on May 10.
- Ukrainian forces conducted a drone strike on the night of May 9 to 10 against an oil refinery in Kaluga Oblast that Ukrainian forces previously struck in March 2024.
- Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin is retaining his position in the Russian government for Russian President Vladimir Putin's new term of office, and there have been speculations but no confirmations of changes to Putin's cabinet.
- US Assistant Secretary of Defense for Space Policy John Plumb stated that US defense officials partnered with SpaceX to stop the Russian military's unauthorized use of Starlink internet terminals in frontline areas of Ukraine.
- Russian forces recently marginally advanced near Donetsk City and in the Donetsk-Zaporizhia Oblast border area.
- Russian and Belarusian authorities continue to illegally deport Ukrainian citizens, including children, to Russia and Belarus.



We do not report in detail on Russian war crimes because these activities are well-covered in Western media and do not directly affect the military operations we are assessing and forecasting. We will continue to evaluate and report on the effects of these criminal activities on the Ukrainian military and the Ukrainian population and specifically on combat in Ukrainian urban areas. We utterly condemn Russian violations of the laws of armed conflict and the Geneva Conventions and crimes against humanity even though we do not describe them in these reports.

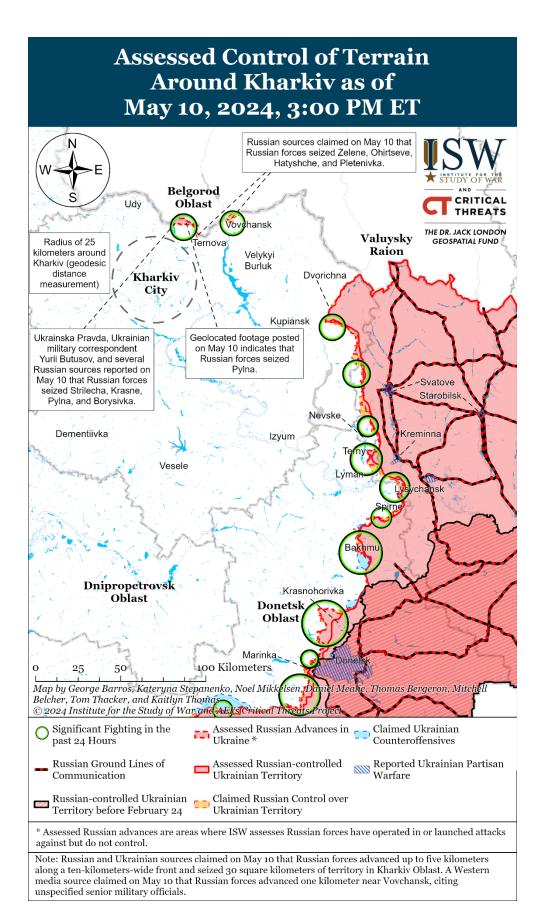
- Russian Main Effort Eastern Ukraine (comprised of two subordinate main efforts)
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #1 Push Ukrainian forces back from the international border with Belgorod Oblast and approach to within tube artillery range of Kharkiv City
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #2 Capture the remainder of Luhansk Oblast and push westward into eastern Kharkiv Oblast and encircle northern Donetsk Oblast
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #3 Capture the entirety of Donetsk Oblast
- Russian Supporting Effort Southern Axis
- Russian Air, Missile, and Drone Campaign
- Russian Mobilization and Force Generation Efforts
- Russian Technological Adaptations
- Activities in Russian-occupied areas
- Ukrainian Defense Industrial Base Efforts
- Russian Information Operations and Narratives
- Significant Activity in Belarus

Russian Main Effort - Eastern Ukraine

<u>Russian Subordinate Main Effort #1 – Kharkiv Oblast (</u>Russian objective: Push Ukrainian forces back from the international border with Belgorod Oblast and approach to within tube artillery range of Kharkiv City)

