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and George Barros**

March 3, 2025, 6:15pm ET

Note: The data cut-off for this product was 12:10pm ET on March 3. ISW will cover subsequent reports in the March 4 Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment.

Ukrainian military intelligence indicated that about 620,000 Russian soldiers are operating in Ukraine and Kursk Oblast, an increase of about 40,000 personnel compared to late 2024. Ukrainian Main Military Intelligence Directorate (GUR) Deputy Head Major General Vadym Skibitskyi stated in an interview with *RBK-Ukraine* published on March 3 that there are 620,000 Russian soldiers in Ukraine and Kursk Oblast, about 200,000 of whom are actively fighting on the frontline.[1] Skibitskyi stated that there are roughly 35,000 additional Rosgvardia troops protecting rear areas and that these personnel can become a second line of defense if necessary. Skibitskyi stated in November 2024 there were about 580,000 Russian soldiers operating against Ukraine (presumably both within Ukraine and in Kursk Oblast), and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky stated in January 2025 that the total Russian force grouping in Ukraine was about 600,000 troops.[2]

Russian authorities reportedly exceeded their recruitment quotas in 2024 and January 2025, likely in part due to increased financial incentives for recruits and prison recruitment efforts that are unsustainable in the medium- to long-term. Skibitskyi reported on March 3 that Russian authorities recruited 440,000 military personnel in 2024 — 10,000 more than their quota for the year — and fulfilled their January 2025 recruitment quota by 107 percent.[3] Russian Security Council Deputy Chairperson Dmitry Medvedev also claimed in late December 2024 that 440,000 recruits signed military service contracts with the Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) in 2024.[4] Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a decree in July 2024 awarding 400,000 rubles (roughly \$4,400) to anyone who signed a contract with the Russian MoD between August 1, 2024 and December 31, 2024 - more than double the previous federal award of 195,000 rubles (roughly \$2,100).[5] This increased federal reward likely contributed to Russia's successful recruitment drive in 2024. Russian federal subjects offered additional high regional bonuses to those who signed military service contracts in late 2024 and early 2025, but select federal subjects have started to reduce these regional payments following the expiration of these limited time offers, indicating that such measures are not sustainable indefinitely.[6] Skibitskyi stated that 15 percent of Russian recruits in 2024 were people under criminal investigation, in prison, or serving suspended sentences and that this figure will increase to roughly 30 percent in 2025. Russian officials reported in 2024 that Russia was shutting down some prisons after Russia's prison population significantly dropped due to the Russian prison recruitment drives.[7] Russia has recently been increasingly recruiting defendants in pretrial detention centers, likely as the pool of prison recruits has dwindled.[8] ISW continues to assess that increased

military spending, including large payments and benefits to Russian servicemembers, is hurting the Russian economy at the macro level and that the Kremlin is reducing this spending on military personnel as part of efforts to mitigate the impacts of such initiatives.[9] Russian authorities are unlikely to sustain such high financial incentives as part of their recruitment drives in the medium- and long-term as the Russian economy continues to decline.

Skibitskyi noted that Russian authorities have previously adjusted their annual quotas throughout the year, having originally called for Russian authorities to recruit 375,000 to 380,000 personnel in 2024 before increasing this number to 430,000.[10] Adjustments to the 2024 recruitment quotas were likely meant to account for Russia's increased tempo of offensive operations in the last few months of 2024 that resulted in the highest casualty rates Russia experienced since early 2022.[11] Skibitskyi concluded that Russia's recruitment plans for 2025 will "mostly" allow the Russian military command to replace its battlefield losses should the current tempo of offensive operations and losses continue.[12] Russian authorities will likely have to adjust their 2025 quotas as they did in 2024 should they want the current tempo of offensive operations to continue and should Russian forces continue to suffer high losses while advancing at a slower rate.[13] Russian authorities are unlikely to generate enough forces to significantly increase the tempo of Russian offensive operations in Ukraine in the near future. **Continued Western military aid would help Ukrainian forces inflict additional losses on the Russian military that would likely intensify Russia's economic and military issues and force Putin into making concessions during meaningful negotiations in 2025.**[14]

Russian forces continue to innovate their strike packages and leverage larger numbers of Shahed and decoy drones in an attempt to penetrate Ukraine's air defense umbrella. Skibitskyi stated that Russian forces launch missiles from several different directions and currently launch 150 to 200 drones during a single overnight strike series.[15] Skibitskyi noted that Russian forces previously launched missiles from a single direction and used an average of 20 to 30 drones in a single overnight strike series. Skibitskyi reported that Russian forces alternate launching missiles and drones in order to overwhelm Ukrainian air defense systems. Skibitskyi noted that Russian forces begin launching drones in the evening such that the drones reach Ukraine at around 2300, and that strikes continue until the morning. ISW observed reports that that Russian forces began launching between 80 and 100 (or more) Shahed and decoy drones as part of their larger strike packages in October and November 2024 and have been launching between 100 to 200 (or more) Shahed and decoy drones in February 2025.[16] Russian forces most likely use large numbers of Shahed and decoy drones to detect and overwhelm Ukrainian air defense and mobile fire groups. Increasing numbers of drones in overnight Russian strike packages indicate that Russia is likely not currently facing domestic Shahed or decoy drone production constraints or constraints in Iranian-provided components to make Shahed drones. It remains unclear whether Russia will be able to produce or source a sufficient number of components to avoid drone production constraints in the long-term, however.

Russian missile production has reportedly not significantly increased, but Russian forces appear to be prioritizing production of missile and drone variants that are more effective against Ukrainian air defenses. Skibitskyi stated that Russia has marginally increased its missile production by a factor of 1.2 to 1.5 throughout 2024 and is "redistributing" its production capabilities.[17] Skibitskyi stated that Russian forces are producing more Kh-101 cruise missiles and fewer of the less effective Kalibr cruise missiles and intend to produce more Kinzhal and Iskander-M

ballistic missiles in the near future. Russian forces rarely used Kalibr cruise missiles in strike packages against Ukraine in January or February 2025 and continue to mainly use Kalibr missiles to pad larger strike packages and overwhelm Ukrainian air defenses.[18]

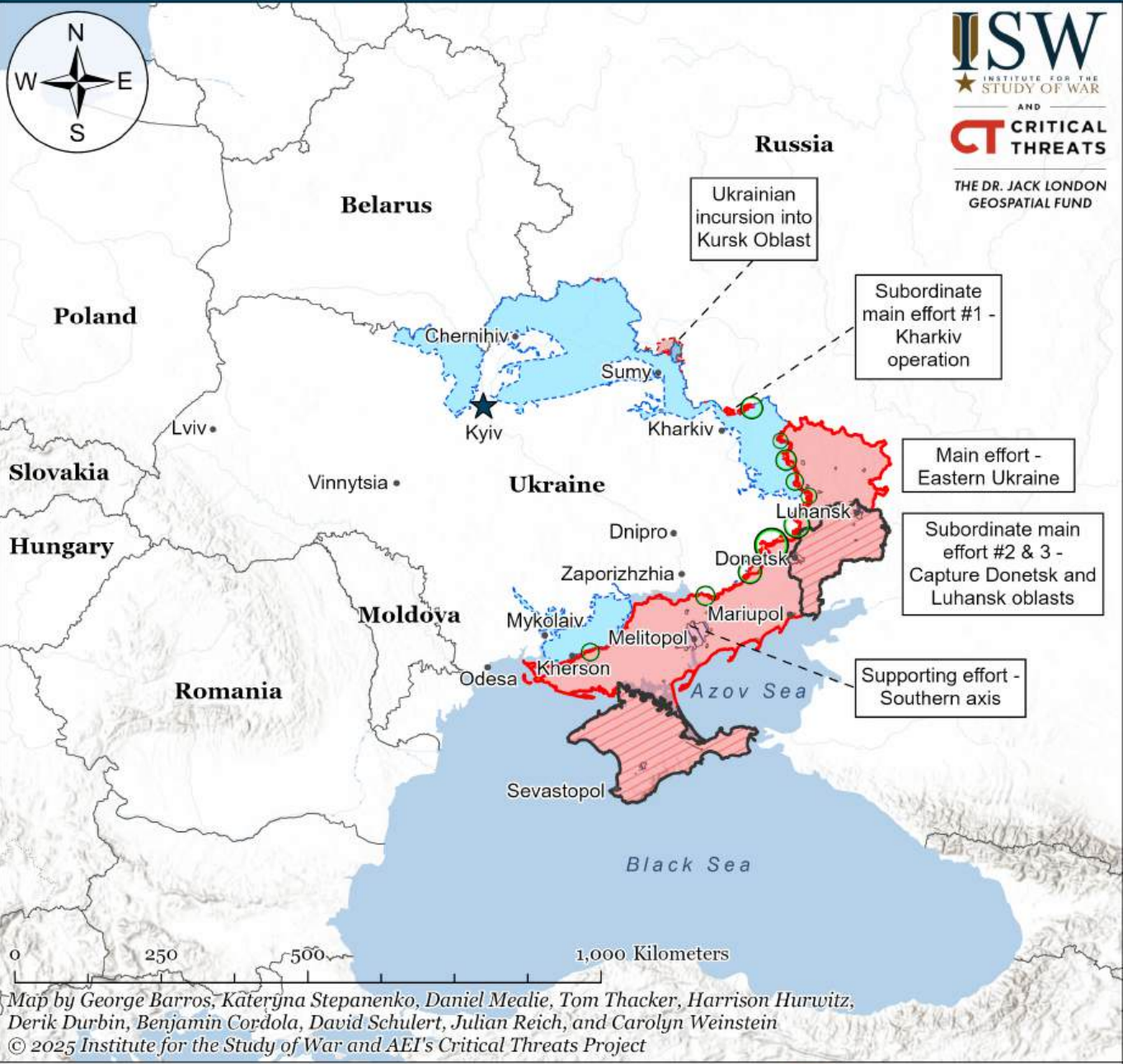
The GUR reported on February 18 that Russia is modernizing and increasing its production of Shahed-136 drones and producing a new Geran-3 drone variant.[19] The GUR reported that Russia has equipped some new Shahed-136 ("Geran-2") drones with a new type of warhead weighing 90 kilograms, moved the drones' navigation and power systems from the nose to the tail, and installed an additional ballast to help with the drones' stability. The GUR reported that Russia is increasingly relying on components manufactured in Russia, the People's Republic of China (PRC), and Iran to produce and assemble Shahed drones. The GUR reported that the Geran-3 drone is an analogue to the Shahed-238 and can fly at a speed of up to 550 to 600 kilometers per hour and has a range of 2,500 kilometers. ISW previously assessed that Russia likely intended to further increase its production and use of Shahed drones and other Shahed-variants following the signing of the Russian-Iranian Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Agreement in January 2025.[20]

