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August 8, 2025, 10:45 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 11:30 am ET on August 8. ISW will cover subsequent reports in the August 9 Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment.

Kremlin officials are reportedly demanding that Ukraine cede to Russia strategically vital unoccupied territory in Donetsk Oblast and freeze the frontline in other areas as part of a ceasefire agreement. Unnamed sources told Bloomberg on August 8 that Russian President Vladimir Putin demanded that Ukraine cede the entirety of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, along with Crimea, as part of ceasefire negotiations.[1] Bloomberg reported that this demand would require Ukraine to withdraw troops from Ukrainian-controlled territory in Luhansk and Donetsk oblasts that Russian forces have been trying and failing to capture since February 2022, after having failed to take it during Russia's initial invasion of Ukraine in 2014. Bloomberg reported that the terms stipulate that Russian forces would also halt offensives in Kherson and Zaporizhia oblasts while Ukraine and Russia negotiate a ceasefire and subsequent peace deal. Bloomberg reported that it is not clear whether Russia is willing to give up any land that it currently occupies, and US sources indicated that Ukraine and European allies still need to approve the deal. The *Wall Street Journal* similarly reported on August 8 that European and Ukrainian officials briefed by the Trump Administration stated that it was unclear whether Putin intended to freeze the current front lines in Zaporizhia and Kherson oblasts or eventually pull out of those regions entirely.[2]

The reported settlement notably does not include any mention of a Russian withdrawal from the occupied Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP) or from positions in Kharkiv, Sumy, Dnipropetrovsk, and Mykolaiv oblasts. Two European officials told the *Wall Street Journal* that US Special Envoy for the Middle East Steve Witkoff stated that the Russian proposal included two phases: the first in which Ukraine would withdraw from Donetsk Oblast and Russia and Ukraine would freeze the frontline, followed by a second phase in which Putin and US President Donald Trump would agree on a peace plan that they would later negotiate with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky. The *Wall Street Journal* reported that a Ukrainian official who participated in a call with Trump on Wednesday said that Ukraine was not opposed to any proposals in principle, but that a ceasefire would be a prerequisite to any further steps. Trump stated at a press conference on August 8 that “there will be some swapping of territories to the betterment of both,” but did not provide further details and noted that there will be no further announcements until August 9 or a later date.[3] US President Donald Trump and Russian Presidential Aide Yuriy Ushakov announced on August 8 that Trump and Putin will meet in Alaska on August 15 and discuss options for long-term peace in Ukraine.[4]

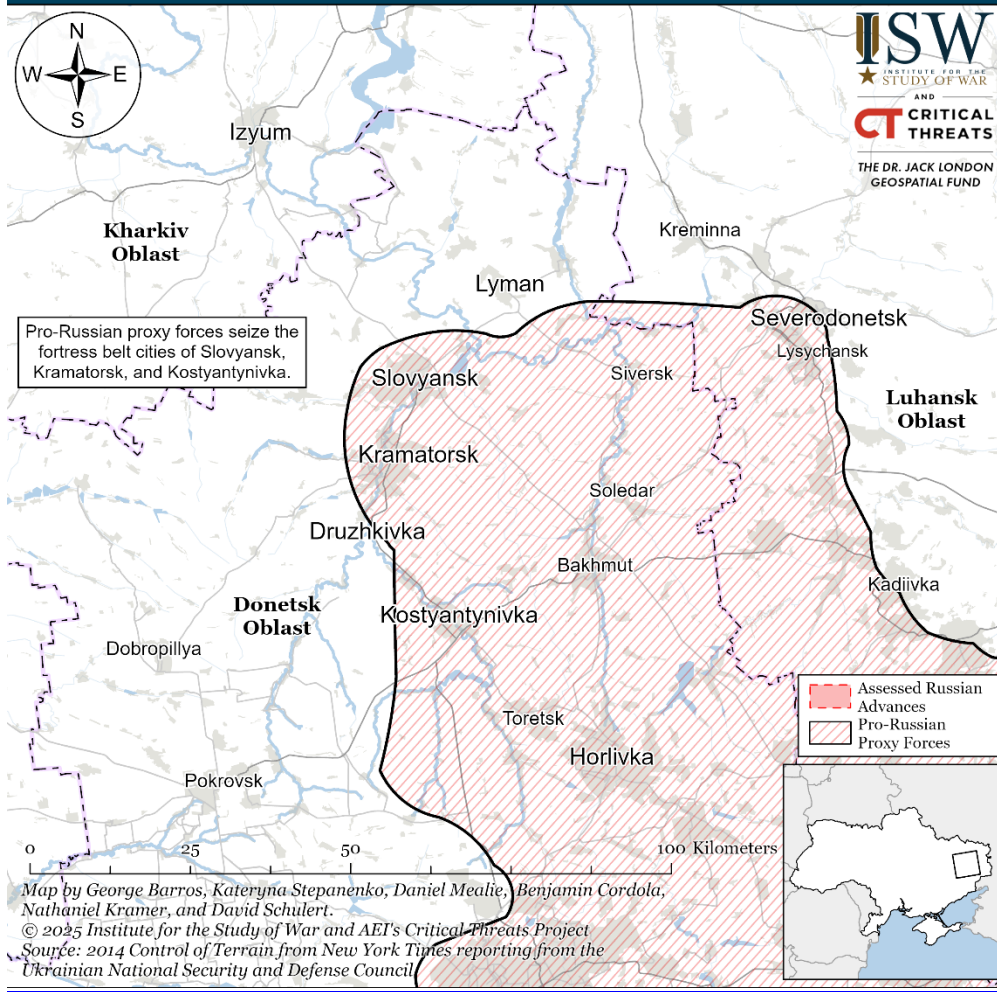
Putin may be offering this proposal in an attempt to delay the sanctions that Trump threatened to impose by August 8 if Putin did not begin to negotiate with Ukraine to end the war.[5] Putin’s proposal demands the surrender of Ukrainian-held territory before a ceasefire, a sequence at odds with Trump’s and Zelensky’s stipulation that a ceasefire must precede any peace negotiations.[6] US Secretary of State Marco Rubio stated on August 6 that a ceasefire is an important part of the negotiation process because it is difficult to negotiate a permanent peace deal while under fire — reiterating Trump’s preferred timeline of establishing a ceasefire in Ukraine before starting formal peace negotiations to end the war.[7] The *Wall Street Journal* noted that European and Ukrainian officials worry that Putin is simply using the offer as a ploy to avoid new US sanctions while continuing the war.[8] Putin is likely deliberately offering a proposal designed to be unacceptable to Ukraine in order to delay sanctions as well as meaningful ceasefire negotiations and place the blame for the failure of negotiations on Ukraine.

The surrender of the rest of Donetsk Oblast as the prerequisite of a ceasefire with no commitment to a final peace settlement ending the war would position Russian forces extremely well to renew their attacks on much more favorable terms, having avoided a long and bloody struggle for the ground. Conceding such a demand would force Ukraine to abandon its "fortress belt," the main fortified defensive line in Donetsk Oblast since 2014 — with no guarantee that fighting will not resume. Ukraine’s fortress belt has served as a major obstacle to the Kremlin’s territorial ambitions in Ukraine over the last 11 years. The fortress belt is made up of four large cities and several towns and settlements that run north to south along the H-20 Kostyantynivka-Slovyansk highway, with a total pre-war population of over 380,537 people.[9] The line is 50 kilometers long (roughly 31 miles, about the distance between Washington, D.C. and Baltimore, Maryland). Slovyansk and Kramatorsk form the northern half of the fortress belt and serve as significant logistics hubs for Ukrainian forces defending in Donetsk Oblast. Kramatorsk currently serves as Donetsk Oblast’s provisional administrative center (because Russian forces occupy the regional center of Donetsk City) and is a major industrial city.[10] Druzhkivka, Oleksiyevo-Druzhkivka, and Kostyantynivka serve as the southern half of the fortress belt. Ukrainian forces first began building up defensive positions in and around these cities after retaking them from

pro-Russian proxy forces who attacked and seized Slovyansk, Kramatorsk, Druzhkivka, and Kostyantynivka in April 2014.[11] Ukrainian forces have maintained control of these cities since July 2014.[12] Ukraine has spent the last 11 years pouring time, money, and effort into reinforcing the fortress belt and establishing significant defense industrial and defensive infrastructure in and around these cities.

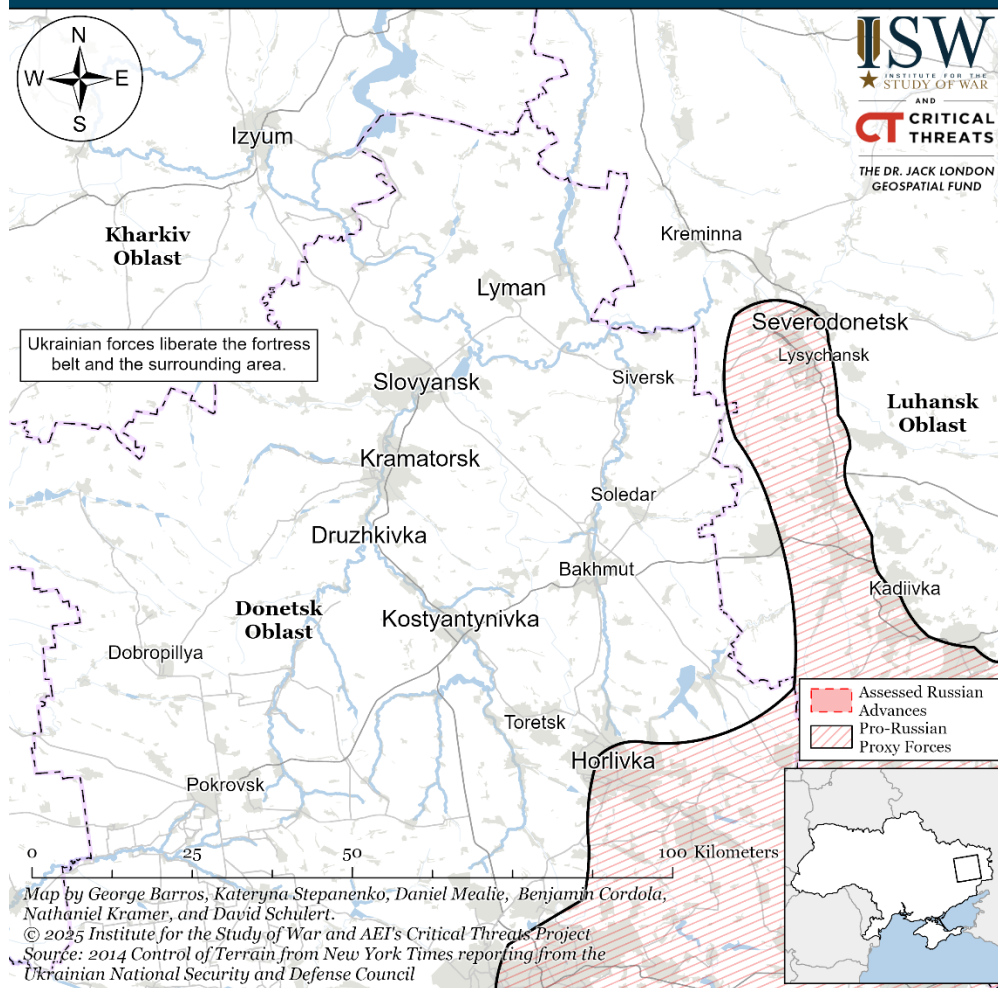
Russian Attempts to Seize Ukraine's Fortress Belt

