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**January 8, 2025, 5pm ET**

**Note: The data cut-off for this product was 12:15pm ET on January 8. ISW will cover subsequent reports in the January 9 Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment.**

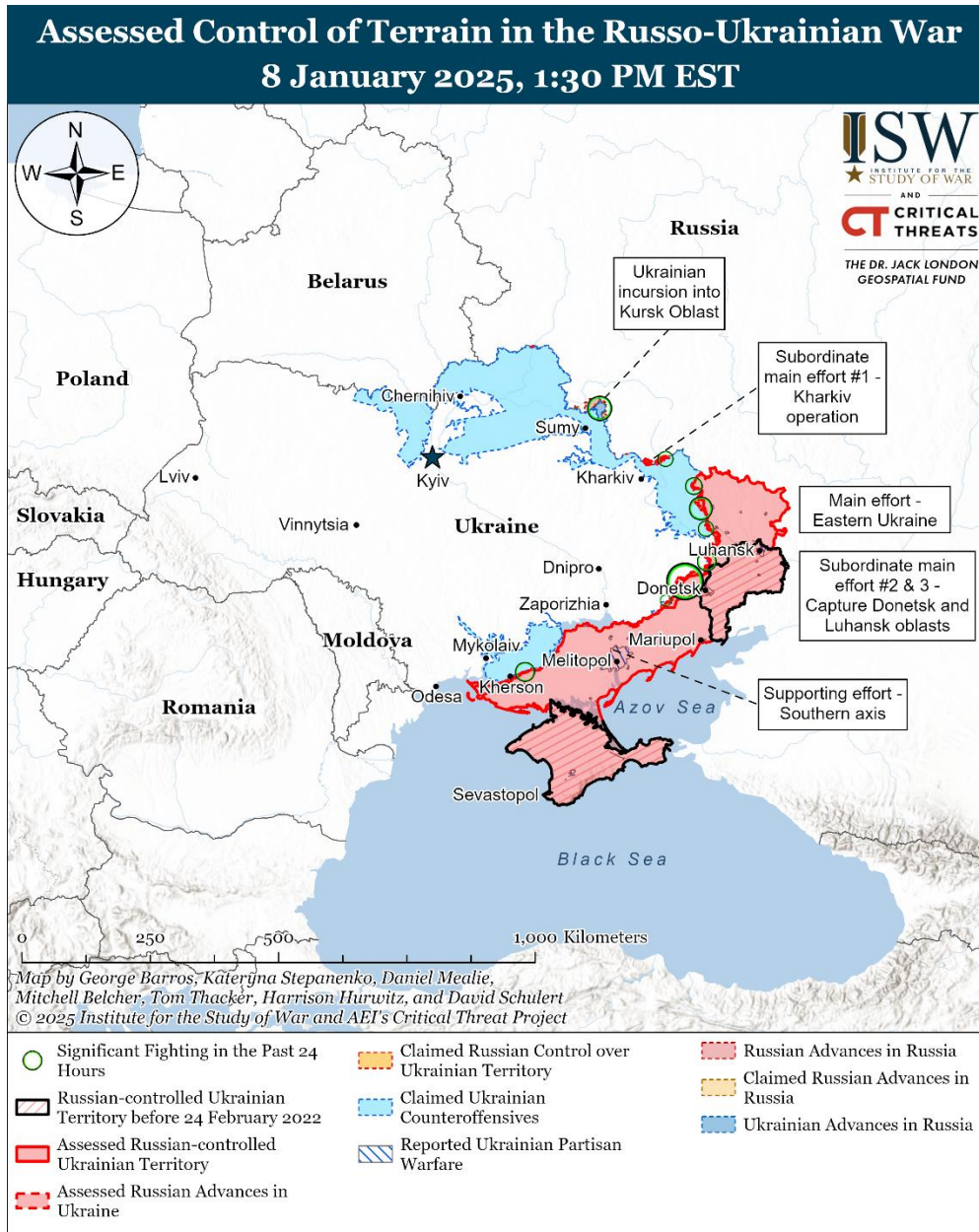
**Ukrainian forces struck Russia's state-owned Kombinat Kristal oil storage facility near Engels, Saratov Oblast on the night of January 7 to 8.** The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Ukraine's Main Military Intelligence Directorate (GUR) and the Unmanned Systems Forces struck the oil storage facility and caused a large fire.[1] The Ukrainian General Staff reported that the facility provides fuel for the Russian military's Engels-2 Air Base and noted that strike will create logistical issues for Russia's strategic aircraft based at the airfield. Geolocated footage published on January 8 shows a large fire at the storage facility, and Russian sources noted that the fire continued to burn into the morning of January 8.[2] Saratov Oblast Governor Roman Busargin claimed that debris from a falling drone struck an unspecified industrial facility near Engels but later acknowledged that the strike caused a fire in the area.[3]

**Ukrainian forces struck a command post of the Russian 8th Combined Arms Army (CAA) (Southern Military District [SMD]) on January 8 in occupied Khartsyzk, Donetsk Oblast.**[4] The Ukrainian General Staff reported that the 8th CAA used this command post to coordinate operations in Kurakhove.[5] Russian sources amplified reports on January 8 that a Ukrainian purported Storm Shadow strike against Lgov, Kursk Oblast on December 30 killed at least one serviceman in the Russian 104th Airborne (VDV) Regiment (76th VDV Division) and three servicemen in the 76th VDV Division.[6]

### **Key Takeaways:**

- **Ukrainian forces struck Russia's state-owned Kombinat Kristal oil storage facility near Engels, Saratov Oblast on the night of January 7 to 8.**
- **Ukrainian forces struck a command post of the Russian 8th Combined Arms Army (CAA) (Southern Military District [SMD]) on January 8 in occupied Khartsyzk, Donetsk Oblast.**
- **Russian forces advanced in Kursk Oblast, in Toretsk, and near Kurakhove.**

- Russian forces are increasingly using drones attached to fiber optic cables in Ukraine.