Key Takeaways:

- **Ukrainian military intelligence indicated that about 620,000 Russian soldiers are operating in Ukraine and Kursk Oblast, an increase of about 40,000 personnel compared to late 2024.**
- **Russian authorities reportedly exceeded their recruitment quotas in 2024 and January 2025, likely in part due to increased financial incentives for recruits and prison recruitment efforts that are unsustainable in the medium- to long-term.**
- **Russian forces continue to innovate their strike packages and leverage larger numbers of Shahed and decoy drones in an attempt to penetrate Ukraine's air defense umbrella.**
- **Russian missile production has reportedly not significantly increased, but Russian forces appear to be prioritizing production of missile and drone variants that are more effective against Ukrainian air defenses.**
- **Ukrainian forces recently advanced near Pokrovsk, and Russian forces recently advanced near Velyka Novosilka and in Kursk Oblast.**
- **The Kremlin continues to promote its "Time of Heroes" veterans' program as part of efforts to militarize the Russian government and society.**

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Russo-Ukrainian War

March 3, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



- Significant Fighting in the Past 24 Hours
- Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory before 24 February 2022
- Assessed Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory
- Assessed Russian Advances in Ukraine
- Claimed Russian Control over Ukrainian Territory
- Claimed Ukrainian Counteroffensives
- Reported Ukrainian Partisan Warfare
- Ukrainian Advances in Russia
- Russian Advances in Russia
- Claimed Russian Advances in Russia

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 Kursk Oblast.

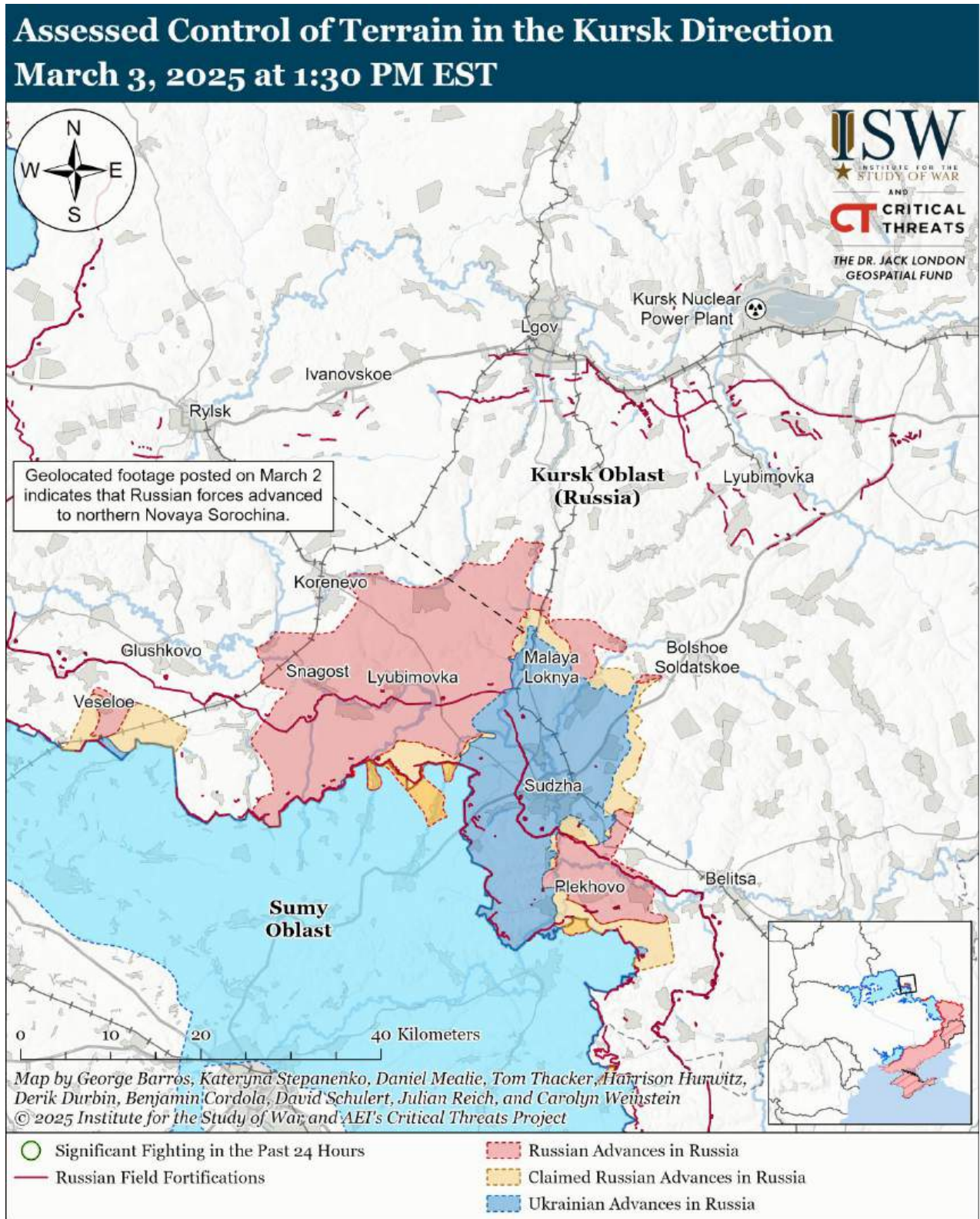
Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on March 2 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced in northern Novaya Sorochina (northwest of Sudzha).[21]

Unconfirmed claims: Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced north of Lebedevka and 1.5 kilometers near Malaya Loknya (both northwest of Sudzha).[22]

Russian forces conducted offensive operations near Malaya Loknya and Lebedevka.[23] A Ukrainian brigade operating in Kursk Oblast reported on March 3 that Russian forces unsuccessfully conducted an at least reinforced platoon-sized mechanized assault in two waves and that Ukrainian forces destroyed four tanks and one armored personnel carrier.[24]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 106th Airborne (VDV) Division are reportedly operating in Sudzhansky Raion; elements of the 83rd VDV Brigade are reportedly operating near Malaya Loknya; elements of the 1st battalion of the 9th Motorized Rifle Regiment (18th Motorized Rifle Division, 11th Army Corps [AC], Leningrad Military District [LMD]) are reportedly operating in Pogrebki (northwest

of Sudzha); elements of the 155th Naval Infantry Brigade (Pacific Fleet) are reportedly operating in Nikolskiy (northwest of Sudzha); and elements of the 1434th "Akhmat-Chechnya" Regiment are reportedly operating near Martynovka (northeast of Sudzha).[25]



Russian forces continue to attack near the international border in Sumy Oblast on March 3.

