



Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment

**Riley Bailey, Christina Harward, Angelica Evans,
Grace Mappes, and Frederick W. Kagan**

May 31, 2024, 6:45pm 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 3D control of terrain topographic map of Ukraine. Use of a computer (not a mobile device) is strongly recommended for using this data-heavy tool.

Click [here](#) to access ISW's archive of interactive time-lapse maps of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. These maps complement the static control-of-terrain map that ISW produces daily by showing a dynamic frontline. ISW will update this time-lapse map archive monthly.

Note: The data cut-off for this product was 12:30pm ET on May 31. ISW will cover subsequent reports in the June 1 Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment.

US and German officials confirmed that the United States and Germany have changed their policies to allow Ukraine to use US- and German-provided weapons to strike Russian territory with some restrictions but did not offer precise details about these restrictions. Secretary of State Antony Blinken stated on May 31 that President Joe Biden approved Ukraine's use of US-supplied weapons to defend against Russian aggression, "including against Russian forces that are massing on the Russian side of the border and then attacking into Ukraine."^[1] Western media reported on May 30 that the Biden administration gave Ukraine permission to use US-provided weapons, including GMLRS rockets, for "counter-fire purposes" against the Russian forces conducting assaults in northern Kharkiv Oblast but has not changed its policy restricting Ukraine from using US-provided weapons, such as ATACMS, to conduct long-range strikes elsewhere into Russia.^[2] Blinken's May 31 statement did not specify which US-provided weapons Ukraine would be able to use or if the United States would allow Ukraine to use US-supplied weapons to strike Russian concentrations in Kursk and Bryansk oblasts as well. It is also unclear from Blinken's statement if the United States will allow Ukraine to strike Russian forces that are massing across the border but have not yet attacked into Ukrainian territory. Blinken responded to a journalist's question on May 31 about whether the United States would allow Ukraine to use US-provided weapons to strike deeper into Russian territory, stating that the United States will "as necessary adapt and adjust."^[3]

German Federal Government Spokesperson Steffen Hebestreit stated on May 31 that Ukraine has a "right under international law to defend itself" against Russian attacks and that Ukraine can use German-provided weapons "for this purpose."^[4] Hebestreit noted that Russian forces have attacked Ukraine "in the Kharkiv areas from positions in the immediately adjacent Russian border region" but

did not specify whether Germany will only allow Ukraine to use German-provided weapons to strike Russian territory near Kharkiv Oblast. German Ambassador to the UK Miguel Berger, however, specifically stated on May 31 that the German government has allowed Ukraine to use German weapons to "defend itself against attacks on [Kharkiv Oblast] from bordering Russian territory," and select Western media similarly reported that Germany had geographically restricted Ukraine to use German-provided weapons against the adjacent Russian border area (presumably only Belgorod Oblast) to defend northern Kharkiv Oblast.[5] Other Western states continue to emphasize that they are imposing few to no restrictions on the use of weapons they are providing to Ukraine, however. *Radio Svoboda* reported on May 31 that Dutch Foreign Minister Hanke Bruins-Slot stated that the Netherlands does not oppose Ukraine's use of F-16s against military targets on Russian territory for self-defense.[6]

Ukrainian forces conducted a series of drone and missile strikes against a Russian long-range radar system in occupied Crimea and an oil depot in Krasnodar Krai on May 31 following the May 30 Ukrainian strike against the Kerch Strait ferry crossing. Ukrainian media, citing unspecified sources, reported on May 31 that Ukraine's Security Service (SBU) conducted a successful drone strike against a Russian "Nebo-IED" long-range radar system near occupied Armyansk, Crimea, and estimated that the system is worth \$100 million.[7] The radar system reportedly serviced a 380-kilometer-long section of the frontline, and Ukrainian forces reportedly observed a shutdown of the radar's radiation signature following the drone strike, indicating that the strike took the system offline. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Ukrainian forces conducted a strike on an oil depot near the port of Kavkaz, Krasnodar Krai with several Neptune anti-ship missiles early in the morning on May 31, and geolocated footage published on May 31 shows a fire at the oil depot.[8] Krasnodar Krai Governor Veniamin Kondratyev stated that Russian air defenses repelled an unspecified large number of Ukrainian drones targeting Krasnodar Krai and that the strike damaged three petroleum tanks at an oil depot in Temryuk Raion.[9] Russian opposition outlet *Astra* stated that Ukrainian forces struck at least two additional facilities at the port and damaged a substation that provides power to the Kerch Strait Bridge.[10] Russian milbloggers claimed that Ukrainian drones also struck a railway train carrying fuel near the oil depot.[11]

The Ukrainian General Staff reported on May 30 that Ukrainian forces conducted a successful ATACMS strike on a ferry crossing and damaged two ferries that Russian forces were using to transport forces and equipment across the Kerch Strait to occupied Crimea on the night of May 29 to 30.[12] Ukrainian Southern Operational Command Spokesperson Captain Third Rank Dmytro Pletenchuk stated on May 31 that Russian forces still rely on the ferry crossing because the railway line across the Kerch Strait Bridge is unfinished and that the strike should affect the provisioning of the Russian force grouping in occupied Crimea.[13] Russian sources issued conflicting reports on May 30 about the results of the May 29 to 30 Ukrainian strike – a Crimean occupation administration official claimed that the strike damaged two pilot boats, a car, and a section of the railway line, while Russia opposition outlet *Astra* stated that the strike sunk the *Mechta* pilot boat.[14] The port of Kavkaz reportedly specializes in servicing rail and truck ferry vessels, and the May 31 strike may be another aspect of Ukraine's strike against the ferry crossing.[15]

Ukraine signed long-term bilateral security agreements with Sweden, Iceland, and Norway on May 31. The Ukraine-Sweden agreement stipulates that Sweden will provide 6.5 billion euros (about \$7 billion) of military assistance for the next decade, will transfer an unspecified amount of ASC 890 advanced early warning and control (AEW&C) aircraft, and continue efforts to transfer JAS

39 Gripen aircraft to Ukraine.[16] The Swedish military assistance package announced on May 29, worth about \$1.25 billion and containing an ASC 890 aircraft, is likely part of this bilateral security agreement.[17] The Ukraine-Iceland agreement stipulates that Iceland will provide at least \$30 million annually from 2024 to 2028 to finance and purchase defense materials and help develop Ukraine's defense industry.[18] The Ukraine-Norway agreement stipulates that Norway will provide assistance worth 75 billion kroner (about \$7.1 billion) from 2023 to 2027, including at least 13.5 billion kroner (about \$1.2 billion) in 2024.[19] Norway will also provide Ukraine with air and missile defense systems, including NASAMs, and help develop Ukraine's aircraft capabilities including with F-16 fighters.

Germany and Poland announced additional large military assistance packages for Ukraine. German Defense Minister Boris Pistorius announced on May 30 a package worth 500 million euros (about \$542 million) that includes a Patriot air defense system, a "large number" of IRIS-T SLM air defense missiles, a smaller number of shorter-range IRIS-T SLS air defense missiles, reconnaissance and combat drones, and spare parts including artillery gun barrels.[20] Polish Foreign Minister Radoslaw Sikorski announced on May 31 that Poland is preparing a military assistance package for Ukraine worth four billion euros (about \$4.3 billion).[21]

Russia's continued efforts to rally Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) member countries around an imagined confrontation with the West likely stems from Russian concerns about the CSTO's longevity as a vector for Russian influence. Russian Defense Minister Andrei Belousov addressed a meeting of the CSTO Council of Defense Ministers in Almaty, Kazakhstan on May 31 and claimed that a tense situation in Eastern Europe and an alleged NATO military buildup threaten the security of CSTO members.[22] Belousov alleged that the US and its allies are a destabilizing geopolitical force and that NATO countries seek to strengthen their positions in the Caucasus and gain access to resources in the Caspian Sea and direct access to Central Asia.[23] Belousov warned that the West has unleashed an information war and sanctions against CSTO members to undermine the organization and called on CSTO members to coordinate their foreign policies to present a united front.[24] Belousov stated that Russia is specifically concerned about alleged US and NATO plans to involve nominal CSTO member Armenia in the West's sphere of interest.[25] Armenia has effectively ceased participation in the CSTO following Russia's failure to prevent Armenia's loss of Nagorno-Karabakh, and Armenia remains a CSTO member only in name.[26] The Kremlin has explicitly threatened Armenia if Armenia does not resume active engagement in the CSTO and return to a pro-Kremlin alignment.[27] Armenia has specifically questioned the value of its CSTO membership following the loss of Nagorno-Karabakh, and the Kremlin is likely concerned that deteriorating relations with Armenia could prompt other CSTO members to question the utility of their CSTO membership.[28] Recent tensions in the Russian-Tajik relationship following the March 2024 Crocus City Hall attack and Central Asian concerns about the impacts of secondary sanctions may be incentivizing the Kremlin to intensify efforts to convince CSTO members that the organization and their involvement in other Russian-led multilateral organizations is worthwhile.[29]

Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan are unlikely to buy into the Kremlin's imagined geopolitical confrontation with the West, and the Kremlin will likely have to offer more concrete promises to maintain the CSTO as a viable collective security organization oriented around Russian interests. Belousov met with Tajikistani Defense Minister Sherali Mirzo in a bilateral meeting on May 31 and stressed that the CSTO will address the escalating situation on the CSTO's southern border.[30] Belousov claimed that the situation in Afghanistan and the threat of terrorism remain the

main sources of instability in Central Asia and that the CSTO must have timely responses to this threat, including strengthening the Tajikistan-Afghanistan border.[31] Russia is currently considering delisting the Taliban as a prohibited organization and will likely strengthen cooperation with the Taliban to combat the Islamic State's Afghan branch IS-Khorasan (IS-K), which conducted the Crocus City Hall attack.[32] IS-K recruited Tajikistani citizens for the Crocus City Hall attack, and Tajikistan likely views multilateral counterterrorism operations as a way to repair strained relations with Russia while also combating transnational terrorist threats emanating from Afghanistan.[33] Russian President Vladimir Putin met with the Russian Security Council on May 31 and also emphasized strengthening international cooperation on counterterrorism.[34] Other Central Asian states, including CSTO members Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, likely view Russian offers for counterterrorism cooperation as attractive benefits of continued security relations with Russia.

Although Russian forces made significant tactical gains in northern Kharkiv Oblast in early May 2024, Russian Defense Minister Andrei Belousov heavily overestimated Russian advances in Ukraine since the start of 2024. Belousov claimed on May 31 that Russian forces have seized 880 square kilometers thus far in 2024.[35] ISW has observed evidence confirming that Russian forces have only seized approximately 752 square kilometers in 2024, however. ISW previously assessed that Russian forces seized about 516 square kilometers between January 1, 2024, and April 29, 2024.[36]

Ukraine and Russia conducted a one-for-one prisoner of war (POW) exchange on May 31, the first POW exchange since February 8. Ukrainian and Russian officials announced that Ukraine and Russia exchanged 75 Ukrainian POWs for 75 Russian POWs, and the Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) credited the United Arab Emirates with mediating the exchange.[37] Russian authorities recently blamed "far-fetched" Ukrainian demands for causing the several-month-long suspension of POW exchanges.[38]

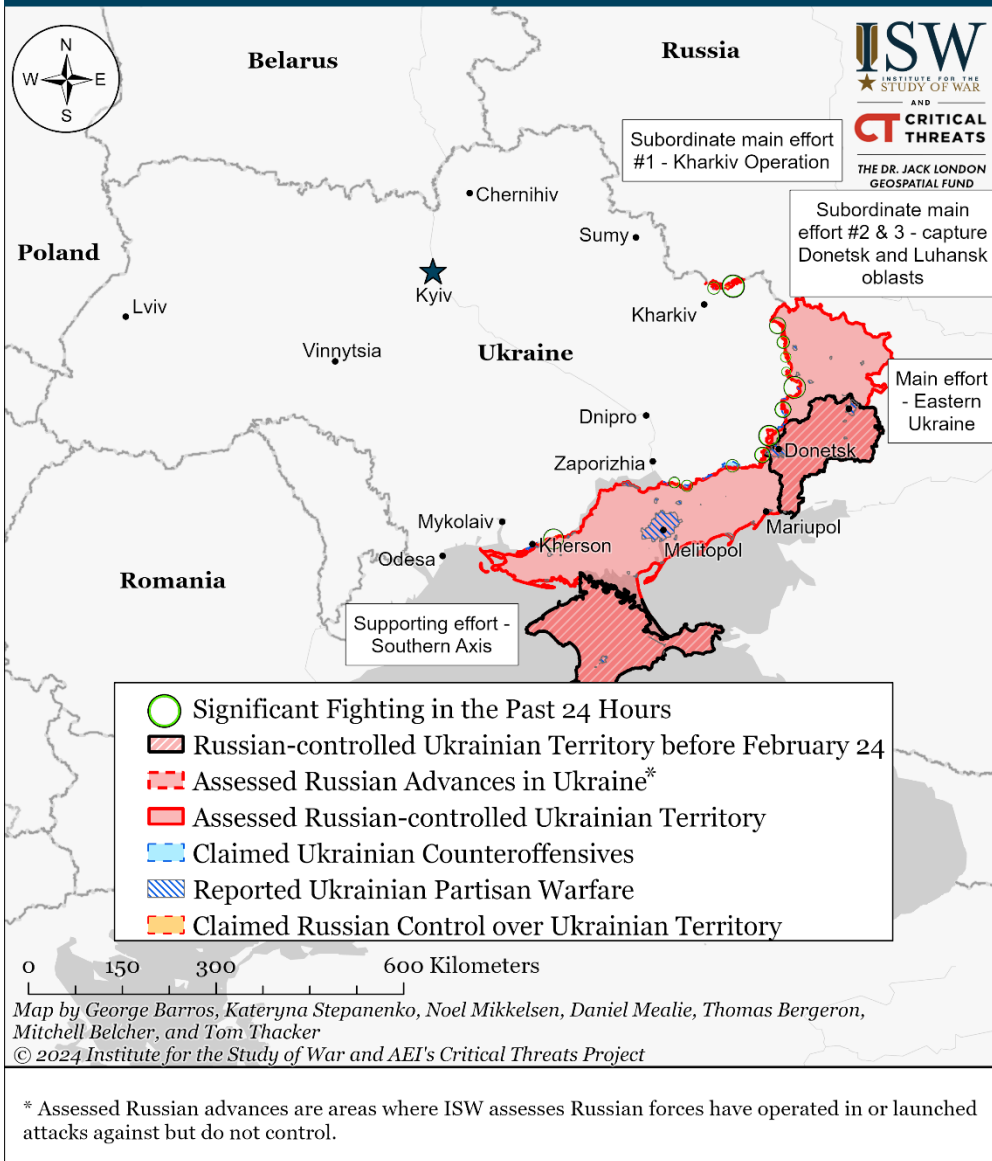
The People's Republic of China (PRC) announced on May 31 that it will not join the June 2024 Ukraine peace summit. PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) Spokesperson Mao Ning stated on May 31 that the PRC will not attend the upcoming Ukraine peace summit in Switzerland because the meeting falls "far short of China's requests and expectations" and emphasized that "both Russia and Ukraine" should "endorse" the peace process.[39] Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky previously stated that Ukraine will only be open to negotiations with Russia after developing a peace plan with its allies, and Ukrainian officials have recently emphasized that it is imperative for both the United States and China to attend the June 2024 peace summit as their participation is "decisive" in compelling Russia to participate in the process of restoring peace and security.[40] Senior Kremlin officials, including President Vladimir Putin, have recently endorsed the PRC's vague 12-point peace plan in Ukraine to falsely portray the Kremlin as willing to negotiate with Ukraine.[41] Senior Russian officials have repeatedly signaled that Russia is unwilling to engage in good-faith negotiations with Ukraine and has no interest in ending the war on terms that would prevent Putin from pursuing the destruction of an independent Ukraine.[42]

Key Takeaways:

- **US and German officials confirmed that the United States and Germany have changed their policies to allow Ukraine to use US- and German-provided weapons to strike Russian territory with some restrictions but did not offer precise details about these restrictions.**

