

Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment, January 22, 2025

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Note: The data cut-off for this product was 11:30 pm ET on January 22. ISW will cover subsequent reports in the January 23 Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment.

The Kremlin has launched an information operation that seeks to create the false impression that the Russian economy is performing well despite numerous continued indicators of macroeconomic distress. Russian President Vladimir Putin claimed during a meeting on economic issues on January 22 that 2024 was a "strong year" for the Russian economy.^[1] Putin claimed that Russia has a manageable budget deficit of 1.7 percent and achieved a 26 percent increase in non-oil-and-gas revenue to 25.6 trillion rubles (approximately \$257.9 billion) in 2024 and announced a retroactive 9.5 percent increase in insurance and military pensions to address rising Russian inflation. *Bloomberg* reported on January 21 that the Russian Finance Ministry released a report projecting economic strength and suggesting that Russian budget revenue in December 2024 reached a record high of over 4 trillion rubles (about \$40 billion) — a 28 percent increase compared to December 2023 and the highest level recorded since 2011.^[2] The data fails to account for Russia's unsustainable levels of defense spending, rampant inflation, a growing deficit and the erosion of Russia's sovereign wealth fund, however.^[3] ISW continues to observe macroeconomic data that directly contradict the Kremlin's claims that the Russian economy is performing well. The Kremlin has recently adopted policies aimed at increasing defense spending all while Russian society faces labor shortages, broader demographic issues, declining savings, and increasing reliance on bailouts as the Russian economy faces rising interest rates, inflated salaries, and deteriorating production capacity.^[4] These economic realities suggest that the Kremlin's efforts to posture economic strength are largely an information operation aimed at reassuring domestic audiences and posturing Russian strength abroad while masking the true challenges Russia's economy is facing, particularly heightened due to its war against Ukraine.

Russia continues long-term efforts to build out its manpower reserve with All-Russian Cossack Society organizations and create a willing and well-trained prioritized pool designed to buffer the Kremlin from potential blowback in the event of a possible future partial call up of Russian reservists. *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's* northwestern Russia service *Sever Realii* reported on January 22 that Russian organizations have allocated a total of 11.4 million rubles (roughly \$114,880) for territorial defense training for 100 officers within the "Great Don Army" branch of the All-Russian Cossack Society, including 5.6 million rubles (approximately \$56,400) from the Russian Presidential Grant Fund and 5.7 million rubles (approximately \$57,400) from the

"Great Don Army" organization.[5] The training will include drone piloting training and tactical, medical, and fire training. A separate portion of the training will be devoted to organizing defense and interacting with political authorities in "wartime conditions." The Kremlin's efforts to expand the All-Russian Cossack societies, following the March 2024 law enrolling members of the All-Russian Cossack Society into the Russian military's mobilization reserve, are likely an effort to expand the number of well-trained troops in Russia's active reserve pools that the Kremlin can call up to fight in Ukraine or elsewhere during a possible future partial call up of Russian reservists.[6]

North Korea will reportedly deploy new military personnel to Russia by mid-March 2025, likely to maintain the current pace and intensity of attritional, infantry-led assaults in Kursk Oblast. The *New York Times* (NYT) reported on January 22 that a US senior defense official stated that additional North Korean forces will arrive in Russia "within the next two months," (roughly mid-March 2025).[7] The NYT did not specify the number of troops or whether North Korea is rotating forces or increasing the size of its total force grouping in Russia, however. The South Korean Joint Chiefs of Staff reported on December 23 that North Korea may be preparing to deploy an unspecified number of additional forces to Ukraine and military equipment to Russia, either as a rotation or additional deployment of forces.[8] Western officials told the BBC on January 22 that North Korean forces have suffered roughly 1,000 killed in action and 3,000 missing or wounded in action as of mid-January 2025, roughly 33 to 40 percent of the 11,000 to 12,000 total North Korean personnel already in Russia.[9] ISW recently assessed that the entirety of the North Korean contingent in Russia may be killed or wounded in action by about mid-April 2025 at their current casualty rate, and a new North Korean deployment — whether intended to increase the current grouping or rotate out existing forces — is likely intended to sustain Russia's tempo of operations despite heavy losses of about 30,000 - 45,000 casualties (combined killed and wounded) per month.[10] North Korean forces reportedly spent at least a month training in eastern Russia before deploying to Kursk Oblast for further training in near rear areas in November 2024 and joining combat operations at least as of early December 2024.[11] This timeline roughly coheres with the possibility that a fresh contingent of North Korean forces could undergo training and replace the shrinking North Korean group in Kursk Oblast by mid-April 2025, assuming the reported next batch of North Korean troops will train for the same duration as their predecessors, and deploy to Russia imminently in late January or early February 2025.

These fresh North Korean forces are unlikely to decisively improve Russian operations and will likely face the same high casualty rates and complications operating with Russian forces as the current North Korean contingent, provided the Russian command continues to use North Korean forces the same way as it has thus far. US officials and Ukrainian soldiers told the NYT that North Korean and Russian forces continue to struggle with communications and cohesion and that Russian and North Korean forces have "clashed" at least twice due to troop identification errors.[12] A Ukrainian commander told the NYT that North Korean assault groups now include a translator who speaks Russian but that these groups are still not very effective. Ukrainian soldiers reported that North Korean forces continue conducting mass infantry assaults and that North Korean soldiers do not retreat even if injured. Ukraine's Special Operations Forces (SSO) published footage on January 22 of North Korean forces massing for an infantry assault and reported that Ukrainian forces killed 21 and wounded 40 North Korean soldiers during the eight-hour long

combat engagement.[13] Ukrainian soldiers told the NYT that Russian forces are still attempting to conceal the presence of North Koreans on the battlefield by conducting drone strikes against wounded North Korean troops as Ukrainian forces attempt to take them prisoner.[14] ISW continues to assess that North Korea's high casualty rate and interoperability difficulties with Russian forces will affect the lessons that the North Korean military command will learn from fighting in Russia's war.[15]

Russian milbloggers complained and expressed concern over recent claims that the Hayat Tahrir al Sham (HTS)-led interim government in Syria suspended Russian investment and financial involvement in the port of Tartus as Russia's long-term military presence in Syria remains unclear. A Kremlin-affiliated Russian milblogger claimed on January 22 that the Russian government, via a Russian military official based in Turkey, recently reached an unspecified agreement with HTS that appears to have included permission for Russian vessels to dock in the port of Tartus.[16] Marine Traffic, a shipping tracking website, shows that the Russian *Sparta* and *Sparta II* cargo ships are docked in the port of Tartus as of January 22, and these ships are likely supporting the Russian military's evacuation of military equipment from the port. The milblogger claimed that the Russian and HTS-led governments continue to negotiate about the future of Russia's presence at the Tartus and Khmeimim military bases and noted that it is unclear if any other third-party might be interested in using the port of Tartus in the future.[17] Other Russian milbloggers expressed confusion over the situation in Syria and accused unspecified actors of spreading rumors about Russia's supposed agreement with the HTS-led government.[18] Syrian Interim Defense Minister Marhaf Abu Qasra stated on January 22 that Russian and Syrian officials have not reached a final solution in the negotiations about future Russian military bases in Syria.[19]

A Russian state media outlet reported that Russia may resume direct gas deliveries to Transnistria despite recent discussions about sourcing non-Russian gas to the region. Russian business outlet *Kommersant*, citing its own sources, reported on January 22 that Russia may resume gas supplies to Transnistria via the TurkStream pipeline, using the Cyprus-based company Obzor Enterprises as an intermediary.[20] *Kommersant*, citing data from the European Union (EU)'s Regional Booking Platform (RBP) for natural gas transmission, reported that Obzor Enterprises booked the TurkStream pipeline on January 20 to transit 3.1 million cubic meters of gas per day to the Strandzha-2 entry point from February 1 to March 1, volumes which *Kommersant* assessed align with Transnistria's estimated humanitarian needs. *Kommersant* reported that authorities are discussing extending these supplies through mid-April and that Russia would pay roughly \$160 million to purchase the gas. *Kommersant's* sources noted that Russia is prioritizing efforts to transfer the gas to Transnistria through the Trans-Balkan pipeline, which runs through Bulgaria and Romania before reaching Transnistria. Russian and Transnistrian authorities have recently been exploring the possibility of sourcing Russian-funded European gas to Transnistria through the European spot market, but Moldovan President Maia Sandu has stated that only Moldovan gas company Moldovagaz has the authority to deliver gas to Transnistria and that Moldovagaz can only work with companies that do not violate Moldovan law or international sanctions.[21] Ukrainian and Moldovan officials have noted how Russia is trying to leverage the manufactured gas crisis to affect Moldovan public opinion

