



Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment

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June 21, 2024, 6:30pm ET

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 1:30pm ET on June 21. ISW will cover subsequent reports in the June 22 Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment.

Russian President Vladimir Putin continues to invoke nuclear threats as part of his ongoing information campaign to discourage further Western support for Ukraine and undermine the international community's efforts to cohere its strategic vision for defeating Russia's war of conquest against Ukraine. Putin claimed during a speech to graduating Russian officers on June 21 that Russia plans to further develop its nuclear triad as a "guarantee of strategic deterrence" and to maintain the balance of power in the world.[1] Putin noted that Russia is also working to increase its conventional combat capabilities and defense industrial production. Putin claimed during a press conference in Vietnam on June 20 that Russia is considering "lowering the threshold" for nuclear use in Russia's nuclear doctrine and that a possible future strategic defeat of Russian forces on the battlefield in Ukraine would result in the "end of [Russia's] statehood." [2] ISW noted that Putin may have falsely equated a Russian defeat in Ukraine with an existential threat to the Russian state in order to invoke an "exceptional case" in which existing Russian nuclear doctrine would allow for the use of nuclear weapons.[3] Putin's June 21 statement appears to be the continuation of his recent information operation intended to sabotage the West's efforts to develop a common strategic objective of decisively defeating Russia's invasion as the West's envisioned end state for the war in Ukraine. ISW continues to assess that the threat of nuclear escalation is a core aspect of Russia's ability to manipulate foreign decision-makers and is highly unlikely to result in actual nuclear escalation due to nuclear and conventional deterrence.[4]

Putin and Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov continued to emphasize Russia's initiative to create an alternative "Eurasian security architecture," likely as part of ongoing efforts to establish a coalition of friendly states to act as an alternative to the

West and undermine NATO. Putin reiterated on June 21 his intention to create "equal and indivisible security in Eurasia." [5] Putin claimed that Russia is ready to discuss Eurasian security issues with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), and BRICS and claimed that Russia is ready to have discussions with European and NATO countries "when they are ready." Lavrov similarly emphasized Russia's effort to form a "Eurasian security architecture to replace... the Euro-Atlantic [security system]" at a June 21 Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) foreign ministers meeting in Almaty, Kazakhstan. [6] Lavrov further promoted the need for joint efforts to create a new Eurasian security architecture and coordination with other unspecified multilateral organizations on the Eurasian continent. [7] Lavrov is likely referencing Russian efforts to increase cooperation with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), as Putin signaled his interest in developing relations with ASEAN during his state visit to Vietnam on June 20. [8] Putin notably included Vietnam - a country not typically included in political conceptions of Eurasia - in addition to North Korea in his proposed formation of a new Eurasian security system, suggesting that Putin seeks to include Southeast Asia into this alternative Eurasian security structure by leveraging select Southeast Asian countries' historically friendly ties with the Soviet Union. Putin first laid the informational groundwork for this Eurasian security structure during his visit to the People's Republic of China (PRC) in May 2024 before proposing it in a speech on June 14, in which he claimed that the "Euro-Atlantic security system" is collapsing and that Western "schemes for security and prosperity in Europe do not work." [9] ISW continues to assess that Putin and other senior Russian officials will likely continue to amplify Russia's efforts to create a coalition of countries that Putin could use to posture as an alternative to NATO while also supporting ongoing Kremlin information operations to falsely portray Western countries as Ukraine's only supporters. [10]

The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) criticized South Korean and Japanese objections to the Russian-North Korean strategic partnership agreement and directly tied the agreement to Russian President Vladimir Putin's "Eurasian security architecture" initiative. South Korea's Yonhap News Agency reported on June 21 that South Korean government sources stated that South Korea may send 155mm artillery shells and unspecified air defense systems to Ukraine, after South Korean National Security Director Chang Ho-jin stated on June 20 that South Korea would respond to the Russian-North Korean agreement by reconsidering its policy preventing it from sending aid to Ukraine. [11] The South Korean MFA summoned Russian Ambassador to South Korea Georgiy Zinovyev on June 21 to urge Russia to stop its military cooperation with North Korea. [12] Zinovyev accused South Korea of trying to "threaten and blackmail" Russia and that Russia's cooperation with North Korea is not directed against any other country and claimed that Russian-North Korean cooperation helps strengthen stability on the Korean peninsula. [13] Director of the Russian MFA's Third Department for Asia Lyudmila Vorobyova met on June 21 with Director of the Japanese MFA's Europe Department Masashi Nakagome following the introduction of a new round of Japanese sanctions targeting Russia. [14] The Russian MFA claimed that the Japanese sanctions are the "next step towards the complete destruction" of Russian-Japanese relations, which the Russian MFA claimed are at an all-time low. [15] The Russian MFA claimed that Russia would respond to the sanctions with "tough and painful countermeasures." The Russian MFA responded to Nakagome's protests about the Russian-North Korean strategic partnership by outlining Putin's June 14 initiative for the creation of "a new continent-wide security architecture" in Eurasia.

Ukrainian forces struck oil refineries and military targets in Bryansk and Astrakhan oblasts, Krasnodar Krai, and occupied Crimea on the night of June 20 to 21. The Ukrainian General Staff reported on June 21 that Ukrainian drones targeted the Afipsky, Ilsky, and Krasnodar oil

refineries in Krasnodar Krai and the Astrakhan oil refinery in Astrakhan Oblast and conducted strikes on unspecified Russian radar and electronic warfare (EW) stations in Bryansk Oblast and occupied Crimea on the night of June 20 to 21 and that Ukrainian forces are still conducting a battlefield damage assessment.[16] The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Ukrainian forces also struck a Shahed-136/131 storage facility, military training facilities, and several drone communication and control posts in Krasnodar Krai. The Krasnodar Krai Operational Headquarters reported that Ukrainian drones struck unspecified targets in Temryuk and Yeysk Raions and the Ilsky oil refinery in Seversk Raion and that debris from a Ukrainian drone fell near Volna.[17] The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) claimed that Russian air defenses destroyed six Ukrainian naval drones in the Black Sea, 70 drones over Crimea, and 43 drones over Krasnodar Krai on the night of June 20 to 21.[18] Russian milbloggers claimed that Ukrainian forces launched the drones in several waves of drone strikes beginning on the evening of June 20 and warned that Ukrainian forces may conduct more large-scale drone strikes in the near future.[19] The Ukrainian General Staff also confirmed that Ukrainian forces and Ukraine's Security Service (SBU) conducted successful drone strikes against the Tambovnefteprodukt fuel and lubricant warehouse in Tambov Oblast and the Lukoil-Yugnefteprodukt "Enemaska" oil depot in Adygea Republic on the night of June 19 to 20, as ISW reported.[20]