July 1, 2014



Russian Attempts to Seize Ukraine's Fortress Belt

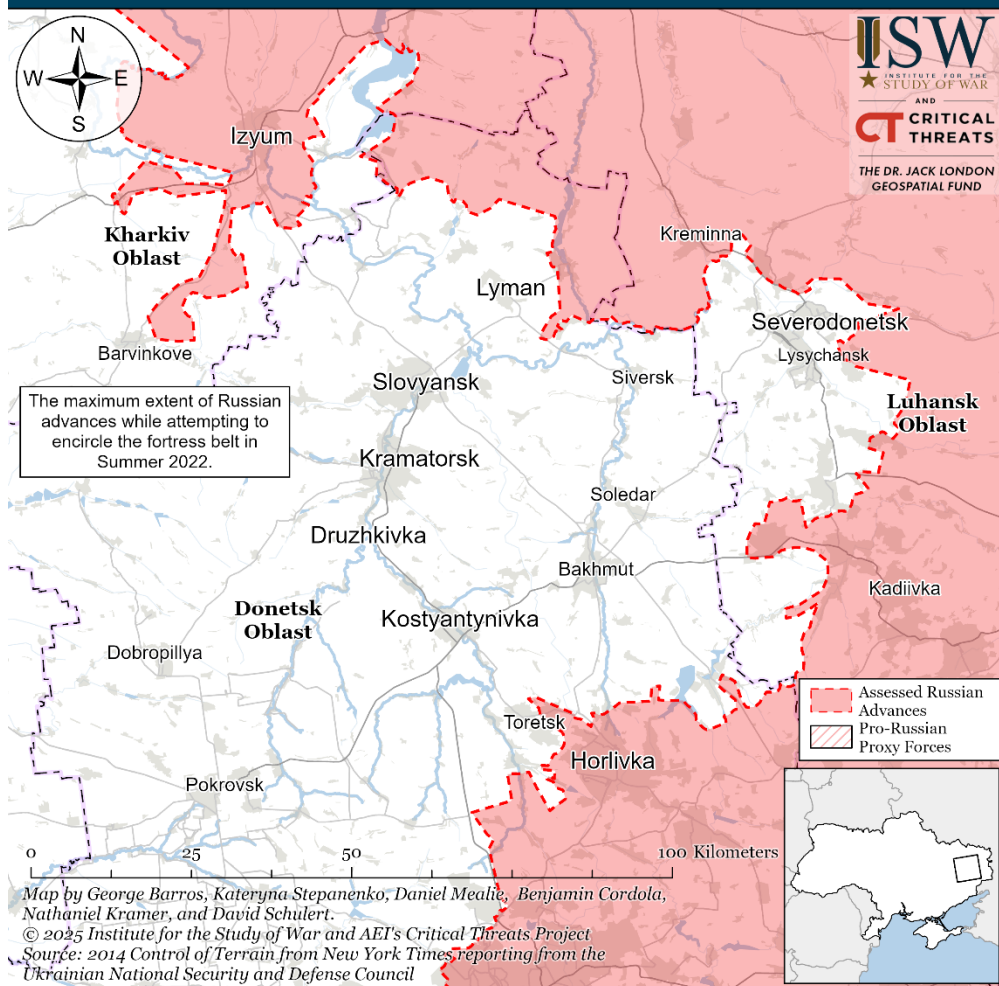
July 21, 2014



Russia's failure to seize Slovyansk in 2022 and ongoing struggles to envelop the fortress belt underscore the success of Ukraine's long-term efforts to reinforce the fortress belt cities. Russian forces attempted to attack the fortress belt from Izyum (northwest of Slovyansk) after advancing into eastern Kharkiv Oblast following the failure of Russian forces to make any significant gains immediately east and west of the fortress belt in March and April 2022.[13] ISW noted in early April 2022 that Russia's ability to seize the entirety of Luhansk and Donetsk oblasts hinged on Russia's ability to seize Slovyansk.[14] Russian forces failed to seize Slovyansk and the rest of the fortress belt in Summer 2022, however, and a Ukrainian counteroffensive drove Russian forces out of Kharkiv Oblast and away from Slovyansk in Fall 2022.[15] Russian forces refocused their efforts on the seizure of Bakhmut in Spring 2023, but then culminated and deprioritized advances toward the fortress belt. Russian forces re-intensified assaults on the fortress belt from the southwest near Toretsk starting in Summer 2024.[16]

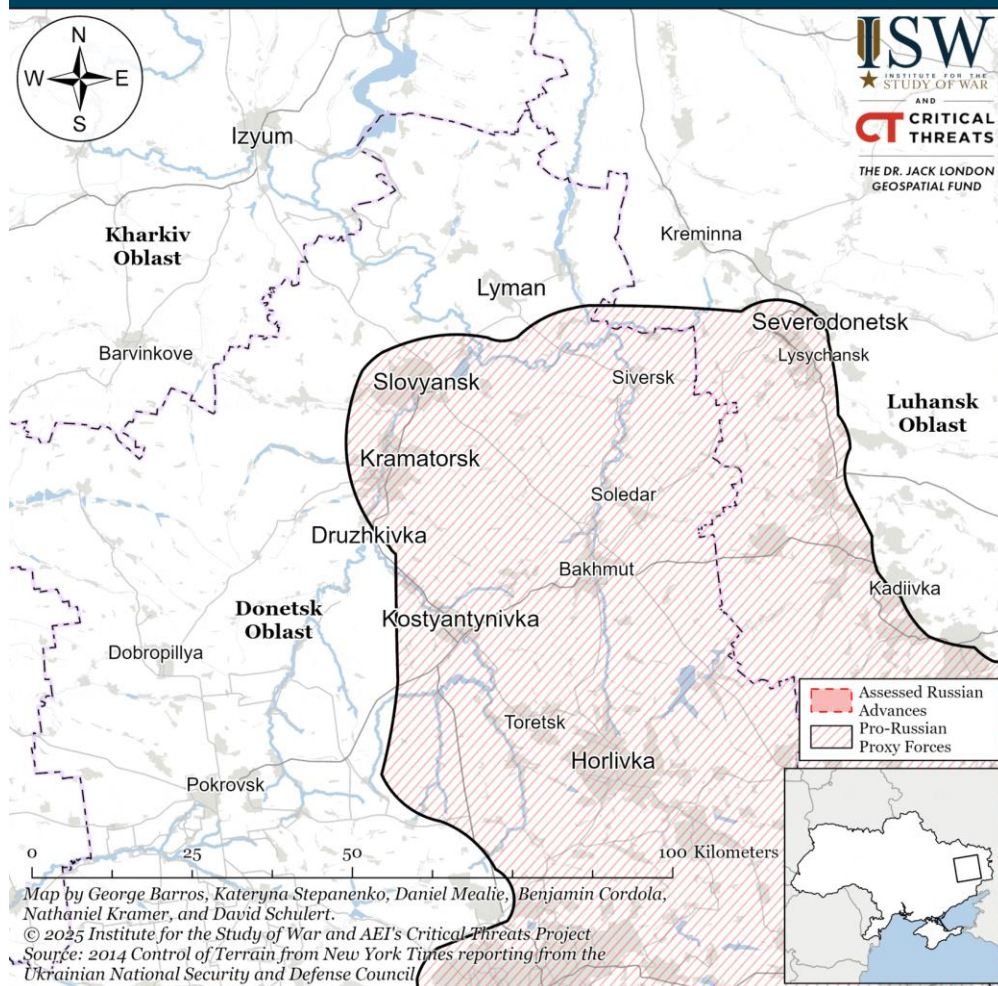
Russian Attempts to Seize Ukraine's Fortress Belt

May 12, 2022



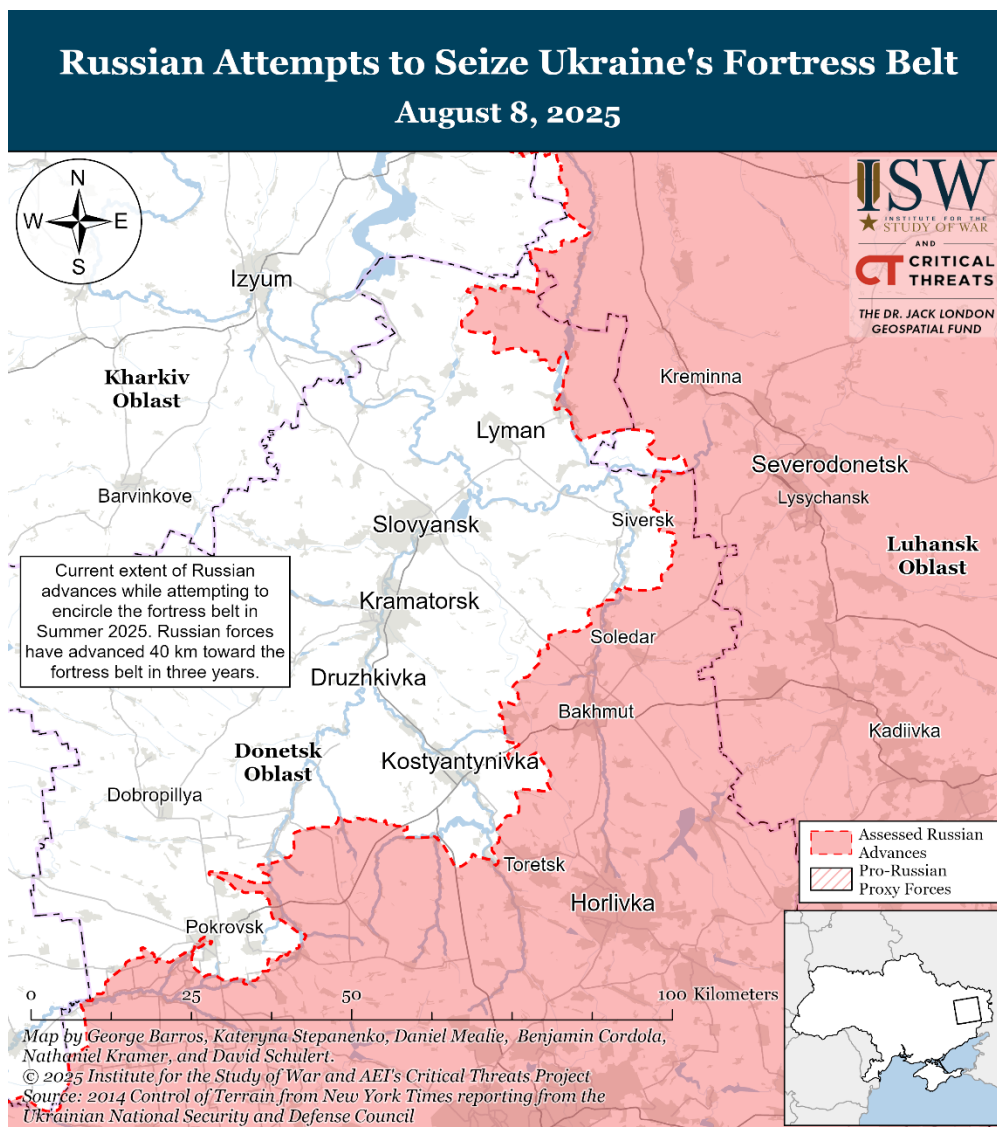
Russian Attempts to Seize Ukraine's Fortress Belt Over the Last 11 Years

