

Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment, December 4, 2023

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December 4, 2023, 5:45pm 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 1pm ET on December 4. ISW will cover subsequent reports in the December 5 Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment.

Russia continues to reckon with the economic ramifications of labor shortages partially resulting from the war in Ukraine. Russian state media outlets reported on December 4 that Russian consulting company Yakov and Partners has recorded increased labor shortages in domestic production that will likely grow to a deficit of two to four million workers by 2030, 90 percent of whom are likely to be semi-skilled workers in critical industries.[1] Yakov and Partners noted that this supply shortage will place upward pressure on workers' wages that will outpace GDP growth and make Russian companies even less attractive to foreign investment.[2] Russian outlet *RBK* cited Russian economic experts who stated that this problem can only be resolved through improved interactions between Russian businesses and the state, including through dedicated programs to repatriate Russians who fled the country due to the war and programs to attract "highly-qualified" migrants from other countries.[3] ISW previously assessed that Russia continues to face shortages in both skilled and unskilled labor, a problem that is further compounded by the Kremlin's inconsistent and often inflammatory messaging about Russians who fled Russia because of the war and against migrant workers within Russia.[4] The Russian economy will likely continue to grapple with the Kremlin's competing desires to bolster Russia's force generation and industrial capacity while simultaneously disenfranchising key labor groups, which is likely to lead to continued concerns over Russian economic output and potential resulting social grievances.

Russian forces launched a series of missile and drone strikes against Ukraine on the night of December 3 to 4. Ukrainian military sources reported that Russian forces launched 23 Shahed-131/136 from Cape Chauda in occupied Crimea and one Kh-59 cruise missile from occupied Kherson Oblast and stated that Ukrainian forces shot down 18 Shaheds and the Kh-59 missile.[5] Ukrainian Air Force Spokesperson Colonel Yuriy Ihnat stated that the Russian military has increased its production of Shahed drones, which are likely to be the main systems that Russian forces will use to target Ukrainian energy infrastructure throughout winter 2023-2024.[6] Ihnat also reported that Russian forces are increasing their "strategic stockpile" of missiles.[7]

Ukraine's Western partners continue efforts to provide Ukraine with military and economic support. German arms manufacturer Rheinmetall announced on December 3 that it won a contract to provide Ukraine with €142 million worth of 155mm artillery rounds, which Germany will deliver to Ukraine in 2025.[8] Rheinmetall stated that it will deliver around 40,000 rounds to Ukraine from a separate order in 2024. British outlet *The Times* highlighted Ukraine's use of British-provided Martlet lightweight missiles to deter a large-scale Russian Shahed drone strike on Kyiv City in late November 2023.[9] *The Times* noted that the British Army trained Ukrainian operators on Martlet systems in the UK earlier this year. Ukrainian Defense Minister Rustem Umerov additionally met with his Belgian counterpart, Ludivine Dedonder, on December 4 to further develop the bilateral Ukrainian-Belgian relationship, particularly in regard to building out Ukraine's defense industrial base with Belgian support.[10] Head of the Ukrainian President's Office Andriy Yermak spoke with US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan about the upcoming Ukrainian-American conference on arms production that will take place on December 6 and 7 in Washington, DC.[11]

Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko discussed deepening Belarusian-Chinese relations with Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing, China on December

4. Lukashenko stated that the “historical increase in the level of [Belarusian-Chinese] relations” has created an impetus for further deepening bilateral cooperation.[12] Lukashenko reiterated Belarus’ role as a “reliable” partner to China and expressed support for the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the Chinese Community of a Common Destiny concept.[13] Lukashenko and Xi discussed strengthening strategic and economic cooperation, and their meeting reportedly lasted three times longer than planned.[14] Xi stated that he opposes unspecified external interference in Belarusian internal affairs and expressed support for strengthening cooperation with Belarus through the UN and Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).[15] Chinese news outlet *Xinhua* stated that Lukashenko and Xi “exchanged views on the Ukraine crisis.”[16] Lukashenko and Xi signed several documents promoting industrial, technical, and scientific cooperation that may have facilitated Russian sanctions evasion by channeling Chinese aid to Russia through Belarus during Lukashenko’s previous visit to China in March 2023.[17]