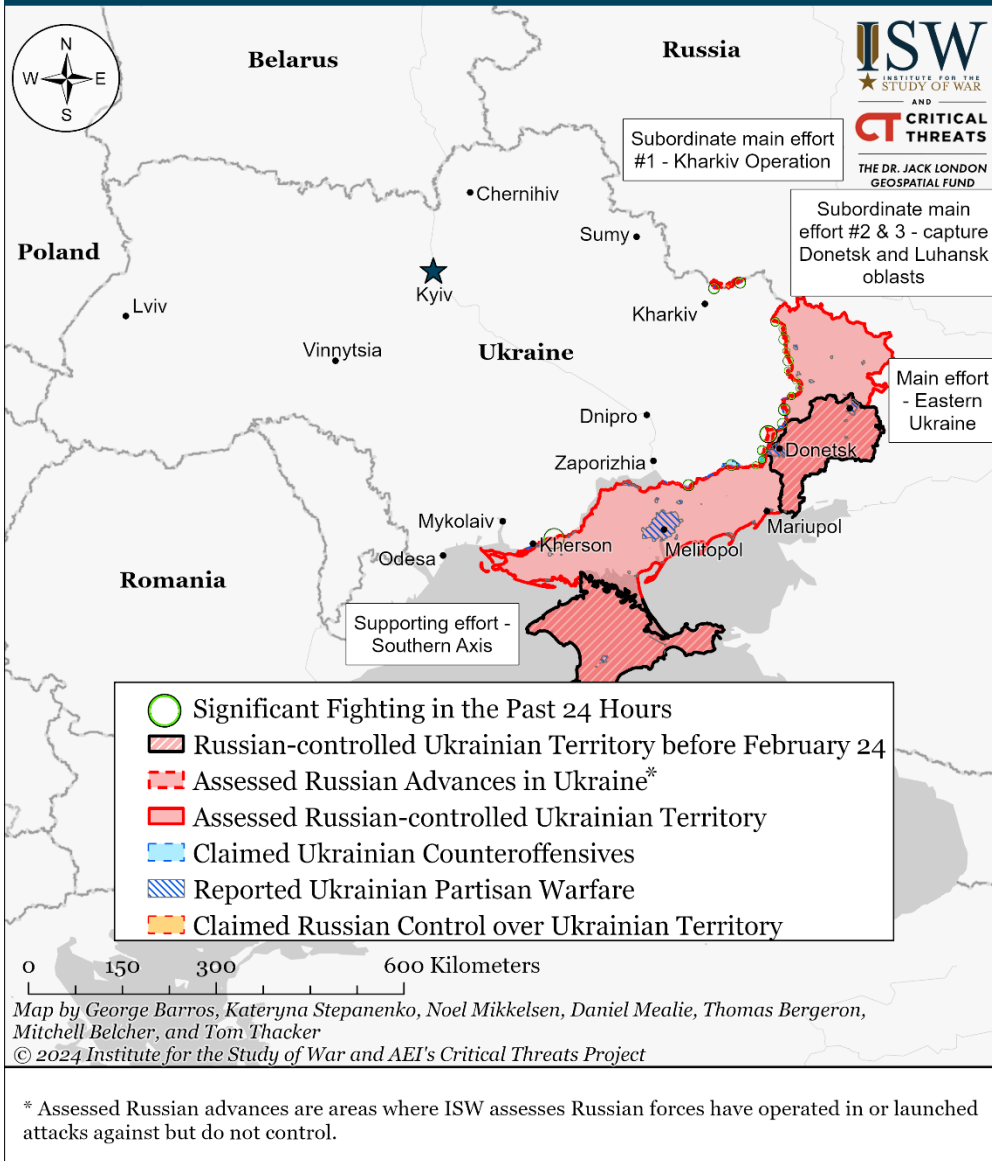
Russian milbloggers reported that Ukrainian forces simultaneously used naval and aerial drones during the Krasnodar Krai strike and overwhelmed Russian defenses, causing a Russian air defense system to accidentally shoot down a Russian helicopter in a friendly fire incident. Several Russian milbloggers claimed on June 21 that Russian friendly fire destroyed a Russian Ka-29 helicopter and the helicopter's crew while defending against Ukrainian drone strikes near Krasnodar Krai.[21] The milbloggers claimed that Russian forces were using helicopters to search for Ukrainian naval drones while Russian air defense systems were simultaneously attempting to shoot down Ukrainian aerial drones and that a Russian Pantsir air defense system accidentally downed a Russian helicopter, reportedly due to a malfunction in the system's Identification Friend or Foe (IFF) system.[22] The milbloggers claimed that Ukrainian forces have previously used missiles to similarly overload Russian air defenses and criticized the Russian military for not improving its IFF systems to prevent these incidents.

Moscow State University (MGU) announced on June 21 that it has opened enrollment for a master's program on "strategic communications, information, and hybrid wars" under the guidance of Russian ultranationalist and former State Duma Deputy Zakhar Prilepin and other select Duma deputies.[23] MGU stated that the master's program has been part of the political science faculty since 2022, but that it is now being offered in an improved and "modernized form," and that Prilepin's team and other Duma deputies will participate in developing and presumably teaching the course. Graduates of the two-year program will receive a master's in "Conflictology" and learn about "national information sovereignty and countering the operations of hybrid, cognitive, and intellectual wars." [24] MGU admitted its first cohort of students to this program in 2022, but later reportedly ended the program in December 2023 due to financial concerns.[25] MGU's June 21 announcement, however, suggests that the university has been able to restart the program under the supervision of prominent ultranationalist voices such as Prilepin. ISW previously noted that the MGU master's program was likely intended to teach and promote Russian objectives for the war in Ukraine, setting multi-generational conditions to strengthen the ideology underpinning Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.[26]

Key Takeaways:

- **Russian President Vladimir Putin continues to invoke nuclear threats as part of his ongoing information campaign to discourage further Western support for Ukraine and undermine the international community's efforts to cohere its strategic vision for defeating Russia's war of conquest against Ukraine.**
- **Putin and Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov continued to emphasize Russia's initiative to create an alternative "Eurasian security architecture," likely as part of ongoing efforts to establish a coalition of friendly states to act as an alternative to the West and undermine NATO.**
- **The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) criticized South Korean and Japanese objections to the Russian-North Korean strategic partnership agreement and directly tied the agreement to Russian President Vladimir Putin's "Eurasian security architecture" initiative.**
- **Ukrainian forces struck oil refineries and military targets in Bryansk and Astrakhan oblasts, Krasnodar Krai, and occupied Crimea on the night of June 20 to 21.**
- **Moscow State University (MGU) announced on June 21 that it has opened enrollment for a master's program on "strategic communications, information, and hybrid wars" under the guidance of Russian ultranationalist and former State Duma Deputy Zakhar Prilepin and other select Duma deputies.**
- **Russian forces recently advanced southeast of Kupyansk, southwest of Svatove, and west and southwest of Donetsk City.**
- **The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) appears to be taking steps to address known bureaucratic issues as part of its efforts to formalize irregular Russian formations.**
- **An investigation by Russian opposition outlet *Verstka* highlights how Russia is importing Russian judges to serve in courts in occupied Ukraine, supporting Russian efforts to control the judiciary while also providing a convenient cover for the resettlement of Russian citizens into occupied Ukraine.**

Assessed Control of Terrain in Ukraine and Main Russian Maneuver Axes as of June 21, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



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 three 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

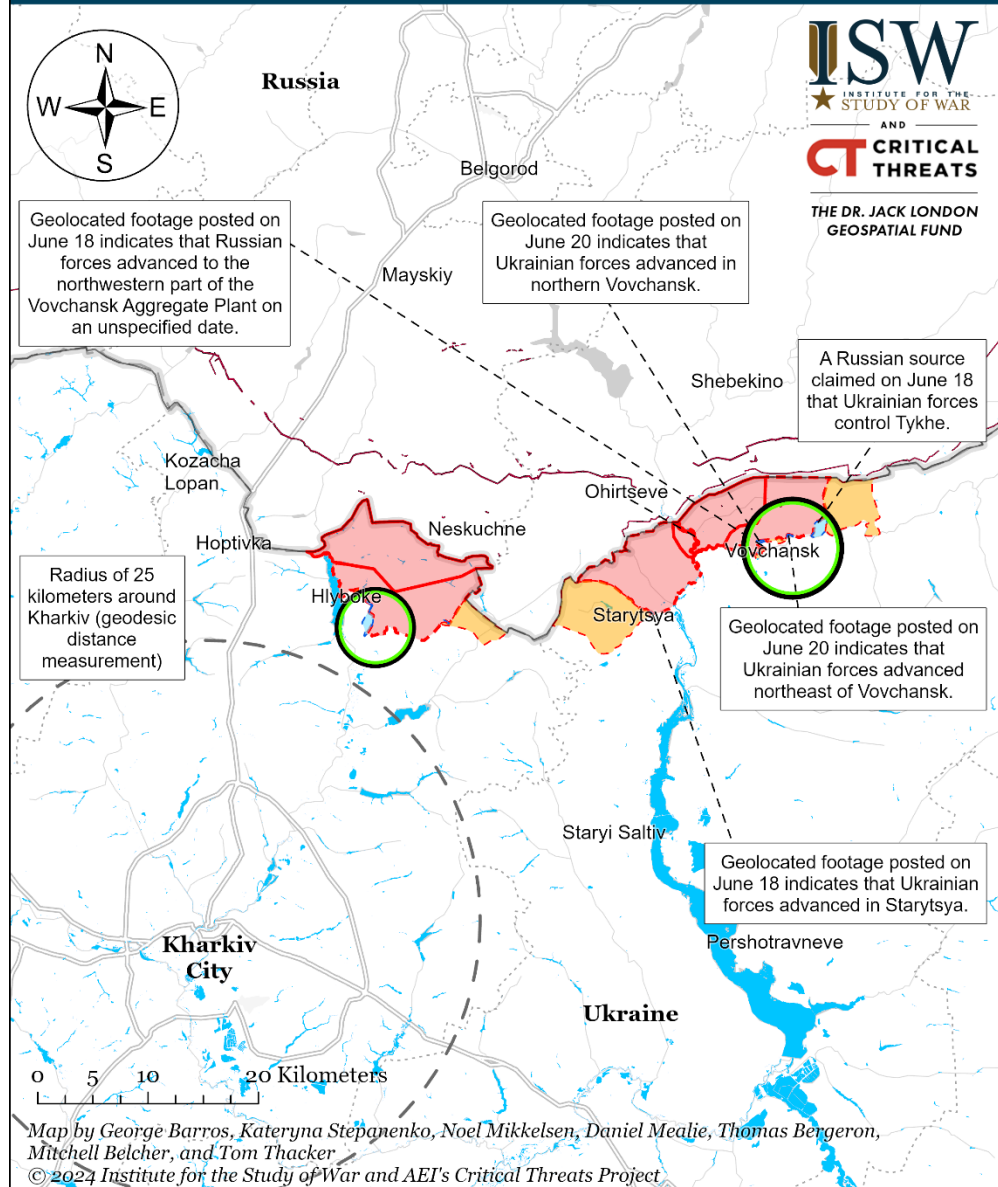
Russian Subordinate Main Effort #1 – Kharkiv Oblast (Russian objective: Push Ukrainian forces back from the international border with Belgorod Oblast and approach to within tube artillery range of Kharkiv City)

