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**January 17, 2025, 7pm 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 12pm ET on January 17. ISW will cover subsequent reports in the January 18 Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment.**

**Russian President Vladimir Putin and Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian signed the Russia-Iran Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Agreement on January 17.[1]** The agreement addresses issues spanning enhanced defense cooperation, intelligence sharing, nuclear energy use and cooperation, transportation support and development of the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC), and a clause stipulating that neither party shall allow third parties to use their territory to threaten the security of the other among other economic and social areas of partnership. The agreement notably includes the unspecified development of "military-technical cooperation" between the two countries, which could allude to Iran's extensive export of domestically-produced Shahed drones and other military equipment for Russia's use in Ukraine, Iran's assistance in Russia's domestic production of Shahed drones, and possible efforts to expand Russia's use and production of Shaheds.[2]

The bilateral agreement could also lay the groundwork for Russia to establish aircraft refueling hubs and a naval presence in Iran, particularly as the fall of Russian ally Bashar al-Assad's regime and overall waning of Russian influence in the Middle East threatens the presence of key Russian bases and assets in Syria.[3] Russia could use Iranian territory to support some of its operations in North Africa and the Middle East despite Iran's suboptimal geographic location when compared to Syria's proximity to Russia's basing in Libya and the Mediterranean Sea. Russia may also use the agreement to establish a

more permanent military presence in Iran in the long term. However, Iran may be reluctant to such efforts due to the possibility of further Western sanctions and retaliation.

Russia may leverage enhanced economic and transportation ties with Iran to further Western sanctions evasion efforts and mitigate economic challenges brought about by sanctions - a broader strategy Russia has established with multiple international partners to circumvent restrictions and alleviate domestic economic pressures.[4]

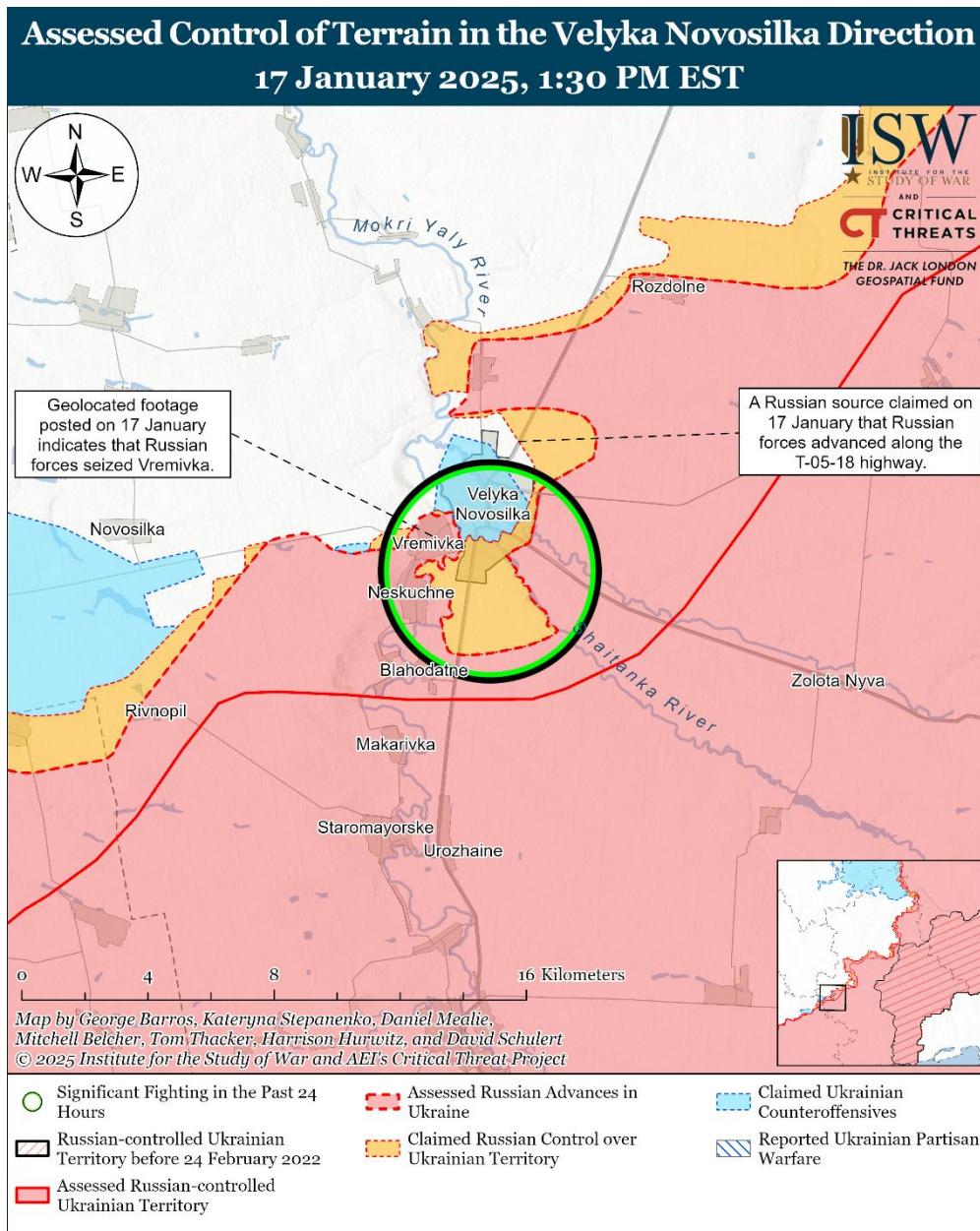
**The Russia-Iran Comprehensive Strategic Partnership agreement lacks a mutual defense clause, however, indicating that Russia likely lacks the bandwidth to support significant operations outside of Ukraine and is prioritizing its manpower needs through its mutual defense treaty with North Korea.** Russia likely does not have the military and defense industrial capacity to support any significant military operations apart from its war in Ukraine, especially as Russia continues to suffer high personnel losses and is reportedly struggling to produce and refurbish enough armored vehicles to replace destroyed vehicles.[5] Putin is likely wary of intensified Russian engagements in the Middle East after Russia's strategic political defeat in Syria following the collapse of the Assad regime and is likely to focus on negotiations with the interim Syrian government to maintain the Russian military presence at the Hmeimim Air Base and the Port of Tartus.[6]

Russia appears to be valuing its ability to mitigate its manpower constraints by leveraging the mutual defense clause within its Strategic Partnership agreement with North Korea to deploy North Korean forces to Kursk Oblast over further military-technical cooperation with Iran.[7] ISW previously assessed that Russia is deploying North Korean forces to operations in Kursk Oblast in order to free up Russian military personnel for operations in Ukraine.[8] Russia is likely to prioritize addressing its manpower issues through defense agreements with North Korea, as Iran is unlikely to provide military personnel to support Russia's war in Ukraine, and Russia has been leveraging its military-technical ties with Iran since 2022 without a strategic partnership agreement.

**Russian forces seized Vremivka on January 17 as part of their efforts to envelop Velyka Novosilka and force Ukrainian forces to withdraw from the settlement.** Geolocated footage published on January 27 shows elements of the Russian 127th Motorized Rifle Division (5th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Eastern Military District [EMD]) planting a Russian flag in northwestern Vremivka (just west of Velyka Novosilka), indicating that Russian forces recently seized the settlement.[9] Russian milbloggers also credited elements of the 60th Motorized Rifle Brigade (5th CAA, EMD) with the seizure of Vremivka and claimed that Russian forces seized the settlement within three days (since January 14) and advanced northeast of Velyka Novosilka, further north of Vremivka, and southeast of Novosilka (west of Velyka Novosilka).[10] Russian forces continued attacking near Velyka Novosilka and Vremivka on January 16 and 17.[11] Russian forces have recently prioritized the interdiction of the Velyka Novosilka-Hulyaipole O-0510 highway and advances southwest of Velyka Novosilka, including into Vremivka, as Russian advances east and north of Velyka Novosilka stalled in December 2024.[12] It remains unclear if Russian forces intend to attack directly into Velyka Novosilka itself or immediately west and northwest of Velyka Novosilka to envelop the settlement, but Ukrainian defensive operations will likely complicate Russian advances in either area.

The spokesperson of a Ukrainian brigade operating in the Velyka Novosilka direction stated on January 17 that Russian forces have a three-to-one personnel advantage in the area and are operating in teams

of four to five personnel.[13] Russian forces may intend to leverage their manpower advantage in the area to close the roughly three kilometers between the forwardmost points of the assessed Russian forward line of own troops north and west of Velyka Novosilka in the coming weeks.



**Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and Russian President Vladimir Putin had a phone call on January 17 indicating the Kremlin's growing concerns over Armenia's deepening ties with the West.** The Armenian Prime Minister's Office stated on January 17 that Pashinyan and Putin discussed the results of Armenia's 2024 presidency of the Russian-led Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), upcoming EAEU activities, and unspecified bilateral issues.[14] The Kremlin claimed that Pashinyan and Putin also addressed deepening integration within the EAEU and highlighted how the EAEU benefits the Armenian economy.[15] The Kremlin claimed that Pashinyan explained Armenia's "recent actions" regarding its relations with the European Union (EU) - likely

referring to the Armenian government's January 9 approval of an EU accession bill - although the Armenian read out of the meeting did not mention this.[16]

The Pashinyan-Putin conversation also comes shortly after the January 14 launch of the Armenia-US Strategic Partnership, which sparked speculation within the Russian information space about Armenia distancing itself and possibly withdrawing from the EAEU - a claim that Armenian officials have denied.[17] Putin's emphasis on EAEU cooperation and acknowledgment of EU-Armenia relations during the phone call likely suggests that the Kremlin is increasingly concerned over Armenia's growing ties with the West, and Putin likely seeks to at least symbolically reassert Russian influence in Armenia to save face.