July 1, 2014



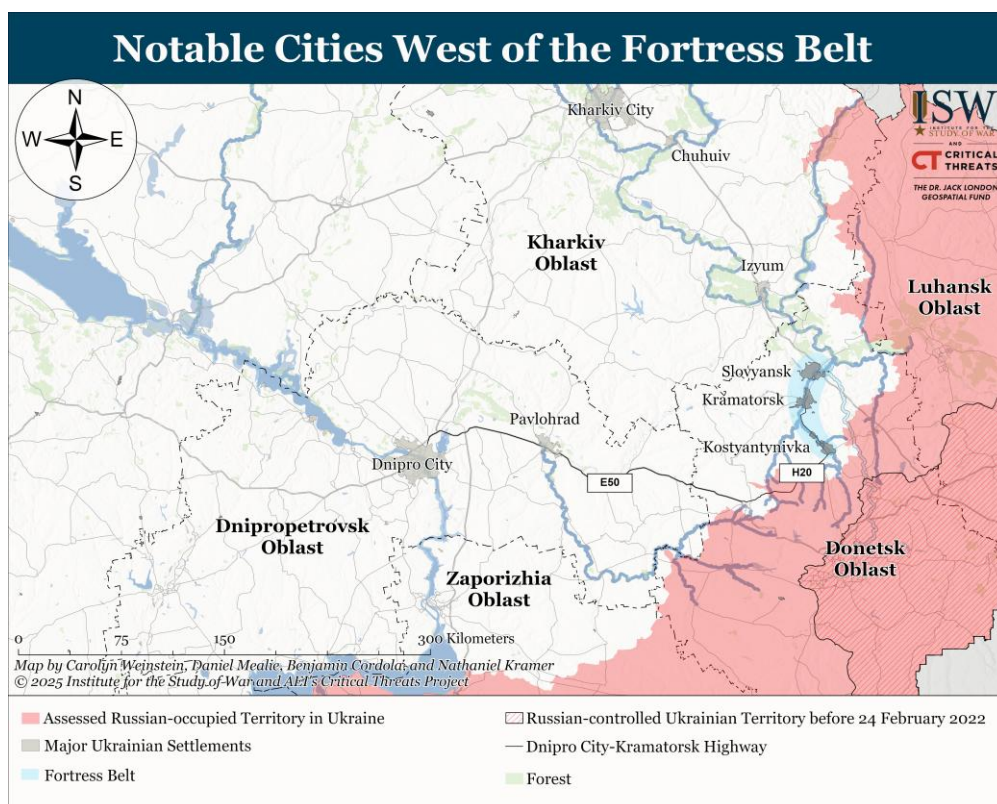
Russian forces are currently still attempting to envelop the fortress belt from the southwest and are engaged in an effort to seize it that would likely take several years to complete. The Russian military command appeared to increase its efforts in the Toretsk and eastern Pokrovsk directions by redeploying elements of the 20th Motorized Rifle Division and the 150th Motorized Rifle Division (8th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Southern Military District [SMD]) from the Kurakhove direction to the area in February 2025.[17] Russian forces also redeployed elements of the Russian 39th Motorized Rifle Brigade (68th Army Corps [AC], Eastern Military District [EMD]) from the Kurakhove direction to near Malynivka (northeast of Pokrovsk) in early May 2025, indicating a re-intensification of the Russian effort to expand Russian forces' salient northeast of Pokrovsk and southwest of the fortress belt.[18] Russian advances northeast of Pokrovsk in early July 2025 indicate that Russian forces may be attempting to advance further toward Dobropillya as part of a mutually reinforcing effort to envelop Pokrovsk and bypass Ukraine's fortress belt from the west in the coming months after failing to advance from Chasiv Yar or north of the Kleban Byk Reservoir (northwest of Toretsk).[19]

Russian forces failed to conduct a wide envelopment of Ukraine's fortress belt in 2022, and such an operation three and a half years into the war would likely be a multi-year effort with significant personnel and materiel losses.[20] The Russian military command has spent the last 18 months developing and disseminating a doctrinal method for advances throughout the theater that aims to leverage creeping partial envelopments of frontline towns and settlements to force Ukrainian withdrawals, as demonstrated in its seizure of Avdiivka, Vuhledar, Kurakhove, and Velyka Novosilka and ongoing efforts near Kupyansk and Pokrovsk.[21] The Russian military command, however, has yet to conduct a successful operational-level envelopment of a significant Ukrainian defensive line and will likely be unable to leverage this tactic to seize Slovyansk, Kramatorsk, or Druzhkivka, as it would require Russian forces to first seize other fortress belt cities first via frontal assault.[22] **Putin's reported proposal reportedly demands that Ukraine concede this critical defensive position, which Russian forces currently have no means of rapidly enveloping or penetrating, apparently in exchange for nothing.**



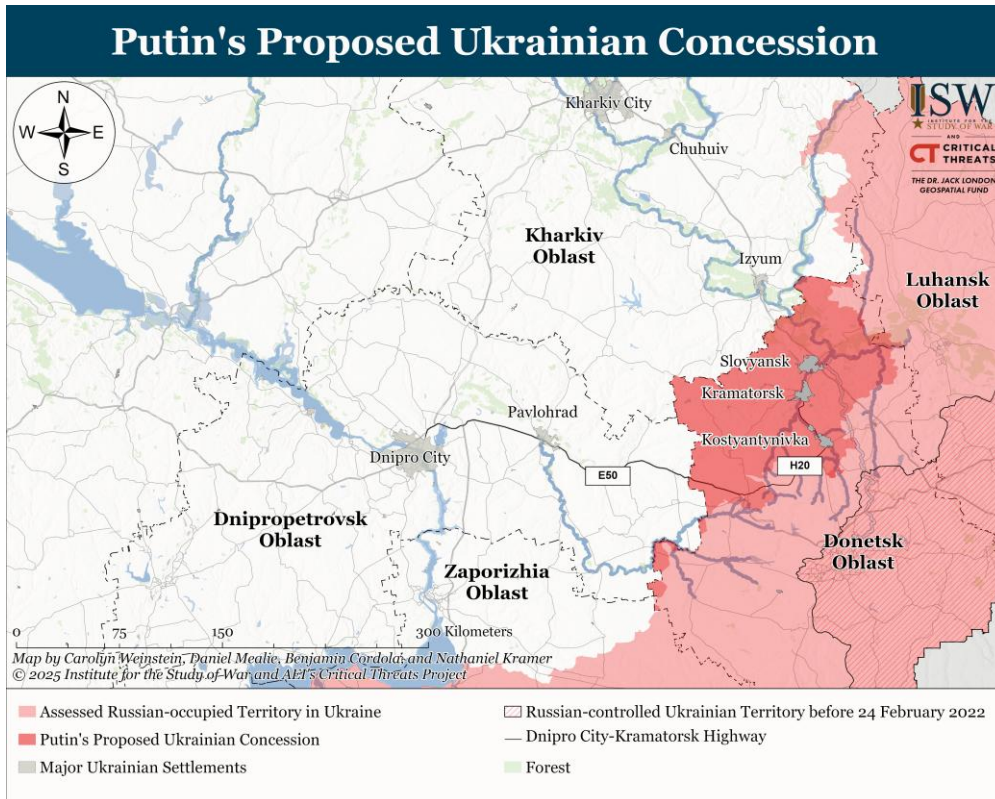
Ceding Ukrainian-held parts of Donetsk Oblast will place Russian forces on the borders of Donetsk Oblast, a position that is significantly less defensible than the current line.

Allowing Russian forces to take up positions along the Donetsk Oblast border would require Ukrainian forces to urgently build up massive defensive fortifications along the Kharkiv and Dnipropetrovsk oblast border areas, whose terrain is poorly suited to act as a defensive line. There are few settlements in the sparsely populated Donetsk Oblast border area, meaning that Ukraine would require enormous, urgent investment from its Western allies to establish and properly fortify a defensive line and supporting infrastructure in this area. Potential Ukrainian defensive lines in this area would run through open fields, and natural obstacles such as the Oskil and Siverskyi Donets rivers are too far east to serve as defensive positions for Ukrainian forces defending the Donetsk Oblast border. A potential ceasefire along the Donetsk Oblast border would also require large-scale investment in infrastructure compatible with a large-scale, long-term ceasefire monitoring mission.



Russian positions along the Donetsk-Kharkiv and Donetsk-Dnipropetrovsk Oblast border areas would provide a more advantageous launching point for a future Russian offensive into nearby areas of Kharkiv or Dnipropetrovsk oblasts. ISW continues to assess that Russian forces will almost certainly violate any future ceasefire or peace agreement and renew military aggression against Ukraine in the future unless a peace agreement includes robust monitoring mechanisms and security guarantees for Ukraine.[23] Forcing Ukraine to concede the remainder of western Donetsk Oblast to Russia would bring Russian forces 82 kilometers further west in Ukraine (roughly 51 miles, or about the distance from downtown Manhattan, New York to Trenton, New Jersey). Conceding Lyman, Donetsk Oblast to Russian occupation would set favorable conditions for the Russians to attack Ukrainian positions in

Kharkiv Oblast on the east bank of the Oskil River in renewed fighting.[24] Russian forces could then attempt to invert their 2022 efforts and leverage Slovyansk and further advances along the E-40 Kharkiv City-Novoshakhtinsk highway to attack Izyum, Kharkiv Oblast, from the south. Russian forces would be roughly 20 kilometers (12.4 miles, about the distance between Washington D.C. and Gaithersburg, Maryland) from Izyum, and only a handful of settlements and small water features would stand in their way of seizing the town. Russian forces leveraged the seizure of Izyum and Chuhuiv (northwest of Izyum) to threaten Kharkiv City in 2022, and Russian forces would likely leverage positions along the Donetsk-Kharkiv oblast border and future advances from Kupyansk to similarly threaten Kharkiv City in renewed fighting.



Russian forces also hold limited positions along the Dnipropetrovsk Oblast border southwest of Pokrovsk, but ceding the remainder of Donetsk Oblast would allow Russian forces to avoid completing their ongoing costly efforts to envelop Pokrovsk and Myrnohrad. Russian forces would also avoid having to fight through Ukraine's westernmost Dobropillya-Bilozerske-Novodonetske-Oleksandrivka defensive line, which also runs north to south, similar to the fortress belt. The Dobropillya line is Ukraine's last north-to-south defensive line, comprised of several towns and cities before the Dnipro City line in central Dnipropetrovsk Oblast. Pavlohrad (northeast of Dnipro City) would likely serve as Ukraine's next defensive hub if Ukraine is forced to concede the remainder of Donetsk Oblast. Pavlohrad is a lone settlement roughly 70 kilometers from the Donetsk-Dnipropetrovsk oblast border area (roughly the distance between Washington, D.C. and Leesburg, Virginia). Most significant water features along the Donetsk-Dnipropetrovsk Oblast border also flow east to west, making them relatively ineffective defensive positions against Russian advances from the

east. Conceding the remains of Donetsk Oblast would thus also provide Russian forces more advantageous positions from which to attack into Dnipropetrovsk Oblast.

Putin's reported proposal once again underscores that he maintains his uncompromising demands for Ukraine's capitulation and remains disinterested in good-faith negotiations. Putin stated on August 1 that the conditions laid out in his June 2024 speech “certainly” remain the same.[25] Putin demanded in June 2024 that any peace agreement must address the “root causes” of the war and provide for Ukraine's demilitarization, denazification, and alliance neutrality. Putin effectively demanded the removal of the current legitimate Ukrainian government and the establishment of a pro-Russian proxy government in Kyiv.[26] Putin has since consistently demanded that Ukraine concede all of Donbas and “Novorossiia,” referring to occupied and non-occupied parts of Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson, and Zaporizhia oblasts as a prerequisite for any sort of negotiations with Ukraine.[27] Kremlin officials often invoke the term “Novorossiia” — an amorphous invented region in Ukraine — as an “integral” part of Russia in order to lay claims to territory beyond the four partially occupied oblasts and include all of southern and eastern Ukraine, including Dnipropetrovsk, Mykolaiv, and Odesa Oblasts.[28] Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov previously stated that there are “no secrets” about Russia’s demands and reiterated the importance of addressing the “root causes” of the war in a future peace agreement.[29] Putin stated on August 7, following his meeting with Witkoff, that, while not opposed to meeting with Zelensky, certain conditions must be “created” before Putin will meet with Zelensky, and that these conditions are still far away.[30] Putin’s efforts to posture himself as amenable to US peace proposals and meaningful negotiations while continuing to make the same demands and refusing to make any concessions are attempts to obfuscate the fact that Putin himself remains uninterested in ending his war on terms short of full victory. Putin and other Kremlin officials have also intentionally cultivated Russian society’s commitment to Putin’s stated war aims and have not set conditions to take any off-ramps to accept a peace settlement that falls short — in contradiction with Putin’s claims that he is interested in peace.[31]