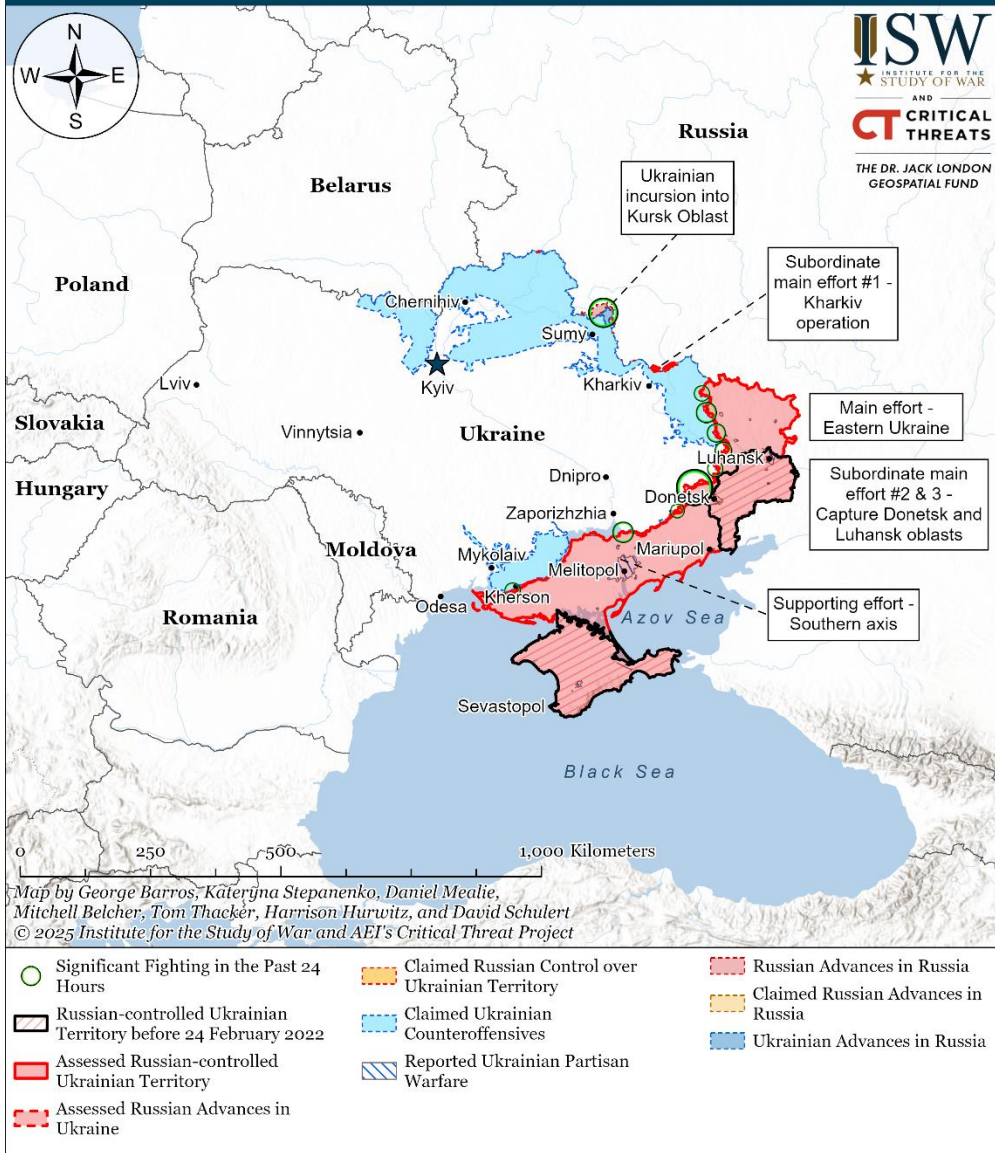
before the Summer 2025 Moldovan parliamentary elections.[22]

Key Takeaways:

- **The Kremlin has launched an information operation that seeks to create the false impression that the Russian economy is performing well despite numerous continued indicators of macroeconomic distress.**
- **Russia continues long-term efforts to build out its manpower reserve with All-Russian Cossack Society organizations and create a willing and well-trained prioritized pool designed to buffer the Kremlin from potential blowback in the event of a possible future partial call up of Russian reservists.**
- **North Korea will reportedly deploy new military personnel to Russia by mid-March 2025, likely to maintain the current pace and intensity of attritional, infantry-led assaults in Kursk Oblast.**
- **These fresh North Korean forces are unlikely to decisively improve Russian operations and will likely face the same high casualty rates and complications operating with Russian forces as the current North Korean contingent, provided the Russian command continues to use North Korean forces the same way as it has thus far.**
- **Russian milbloggers complained and expressed concern over recent claims that the Hayat Tahrir al Sham (HTS)-led interim government in Syria suspended Russian investment and financial involvement in the port of Tartus as Russia's long-term military presence in Syria remains unclear.**
- **A Russian state media outlet reported that Russia may resume direct gas deliveries to Transnistria despite recent discussions about sourcing non-Russian gas to the region.**
- **Ukrainian forces recently recaptured lost positions near Toretsk.**
- **Russian forces recently advanced near Chasiv Yar, Toretsk, Pokrovsk, Kurakhove, and Velyka Novosilka.**
- **Russia and Uzbekistan are deepening military cooperation.**

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Russo-Ukrainian War

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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.

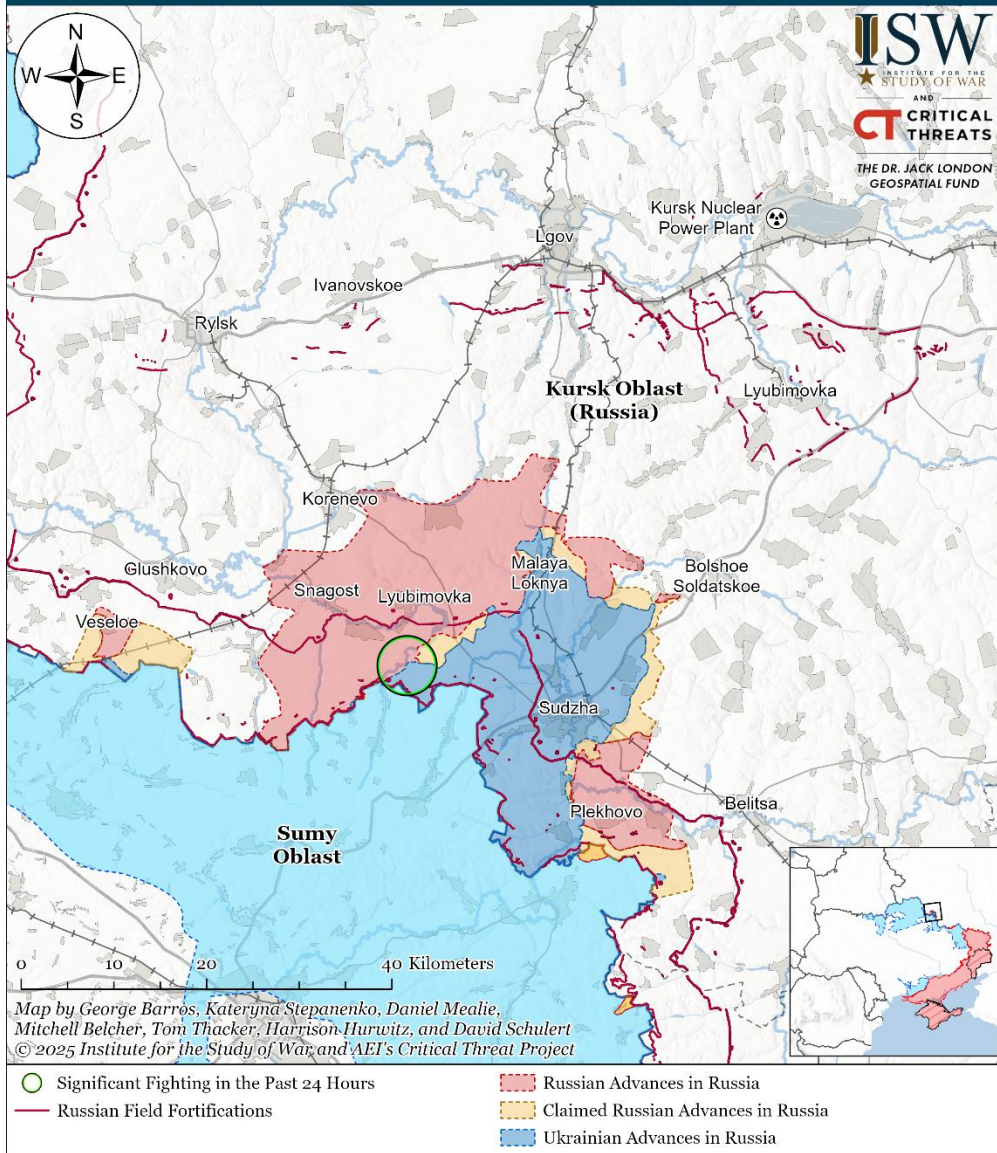
- Ukrainian Operations in the Russian Federation
- Russian Main Effort – Eastern Ukraine (comprised of three subordinate main efforts)

