

Grace Mappes, Davit Gasparyan, Angelica Evans, Olivia Gibson,
and Frederick W. Kagan with Nate Trotter and William Runkel

January 29, 2025, 8:45 pm 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 interactive map of Ukraine's offensive in Kursk Oblast.

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 12:30pm ET on January 29. ISW will cover subsequent reports in the January 30 Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment.

Russian President Vladimir Putin stated that Western military assistance remains vital to Ukraine's ability to maintain its defense against Russian aggression. Putin gave an interview to Kremlin journalist Pavel Zarubin published on January 28 in which he claimed that the war in Ukraine could be over within two months if the West stops providing Ukraine with military assistance and that Ukraine's dependence on Western military aid indicates that Ukraine has "no sovereignty."^[1] Putin's claims about how quickly the war will end without further Western military assistance and his explicit rejection of Ukrainian sovereignty are a part of long-term Kremlin information operations aimed at undermining Western support for Ukraine and deterring additional Western military assistance.^[2] Putin is correct, however, that **additional Western military assistance — particularly US military assistance — remains critical to maintaining and further developing Ukraine's warfighting capabilities. Ukrainian forces have consistently proven throughout the war that they can achieve operationally- and strategically significant battlefield victories when armed with sufficient quantities of US and other Western-provided military assistance.**^[3] Ukrainian forces have also maintained stubborn defenses even when poorly provisioned and notably forced Russian forces to withdraw from Kyiv Oblast in April 2022 before significant deliveries of Western aid even arrived at the frontline and significantly slowed the pace of Russian offensive operations in Ukraine in Summer 2022.^[4] Putin and other Kremlin officials aim to portray Ukraine as weak and incapable of adequately leveraging Western-provided weapons at this critical moment in Western policy discussions about Ukraine — even though

Ukraine has proven that it is anything but weak after fending off Russia for the almost three years of war.

Putin's longstanding theory of victory relies on the assumption that the West will abandon Ukraine, and only unwavering Western support and consistent deliveries of Western military assistance to Kyiv can force Putin to abandon his theory and accept the need to offer the concessions necessary for any resolution to the conflict acceptable to the United States, Europe, and Ukraine.[5] ISW continues to assess that only the United States can provide Ukraine with some critical weapons and military equipment at the scale, speed, and regularity necessary for Ukraine's defense against Russia, and Western officials have recently proposed that European states increasingly assist in funding US military assistance to Ukraine.[6]

Putin indicated that he will not view any peace agreement with Ukraine as binding by claiming that the Ukrainian government is either unwilling or unable to rescind the 2022 Ukrainian presidential decree banning negotiations with Putin. Putin claimed that any peace agreement that Russia and Ukraine conclude before Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky rescinds his 2022 decree will be invalid.[7] Putin further claimed that that Zelensky is no longer able to legally rescind the decree because he is no longer the "legitimate" president of Ukraine and that the Ukrainian Verkhovna Rada could rescind the decree but does not seem interested in doing so. The Ukrainian constitution does not empower the Verkhovna Rada to unilaterally rescind presidential decrees, however, and a decision to do so could itself violate the Ukrainian constitution.[8] Kremlin officials, including Putin, have repeatedly used deliberately false interpretations of Ukraine's law and constitution to claim that Zelensky is the illegitimate president of Ukraine after Ukraine, adhering to its law and constitution, did not hold elections under martial law in 2024.[9] Putin would likely seize on any unconstitutional act by the Verkhovna Rada — even one he is now calling for — to declare the act and Verkhovna Rada "illegitimate" and stand up another strawman to hide the reality of his disinterest in serious negotiations that recognize Ukraine as an independent state. Putin has previously claimed that the Verkhovna Rada is the only "legitimate" government branch in Ukraine and thus the only Ukrainian government entity with which Russia could negotiate.[10] Putin may intend to declare the Verkhovna Rada "illegitimate" in the future in order to justify his demands for complete regime change in Kyiv and his unwillingness to negotiate with Ukrainian authorities.

Putin's statements rejecting the legitimacy of the Ukrainian government and of a possible future peace agreement set conditions for Russia to justify violating any future agreement with Ukraine. Putin has repeatedly claimed that every Ukrainian government since the 2014 pro-Western Revolution of Dignity in Ukraine has been illegitimate.[11] Putin has nevertheless engaged in negotiations and reached agreements with Ukrainian officials, including regarding the resolution of armed conflict with the Minsk agreements of 2014 and 2015.[12] Putin has also consistently violated these agreements and used similar claims about the illegitimacy of the Ukrainian government to justify these violations.[13] Even if Zelensky or other parts of the Ukrainian government agreed to lift the decree banning negotiations with Putin, Putin would likely violate any peace or other agreement that he reaches with Ukraine under the false justification that such agreements are "invalid" as long as he believes that he can achieve his maximalist war aims through military operations. Putin likely also intends to leverage false claims about the illegitimacy of the Ukrainian government and the limitations that the decree places on the possibility of peace negotiations to falsely portray Ukraine —

rather than Russia — as the party prolonging the war and unwilling or unable to engage in meaningful negotiations to his domestic and international audiences.

Putin continues efforts to coerce US President Donald Trump into bilateral negotiations that exclude Ukraine, impose his desired negotiation framework on Trump, and compel Trump to inadvertently endorse ongoing Russian information operations about the illegitimacy of the current Ukrainian government. Putin's January 28 statements are part of a continued effort to position himself as Trump's equal and reinforce his long-held belief that Russia is the great-power heir to the Soviet Union.[14] Putin's statements also set conditions for Russia to violate any future peace agreements with Ukraine that Trump may hope to mediate and are yet another indication that Putin is not interested in compromising on his demands of complete regime change and the crippling of Ukraine's military as conditions for peace.[15] Putin's efforts to strongarm Trump are also part of a concerted Russian effort to force the West to acknowledge and endorse Russian information operations about the illegitimacy of the current Ukrainian government and an enduring Ukrainian state. ISW previously noted that Western acquiescence to all of Russia's demands in Ukraine would require the West to acknowledge and agree that the current Ukrainian government is illegitimate and that a Ukrainian identity and state independent from Russia either does not currently exist and/or does not deserve to exist in the future.[16]

Ukrainian forces conducted a drone strike at the Russian oil refinery in Kstovo, Nizhny Novgorod Oblast, and reportedly hit a Russian arsenal in Tver Oblast on the night of January 28 to 29. The Ukrainian General Staff reported on January 29 that elements of Ukraine's Main Military Intelligence Directorate (GUR) and Unmanned Systems Forces struck the Lukoil-Nizhegorodnefteorgsintez oil refinery in Kstovo and caused a fire.[17] Ukrainian Center for Countering Disinformation Head Lieutenant Andriy Kovalenko posted footage of the oil refinery fire in Kstovo and reported that the refinery produces gasoline, diesel, aviation kerosene, and bitumen; processes 15 to 17 million tons of oil per year; and supports the Russian military.[18] Geolocated footage posted on January 28 and 29 shows a fire at the Nizhny Novgorod Oil Refinery.[19] Russian petrochemicals company Sibur-Kstovo Enterprise reported on January 29 that Ukrainian drone debris struck the enterprise on the night of January 28 to 29, and Nizhny Novgorod Oblast Governor Gleb Nikitin acknowledged that drone debris started a fire in an industrial area.[20] Russian opposition outlet *Astra* reported on January 29 that Ukrainian drones also struck the Russian Main Missile and Artillery Directorate of the Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD)'s 23rd Arsenal near Oktyabrsky, Tver Oblast, reportedly damaging an empty weapons storage building and three other buildings.[21] Ukrainian forces previously struck the Russian 23rd Arsenal in September 2024.[22]