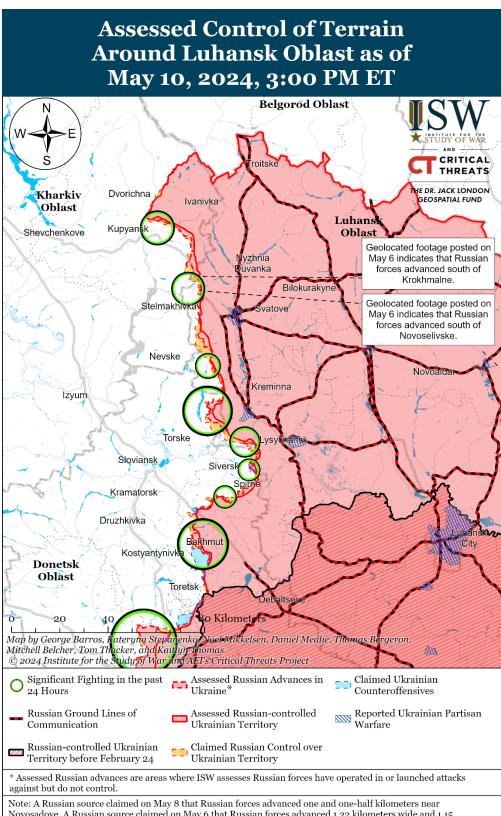
NOTE: ISW is adding a section to cover Russian offensive operations along the Belgorod-Kharkiv axis as these offensive operations comprise an operational effort separate from Russian offensive operations along the Kupyansk-Svatove-Kreminna line. ISW may enlarge the scope of this section should Russian forces expand offensive operations along the Russian-Ukrainian international border in northeastern Ukraine.

See topline text.



<u>Russian Subordinate Main Effort #2 – Luhansk Oblast</u> (Russian objective: Capture the remainder of Luhansk Oblast and push westward into eastern Kharkiv Oblast and northern Donetsk Oblast)

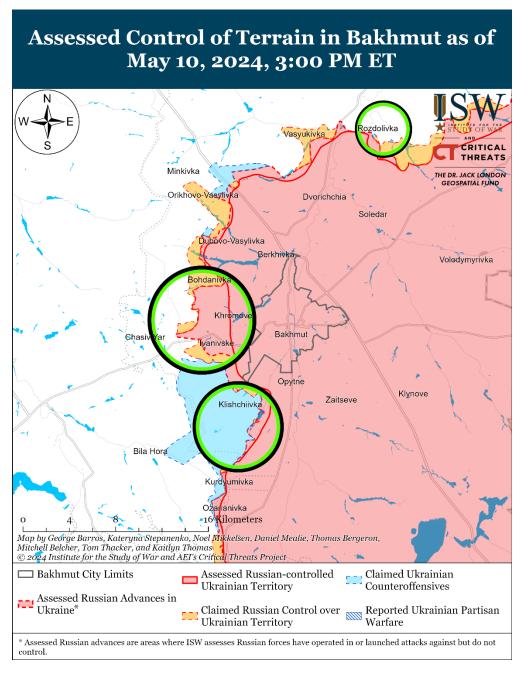
Russian forces continued offensive operations along the Kupyansk-Svatove-Kreminna line on May 10 but there were no changes to the frontline in the area. Russian forces continued offensive operations northeast of Kupyansk near Synkivka; east of Kupyansk near Petropavlivka; northwest of Svatove near Berestove, Krokhmalne, Kyslivka, Kotlyarivka, and Stelmakhivka; northwest of Kreminna near Novosadove and Makiivka; west of Kreminna near Terny, Yampolivka, and Torske; and south of Kreminna near Dibrova, Hryhorivka, the Serebryanske forest area, and Bilohorivka.[54] Ukrainian Khortytsia Group of Forces Spokesperson Lieutenant Colonel Nazar Voloshyn stated that Russian forces have been conducting 10 to 20 infantry-heavy assaults per day in the Lyman direction in recent weeks and that Russian forces only periodically conduct assaults with armored vehicle support.[55] A Russian milblogger claimed that elements of the Russian 47th Tank Division (1st Guards Tank Army [GTA], Moscow Military District) are operating near the Serebryanske forest.[56] Elements of the 47th Tank Division appear to be heavily committed to Russian offensive operations northwest of Svatove, and ISW has not yet observed reports about elements of the 47th Tank Division recently conducting assaults near Kreminna.[57]



Novosadove. A Russian source claimed on May 6 that Russian forces advanced 1.32 kilometers wide and 1.15 kilometers deep near Kyslivka. A Russian source claimed on May 6 that Russian forces advanced 300 meters on the eastern outskirts of Stelmakhivka.