- **Ukrainian forces conducted a series of drone and missile strikes against a Russian long-range radar system in occupied Crimea and an oil depot in Krasnodar Krai on May 31 following the May 30 Ukrainian strike against the Kerch Strait ferry crossing.**
- **Ukraine signed long-term bilateral security agreements with Sweden, Iceland, and Norway on May 31.**
- **Russia's continued efforts to rally Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) member countries around an imagined confrontation with the West likely stems from Russian concerns about the CSTO's longevity as a vector for Russian influence.**
- **Although Russian forces made significant tactical gains in northern Kharkiv Oblast in early May 2024, Russian Defense Minister Andrei Belousov heavily overestimated Russian advances in Ukraine since the start of 2024.**
- **Ukraine and Russia conducted a one-for-one prisoner of war (POW) exchange on May 31, the first POW exchange since February 8.**
- **The People's Republic of China (PRC) announced on May 31 that it will not join the June 2024 Ukraine peace summit.**
- **Russian forces recently advanced near Vovchansk, Avdiivka, and Donetsk City.**
- **Russian State Duma Information Policy Committee Chairperson Alexander Khinshtein announced on May 30 that he and Duma Security Committee Chairperson Vasily Piskarev submitted a bill for the Duma's consideration that would eliminate toll fees for Russian military, Rosgvardia, and Federal Security Service (FSB) vehicles.**

Assessed Control of Terrain in Ukraine and Main Russian Maneuver Axes as of May 31, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



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.

- 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
- Ukrainian Defense Industrial Base Efforts
- Russian Information Operations and Narratives
- Significant Activity in Belarus

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)

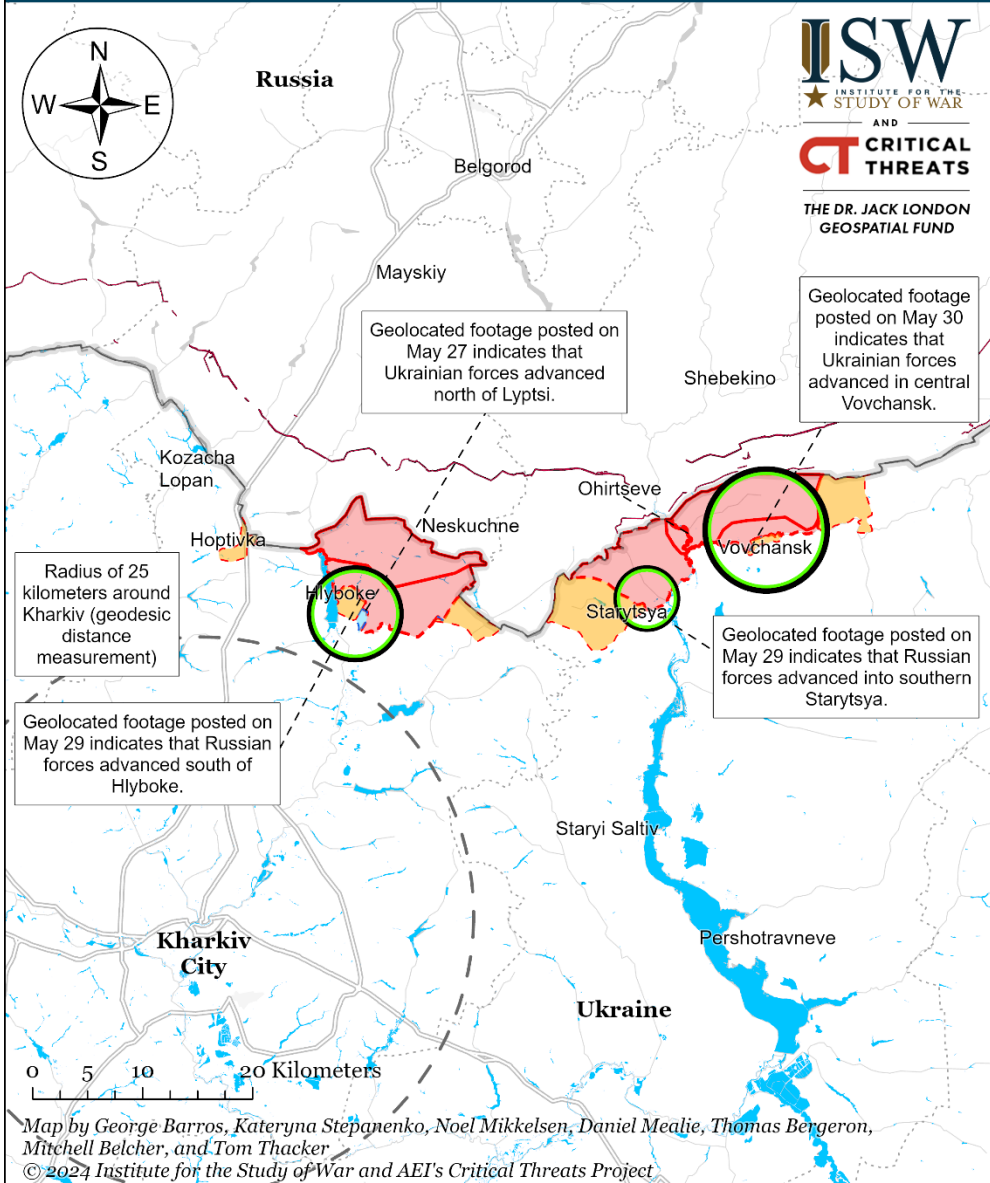
Russian forces recently marginally advanced northeast of Kharkiv City on May 31 amid continued positional fighting north and northwest of the city. Geolocated footage published on May 31 indicates that Russian forces recently marginally advanced within the eastern outskirts of Vovchansk (northeast of Kharkiv City).[43] Russian Defense Minister Andrei Belousov claimed that Russian forces have forced Ukrainian forces to retreat eight to nine kilometers in northern Kharkiv Oblast in May 2024, which is consistent with ISW's furthest assessed Russian advances near Lyptsi (north of Kharkiv City).[44] A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces recently advanced 450 meters in the Vovchansk direction.[45] Russian milbloggers claimed that Ukrainian forces conducted unsuccessful counterattacks within Vovchansk and in the Lyptsi direction on May 30 and 31.[46] Russian forces also continued assaults near Starytsya (northeast of Kharkiv City and southwest of Vovchansk) on May 30 and 31.[47] Ukrainian military observer Kostyantyn Mashovets stated that elements of the Russian 26th Missile Brigade and the 138th Motorized Rifle Brigade (both elements of the 6th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Leningrad Military District [LMD]) are preparing to advance further within Vovchansk, and elements of the 18th Motorized Rifle Division (11th Army Corps [AC], LMD) are operating in the Starytsya-Izbitske area (northeast of Kharkiv City and southwest of Vovchansk).[48] Elements of the Russian Ministry of Defense- (MoD) controlled Africa Corps and the Chechen Akhmat Spetsnaz are reportedly operating near Vovchansk.[49]

Ukrainian Air Force Spokesperson Major Ilya Yevlash reported on May 31 that Russian forces rotate groups of four to five Su-34S/35S aircraft to conduct simultaneous glide bomb strikes against Ukrainian positions and settlements in northern Kharkiv Oblast and that promised F-16 fighter jets will act as a deterrent to drive Russian aircraft back from the frontline.[50]

Georgia-based open-source intelligence organization Conflict Intelligence Team (CIT) stated on May 30 that restrictions on Ukraine's ability to use Western-provided weapons to strike targets in Russia have allowed Russian forces to freely operate Lancet loitering munitions just across the border in

Belgorod Oblast and conduct an increased number of successful Lancet strikes against Ukrainian forces.[51] CIT observed footage of at least 33 successful Lancet strikes against Ukrainian targets in northern Kharkiv Oblast since the beginning of Russia's offensive operations in the area on May 10. A Russian milblogger that tracks Ukrainian vehicle losses claimed that Russian forces have conducted 296 Lancet strikes in Ukraine between May 1 and 31, and CIT noted that Russian forces only conducted 178 Lancet strikes in Ukraine in March 2024.[52] CIT attributed Russian forces' increased use of Lancet loitering munitions to increased Russian domestic production of Lancets and favorable conditions for Lancet strikes in northern Kharkiv Oblast.[53] CIT stated that Russian forces have continuous surveillance over the limited number of roads and highways in northern Kharkiv Oblast, making it difficult for Ukrainian vehicles to move undetected. CIT noted that Western restrictions on Ukraine's ability to strike targets in Russia have allowed Russian Lancet operators to operate within Russian border areas without fear of retaliatory Ukrainian strikes with HIMARS or other Western-provided MLRS systems, which has increased the effectiveness of Russian drone targeting.