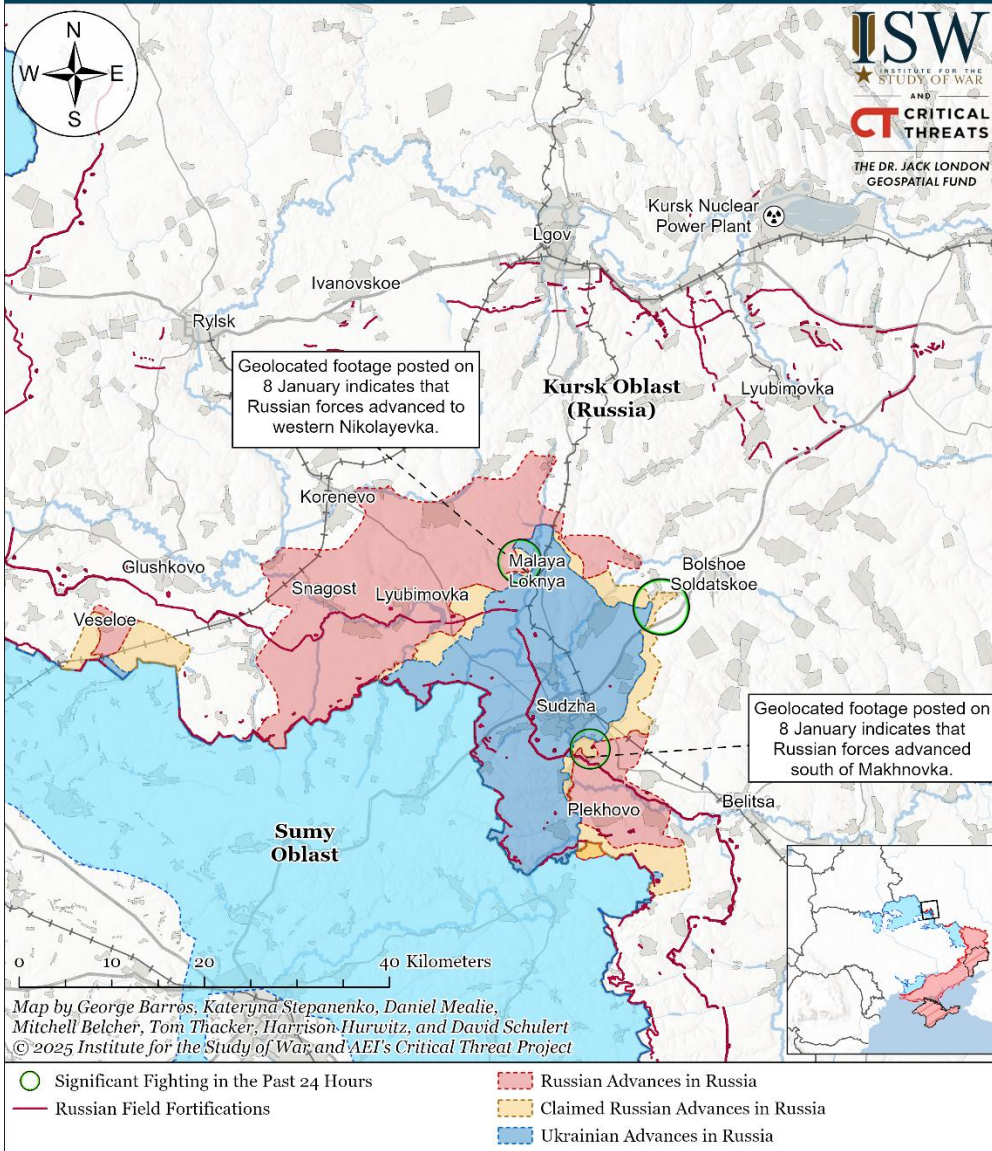
***We do not report in detail on Russian war crimes because these activities are well-covered in Western media and do not directly affect the military operations we are assessing and forecasting. We will continue to evaluate and report on the effects of these criminal activities on the Ukrainian military 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 recently advanced in the Ukrainian salient in Kursk Oblast amid continued offensive operations in the area on January 8. Geolocated footage published on January 8 indicates that Russian forces advanced into western Nikolaevka (northwest of Sudzha) and marginally advanced in Makhnovka (southeast of Sudzha).[7] Ukraine's Special Operations Forces (SSO) reported on January 8 that Ukrainian forces repelled a Russian roughly reinforced platoon-sized mechanized assault in an unspecified area in Kursk Oblast.[8] Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced northwest of Sudzha near Malaya Loknya, Nikolayevka, Staraya Sorochina, Orlovka, and Nikolayevo-Darino; northeast of Sudzha near Russkoye Porechnoye and Cherkasskoye Porechnoye; east of Sudzha near Bondarevka; and southeast of Sudzha near Makhnovka.[9] A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces seized Kositsa (northeast of Sudzha) and that elements of the Russian 34th Motorized Rifle Brigade (49th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Southern Military District [SMD]) are clearing Pogrebki (northwest of Sudzha).[10] ISW has not observed visual confirmation of any of these claims, however. A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces counterattacked near Pogrebki.[11] Elements of the Russian 106th Airborne (VDV) Division are reportedly operating in the direction of Sverdlikhovo (northwest of Sudzha).[12]

## Assessed Control of Terrain in the Kursk Direction 8 January 2025, 1:30 PM EST



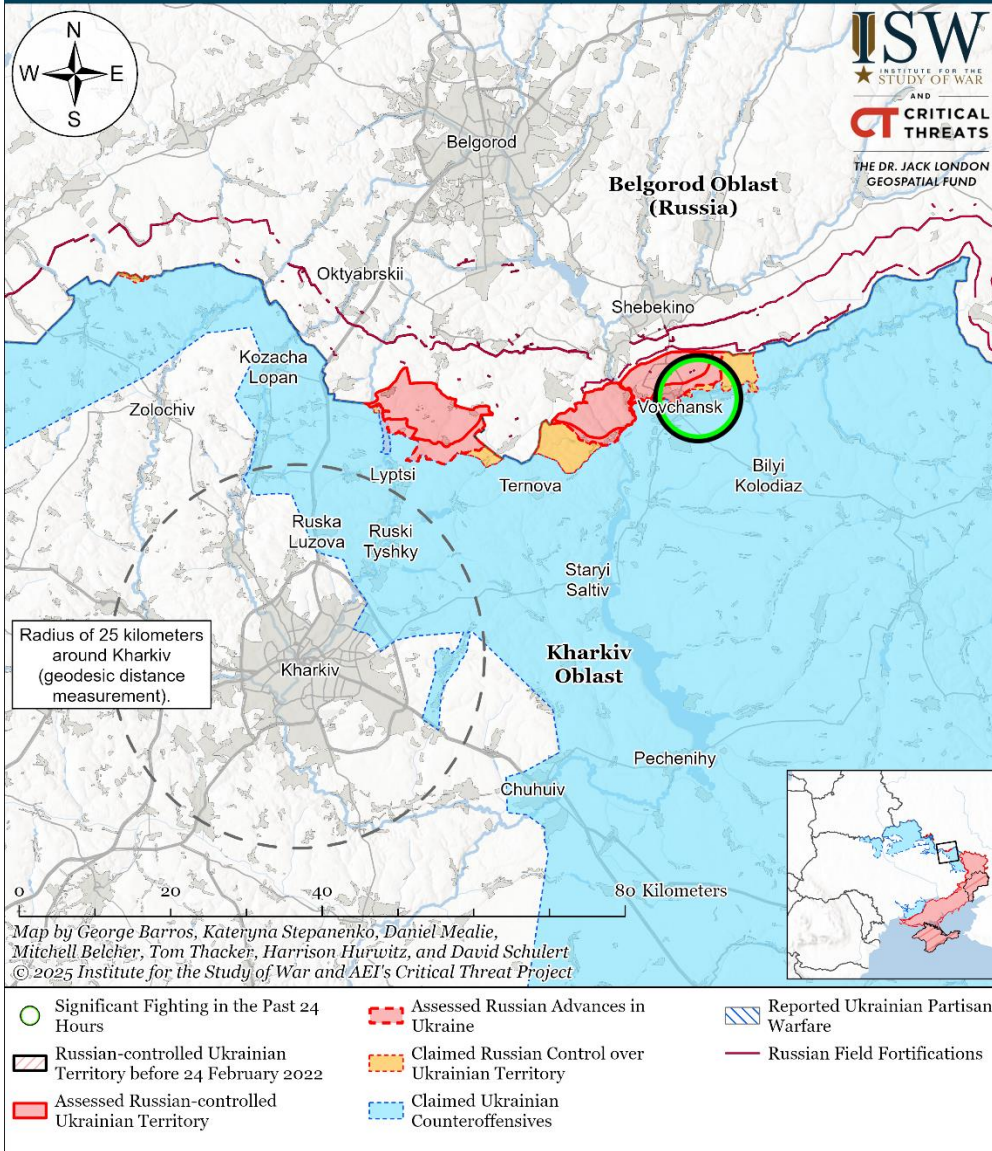
### Russian Main Effort – Eastern Ukraine

#### 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 limited ground attacks northeast of Kharkiv City near Vovchansk and Tykhe on January 7 and 8 but did not make any confirmed advances.<sup>[13]</sup>



## Assessed Control of Terrain in the Kharkiv Direction 8 January 2025, 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)**