**Recently declassified US documents highlight the integral role of US monetary and technical assistance in expanding Ukraine's domestic drone production capabilities and how US national security is directly benefiting by integrating lessons learned from Ukraine in America's defense industry.** *The New York Times* (NYT) reported on January 17 that outgoing US President Joe Biden's administration recently declassified reports revealing that the United States made significant investments in Ukraine at the beginning of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, enabling Kyiv to rapidly expand its domestic drone production capabilities.[18] US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan recently stated that the United States began investing in Ukraine's drone production initiative in Fall 2022 and accelerated these efforts in Summer 2023. Unspecified US officials told the NYT that US aid helped "Ukraine develop a new generation of drones and revolutionize how wars are fought." Sullivan stated on January 16 that US support for Ukraine's drone production has yielded insights for American defense industrial companies and that the Biden Administration previously held a conference with US defense industrial and military leadership to assess domestic drone production innovation efforts.[19]

Ukrainian first-person view (FPV) and long-range drone capabilities and innovations continue to play a critical role in both constraining Russian mechanized maneuver on the battlefield and undermining Russia's ability to pay for and stockpile weapons for its war in Ukraine.[20] Ukrainian forces continue efforts to innovate and expand their asymmetric strike capabilities, and such capabilities will almost certainly play a critical role in the future of modern warfare both in Ukraine and globally.

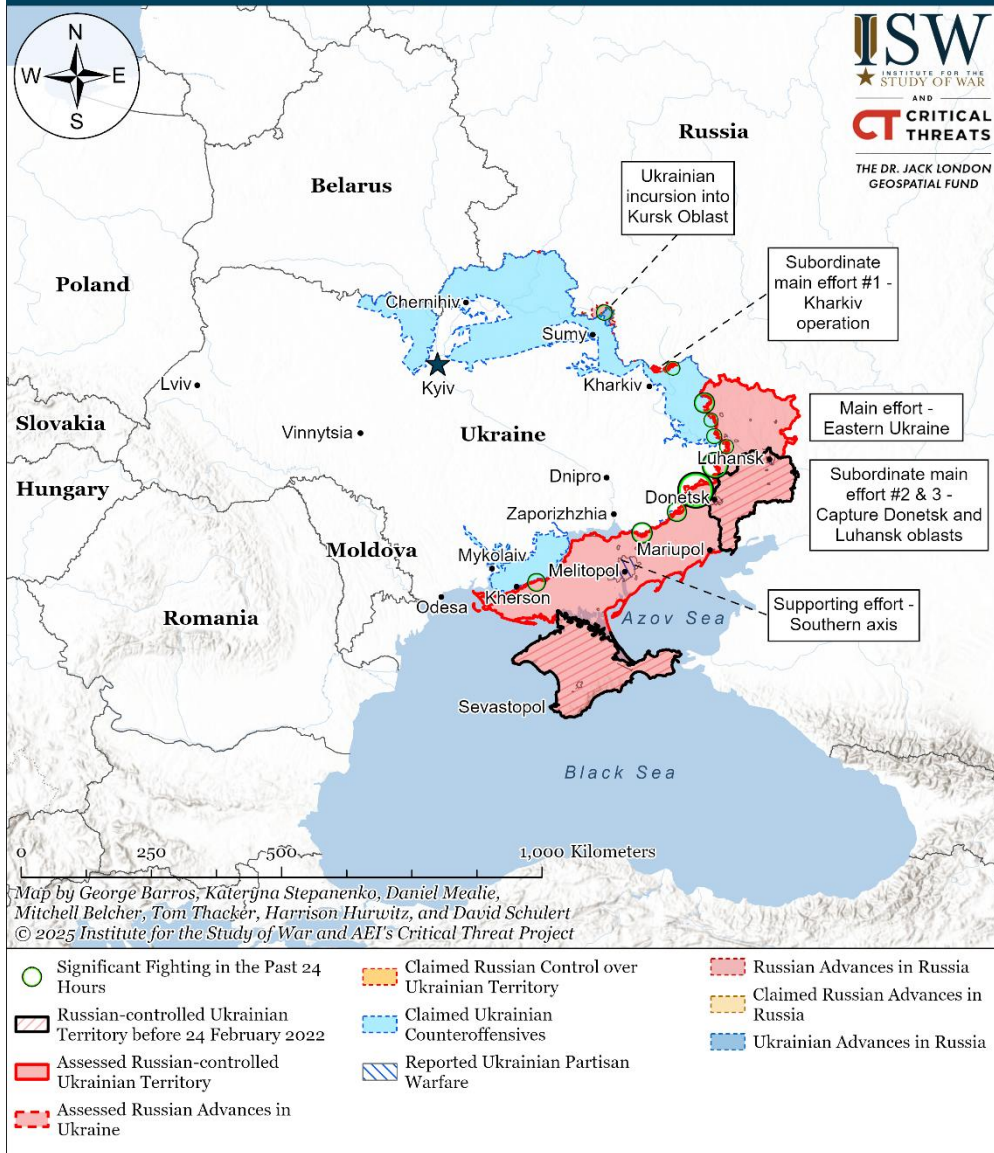
#### **Key Takeaways:**

- **Russian President Vladimir Putin and Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian signed the Russia-Iran Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Agreement on January 17.**
- **The Russia-Iran Comprehensive Strategic Partnership agreement lacks a mutual defense clause, however, indicating that Russia likely lacks the bandwidth to support significant operations outside of Ukraine and is prioritizing its manpower needs through its mutual defense treaty with North Korea.**
- **Russian forces seized Vremivka on January 17 as part of their efforts to envelop Velyka Novosilka and force Ukrainian forces to withdraw from the settlement.**

- **Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and Russian President Vladimir Putin had a phone call on January 17 indicating the Kremlin's growing concerns over Armenia's deepening ties with the West.**
- **Recently declassified US documents highlight the integral role of US monetary and technical assistance in expanding Ukraine's domestic drone production capabilities and how US national security is directly benefiting by integrating lessons learned from Ukraine in America's defense industry.**
- **Russian forces recently advanced in Kursk Oblast and the Kharkiv, Kupyansk, Borova, Toretsk, Pokrovsk, and Kurakhove directions.**
- **Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a decree on January 17 authorizing calling up Russian reservists ("personnel mobilization resource" or zapas) for training in 2025.**



## Assessed Control of Terrain in the Russo-Ukrainian War 17 January 2025, 1:30 PM EST



***We do not report in detail on Russian war crimes because these activities are well-covered in Western media and do not directly affect the military operations we are assessing and forecasting. We will continue to evaluate and report on the effects of these criminal activities on the Ukrainian military and the Ukrainian population and specifically on combat in Ukrainian urban areas. We utterly condemn Russian violations of the laws of armed conflict and the Geneva Conventions and crimes against humanity even though we do not describe them in these reports.***