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Kharkiv as of May 31, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



- Significant Fighting in the past 24 Hours
- Assessed Russian Advances in Ukraine*
- Reported Ukrainian Partisan Warfare
- Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory before February 24
- Claimed Russian Control over Ukrainian Territory
- Russian Field Fortifications
- Assessed Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory
- Claimed Ukrainian Counteroffensives

* Assessed Russian advances are areas where ISW assesses Russian forces have operated in or launched attacks against but do not control.

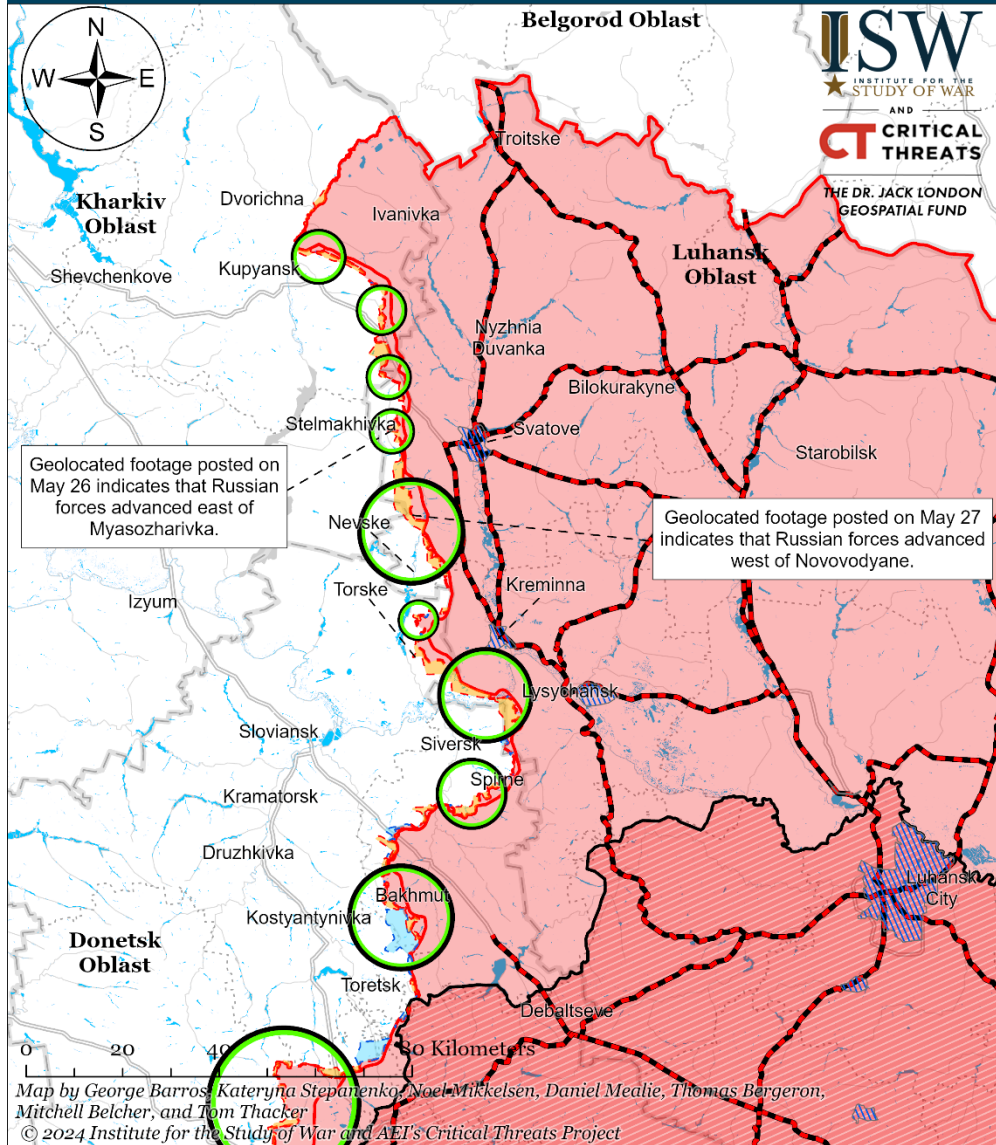
Note: A Russian source claimed on May 31 that Russian forces advanced 450 meters in Vovchansk. A Russian source claimed on May 30 that Russian forces advanced 150 meters deep in the Lyptsi direction. A Russian source claimed on May 28 that Russian forces advanced up to 600 meters near Vovchansk. A Russian source claimed on May 28 that Russian forces advanced 200 meters near Lyptsi.

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 along the Kupyansk-Svatove-Kreminna line on May 31, but there were no confirmed changes to the frontline. A Russian milblogger claimed on May 31 that Russian forces entered Myasozharivka (west of Svatove), although ISW has not observed confirmation of this claim.[54] Russian forces continued offensive operations northeast of Kupyansk near Synkivka; east of Kupyansk near Petropavlivka; northwest of Svatove near Stepova Novoselivka, Ivanivka, and Berestove; west of Svatove near Myasozharivka and Andriivka; southwest of Svatove near Druzhelyubivka and Novoyehorivka; northwest of Kreminna near Makiivka; west of Kreminna near Terny; and south of Kreminna near Dibrova and the Serebryanske forest area on May 30 and May 31.[55] The spokesperson for a Ukrainian brigade operating in the Kupyansk direction stated on May 31 that Russian forces have increased attempts to find weak spots in the Ukrainian defense but that this intensified activity has only resulted in greater Russian equipment and manpower losses.[56] Elements of the Russian 752nd Motorized Rifle Regiment (3rd Motorized Rifle Division, 20th Combined Arms Army, [CAA], Moscow Military District [MMD]) are reportedly operating near Novoyehorivka.[57]

Luhansk People's Republic (LNR) head Leonid Pasechnik's Press Secretary Anna Romanova claimed on May 30 that Ukrainian forces struck a gas pipeline in occupied Pervomaisk (west of Luhansk City) with an unspecified number of HIMARS rockets.[58]

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Luhansk Oblast as of May 31, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



- Significant Fighting in the past 24 Hours
- Russian Ground Lines of Communication
- Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory before February 24
- - - Assessed Russian Advances in Ukraine*
- Assessed Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory
- Claimed Russian Control over Ukrainian Territory
- Claimed Ukrainian Counteroffensives
- Reported Ukrainian Partisan Warfare

* Assessed Russian advances are areas where ISW assesses Russian forces have operated in or launched attacks against but do not control.