- 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
- Significant Activity in Belarus

Ukrainian Operations in the Russian Federation

Russian forces continued offensive operations along the Ukrainian salient in Kursk Oblast on January 22 but did not make confirmed advances. A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces reached the outskirts of Guyevo (south of Sudzha), but ISW has not observed evidence of this claim.^[23] Russian forces continued ground attacks northwest of Sudzha near Pogrebki and south of Sudzha near Makhnovka and in and west of Kurilovka.^[24] Russian milbloggers claimed that Ukrainian forces counterattacked near Makhnovka and northwest of Sudzha near Kruglenkoye.^[25] Elements of the Chechen "Zapad-Akhmat" Battalion are reportedly conducting reconnaissance operations near Russia's international border with Sumy Oblast.^[26] Elements of the Russian 106th Airborne (VDV) Division are reportedly operating a TOS-1A thermobaric artillery system in Kursk Oblast.^[27]

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Kursk Direction
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Ukraine's Main Military Intelligence Directorate (GUR) reported on January 22 that GUR first person view (FPV) strike drones struck a piece of Russian satellite equipment near Tetkino, Kursk Oblast on January 17.[28] The GUR reported that the equipment supported Russia's use of the Yamal-401, Yamal-402, and Yamal-300K communications satellites in the area.

Russian Main Effort – Eastern Ukraine

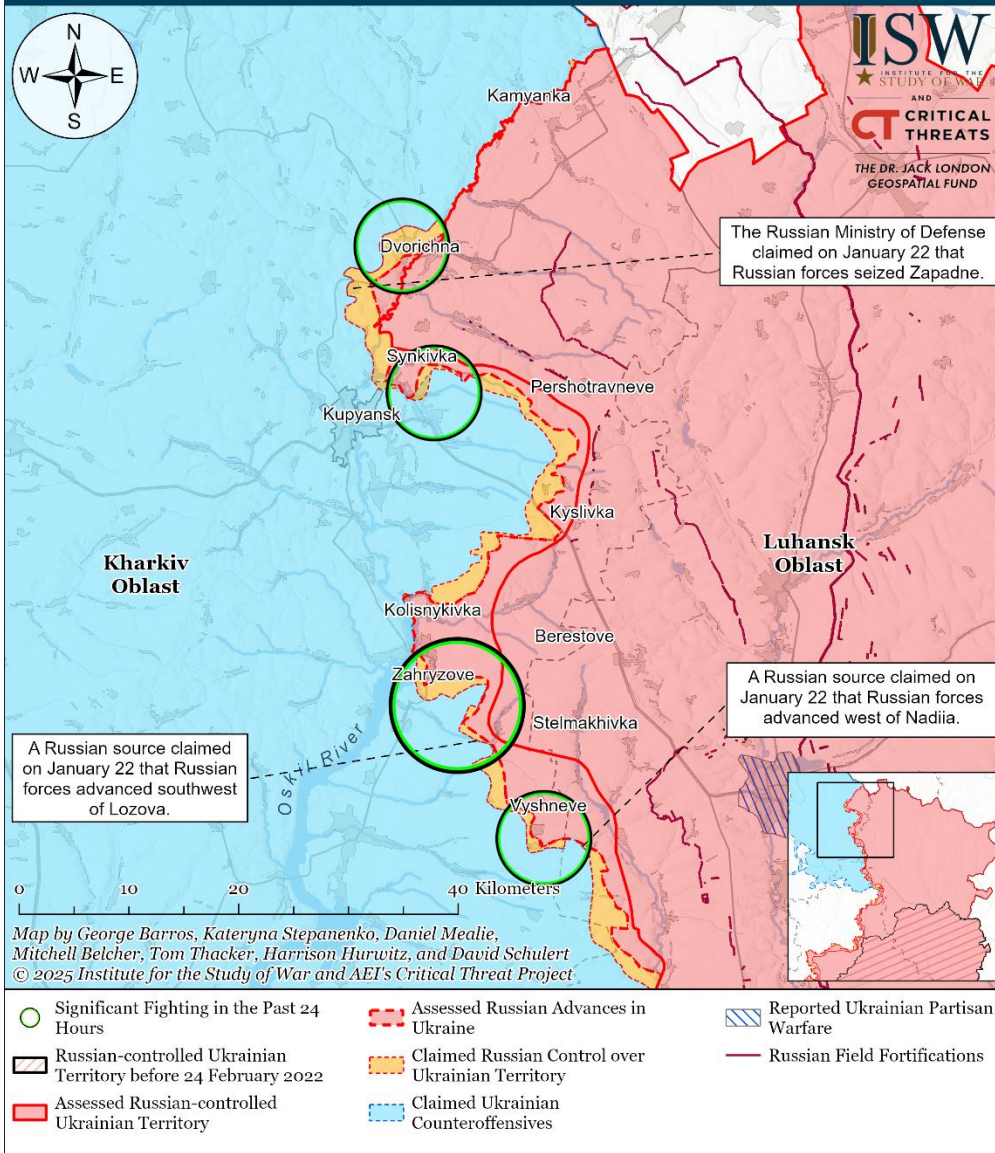
Russian Subordinate Main Effort #1 – Kharkiv Oblast (Russian objective: Push Ukrainian forces back from the international border with Belgorod Oblast and approach to within tube artillery range of Kharkiv City)

Russian forces continued limited ground attacks northeast of Kharkiv City near Vovchansk on January 21 and 22 but did not advance.[29] Elements of the Chechen “Zapad-Akhmat” Battalion and Rosgvardia’s 116th Special Purpose “Stalhaya” Brigade are reportedly operating in Kharkiv Oblast.[30]

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)

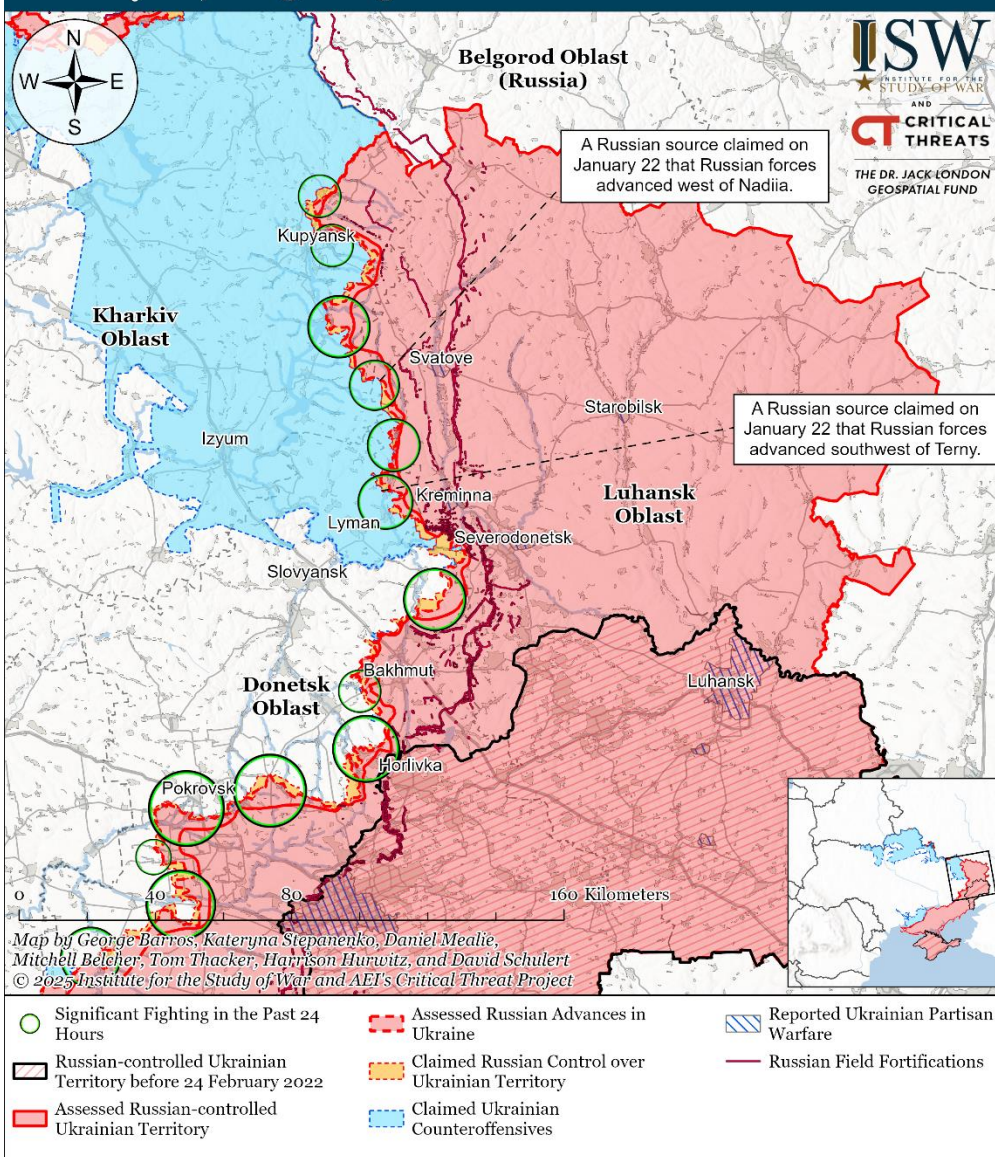
Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Kupyansk direction on January 22 but did not make confirmed advances. The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) claimed on January 22 that Russian forces seized Zapadne (north of Kupyansk).[31] Russian milbloggers claimed on January 22 that Russian forces advanced both north and south of Zapadne and south of and in central Dvorichna (northeast of Kupyansk).[32] ISW has not observed confirmation of these claims, however. Russian forces continued ground attacks north of Kupyansk near Dvorichna and Kutkivka and east of Kupyansk near Petropavlivka on January 21 and 22.[33] A Russian milblogger claimed on January 22 that Ukrainian forces are counterattacking near Vilshana (northeast of Kupyansk).[34] Ukrainian Khortytsia Group of Forces Spokesperson Major Viktor Trehubov stated on January 22 that Russian forces are attempting to cross the Oskil River near Dvorichna with small vessels - particularly small rubber boats - under the cover of night.[35] Trehubov noted that Ukrainian drones are targeting Russian forces attempting to cross the Oskil River and hiding in windbreaks. Trehubov also stated that Russian forces conduct assaults on the west (right) bank of the Oskil River, have accumulated an unspecified amount of personnel, and have not established logistics across the Oskil River as the water has not frozen. A Ukrainian drone battalion commander operating in the Kupyansk direction stated on January 22 that Russian commanders are forcing infantry to attack despite poor weather conditions preventing the proper use of drone or armored vehicle support.[36] The Ukrainian Khortytsia Group of Forces reported on January 22 that Russian forces used an unspecified number of armored vehicles to conduct recent assaults in the Petropavlivka direction (east of Kupyansk) and near Lozova (northeast of Borova).[37] Drone operators of the Russian Rubicon Center for Advanced Unmanned Technologies reportedly continue operating in the Kupyansk direction.[38]