Unconfirmed claims: Russian milbloggers continued to claim that Russian forces seized Zhuravka (just along the international border) and advanced into Novenke (east of Zhuravka).[26]

Ukraine's State Border Service Spokesperson Andriy Demchenko stated on March 3 that Russian forces are trying to break through the international border into Ukraine and cut off Ukrainian logistics routes.[27] Demchenko stated that Russian forces are attacking toward Novenke but are not conducting large-scale assaults in the area.

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 83rd VDV Brigade are reportedly operating near Zhuravka and Basivka (south of Novenke).[28]

Russian Main Effort — Eastern Ukraine

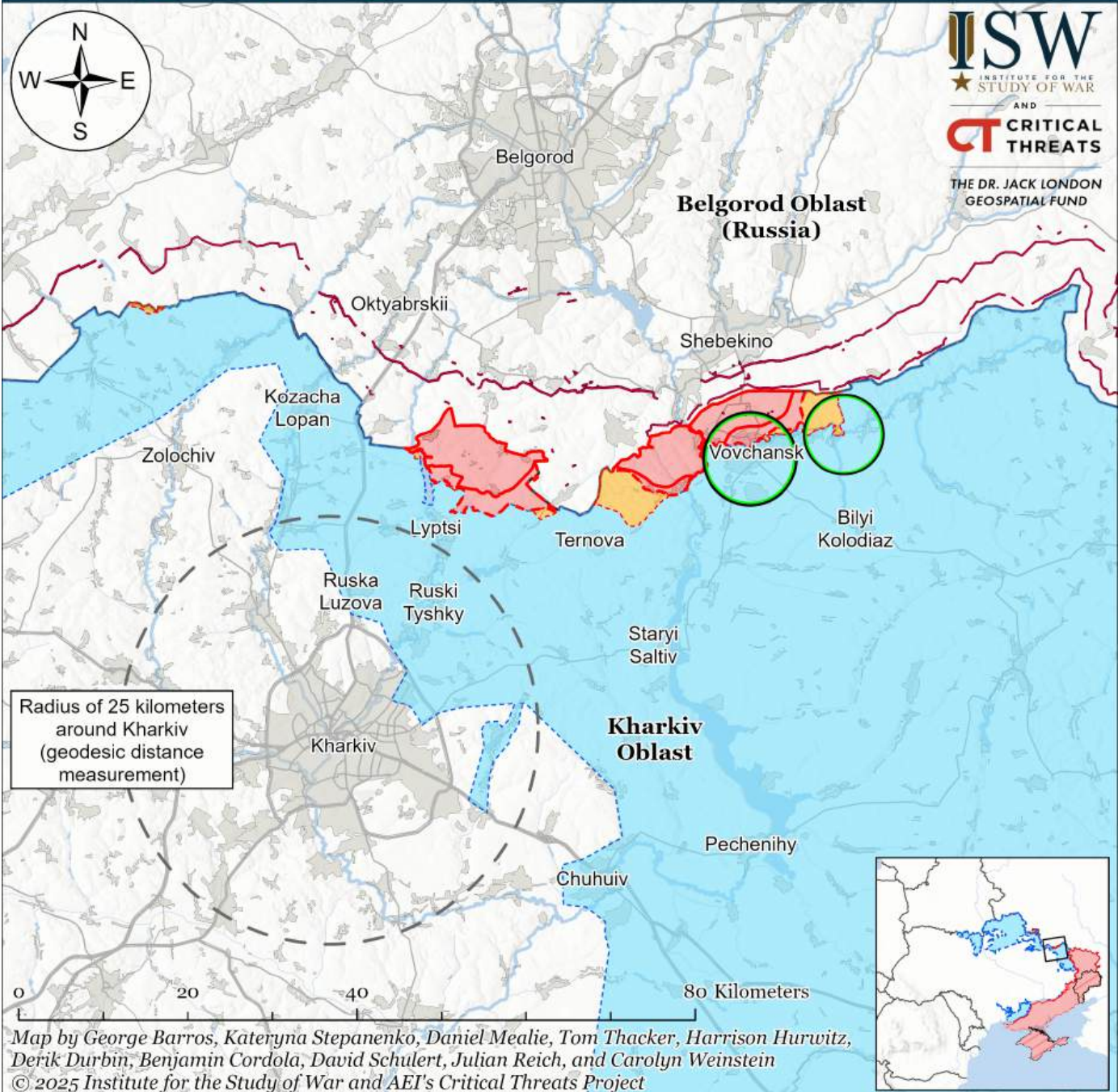
Russian Subordinate Main Effort #1 — Kharkiv Oblast (Russian objective: Push Ukrainian forces back from the international border with Belgorod Oblast and approach to within tube artillery range of Kharkiv City)

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Kharkiv direction on March 3 but did not advance.

Russian forces conducted offensive operations northeast of Kharkiv City near Vovchansk and toward Bochkove on March 2 and 3.[29]

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Kharkiv Direction

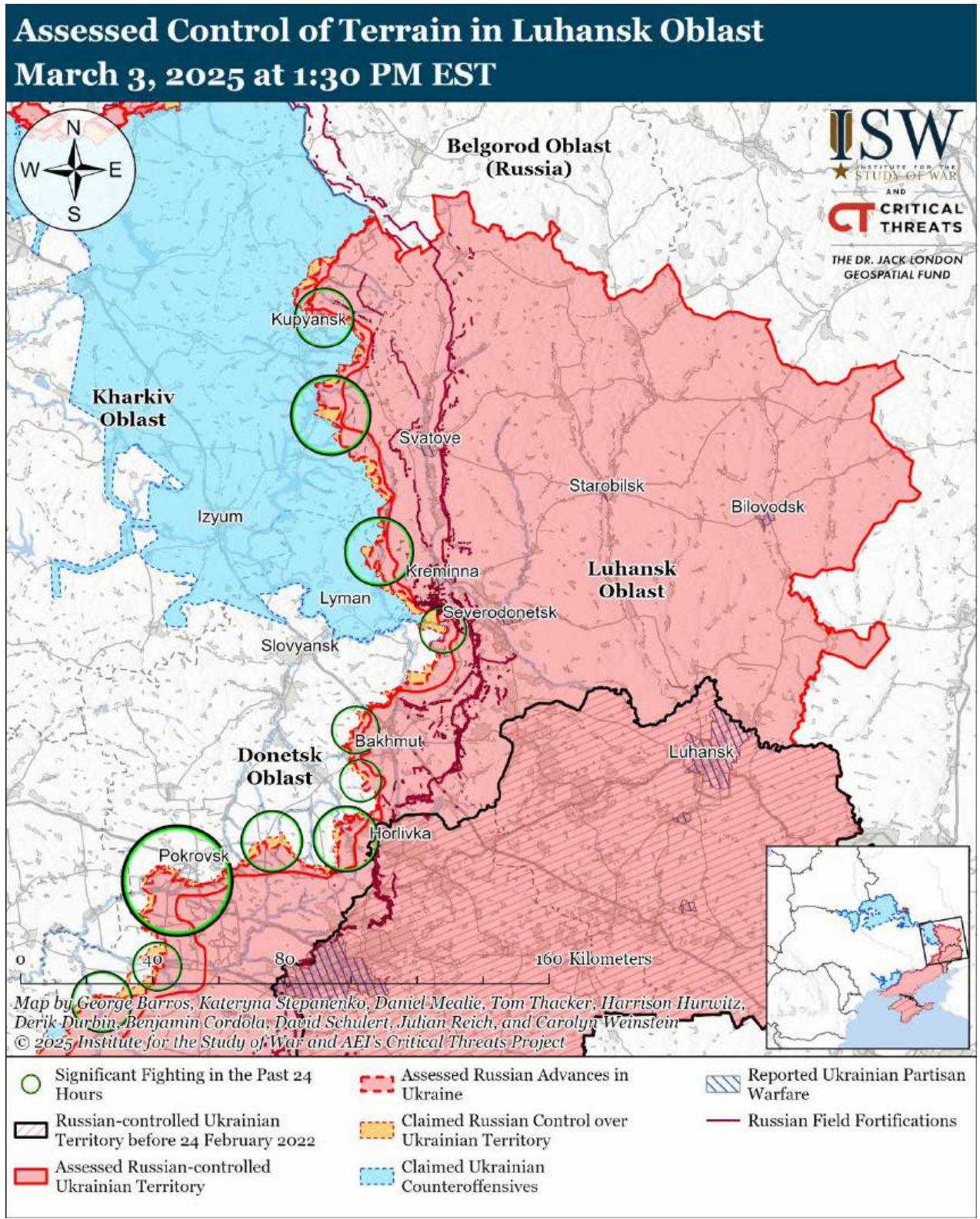
March 3, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



Map by George Barros, Kateryna Stepanenko, Daniel Mealie, Tom Thacker, Harrison Hurwitz, Derik Durbin, Benjamin Cordola, David Schulert, Julian Reich, and Carolyn Weinstein
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| Significant Fighting in the Past 24 Hours | Assessed Russian Advances in Ukraine | Reported Ukrainian Partisan Warfare |
| Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory before 24 February 2022 | Claimed Russian Control over Ukrainian Territory | Russian Field Fortifications |
| Assessed Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory | Claimed Ukrainian Counteroffensives | |

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 March 3 but did not advance.

Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed on March 3 that Russian forces are clearing parts of Holubivka.[30] Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced to the outskirts of Kindrashivka (north of Kupyansk) and are attempting to interdict the Ukrainian ground line of communication (GLOC) along the Kupyansk-Velykyi Burluk highway and set conditions to attack Kupyansk from the northwest.[31] Another Russian milblogger claimed on March 2 that Russian forces' main movements are in the direction of Kamianka (southwest of Topoli).[32]

Russian forces conducted offensive operations in the direction of Petropavlivka (west of Kupyansk) on March 2 and 3.[33] A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces are consolidating positions around Kalynove (both northeast of Kupyansk) and enforcing their positions northeast of Kupyansk near Topoli. The milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces are counterattacking near Fyholivka and Dvorichna (both northeast of Kupyansk).[34]

The commander of a Ukrainian drone regiment operating in the Kupyansk direction stated on March 3 that the most dangerous area of the frontline in the area is near Kruhlyakivka (southeast of Kupyansk), where Russian forces cut through Ukrainian defenses and established a bridgehead across the Oskil River.[35] The commander added that the most intense fighting is currently in the vicinity of Dvorichna.

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 16th Spetsnaz Brigade (Russian General Staff's Main Directorate [GRU]) are reportedly operating near Zapadne.[36]

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Borova direction on March 3 but did not advance.

Russian forces conducted offensive operations northeast of Borova near Zahryzove, Lozova, and Nova Kruhlyakivka on March 2 and 3.[37]

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Lyman direction on March 3 but did not advance.

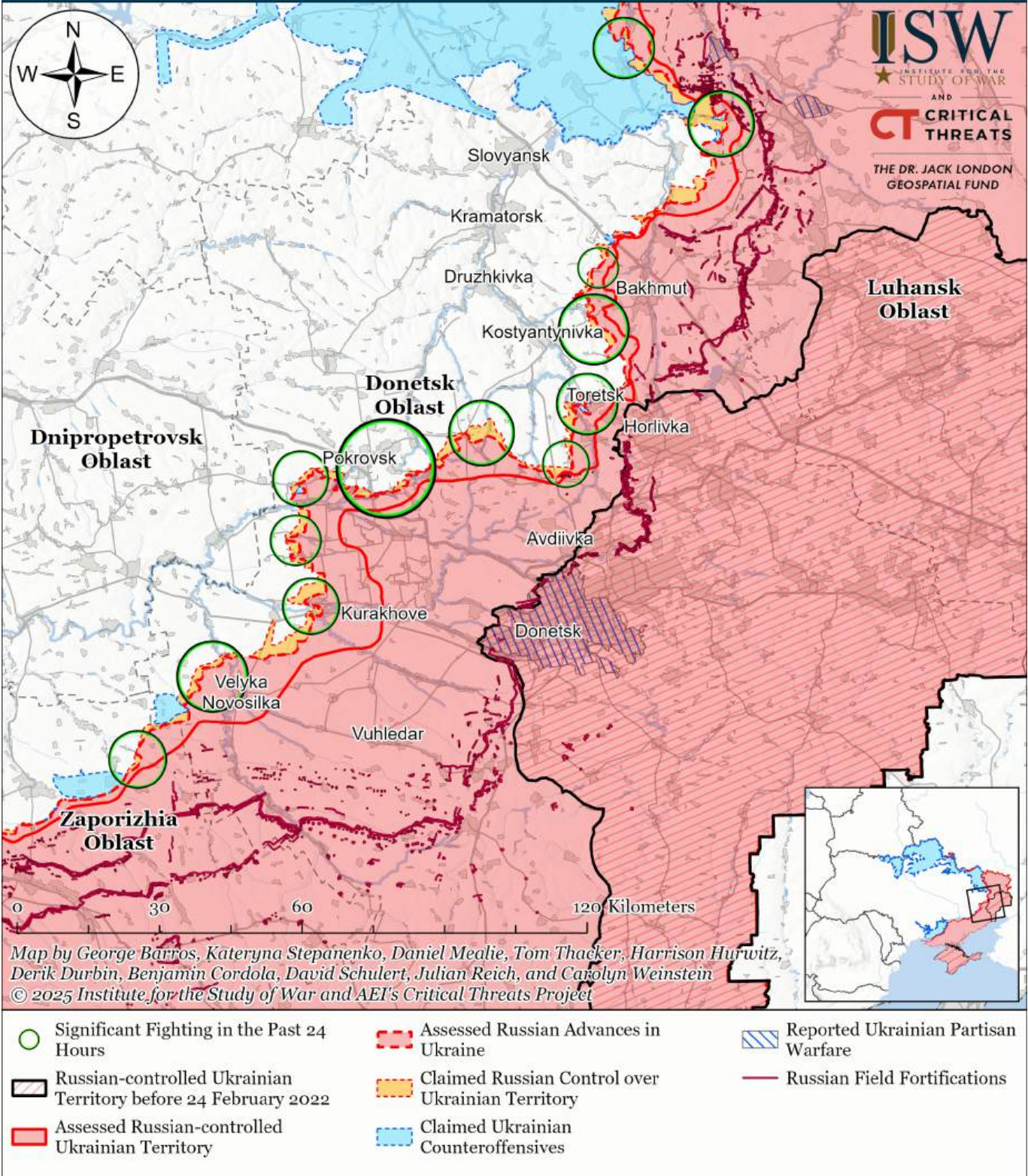
Russian forces continued ground attacks north of Lyman towards Nove and Novomykhailivka and northeast of Lyman near Novolyubivka and Yampolivka on March 2 and 3.[38]

The spokesperson of a Ukrainian brigade operating in the Lyman direction stated that Russian forces continue conducting squad-sized infantry assaults and that two units conduct an assault against one position with a third squad arriving later to consolidate the advance.[39] The spokesperson stated that Russian forces are conducting fewer drones strikes in the Lyman direction.

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

Assessed Control of Terrain in Donetsk Oblast

March 3, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Siversk direction on March 3 but did not advance.

Russian forces conducted offensive operations northeast of Siversk near Bilohorivka and east of Siversk near Verkhokamyanske on March 3.[40]

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Chasiv Yar direction on March 3 but did not make any confirmed advances.

Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced to Dniprovska Street within Chasiv Yar.[41]