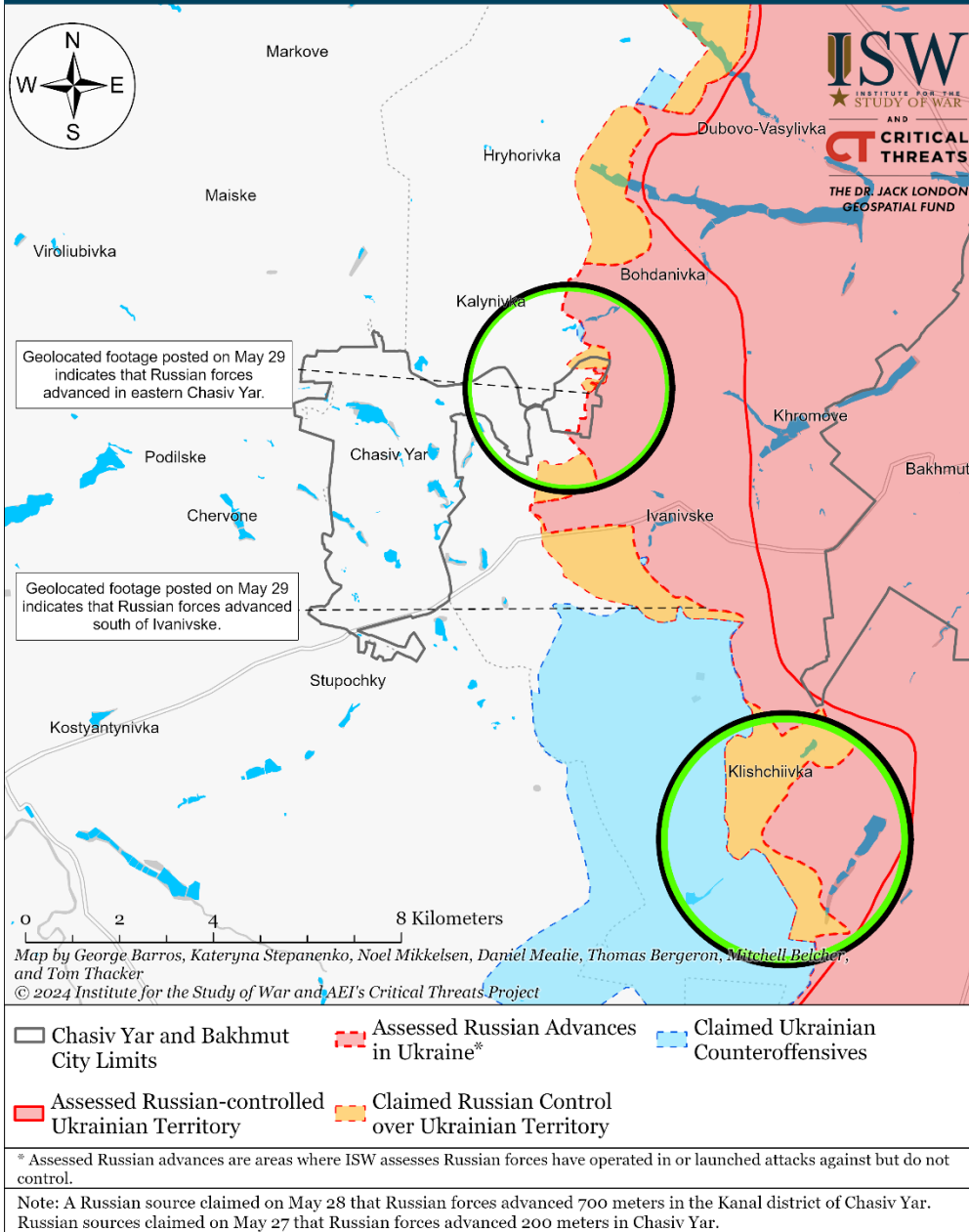
Note: Russian sources claimed on May 28 that Russian forces advanced between one and 1.43 kilometers near Myasozharivka. A Russian source claimed on May 28 that Russian forces advanced 400 meters near Berestove.

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

The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces conducted offensive operations in the Siversk direction near Vyimka and Berestove (both southeast of Siversk) and Rozdolikva (south of Siversk) on May 30 and 31.[59] Elements of the Russian 7th Motorized Rifle Brigade (2nd Luhansk People's Republic [LNR] Army Corps [AC]) are reportedly operating near Nykyforivka (southwest of Siversk).[60]

Russian forces continued offensive operations near Chasiv Yar on May 31, but there were no confirmed changes to the frontline in this area. Ukrainian military observer Kostyantyn Mashovets stated that Russian forces recently advanced to the intersection of the Siversky-Donets Donbas canal and the T0504 Chasiv Yar-Kostyantynivka highway south of Chasiv Yar and to the eastern outskirts of Kalynivka (north of Chasiv Yar).[61] A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced to the central and western areas of the Kanal Microraion (easternmost Chasiv Yar), but ISW has not observed confirmation of this claim.[62] Fighting continued northeast of Chasiv Yar near Bohdanivka; north of Chasiv Yar near Kalynivka; east of Chasiv Yar near Ivanivske; in eastern Chasiv Yar; and southeast of Chasiv Yar near Andriivka and Klishchiivka on May 30 and 31.[63] Mashovets stated that elements of the Russian 98th Airborne (VDV) Division, 11th VDV Brigade, Volunteer Corps, and 102nd Motorized Rifle Regiment (150th Motorized Rifle Division, 8th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Southern Military District [SMD]) are operating near the Kanal Microraion; elements of the 200th Motorized Rifle Brigade (14th AC, Leningrad Military District [LMD]) are operating along the Bohdanivka-Kalynivka line; and elements of the 6th Motorized Rifle Division (3rd AC) are operating near Klishchiivka.[64]

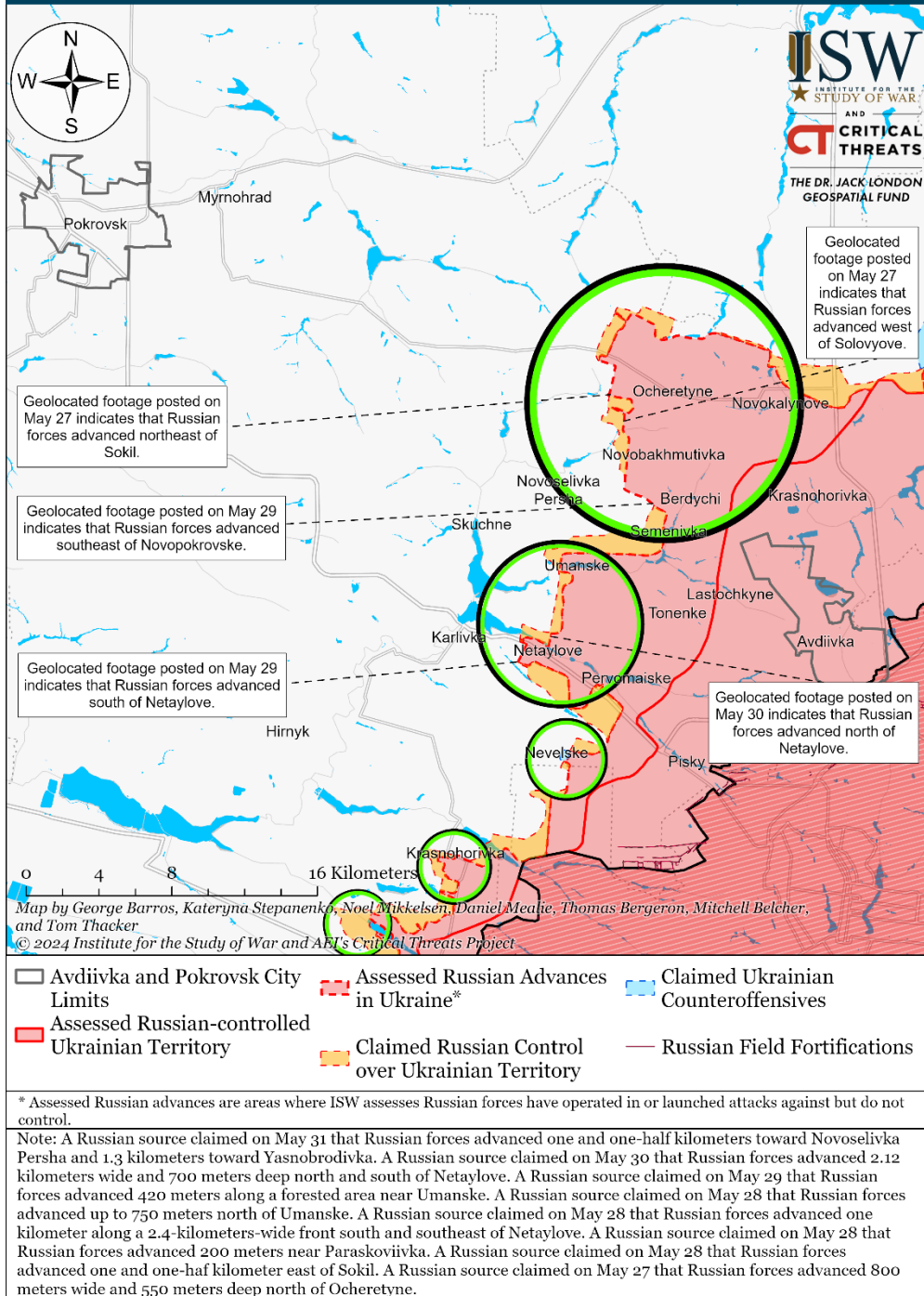
Assessed Control of Terrain near Chasiv Yar as of May 31, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