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Kupyansk Direction January 22, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Borova direction on January 22 but did not make confirmed advances. A Russian milblogger claimed on January 22 that Russian forces advanced southwest of Lozova (northeast of Borova) and west of Nadiya (east of Borova).[39] ISW has not observed confirmation of this claim, however. Russian forces continued ground attacks northeast of Borova near Lozova, Nova Kruhlyakivka, and Zahryzove; east of Borova near Kopanky; and southeast of Borova near Novoyehorivka and Novoserhiivka on January 21 and 22.[40]

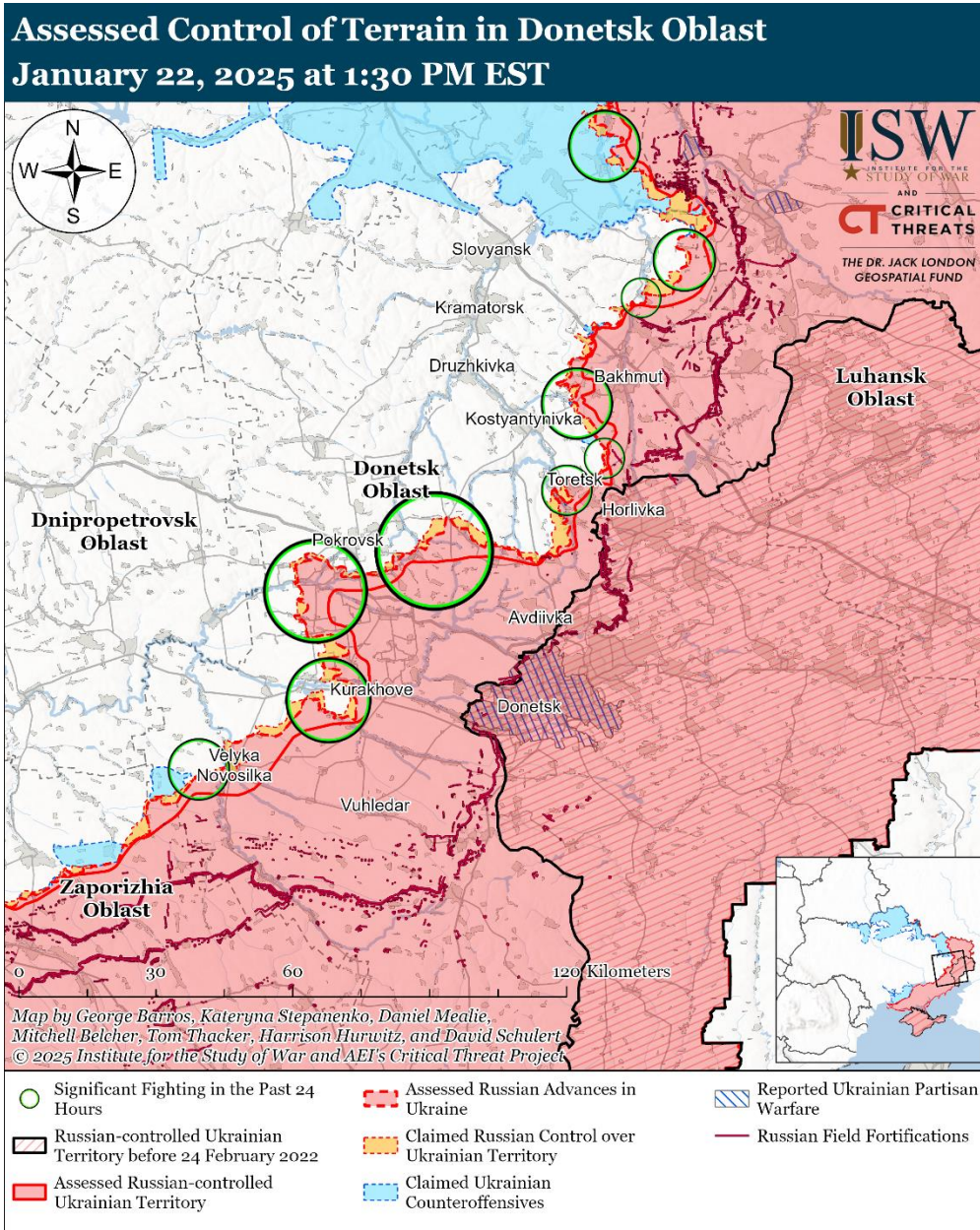
Assessed Control of Terrain in Luhansk Oblast January 22, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Lyman direction on January 22 but did not make confirmed advances. A Russian milblogger claimed on January 22 that Russian forces advanced southwest of Terny (northeast of Lyman), northwest and west of Ivanivka (northeast of Lyman), and north and east of Kolodyazi.[41] ISW has not observed confirmation of these claims, however. Russian forces continued ground attacks north of Lyman near Zelena Dolyna; northeast of Lyman near Kuzmyne, Terny, and Kolodyazi; and east of Lyman near the Serebryanske forest area on January 21 and 22.[42] Elements of the Russian 144th Motorized Rifle Division (20th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Moscow Military District [MMD]) reportedly continue operating in the Lyman direction.[43]