Kremlin-backed United Russia State Duma deputies and Federation Council senators proposed a bill to introduce criminal punishments for leaking personal data, likely as part of ongoing efforts to control the Russian information space ahead of the March 2024 Russian presidential elections. The United Russia legislators proposed a bill that would allow Russian authorities to sentence individuals to up to four years in prison for storing, transferring, or collecting personal data “obtained illegally,” and up to five years if the information contains unspecified “special categories of data” or personal biometric data.[18] The bill also stipulates that Russian authorities could punish someone with up to six years in prison for “illegal use of personal data for selfish interest” and could punish someone with up to eight years in prison and a two million ruble (about \$21,850) fine for transferring “illegally acquired” personal data abroad.[19] Russian opposition outlet *Agentstvo Novosti* reported that the bill’s definition of personal data includes an individual’s first name, surname, patronymic, address, phone number, address, and email.[20] *Agentstvo Novosti* noted that the bill’s implementation would criminalize database analysis – one of the few tools left to independent Russian investigative journalists.[21] The Russian government has been prosecuting Russian internet service companies Yandex and Google under laws about illegal storing of personal data of Russian users likely to gain further control over internet companies operating in Russia to better track Russians’ personal information and online data ahead

of the Russian 2024 presidential election.[22] The bill is also likely part of ongoing Russian government efforts to restrict Russian citizens' access to information on the internet and the activities of opposition figures and media outlets.[23]

The Kremlin likely continues efforts to insert itself into power vacuums in several African countries as Wagner Group elements continue to operate in the Central African Republic (CAR). Nigerien state media stated that Russian Deputy Defense Minister Colonel General Yunus-Bek Yevkurov and Nigerien junta Defense Minister Lieutenant General Salifou Modi signed a document strengthening defense cooperation on December 4 after meeting on December 3 in Niamey, Niger.[24] Reuters reported on December 4 that the Nigerien junta also revoked its military partnership with the European Union (EU), further isolating post-coup Niger from the EU.[25] Yevkurov previously met with Malian junta head Assimi Goita, Malian junta Defense Minister Sadio Camara, and Modi on September 16 and with Burkinabe junta head Ibrahim Traore on September 1.[26] Niger, Burkina Faso, and Mali previously created the Alliance of Sahel States, a collective defense pact, on September 16, following Yevkurov's visits with the junta heads in September.[27] A French open-source intelligence project assessed on December 4 that Russia is using two structures – the Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD)-controlled "Africa Corps" and the newly formed, pseudo local media outlet called "African Initiative" that employs former Wagner Group fighters – to establish a foothold in Burkina Faso.[28] ISW previously reported that the Russian MoD has begun to publicly recruit for the "Africa Corps," which is aimed at subsuming Wagner operations in Africa after the MoD made failed attempts to directly recruit former Wagner personnel.[29] *The New York Times* also reported on November 26 that Wagner maintains a major presence in the Central African Republic (CAR) and controls the largest gold mine and over 1,000 personnel in the country, including personnel likely working as security for CAR President Faustin-Archange Touadera and other senior personnel running the Russia House cultural center in Bangui.[30] The Kremlin is likely attempting to expand Russian MoD-controlled "Africa Corps" operations in Niger, Burkina Faso, and Mali, as well as to expand Russian information operations on the continent in part to counter Wagner operations in the CAR.

Voronezh Oblast Governor Alexander Gusev confirmed on December 4 the death of Russian 14th Army Corps Deputy Commander Major General Vladimir Zavadsky in Ukraine.[31] Various Russian and Ukrainian sources claimed on November 28 and 29 that Zavadsky died after stepping on a mine in Kherson Oblast on November 28.[32]

Key Takeaways:

- **Russia continues to reckon with the economic ramifications of labor shortages partially resulting from the war in Ukraine.**
- **Ukraine's Western partners continue efforts to provide Ukraine with military and economic support.**
- **Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko discussed deepening Belarusian-Chinese relations with Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing, China on December 4.**
- **Kremlin-backed United Russia State Duma deputies and Federation Council senators proposed a bill to introduce criminal punishments for leaking personal data, likely as part of ongoing efforts to control the Russian information space ahead of the March 2024 Russian presidential elections.**

- **The Kremlin likely continues efforts to insert itself into power vacuums in several African countries as Wagner Group elements continue to operate in the Central African Republic (CAR).**
- **Voronezh Oblast Governor Alexander Gusev confirmed on December 4 the death of Russian 14th Army Corps Deputy Commander Major General Vladimir Zavadsky in Ukraine.**
- **Russian forces conducted offensive operations along the Kupyansk-Svatove-Kreminna line, near Bakhmut, near Avdiivka, west and southwest of Donetsk City, in the Donetsk-Zaporizhia Oblast border area, and in western Zaporizhia Oblast and advanced in some areas on December 4.**
- **Select Russian Duma deputies appear to be at odds over the issue of extending Russian conscript service.**
- **Russian Presidential Administration Head for Domestic Policy Andrei Yarin reportedly visited occupied Ukraine as part of ongoing efforts to legitimize Russian authority over occupied Ukraine ahead of the March 2024 Russian presidential election.**