Russian forces recently advanced near Avdiivka amid ongoing Russian offensive operations in the area on May 31. Geolocated footage published on May 31 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced southeast of Novooleksandrivka (northwest of Avdiivka).[65] Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced northwest of Avdiivka near Kalynove and west of Avdiivka near Umanske, Semenivka, Yasnobrodivka, Netaylove, and Karlivka.[66] One Russian source claimed that Russian forces advanced 1.5 kilometers towards Novoselivka Persha (northwest of Avdiivka) and 1.3 kilometers along the Karlivka Reservoir towards Yasnobrodivka.[67] ISW has not observed confirmation of these

Russian claims, however. A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian counterattacks near Sokil (northwest of Avdiivka) are hindering Russian advances.[68] The spokesperson for a Ukrainian brigade operating in the Avdiivka direction stated that Russian forces usually attack in groups of about six personnel and have mostly stopped using armored vehicles, but that Ukrainian forces have recently observed Russian forces using Soviet-era T-62 tanks in the area.[69] Fighting continued northwest of Avdiivka near Kalynove, Novooleksandrivka, Ocheretyne, Sokil, Yevhenivka, Prohres, and Novoselivka Persha; west of Avdiivka near Yasnobrodivka, Netaylove, and Umanske; and southwest of Avdiivka near Nevelske on May 30 and 31.[70] Mashovets stated that elements of the Russian 239th Tank Regiment and 228th Motorized Rifle Regiment (both of the 90th Tank Division, 41st CAA, Central Military District [CMD]) and the 1st Motorized Rifle Brigade (1st Donetsk People's Republic [DNR] AC) are operating near Netaylove and Umanske; elements of the 15th Motorized Rifle Brigade (2nd CAA, CMD) and 55th Motorized Rifle Brigade (41st CAA, CMD) are operating in the Sokil-Novopokrovske direction; elements of the 114th Motorized Rifle Brigade (1st DNR AC) and 74th Motorized Rifle Brigade (41st CAA, CMD) are operating in the Semenivka-Novoselivka Persha direction; and elements of the 35th Motorized Rifle Brigade (41st CAA, CMD) and 132nd Motorized Rifle Brigade (1st DNR AC) are operating in the Keramik-Oleksandropil (north of Avdiivka) direction.[71]

Assessed Control of Terrain Northwest of Avdiivka as of May 31, 2024, 3:00 PM ET

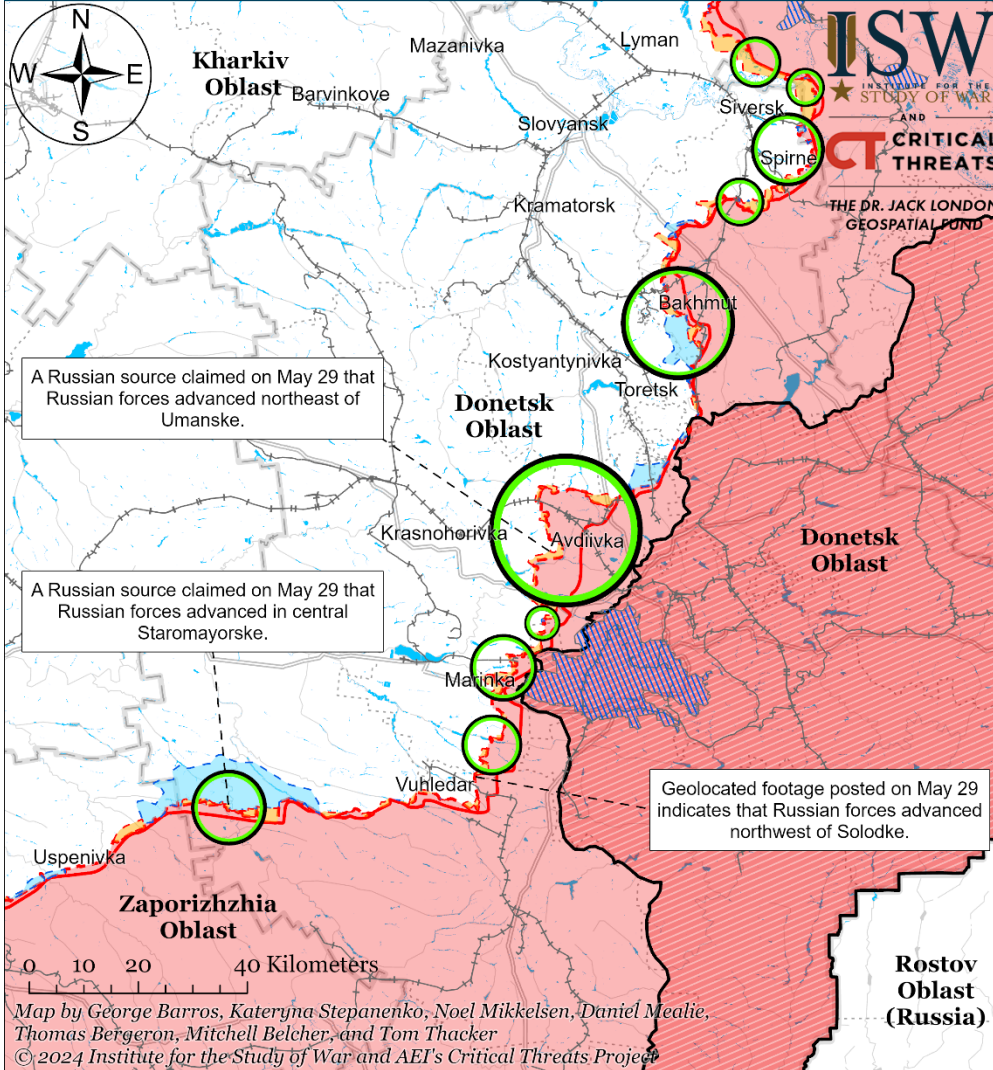


Russian forces recently advanced west of Donetsk City amid continued Russian offensive operations in the area on May 31. Geolocated footage published on May 30 indicates that Russian forces advanced to the city council building in central Krasnohorivka (west of Donetsk City).[72] A Russian milblogger

claimed that Russian forces advanced in an area of two square kilometers west of Solodke (southwest of Donetsk City).[73] A Russian source claimed that Ukrainian first-person view (FPV) drones are hindering Russian forces' ability to field vehicles to support infantry near Krasnohorivka.[74] Fighting continued west of Donetsk City near Krasnohorivka and Heorhiivka and southwest of Donetsk City near Novomykhailivka, Kostyantynivka, Paraskoviivka, and Vodyane.[75] Elements of the Russian 5th Motorized Rifle Brigade (1st DNR AC) are reportedly operating within Krasnohorivka; elements of the 39th Motorized Rifle Brigade (68th AC, Eastern Military District [EMD]) and 238th Artillery Brigade (8th CAA, SMD) are reportedly operating near Kostyantynivka; elements of the 14th Spetsnaz Brigade (subordinate to the Russian General Staff's Main Intelligence Directorate [GRU]) are reportedly operating near Vuhledar; and elements of the 255th Motorized Regiment (20th Motorized Rifle Division, 8th CAA, SMD) are reportedly operating in the Kurakhove (Marinka) direction.[76]

Positional engagements continued in the Donetsk-Zaporizhia Oblast border area on May 31. Positional engagements continued near Staromayorske and Urozhaine (both south of Velyka Novosilka).[77] Elements of the Russian 11th Air Force and Air Defense Army (Russian Aerospace Forces [VKS] and EMD) are reportedly operating near Urozhaine.[78]

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Donetsk as of May 31, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



- Significant Fighting in the past 24 Hours
- Assessed Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory
- Claimed Russian Control over Ukrainian Territory
- Claimed Ukrainian Counteroffensives
- ⚡ Assessed Russian Advances in Ukraine*
- Reported Ukrainian Partisan Warfare
- +— Major Railroads