Russian forces continued offensive operations in northern Kharkiv Oblast on June 20 and 21 but did not make any confirmed advances. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces conducted ground attacks north of Kharkiv City near Lyptsi and northeast of Kharkiv City near Vovchansk and Tykhe (immediately east of Vovchansk) in the evening of June 20 but noted that Russian forces did not conduct active offensive operations in this direction on June 21 and instead conducted heavy guided glide bomb strikes from Belgorod Oblast.[27] Kharkiv Oblast Police Chief Volodymyr Tymoshenko reported that Russian forces launched 17 guided glide bombs at positions north and northeast of Kharkiv City as of 1200 local time on June 21.[28] Russian milbloggers claimed that Ukrainian forces continued counterattacks near Hlyboke (north of Lyptsi).[29] Russian sources additionally claimed that intense fighting continued in Vovchansk, with one milblogger reiterating claims that Russian forces have seized the entire Vovchansk Aggregate Plant and another claiming that Russian forces seized territory in the northern part of the Aggregate Plant, including near the children's music school.[30] One milblogger claimed that Russian forces have captured most of Tykhe, although ISW has not observed visual evidence of Russian forces in Tykhe and continues to assess that Ukrainian forces recently recaptured the settlement given more robust Russian reporting that Russian forces do not control Tykhe.[31]

Ukrainian military sources have not yet confirmed that Russian forces used an FAB-3000 glide bomb to strike Lyptsi on June 20 despite widespread Russian reporting that June 20 marked the first-ever strike using an FAB-3000 with this particular glide bomb modification. Ukrainian Air Force Spokesperson Major Ilya Yevlash noted that Ukrainian forces have not yet concluded their investigation of the blast site in Lyptsi and therefore cannot confirm yet whether Russia used an FAB-3000, noting that Russian forces most frequently use lighter FAB modifications such as the FAB-250 and FAB-500.[32] Ukrainian media also amplified comments from a Ukrainian aviation expert on June 21 who stated that the blast radius for the Lyptsi strike was only about 90 meters, whereas the FAB-3000 blast radius should be closer to 260 meters.[33] Russian milbloggers called into question the efficacy of using

FAB-3000s, noting that a Russian fighter bomber can deliver a payload of one FAB-3000 versus three FAB-1500 bombs with glide modules and that Russian forces can inflict more effective damage if they drop a salvo of three FAB-1500 bombs, or four FAB-500 bombs on a target than one FAB-3000 because FAB-500 and FAB-1500 bombs are more accurate in general are more likely to strike a target.[34] Some milbloggers claimed that Russian forces conducted a second FAB-3000 strike in Lyptsi on June 21, but Ukrainian sources have not yet confirmed this strike, and ISW cannot independently verify the weapon used in either strike.[35]

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Kharkiv as of June 21, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



- Significant Fighting in the past 24 Hours
- Assessed Russian Advances in Ukraine*
- ▨ Reported Ukrainian Partisan Warfare
- Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory before February 24
- Claimed Russian Control over Ukrainian Territory
- Russian Field Fortifications
- Assessed Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory
- Claimed Ukrainian Counteroffensives

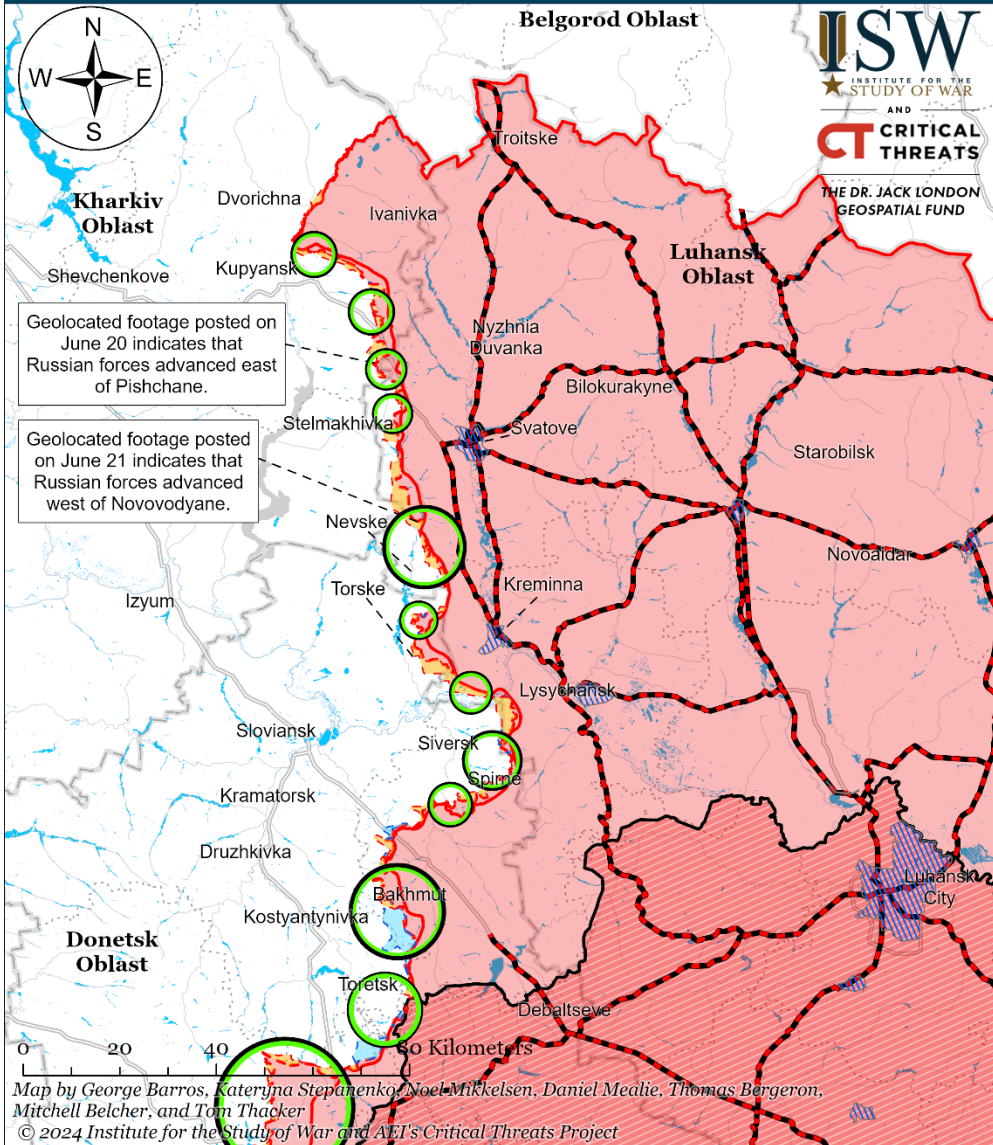
* Assessed Russian advances are areas where ISW assesses Russian forces have operated in or launched attacks against but do not control.