Assessed Control of Terrain in Ukraine and Main Russian Maneuver Axes as of December 4, 2023, 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 two subordinate main efforts)
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #1 – Capture the remainder of Luhansk Oblast and push westward into eastern Kharkiv Oblast and encircle northern Donetsk Oblast
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #2 – Capture the entirety of Donetsk Oblast
- Russian Supporting Effort – Southern Axis
- Russian Mobilization and Force Generation Efforts
- Russian Technological Adaptations
- Activities in Russian-occupied areas
- Russian Information Operations and Narratives

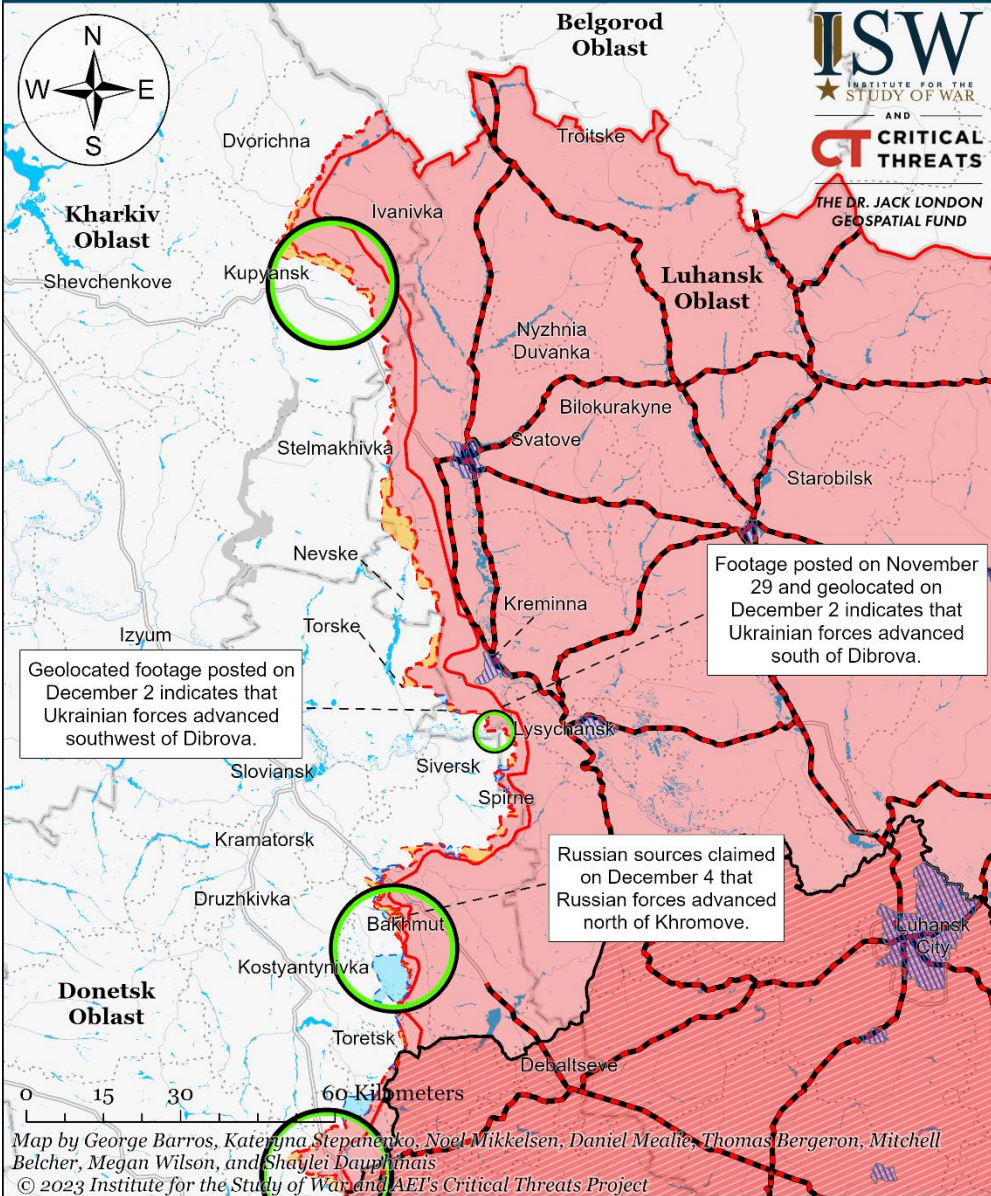
Russian Main Effort – Eastern Ukraine

Russian Subordinate Main Effort #1 – Luhansk Oblast (Russian objective: Capture the remainder of Luhansk Oblast and push westward into eastern Kharkiv Oblast and northern Donetsk Oblast)