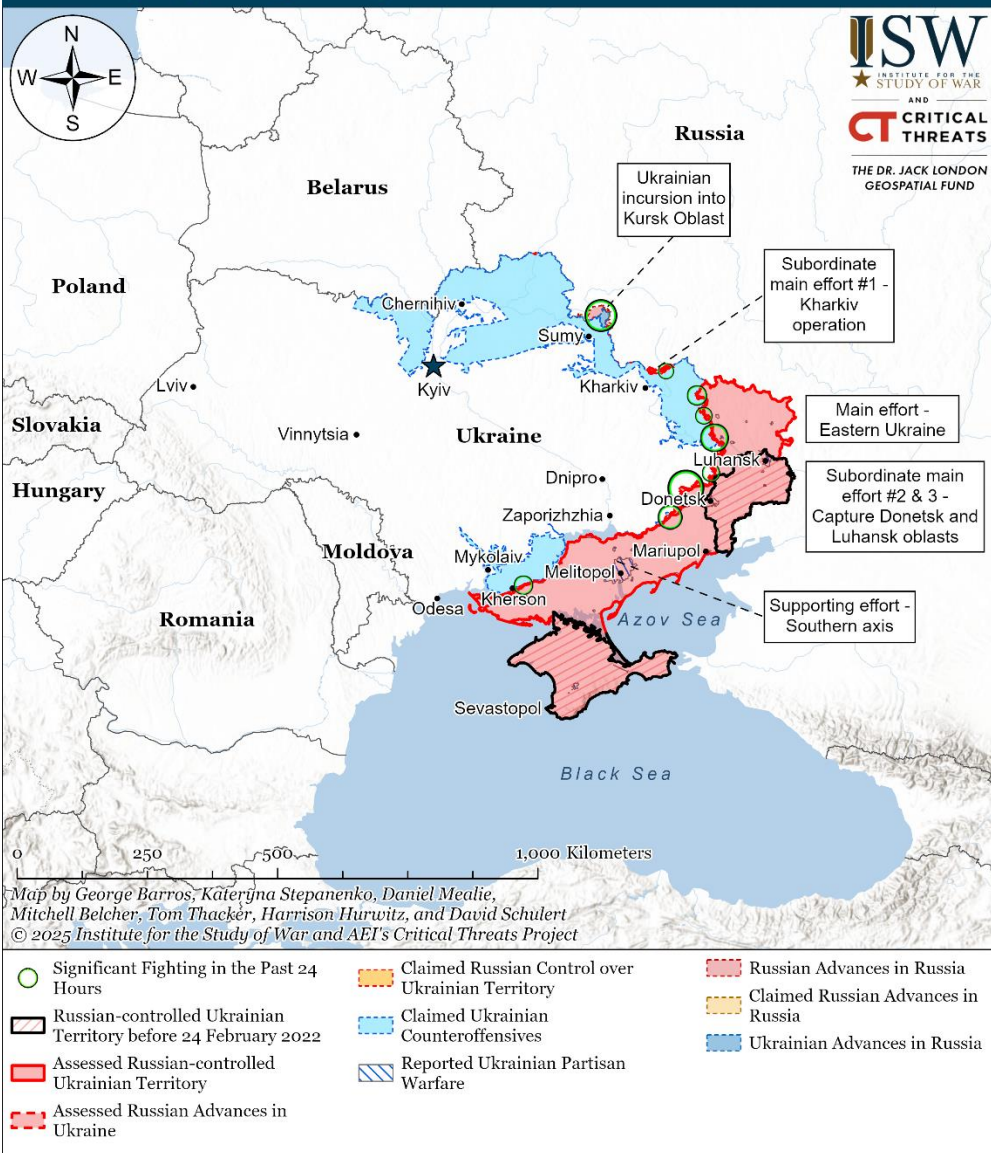
The Russian MoD confirmed in a post on January 29 that Lieutenant General Alexander Sanchik is the commander of the Russian Southern Grouping of Forces. Sanchik briefed Russian Defense Minister Belousov on Ukrainian activity along the front line in the Southern Grouping of Force's area of responsibility (AoR) and the Russian MoD posted footage showing Sanchik speaking with Belousov.[23] Sanchik previously served as commander of the Eastern Military District (EMD), and ISW first observed claims that Russian authorities appointed Sanchik commander of the Southern Grouping of Forces and Southern Military District [SMD] in November 2024.[24]

Key Takeaways:

- **Russian President Vladimir Putin stated that Western military assistance remains vital to Ukraine's ability to maintain its defense against Russian aggression.**
- **Putin's longstanding theory of victory relies on the assumption that the West will abandon Ukraine, and only unwavering Western support and consistent deliveries of Western military assistance to Kyiv can force Putin to abandon his theory and accept the need to offer the concessions necessary for any resolution to the conflict acceptable to the US, Europe, and Ukraine.**
- **Putin indicated that he will not view any peace agreement with Ukraine as binding by claiming that the Ukrainian government is either unwilling or unable to rescind the 2022 Ukrainian presidential decree banning negotiations with Putin.**
- **Putin's statements rejecting the legitimacy of the Ukrainian government and of a possible future peace agreement set conditions for Russia to justify violating any future agreements with Ukraine.**
- **Putin continues efforts to coerce US President Donald Trump into bilateral negotiations that exclude Ukraine, impose his desired negotiations framework on Trump, and compel Trump to inadvertently endorse ongoing Russian information operations about the illegitimacy of the current Ukrainian government.**
- **Ukrainian forces conducted a drone strike at the Russian oil refinery in Kstovo, Nizhny Novgorod Oblast and reportedly hit a Russian arsenal in Tver Oblast on the night of January 28 to 29.**
- **The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) confirmed in a post on January 29 that Lieutenant General Alexander Sanchik is the commander of the Russian Southern Grouping of Forces.**
- **Ukrainian forces recently advanced in Kursk Oblast and near Toretsk and Russian forces recently advanced near Lyman, Chasiv Yar, Toretsk, Pokrovsk, Kurakhove, Velyka Novosilka, Robotnye, and in the Dnipro direction.**
- **Volunteer recruitment rates in Moscow have dropped sharply, as Russian citizens grow increasingly unwilling to serve in Ukraine.**

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Russo-Ukrainian War

January 29, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



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.

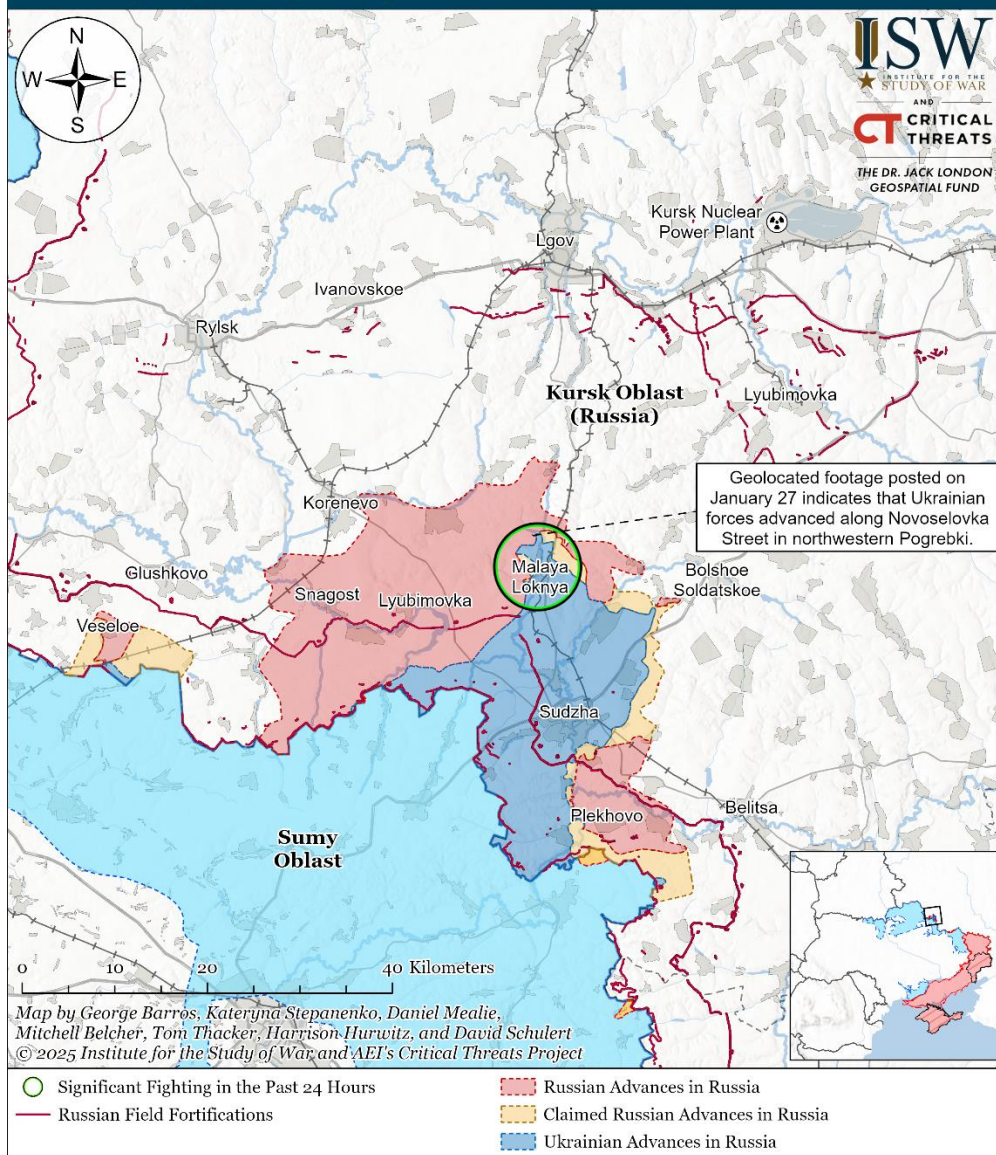
- Ukrainian Operations in the Russian Federation
- Russian Main Effort – Eastern Ukraine (comprised of three subordinate main efforts)