Note: A Russian source claimed on June 20 that Russian forces advanced up to 1.55 kilometers deep in the Tykhe direction. A Russian source claimed on June 17 that Russian forces advanced 300 meters in the Vovchansk direction.

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

Russian forces recently advanced along the Kupyansk-Svatove-Kreminna line amid continued Russian ground attacks in the area on June 21. Geolocated footage published on June 20 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced east of Pishchane (southeast of Kupyansk).[36] Additional geolocated footage published on June 21 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced west of Novovodyane (southwest of Svatove).[37] Fighting continued northeast of Kupyansk near Synkivka; southeast of Kupyansk near Stepova Novoselivka, Pishchane, and Berestove; northwest of Svatove near Stelmakhivka; northwest of Kreminna near Novosadove, Hrekivka, and Nevske; and south of Kreminna in the Serebryanske forest area on June 20 and 21.[38] Ukraine's Main Military Intelligence Directorate (GUR) Spokesperson Andriy Yusov stated that Russian forces are attempting to transfer reserves to the Borova direction (west of Svatove) but are not forming "powerful" new assault groups in the area that could meaningfully threaten Ukrainian defenses in the Borova direction.[39]

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Luhansk Oblast as of June 21, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



- Significant Fighting in the past 24 Hours
- Assessed Russian Advances in Ukraine*
- Claimed Ukrainian Counteroffensives
- Russian Ground Lines of Communication
- Assessed Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory
- Reported Ukrainian Partisan Warfare
- Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory before February 24
- Claimed Russian Control over Ukrainian Territory

* Assessed Russian advances are areas where ISW assesses Russian forces have operated in or launched attacks against but do not control.

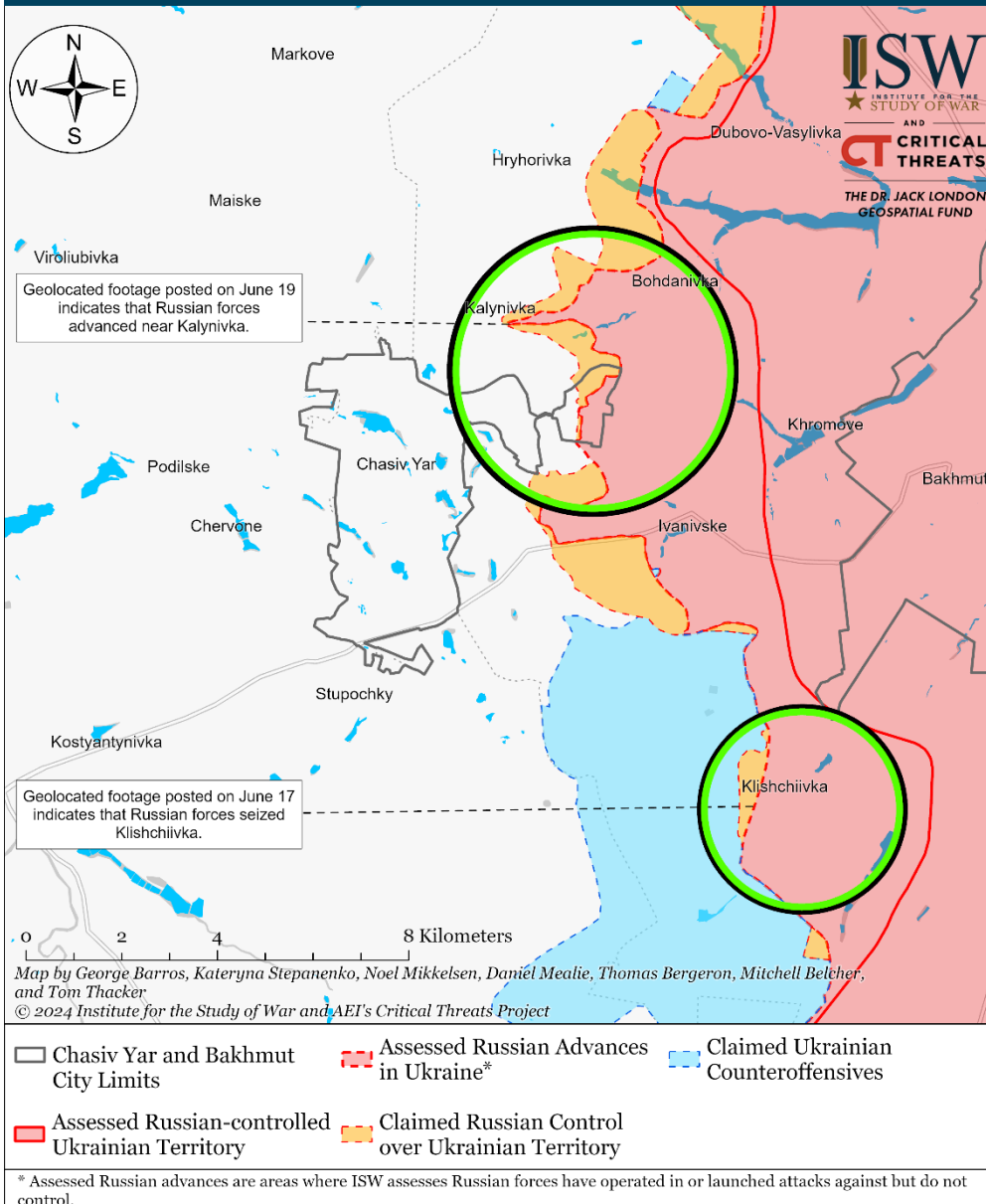
Note: A Russian source claimed on June 20 that Russian forces advanced up to two kilometers wide and 1.13 kilometers deep west of Ploshanka. A Russian source claimed on June 20 that Russian forces advanced one kilometer southwest of Rozdolivka.

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

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Siversk direction on June 21, but there were no confirmed changes to the frontline in this area. Russian forces continued offensive operations east of Siversk near Verkhokamyanske; southeast of Siversk near Spirne and Vyimka; and south of Siversk near Rozdolivka on June 20 and 21.[40] Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces gained a foothold on the outskirts of Rozdolivka, but ISW has not observed confirmation of this claim.[41]

Russian forces continued offensive operations near Chasiv Yar on June 21, but there were no confirmed changes to the frontline in this area. Russian forces continued offensive operations near Chasiv Yar, including in the Kanal Microraion (easternmost Chasiv Yar); north of Chasiv Yar near Kalynivka; and southeast of Chasiv Yar near Klishchiivka on June 20 and 21.[42] The commander of a Ukrainian brigade operating in the Chasiv Yar direction stated on June 21 that Russian forces operating in the area have a significant advantage in the quantity of artillery ammunition.[43] Elements of the Russian 58th Spetsnaz Battalion (1st Donetsk People's Republic Army Corps [DNR AC]) and the 4th Motorized Rifle Brigade (2nd Luhansk People's Republic [LNR] AC) are reportedly operating near Chasiv Yar.[44]