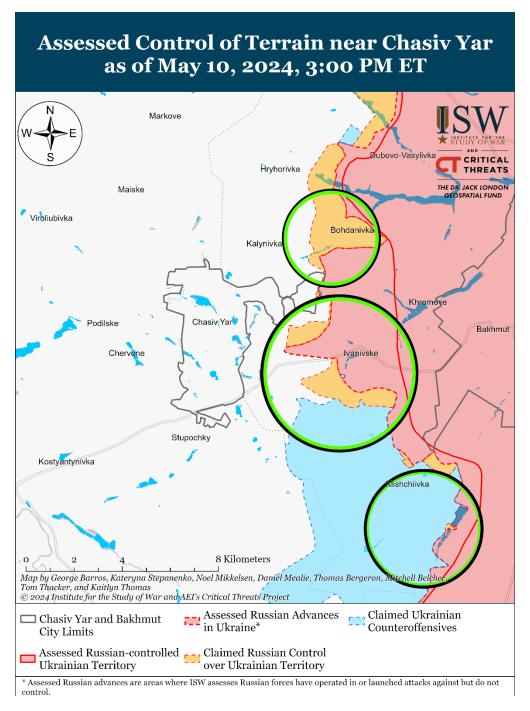
<u>Russian Subordinate Main Effort #3 – Donetsk Oblast</u> (Russian objective: Capture the entirety of Donetsk Oblast, the claimed territory of Russia's proxies in Donbas)

The Ukrainian General Staff reported on May 10 that Ukrainian forces repelled Russian assaults in the Siversk direction (northeast of Bakhmut) near Verkhnokamyanske (east of Siversk) and Rozdolivka (south of Siversk).[58]



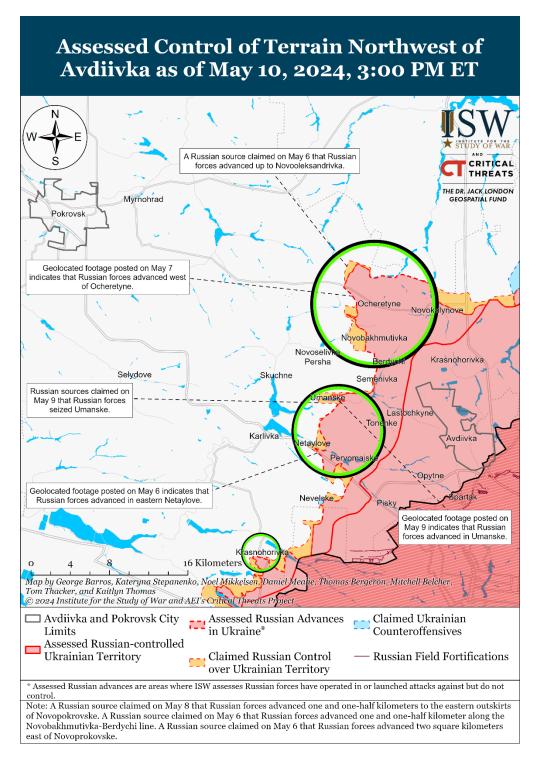
Russian forces continued offensive operations near Chasiv Yar on May 10, but there were no confirmed changes to the frontline. A Russian milblogger claimed that elements of the Russian 98th Airborne (VDV) Division are pushing Ukrainian forces from positions near the Novyi Microraion in eastern Chasiv Yar and that elements of the 98th VDV Division and 11th VDV Brigade are attacking near Chasiv

Yar's southeastern outskirts.[59] Another Russian milblogger claimed that the frontline is stagnant despite the high intensity of fighting in the area.[60] The commanders of several Ukrainian units fighting near Chasiv Yar stated in an article published by *The Economist* on May 9 that Russian forces are continuing to conduct assaults on motorcycles and all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) in the area.[61] Russian forces continued to attack northeast of Chasiv Yar near Bohdanivka and Kalynivka, east of Chasiv Yar near Ivanivske, and southeast of Chasiv Yar near Klishchiivka and Andriivka.[62] Elements of the Russian 4th Motorized Rifle Brigade (2nd Luhansk People's Republic [LNR] Army Corps [AC]) and Chechen "Akhmat" Spetsnaz are reportedly operating near Ivanivske.[63] Elements of the Russian 3rd Spetsnaz Brigade (Main Intelligence Directorate of the Russian General Staff [GRU]) reportedly struck a Ukrainian S-300 air defense system with a drone near Oleksandro-Kalynove (southwest of Chaisv Yar).[64]