- 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

Ukrainian forces recently marginally advanced in Kursk Oblast amid continued fighting in the Ukrainian salient on January 29. Geolocated footage published on January 27 indicates that Ukrainian forces recently marginally advanced along Novoselovka Street in northwestern Pogrebki (northwest of Sudzha).[25] Russian milbloggers claimed on January 29 that Russian forces recently advanced along the windbreaks west of Plekhovo and north of Guyevo (both south of Sudzha).[26] ISW has not observed confirmation of these claims, however. Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces attacked towards Russkoye Porechnoye (north of Sudzha) and near Sverdlikovo (west of Sudzha).[27] A Russian milblogger claimed on January 29 that Ukrainian forces counterattacked near Nikolskiy (northwest of Sudzha).[28] Geolocated footage published on January 28 shows that Ukrainian forces repelled a roughly platoon-sized Russian mechanized assault involving at least four armored vehicles west of Nikolskiy on January 19.[29] Drone operators of the Russian "Rubikon" Center for Advanced Unmanned Technologies are reportedly operating in Kursk Oblast; drone operators of the 83rd Airborne (VDV) Brigade are reportedly striking Ukrainian forces near the Kursk Oblast border area; likely elements of the Russian 7th VDV Division are reportedly operating near Sverdlikovo; and drone elements of the 34th Motorized Rifle Brigade (49th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Southern Military District [SMD]) reportedly continue to strike Ukrainian positions in Pogrebki.[30]

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Kursk Direction January 29, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



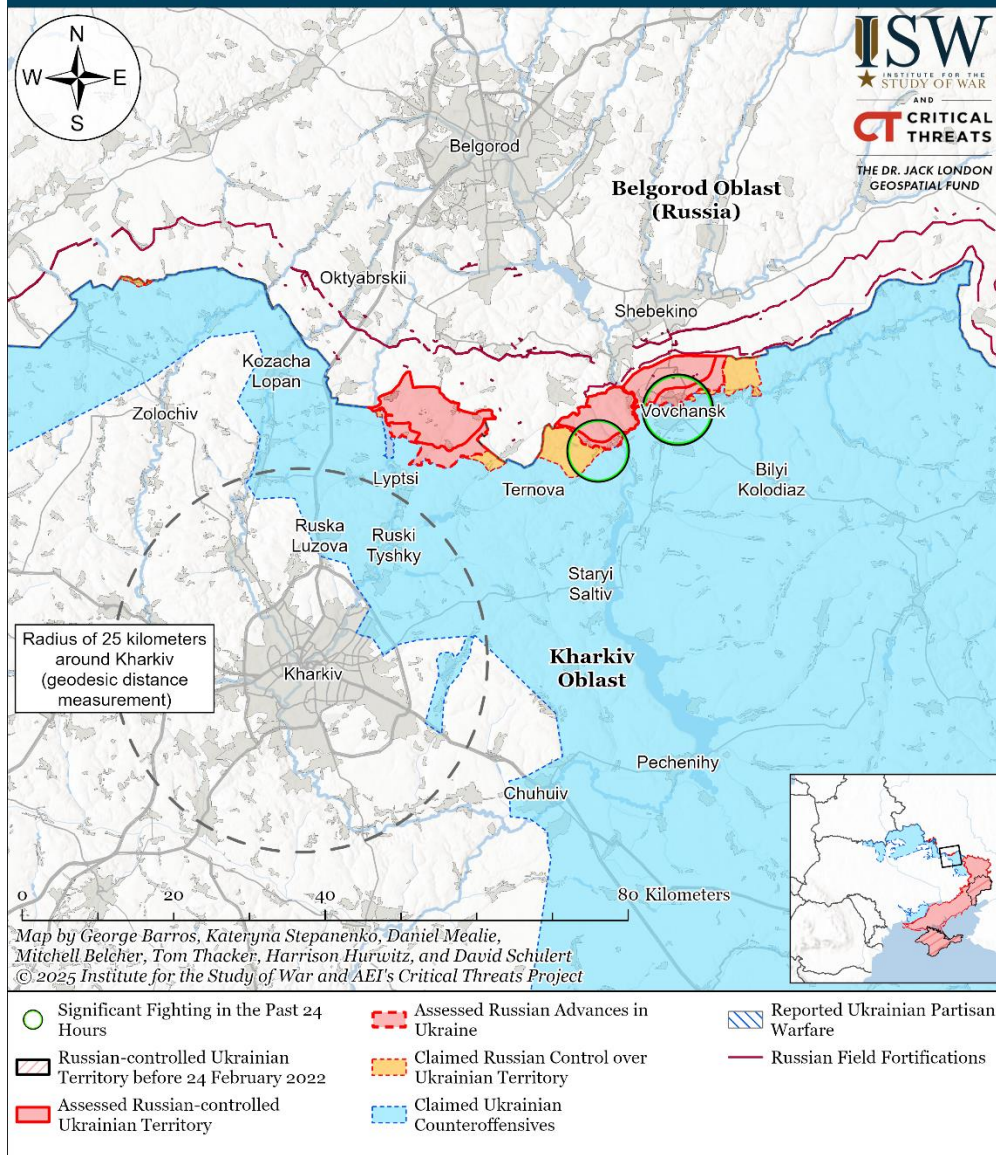
Russian Main Effort – Eastern Ukraine

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 ground attacks northeast of Kharkiv City near Vovchansk and Starytsya on January 28 and 29 but did not advance.[31]

A Ukrainian drone battalion operating in Kharkiv Oblast published footage on January 29 and reported that Ukrainian force struck a Russian Buk-M3 air defense system in occupied Kharkiv Oblast.[32]

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Kharkiv Direction January 29, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



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)