Russian forces conducted offensive operations along the Kupyansk-Svatove-Kreminna line but did not make any confirmed gains on December 4. Russian sources claimed on December 3 and 4 that Russian forces advanced near Synkivka (8km northeast of Kupyansk) and controlled about half of the settlement.[33] ISW has not observed visual confirmation of significant Russian advances in Synkivka, however. A Russian milblogger claimed on December 4 that Russian forces also attacked south of Lyman Pershyi (12km northeast of Kupyansk) and near Pershotravneve (21km east of Kupyansk).[34] A Russian milblogger claimed on December 4 that Russian forces advanced near Torske (15km west of Kreminna) and in the Serebryanske forest area (10km southwest of Kreminna)[35][36]. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces unsuccessfully attacked near Synkivka and Petropavlivka (7km east of Kupyansk) in the Kupyansk direction and near the Serebryanske forest area, Terny (17km west of Kreminna), and Bilohorivka (12km south of Kreminna) in [36]

Russian sources claimed that Ukrainian forces conducted offensive operations along the Kupyansk-Svatove-Kreminna line but did not make any claimed or confirmed advances on December 4. The Russian MoD claimed that Ukrainian forces unsuccessfully attacked near Synkivka in the Kupyansk direction and near Torske, Yampolivka (17km west of Kreminna), and Dibrova (7km southwest of Kreminna) in the Lyman direction.[37] Russian sources claimed on December 3 and 4 that Ukrainian forces unsuccessfully attacked in the Serebryanske forest area.[38]

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Luhansk Oblast as of December 4, 2023, 3:00 PM ET



Geolocated footage posted on December 2 indicates that Ukrainian forces advanced southwest of Dibrova.

Footage posted on November 29 and geolocated on December 2 indicates that Ukrainian forces advanced south of Dibrova.

Russian sources claimed on December 4 that Russian forces advanced north of Khromove.

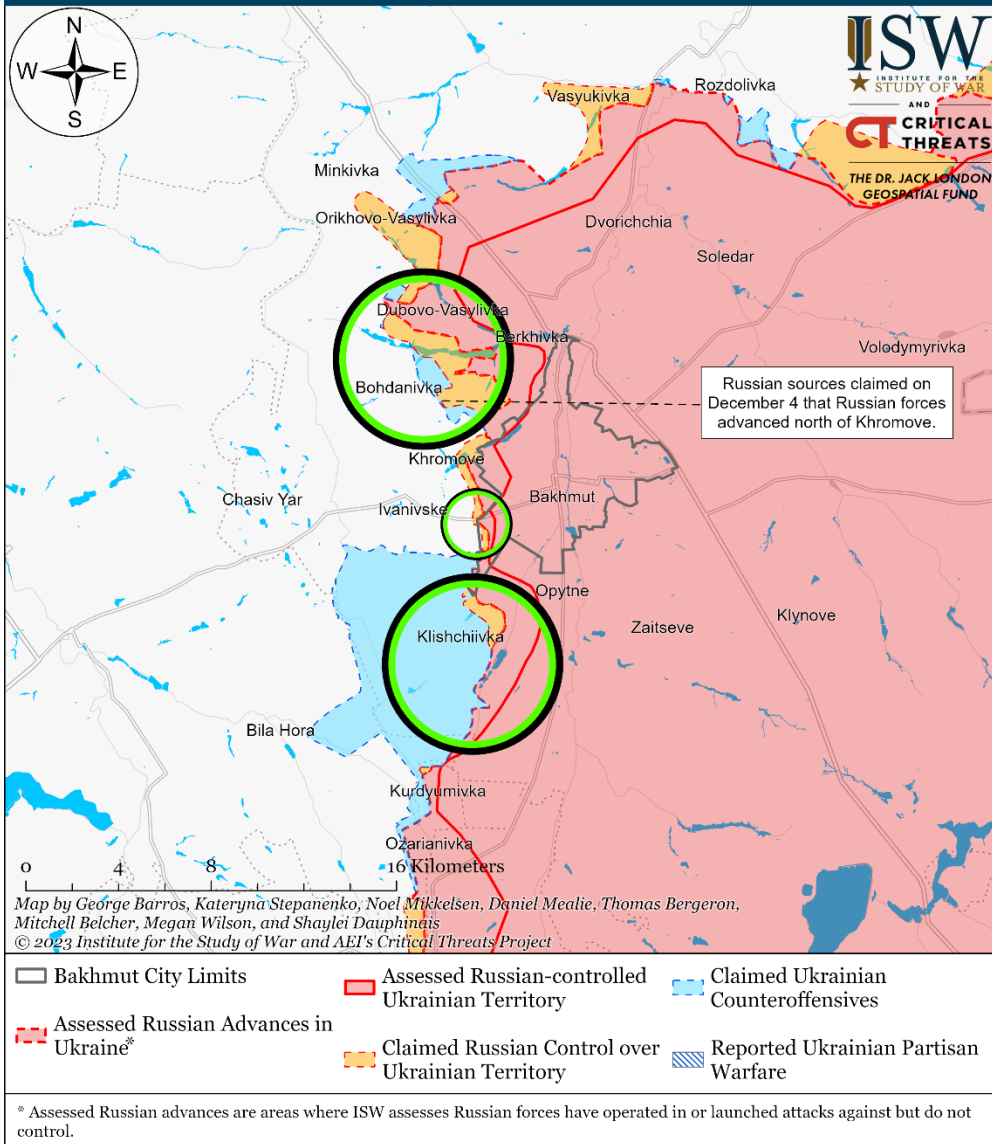
- Significant Fighting in the past 24 Hours
- Russian Ground Lines of Communication
- Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory before February 24
- Assessed Russian Advances in Ukraine*
- Assessed Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory
- Claimed Russian Control over Ukrainian Territory
- Claimed Ukrainian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