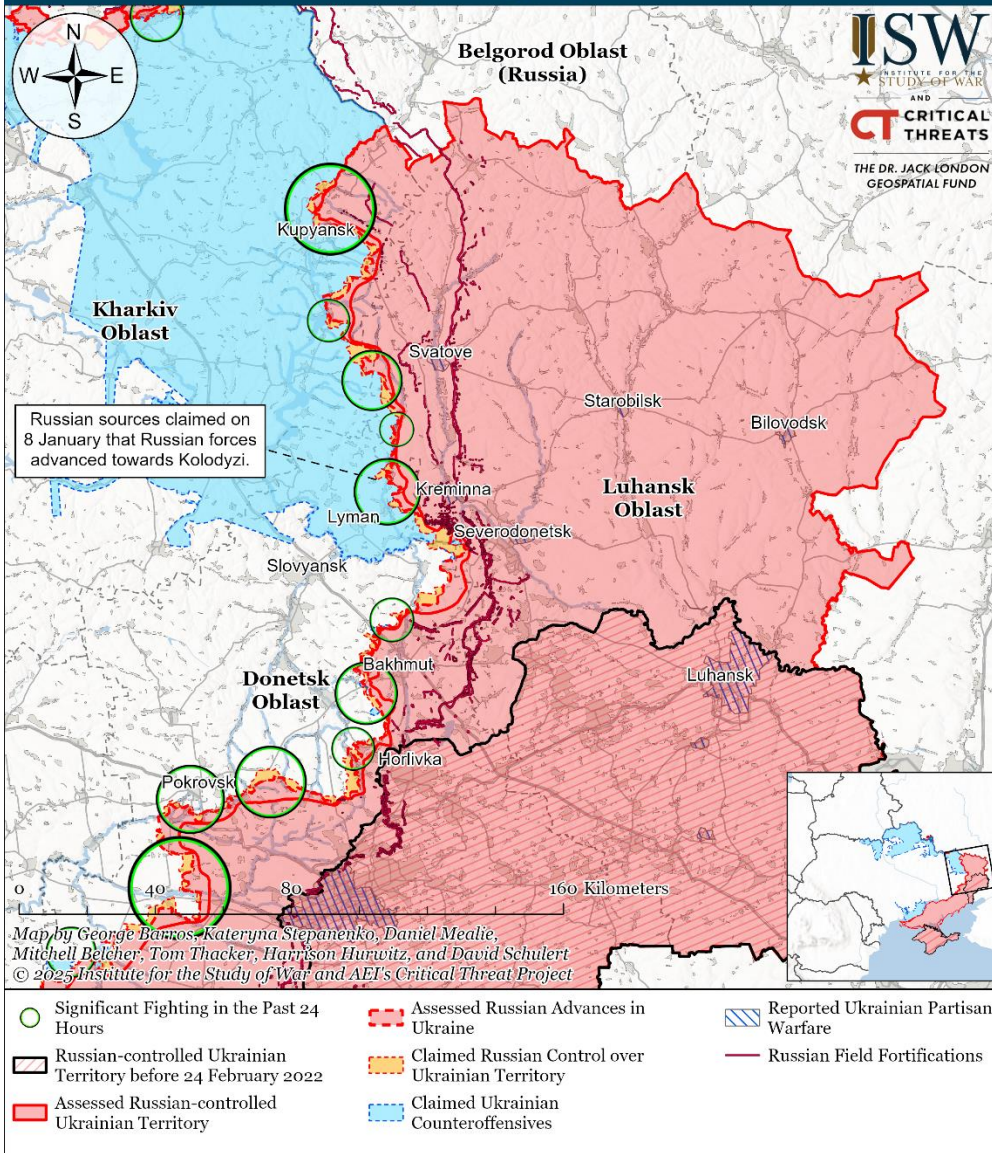
Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Kupyansk direction on January 8 but did not make any confirmed advances. Ukrainian military observer Kostyantyn Mashovets stated that the Russian 69th Motorized Rifle Division (6th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Leningrad Military District [LMD]) marginally advanced south of Dvorichna (northeast of Kupyansk) and that Russian forces advanced along the Dvorichna-Kupyansk highway towards Zapadne (southwest of Dvorichna and northwest of Kupyansk).<sup>[14]</sup> A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced north of Dvorichna, but ISW has not observed visual confirmation of this claim.<sup>[15]</sup> Russian forces attacked

north of Kupyansk near Holubivka and northeast of Kupyansk near Topoli (along the international border) and Petropavlivka on January 7 and 8.<sup>[16]</sup> A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian drone operators are able to interdict Ukrainian ground lines of communication (GLOCs) near Dvorichna.<sup>[17]</sup> The milblogger also claimed that Russian air strikes destroyed a river crossing near Kupyansk.

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Borova direction on January 8 but did not make any confirmed advances. Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian mechanized units seized two forested areas and cleared Ukrainian forces from positions between Zahryzove and Lozova (both northeast of Borova) and advanced west of Makiivka (southeast of Borova).<sup>[18]</sup> One Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces are five kilometers from Borova, but ISW assesses that Russian forces have advanced roughly 12 kilometers from Borova as of January 8.<sup>[19]</sup> Geolocated footage published on January 7 shows a lone Ukrainian armored vehicle temporarily advancing into and then retreating from Kolisnykivka (northeast of Borova) without encountering Russian forces, indicating that Russian forces may not hold positions throughout the settlement.<sup>[20]</sup> Mashovets stated that elements of the Russian 2nd Motorized Rifle Division and the 47th Tank Division (both of the 1st Guards Tank Army [GTA], Moscow Military District [MMD]) are advancing on the east (left) bank of the Oskil River, most likely referring to the section of the bank of the Oskil River near Kolisnykiva.<sup>[21]</sup> Russian forces attacked northeast of Borova near Zahryzove; east of Borova near Nadiya, Kopanky, Novoyehorivka, and Pershotravneve; and southeast of Borova near Novoserhiivka, Cherneshchyna, and Makiivka on January 7 and 8.<sup>[22]</sup> Drone operators of the Russian 16th Spetsnaz Brigade (Russian General Staff's Main Directorate [GRU]) are reportedly operating near Raihorodka (east of Borova).<sup>[23]</sup>

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Lyman direction on January 8 but did not make any confirmed advances. Russian milbloggers claimed on January 7 and 8 that Russian forces advanced towards Kolodyazi and Myrne (both northeast of Lyman) along the west (right) bank of the Zherebets River.<sup>[24]</sup> ISW currently assesses that Russian forces are about 3.5 kilometers from Kolodyazi and has not observed visual confirmation of these claims. Russian forces continued ground attacks northeast of Lyman near Ivanivka, Kolodyazi, Terny, and Zarichne on January 7 and 8.<sup>[25]</sup>

## Assessed Control of Terrain in Luhansk Oblast 8 January 2025, 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 continued offensive operations near Bilohorivka (northeast of Siversk) on January 7 and 8 but did not make any confirmed advances.[26] A Russian milblogger claimed on January 8 that Russian forces are gradually advancing south of Verkhokamyanske (east of Siversk), but ISW has not observed confirmation of this claim.[27] The commander of a Ukrainian unit operating in the Siversk direction reported on January 8 that Russian forces are conducting guided glide bomb strikes against Siversk and nearby areas, sometimes striking one street with three-to-four glide bombs at a time.[28] The commander stated that Russian forces are conducting small infantry assaults during periods of