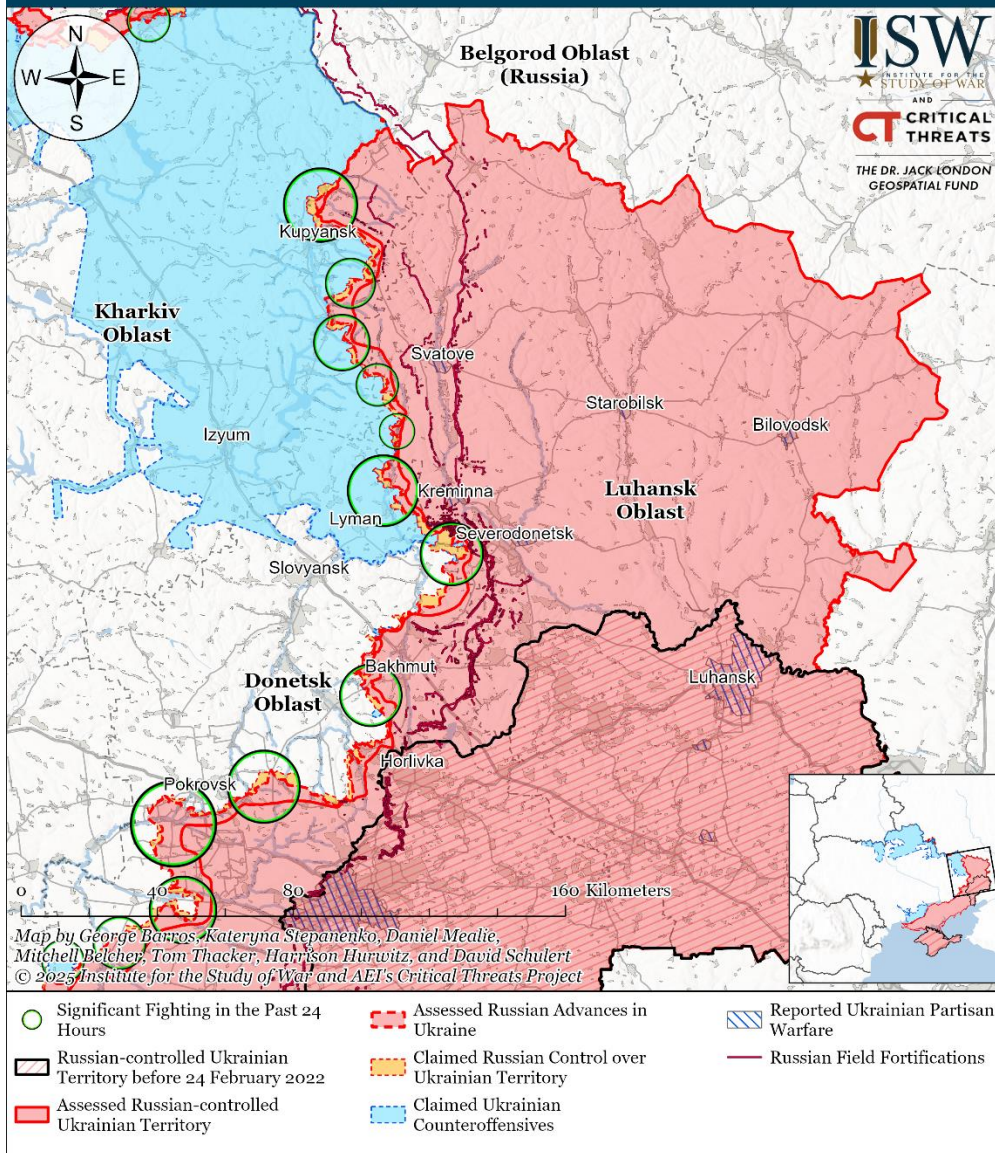
Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Kupyansk direction on January 29 but did not advance. Russian forces continued attacking north of Kupyansk near Kutkivka, Dvorichna, and Kindrashivka, and northeast of Kupyansk near Novomlynsk and Petropavlivka on January 28 and 29.[33] Ukraine's Khortytsia Group of Forces reported on January 29 that Russian forces are using armored vehicles to support infantry assaults near Pishchane (southeast of Kupyansk).[34] A Russian milblogger claimed on January 28 that Russian forces advanced up to 3 kilometers after seizing Dvorichna as other milbloggers reiterated claims that Russian forces seized the settlement.[35] ISW has not observed confirmation of these claims, however. The first milblogger claimed that Russian

forces continue to develop positions along the east (left) and west (right) banks of the Oskil River as Russian forces continue to attack and advance from Zapadne (north of Kupyansk) toward Kupyansk.[36] Russian milbloggers claimed on January 29 that Russian forces have reinforced Russian positions on the right bank of the Oskil River with materiel and manpower.[37] Elements of the Russian 25th Motorized Rifle Brigade (6th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Leningrad Military District [LMD]) are reportedly operating on the right bank of the Oskil River near Dvorichna and Zapadne.[38]

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Borova direction on January 29 but did not advance. Russian forces attacked northeast of Borova near Kolisnykivka, Nova Kruhliakivka, Lozova, and Bohuslavka; east of Borova near Kopanky; and southeast of Borova near Makiivka on January 28 and 29.[39] A Russian milblogger claimed on January 28 that positional fighting continues near Kolisnykivka and Zahryzove (northeast of Borova) and that Russian forces are attacking from Zeleny Hai toward Borivska Andriivka (both northeast of Borova).[40] Another Russian milblogger claimed on January 29 that the Russian military command is forcing elements of the 20th CAA (Moscow Military District [MMD]) to attempt to advance near Novoyehorivka (southeast of Borova), punctuating outcry in the Russian information space regarding the Russian Ministry of Defense's (MoD) premature January 20 claim that Russian forces seized the settlement.[41] Yet another Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces seized Novoyehorivka on January 29.[42] Drone operators of the 16th Spetsnaz Brigade (Russian General Staff's Main Directorate [GRU]) are reportedly operating fiber-optic first-person view (FPV) drones near Hrekiivka (southeast of Borova).[43]

Russian forces recently advanced in the Lyman direction amid continued offensive operations on January 29. The Ukrainian General Staff published a map on January 29 indicating that Russian forces recently advanced northwest of Novosadove and Novolyubivka (both northeast of Lyman).[44] A Russian source claimed on January 29 that Russian forces also advanced near Terny (northwest of Lyman).[45] ISW has not observed confirmation of this claim, however. Russian forces attacked north of Lyman near Zelena Dolyna; northeast of Lyman near Novolyubivka, Torske, and Yampolivka; and southeast of Lyman near the Serebryanske forest area on January 28 and 29.[46]

Assessed Control of Terrain in Luhansk Oblast January 29, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



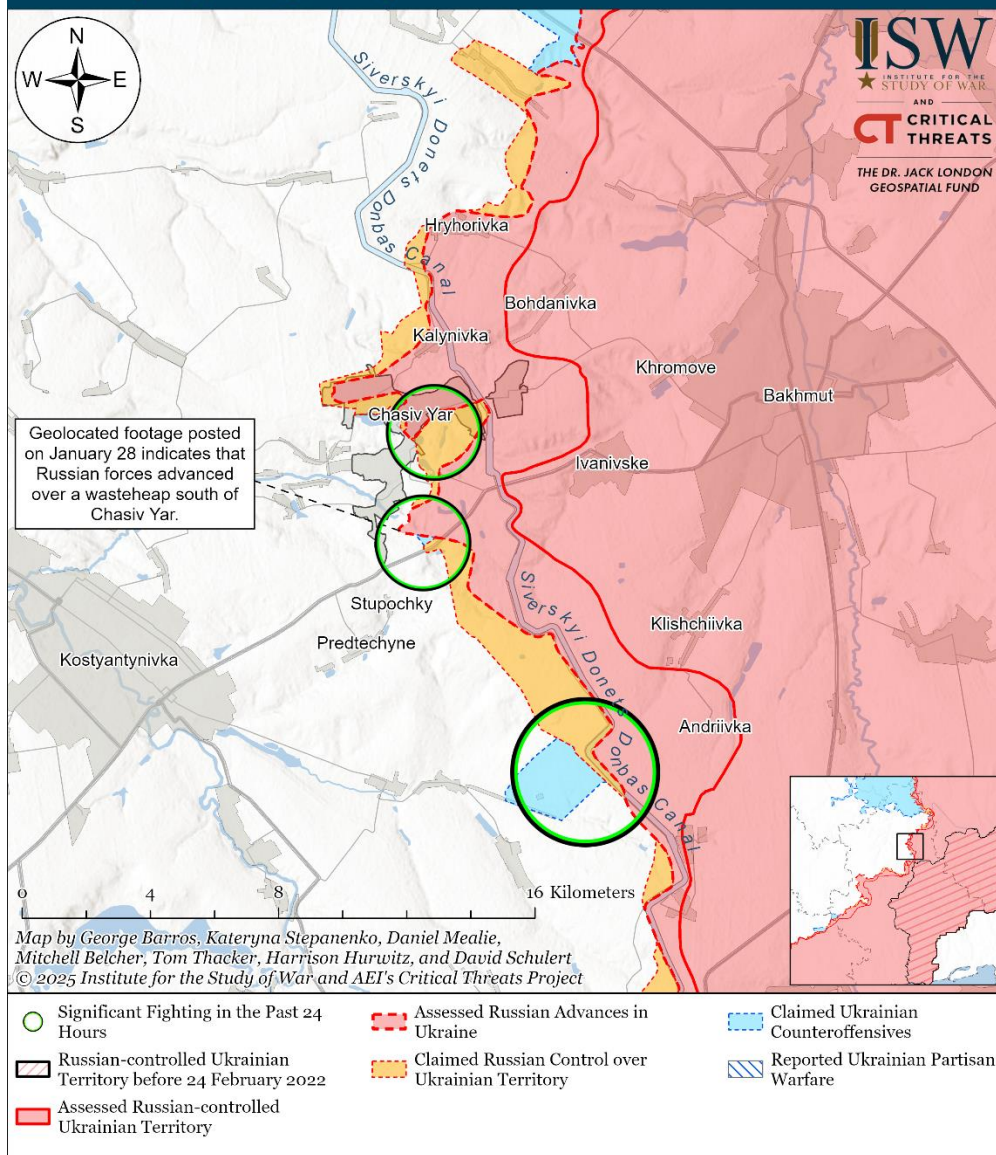
Russian Subordinate Main Effort #3 – Donetsk Oblast (Russian objective: Capture the entirety of Donetsk Oblast, the claimed territory of Russia’s proxies in Donbas)