Russian Subordinate Main Effort #2 – 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 Bakhmut direction on December 4 and reportedly advanced on Bakhmut's northwestern flank. Several Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces captured a plant nursery north of Bakhmut, likely referring to the tree nursery area near Bohdanivka (about 6km northwest of Bakhmut).[39] Russian milbloggers additionally claimed that Russian forces continued attacking west of Khromove (on the northwest outskirts of Bakhmut) towards Ivanivske (5km west of Bakhmut) and along the Klishchiivka-Andriivka line (5km to 7km southwest of Bakhmut).[40] Russian sources amplified footage of various Donetsk People's Republic (DNR), Luhansk People's Republic (LNR), and airborne (VDV) elements fighting on the outskirts of Bakhmut.[41] The Ukrainian General Staff reported unsuccessful Russian attacks near Bohdanivka, Ivanivske, Klishchiivka, and Andriivka.[42] The Ukrainian General Staff also reiterated that Ukrainian forces continued assault actions on the southern flank of Bakhmut.[43]

Assessed Control of Terrain in Bakhmut as of December 4, 2023, 3:00 PM ET

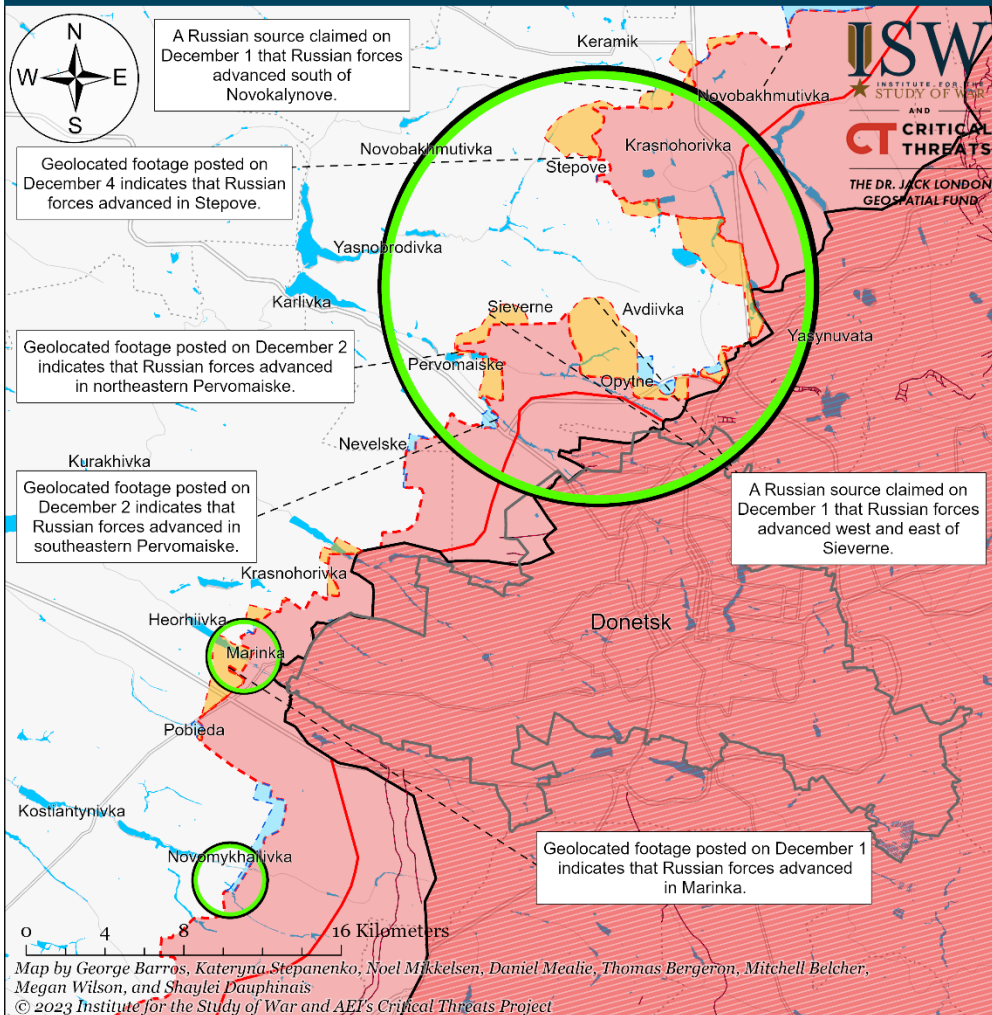


Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Avdiivka direction on December 4 and made confirmed advances. Geolocated footage published on December 4 shows that Russian forces advanced near the reservoir area directly north of Avdiivka.[44] Additional geolocated footage published on December 4 shows that Russian forces have advanced within Stepove (5km northwest of Avdiivka).