The Kremlin does not appear to be setting the domestic information conditions necessary for the Russian people to accept a settlement short of full victory in Ukraine. Several Russian federal newswires amplified Bloomberg’s reporting of the proposal with no additional commentary, but contextualized Putin's proposal by repeating Putin’s 2024 demand that Russia gain control of Luhansk, Zaporizhia, Donetsk, and Kherson oblasts as a precondition to any ceasefire.[32] The Russian federal newswires’ messaging indicates that the Kremlin's domestic narrative about the resolution of the war has not changed. Other Russian state media outlets reported limited details of the ceasefire proposal and heavily emphasized that the deal may change before a final settlement.[33] A Russian outlet added an observation that “only Putin would dictate the terms of peace” when discussing the ceasefire proposal, likely to condition the Russian domestic audience to believe that Russia is the sole decider of the war’s outcome.[34] Another Russian outlet simply stated that the proposal may freeze the frontline in Ukraine and did not discuss the possibility of Russia halting its offensives in Kherson and Zaporizhia oblasts or Ukraine ceding Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts to Russia.[35] State Duma Defense Committee First Deputy Chairperson Alexei Zhuravlev stated that Putin is “capable of outplaying any of the currently living politicians,” insinuating that Putin is not entering these negotiations in good faith and is superior to Trump.[36] A Russian US political expert assessed that Putin and Trump will only be able to reach a temporary agreement and noted that the

agreement will only concern the Trump administration.[37] Russian public officials and unofficial messaging does not communicate any changes in the ongoing Kremlin line, insinuating that Putin is not preparing for any meaningful concessions. **The lack of change in public Kremlin messaging, in combination with ongoing speculation that Putin is looking to “outplay” the West, signifies that Putin himself likely does not see his reported proposal as a concession and likely retains territorial aspirations beyond Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts.**

Ongoing Russian long-range drone strikes against major Ukrainian cities also demonstrate the Kremlin’s lack of interest in good-faith negotiations to end Russia’s war against Ukraine. The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Russia launched four jet-powered drones and 104 Shahed-type strike and decoy drones from the directions of Shatalovo, Smolensk Oblast; Kursk City; Bryansk City; Primorsko-Akhtarsk, Krasnodar Krai; and occupied Cape Chauda, Crimea, on the night of August 7 to 8.[38] The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Ukrainian forces downed three jet-powered drones and 79 strike and decoy drones and that 26 Russian drones struck ten unspecified locations in Ukraine. Ukrainian officials reported that Russian drone and missile strikes damaged civilian and industrial infrastructure in Saltyvskiy Raion, Kharkiv City and Kharkiv Oblast; residential areas in Bucha Raion, Kyiv Oblast; and civilian infrastructure in Sumy and Odesa oblasts.[39]

A Russian milblogger, appearing to cite statistics from the Ukrainian Air Force, claimed that Russian forces launched over 6,000 drones at Ukrainian cities during July 2025, a substantial increase from roughly 4,500 reported in June 2025.[40] The milblogger added that Russian forces reportedly increased their use of Geran-3 jet-powered drones, the Russian analogue to the Iranian Shahed-238. Ukrainian Air Force statistics indicate that Russian forces launched 728 drones on July 9, more than in any previous 24-hour period since February 2022.[41]

Putin is likely attempting to shore up support abroad to portray strength and confidence ahead of the August 15 meeting with Trump. Putin called People’s Republic of China (PRC) President Xi Jinping on August 8 to discuss the results of Putin’s August 6 meeting with US Middle East Steve Witkoff, Russia-China bilateral relations, and Putin’s upcoming visit to the PRC in September 2025.[42] Xi reiterated that China will uphold its consistent position and persist in promoting peace and dialogue.[43] Putin called Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to discuss trade, economic and investment cooperation, and Witkoff’s meeting with Putin amidst threats of US tariffs in response to India’s continued purchases of Russian oil.[44] Putin called South African President Cyril Ramaphosa, Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, and Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev to discuss his meeting with Witkoff.[45] Putin also called Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko to discuss the contents of the American peace proposal and the results of Putin’s meeting with Witkoff.[46] Putin is likely attempting to present himself as a powerful opponent with support abroad as he continues to reject US and Ukrainian negotiation proposals. Putin’s posturing suggests that he likely remains confident in his ability to secure his war aims in Ukraine via negotiations or military operations.

Ukraine’s European allies continue to provide monetary aid to Ukraine. The European Council of the European Union (EU) announced on August 8 that it approved a fourth tranche of

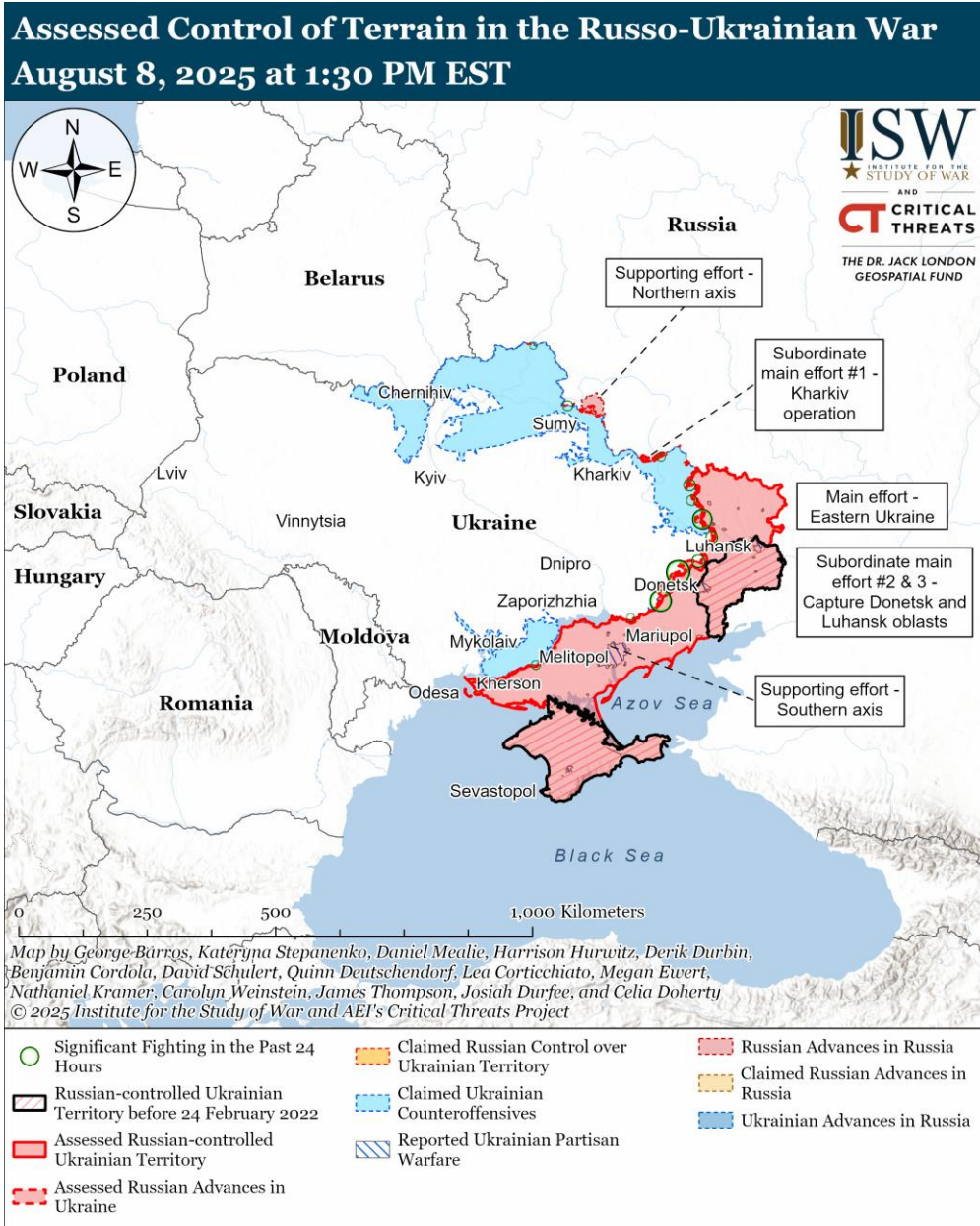
financial aid to Ukraine worth over 3.2 billion euros (roughly \$3.7 billion) as part of the EU's Ukraine Facility program.[47]

Ukrainian drone manufacturers developed a new drone capable of intercepting Russian Shahed-type drones. Co-owner of Ukrainian drone manufacturer Tenebris, Kyrylo Andrusyak, told Ukrainian newswire *Ukrinform* on August 7 that Tenebris developed a new "Bayonet" interceptor drone specifically designed to counter Russian Shahed and Geran drones.[48] The "Bayonet" drone can reportedly match Shahed speeds of up to 250 kilometers per hour, fly at an altitude of up to five kilometers, has a range of 40 kilometers, and has automatic takeoff and return capabilities and visual target locks that plot the optimal interception course without relying on GPS or radio communication.[49] The manufacturers are also finalizing a full autonomous guidance system and network that would allow one drone operator to control 15 interceptors from three stations.

Key Takeaways:

- **Kremlin officials are reportedly demanding that Ukraine cede to Russia strategically vital unoccupied territory in Donetsk Oblast and freeze the frontline in other areas as part of a ceasefire agreement.**
- **The surrender of the rest of Donetsk Oblast as the prerequisite of a ceasefire with no commitment to a final peace settlement ending the war would position Russian forces extremely well to renew their attacks on much more favorable terms, having avoided a long and bloody struggle for the ground. Conceding such a demand would force Ukraine to abandon its "fortress belt," the main fortified defensive line in Donetsk Oblast since 2014 — with no guarantee that fighting will not resume.**
- **Russia's failure to seize Slovyansk in 2022 and ongoing struggles to envelop the fortress belt underscore the success of Ukraine's long-term efforts to reinforce the fortress belt cities.**
- **Russian forces are currently still attempting to envelop the fortress belt from the southwest and are engaged in an effort to seize it that would likely take several years to complete.**
- **Ceding Ukrainian-held parts of Donetsk Oblast will place Russian forces on the borders of Donetsk Oblast, a position that is significantly less defensible than the current line.**
- **Russian positions along the Donetsk-Kharkiv and Donetsk-Dnipropetrovsk Oblast border areas would provide a more advantageous launching point for a future Russian offensive into nearby areas of Kharkiv or Dnipropetrovsk oblasts. ISW continues to assess that Russian forces will almost certainly violate any future ceasefire or peace agreement and renew military aggression against Ukraine in the future unless a peace agreement includes robust monitoring mechanisms and security guarantees for Ukraine.**

- **Putin's reported proposal once again underscores that he maintains his uncompromising demands for Ukraine's capitulation and remains disinterested in good-faith negotiations.**
- **The Kremlin does not appear to be setting the domestic information conditions necessary for the Russian people to accept a settlement short of full victory in Ukraine.**
- **Ukrainian forces advanced near Kupyansk and Toretsk. Russian forces advanced near Lyman, Toretsk, and Pokrovsk.**



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 Supporting Effort – Northern Axis
- 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, the claimed territory of Russia’s proxies in Donbas, and possibly advance into Dnipropetrovsk Oblast
- Russian Supporting Effort – Southern Axis
- Russian Air, Missile, and Drone Campaign
- Significant Activity in Belarus