Russian forces conducted offensive operations in the Siversk direction on January 29 but did not advance. The Ukrainian Khortytsia Group of Forces reported on January 29 that Ukrainian forces destroyed two tanks, 10 armored vehicles, and six motorcycles during Russian motorized and mechanized assaults near Bilohorivka (northeast of Siversk), Verkhokamyanske (east of Siversk), and Ivano-Darivka (southeast of Siversk).[47] Russian forces also attacked likely near Novoselivka (east of Siversk) on January 28 and 29.[48]

Russian forces recently advanced in the Chasiv Yar direction amid continued Russian offensive operations in the area on January 29. Geolocated footage published on January 28 shows Chechen

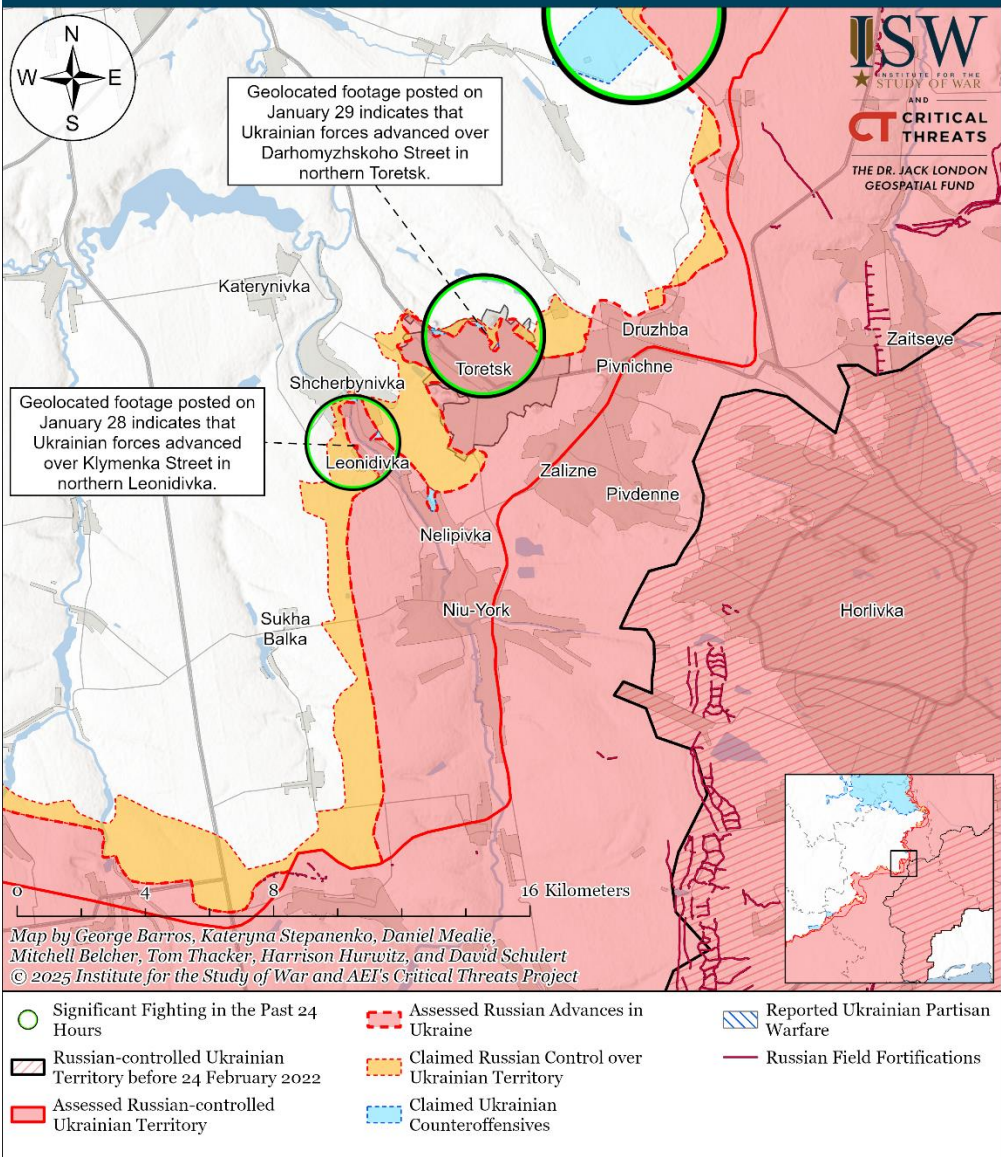
“Akhmat” Spetsnaz forces assaulting Ukrainian positions near a waste heap south of Chasiv Yar, indicating that Russian forces recently advanced along the T-0504 Bakhmut-Kostyantynivka highway and westward over part of the waste heap south of Chasiv Yar.[49] The Ukrainian General Staff published a map on January 29 indicating that Russian forces also likely advanced along the O-0508 highway in southeastern Orikhovo-Vasylivka (north of Chasiv Yar) and in fields south of the settlement.[50] Russian milbloggers claimed on January 29 that the Russian “Hispaniola” Volunteer Brigade (Russian Volunteer Corps) seized most or all of Pivnichnyi Microraion (northern Chasiv Yar) and most of Novopivnichnyi Microraion (northwestern Chasiv Yar) and advanced in fields south of the Tsentralnyi Pond (south of Chasiv Yar).[51] Russian forces continued ground attacks near Chasiv Yar itself; north of Chasiv Yar near Novomarkove; and south of Chasiv Yar near Stupochky, Bila Hora, and Predtechyne on January 28 and 29.[52] Assault elements of the Russian 13th “Rusich” Detachment (4th Motorized Rifle Brigade, 3rd Combined Arms Army [CAA], formerly 2nd Luhansk People’s Republic Army Corps [LNR AC]) are reportedly operating southeast of Chasiv Yar, and assault elements of the 98th Airborne (VDV) Division and the 200th Motorized Rifle Brigade (14th AC, Leningrad Military District [LMD]) are reportedly fighting in Chasiv Yar.[53] Drone operators of the Russian 27th Artillery Regiment (6th Motorized Rifle Division, 3rd AC) are reportedly striking Ukrainian forces near Predtechyne.[54]

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Chasiv Yar Direction January 29, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



Ukrainian and Russian forces recently advanced in the Toretsk direction amid continued Russian offensive operations in the area on January 29. Geolocated footage published on January 28 and 29 indicates that Ukrainian forces recently advanced along Klymenka Street in northwestern Leonidivka (west of Toretsk) and along Darhomyzhskoho Street in northern Toretsk, respectively.[55] Additional geolocated footage published on January 29 indicates that Russian forces marginally advanced in northwestern Pivnichne (east of Toretsk).[56] A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces control 90 to 95 percent of Toretsk, but ISW currently assesses that Russian forces occupy roughly 88 percent of Toretsk.[57] Russian forces continued ground attacks within Toretsk itself; north of Toretsk near Krymske, Dachne, and Dyliivka; and west of Toretsk near Shcherbynivka on January 28 and 29.[58] Assault elements of the Russian 132nd Motorized Rifle Brigade (51st CAA, formerly 1st Donetsk People's Republic [DNR] AC) are reportedly fighting at the Toretska Mine in northern Toretsk.[59]