[45] Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces have consolidated control of positions in and around Stepove, and one Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced up to 600 meters in the forest area southeast of Stepove.[46] Milbloggers also claimed that heavy fighting is ongoing near the Avdiivka Coke Plant (just northwest of Avdiivka) and in the industrial area (just southeast of Avdiivka).[47] Russian sources amplified footage reportedly showing elements of the "Kozma Minin" Nizhny Novgorod-based volunteer tank battalion operating in the Avdiivka industrial

zone.[48] The Ukrainian General Staff reported unsuccessful Russian offensive operations east of Novokalynove (10km northwest of Avdiivka) and Novobakhmutivka (10km northeast of Avdiivka) and near Avdiivka itself, Stepove, Sieverne (5km west of Avdiivka), and Pervomaiske (10km southwest of Avdiivka).[49]

Ukrainian forces recently counterattacked near Avdiivka and have regained lost positions as of December 1. Geolocated footage posted on December 4 shows Ukrainian forces assaulting Russian positions in a tree line south of Stepove on or around December 1.[50]

Assessed Control of Terrain near Donetsk City as of December 4, 2023, 3:00 PM ET



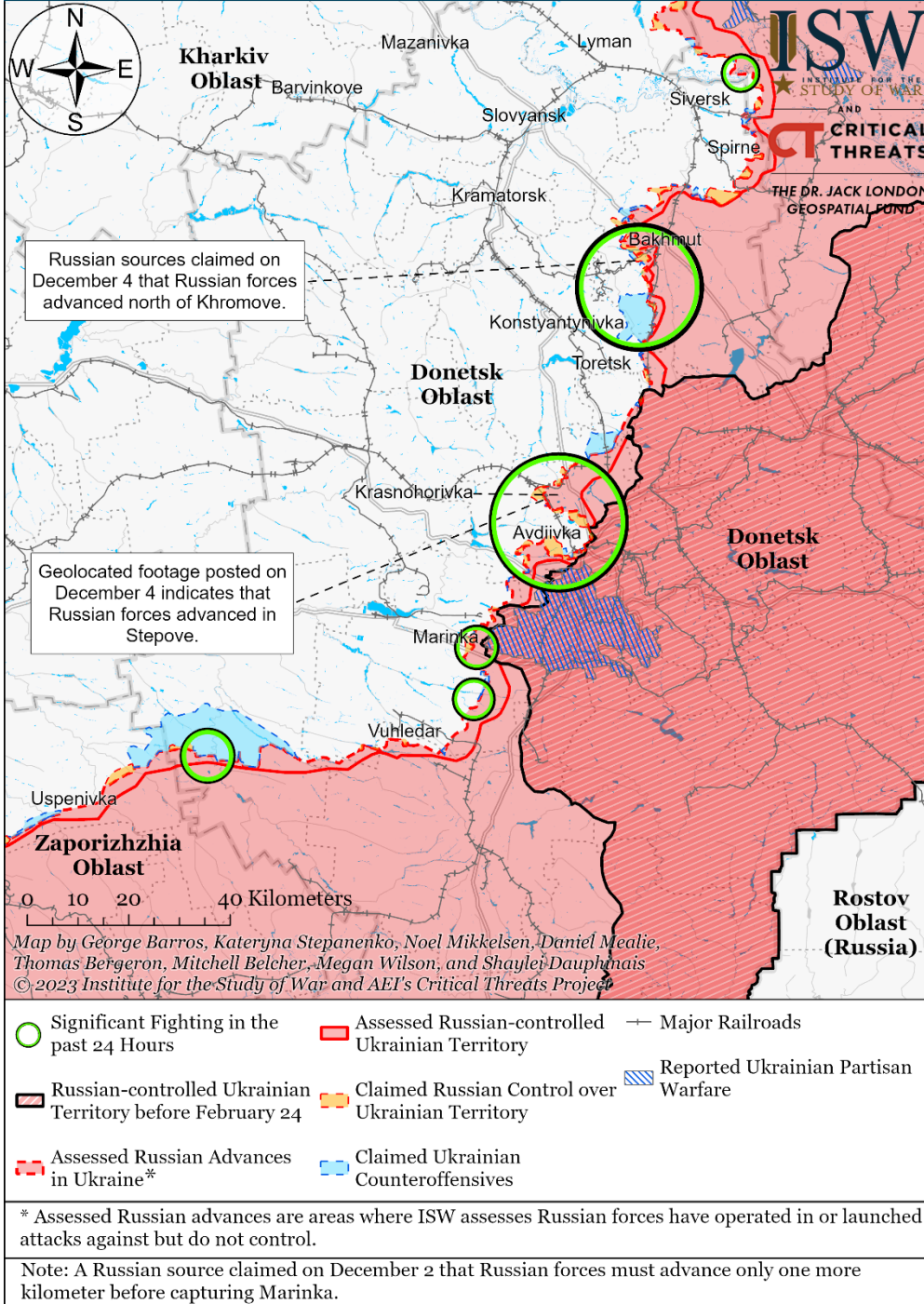
Donetsk City Limits	Assessed Russian Advances in Ukraine*	Claimed Ukrainian Counteroffensives
Assessed Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory	Claimed Russian Control over Ukrainian Territory	Russian Field Fortifications