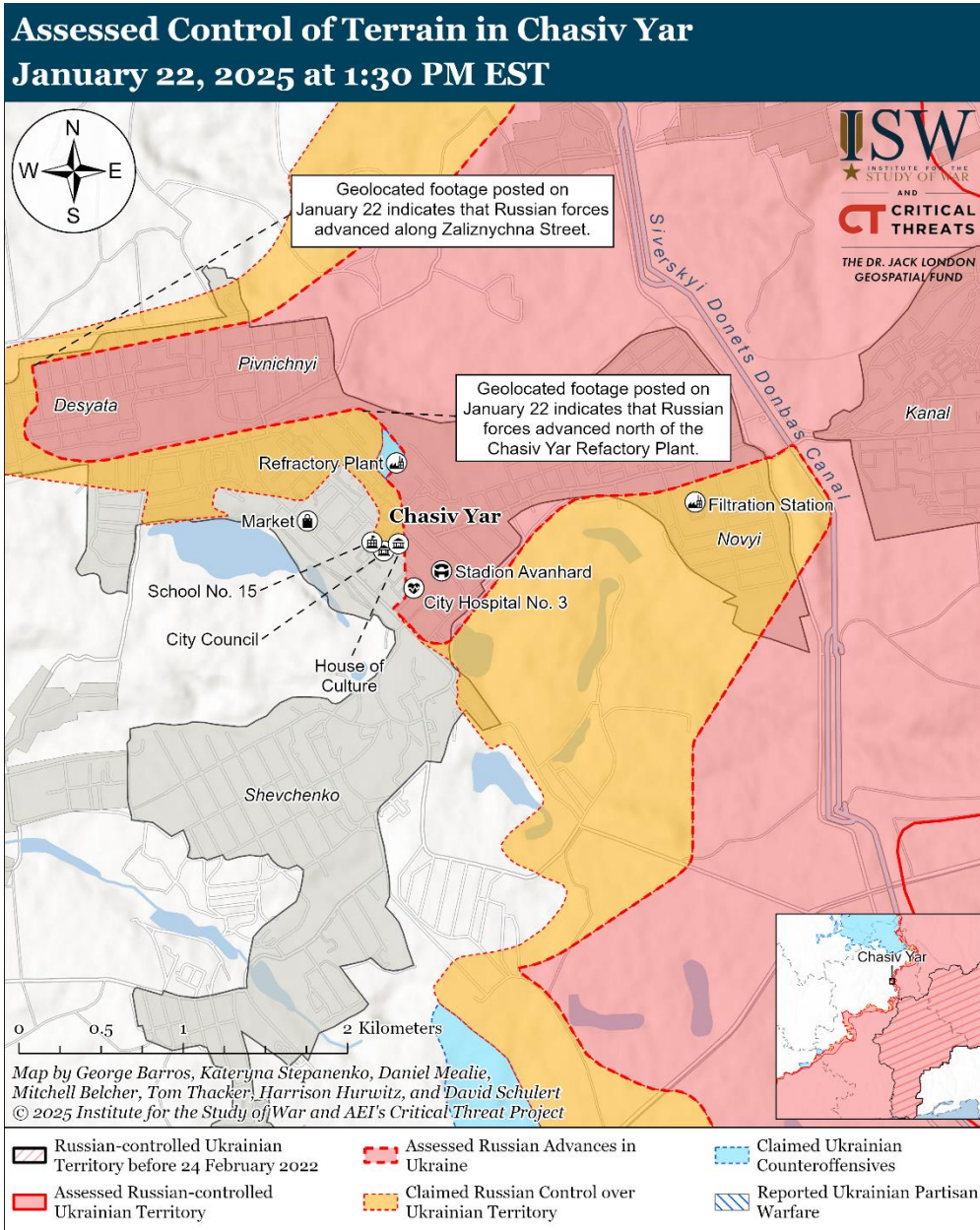
Russian Subordinate Main Effort #3 – Donetsk Oblast (Russian objective: Capture the entirety of Donetsk Oblast, the claimed territory of Russia’s proxies in Donbas)

Russian forces continued offensive operations southeast of Siversk near Ivano-Darivka on January 21 and 22 but did not advance.[44]



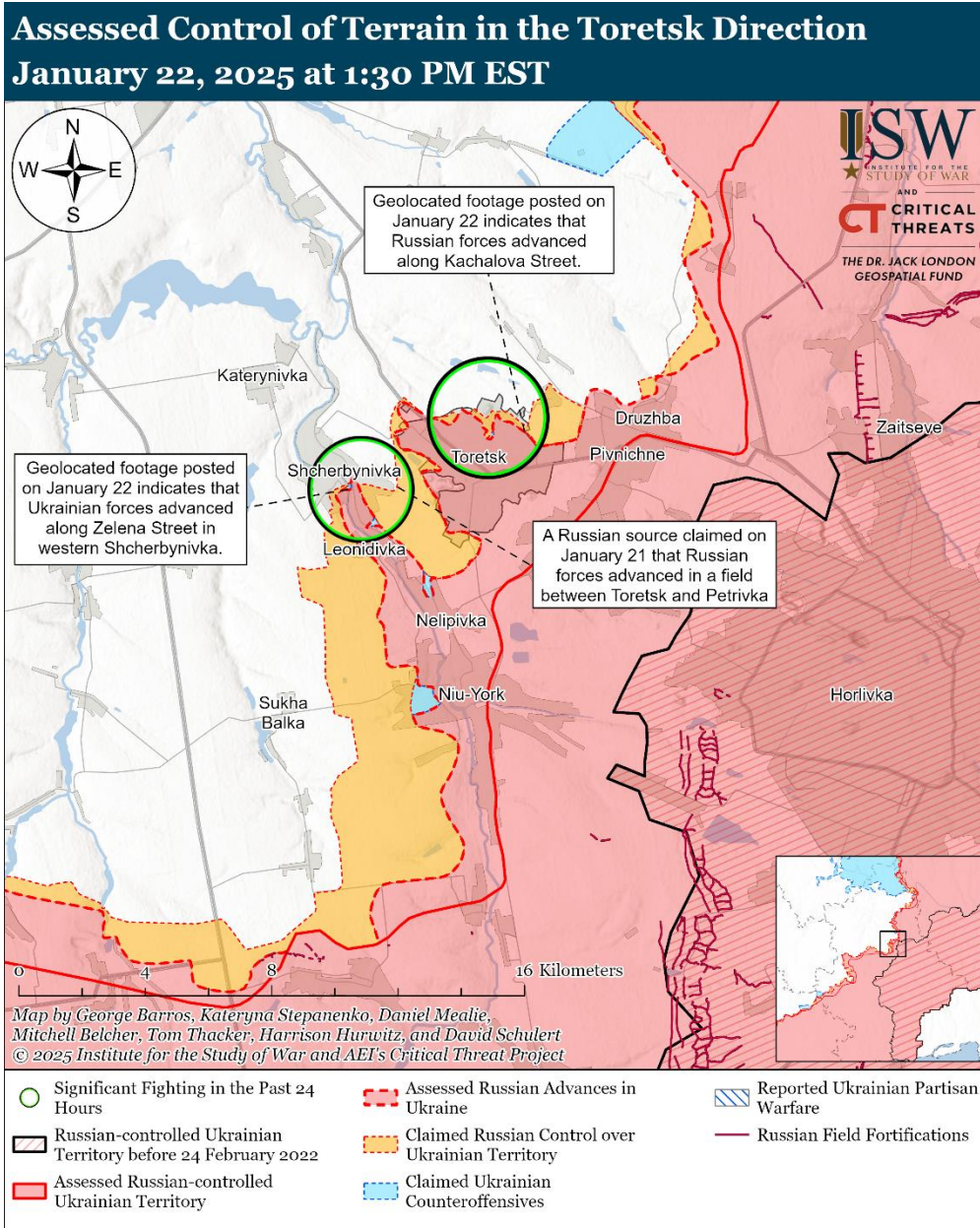
Russian forces recently advanced in the Chasiv Yar direction amid continued offensive operations in the area on January 22. Geolocated footage published on January 22 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced along Zaliznychna Street in northwestern Chasiv Yar and recently marginally advanced north and northwest of the Chasiv Yar Refractory Plant in central Chasiv Yar.[45] A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced further along Tsentralna Street in central Chasiv Yar, but ISW has not observed confirmation of this claim.[46] Russian forces continued ground attacks near

Chasiv Yar itself and north of Chasiv Yar in the direction of Fedorivka on January 21 and 22.[47] Snipers of the Russian 299th Airborne (VDV) Regiment (98th VDV Division) are reportedly operating in Chasiv Yar itself, and elements of the Russian 215th Reconnaissance Battalion (98th VDV Division) are reportedly striking Ukrainian positions in Chasiv Yar itself.[48]



Ukrainian and Russian forces recently advanced in the Toretsk direction amid continued offensive operations in the area on January 22. Geolocated footage published on January 22 shows drone operators of the Russian 9th Motorized Rifle Brigade (51st Combined Arms Army [CAA], formerly the 1st Donetsk People's Republic Army Corps [DNR AC]) striking Ukrainian forces in western Shcherbynivka (west of Toretsk), indicating that Ukrainian forces recently regained lost positions in the area.[49] Geolocated footage published on January 11 and geolocated on January 22 indicates that