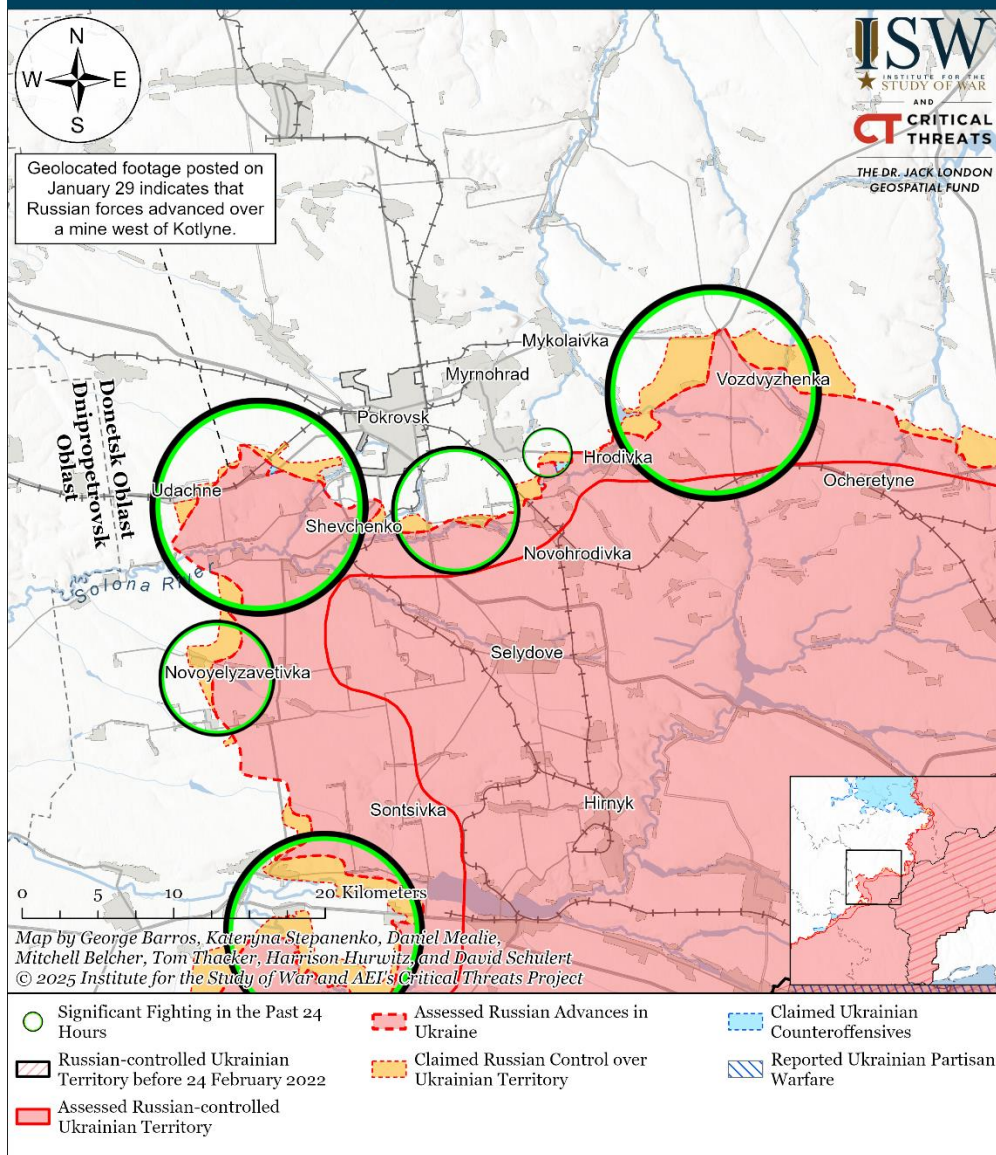
Assessed Control of Terrain in the Toretsk Direction January 29, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



Russian forces recently marginally advanced southwest of Pokrovsk amid ongoing offensive operations in the Pokrovsk direction on January 29. Geolocated footage published on January 29 indicates that Russian forces marginally advanced west of Kotlyne (southwest of Pokrovsk).[60] Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced south of Zvirove (south of Pokrovsk), along the railway line from Kotlyne towards Pokrovsk, and into the southeastern outskirts of Sribne (southwest of Pokrovsk), and that Russian forces also consolidated positions in central and eastern Udachne (southwest of Pokrovsk).[61] ISW has not observed confirmation of these claims, however. The Russian MoD claimed on January 29 that Russian forces seized Novoyelyzavetivka (southwest of Pokrovsk), but ISW assesses that Russian forces seized the settlement as of January 14.[62] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces are counterattacking near Uspenivka and Novooleksandriivka (both southwest of Pokrovsk).[63] Ukrainian military observer Kostyantyn Mashovets stated that elements of the Russian

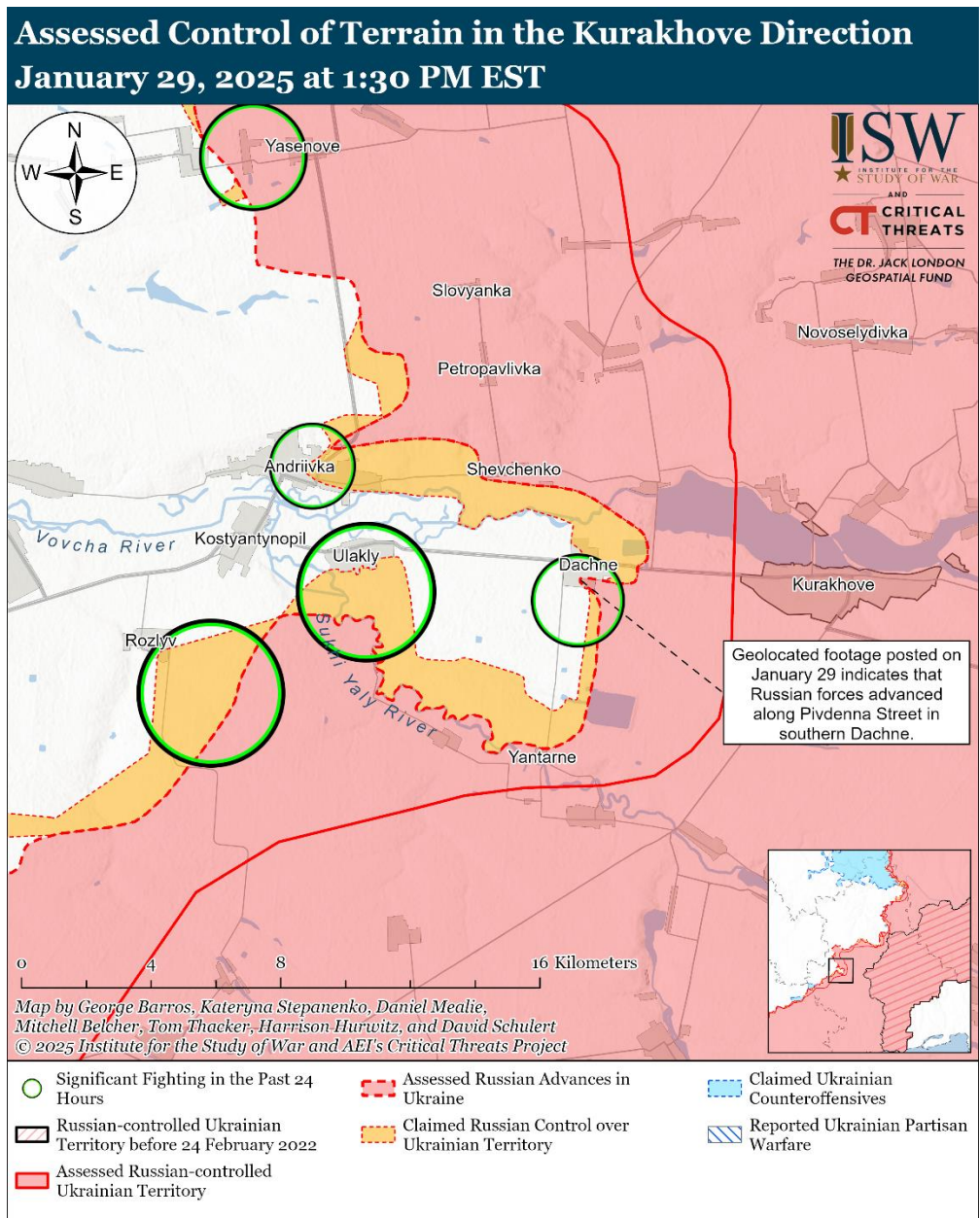
74th and 55th motorized rifle brigades (both of the 41st CAA, Central Military District [CMD]) advanced between Novovasylivka and Pishchane (both southwest of Pokrovsk) and are attacking Udachne.[64] Mashovets stated that elements of the Russia 35th Motorized Rifle Brigade (41st CAA) and 506th Motorized Rifle Regiment (27th Motorized Rifle Division, 2nd CAA, CMD) are unsuccessfully attacking near Chynshyne (south of Pokrovsk) and that elements of the 137th Motorized Rifle Brigade (41st CAA) and 589th Motorized Rifle Regiment (27th Motorized Rifle Division) are unsuccessfully attacking the southern outskirts of Myrnohrad (east of Pokrovsk). Russian forces also continued assaults near Pokrovsk itself; east of Pokrovsk near Baranivka, Vodyane Druhe, Vozdvyzhenka, Yelyzavetivka, Promin, and Myrolyubivka; southeast of Pokrovsk near Sukhyi Yar and Lysivka; south of Pokrovsk near Zelene, Vidrodzhennya (formerly Novyi Trud), Shevchenko, and Zvirove; and southwest of Pokrovsk near Kotlyne, Udachne, Nadiivka, Uspenivka, Novovasylivka, Novooleksandrivka, and Kotlyarivka and in the direction of Serhiivka and Bohdanivka on January 28 and 29.[65] Elements of the Russian "Vega" Spetsnaz Detachment (24th Spetsnaz Brigade, Main Intelligence Directorate of the Russian General Staff [GRU]) are reportedly operating in the Pokrovsk direction.[66]