* 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 December 4 that Russian forces advanced up to 600 meters along the forest belt southeast of Stepove. A Russian source claimed on December 2 that Russian forces must advance only one more kilometer before capturing Marinka. Russian sources made contradictory claims about Marinka on December 1, claiming anywhere from 90 to 100 percent control over the settlement. Available geolocated evidence as of December 1 indicates Russian forces occupy no less than 74 percent of Marinka.

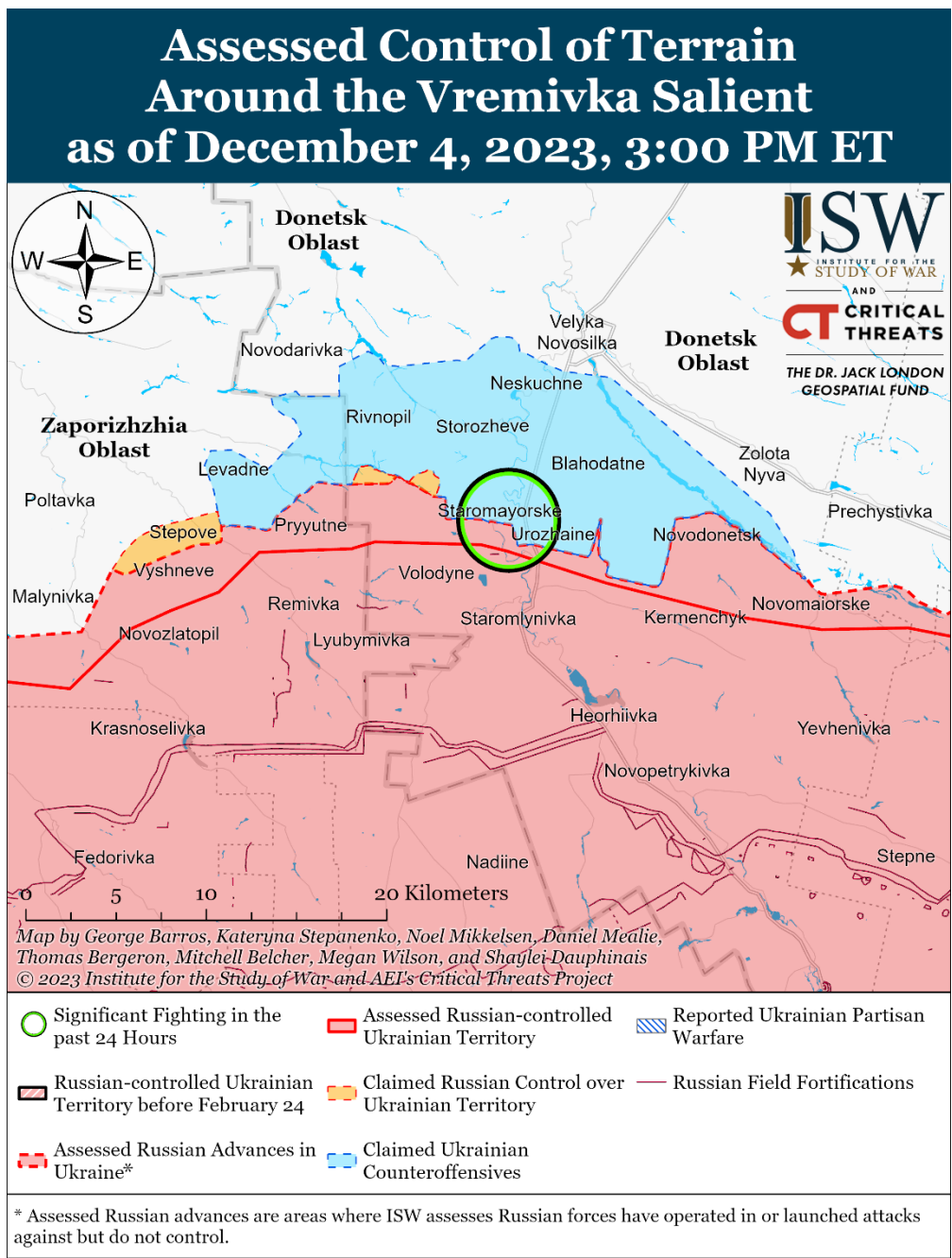
Russian forces continued offensive operations west and southwest of Donetsk City on December 4 but did not make any claimed or confirmed gains. The Ukrainian General Staff stated that Ukrainian forces repelled Russian attacks near Marinka (on the western outskirts of Donetsk City) and Novomykhailivka (10km southwest of Donetsk City).[51] Milbloggers claimed that Russian forces continued offensive operations within Marinka, despite earlier claims that Russian forces completely captured the settlement in previous days.[52]