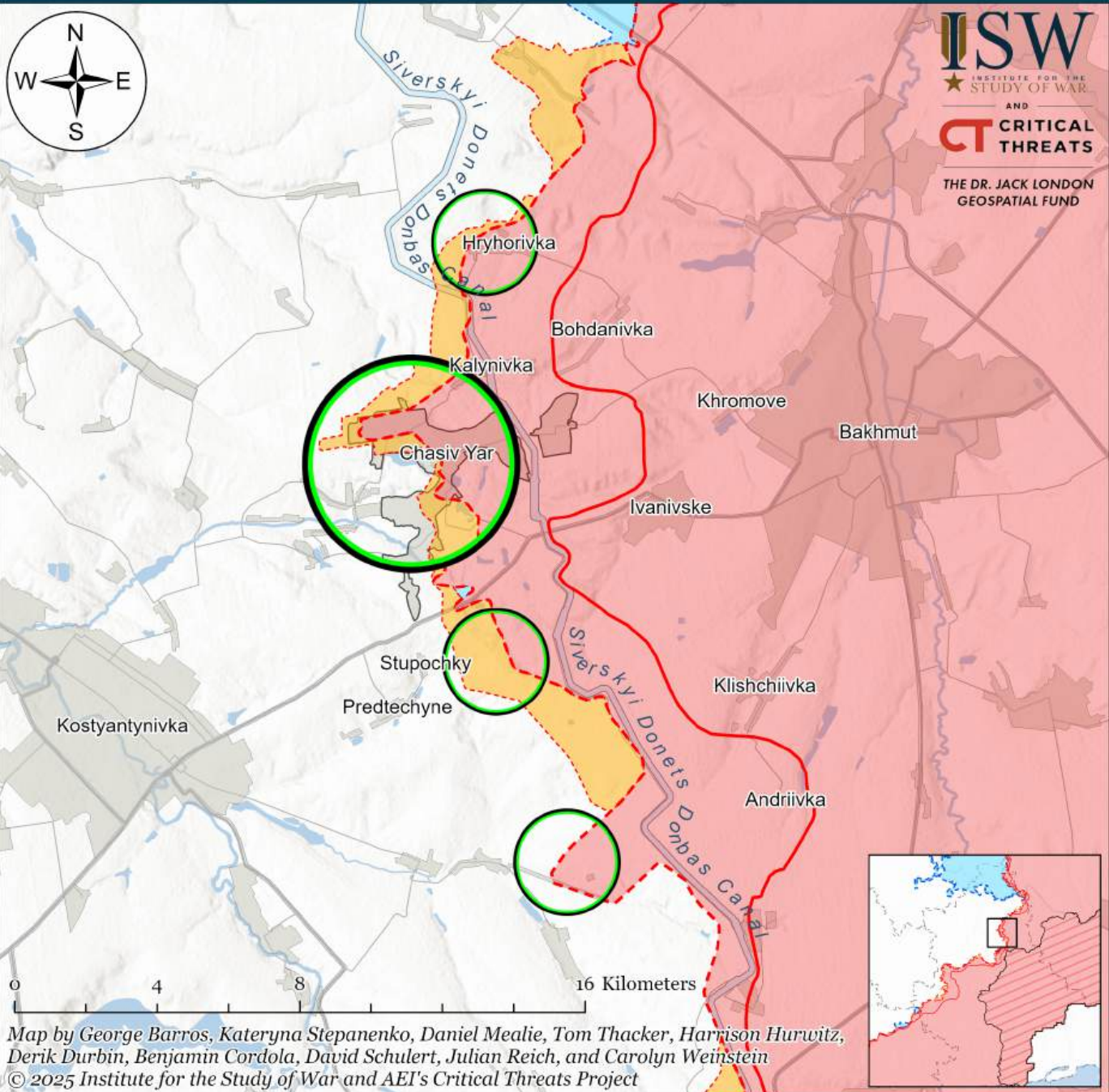
Russian forces conducted offensive operations near Chasiv Yar itself; northeast of Chasiv Yar near Hryhorivka; and south of Chasiv Yar near Stupochky, Predtechyne, and Oleksandro-Shulytne on March 2 and 3.[42]

A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian first-person view (FPV) drones are complicating Russian advances within Chasiv Yar.[43] Another Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian electronic warfare (EW) interference is causing Russian rockets to miss their targets near Kostyantynivka.[44]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Chechen "Akhmat" Spetsnaz and 215th Reconnaissance Battalion (98th Airborne [VDV] Division) are reportedly operating within Chasiv Yar.[45]

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Chasiv Yar Direction

March 3, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



Map by George Barros, Kateryna Stepanenko, Daniel Mealie, Tom Thacker, Harrison Hurwitz, Derik Durbin, Benjamin Cordola, David Schulert, Julian Reich, and Carolyn Weinstein
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|  Assessed Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory | | |

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Toretsk direction on March 3 but did not advance.

Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced northwest of Krymske (north of Toretsk) and north of Druzhba (east of Toretsk).[46]

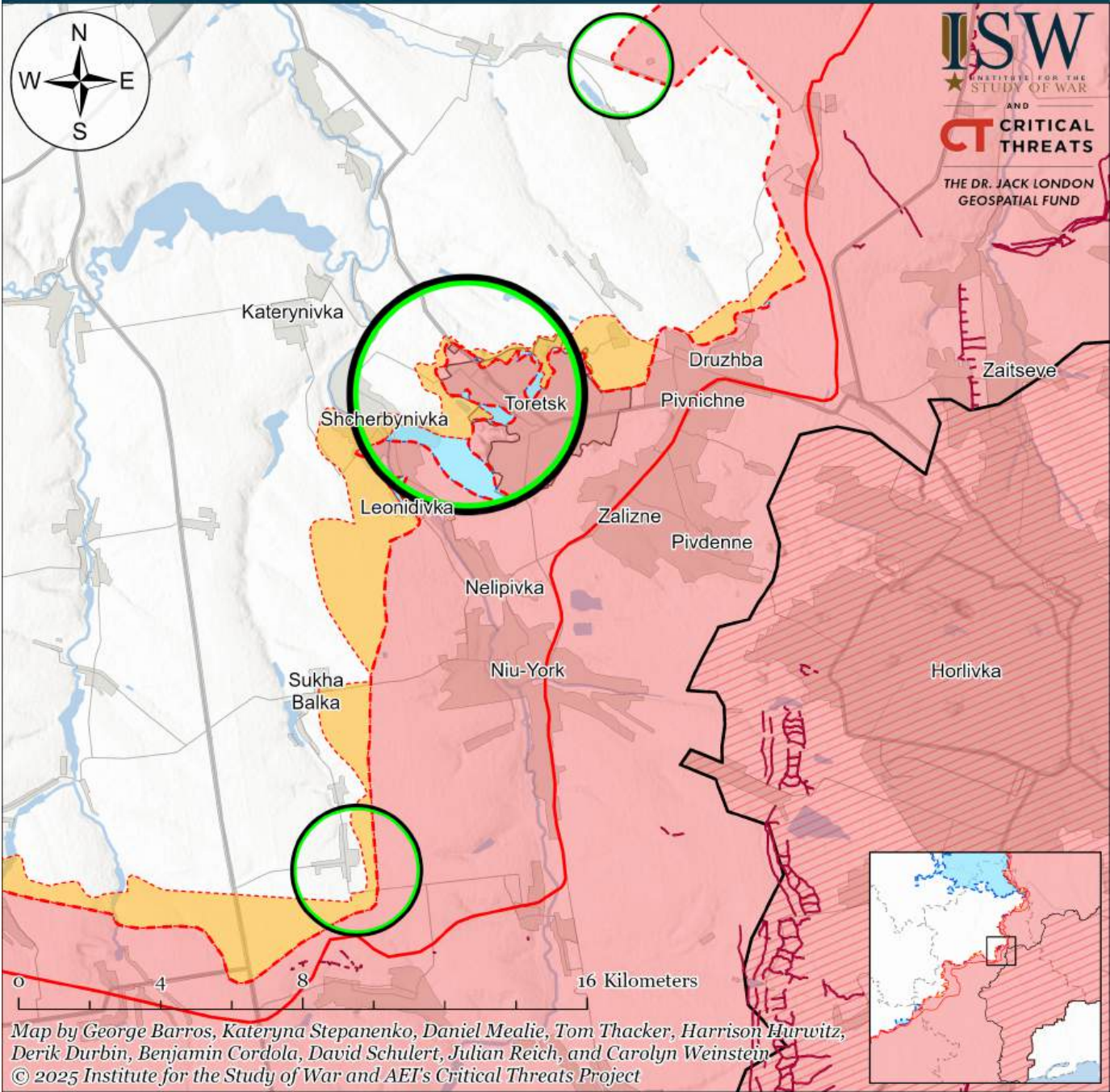
Russian forces attacked near Toretsk and west of Toretsk near Shcherbynivka on March 2 and 3.[47] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces are counterattacking near Toretsk from Shcherbynivka and from north of Toretska Mine (in northern Toretsk).[48]

The commander of a Ukrainian battalion operating in the Toretsk direction stated that Russian forces are attempting to envelop Toretsk by attacking settlements on the settlement's flanks.[49] the commander also stated that Russian forces are attempting to advance on foot and with armored vehicles, civilian cars, motorcycles, and electric scooters.