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Pokrovsk Direction January 29, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



Russian forces recently advanced west of Kurakhove amid ongoing offensive operations on January 29. Geolocated footage published on January 29 indicates that Russian forces advanced in southern Dachne (west of Kurakhove).[67] Russian milbloggers claimed that elements of the Russian 102nd and 103rd motorized rifle regiments (both of the 150th Motorized Rifle Division, 8th CAA, Southern Military District [SMD]) participated in the advance into Dachne.[68] Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced west of Petropavlivka (northwest of Kurakhove), in western Andriivka (northwest of Kurakhove), and in central Dachne and are attempting to envelop Dachne.[69] Russian forces continued ground attacks northwest of Kurakhove near Andriivka; southwest of Kurakhove near Zelenivka; and west of Kurakhove near Dachne, Ulakly, Kostyatynopil, and Rozlyv and towards Oleksiivka on January 28 and 29.[70] Elements of the Russian 3rd Tank Battalion of the 68th Tank Regiment (150 Motorized Rifle Division) and 39th Motorized Rifle Brigade (68th AC, Eastern Military

District [EMD]) are reportedly operating near Dachne, and elements of the 381st Artillery Regiment (150th Motorized Rifle Division) are reportedly operating in the general Kurakhove direction.[71]



Russian forces recently advanced northeast and southwest of Velyka Novosilka amid continued offensive operations in the area on January 29. The Ukrainian General Staff published a map on January 29 indicating that Russian forces likely recently advanced north of Rozdolne (northeast of Velyka Novosilka), southeast of Novodarivka (southwest of Velyka Novosilka), and east of Olhivske (southwest of Velyka Novosilka).[72] Russian milbloggers claimed on January 29 that Russian forces advanced northeast of Rozdolne and northwest of Velyka Novosilka.[73] ISW has not observed confirmation of these claims, however. Russian forces continued assaults near Velyka Novosilka itself; northeast of Velyka Novosilka near Rozdolne; north of Velyka Novosilka near Novyi Komar; northwest of Velyka Novosilka near Novoocheretuvate; and west of Velyka Novosilka near Novosilka on January

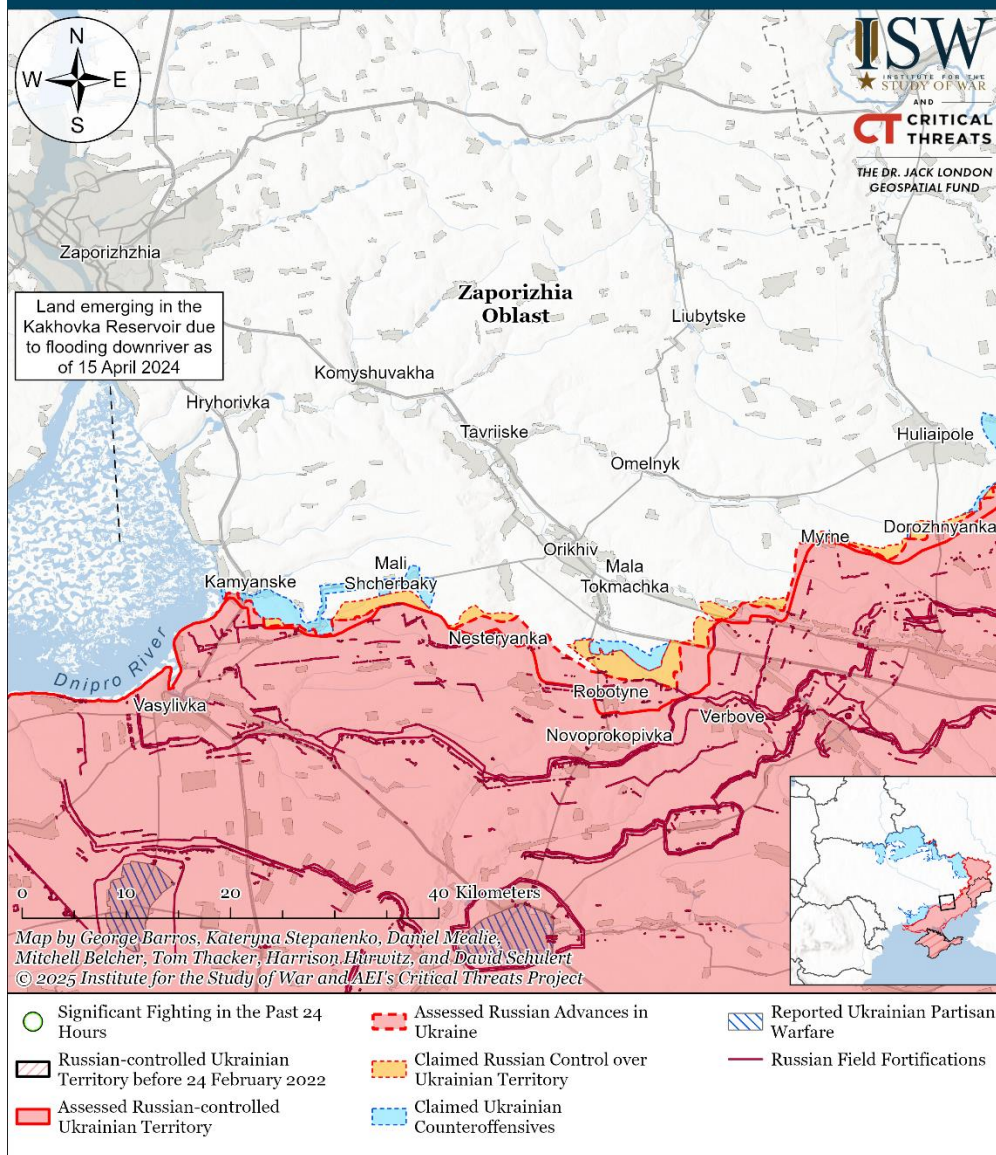
28 and 29.[74] Elements of the Russian 40th Naval Infantry Brigade (Pacific Fleet, Eastern Military District [EMD]) reportedly continue to operate near Velyka Novosilka.[75]

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

Russian forces continued ground assaults in the Polohy direction on January 29 but did not advance.[76] Elements of the Russian 38th Motorized Rifle Brigade (35th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Eastern Military District [EMD]) are reportedly operating in the Polohy direction.[77]