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

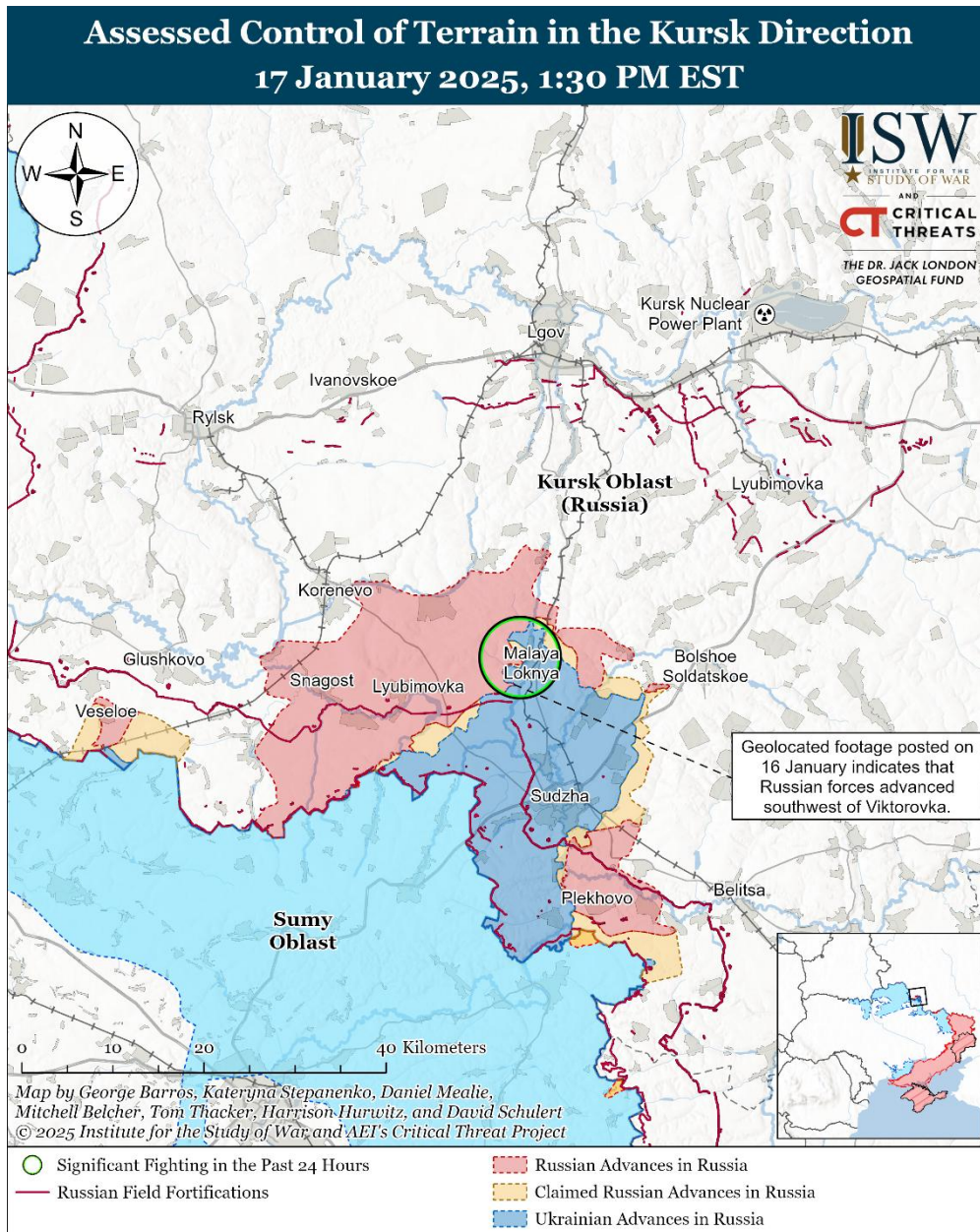
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #1 – Push Ukrainian forces back from the international border with Belgorod Oblast and approach to within tube artillery range of Kharkiv City
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #2 – Capture the remainder of Luhansk Oblast and push westward into eastern Kharkiv Oblast and encircle northern Donetsk Oblast
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #3 – Capture the entirety of Donetsk Oblast
- Russian Supporting Effort – Southern Axis
- Russian Air, Missile, and Drone Campaign
- Russian Mobilization and Force Generation Efforts
- Russian Technological Adaptations
- Activities in Russian-occupied areas
- Significant Activity in Belarus

### **Ukrainian Operations in the Russian Federation**

Russian forces recently advanced in the main Ukrainian Kursk Oblast salient amid continued fighting on January 17. Geolocated footage published on January 16 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced southwest of Viktorivka (southeast of Korenevo).[21] Fighting continued north of Sudzha near Pogrebki and Cherkasskoye Porechnoye; south of Sudzha near Makhnovka; and in the forest belts near Sudzha on January 17.[22] The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) claimed on January 17 that Russian forces have retaken 63.2 percent of the Ukrainian salient in Kursk Oblast.[23] ISW's assessment of currently available open-source data is that Russian forces have regained about 50 percent of the Ukrainian salient, however. The Russian MoD claimed that elements of the Chechen "Akhmat" Spetsnaz forces, Russian 42nd Motorized Rifle Divisions (58th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Southern Military District [SMD]), and 106th Airborne (VDV) Division recently repelled a Ukrainian counterattack in the direction of Berdin (northeast of Sudzha).[24] Ukrainian military observer Yuriy Butusov reported on January 17 that Russian forces apply "scorched earth" tactics in Kursk Oblast by leveling their settlements, such as Darino (northwest of Sudzha), to the ground.[25] A Ukrainian soldier operating in Kursk Oblast stated that Russian forces are conducting infantry assaults and assaults on all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) and motorcycles in the Kursk direction in order to conserve armored vehicles.[26] The Russian MoD credited elements of the Russian 7th and 76th VDV divisions, 83rd VDV Brigade, 155th Naval Infantry Brigade (Pacific Fleet, Eastern Military District [EMD]), 810th Naval Infantry Brigade (Black Sea Fleet [BSF], Southern Military District [SMD]), and 1427th Motorized Rifle Regiment (formed during the 2022 partial reserve call up) with seizing settlements in Kursk Oblast during the first two weeks of January 2025.[27] Elements of the Russian 106th VDV Division are reportedly operating near Nikolayevo-Darino (northwest of Sudzha), and elements of the Russian 56th VDV Regiment (7th VDV Division) are reportedly operating near Leonidovo and Alexandriya (both southeast of Korenevo).[28] Drone operators of the Russian 76th VDV Division are reportedly operating near Berdin, and drone operators of the Russian 30th Motorized Rifle Regiment (72nd

Motorized Rifle Division, 44th Army Corps [AC], Leningrad Military District [LMD]) reportedly continue operating near Cherkasskoye Porechnoye (north of Sudzha).[29]

The Ukrainian General Staff reported on January 17 that Ukrainian missile forces and other Ukrainian forces conducted strikes with precision weapons against positions of the Russian 568th Anti-Aircraft Missile Regiment in Belgorod Oblast, a 92N6 radar station of an S-400 missile system battery, and the positions of a radio engineering battalion of the Russian 336th Radio-Technical Regiment on January 16.[30]





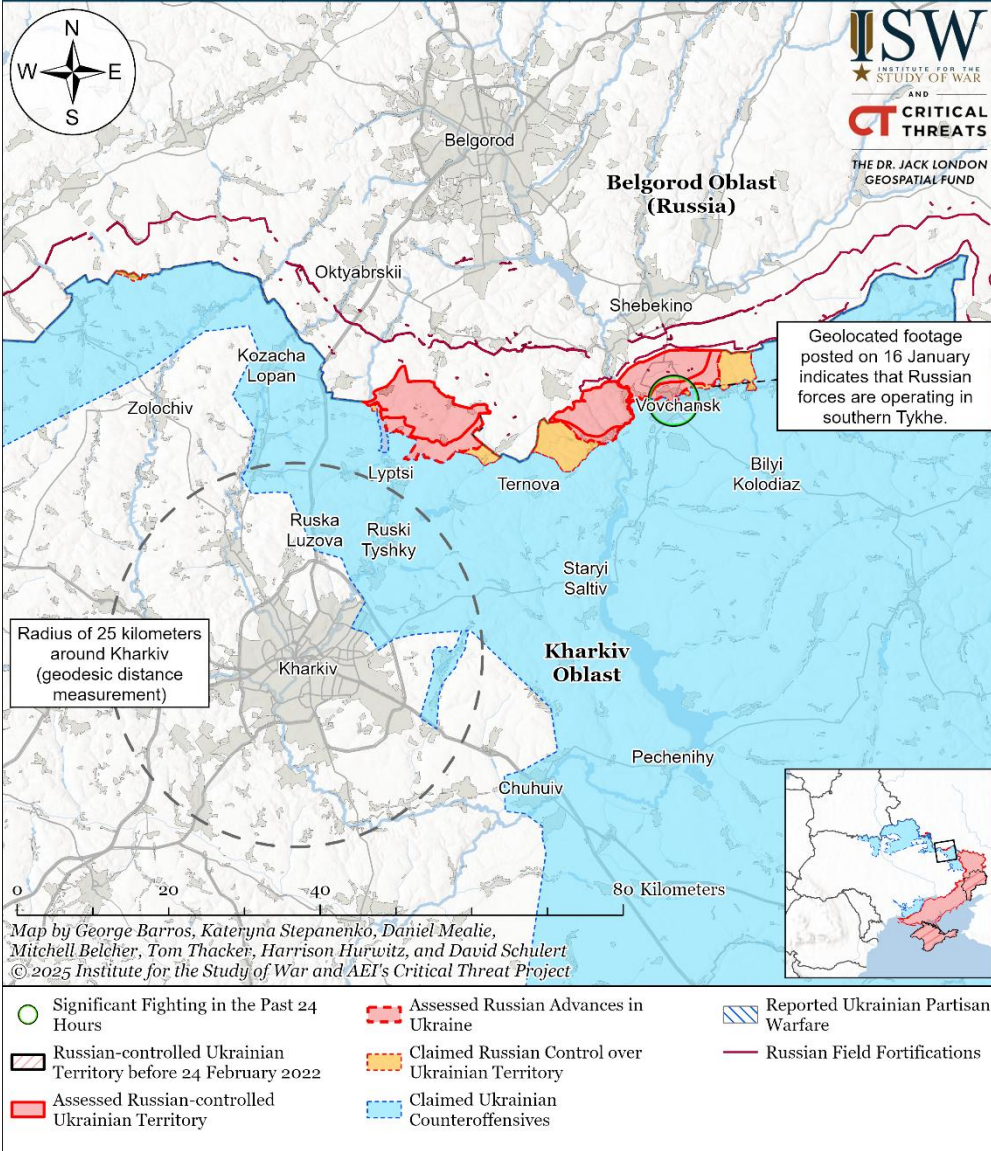
## **Russian Main Effort – Eastern Ukraine**