Assessed Control of Terrain near Chasiv Yar as of June 21, 2024, 3:00 PM ET

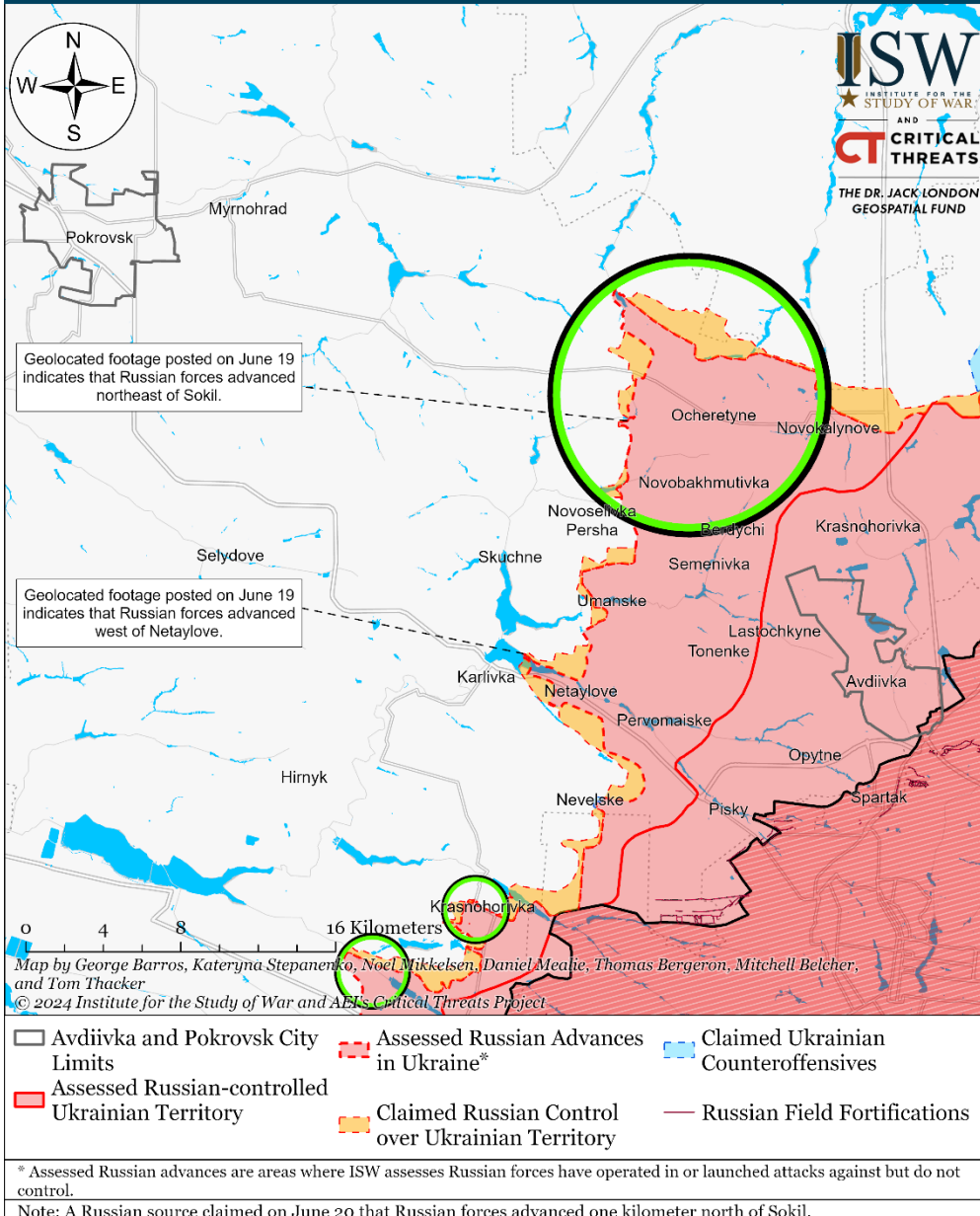


Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Toretsk direction (southwest of Chasiv Yar) on June 21, but there were no confirmed changes to the frontline in this area. Russian forces continued offensive operations near Toretsk; east of Toretsk near Pivnichne; southeast of Toretsk near Shumy; and south of Toretsk near Niu York on June 20 and 21.[45] Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced two kilometers near Niu York and Toretsk and entered the outskirts of Pivnichne, but ISW has not observed visual confirmation of these claims.[46] Ukrainian Khortytsia Group of Forces Spokesperson Lieutenant Colonel Nazar Voloshyn stated on June 21 that Russian forces are attacking

in the Toretsk direction, including near Niu York and Shumy from Horlivka (west of Torestk), in order to develop an offensive on Chasiv Yar from the south.[47]

Russian forces continued offensive operations near Avdiivka on June 21, but there were no confirmed changes to the frontline in this area. Russian forces continued offensive operations northwest of Avdiivka near Vozdvyzhenka, Arkhanhelske, Novooleksandrivka, Sokil, Novopokrovske, and Novoselivka Persha; west of Avdiivka near Yasnobrodovka; and southwest of Avdiivka near Karlivka on June 20 and 21.[48] Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced on the northern bank of the Karlivske Reservoir and west of Netaylove (both southwest of Avdiivka), but ISW has not observed visual confirmation of these claims.[49]

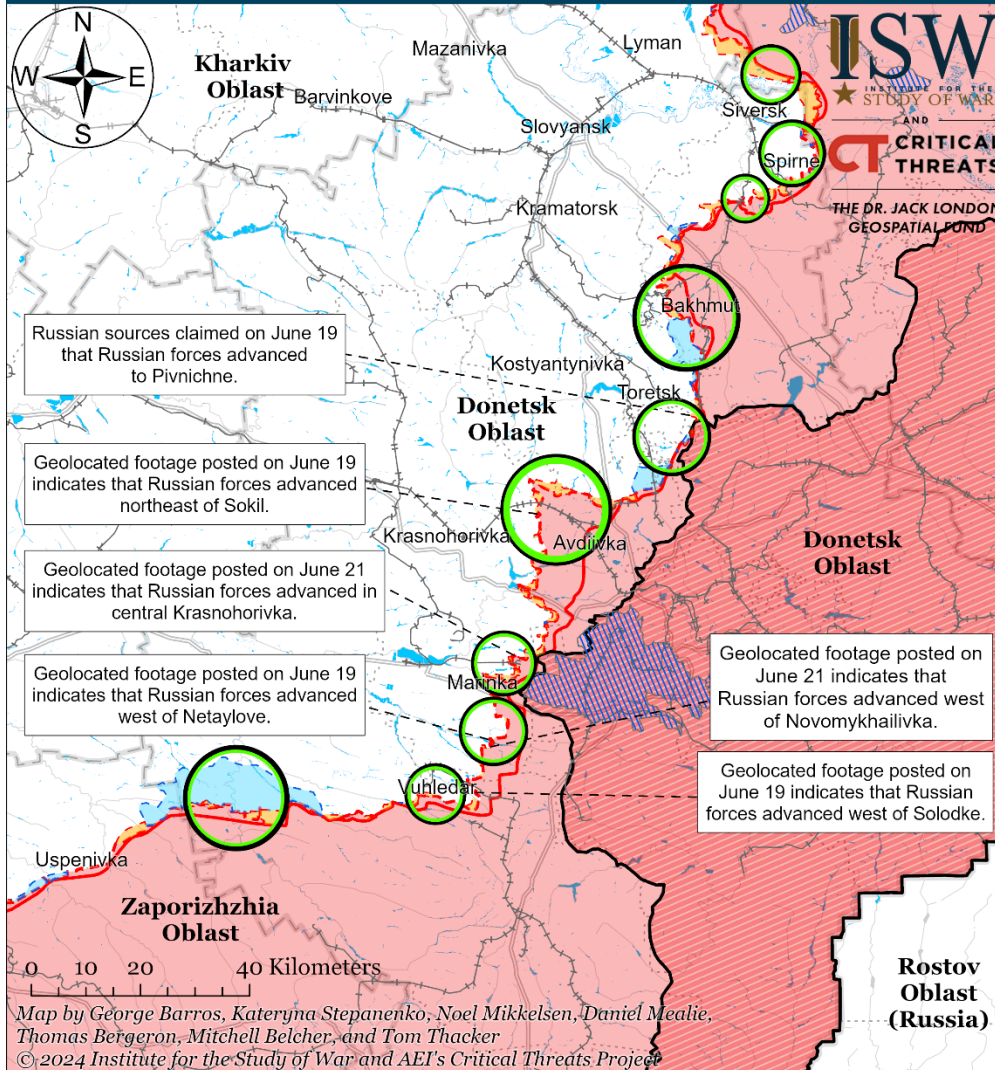
Assessed Control of Terrain Northwest of Avdiivka as of June 21, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