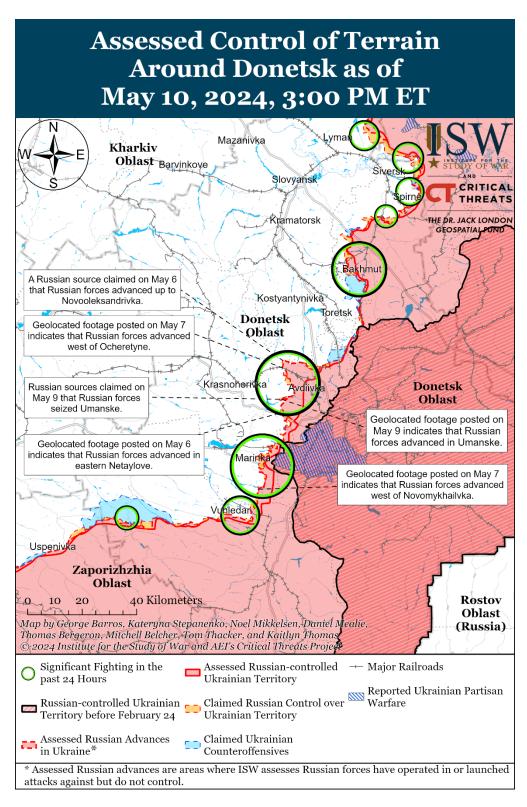
Russian forces reportedly advanced west of Avdiivka on May 10 amid continued Russian offensive operations in the area, but there were no confirmed changes to the frontline. Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced further within Umanske (northwest of Avdiivka) and that there are unconfirmed reports that Russian forces have completely seized Umanske.[65] ISW previously observed geolocated footage of Russian forces operating in central Umanske but has not observed evidence of Russian forces operating in western or northern Umanske.[66] Russian sources also claimed that Russian forces advanced within Netaylove (southwest of Avdiivka) and south of Pervomaiske (southwest of Avdiivka).[67] Russian forces continued assaults northwest of Avdiivka

near Kalynove, Arkhanhelske, Novooleksandrivka, Solovyove, Ocheretyne, Sokil, and Novoselivka Persha and west of Avdiivka near Semenivka and Yasnobrodivka.[68]



Russian forces recently marginally advanced west of Donetsk City amid continued fighting in the area on May 10. Geolocated footage published on May 10 indicates that Russian forces recently marginally advanced along a windbreak south of Krasnohorivka (west of Donetsk City).[69] Russian sources

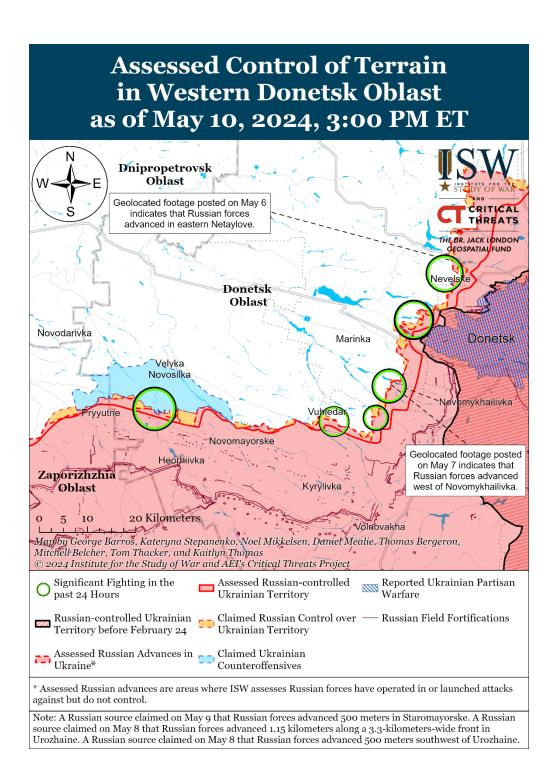
claimed that Russian forces, including elements of the Russian 5th Motorized Rifle Brigade (1st Donetsk People's Republic [DNR] AC), are attempting to encircle Ukrainian forces in Krasnohorivka and that Russian forces are advancing along Chaikovskoho and Abrikosiva streets in eastern Krasnohorivka.[70] Elements of the Russian 5th Motorized Rifle Brigade reportedly completely seized the entire territory of the brick factory in central Krasnohorivka, but ISW has not observed visual confirmation of this claim.[71] A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced in a forest area near Marinka (southwest of Donetsk City) and that Russian forces were also using motorcycles in their assaults near Paraskoviivka (southwest of Donetsk City).[72] Russian forces continued attacks west of Donetsk City near Heorhiivka, south of Donetsk City near Solodke, and southwest of Donetsk City near Vodyane, Kostyantynivka, and southwest of Novomykhailivka.[73]