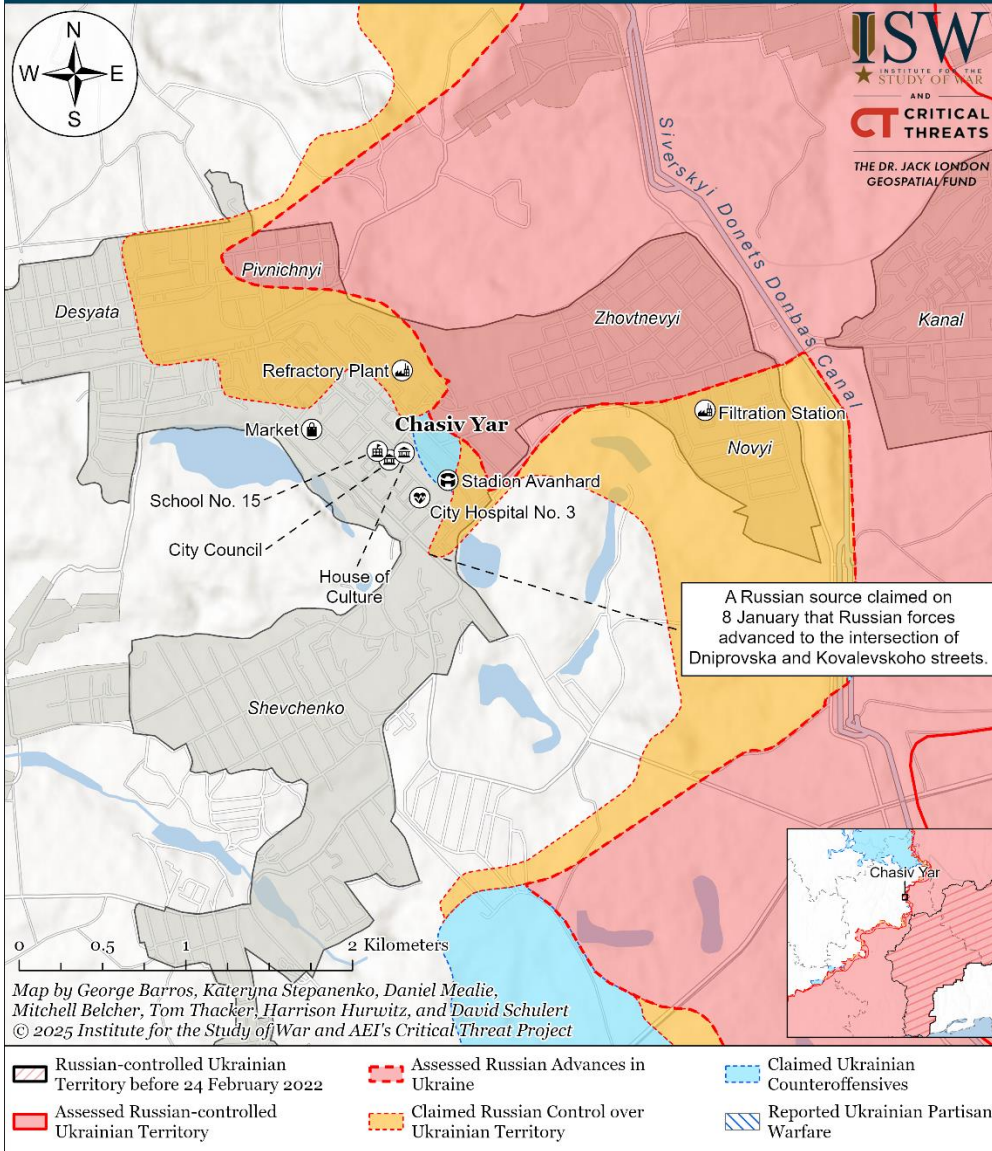


freezing temperatures and bad weather at dawn and dusk. The commander added that Russian forces use motorcycles, buggies, armored vehicles, and tanks to transport infantry to frontline positions.

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Chasiv Yar direction on January 8 but did not make any confirmed advances. Russian milbloggers claimed that elements of the Russian 217th Airborne (VDV) Regiment (98th VDV Division) advanced to the intersection of Dniprovska and Kovalevskoho streets in central Chasiv Yar and that Russian forces advanced south of Orikhovo-Vasylivka (north of Chasiv Yar).[29] ISW has not observed confirmation of these claims, however. Russian forces continued attacking near Chasiv Yar itself; northeast of Chasiv Yar near Vasyukivka and Bondarne; and south of Chasiv Yar near Stupochky and Bila Hora on January 7 and 8.[30] Element of the Russian 200th Motorized Rifle Brigade (14th Army Corps [AC], Leningrad Military District [LMD]) and 331st VDV Regiment (98th VDV Division) are reportedly operating near the Refractory Plant in central Chasiv Yar.[31]

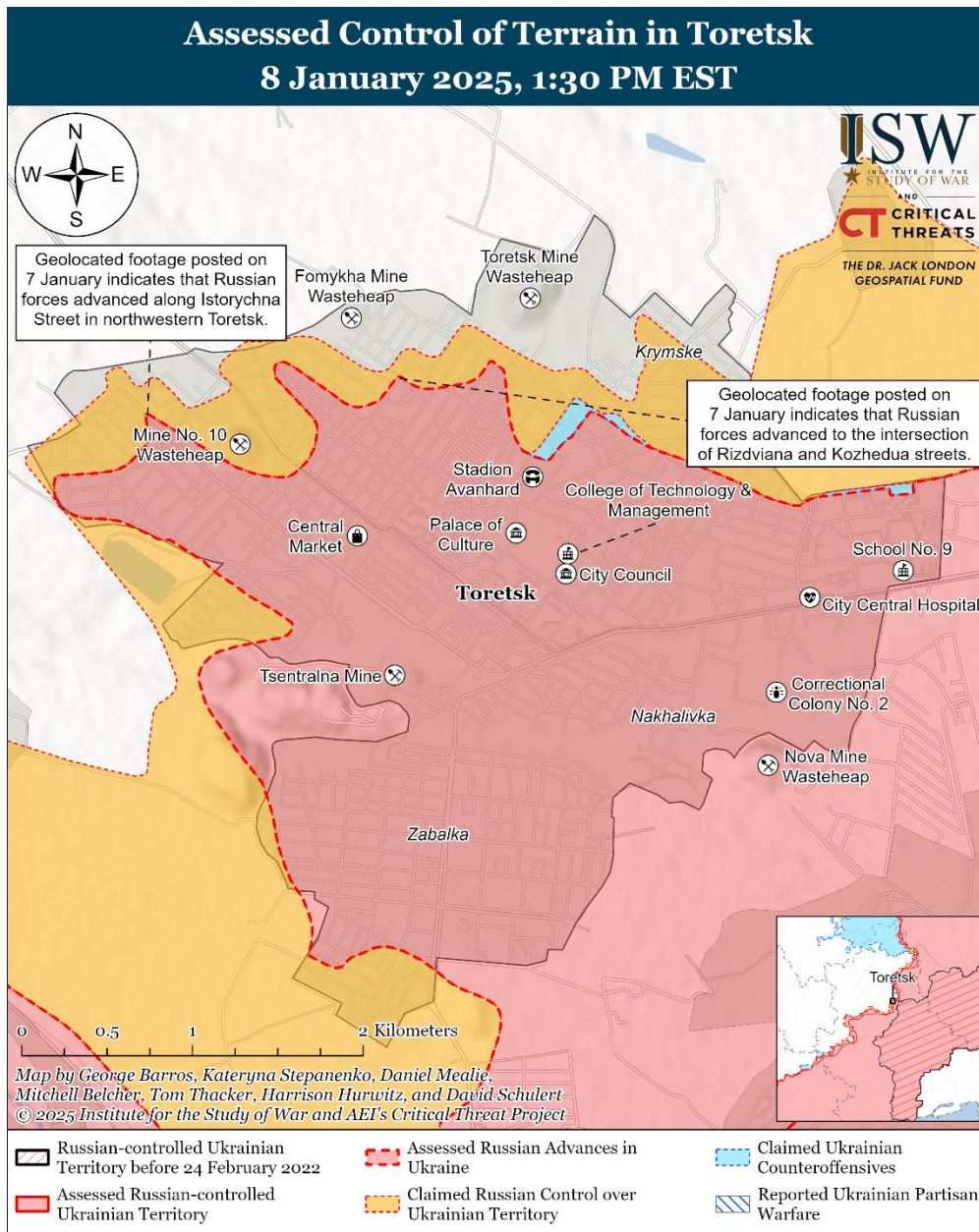


## Assessed Control of Terrain in Chasiv Yar 8 January 2025, 1:30 PM EST



Russian forces continued to advance in northern and northwestern Toretsk amid ongoing offensive operations in the area on January 8. Geolocated footage published on January 7 and 8 indicates that Russian forces recently marginally advanced in northern and northwestern Toretsk.[32] Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced near the Toretsk Mine in northern Toretsk, are clearing Ukrainian forces from Dachne (north of Toretsk), and are attacking towards Dyliivka (north of Toretsk) along the railway line.[33] ISW has not observed confirmation of these claims, however. Another Russian milblogger noted that the Ukrainian force grouping in Toretsk has relied on drone operations and limited mobile assault groups to deny Russian advances in large parts of the contested "gray zone" in Toretsk in recent months but that Russian forces are now advancing more rapidly in the settlement.[34] Russian forces continued offensive operations in Toretsk itself and north of