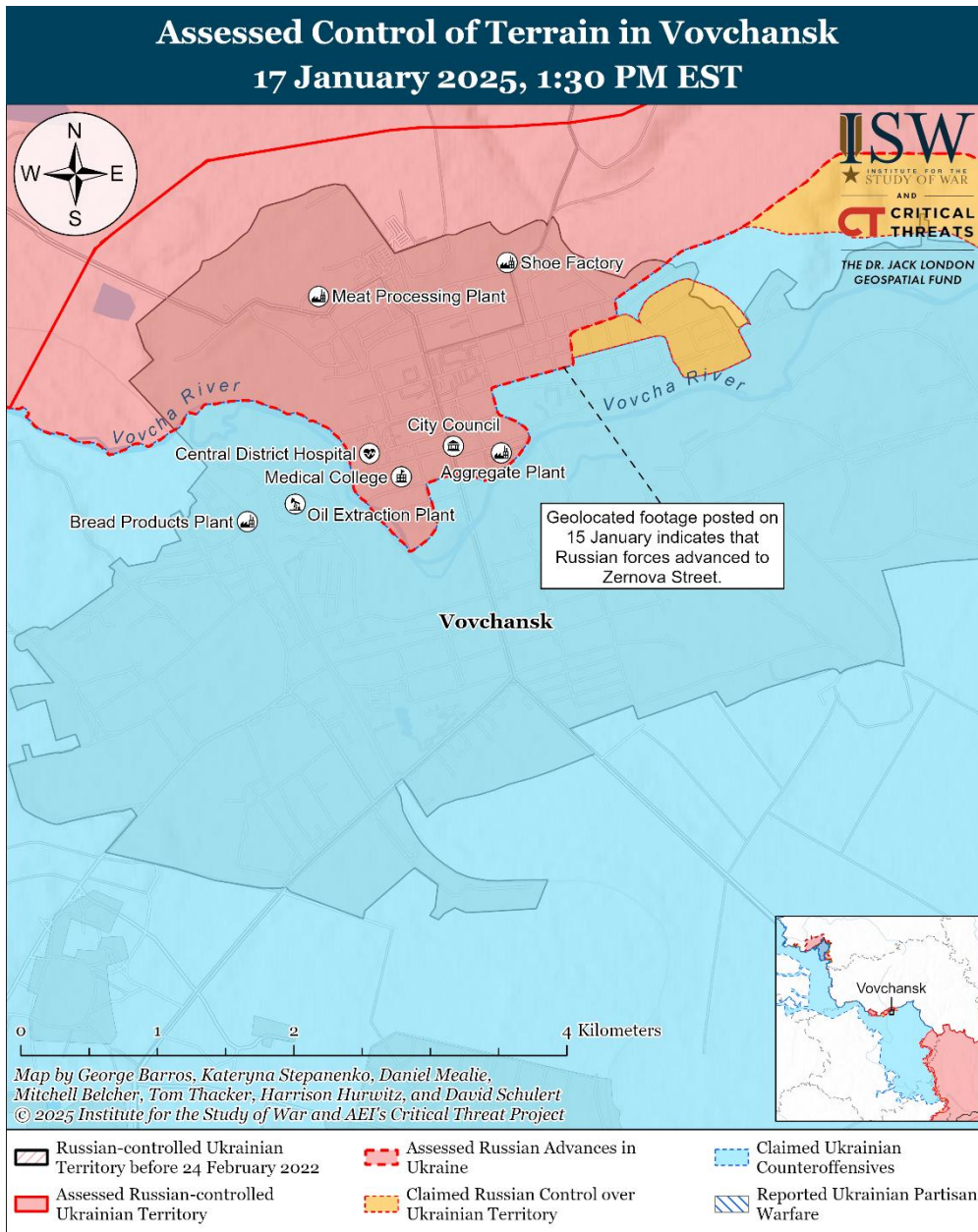
### **Russian Subordinate Main Effort #1 – Kharkiv Oblast (Russian objective: Push Ukrainian forces back from the international border with Belgorod Oblast and approach to within tube artillery range of Kharkiv City)**

Russian forces recently advanced northeast of Kharkiv City amid continued offensive operations in the area on January 17. Geolocated footage published on January 15 and 16 indicates that Russian forces recently marginally advanced to Zernova Street in northern Vovchansk (northeast of Kharkiv City) and that elements of the Russian 136th Motorized Rifle Brigade (58th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Southern Military District [SMD]) advanced along a road in southern Tykhe (northeast of Kharkiv City).[31] Russian forces continued ground attacks near Vovchansk and Tykhe on January 16 and 17.[32] Russian milbloggers claimed on January 17 that Ukrainian forces conducted three counterattacks in the Vovchansk area.[33] Ukraine's Pivnich (Northern) Operational Command Spokesperson Colonel Vadym Mysnyk reported that Russian forces have changed drone tactics along Ukraine's northern border with Russia and are now primarily using reusable drones instead of single-use (FPV) drones to drop explosives on Ukrainian positions.[34]

# Assessed Control of Terrain in the Kharkiv Direction

## 17 January 2025, 1:30 PM EST



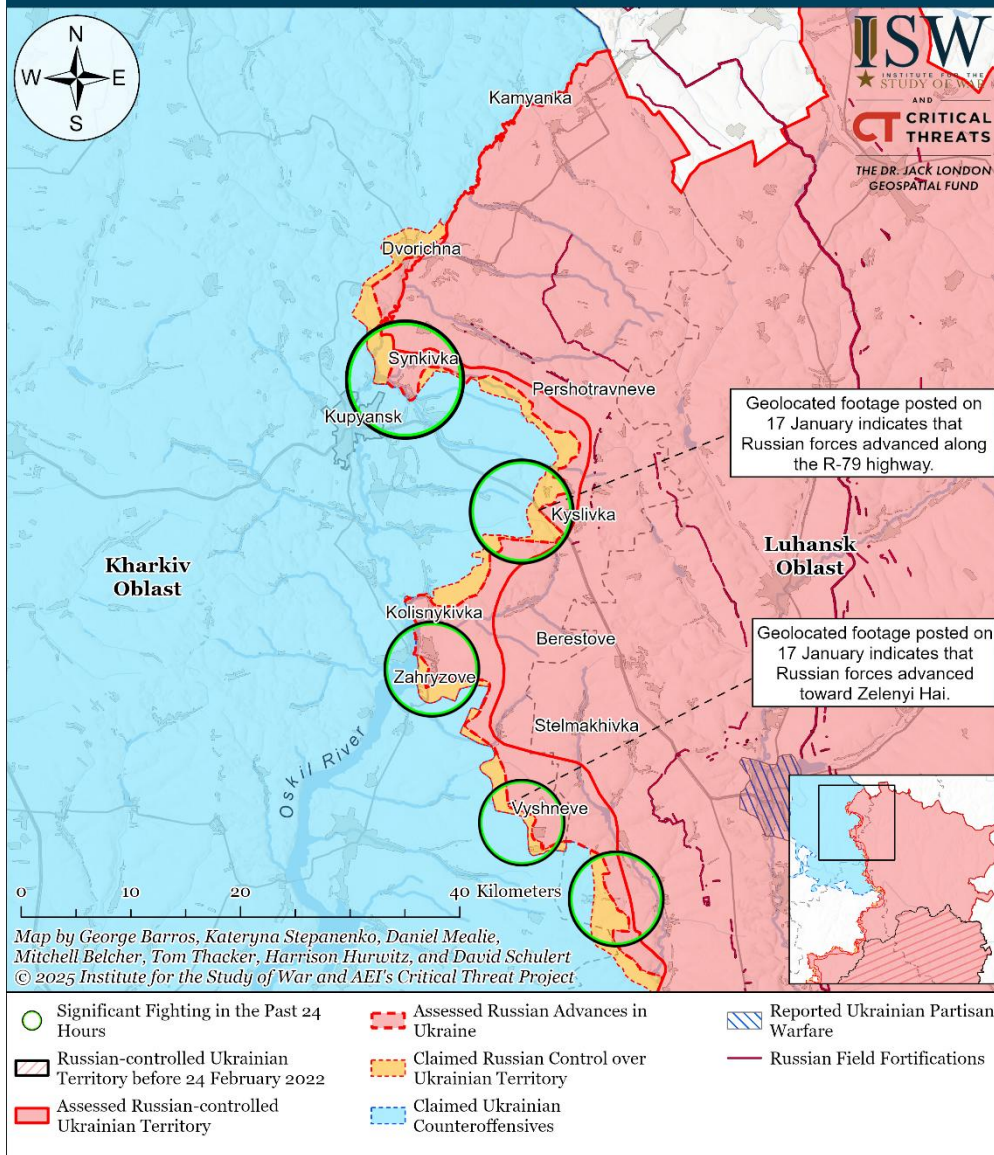


**Russian Subordinate Main Effort #2 – Luhansk Oblast (Russian objective: Capture the remainder of Luhansk Oblast and push westward into eastern Kharkiv Oblast and northern Donetsk Oblast)**

Russian forces recently marginally advanced in the Kupyansk direction amid continued offensive operations on January 17. Geolocated footage published on January 17 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced northwestward along the P-07 Svatove-Kupyansk highway southwest of Stepova Novoselivka (southeast of Kupyansk).[35] A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces are advancing towards the P-79 Kupyansk-Dvorichna highway south of Dvorichna (north of Kupyansk) and that Ukrainian forces are counterattacking in the area.[36] Russian forces attacked north of Kupyansk near Holubivka, east of Kupyansk near Petropavlivka, and southeast of Kupyansk near Stepova Novoselivka and Pishchane on January 16 and 17.[37]