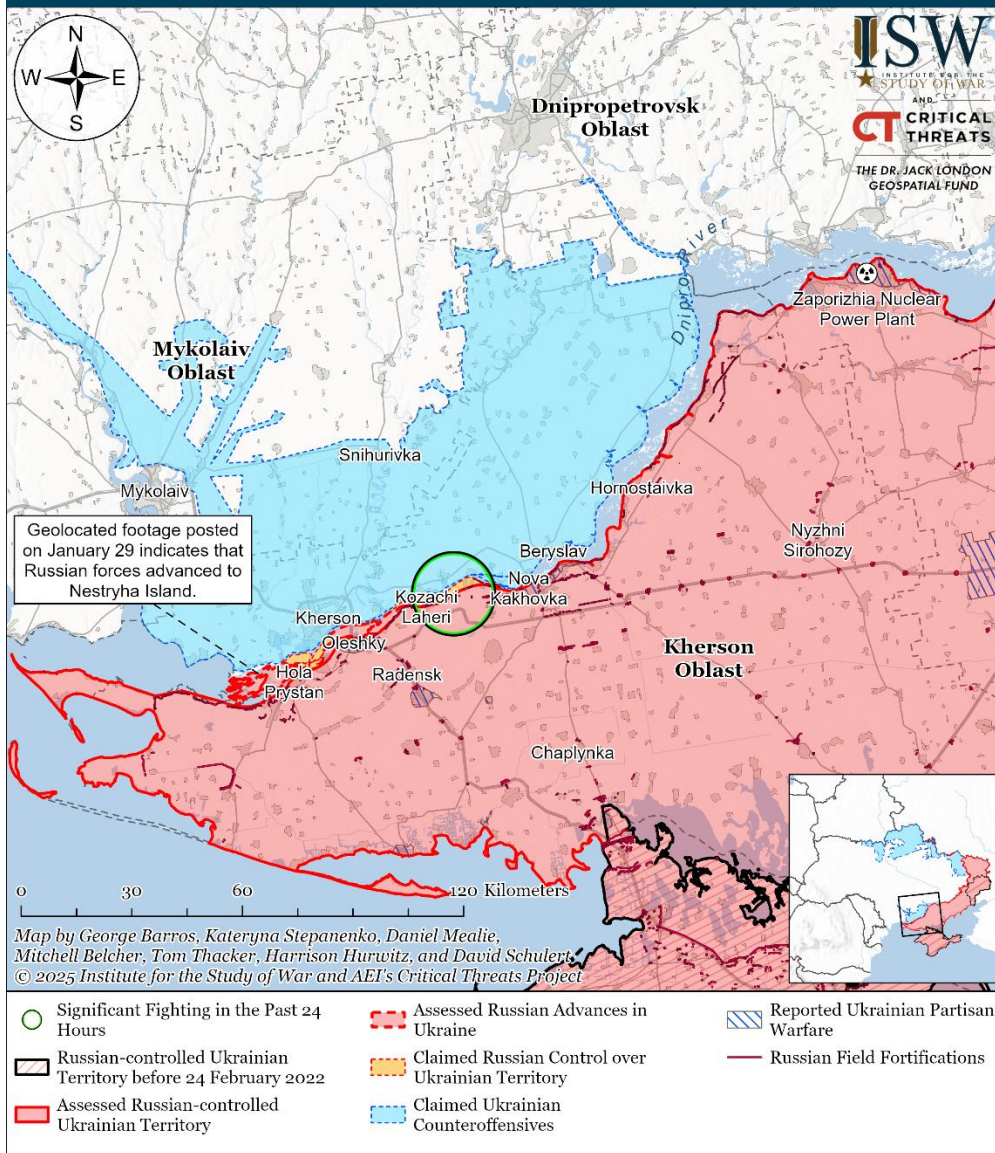
Russian forces recently advanced north of Robotyne amid continued offensive operations in the Zaporizhia direction on January 29.[78] The Ukrainian General Staff published a map on January 29 indicating that Russian forces likely advanced southwest of Novodanylivka (north of Robotyne).[79] Elements of the Russian 247th Airborne (VDV) Regiment (7th VDV Division) are reportedly operating near Kamyanske (northwest of Robotyne); drone operators of the Russian 1455th Motorized Rifle Regiment (reportedly of the 42nd Motorized Rifle Division, 58th CAA, Southern Military District [SMD]) are reportedly striking Ukrainian positions near Orikhiv; and elements of the 136th Motorized Rifle Brigade (58th CAA, SMD) are reportedly operating in the Zaporizhia direction.[80]

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Zaporizhia Direction January 29, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



Russian forces recently advanced in the Dnipro direction amid continued offensive operations in the area on January 28 and 29.[81] Geolocated footage published on January 29 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced northward in the Dnipro River Delta and seized Nestryha Island (southwest of Kherson City).[82]

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Kherson Direction January 29, 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 missile and drone strikes against Ukraine overnight on January 28 to 29. The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Russian forces launched an Iskander-M ballistic missile from occupied Crimea and 57 Shahed and other strike and decoy drones from Millerovo, Rostov Oblast; Primorsko-Akhtarsk, Krasnodar Krai; Kursk Oblast; and occupied Cape Chauda, Crimea.[83] The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Ukrainian forces downed 29 of the drones and that 14 other drones were "lost," likely due to Ukrainian electronic warfare (EW) interference.[84] The Ukrainian Air Force reported that the strikes affected Kharkiv, Kyiv, Mykolaiv, Odesa, and Sumy oblasts. Russian sources claimed that Russian forces struck military and critical infrastructure in Chernihiv, Cherkasy, and Dnipropetrovsk oblasts.[85]

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

Volunteer recruitment rates in Moscow have dropped sharply, as Russian citizens grow increasingly unwilling to serve in Ukraine. Russian opposition outlet *Verstka* reported on January 29 that the number of Russian citizens willing to volunteer to fight in Ukraine in Moscow City has dropped significantly since Moscow's peak daily rate of 200 to 250 people in August 2024 (after the start of the Ukrainian incursion into Kursk) to the current daily rate of about 40 people.[86] The demographic makeup of the volunteers has also largely shifted as ordinary Russian citizens now comprise only half of the volunteers while the other half are largely foreigners and individuals facing criminal or administrative charges. *Verstka*, citing sources in the Moscow mayor's office and interviews with foreign recruits, noted that more citizens particularly from the People's Republic of China (PRC), African countries, and many from post-Soviet countries are signing contracts with the MoD and are drawn by the promise of one-time payments of 1.9 million rubles (about \$19,140).

The Russian government continues to use its "Time of Heroes" program to appoint veterans of the war in Ukraine to federal government positions as part of wider Kremlin efforts to militarize Russian society. The "Time of Heroes" program reported on January 29 that Russian authorities appointed Sergey Kuzminchuk, a participant of the program and veteran of the war, to be the federal inspector for the Kamchatka Krai Office of the Plenipotentiary Representative of the Russian President in the Far Eastern Federal District.[87]

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

Russia's defense industrial base (DIB) continues to develop armored vehicle adaptations in an effort to offset its inability to produce a sufficient number of armored vehicles for the Russian military's needs in Ukraine and to protect armored vehicles from Ukrainian drone strikes. A Russian milblogger noted on January 28 that the Russian DIB has developed an entire industry focused on welding armored protective cages onto MT-LB multipurpose armored fighting vehicles (AFVs) to better protect troop compartments from drone strikes.[88] The milblogger noted that the Russian DIB has created the industry as a result of Russia's inability to sustain a replenishment production rate for armored vehicles, which has forced the Russian Armed Forces to pivot towards a strategy of deploying MT-LBs as armored personnel carriers (APC), necessitating the addition of armored protective cages. The Russian milblogger, citing a November 2024 issue from the Russian magazine *Material and Technical Support of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation*, claimed on January 29 that Russian authorities have applied adaptations to the ASN-233115 "Tiger-M" special purpose armored vehicle.[89] The milblogger claimed that the updated vehicle possesses additional armored plating in the engine compartment, on all four doors, and the rear wheels as well as an armored screen for the central part of the hood and on the windshield to ensure functionality following strikes.

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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