Toretsk near Dyliivka on January 7 and 8.[35] Elements of the Russian 1st, 9th, and 132nd motorized rifle brigades and 80th "Sparta" Separate Reconnaissance Battalion (all 51st Combined Arms Army [CAA], formerly 1st Donetsk People's Republic [DNR] AC) are reportedly operating in Toretsk.[36]

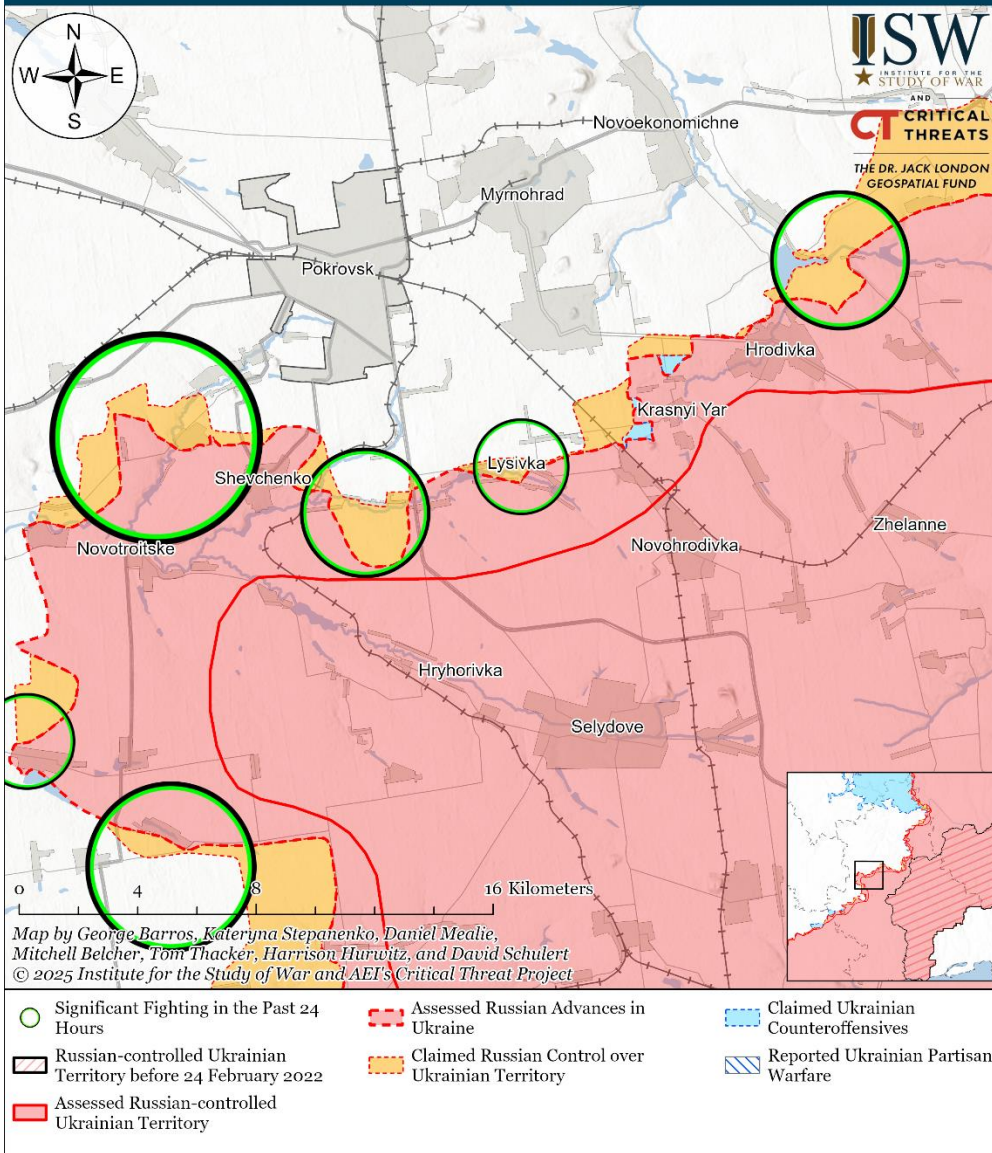


Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces recently interdicted the T-0504 Pokrovsk-Kostyantynivka highway northeast of Pokrovsk amid ongoing offensive operations near Pokrovsk on January 8. Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces with armored vehicle support and elements of an unspecified Russian airborne (VDV) unit interdicted the highway near Malynivka (northeast of Pokrovsk) on January 7, but ISW has not observed confirmation of this claim.[37] Other Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced to the northwestern outskirts of Zvirove

(south of Pokrovsk) and that the Russian military command transferred additional forces to support assaults on Kotlyne (southwest of Pokrovsk) but characterized Russian advances in this area as "crawling."<sup>[38]</sup> Ukrainian military observer Kostyantyn Mashovets stated that the Russian military command recently introduced elements of the 55th, 35th, 137th, and 74th motorized rifle brigades (41st CAA, Central Military District [CMD]) into combat south of Pokrovsk under the command of the 90th Tank Division (41st CAA) and 27th Motorized Rifle Brigade (2nd CAA, CMD).<sup>[39]</sup> Mashovets stated that Russian forces also recently introduced an unspecified motorized rifle regiment into combat near Vozdvyzhenka (east of Pokrovsk). The staff sergeant of a Ukrainian brigade operating in the Pokrovsk direction stated that Russian forces recently intensified offensive operations south of Myrnohrad (just east of Pokrovsk), transferred fresh forces to this area, and are using civilian vehicles to transport infantry to frontline positions for assaults.<sup>[40]</sup> A Ukrainian source stated that Russian forces are transferring unspecified units from the Kurakhove direction to the vicinity of Myrnohrad.<sup>[41]</sup> Russian forces continued offensive operations near Pokrovsk itself; east of Pokrovsk near Myrolyubivka, Baranivka, Yelyzavetivka, Tarasivka, and Vodyane Druhe; southeast of Pokrovsk near Lysivka and Sukhyi Yar; south of Pokrovsk near Zelene, Novyi Trud, and Zvirove; and southwest of Pokrovsk near Kotlyne, Nadezhdynka, Novovasylivka, and Yasenove on January 7 and 8.<sup>[42]</sup> Elements of the Russian 506th Motorized Rifle Regiment (27th Motorized Rifle Division, 2nd CAA, CMD) and the 907th Reconnaissance Battalion are reportedly operating near Pokrovsk.<sup>[43]</sup>