## Assessed Control of Terrain in the Kupyansk Direction 17 January 2025, 1:30 PM EST



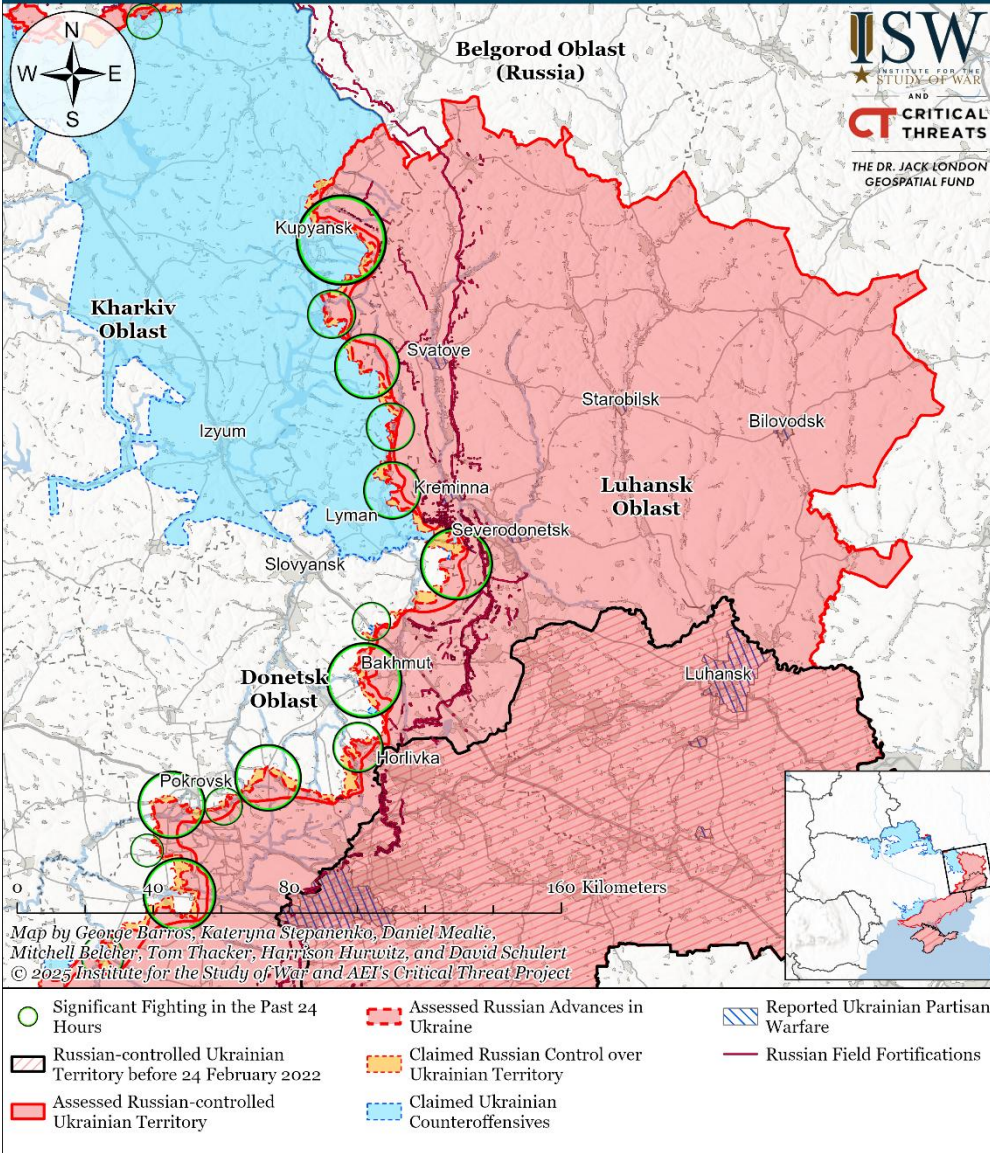
Russian forces recently advanced in the Borova direction amid continued offensive operations on January 17. Geolocated footage published on January 17 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced east of Zeleny Hai (northeast of Borova).[38] A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced 1.8 kilometers northeast of Zeleny Hai, and Russian sources claimed that Russian forces are pushing Ukrainian forces from a tactical height and advanced marginally in the fields northwest and west of Makiivka (southeast of Borova).[39] ISW has not observed confirmation of these claims. Russian forces attacked north of Borova in the direction of Novoplatonivka; northeast of Borova near Kruhlyakivka, Zeleny Hai, and Zahryzove; east of Borova near Kopanky; and southeast of Borova near Tverdokhlibove, Hrekiivka, Makiivka, and Novoserhiivka on January 16 and 17.[40]

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Lyman direction on January 17 but did not advance. A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced on the western bank of the

Zherebets River near Makiivka and Ivanivka (northeast of Lyman) and in the fields west of Novosadove (northeast of Lyman).[41] ISW has not observed evidence of these claims, however. Russian forces attacked north of Lyman near Zelena Dolyna, northeast of Lyman near Terny and Torske, and east of Lyman near Zarichne on January 16 and 17.[42] A spokesperson of a Ukrainian brigade operating in the Lyman direction reported on January 17 that Russian forces typically attack in groups of two where one unarmed soldier advances to expose Ukrainian firing positions, and then the second well-armed soldier approaches and begins firing on Ukrainian positions.[43] The spokesperson noted that Russian forces prefer to relegate convict recruits to the role of the unarmed soldier and noted that the Russian units in the area still possess a significant number of convict recruits for such attacks. A spokesperson of another Ukrainian brigade operating in the Lyman direction stated that Russian forces have not attacked the brigade's positions in the past few days, which is notably different from the near-constant infantry assaults that Russian forces conducted in the area in 2024.[44]



## Assessed Control of Terrain in Luhansk Oblast 17 January 2025, 1:30 PM EST



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

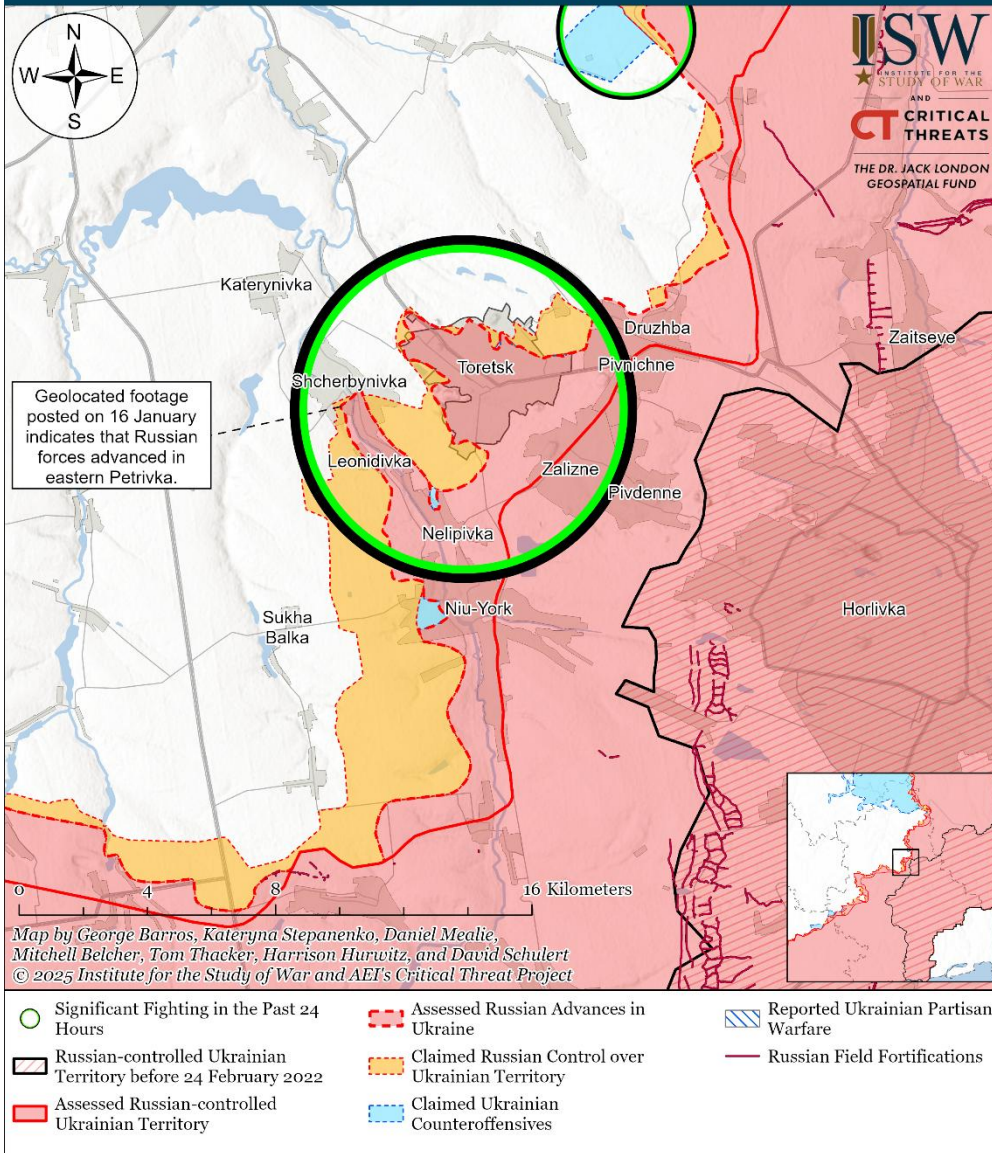
Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Siversk direction on January 17 but did not advance. Russian forces continued operations northeast of Siversk near Bilohorivka, east of Siversk near Verkhokamyanske, and southeast of Siversk near Ivano-Darivka on January 16 and 17.[45] Ukraine’s Khortytzia Group of Forces stated on January 17 that Russian forces used cars and motorcycles to transport soldiers to the frontline for infantry assaults in the Siversk direction.[46]