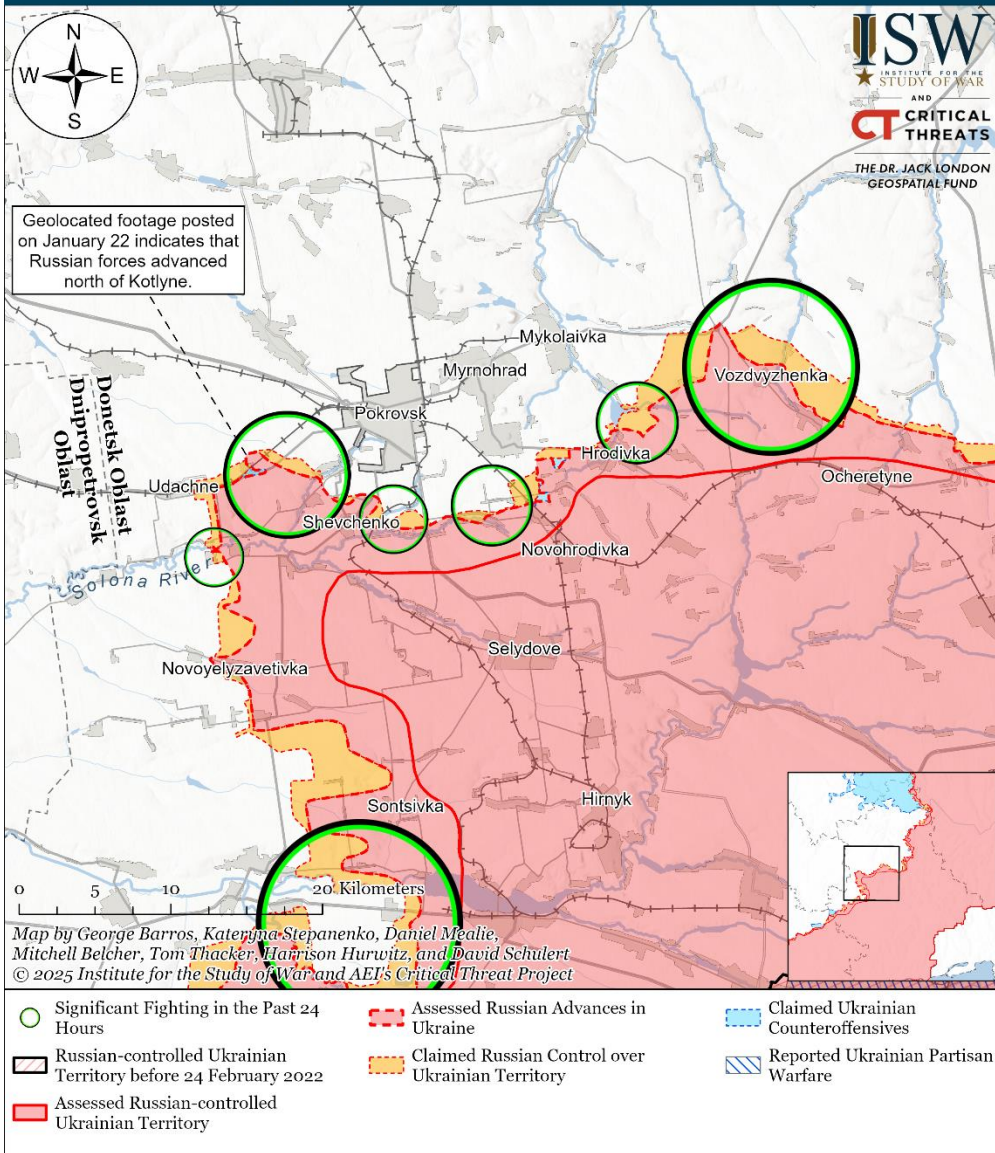
Russian forces advanced along Kachalova and Puzanova streets in northern Toretzk.[50] The commander of a Ukrainian battalion operating in the Toretzk direction stated on January 22 that Ukrainian forces are defending in limited positions in Toretzk and trying to contain Russian forces in the settlement.[51] Russian milbloggers claimed on January 21 and 22 that Russian forces advanced to a field between Toretzk and Petrivka (west of Toretzk) and that Russian forces advanced east of the Toretzka Mine waste heap in northern Toretzk, but ISW has not observed confirmation of these claims.[52] Russian forces continued ground attacks within Toretzk itself on January 21 and 22.[53]



Russian forces recently advanced southwest of Pokrovsk amid ongoing offensive operations near Pokrovsk on January 22. Geolocated footage published on January 22 indicate that Russian forces recently advanced in the fields northeast of Kotlyne (southwest of Pokrovsk) and within the

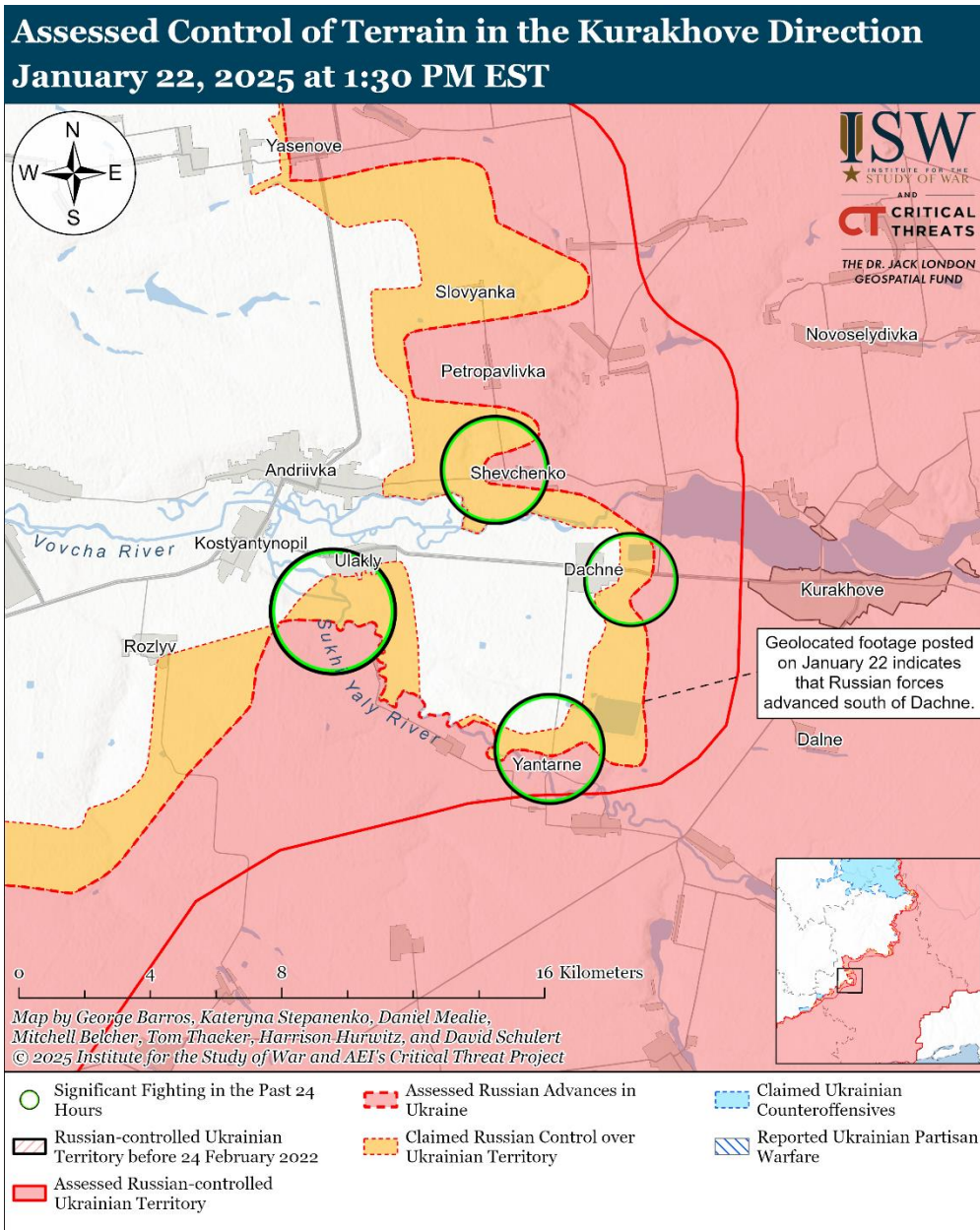
northeastern part of the settlement.[54] Russian milbloggers reiterated claims that Russian forces advanced near Vozdvyzhenka (east of Pokrovsk), seized Baranivka (northeast of Pokrovsk and north of Vozdvyzhenka) and Kotlyne (southwest of Pokrovsk), advanced 3.6 kilometers in depth west of Vovkove (southwest of Pokrovsk), and within Nadiivka (southwest of Pokrovsk).[55] A Russian milblogger claimed that the Russian military command recently introduced reserve forces into combat east of Pokrovsk and that these forces participated in the supposed seizure of Baranivka.[56] Ukrainian military observer Kostyantyn Mashovets stated that Russian forces recently introduced elements of the 30th Motorized Rifle Brigade (2nd CAA, Central Military District [CMD]) to offensive operations south of Pokrovsk, indicating that Russian forces continue to prioritize the envelopment of Pokrovsk from the southwest.[57] Mashovets assessed that Russian advances south and east of Pokrovsk have slowed in recent weeks. A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces are counterattacking near Udachne (southwest of Pokrovsk).[58] Russian forces continued offensive operations east of Pokrovsk near Vodyane Druhe, Zelene Pole, Myrolyubivka, Yelyzavetivka, Pomin, and Myrnohrad; southeast of Pokrovsk near Lysivka; south of Pokrovsk near Novyi Trud, Zvirove, and Petropavlivka; and southwest of Pokrovsk near Novoserhiivka, Kotlyne, Uspenivka, and Sribne and in the direction of Hryshyne (northwest of Pokrovsk) on January 21 and 22.[59]