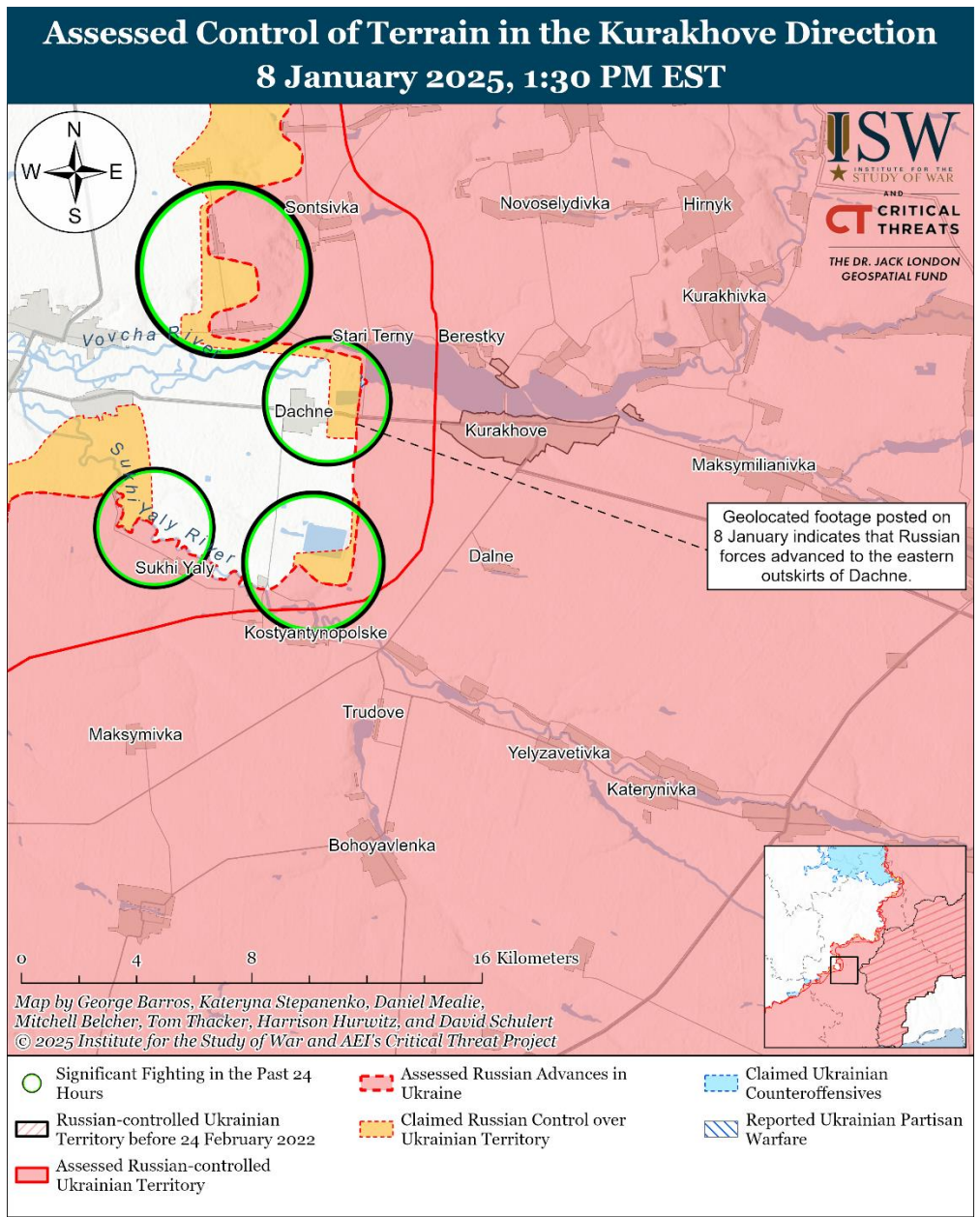
## Assessed Control of Terrain in the Pokrovsk Direction 8 January 2025, 1:30 PM EST



Russian forces recently marginally advanced in the Kurakhove direction amid continued offensive operations in the area on January 8. Geolocated footage published on January 7 indicates that Russian forces recently marginally advanced east of Dachne (west of Kurakhove).[44] Russian forces continued attacking near Kurakhove itself; northwest of Kurakhove near Shevchenko, Petropavlivka, Slovyanka, and Sribne; west of Kurakhove near Dachne, Kostyantynopil, Andriivka, and Ulakly; and southwest of Kurakhove near Kostyantynopolske, Yantarne, and Rozlyv on January 7 and 8.[45] Mashovets stated that elements of the Russian 6th and 80th tank regiments and 428th Motorized Rifle Regiment (all 90th Tank Division, 41st CAA, CMD) continue operating in the Slovyanka-Petropavlivka area.[46] Elements of the Russian 68th Tank Regiment and 103rd Motorized Rifle Regiment (both 150th Motorized Rifle Division, 8th CAA, Southern Military District [SMD]) are

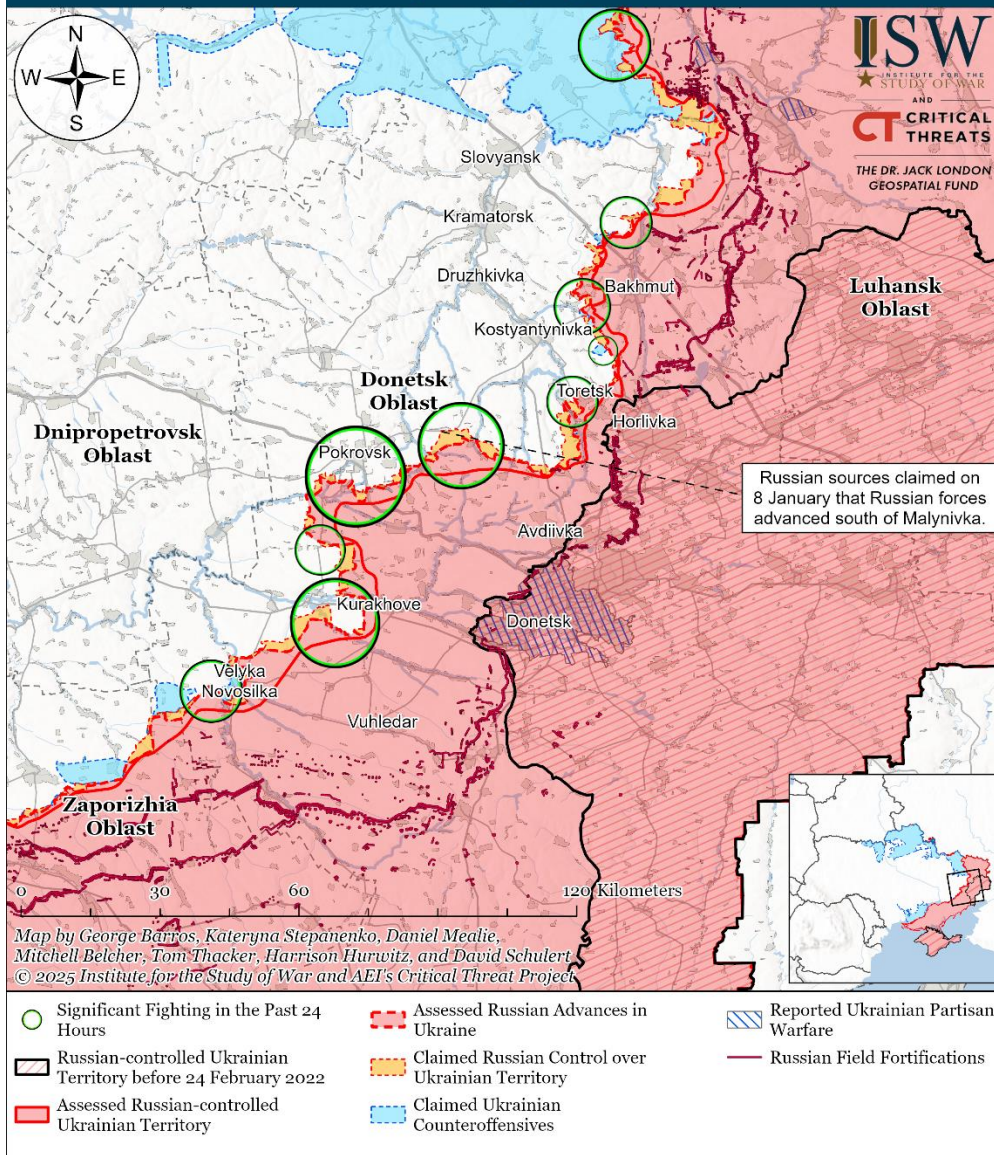


reportedly operating near Kurakhove.[47]