Order of Battle: Drone operators of the Russian 381st Artillery Regiment (150th Motorized Rifle Division, 8th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Southern Military District [SMD]) and artillery elements of the 238th Artillery Brigade (8th CAA) are reportedly striking targets near Shcherbynivka.[50] ISW has recently observed reports of Russian forces redeploying elements of the 8th CAA from the Kurakhove direction to the Toretsk direction, and this is the first report of the 381st Artillery Regiment operating in the area that ISW has observed.[51] Ukrainian military observer Kostyantyn Mashovets reported on March 3 that elements of the 8th CAA have begun participating in combat operations in the Toretsk and Kostyantynivka directions.[52]

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Toretsk Direction

March 3, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



Map by George Barros, Kateryna Stepanenko, Daniel Mealie, Tom Thacker, Harrison Hurwitz, Derik Durbin, Benjamin Cordola, David Schulert, Julian Reich, and Carolyn Weinstein
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| Assessed Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory | Claimed Ukrainian Counteroffensives | |

Ukrainian forces recently advanced in the Pokrovsk direction.

Assessed Ukrainian advances: Geolocated footage published on March 2 indicates that Ukrainian forces recently advanced in the fields southeast of Udachne (southwest of Pokrovsk).[53]

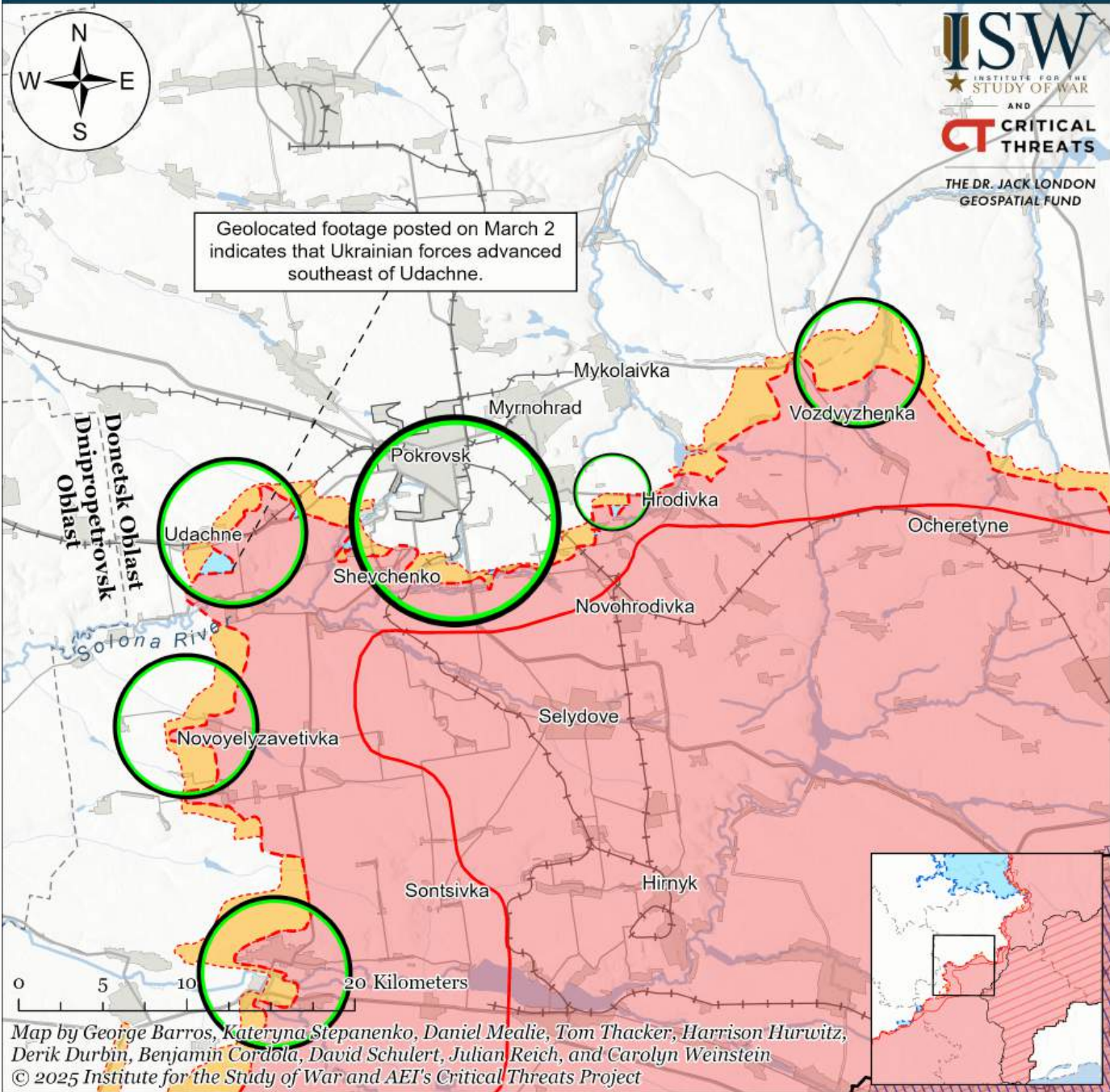
Unconfirmed claims: Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced northeast of Dachenske (south of Pokrovsk) and advanced one kilometer south of Zaporizhzhia (southwest of Pokrovsk).[54]

Russian forces continued offensive operations near Pokrovsk itself; northeast of Pokrovsk near Oleksandropil; east of Pokrovsk near Vodyane Druhe, Tarasivka, and Promin; south of Pokrovsk near Dachenske, Zvirove, and Pishchane; and southwest of Pokrovsk near Kotlyne, Udachne, Nadiivka, Kotlyarivka, and Uspenivka on March 2 and 3.[55] A Russian milblogger claimed that the intensity of Ukrainian counterattacks near Udachne and Kotlyne is decreasing.[56]

The spokesperson of a Ukrainian National Guard brigade operating in the Pokrovsk direction reported that Russian forces are deploying reserves in combat operations in this direction.[57] The spokesperson stated that Russian forces are mainly relying on infantry assaults supported by light armored vehicles, drones, and artillery to advance in the Pokrovsk direction. Ukrainian Khortytsia Group of Forces Spokesperson Major Viktor Trehubov stated that the Russian military has accumulated up to a combined arms army's worth of personnel (up to 100,000 troops) in the Pokrovsk direction and are losing roughly as many tanks in one month in the Pokrovsk direction as some European armies have in service in total.[58]

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Pokrovsk Direction

March 3, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



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- Significant Fighting in the Past 24 Hours
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- Claimed Ukrainian Counteroffensives
- Reported Ukrainian Partisan Warfare

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Kurakhove direction on March 3 but did not advance.

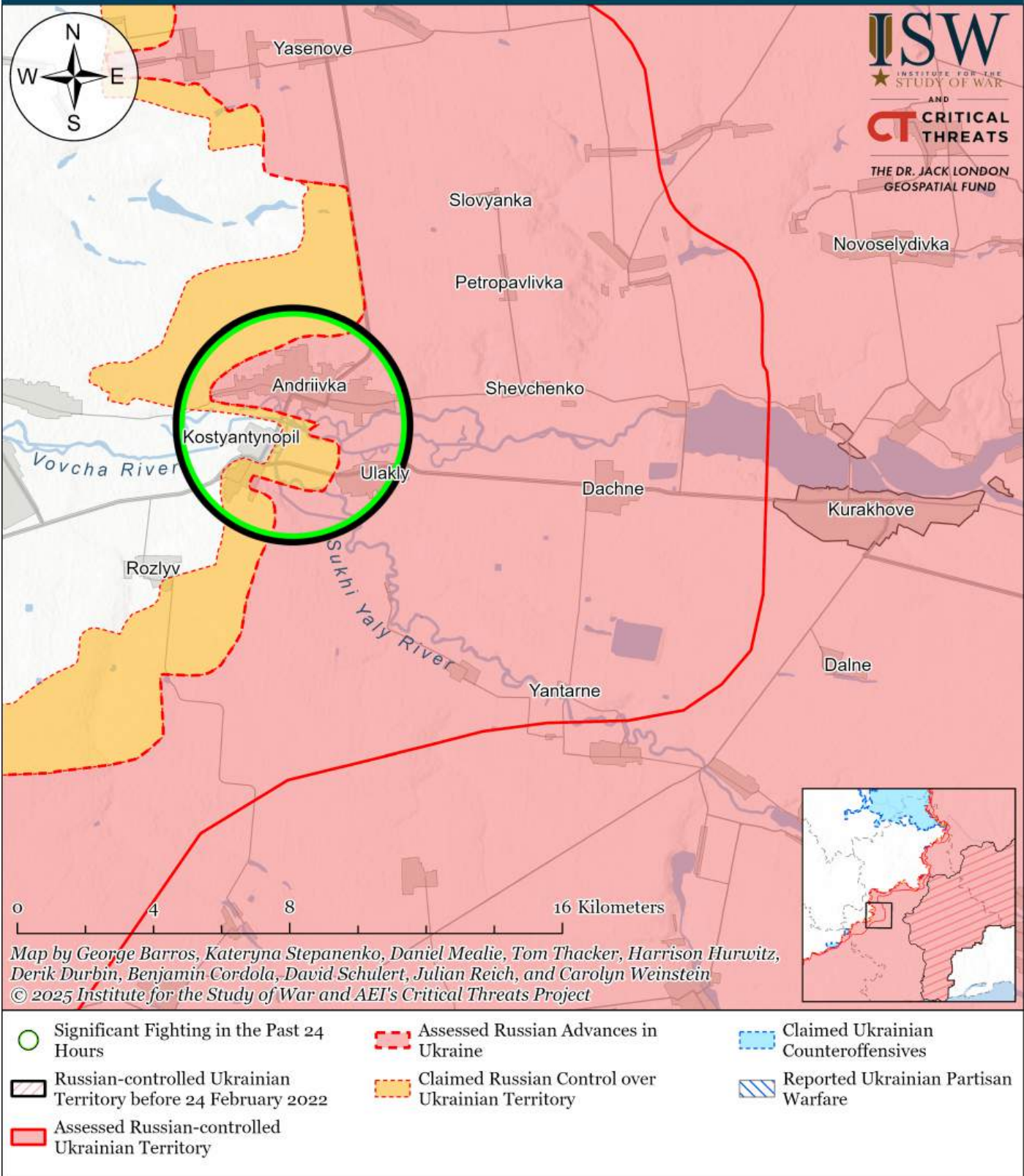
Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced north of Andriivka (west of Kurakhove).[59]