Russian forces marginally advanced in the Donetsk-Zaporizhia Oblast border area amid continued fighting in the area on May 10. Geolocated footage published on May 7 indicates that Russian forces marginally advanced southwest of Urozhaine (south of Velyka Novosilka).[74] Additional geolocated footage published on May 10 indicates that Russian forces recently marginally advanced south of

Staromayorske (south of Velyka Novosilka).[75] Russian milbloggers claimed that elements of the Russian 1466th Motorized Rifle Regiment (Territorial Troops [TRV]) and the 394th Motorized Rifle Regiment (127th Motorized Rifle Division, 5th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Eastern Military District [EMD]) advanced west of Staromayorske and within the administrative borders of the settlement.[76]

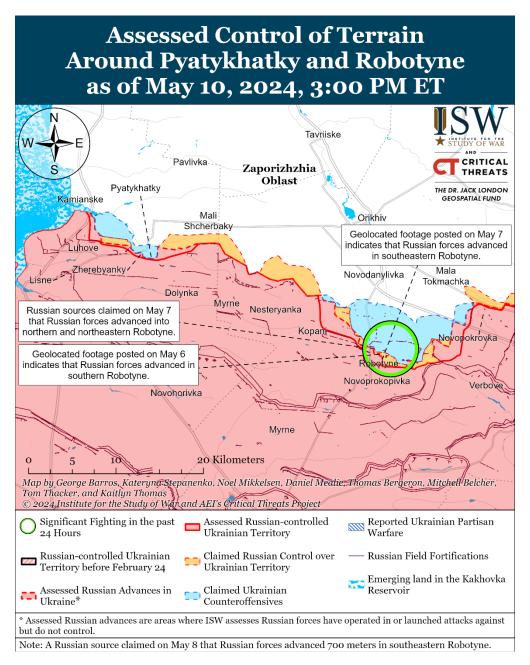
Russian sources claimed that Ukrainian forces conducted an ATACMS strike against targets in occupied Mariupol, Donetsk Oblast on May 9.[77] Ukrainian officials have not commented on the strike, and ISW cannot independently verify Russian claims about the strike.

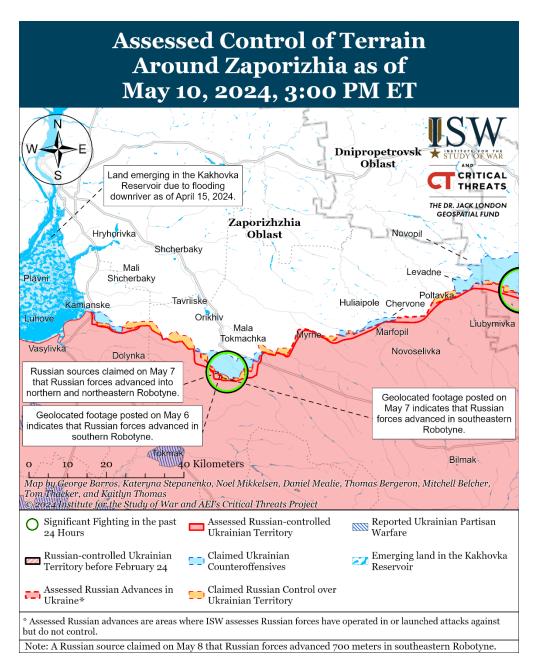


<u>Russian Supporting Effort – Southern Axis</u> (Russian objective: Maintain frontline positions and secure rear areas against Ukrainian strikes)