Russian forces continued offensive operations south of Velyka Novosilka near Vremivka and west of Velyka Novosilka near Novosilka on January 8 but did not make confirmed advances in the area.[48] Mashovets stated that elements of the Russian 127th Motorized Rifle Brigade (5th CAA, Eastern Military District [EMD]) are attacking Velyka Novosilka from the southwest and are trying to advance along the Velyka Novosilka-Hulyaipole road.[49]

## Assessed Control of Terrain in Donetsk Oblast 8 January 2025, 1:30 PM EST



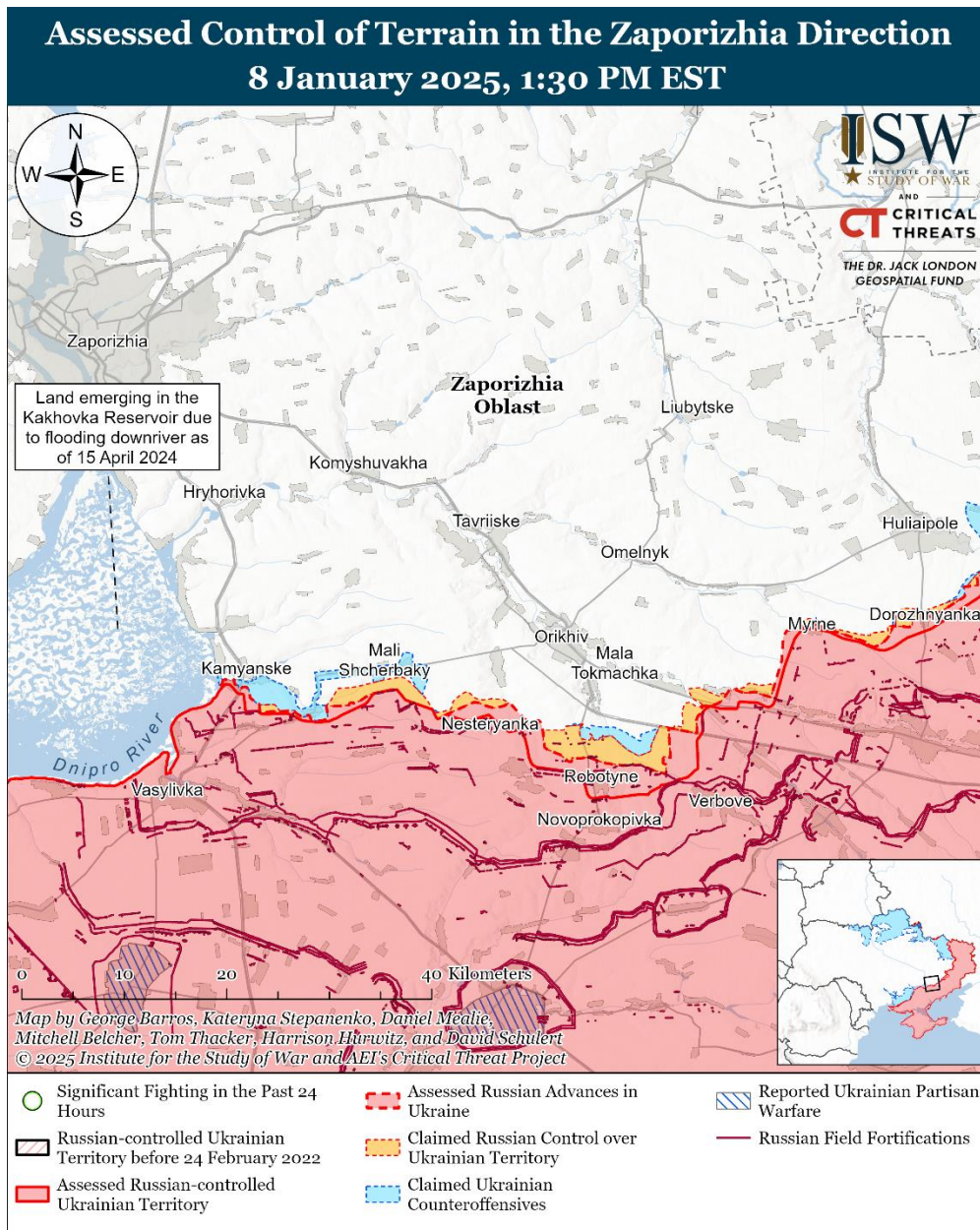
### **Russian Supporting Effort – Southern Axis (Russian objective: Maintain frontline positions and secure rear areas against Ukrainian strikes)**

Russian forces continued offensive operations in western Zaporizhia Oblast on January 8 but did not make any confirmed advances. The spokesperson of a Ukrainian brigade operating in the Orikhiv direction reported on January 8 that Russian forces are conducting small infantry assaults several times per day in an attempt to identify weaknesses in Ukrainian defensive lines.[50] The spokesperson added that Russian forces are largely not using armored vehicles in assaults in this area. The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) stated that elements of the Russian BARS-11 "Kuban" Detachment (Russian Combat Army Reserve) are training in a rear area in the Zaporizhia direction to prepare for future combat operations near Orikhiv.[51] Elements of the Russian BARS-Sarmat



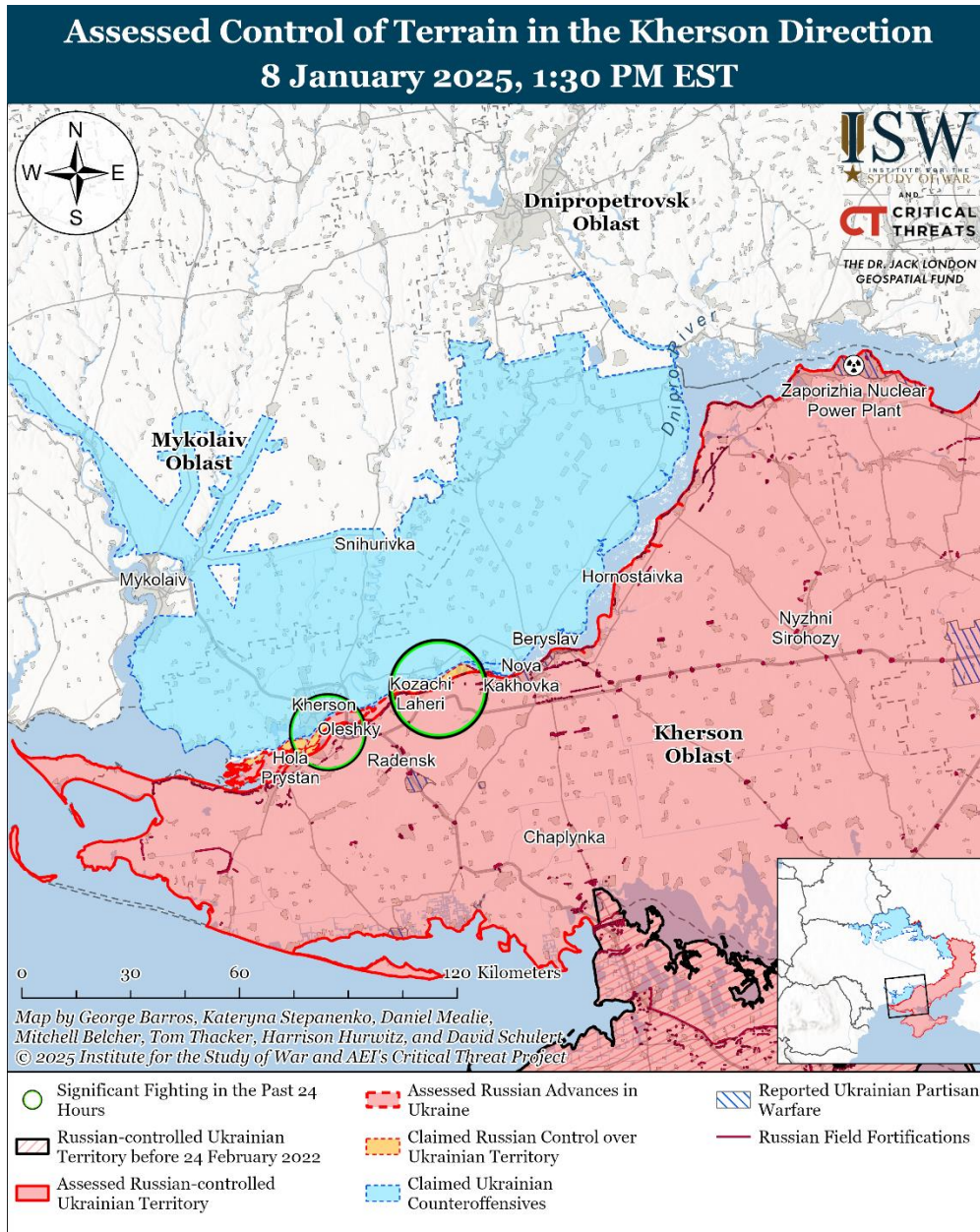
Detachment (Russian Combat Army Reserve) and the 7th Airborne (VDV) Division are reportedly operating in the Kamyanske direction (northwest of Robotyne).[52]