Russian forces conducted offensive operations west of Kurakhove near Andriivka, Ulakly, and Kostyantynopil on March 2 and 3.[60]

Order of Battle: Drone operators of the Russian 14th Spetsnaz Brigade (Russian General Staff's Main Directorate [GRU]) are reportedly operating near Kostyantynopil, and elements of the 57th Motorized Rifle Regiment (6th Motorized Rifle Division, 3rd Army Corps [AC]) are reportedly near Yelyzavetivka (south of Kurakhove in the Russian rear).[61]

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Kurakhove Direction

March 3, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST

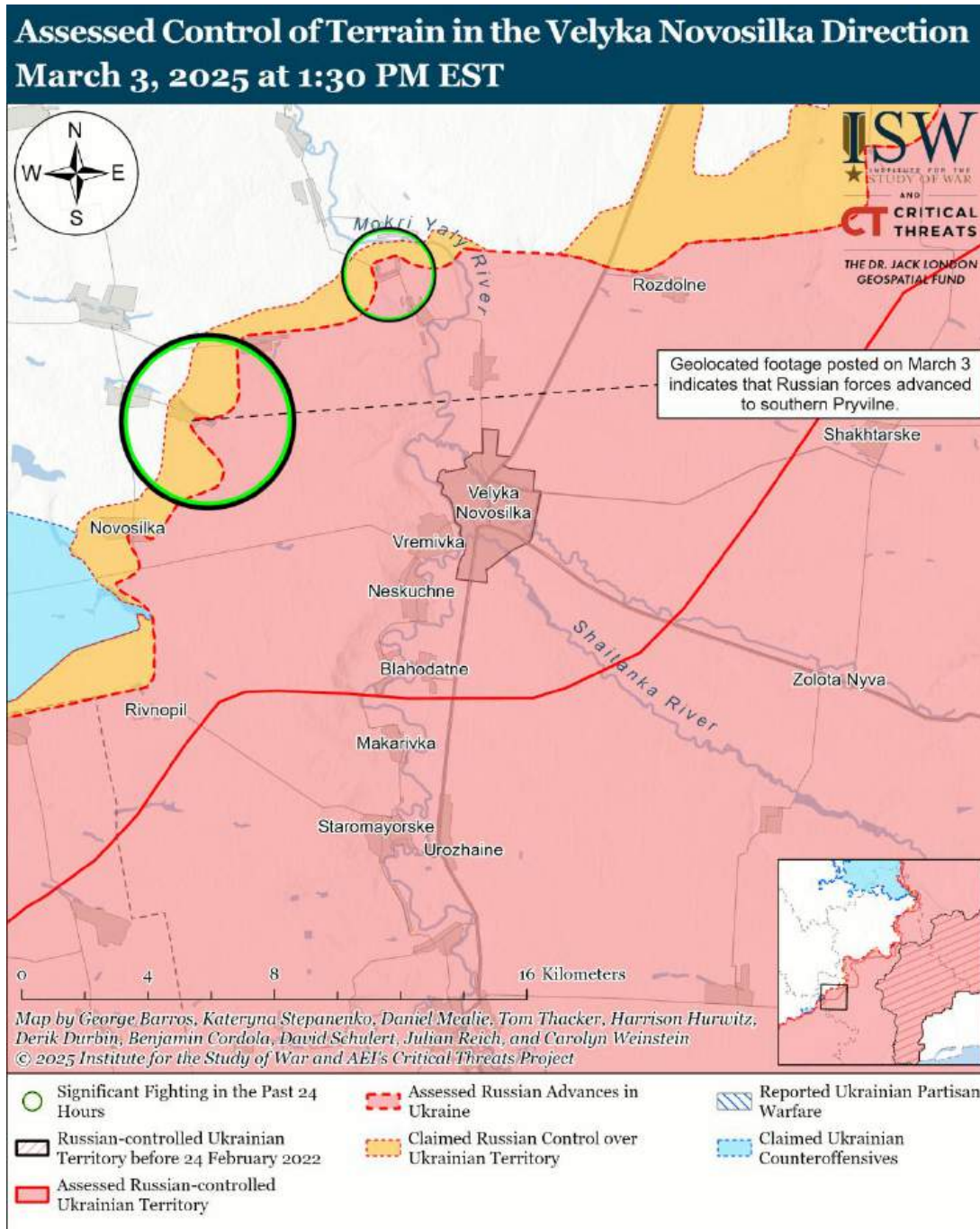


Russian forces recently advanced near Velyka Novosilka.

Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on March 3 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced in southeastern Pryvilne (northwest of Velyka Novosilka).[62]

Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces seized Pryvilne and advanced north and northwest of Burlatske (northwest of Velyka Novosilka).[63]

Russian forces conducted offensive operations north of Velyka Novosilka near Skudne and Dniproenerhiya and northwest of Velyka Novosilka near Pryvilne and Vilne Pole on March 2 and 3.[64]



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 March 3 but did not advance.

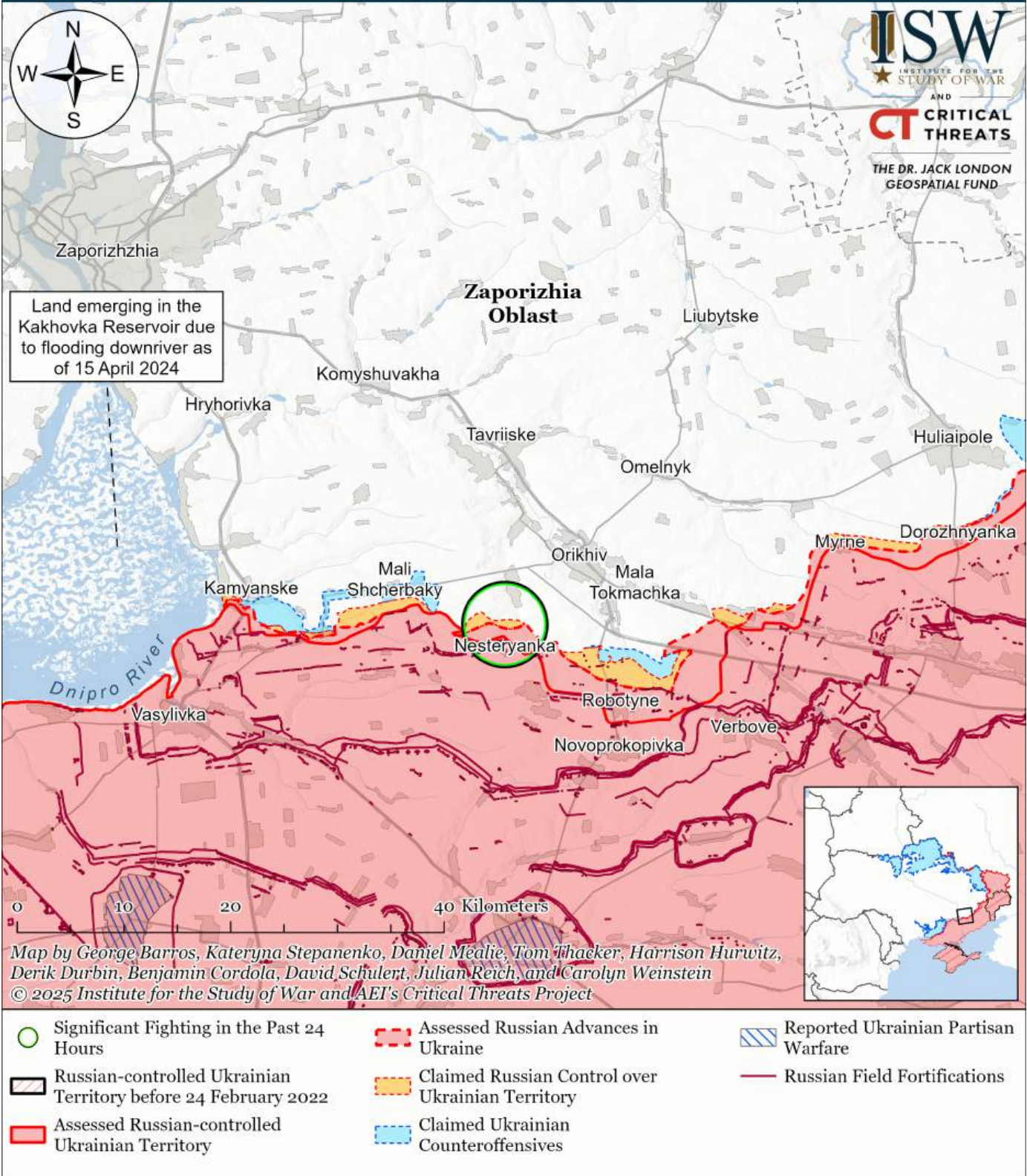
Unconfirmed claims: Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced toward Mali Shcherbaky (northwest of Robotyne).[65]