Russian forces recently advanced west and southwest of Donetsk City amid continued Russian offensive operations in the area on June 21. Geolocated footage published on June 21 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced west of Novomykhailivka (southwest of Donetsk City) and within Krasnohorivka (west of Donetsk City).[50] Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces made additional gains within Krasnohorivka, but ISW has not observed confirmation of these claims.[51] A large number of heat anomalies detected by NASA's Fire Information for Resource Management System on June 21 indicates fighting in central Krasnohorivka. Russian forces continued offensive operations west of Donetsk City near Krasnohorivka, Maksymilianivka, and Heorhiivka and southwest

of Donetsk City near Kostyantynivka, Pobieda, Paraskoviivka, and Vodyane on June 20 and 21.[52] Elements of the Russian 238th Artillery Brigade and 20th Motorized Rifle Division (both of the 8th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Southern Military District [SMD]) are reportedly operating near Kostyantynivka.[53]

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Donetsk as of June 21, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



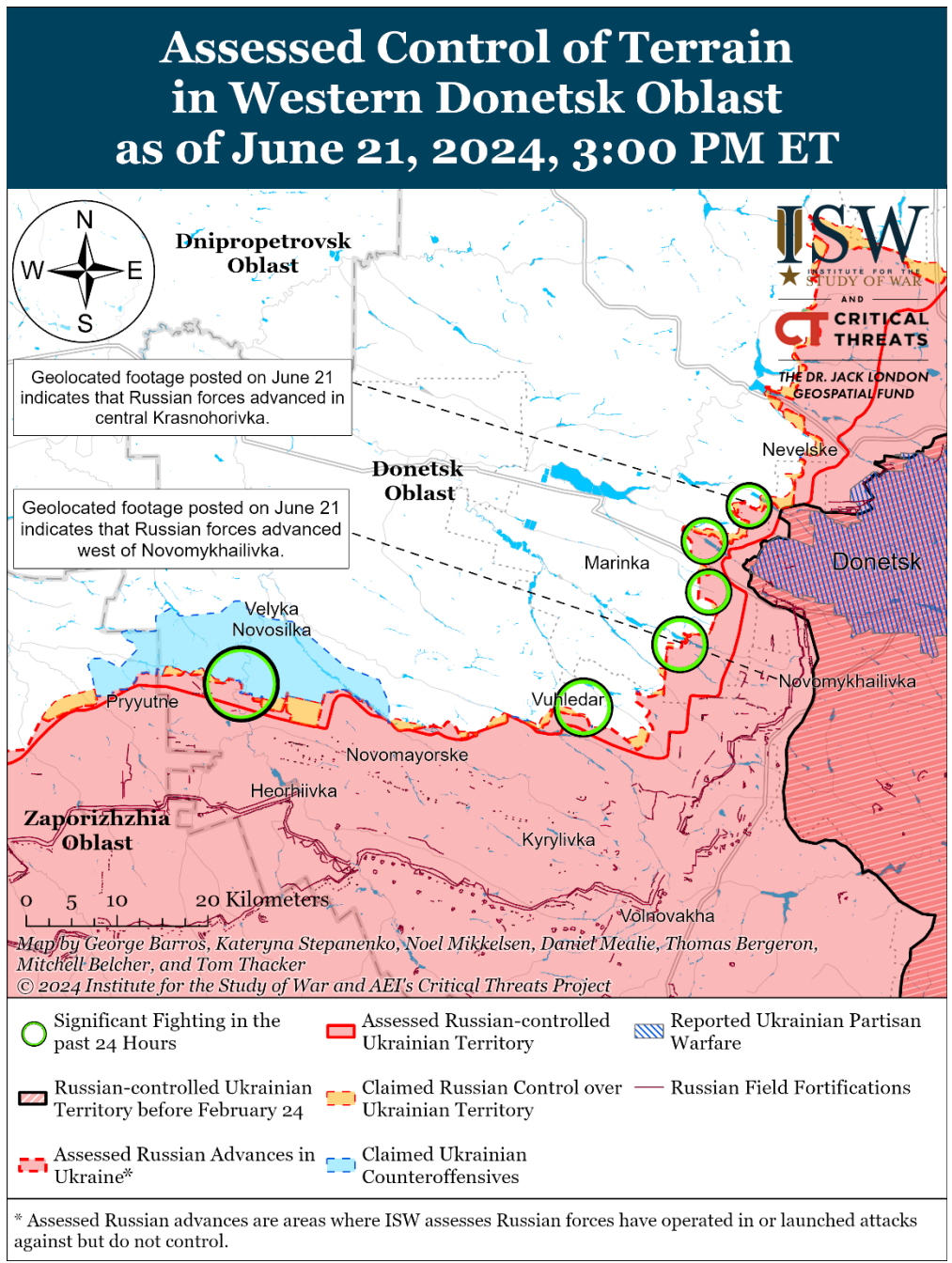
	Significant Fighting in the past 24 Hours		Assessed Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory		Major Railroads
	Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory before February 24		Claimed Russian Control over Ukrainian Territory		Reported Ukrainian Partisan Warfare
	Assessed Russian Advances in Ukraine*		Claimed Ukrainian Counteroffensives		

* Assessed Russian advances are areas where ISW assesses Russian forces have operated in or launched attacks against but do not control.

Note: A Russian source claimed on June 20 that Russian forces advanced up to two kilometers deep east of Pivnichne. A Russian source claimed on June 20 that Russian forces advanced one kilometer southwest of Rozdolivka.

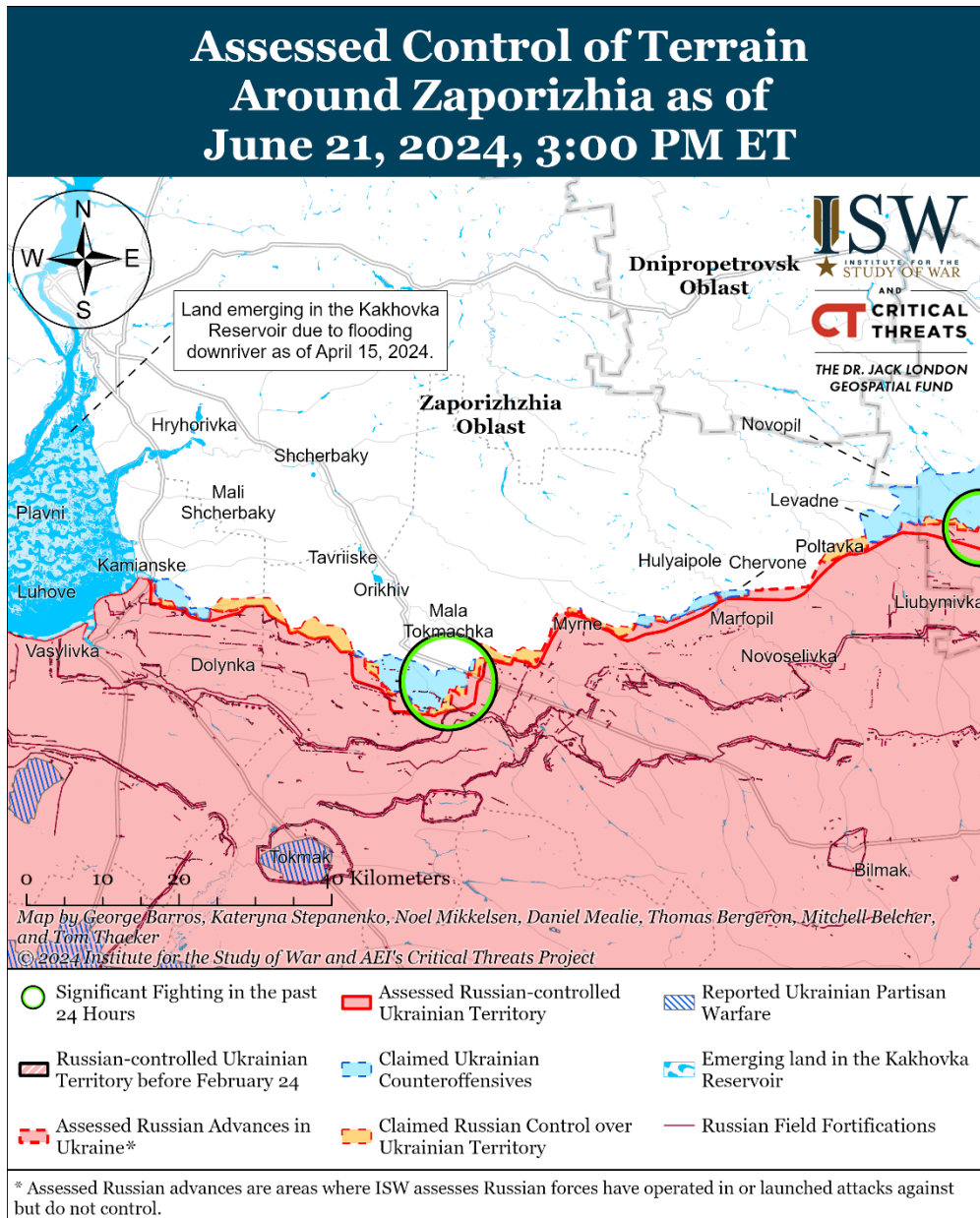
Positional engagements continued in the Donetsk-Zaporizhzhia Oblast border area near Staromayorske and Urozhaine (both south of Velyka Novosilka) on June 21.[54] The Ukrainian General Staff reported