Ukrainian and Russian sources stated on January 8 that Ukrainian forces launched a missile strike against an empty oil storage facility near the port in occupied Berdyansk, Zaporizhia Oblast.[53] ISW has not observed footage of the strike.



Russian forces continued assaults in the Dnipro direction, including near Kozatskyi Island (northeast of Kherson City near Nova Kakhovka) and Velykyi Potomkin Island (south of Kherson City) on January 7 and 8 but did not make any confirmed advances in the area.[54] Elements of the Russian

205th Motorized Rifle Brigade (49th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Southern Military District [SMD]) and the 80th Arctic Motorized Rifle Brigade (14th Army Corps [AC], Leningrad Military District [LMD]) are reportedly operating in Kherson Oblast.[55]



**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 7 to 8. The Ukrainian Air Force reported on January 8 that Russian forces launched 64 Shahed and decoy drones from Oryol, Kursk, and Bryansk oblasts, and Primorsko-Akhtarsk, Krasnodar Krai.[56] The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Ukrainian forces downed 41 drones over Poltava, Sumy, Kharkiv, Cherkasy,



Chernihiv, Zhytomyr, Dnipropetrovsk, Mykolaiv, and Kirovohrad oblasts; that 22 decoy drones were “lost,” likely due to Ukrainian electronic warfare (EW) interference; that three drones returned to Russian airspace; and that one drone flew towards Belarusian airspace as of 0900 local time (adding up to 67 drones). The Kyiv Oblast Military Administration reported on January 8 that debris from downed Russian drones caused minor damage to houses in Kyiv Oblast.[57]

Zaporizhia Oblast Military Administration Head Ivan Fedorov reported on January 8 that Russian forces conducted a glide bomb strike against an industrial infrastructure object in Zaporizhzhia City, killing 13 people and injuring at least 63 people.[58]

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

Nothing significant to report.

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

Russian forces are increasingly using drones attached to fiber optic cables in Ukraine. The spokesperson of a Ukrainian brigade reported on January 8 that Russian forces are increasingly using drones attached to fiber optic cables that are resistant to electronic warfare (EW) interference in strikes against Ukrainian forces throughout the frontline.[59] The spokesperson noted that Russian forces are not yet systematically employing fiber-optic drones and noted that fiber-optic drones are slower and less maneuverable than first-person view (FPV) drones, making fiber-optic drones more vulnerable to small-arms fire. A Russian milblogger claimed on January 8 that Russian forces were the first to successfully develop and integrate fiber-optic drones into combat operations in Ukraine but cautioned that Ukrainian would soon develop similar innovations.[60] The milbloggers added that Russian forces will need to develop new means of downing Ukrainian fiber-optic drones.

### **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 reporting on 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)**

The Belarusian Ministry of Defense (MoD) announced that Belarusian territorial troops are conducting exercises from January 8 to 31.[61] ISW assess that these exercises do not threaten Ukraine.

**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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[1]

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[2] [https://t.me/kiber\\_boroshno/10909](https://t.me/kiber_boroshno/10909); [https://t.me/WarArchive\\_ua/24425](https://t.me/WarArchive_ua/24425);  
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[3] [https://t.me/tass\\_agency/295044](https://t.me/tass_agency/295044) ; [https://t.me/tass\\_agency/295050](https://t.me/tass_agency/295050) ;  
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[4] <https://t.me/GeneralStaffZSU/19859>

[5] <https://t.me/GeneralStaffZSU/19859>

[6] [https://www.instagram.com/news\\_time\\_ing/](https://www.instagram.com/news_time_ing/) ;  
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[7] [https://t.me/WarArchive\\_ua/24439](https://t.me/WarArchive_ua/24439); <https://t.me/kryvyrih170tbr/4079>;  
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[8] <https://t.me/RVvoenkor/84125>

[9] [https://t.me/dva\\_majors/62036](https://t.me/dva_majors/62036) ; [https://t.me/boris\\_rozhin/150534](https://t.me/boris_rozhin/150534) ;  
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[10] <https://t.me/RVvoenkor/84125> ; <https://t.me/yurasumy/20374>

[11] <https://t.me/DnevnikDesantnika/22110>

[12] [https://t.me/rusich\\_army/19953](https://t.me/rusich_army/19953)

[13] <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbido2M7XWfbU75vB3BTibWpszP3BUjq9PaNG6WLDd9vkf7gY34ygNPPx2DEy7eJTLoYsbl> ;  
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<https://t.me/otukharkiv/3466>

[14] <https://t.me/zvizdecmanhustu/2481>

[15] [https://t.me/notes\\_veterans/21345](https://t.me/notes_veterans/21345)

[16] <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbido2M7XWfbU75vB3BTibWpszP3BUjq9PaNG6WLDd9vkf7gY34ygNPPx2DEy7eJTLoYsbl> ;  
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[17] <https://t.me/DnevnikDesantnika/22082>

[18] <https://t.me/DnevnikDesantnika/22082>; [https://t.me/notes\\_veterans/21345](https://t.me/notes_veterans/21345)

[19] <https://t.me/yurasumy/20371>

[20] [https://t.me/creamy\\_caprice/8051](https://t.me/creamy_caprice/8051); <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/21043> ;  
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<https://x.com/PuenteUribarri/status/1876950837689295317>; [https://t.me/ngu\\_3027/3559](https://t.me/ngu_3027/3559)

[21] <https://t.me/zvizdecmanhustu/2481>

[22] <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbido2M7XWfbU75vB3BTibWpszP3BUjq9PaNG6WLDd9vkf7gY34ygNPPx2DEy7eJTLoYsbl>

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[33] <https://t.me/voenkorKotenok/61292> ; <https://t.me/rybar/66992>

[34] <https://t.me/yurasumy/20369>

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[37] <https://t.me/voenkorKotenok/61290> ; <https://t.me/RVvoenkor/84124>

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[46] <https://t.me/zvizdecmanhustu/2480>

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[61] <https://t.me/modmilby/44325>