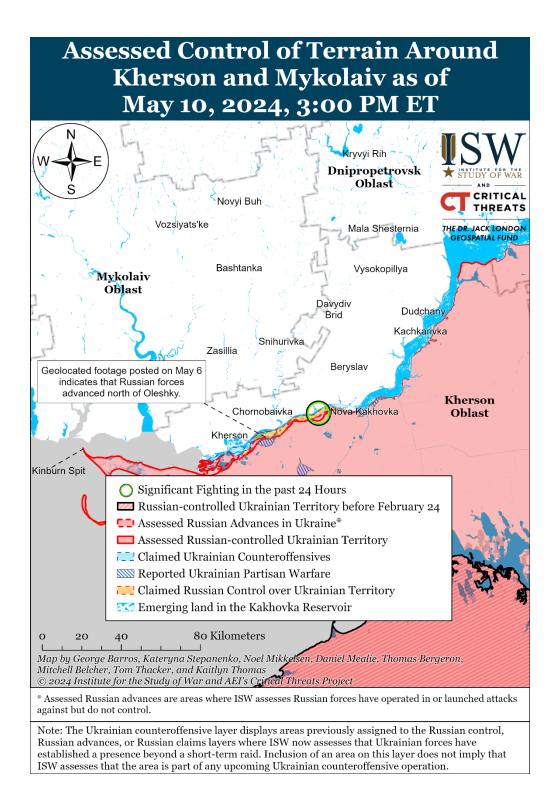
Positional engagements continued in western Zaporizhia Oblast on May 10, but there were no confirmed changes to the frontline in this area. Positional engagements continued in western Zaporizhia Oblast near Robotyne and Verbove (east of Robotyne).[78] A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced to the northern outskirts of Robotyne, but ISW has not observed visual

confirmation of this claim.[79] Elements of the Russian 70th Motorized Rifle Regiment (42nd Motorized Rifle Brigade, 58th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Southern Military District [SMD]) are reportedly using motorcycles to approach Ukrainian positions near Robotyne.[80] Elements of the Russian 1152nd Motorized Rifle Regiment (58th CAA) are also reportedly operating near Robotyne.[81]





Positional fighting continued in east (left) bank Kherson Oblast on May 10, but there were no confirmed changes to the frontline. Russian and Ukrainian sources reported continued positional engagements near Krynky, the Antonivsky roadway bridge (north of Oleshky), and unspecified Dnipro River delta islands near Kozachi Laheri.[82] Ukrainian Southern Operational Command and Navy Spokesperson Captain Third Rank Dmytro Pletenchuk reported that Russian forces periodically attempt to land on Nestryha Island but that Ukrainian forces continue to repel Russian forces from the island.[83]



<u>Russian Air, Missile, and Drone Campaign</u> (Russian Objective: Target Ukrainian military and civilian infrastructure in the rear and on the frontline)

Russian forces conducted a limited series of drone and missile strikes against Ukraine on the night of May 9 to 10 and during the day on May 10. Ukrainian Air Force Commander Lieutenant General Mykola Oleshchuk stated that Russian forces launched 10 Shahed-136/131 drones from occupied Crimea and

two S-300/400 missiles from Belgorod Oblast and that Ukrainian mobile fire groups and air defenses destroyed all 10 Shaheds over Odesa, Mykolaiv, and Kherson oblasts.[84] Kharkiv Oblast Head Oleh Synehubov reported that Russian missiles struck homes in Kharkiv City.[85] Ukrainian Air Force Spokesperson Major Ilya Yevlash stated that Ukrainian authorities in Kharkiv City have very little time to identify and neutralize air threats that originate from the nearby areas across the Russian border.[86] The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Ukrainian forces also shot down a Russian Kh-59/69 cruise missile over Dnipropetrovsk Oblast during the day.[87]

Russian sources claimed on May 10 that a Russian Iskander-K ballistic missile struck a Ukrainian Patriot air defense system and AN/MPQ-65 radar near Hulyaipole, Zaporizhia Oblast.[88] ISW cannot verify the validity of amplified footage purporting to show the strike.

<u>Russian Mobilization and Force Generation Efforts</u> (Russian objective: Expand combat power without conducting general mobilization)

Nothing significant to report.

<u>Russian Technological Adaptations</u> (Russian objective: Introduce technological innovations to optimize systems for use in Ukraine)

Nothing significant to report.

<u>Ukrainian Defense Industrial Efforts</u> (Ukrainian objective: Develop its defense industrial base to become more self-sufficient in cooperation with US, European, and international partners)

ISW is not publishing coverage of Ukrainian defense industrial efforts today.