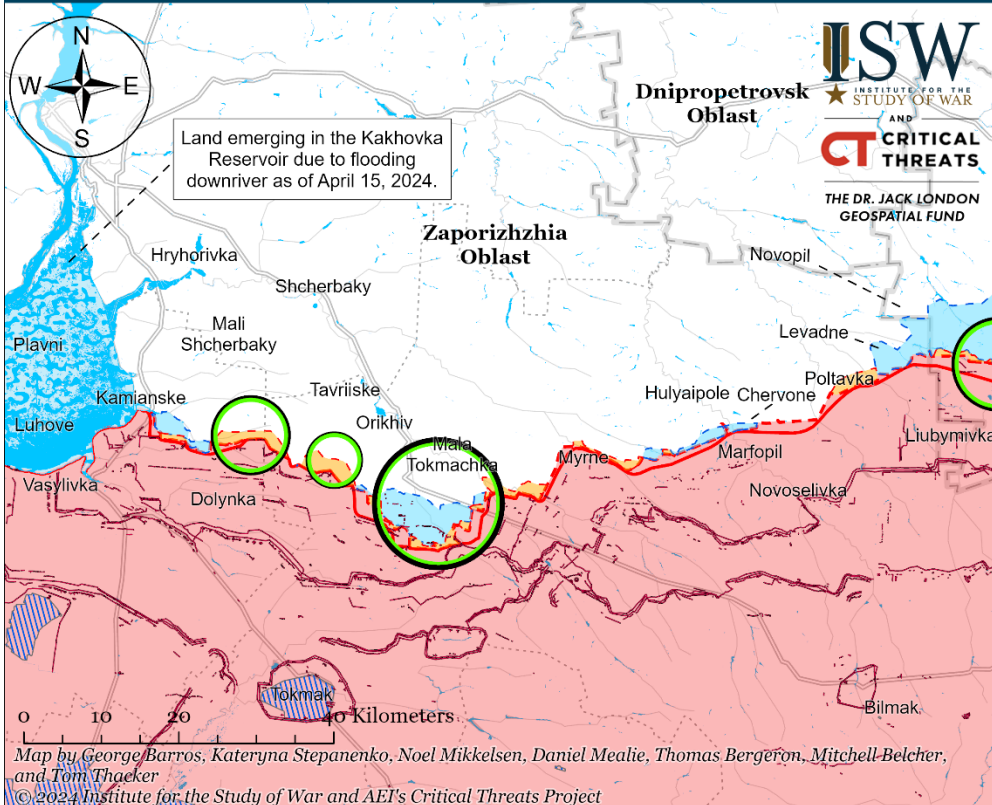
* Assessed Russian advances are areas where ISW assesses Russian forces have operated in or launched attacks against but do not control.

Note: A Russian source claimed on May 31 that Russian forces seized two square kilometers of territory west of Solodke. A Russian source claimed on May 30 that Russian forces seized 70 percent of west of Staromayorske. A Russian source claimed on May 29 that Russian forces established a foothold west of Staromayorske and advanced along a 700 meter deep and two kilometer wide frontline into the settlement. A Russian source claimed on May 28 that Russian forces advanced along a 100 meter deep and 200 meter wide frontline in Urozhaine and advanced 300 meters west of the settlement. A Russian source claimed on May 28 that Russian forces advanced one kilometer in the Siversk direction.

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

Russian forces continued ground attacks in western Zaporizhia Oblast, but there were no confirmed changes to the frontline. A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced up to two kilometers near Mala Tokmachka (northeast of Robotyne) over the past week and that Russian forces recently seized several windbreaks in unspecified areas of the Zaporizhia direction, although ISW has not observed confirmation of these claims.[79] Another Russian milblogger noted that Russian forces recently intensified their offensive efforts south of Shcherbaky (northwest of Robotyne).[80] Russian forces conducted assaults near Robotyne, Verbove (east of Robotyne), Mala Tokmachka, Mali Shcherbaky (northwest of Robotyne), and Novoandriivka (northwest of Robotyne) on May 30 and 31.[81]

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Zaporizhzhia as of May 31, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



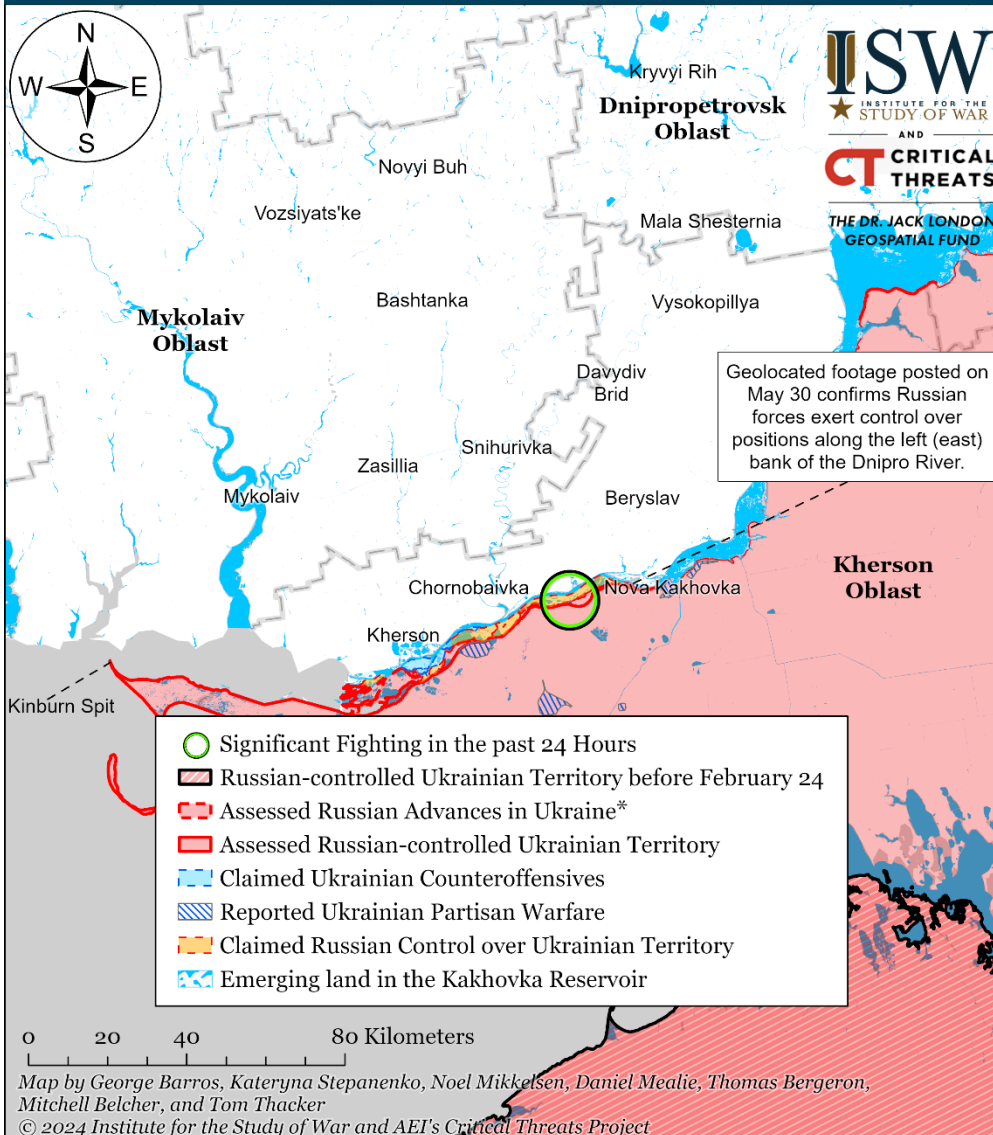
- Significant Fighting in the past 24 Hours
- Assessed Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory
- Claimed Ukrainian Counteroffensives
- Assessed Russian Advances in Ukraine*
- Claimed Russian Control over Ukrainian Territory
- Reported Ukrainian Partisan Warfare
- Emerging land in the Kakhovka Reservoir
- Russian Field Fortifications

* Assessed Russian advances are areas where ISW assesses Russian forces have operated in or launched attacks against but do not control.