Russian forces conducted offensive operations northwest of Robotyne near Pyatykhatky and toward Stepove and Nesteryanka and north of Robotyne near Novodanylivka on March 2 and 3.[66]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 108th Airborne (VDV) Regiment (7th VDV Division) are reportedly operating in the Zaporizhia direction.[67]

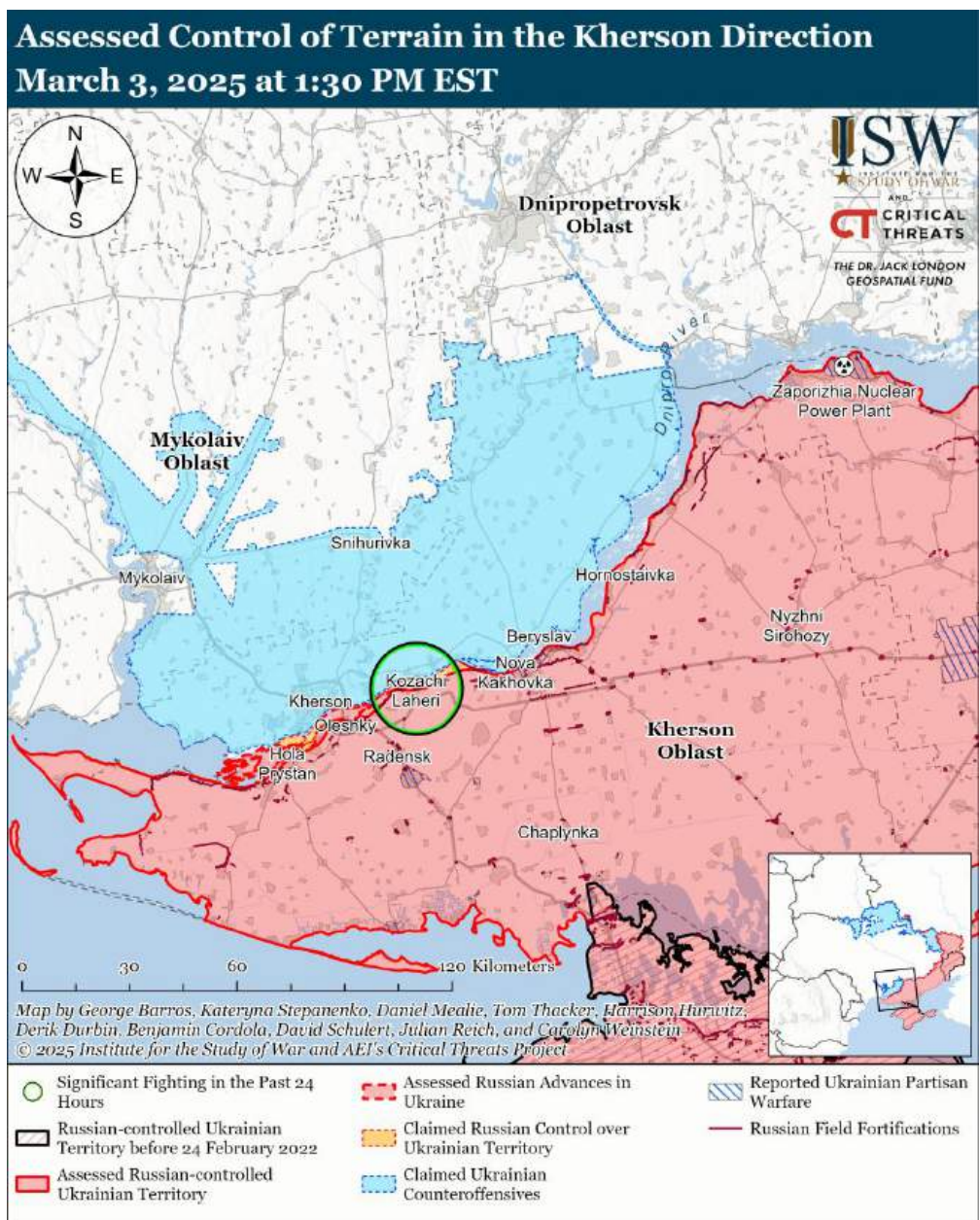
Assessed Control of Terrain in the Zaporizhia Direction

March 3, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Secretary General Rafael Mariano Grossi stated on March 3 that he discussed a recent rotation of IAEA observers to the Russian-occupied Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP) with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andriy Sybiha.[68] Grossi stated that the observers had to travel through Russian-occupied areas as an "extraordinary circumstance" due to the inability for the observers to rotate through Ukrainian-controlled territory safely. Russian state atomic energy corporation Rosatom claimed on March 1 that a group of IAEA observers recently arrived at the ZNPP as part of a delayed rotation and that the group traveled through "Russian territory" (occupied Ukrainian territory) to get to the ZNPP for the first time.[69]

Russian forces continued ground attacks in unspecified areas in the Dnipro direction in Kherson Oblast on March 2 and 3 but did not make confirmed advances.[70]



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 March 2 to 3. The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Russian forces launched 83 Shahed and decoy drones from the directions of Oryol and Kursk cities; Millerovo, Rostov Oblast; and Primorsko-Akhtarsk, Krasnodar Krai.[71] The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Ukrainian forces shot down 46 drones over Kharkiv, Poltava, Sumy, Kyiv, Chernihiv, Cherkasy, and Dnipropetrovsk oblasts and that 31 decoy drones were "lost," likely due to Ukrainian electronic warfare (EW) interference. Ukrainian officials reported that Russian drones struck Kharkiv, Sumy, Kyiv, Cherkasy, Dnipropetrovsk and Zaporizhia oblasts.[72]

Ukrainian military officials confirmed on March 3 that Russian forces conducted a strike using an Iskander-M ballistic missile with a cluster munition against a Ukrainian training ground in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast on March 1.[73]

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

The Kremlin continues to promote its "Time of Heroes" veterans' program as part of efforts to militarize the Russian government and society. The Time of Heroes program announced on March 3 that its participant Anton Shorokhov became the Russian Presidential Administration's Head Advisor for Monitoring Analysis of Social Processes.[74] The Time of Heroes announced that 27 of the 83 participants in its first class received federal- and regional-level government appointments as of March 1.[75] Yevgeny Poddubny, a Kremlin-coopted and Kremlin-awarded milblogger, stated that he is a member of the Time of Heroes Public Council and claimed that Russian President Vladimir Putin pays personal attention to this program and has a "special attitude" towards Russian veterans of the war in Ukraine.[76]

The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) announced that Russia successfully launched the Soyuz-2.1b satellite into space from Plesetsk Cosmodrome in Arkhangelsk Oblast.[77]

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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