<u>Activities in Russian-occupied areas</u> (Russian objective: Consolidate administrative control of annexed areas; forcibly integrate Ukrainian citizens into Russian sociocultural, economic, military, and governance systems)

Russian and Belarusian authorities continue to illegally deport Ukrainian citizens, including children, to Russia and Belarus. The Russian "We Help Our People" charity organization claimed on May 8 that Russian authorities deported a group of 33 Ukrainian children and their mothers from occupied Horlivka, Donetsk Oblast to the Russian Federal Medical Biological Agency's Klyazma Children's Medical Center in Moscow Oblast.[89] Belarusian outlet *Belta* reported on May 8 that a group of children aged 9-17 and their parents from occupied Ukraine arrived in Gomel, Belarus under the guise of vacations.[90] Belarusian Council of the Republic National Assembly Speaker Natalya Kochanova and Russian Federation Council Speaker Valentina Matvienko are reportedly supporting the program. ISW has long assessed that Belarusian officials, including Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko, are actively involved in the deportation of Ukrainian children from occupied Ukraine to Belarus.[91]

Russian prison convicts serving in the Russian military continue to commit serious crimes in occupied Ukraine. Russian opposition outlet *Astra* reported on May 9 that a Russian serviceman, who has been serving a prison sentence for murder since 2016 before joining the Russian military about a year and a half ago, raped and murdered a 17-year-old Ukrainian girl in occupied Luhansk Oblast.[92]

Russian Information Operations and Narratives

Russia continues attempts to enforce Russian federal law on NATO states outside Russia's legal jurisdiction. Russian Investigative Committee Head Alexander Bastrykin ordered an investigation on May 10 into vandalism at a monument to Soviet military personnel in Helsinki, Finland.[93] Russian officials have regularly attempted to enforce Russian law over post-Soviet and NATO officials and states outside of Russia's jurisdiction under the guise of protecting Soviet monuments or Russian "compatriots" abroad.[94] These Russian actions effectively deny the sovereignty of the targeted states for situations involving their own - and not Russian - territory.

Pro-Kremlin voices are conducting information operations aimed at demoralizing Ukrainian soldiers and civilians and attempting to justify Russia's intensified offensive efforts in Ukraine. Kremlin newswire *TASS* claimed that Russian "partisans" reported that Ukrainian forces committed war crimes against civilians, likely aimed at discrediting the Ukrainian government and distracting from Russia's own documented war crimes in Ukraine.[95] Russian milbloggers also accused Ukraine of hiding defense industrial facilities in residential buildings in Ukraine, particularly in Kharkiv and Odesa cities, to justify continued Russian strikes that frequently target these cities and cause civilian casualties.[96]

Russian officials continued rhetoric aimed at coercing the West into self-deterring from providing further military assistance to Ukraine, including through the Kremlin's revived reflexive control campaign centered on nuclear posturing.[97] Russian Security Council Chairperson Dmitry Medvedev responded on May 10 to UK Foreign Minister David Cameron's recent statement about Ukraine using UK-provided weapons to strike Russia, dismissing Cameron and threatening "special ammunition" and Russia's lack of fear of nuclear conflict.[98] Medvedev connected upcoming Russian nuclear readiness exercises to Cameron's statement. Medvedev in particular is a critical element of Russia's reflexive control campaign, as Medvedev routinely makes outlandish statements aimed at persuading Western states to act according to Russia's interests.[99] Yulia Zhdanova, a member of the Russian delegation to Vienna on military security and arms control, gave a speech to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) accusing NATO states of escalating the war in Ukraine through various military exercises and weapons provisions to Ukraine.[100] ISW continues to assess that Russia does not seek nuclear escalation and that Russia's use of nuclear weapons remains unlikely.

<u>Significant activity in Belarus</u> (Russian efforts to increase its military presence in Belarus and further integrate Belarus into Russian-favorable frameworks and Wagner Group activity in Belarus)

The New York Times (NYT) reported on May 10 that satellite imagery indicates that Russia has been constructing facilities that could house Russian nuclear warheads near Asipovichy, Belarus since March 2023.[101] NYT reported that the facilities include an air defense system, a security checkpoint, a triple fence around an underground bunker, and other structures that are unique to Russian nuclear storage facilities. The Federation of American Scientists similarly reported in March 2024 that structures seen in satellite imagery indicated that Russia may be constructing a nuclear warhead storage site for Russian tactical nuclear weapons in Belarus.[102] ISW continues to assess that neither Russia nor Belarus seeks nuclear escalation and that their use of nuclear weapons remains unlikely.[103]

Note: ISW does not receive any classified material from any source, uses only publicly available information, and draws extensively on Russian, Ukrainian, and Western reporting and social media as well as commercially available satellite imagery and other

geospatial data as the basis for these reports. References to all sources used are provided in the endnotes of each update.



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