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Chasiv Yar direction on January 17 but did not make any confirmed advances. Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced near the mining area in northern Chasiv Yar, up to Dniprovsk Street in central Chasiv Yar, along Dobroliubova

Street in western Chasiv Yar, and in an area just north of Chasiv Yar.[47] A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces also advanced in forested areas northeast and west of Hryhorivka (north of Chasiv Yar).[48] ISW has not observed confirmation of these claims, however. Another milblogger claimed on January 17 that Russian forces continue fighting for the Refractory Plant in central Chasiv Yar following Russian milblogger claims on January 14 that Russian forces had pushed Ukrainian forces from the area.[49] Russian forces continued ground attacks within Chasiv Yar itself, north of Chasiv Yar near Hryhorivka and Pryvillya, and south of Chasiv Yar near Stupochky and Bila Hora on January 16 and 17.[50] A Russian milblogger claimed on January 17 that Ukrainian forces counterattacked near the Siverskyi Donets-Donbas Canal south of Chasiv Yar.[51] Elements of the Russian 217th and 331st Airborne (VDV) regiments (both 98th VDV Division) are reportedly operating in Chasiv Yar, and Chechen "Akhmat" forces are reportedly fighting in southern Chasiv Yar and the forest area south of Chasiv Yar.[52]

Russian forces recently advanced west of Toretsk amid continued offensive operations in the area on January 17. Geolocated footage published on January 16 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced along Lesi Ukrainky Street in eastern Petrivka (west of Toretsk).[53] Russian forces continued ground attacks within Toretsk itself, north of Toretsk near Krymske and Dyliivka, and west of Toretsk near Leonidivka and Shcherbynivka on January 16 and 17.[54]

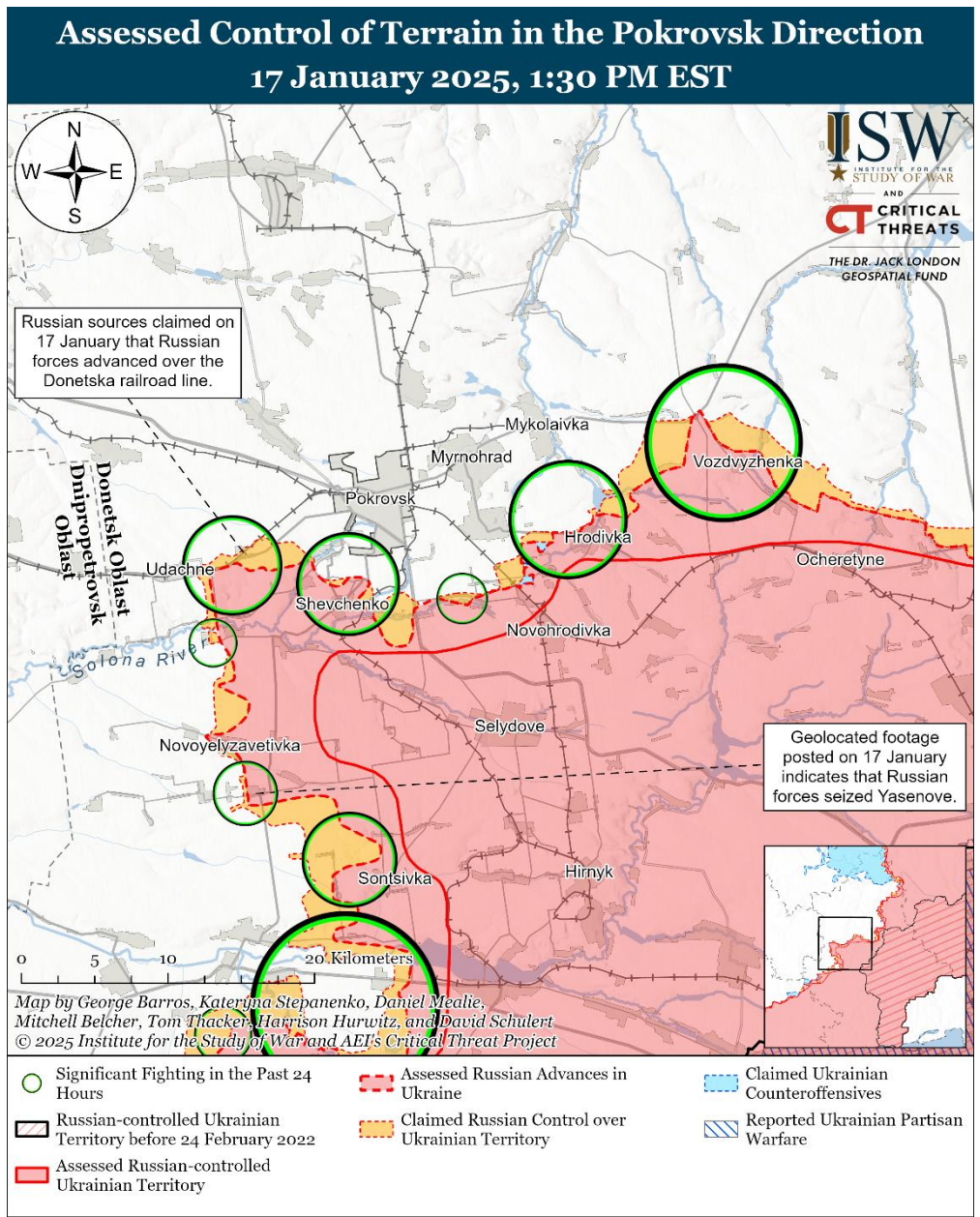
## Assessed Control of Terrain in the Toretsk Direction 17 January 2025, 1:30 PM EST



Russian forces recently advanced in the Pokrovsk direction amid continued offensive operations in the area on January 17. Geolocated footage published on January 17 indicates that Russian forces likely seized Yasenove and also advanced along the south (left) bank of the Solona River north of Uspenivka (both southwest of Pokrovsk).[55] Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces east of Pokrovsk advanced in fields southeast and west of Kalynove; west of Pokrovsk to Zaliznychna Street in central Kotlyne (west of Pokrovsk) and to a railroad line east of the settlement; southwest of Pokrovsk along the railroad line and the T-0406 highway east of Udachne, along Haharina Street in western Zvirove and in fields to the northwest along the S-050932 road in eastern Novoserhiivka, in eastern Uspenivka, northeast of Nadezhdynka, and south of Novoandriivka (all southwest of Pokrovsk).[56] ISW has not observed visual confirmation of these claims, however. Russian forces continued attacking northeast of Pokrovsk near Vodyane Druhe; east of Pokrovsk near Zelene Pole, Yelyzavetivka, Promin, and