Note: A Russian source claimed on May 31 that Russian forces advanced two kilometers near Mala Tokmachka in the past week.

Russian forces continued assaults in east (left) bank Kherson Oblast near Krynyky and in the Dnipro River delta near Nestryha Island on May 30 and 31, but there were no confirmed changes to the frontline.[82] A Russian milblogger claimed that elements of the Russian 810th Naval Infantry Brigade (Black Sea Fleet [BSF]) are operating in the Dnipro River delta and that Russian forces have recently seized the tactical initiative in the delta area.[83]

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Kherson and Mykolaiv as of May 31, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



* Assessed Russian advances are areas where ISW assesses Russian forces have operated in or launched attacks against but do not control.

Note: The Ukrainian counteroffensive layer displays areas previously assigned to the Russian control, Russian advances, or Russian claims layers where ISW now assesses that Ukrainian forces have established a presence beyond a short-term raid. Inclusion of an area on this layer does not imply that ISW assesses that the area is part of any upcoming Ukrainian counteroffensive operation.

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 limited series of missile and drone strikes against Ukraine on the night of May 30 to 31. Ukrainian officials reported that Russian forces launched five S-300/S-400 missiles at Kharkiv City from Belgorod Oblast, an Iskander-K ballistic missile at Kyiv City from Kursk Oblast, and

four Shahed-136/131 drones from Yeysk, Krasnodar Krai.[84] Ukrainian officials reported that Ukrainian forces destroyed the Iskander-K ballistic missile and all four Shahed drones over Kyiv, Zaporizhia, and Dnipropetrovsk oblasts.[85] Kharkiv Oblast Prosecutor's Office reported that Russian forces struck Novobavarskyi Raion in Kharkiv City with the five S-300/S-400 missiles.[86]

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

Russian State Duma Information Policy Committee Chairperson Alexander Khinshtein announced on May 30 that he and Duma Security Committee Chairperson Vasily Piskarev submitted a bill for the Duma's consideration that would eliminate toll fees for Russian military, Rosgvardia, and Federal Security Service (FSB) vehicles.[87] Russian milbloggers celebrated the bill and claimed it was the result of months of "public outcry."[88]

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

Russian forces continue to develop new missile and drone innovations for use in Ukraine. Russia has reportedly developed a new S-80FP "armor piercing" variant of the S-8 "NAR" unguided aerial rocket to conduct airstrikes against light and heavy armored vehicles.[89] Russian company Integrated Robotic Technologies (IRT) reportedly developed the "IRT-Scout" first-person view (FPV) drone made of foam with a maximum speed of 90 kilometers per hour, range of 50 kilometers, flight time of up to 60 minutes, and payload of 200 grams.[90] The "IRT-Scout" is reportedly resistant to electronic warfare (EW) and easily repairable because it is made of foam.

Ukrainian Defense Industrial Efforts (Ukrainian objective: Develop its defense industrial base to become more self-sufficient in cooperation with US, European, and international partners)

ISW is not publishing coverage of Ukrainian defense industrial efforts today.

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)

Russian and occupation officials continue efforts to strengthen logistics lines within occupied Ukraine and between occupied areas and Russia. Ukraine-based open source organization Frontelligence Insight assessed on May 29 that Russia is "weeks or days" away from launching a new 80-kilometer rail line between Burne and Malovodne, Donetsk Oblast to create a direct rail link between occupied southern Ukraine and Russia as an alternative to the Kerch Strait Bridge.[91] Frontelligence Insight reported that satellite imagery indicates that Russia is moving trains on this new rail line but that it is unclear whether these trains are test trains or trains involved in railroad construction. Frontelligence Insight assessed that this rail line would be able to supply occupied southern Ukraine even if the Kerch Strait Bridge was destroyed. Ukrainian officials stated in March and April 2024 that Russian forces have stopped using the Kerch Strait railway bridge for military and logistics transport and also stopped using the road bridge for fuel transport.[92] Kherson Oblast occupation officials reported on May 29 that occupation authorities have repaired 109.5 kilometers of the Novotroitske-Chaplynka and Askaniya Nova-Dzhankoi roads that comprise parts of an envisioned 1,400-kilometer "land corridor"

connecting Rostov Oblast to Crimea through occupied Ukraine, bypassing the Kerch Strait Bridge.[93] Kherson Oblast occupation chairperson Andrei Alekseyenko stated on May 31 that the Novotroitske-Chaplynka highway is almost complete.[94]

Russian authorities continue to indoctrinate Ukrainian children with Russian military-patriotic education as part of Russia's genocidal campaign to eradicate Ukrainian national and cultural identities. The Kherson Oblast occupation administration reported on May 29 that it sent 36 Ukrainian teenage minors to Volgograd for a 21-day military training camp and that more Ukrainian children have previously traveled to a similar camp in Vladivostok.[95] The occupation Kherson Oblast military administration reported on May 30 that 20 cadets – all Ukrainian minors – at a school in occupied Henichesk Raion will begin attending the school's first cadet class and that the school may form another cadet class during the new academic year.[96] The Ukrainian Resistance Center reported on May 30 that Russia is planning to introduce a new course on the "fundamentals of security and protection of the [Russian] Motherland" covering tactical medicine, military training, and operating drones, grenades, and assault rifles.[97] The Ukrainian Resistance Center reported that this class is mandatory for all high school students in occupied Ukraine and that Russia aims to create more cadet classes in occupied territories.

Kremlin Commissioner on Children's Rights Maria Lvova-Belova claimed on May 31 that Russia has helped reunite 70 Ukrainian children with their relatives in Ukraine or other countries, likely in a continued attempt to distract from her and the Kremlin's roles in the forced deportation of Ukrainian children to Russia.[98] Lvova-Belova has continuously attempted to distract from Russia's illegal deportations of Ukrainian children and adults, and a recent investigation from opposition outlet *Vazhnye Istorii* implicated Lvova-Belova and her sister in the forced deportation of special needs Ukrainian adults to Russia.[99]

Russian Information Operations and Narratives

Russian Security Council Deputy Chairperson Dmitry Medvedev responded to the change in US and Western policy permitting Ukraine to use Western-provided weapons to strike military targets within Russia and threatened escalation in an attempt to encourage Western self-deterrence and further frame the war in Ukraine as a wider war against the West.[100] Medvedev claimed on May 31 that Western permission for Ukraine to strike within Russia with Western-provided weapons is a possible *casus belli*. [101] Medvedev also engaged in tired Russian nuclear saber-rattling by invoking the fear of nuclear confrontation between Russia and the West.[102]

Russian officials continue informational efforts to justify future escalation against Baltic states. The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) announced on May 31 that the Russian research group "Association for Baltic Studies" will hold a conference entitled "Baltic Fascism: Evidence for the Future Tribunal" in St. Petersburg on June 3 with support from the St. Petersburg City Committee for External Relations.[103] The event will reportedly address alleged violations against Russian-speaking populations in Baltic countries, and the Russian MFA stated that organizations supporting "compatriots abroad" will attend the event.[104] The Kremlin has long been setting information conditions for hybrid operations against Baltic states in the name of protecting "compatriots abroad," and the allusion to a "tribunal" is similar to routine calls from Russian officials to try Ukrainians for alleged crimes against ethnic Russians and Russian speakers after an envisioned Russian victory in Ukraine.[105] The Kremlin has added European officials to Russia's wanted list, primarily from Baltic

states, and appears to be asserting the jurisdiction of Russian federal law over sovereign NATO member states.[106] Russian rhetorical efforts to identify and charge Baltic officials with imagined crimes against Russia and its "compatriots abroad" likely aim to give Russia justifications for future escalation.[107]

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

Russian President Vladimir Putin and Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko had a telephone conversation on May 31 and discussed the bilateral relationship and the upcoming Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit in Kazakhstan in July 2024.[108] The Kremlin noted that SCO members are expected to adopt a decision conferring SCO member status on Belarus.[109]

The Russian Ministry of Defense published footage on May 31 of Russian pilots participating in ongoing joint tactical flight exercises with Belarusian pilots in Belarus.[110]

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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