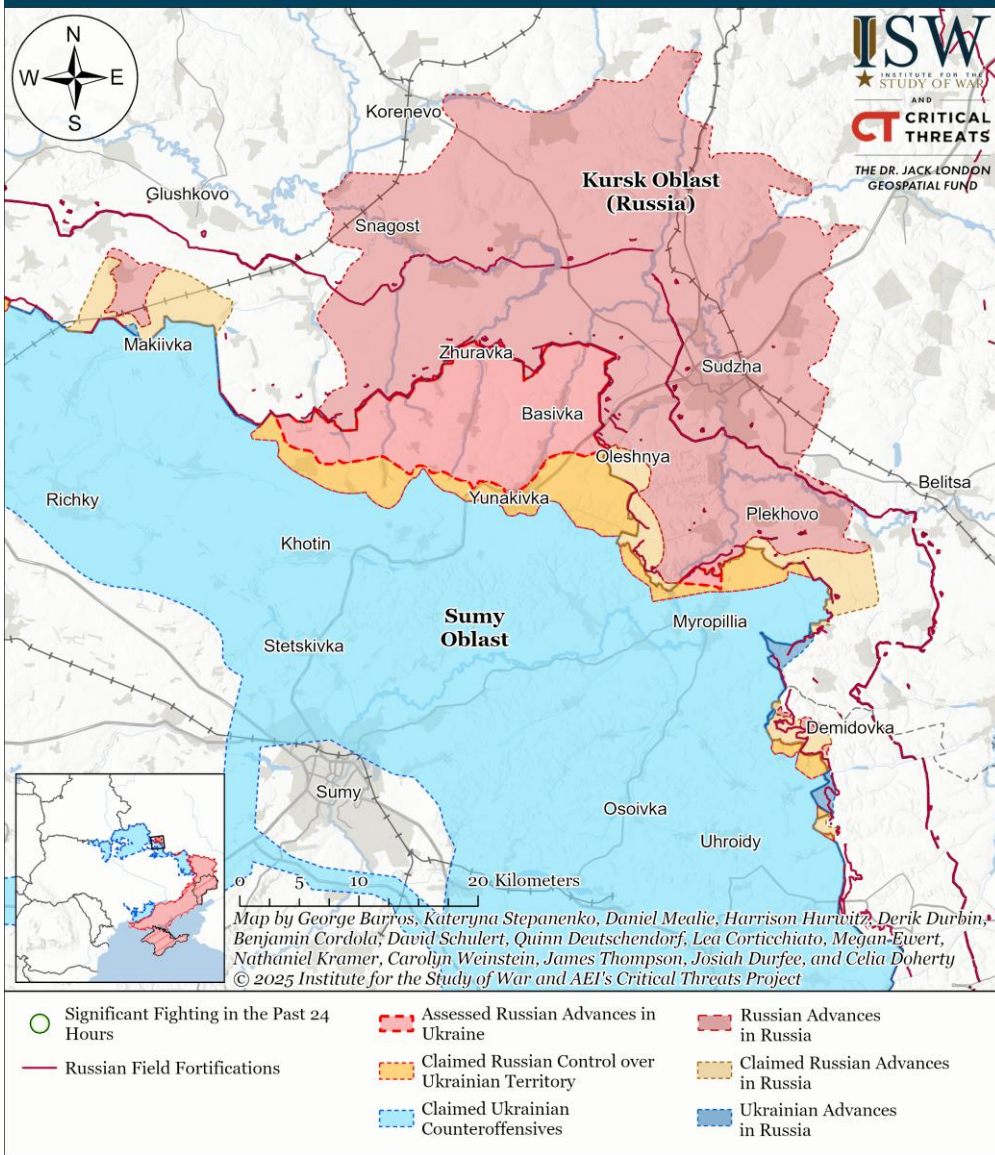
Ukrainian Operations in the Russian Federation

Russian forces continued offensive operations in unspecified areas of Kursk Oblast on August 7 and 8 but did not advance.[50]

Russian Supporting Effort – Northern Axis (Russian objective: Create defensible buffer zones in northern Ukraine along the international border and approach to within tube artillery range of Sumy City)

Fighting continued in northern Sumy Oblast on August 8.

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Sumy Direction August 8, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced west of Kindrativka and south of Andriivka (both north of Sumy City).[51]

Russian milbloggers claimed that Ukrainian forces are counterattacking north of Sumy City near Oleksiivka, Kindrativka, and Andriivka and northeast of Sumy City near Varachyne and Sadky.[52] Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces attacked in southern Yunakivka (northeast of Sumy City).[53] A Russian milblogger reportedly affiliated with the Russian Northern Grouping of Forces claimed that elements of the Russian 155th Naval Infantry Brigade (Pacific Fleet) and 30th Motorized Rifle Regiment (72nd Motorized Rifle Division, 44th Army Corps [AC], Leningrad Military District [LMD]) failed to prevent a Ukrainian sabotage and reconnaissance group from advancing into

Oleksiiivka.[54] The milblogger attributed the failure to Russian forces lacking the necessary manpower to sufficiently protect the frontline.

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 76th Airborne (VDV) Division, including its 234th VDV Regiment, are reportedly attacking near Yunakivka.[55] Drone operators of the Russian 76th VDV Division and the Rubikon Center for Advanced Unmanned Technologies reportedly struck Ukrainian positions near Mykilske (northeast of Sumy City).[56] Artillery elements of the Russian 9th Motorized Rifle Regiment (18th Motorized Rifle Division, 11th AC, LMD) are reportedly shelling Ukrainian positions in Novokostyantynivka (north of Sumy City).[57] Elements of the 177th Naval Infantry Regiment (Caspian Flotilla), 83rd VDV Brigade, 56th VDV Regiment (7th VDV Division), and 810th Naval Infantry Brigade (Black Sea Fleet) are reportedly operating in northern Sumy Oblast.[58] Drone operators of the Russian 155th Naval Infantry Brigade and elements of the Smuglyanka Detachment and Chechen Akhmat Spetsnaz are reportedly operating in the Sumy direction.[59]

Russian Main Effort – Eastern Ukraine

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

Russian forces continued offensive operations in northern Kharkiv Oblast on August 8 but did not advance.

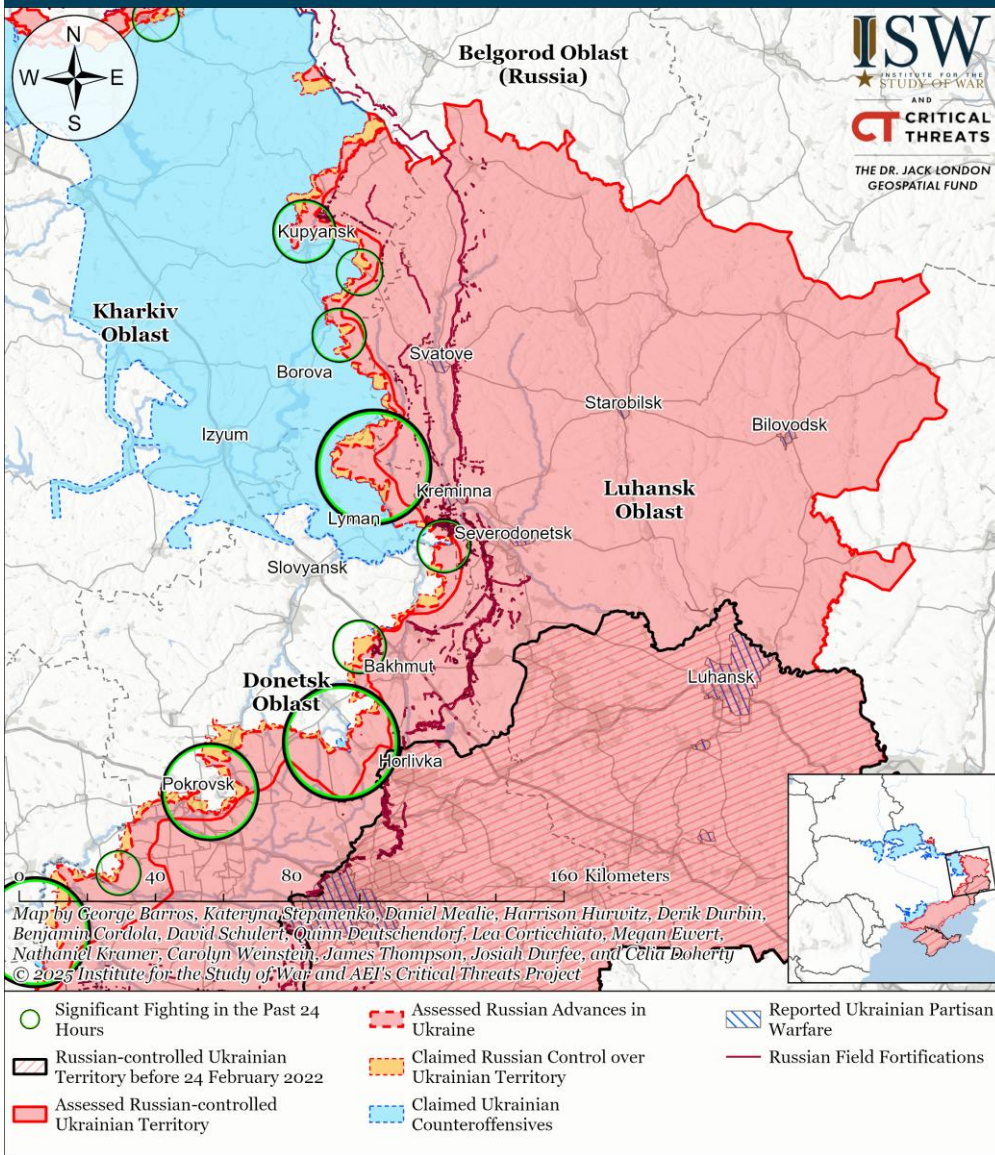
Russian forces attacked northeast of Kharkiv City near Vovchansk and Vovchanskyi Khutory and toward Synelnykove on August 7 and 8.[60] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces counterattacked in a forest near Synelnykove.[61]

Order of Battle: Drone operators of the Russian Antagonist Group (likely part of Sudoplatov Battalion) are reportedly operating in northern Kharkiv Oblast.[62]

Neither Ukrainian nor Russian forces reported ground activity in the Velykyi Burluk direction on August 8.

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)

Assessed Control of Terrain in Luhansk Oblast August 8, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST

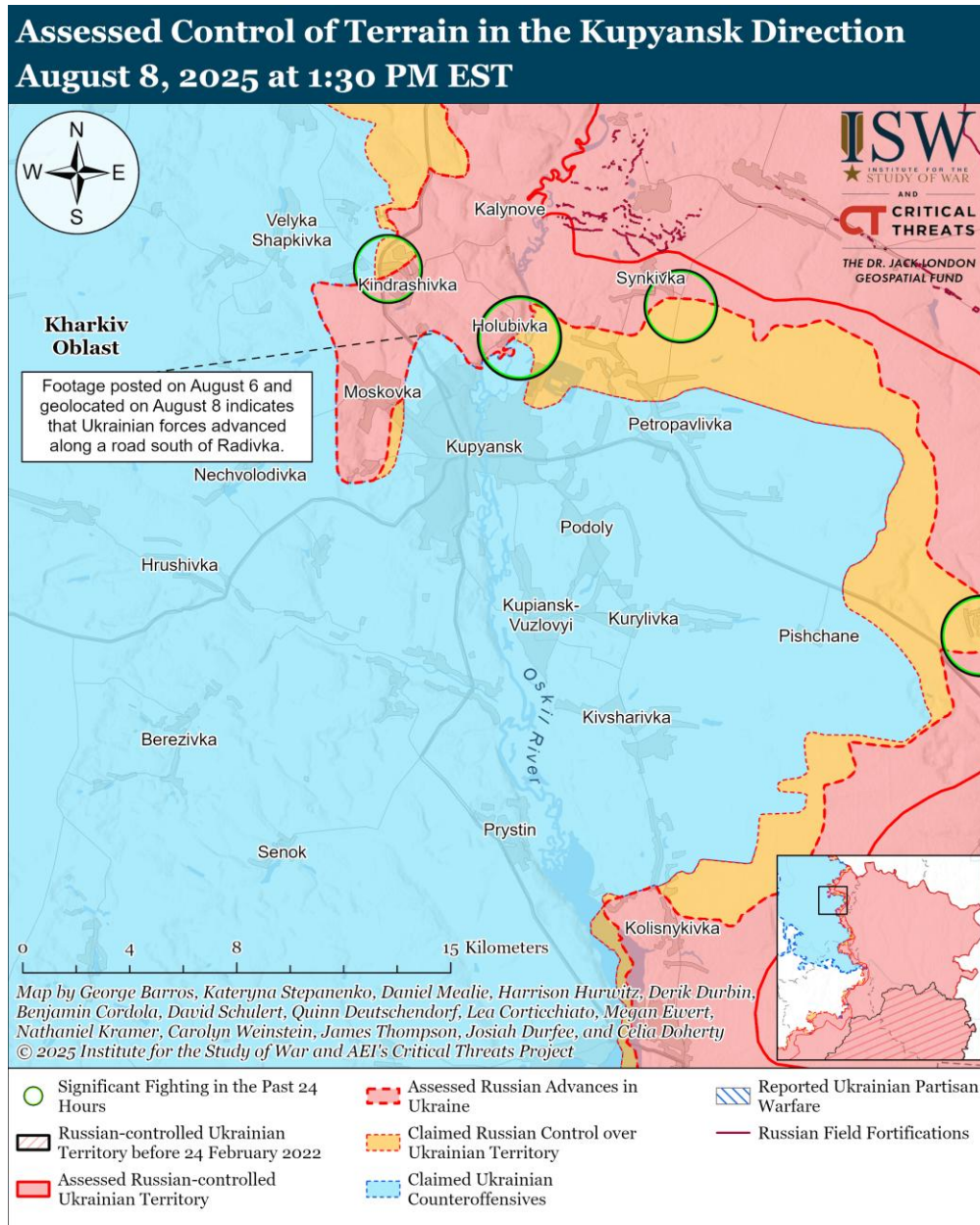


Ukrainian forces recently advanced in the Kupyansk direction.