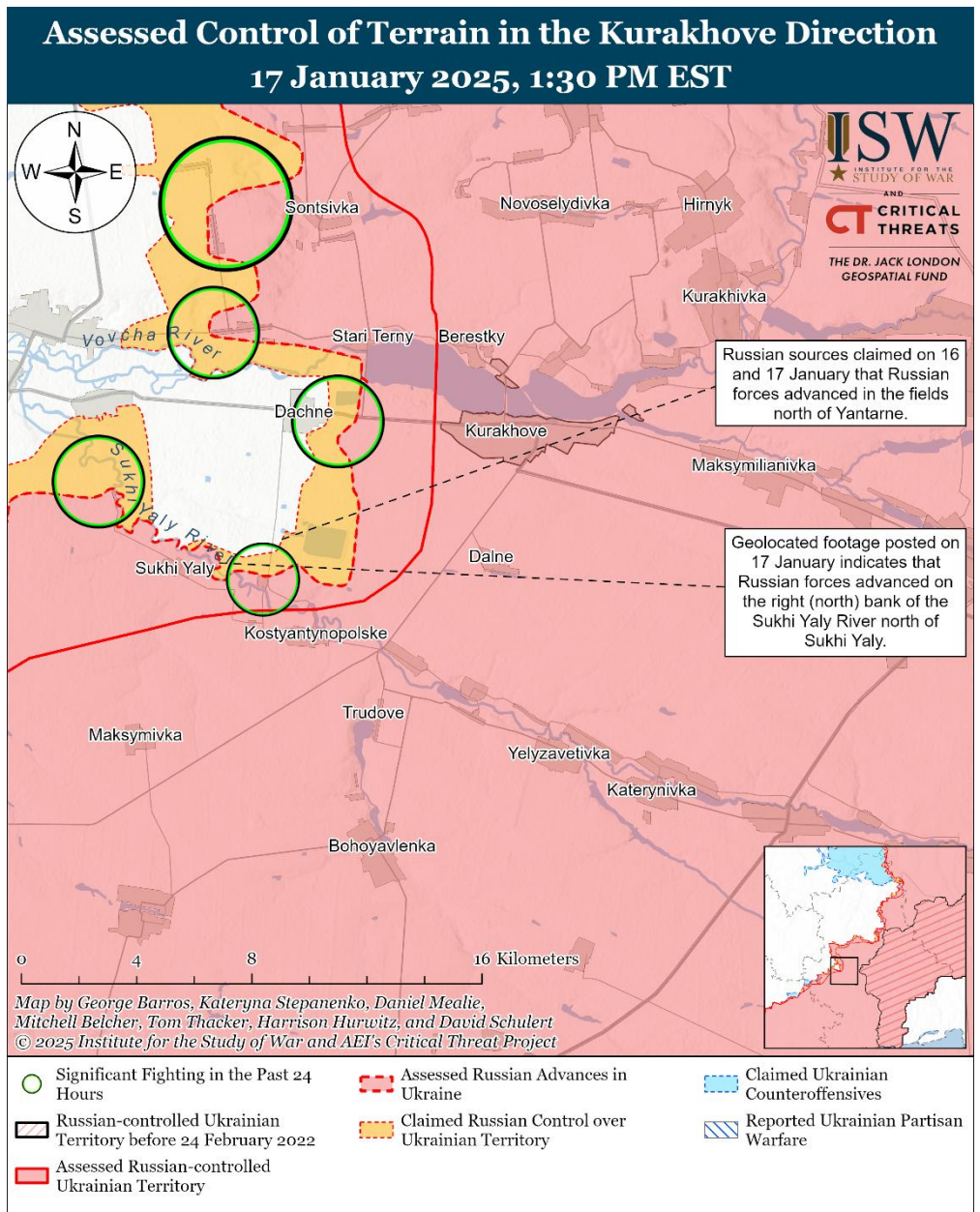


Myrolyubivka; southeast of Pokrovsk near Lysivka; south of Pokrovsk near Shevchenko and Novyi Trud; and southwest of Pokrovsk near Udachne, Uspenivka Sribne, Zvirove, and Kotlyne on January 16 and 17.[57] An officer in a Ukrainian brigade operating in the Pokrovsk direction stated that one Ukrainian brigade can inflict casualties of roughly 300 Russian personnel per day in the Pokrovsk direction.[58] Elements of the Russian 30th Motorized Rifle Brigade (2nd Combined Arms Army [CAA], Central Military District [CMD]) are reportedly operating near Kotlyne, and elements of the Russian 110th Motorized Rifle Brigade (51st CAA, formerly 1st Donetsk People’s Republic Army Corps [DNR AC]) reportedly continue operating in the Russian near rear near Kalynove (east of Pokrovsk).[59]



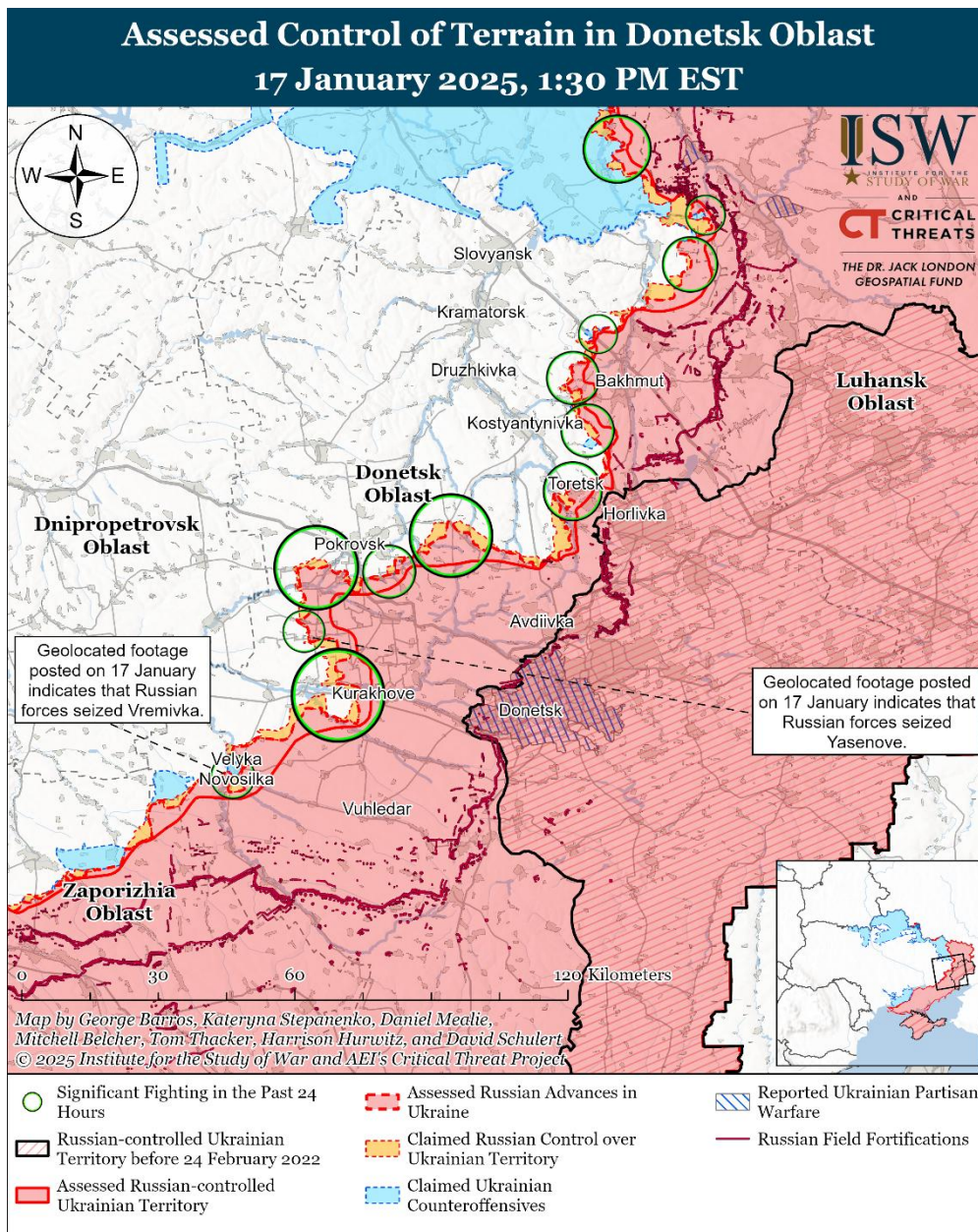
Russian forces recently advanced southwest of Kurakhove amid ongoing offensive operations in the area on January 17. Geolocated footage published on January 17 indicates that likely elements of the

Russian 39th Motorized Rifle Brigade (68th AC, Eastern Military District [EMD]) recently advanced northeast of Sukhi Yaly (southwest of Kurakhove) along the northern bank of the Sukhi Yaly River.[60] Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces operating southwest of Kurakhove advanced one kilometer north of Yantarne, in an area 3.5 kilometers wide and up to 1.5 kilometers in depth northeast of Kostyantynopolske, and from Shevchenko.[61] Russian forces continued assaults near Kurakhove itself; northwest of Kurakhove near Slovyanka, Petropavlivka, and Andriivka; west of Kurakhove near Dachne and Ulakly; and southwest of Kurakhove near Yantarne and Zelenivka on January 16 and 17.[62] Elements of the Russian 33rd Motorized Rifle Regiment (20th Motorized Rifle Division, SMD) and drone operators of the 150th Motorized Rifle Division (8th CAA, SMD) reportedly continue operating in the Kurakhove direction.[63] Elements of the Russian 238th Artillery Brigade (8th CAA) are reportedly striking targets near Dachne.[64]





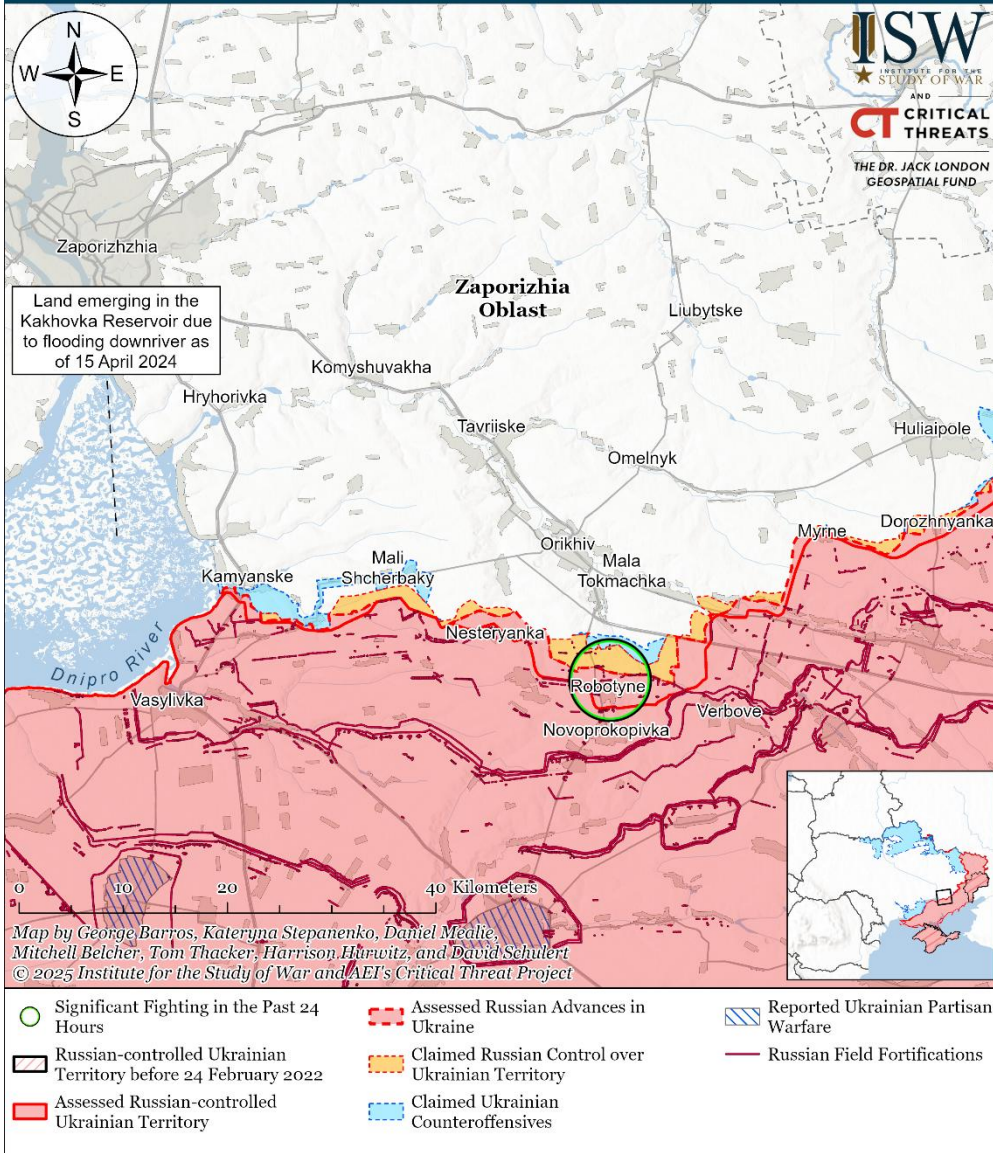
See topline text for updates in the Velyka Novosilka direction.