on June 21 that Russian forces conducted guided glide bomb strikes on Novoukrainka (east of Velyka Novosilka).[55] Russian forces have also reportedly recently increased glide bomb strikes against Staromayorske, possibly in preparation for future ground attacks near the settlement.[56] Elements of the Russian 14th Spetsnaz Brigade (Russian General Staff's Main Intelligence Directorate [GRU]) are reportedly operating in the Donetsk-Zaporizhzhia Oblast border area.[57]



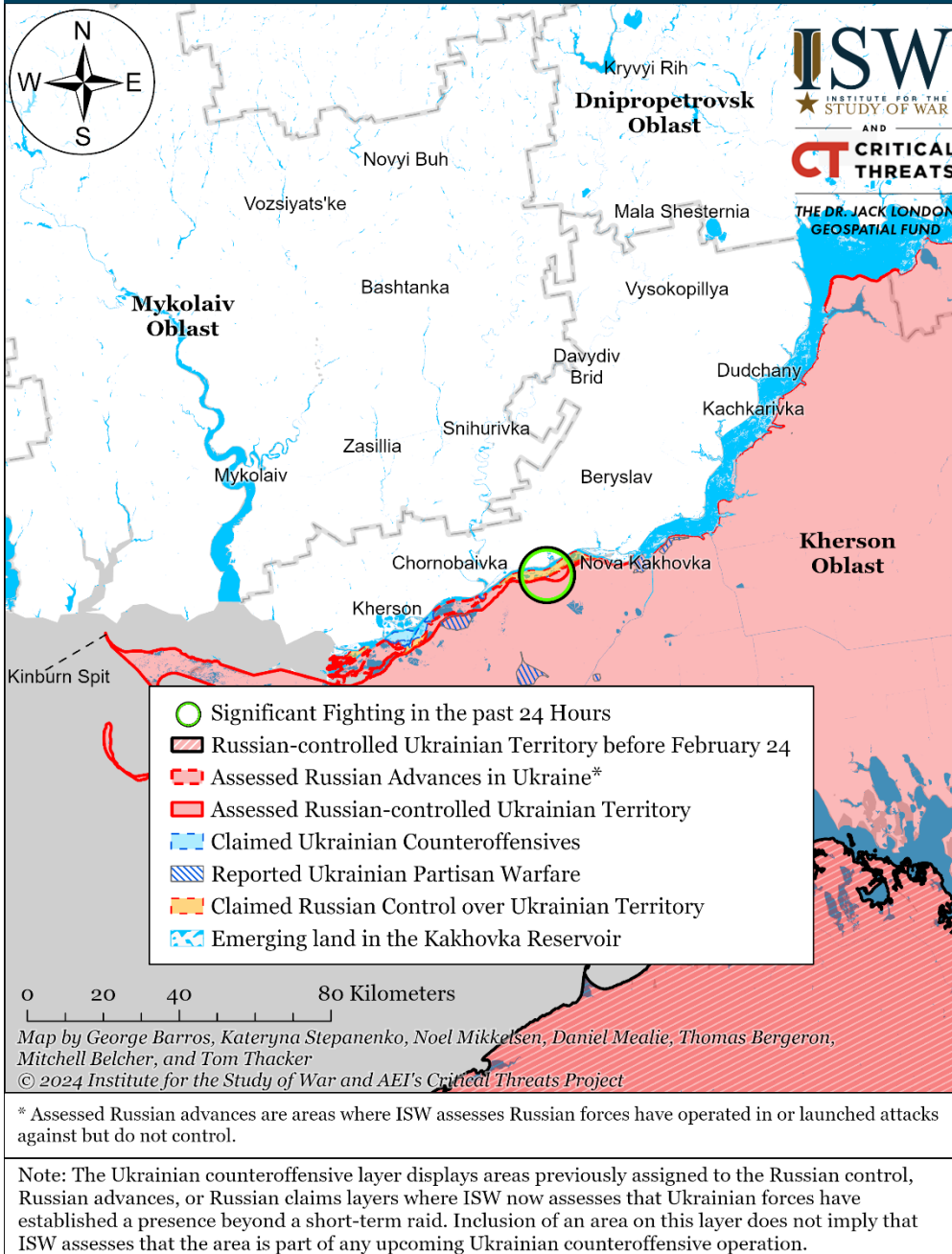
Russian Supporting Effort – Southern Axis (Russian objective: Maintain frontline positions and secure rear areas against Ukrainian strikes)

Positional engagements continued in western Zaporizhzhia Oblast on June 21, but there were no confirmed changes to the frontline. Positional engagements continued near Robotyne and northeast of Robotyne near Verbove and Mala Tokmachka on June 21.[58]



Positional engagements continued in east (left) bank Kherson Oblast near Krynyky and Kozachi Laheri and on the islands in the Dnipro River Delta on June 21.[59]

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Kherson and Mykolaiv as of June 21, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



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

Russian forces conducted missile strikes against Ukraine on the night of June 20 to 21 and during the day on June 21. Ukrainian Air Force Commander Lieutenant General Mykola Oleshchuk reported that Russian forces launched four Kh-59/69 cruise missiles against Kirovohrad and Kherson oblasts on the

night of June 20 to 21 and that Ukrainian forces downed all four missiles.[60] Dnipropetrovsk Oblast Military Administration Head Serhii Lysak reported that Russian forces struck a food warehouse in Kryvyi Rih with an unspecified missile during the day on June 21.[61] Odesa Oblast Military Administration Head Oleh Kiper reported that Russia conducted a ballistic missile strike against the coast of Odesa Oblast on June 21, damaging recreational infrastructure.[62]

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

The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) is taking steps to address bureaucratic issues in order to formalize irregular Russian formations, including elements of the Wagner Group. Russian Deputy Defense Minister Anna Tsivileva announced on June 20 that she, Chairperson of the Special Military Operation (SVO) Veteran's Association Alexei Naumets, Khabarovsk Krai Deputy Chairman for Social Issues Leonid Nikonov, Khabarovsk Krai military enlistment officer Sergei Yevlampiev, and Defenders of the Fatherland Foundation Supervisory Board member Alexei Romanov presented combat veteran certificates to a group of Khabarovsk Krai veterans who fought in Ukraine as members of the Wagner Group private military company (PMC).[63] Tsivileva stated that these veterans are unable to qualify for the federal and regional social services that the government owes them in exchange for their military service. Tsivileva stated that the Defenders of the Fatherland Foundation and the MoD are working together to help veterans submit the necessary paperwork to receive their state benefits and that the foundation and MoD worked together to "restore the rights" of veterans who served under the Wagner Group to receive the same social benefits as other veterans of the war in Ukraine. Tsivileva stated that this is fair because all soldiers fight together in Ukraine and congratulated the Wagner veterans on receiving their long-awaited documents.