Assessed Ukrainian advances: Geolocated footage published on August 6 indicates that Ukrainian forces recently advanced southwest of Radkivka (north of Kupyansk).[63] Russian forces have recently advanced northwest and north of Kupyansk in ongoing efforts to envelop and seize the city, and further Ukrainian counterattacks may impede Russian envelopment efforts.[64]

Russian forces attacked near Kupyansk itself; northwest of Kupyansk near Myrove and Kindrashivka; north of Kupyansk near Holubivka and Radkivka; northeast of Kupyansk near Krasne Pershe, Fyholivka and Kamyanka and toward Novovasylivka; east of Kupyansk near Petropavlivka; and southeast of Kupyansk near Stepova Novoselivka on August 7 and 8.[65]

The commander of a Ukrainian reconnaissance company operating in the Kupyansk direction stated that Russian forces constantly commit small infantry groups to high-attrition assaults in attempts to break into Kupyansk and use various watercraft, such as rubber boats, when attempting to cross to the left bank of the Oskil River.[66] The commander reported that Ukrainian forces destroyed Russian armored vehicles when Russian forces attempted to use these vehicles to advance in the Kupyansk-Vuzlovyyi direction.



Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Borova direction on August 8 but did not advance.

Russian forces attacked northeast of Borova near Zahryzove and toward Nova Kruhlyakivka and southwest of Borova near Hrekiivka and toward Olhivka on August 7 and 8.[67]

Russian forces recently advanced in the Lyman direction.

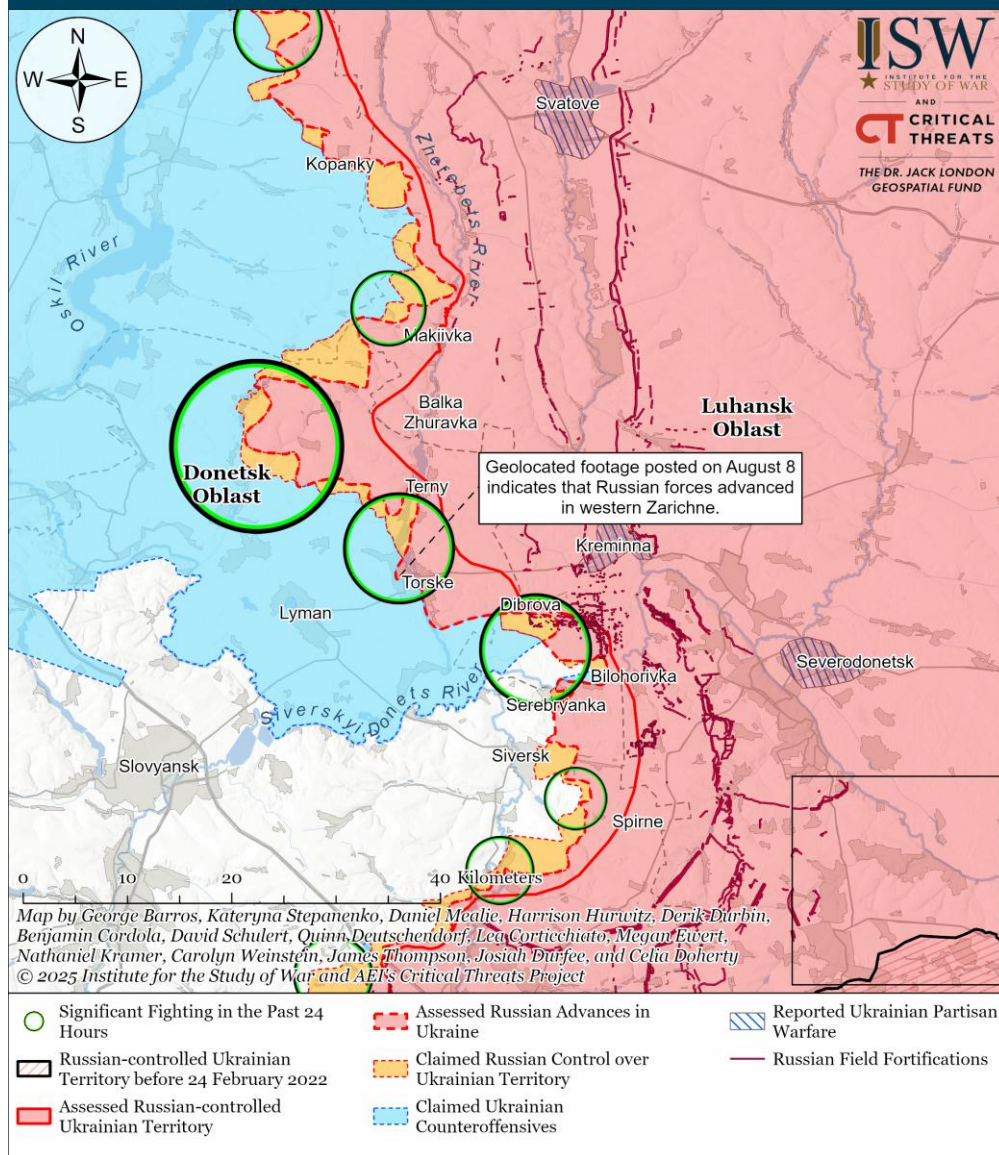
Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on August 8 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced during a motorized assault in western Zarichne (east of Lyman).[68]

Russian forces attacked northwest of Lyman near Karpivka and toward Shandryholove and Serednie; north of Lyman near Zelena Dolyna and Novyi Myr; northeast of Lyman near Kolodyazi and Yampolivka; east of Lyman near Torske and Dibrova; and southeast of Lyman in the Serebryanske forest area on August 7 and 8.[69]

The commander of a Ukrainian brigade operating in the Lyman direction stated that Russian forces are leveraging various combinations of armored and motorized vehicles in assaults.[70] The commander stated that the Russian assault groups are composed of poorly trained recruits and well-trained personnel and that these groups attempt to infiltrate into the Ukrainian rear.

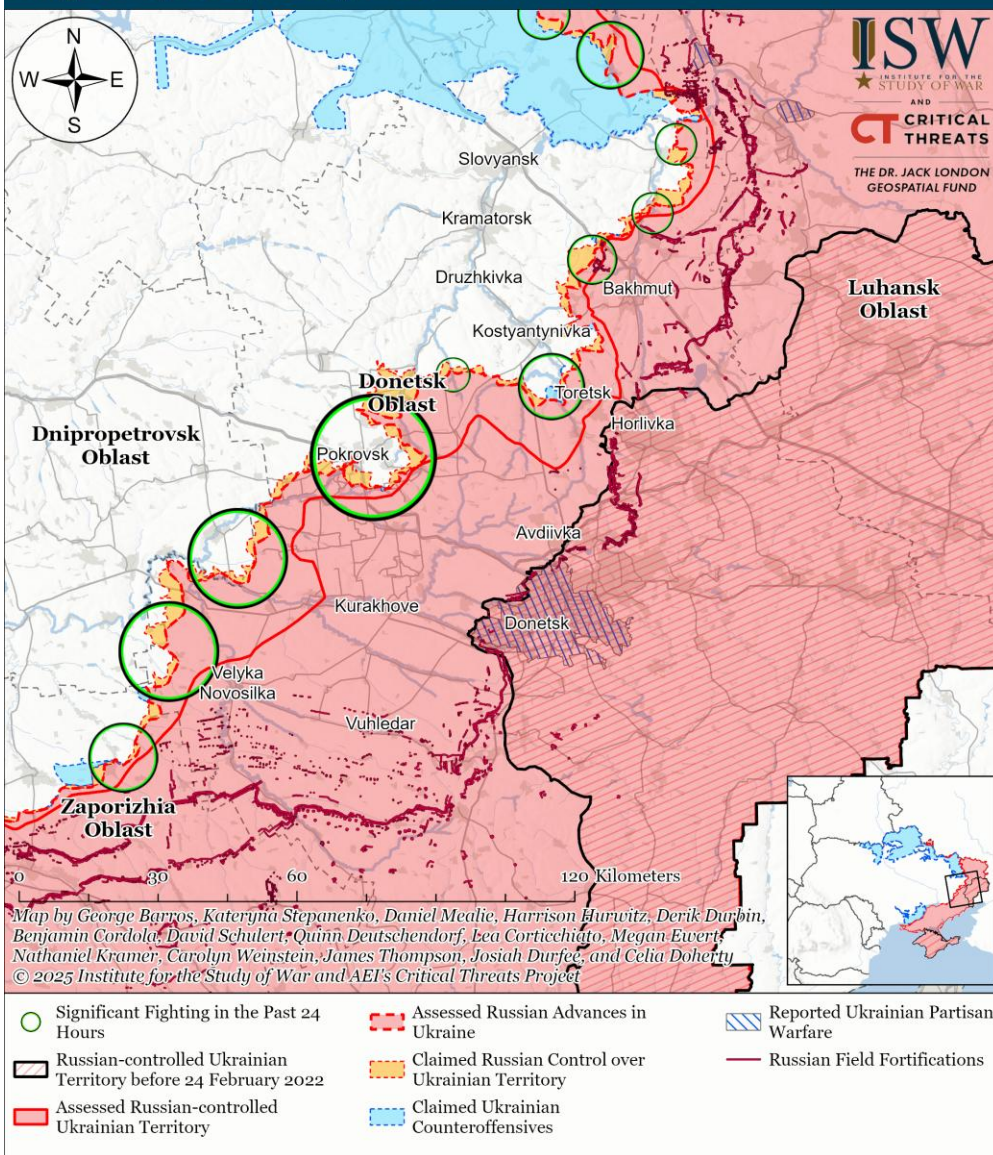
Order of Battle: Elements of Russian Tuman Spetsnaz Detachment (25th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Central Military District [CMD]) are reportedly operating in the Serebryanske forest area.[71]

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Svatove-Kreminna Direction August 8, 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, and possibly advance into Dnipropetrovsk Oblast)

Assessed Control of Terrain in Donetsk Oblast August 8, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Siversk direction on August 8 but did not advance.

Russian forces attacked northeast of Siversk near Hryhorivka and Serebryanka and southwest of Siversk near Fedorivka on August 7 and 8.[72]

Order of Battle: Drone operators of the Russian 7th Motorized Rifle Brigade (3rd Combined Arms Army [CAA], formerly 2nd Luhansk People's Republic Army Corps [LNR AC], Southern Military District [SMD]) are reportedly striking Ukrainian positions in Serebryanka.[73] Artillery elements of the 85th Motorized Rifle Brigade (3rd CAA) are reportedly striking Ukrainian positions near Fedorivka.[74]

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Chasiv Yar direction on August 8 but did not make confirmed advances.

Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces are advancing along the Siverskyi Donetsk-Donbas Canal near Hryhorivka (north of Chasiv Yar).[75]

Russian forces attacked north of Chasiv Yar toward Novomarkove, northeast of Chasiv Yar near Orikhovo-Vasylivka, and south of Chasiv Yar toward Stupochky on August 7 and 8.[76]

The commander of a Ukrainian drone battalion operating in the Chasiv Yar direction stated on August 8 that Ukrainian forces repelled several motorized assaults in this direction on August 7.[77] The commander added that Russian forces in the Chasiv Yar direction are leveraging drones to compensate for armored vehicle losses and noted that the battalion destroyed 350 drones of various types over July 2025. A chief sergeant of a Ukrainian brigade operating in the Chasiv Yar direction refuted Russian claims on August 8 that Russian forces seized Chasiv Yar and stated that Ukrainian forces maintain positions in the city.[78] The chief sergeant implied that Russian forces send poorly equipped infantry into highly attritional assaults along the same routes.