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Pokrovsk Direction January 22, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



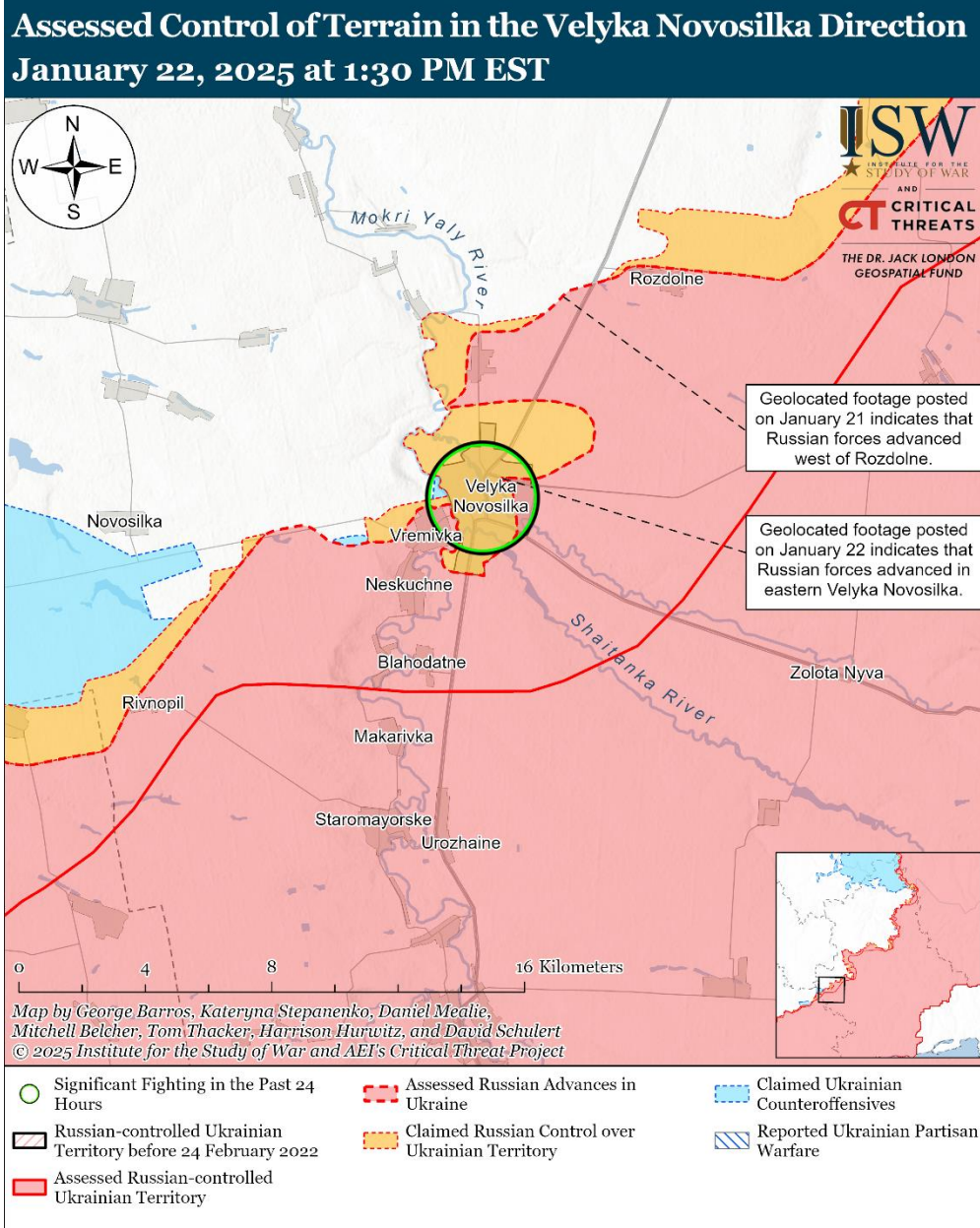
Russian forces recently advanced west of Kurakhove amid continued offensive operations in the Kurakhove direction on January 22. Geolocated footage published on January 21 indicates that Russian forces recently marginally advanced in the fields south of Dachne (west of Kurakhove).^[60] Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced along windbreaks southwest of Slovyanka (northwest of Kurakhove) and two kilometers towards Kostyantynopil (west of Kurakhove) and that Russian forces are clearing Ukrainian forces from the area west of the Kurakhivske Reservoir (west of Kurakhove).^[61] ISW has not observed visual confirmation of these claims, however. Mashovets stated on January 22 that elements of the Russian 110th Motorized Rifle Brigade (51st CAA) have struggled to advance towards Andriivka (west of Kurakhove) from the south since their last advance as of January 12 despite being reinforced with elements of the 114th Motorized Rifle Brigade (51st CAA).^[62] Russian forces continued ground attacks northwest of Kurakhove near Slovyanka and Shevchenko; west of

Kurakhove near Dachne, Andriivka, and Kostyantynopil; and southwest of Kurakhove near Ulakly and Yantarne on January 21 and 22.[63] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces counterattacked near Andriivka and Zelenivka (southwest of Kurakhove).[64]



Russian forces recently advanced near and within Velyka Novosilka amid continued offensive operations in the area on January 22. Geolocated footage published on January 21 and 22 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced along a road west of Rozdolne (northeast of Velyka Novosilka) and along Horizhnia Street in northeastern Velyka Novosilka.[65] Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced north of Vremivka (west of Velyka Novosilka) and further within eastern Velyka Novosilka and reiterated claims that Russian forces have partially enveloped Ukrainian forces in Velyka Novosilka from the north, east, and south.[66] Mashovets stated that elements of the Russian

37th Motorized Rifle Brigade (36th CAA, Eastern Military District [EMD]) and 5th Tank Brigade (36th CAA) are attacking in southeastern Velyka Novosilka and that elements of the 127th Motorized Rifle Division (5th CAA, EMD) are attacking in the southwestern part of the settlement.[67] Mashovets noted that elements of the Russian 336th Naval Infantry Brigade (Baltic Fleet, Leningrad Military District [LMD]) are advancing near the northern outskirts of Velyka Novosilka.[68] Russian forces continued ground assaults near Velyka Novosilka and just west of Velyka Novosilka near Vremivka on January 21 and 22.[69] Elements of the Russian 40th Naval Infantry Brigade (Pacific Fleet, EMD) are reportedly operating within Velyka Novosilka.[70]