Several Russian milbloggers responded to Tsivileva's announcement on June 21, and one milblogger claimed that this is a significant gesture of goodwill towards the Wagner veterans given the MoD's "complex relationship" with the Wagner Group and deceased Wagner Group financier Yevgeny Prigozhin.[64] The milblogger claimed that it is significant that Tsivileva presented these certificates on the eve of the first anniversary of the Wagner Group's armed rebellion on June 24, 2023, and noted that this gesture indicates that former Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu and his team were "driving" the confrontation between the MoD and the Wagner Group - a misrepresentation designed to save face and likely mollify disaffected Wagner Group personnel whom the Kremlin is now trying to reapproach and ultimately assimilate. Another Russian milblogger claimed that Tsivileva's progress in presenting these certificates could be a sign of "new life" in the MoD and claimed that this could have been Tsivileva's personal initiative.[65] Veterans of irregular Russian military formations, such as the Wagner Group and the recently dissolved Donetsk People's Republic's (DNR) Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD) "Kaskad" Operational Combat Tactical Formation, have repeatedly complained about the MoD's unwillingness to issue them combat veteran certificates and monetary and social benefits due to their service in irregular formations, which previously did not have legal standing in Russia.[66] Tsivileva may prioritize addressing these bureaucratic issues in her role as deputy defense minister and could further streamline the MoD's efforts to formalize the irregular formations that it has come to rely on in Ukraine.

Russian Defense Minister Andrei Belousov met with Minister of Digital Development, Communications, and Mass Communications Maksut Shadayev on June 21 to discuss the MoD's efforts to streamline the benefits process for Russian veterans following Tsivileva's June 20 meeting.[67] Belousov emphasized that Russian military personnel and their families are struggling to

prepare the necessary documents to apply for their benefits and social services and suggested that the MoD should automate the process. Belousov and Shadayev decided that the MoD should digitally issue and approve documents and set a goal to digitize the MoD's services by the third quarter of 2024. Belousov also created a permanent interdepartmental working group to address any issues in digitizing combat veteran certificates and benefit applications.

Russia continues to improve its drone training capabilities as part of its long-term force generation efforts. Russian Deputy Defense Minister Lieutenant General Andrei Bulyga inspected the Ussuriysk Suvorov Military School on June 21, and Chief of the Ussuriysk Suvorov Military School Major General Nikolay Glinin told Bulyga that the school is developing a drone training course for students.[68] Russian loitering munitions manufacturer and Kalashnikov Concern subsidiary Zala Aero announced on June 14 that it is partnering with Russia's Udmurt State University and Moscow State Technical University to open a master's program on "automatic control in robotic systems." [69] Zala Aero reported that the programs will include programming and engineering courses and will train students to design drone control systems, develop optical navigation programs, and prototype autopilots for unmanned systems.

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

Russian state-owned defense conglomerate Rostec published footage on June 21 and announced that it will begin testing its "Impulse-M" tracked unmanned ground vehicle (UGV) in the near future.[70] Rostec reported that the UGV is just over two meters long and can transport cargo weighing up to one ton. Rostec reportedly designed the UGV's tracked chassis to be highly reliable and easily maintainable in frontline conditions.

A Ukrainian commander reported on June 21 that Russian forces are installing lights on drones to illuminate potential targets for Krasnopol guided artillery systems.[71]

Ukrainian Defense Industrial Efforts (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.

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

Officials from the Chuvashia Republic implicated themselves in the deportation of Ukrainian children to Russia. Chuvashia's Minister of Education and Health Dmitry Zakharov reported on June 16 that 43 children from occupied Berdyansk, Zaporizhia Oblast, arrived in Chuvashia to attend the "Brigantina" summer camp in Cheboksary, Chuvashia (notably over 1,200 kilometers from Zaporizhia Oblast).[72] Zakharov reported that the children are "resting" at the camp and will also have an opportunity to travel around Chuvashia. Ukrainian Ombudsman Dmytro Lubinets noted on June 21 that Russian authorities are using the camp to expose Ukrainian children to re-education programs meant to strengthen Russia's control of occupied Ukraine by erasing the children's Ukrainian identities.[73] Zakharov denied Lubinets' report as "fake," but in his refutation confirmed that Russia

has actually deported 47 children to the "Brigantine" camp for "rest" and participation in other camp programs.[74] Russian authorities are using such summer camps to deport Ukrainian children to Russia and expose them to re-education efforts in order to separate them from their Ukrainian identities and encourage pro-Russian sentiments, as ISW has previously reported.[75]

An investigation by Russian opposition outlet *Verstka* highlights how Russia is importing Russian judges to serve in courts in occupied Ukraine, supporting Russian efforts to control the judiciary system while also providing a convenient cover for the resettlement of Russian citizens into occupied Ukraine.[76] *Verstka* found that the majority of judges serving at both the municipal and oblast level in occupied Kherson and Zaporizhia oblasts have come from Russia— 65 of 75 judges in occupied Zaporizhia Oblast are Russian, while 51 of 53 judges in occupied Kherson Oblast are Russian.[77] Most local judges are represented in courts in occupied Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, since Russia has been cultivating collaborator networks in the Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics (DNR and LNR) since 2014, and the court systems in these two oblasts are also notably much larger. In occupied Donetsk Oblast, 69 of 194 judges are Russian, while in occupied Luhansk Oblast only 20 of 147 judges are Russian. *Verstka* reported that high-quality and better-trained judges from Moscow City and St. Petersburg are more hesitant to take new jobs in occupied Ukraine, so judges from Nizhny Novgorod and Saratov oblasts are the most represented within the judiciary system in occupied Ukraine. *Verstka* noted that many of the Russian judges serving in occupied courts have corruption charges and that some served with DNR and LNR militias in 2014. The prevalence of imported Russian judges serving in courts in occupied Ukraine strengthens Russian control over the legal system in occupied Ukraine and supports Kremlin efforts to repopulate occupied Ukraine with Russian citizens in order to fundamentally alter Ukraine's demographics.[78] *Verstka* previously reported that over half of the senior and mid-level bureaucratic officials serving in Russian occupation administrations as of mid-2023 had relocated from Russia for similar purposes.[79]

Russia is using coerced passportization to pursue effective nationalization of seized Ukrainian properties in occupied areas. *The Economist* reported on June 19 that Russian occupation authorities in occupied Mariupol, Donetsk Oblast, are leaving notices on residential blocks declaring that apartment owners must have Russian passports and documentation and must re-register their properties with the occupation administration, or else the occupation administration will seize and nationalize the property.[80] The implications of this policy are clear—Russian occupation authorities are requiring residents of occupied Mariupol to obtain Russian passports and other documentation in order to keep their properties. ISW has also previously noted that Russian occupation authorities are trying to use nationalized housing in Mariupol to encourage Russians to resettle in occupied Ukraine, including by offering preferential mortgages on properties seized from Ukrainians to galvanize Russians to move to Mariupol.[81]

Russian Information Operations and Narratives

Russian officials continue efforts to discredit Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and portray Zelensky as an illegitimate president as part of Russia's ongoing "Maidan 3" information operation. Russian Deputy Chairman of the Russian Security Council Dmitry Medvedev claimed on June 21 that Zelensky has committed a number of unspecified crimes as president of Ukraine and that Zelensky's presidential term expired in May 2024.[82] Russian State Duma Chairperson Vyacheslav Volodin claimed that the West is going to replace Zelensky in the near future due to Zelensky's "illegitimacy" and Ukraine's performance on the battlefield.[83] Medvedev and Volodin's statements are a

continuation of Russia's "Maidan-3" information operation aimed at portraying Zelensky's government as illegitimate after Ukraine lawfully suspended its planned May 20 presidential elections in accordance with Ukraine's constitution and martial law.

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

The Belarusian Ministry of Defense (MoD) announced on June 21 that it is conducting a surprise readiness check of Belarusian forces at training grounds in Brest and Gomel oblasts.[84] The Belarusian MoD stated that it would check regular Belarusian forces, special operations forces, missile and artillery forces, and air force and air defense forces. BBC News Russian Service reported that the Belarusian MoD conducted its previous surprise readiness check on May 7.[85]

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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