Donetsk Oblast Police reported that Russian forces struck Kostyantynivka (southwest of Chasiv Yar) using a KAB-250 glide bomb, wounding a civilian and damaging a hospital.[79]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 98th Airborne (VDV) Division are reportedly operating near Chasiv Yar.[80] Drone operators of the 103rd Motorized Rifle Regiment (150th Motorized Rifle Division, 8th CAA, SMD) are reportedly operating in the Kostyantynivka (Chasiv Yar) direction.[81]

Ukrainian and Russian forces recently advanced in the Toretsk direction.

Assessed Ukrainian advances: Geolocated footage published on August 8 indicates that Ukrainian forces recently advanced within Katerynivka (immediately northwest of Toretsk) and Shcherbynivka (west of Toretsk).[82]

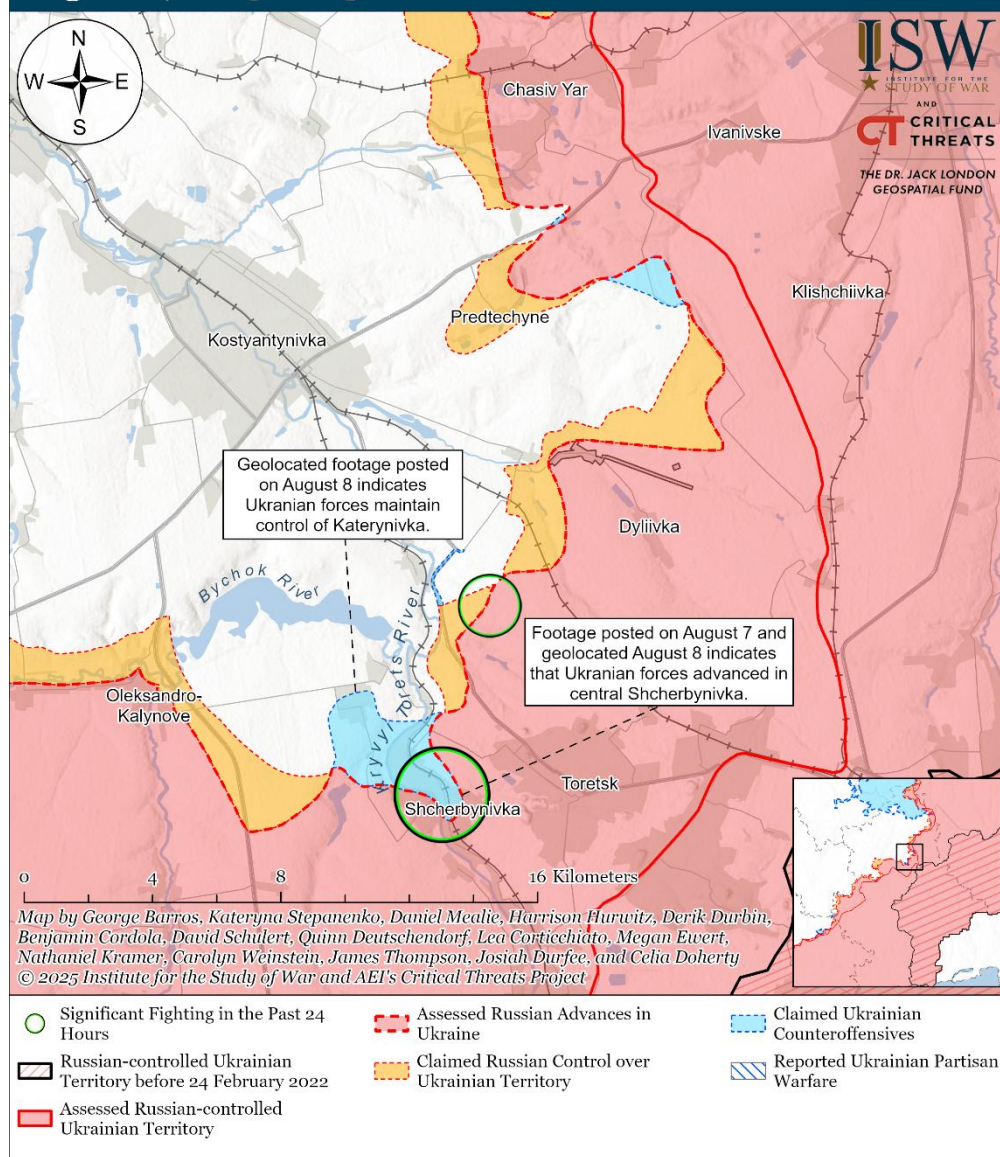
Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on August 8 indicates that Russian forces advanced within central Rusyn Yar and seized Poltavka (both northwest of Toretsk).[83]

Unconfirmed claims: Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced near Mykolaivka (north of Toretsk), north and northwest of Rusyn Yar, and near Yablunivka (both northwest of Toretsk).[84]

Russian forces attacked near Toretsk itself; north of Toretsk near Bila Hora and Dyliivka; west of Toretsk near Shcherbynivka; and northwest of Toretsk near Popiv Yar, Poltavka, Rusyn Yar, Oleksandro-Kalynove, Katerynivka and Pleshchiivka and toward Stepanivka on August 7 and 8.[85]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 20th Motorized Rifle Division (8th CAA, SMD) are reportedly operating in Rusyn Yar and near Poltavka.[86] Artillery elements of the Russian 238th Artillery Brigade and drone operators of the 439th Rocket Artillery Brigade (both of the 8th CAA) are reportedly coordinating strikes against Ukrainian positions near Kleban-Byk (northwest of Toretsk).[87] Drone operators of the 1194th Motorized Rifle Regiment (reportedly of the 7th Military Base, 49th CAA, SMD) are reportedly striking Ukrainian forces near Pleshchiivka.[88]

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Kostyantynivka Direction August 8, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



Russian forces recently advanced in the Pokrovsk direction.

Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on August 8 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced in eastern and central Pokrovsk.[89]

Unconfirmed claims: Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced within Pokrovsk, north of Novokostyantynivka (just south of Pokrovsk), and west of Udachne (southwest of Pokrovsk).[90]

Russian forces attacked north of Pokrovsk near Rodynske and toward Krasnyi Lyman; northeast of Pokrovsk near Volodymyrivka, Sukhetske, Novoekonomichne, Boykivka, Nykanorivka, Dorozhnie, and Mykolaivka; east of Pokrovsk near Myrolyubivka and Moskovske; southeast of Pokrovsk near

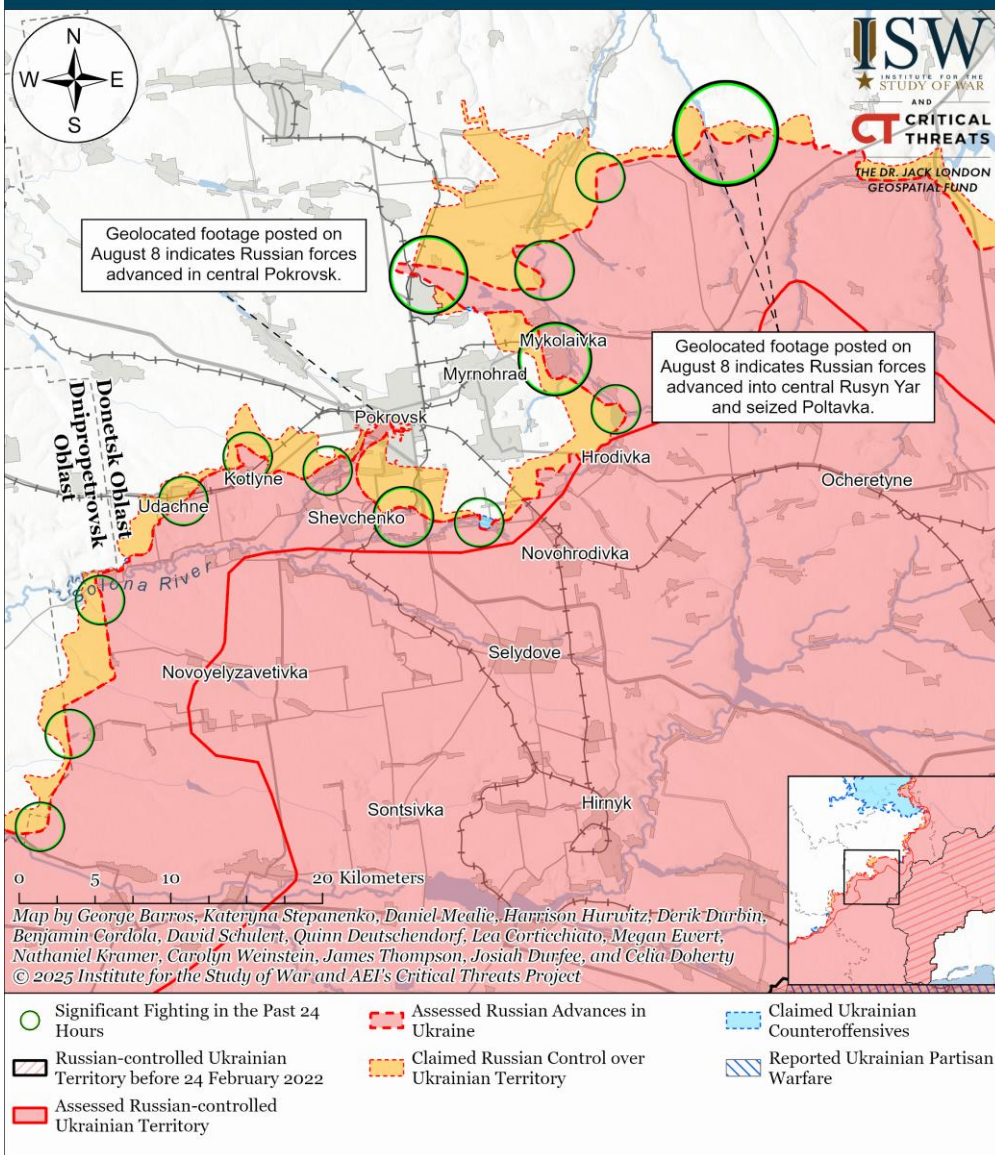
Lysivka, Sukhyi Yar, and Novopavlivka; south of Pokrovsk near Novoukrainka; and southwest of Pokrovsk near Zvirove, Kotlyne, and Udachne on August 7 and 8.[91]

Ukrainian Commander-in-Chief General Oleksandr Syrskyi stated on August 7 that Russian forces are attacking more in the Pokrovsk direction than any other area on the frontline and are sustaining massive casualties.[92] Syrskyi stated that Russian forces have engaged in efforts to seize Pokrovsk for over a year and that the Pokrovsk direction remains extremely difficult, but stated that Ukrainian forces maintain their positions in Pokrovsk against over 110,000 Russian personnel operating in this direction. Syrskyi stated that Russian forces in the Pokrovsk direction recently changed tactics, increased the number of troops, and are leveraging armored vehicles in attempts to advance. ISW previously assessed that Russian advances aimed at enveloping Pokrovsk have accelerated in recent weeks.[93] The commander of a Ukrainian battalion operating in the Pokrovsk direction reported that Russian forces continue to “probe” Ukrainian defensive lines for weak points to then attack in small fire teams of two infantrymen and are constantly changing supply routes in attempts to evade Ukrainian drones and sustain offensive operations.[94]

Ukraine’s Donetsk Oblast Police reported on August 8 that Russian forces struck Dobropillya (north of Pokrovsk) with two KAB guided glide bombs overnight on August 7 to 8.[95] A Ukrainian Verkhovna Rada (VR) Deputy and Chairman of the Confederation of Free Trade Unions, Mykhailo Volynets, reported that Russian artillery fire struck the Dobropillyavugol-vydobutok mine in Dobropillya, damaging and disabling a 110-kW substation, and that the substation is now in critical condition with gas contamination and flooding. [96]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 1st Slovyansk Motorized Rifle Brigade (51st CAA, formerly 1st Donetsk People's Republic [DNR AC], SMD) are reportedly operating near Koptieve and Novotoretske (both northeast of Pokrovsk).[97]

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



Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Novopavlivka direction on August 8 but did not advance.