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

Russian forces continued limited ground attacks north of Robotyne near Novodanylivka on January 16 and 17 but did not advance.[65]

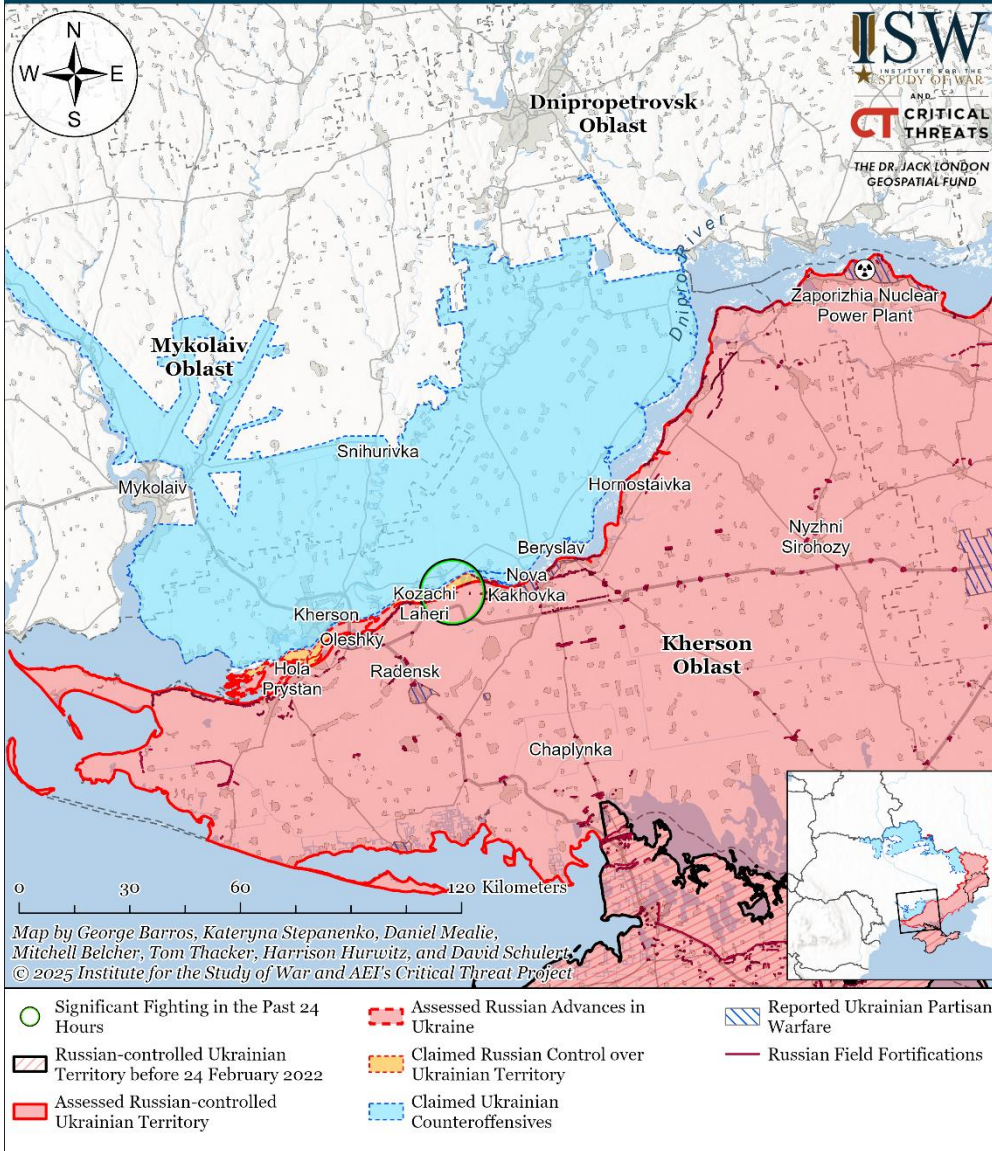
## Assessed Control of Terrain in the Zaporizhia Direction 17 January 2025, 1:30 PM EST



Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Dnipro direction on January 16 and 17 but did not advance.[66]



## Assessed Control of Terrain in the Kherson Direction 17 January 2025, 1:30 PM EST



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

Russian forces conducted a series of drone and missile strikes against Ukraine on the night of January 16 to 17. The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Russian forces launched two Iskander-M ballistic missiles from Rostov Oblast and 50 Shahed, other strike and decoy drones from Millerovo, Rostov Oblast; Primorsko-Akhtarsk, Krasnodar Krai; and Oryol, Bryansk, and Kursk oblasts.[67] The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Ukrainian forces downed 33 drones over Poltava, Sumy, Kharkiv, Cherkasy, Chernihiv, Kyiv, Khmelnytskyi, Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporizhia, Mykolaiv, and Odesa oblasts; nine drones were "lost; one drone flew into Romanian airspace; an unspecified number of drones struck several enterprises in Odesa Oblast; and debris from downed drones damaged institutions and residences in Kharkiv, Cherkasy, and Kyiv oblasts. Dnipropetrovsk Oblast Head Serhii Lysak and other

Ukrainian officials reported on January 17 that Russian ballistic missile strikes damaged civilian infrastructure in Kryvyi Rih.[68] Odesa Oblast Head Oleh Kiper reported that the Russian forces targeted port infrastructure in Izmail Raion, but did not specify which enterprises were damaged in the strike.[69]

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

Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a decree on January 17 authorizing calling up Russian reservists (“personnel mobilization resource” or *zapas*) for training in 2025.[70] Russian reservists in the Russian Armed Forces, Rosgvardia, Ministry of Emergency Situations, Federal Security Service (FSB), and other state security agencies will undergo combat training. Putin previously signed these annual decrees in March 2024 and May 2023.[71]

Russia is training schoolchildren to design, manufacture, and operate strike drones, likely as part of Russia's long-term force generation efforts and broader efforts to militarize Russian society. Russian student opposition outlet *DOXA* reported that Russian authorities spent roughly 540 billion rubles (\$5.29 billion) training Russian schoolchildren to control drones and perform combat missions in 2024.[72] Russian schoolchildren reportedly used drone operation simulators to practice working with first-person view (FPV) strike drones and drones that drop munitions to identify and strike enemy targets and worked in drone production facilities. Putin stated in April 2023 that Russian schools should introduce drone courses, and the Kremlin launched the Unmanned Aerial Systems program in 2024, which includes drone training courses in schools.[73] *DOXA* also reported that some Russian schools are opening clubs for children as young as 10 years old to learn to design and control drones, conduct training flights, and participate in drone operation competitions.[74]

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

Russian state defense corporation Rostec stated on January 16 that it successfully tested the "Sfera" drone detection and suppression system to protect civilian areas from drone strikes.[75] Rostec stated that the "Polet" Chelyabinsk Radio Plant produces the Sfera electronic warfare (EW) system, which Rostec claimed has a range of "several" square kilometers. Rostec claimed that it has successfully tested the "Sfera" both in areas of mass civilian gatherings and on the frontlines.[76]

### **Activities in Russian-occupied areas (Russian objective: Consolidate administrative control of annexed areas; forcibly integrate Ukrainian citizens into Russian sociocultural, economic, military, and governance systems)**

*ISW is not publishing coverage of activities in Russian-occupied areas today.*

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

Nothing significant to report.

**Note: ISW does not receive any classified material from any source, uses only publicly available information, and draws extensively on Russian, Ukrainian, and Western**

**reporting and social media as well as commercially available satellite imagery and other geospatial data as the basis for these reports. References to all sources used are provided in the endnotes of each update.**

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[1] <http://kremlin dot ru/supplement/6258> ; [https://t.me/tass\\_agency/296544](https://t.me/tass_agency/296544) ;  
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