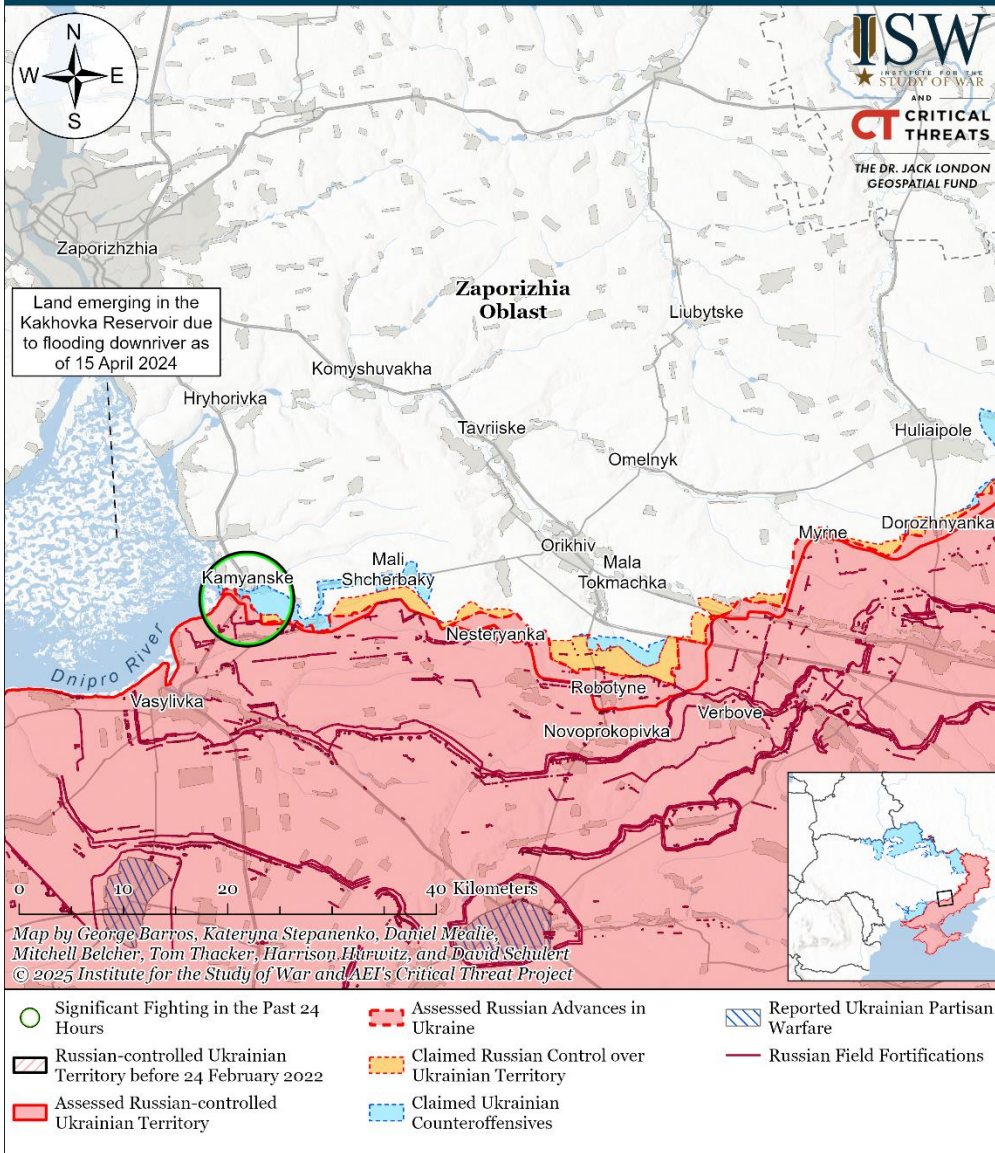


Russian Supporting Effort – Southern Axis (Russian objective: Maintain frontline positions and secure rear areas against Ukrainian strikes)

Russian forces continued limited ground attacks northwest of Robotyne near Kamyanske on January 21 and 22 but did not advance.[71] Drone operators of the Russian "Smuglyanka" Detachment are reportedly operating in the Zaporizhia direction.[72]

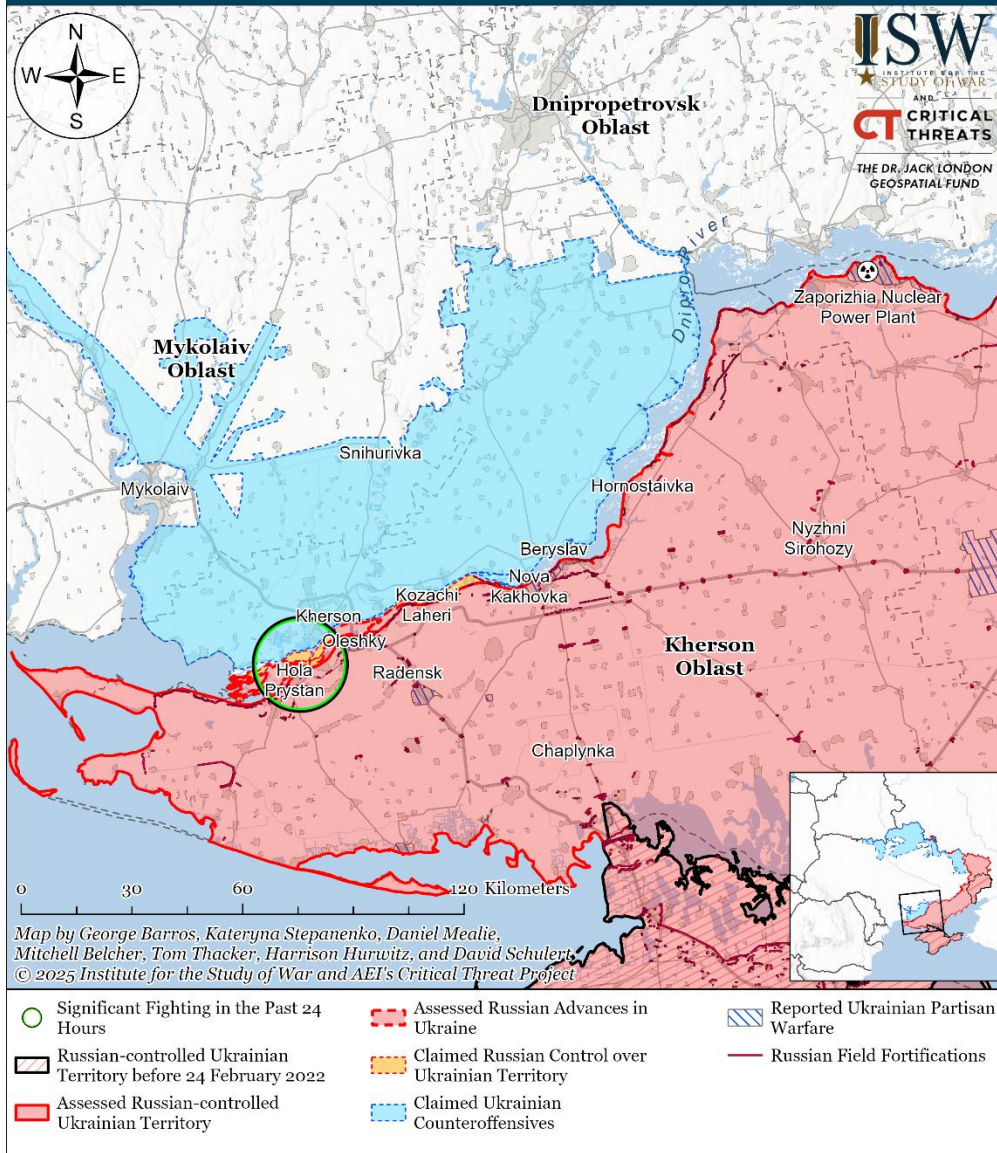
A Ukrainian drone group operating in the Zaporizhia direction posted footage on January 22 showing a Ukrainian first-person view (FPV) drone strike against a Russian Buk-M3 air defense system likely in western Zaporizhia Oblast.[73]

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Zaporizhia Direction January 22, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



Russian forces continued limited ground attacks in the Dnipro direction on January 21 and 22 but did not advance.[74] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces have intensified drone and HIMARS strikes against the Russian rear in occupied Kherson Oblast.[75] Drone operators of the Russian 10th Spetsnaz Brigade (Russian Main Military Intelligence Directorate [GRU]) are reportedly operating in the Kherson direction.[76]

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Kherson Direction January 22, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



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

Russian forces conducted a series of drone strikes against Ukraine on the night of January 21 to 22. The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Russian forces launched 99 Shahed and other strike and decoy drones from Millerovo, Rostov Oblast; Primorsko-Akhtarsk, Krasnodar Krai; Bryansk, Kursk, and Oryol oblasts; and occupied Cape Chauda, Crimea.[77] The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Ukrainian forces downed 65 drones over Poltava, Sumy, Kharkiv, Cherkasy, Chernihiv, Kyiv, Khmelnytskyi, Dnipropetrovsk, Mykolaiv, and Odesa oblasts; that 30 drones were "lost," likely due to Ukrainian electronic warfare (EW) interference; and that drone strikes damaged institutions, industrial enterprises, farm buildings, residential homes, and apartment buildings in Mykolaiv, Dnipropetrovsk,

Kyiv, Cherkasy, Sumy, and Khmelnytskyi oblasts. Ukrainian official sources reported that Russian drone strikes hit a residential home and an administrative building in Mykolaiv Oblast and a residential home in Sumy Oblast.[78]

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

Russia and Uzbekistan are deepening military cooperation. Russian Defense Minister Andrei Belousov met with Uzbek Defense Minister Shukhrat Halmukhamedov in Tashkent on January 22 and signed a joint Russian-Uzbekistan military cooperation plan for 2025 and a strategic military partnership plan for 2026-2030.[79] Belousov stated that the delegation also discussed bilateral military-technical cooperation and regional security issues and claimed that Russian-Uzbek cooperation has a significant impact on regional security in Central Asia. Belousov also met with Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev on January 22.[80]

Russia continues efforts to improve state monitoring processes and streamline force generation mechanisms. Moscow City Military Recruitment Head Maxim Loktev announced on January 21 that regional officials will send text messages to boys turning 17 years old in 2025 regarding automatic registration for military service.[81] The Kremlin adopted a law in 2023, implemented in Fall 2024, which authorized authorities to dispatch automatic summons via electronic methods, thereby boosting the state's visibility among recruitment pools and automating recruitment notices, and Loktev's announcement appears to be part of this effort.[82]

The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) continues to grapple with unprofessionalism and abuse among Russian commanders. A Kremlin-affiliated Russian milblogger claimed on January 22 that Luhansk Oblast occupation authorities arrested the commander of a Russian assault company of the 55th Motorized Rifle Brigade (41st Combined Arms Army [CAA], Central Military District [CMD]) for crimes ranging from embezzlement to creating a private prison to punish his subordinates.[83] The milblogger claimed that this is the second scandal in two days for the unit and that occupation officials recently arrested a military police officer for beating a contract soldier. The milblogger noted that such beatings are common and have a negative impact on Russian society and force generation efforts. The milblogger called on Russian military officials to make an example of such individuals.

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

Nothing significant to report.

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)

ISW is not publishing coverage of activities in Russian-occupied areas today.

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

Nothing significant to report.

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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