Russian forces attacked northeast of Novopavlivka near Muravka; southeast of Novopavlivka near Horikhove and Zelenyi Kut; and southwest of Novopavlivka near Tovste and Zelenyi Hai and toward Filiya on August 7 and 8.[98] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces counterattacked near Dachne (southeast of Novopavlivka) and toward Yalta (southwest of Novopavlivka).[99]

Ukraine's Khortytsia Group of Forces Spokesperson Major Viktor Trehubov refuted claims on August 8 that Russian forces advanced near Dachne (southeast of Novopavlivka) and stated that Ukrainian forces repelled a Russian attack near Dachne several days ago.[100] Trehubov stated that Russian forces are accumulating forces in Donetsk Oblast and are likely preparing to attack Dachne again.

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 74th Motorized Rifle Brigade (41st CAA, Central Military District [CMD]) are reportedly operating in the Novopavlivka direction.[101]

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Velykomykhailivka direction on August 8 but did not make confirmed advances.

Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced toward Komyshevukha southeast of Velykomykhailivka.[102]

Russian forces attacked east of Velykomykhailivka near Voskresenka and Oleksandrohrad and southeast of Velykomykhailivka near Zelene Pole, Maliivka, Novopil, Vilne Pole, Temyrivka, and toward Komyshevukha on August 7 and 8.[103] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces counterattacked near Temyrivka.[104]

Order of Battle: Elements of the 11th Air Force and Air Defense Army (Russian Aerospace Forces [VKS] and Eastern Military District [EMD]) are reportedly FAB glide bomb striking Ukrainian forces near Andriivka-Klevtsove (northeast of Velykomykhailivka).[105] Elements of the 36th Motorized Rifle Brigade (29th CAA, EMD) and 37th Motorized Rifle Brigade (36th CAA, EMD) are reportedly operating near Oleksandrohrad and Andriivka-Klevtsove.[106]

Russian Supporting Effort – Southern Axis (Russian objective: Maintain frontline positions, secure rear areas against Ukrainian strikes, and advance within tube artillery range of Zaporizhzhia City)

Russian forces attacked northeast of Hulyaipole near Olhivske and toward Ivanivka and east of Hulyaipole near Malynivka on August 7 and 8, but did not advance.[107]

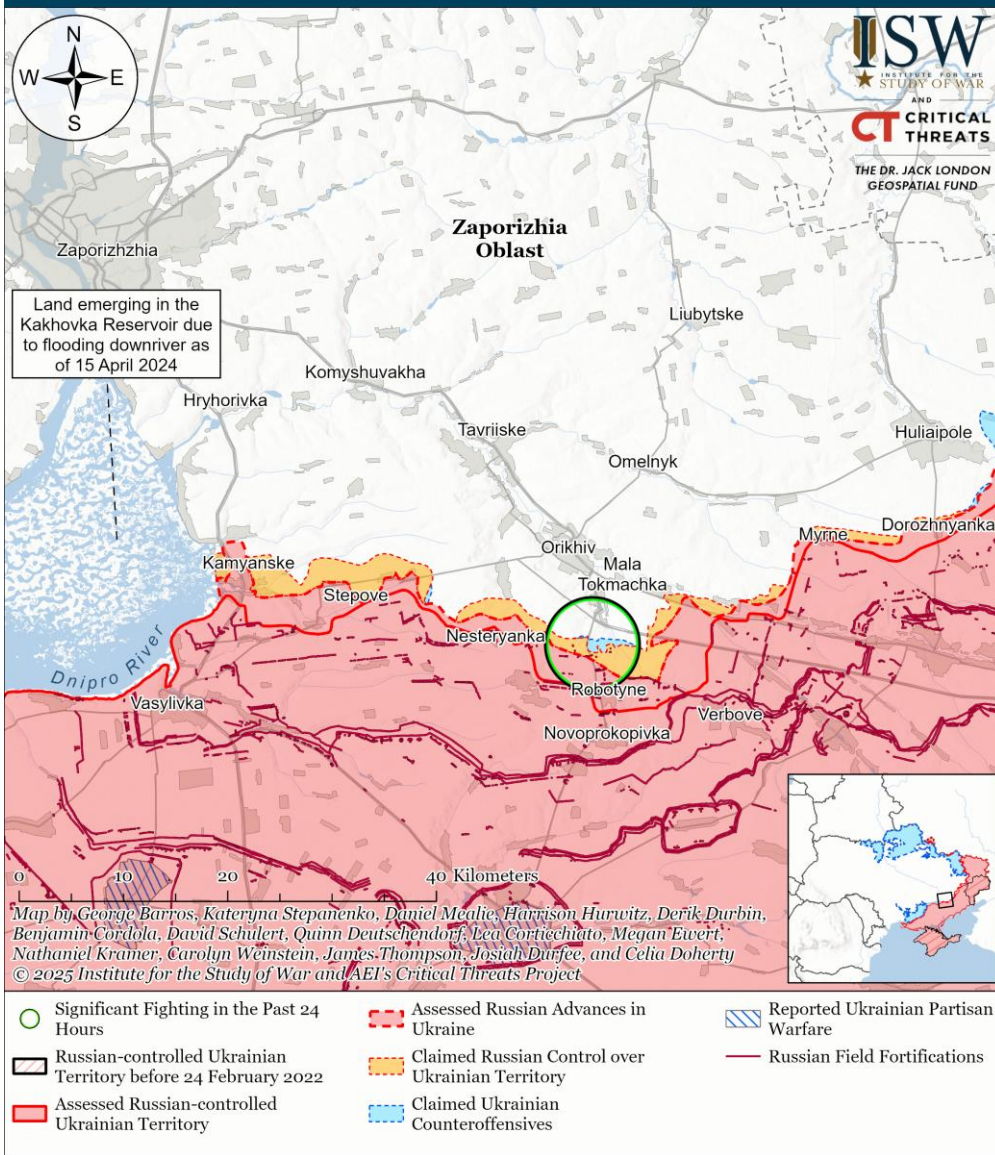
Russian forces continued offensive operations in western Zaporizhzhia Oblast on August 8 but did not make confirmed advances.

Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced northeast of Kamyanske (west of Orikhiv).[108]

Russian forces attacked southeast of Orikhiv near Mala Tokmachka; south of Orikhiv toward Novodanylivka; southwest of Orikhiv near Nesteryanka; and west of Orikhiv near Kamyanske, Stepnohirsk, and Plavni on August 7 and 8.[109] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces counterattacked near Orikhiv itself, Stepnohirsk, and Plavni.[110]

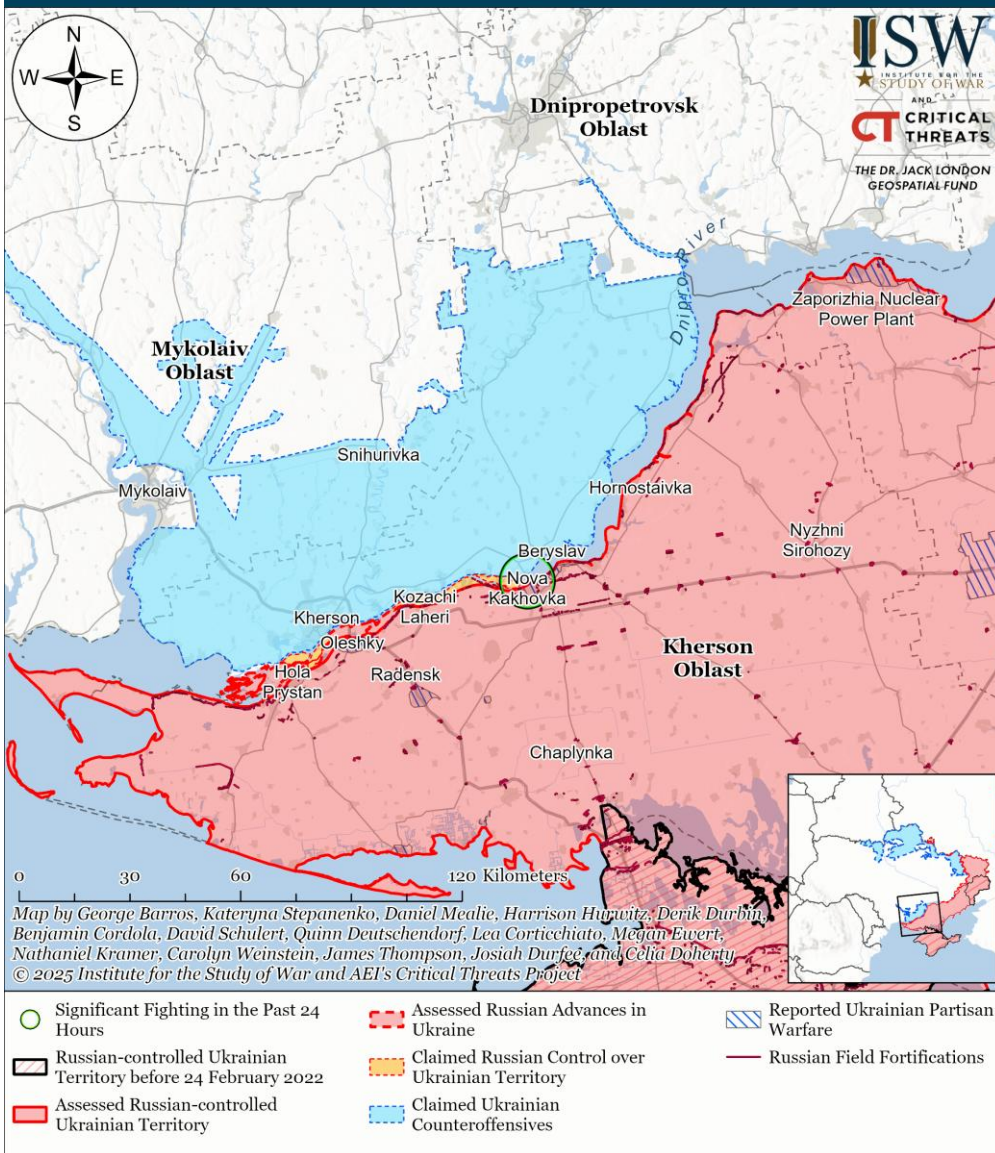
Order of Battle: Artillery elements and drone operators of the Russian 7th Airborne (VDV) Division are reportedly striking Ukrainian positions in the Zaporizhzhia direction and near Plavni, respectively.[111] Drone operators of the 247th VDV Regiment (7th VDV Division), 218th Tank and 143rd Motorized Rifle regiments (both of 127th Motorized Rifle Division, 5th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Eastern Military District [EMD]), and the Rostov Battalion are reportedly striking Ukrainian forces in the Zaporizhzhia direction.[112] Drone operators of the 291st Motorized Rifle Regiment (42nd Motorized Rifle Division, 58th CAA, Southern Military District [SMD]) are reportedly striking Ukrainian positions near Novoandriivka (west of Orikhiv).[113] Elements of the 7th VDV Division, including of its 108th and 247th VDV regiments, are reportedly operating near Plavni.[114]

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Zaporizhia Direction August 8, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Kherson direction on August 8 but did not advance.[115]

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Kherson Direction August 8, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



The Ukrainian Main Intelligence Directorate (GUR) published footage on August 8 showing Ukrainian drones striking a Russian 98L6 Yenisei radar station in an unspecified location in occupied Crimea.[116]

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

See topline text.

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

Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko requested an interview with *Time Magazine*, published on August 8, in which Lukashenko stated that he is not currently planning to run for another presidential term but declined to comment on who he might choose as his successor.[117] Lukashenko also claimed that Belarus will have an operational Oreshnik missile system by the end of 2025.

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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