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Donetsk as of December 4, 2023, 3:00 PM ET



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

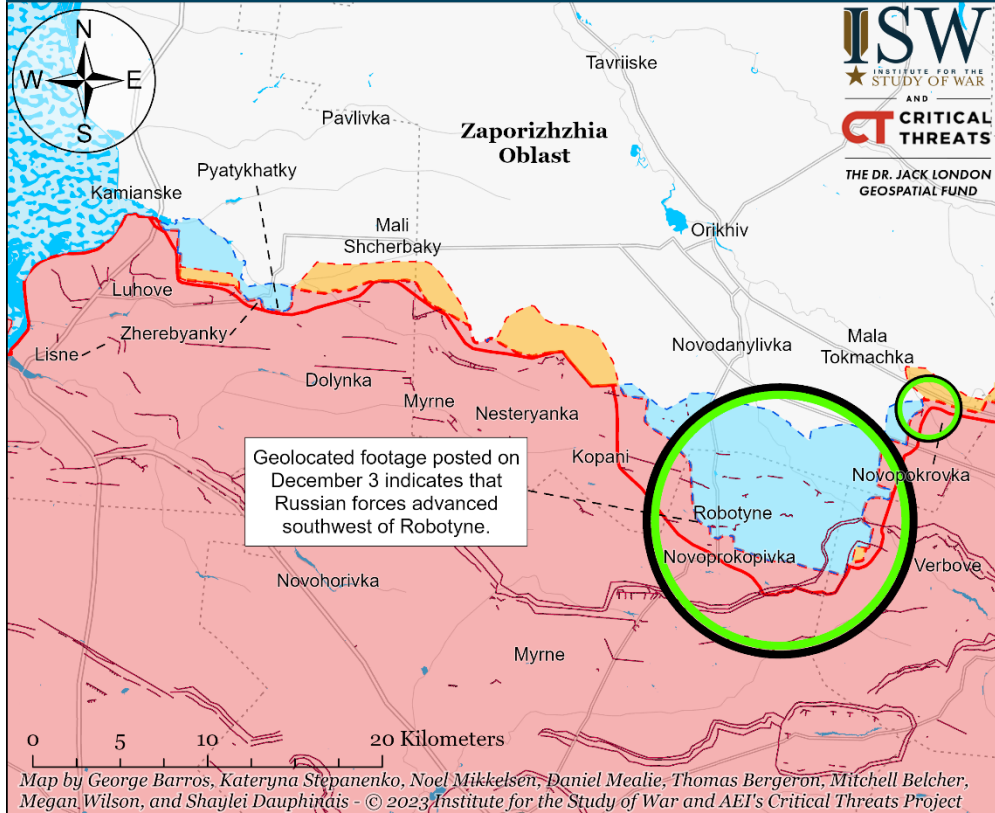
Russian forces continued ground attacks in the Donetsk-Zaporizhzhia Oblast border area but did not make any confirmed advances on December 4. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Ukrainian forces repelled a Russian attack near Staromayorske (9km south of Velyka Novosilka).[53] Russian sources claimed that Russian forces continue to attack in forest areas near Staromayorske, and one milblogger claimed that Russian forces have marginally advanced northwest of Staromayorske since November 27.[54]



Russian sources claimed that Ukrainian forces continued ground attacks but did not make any confirmed advances in western Zaporizhia Oblast on December 4. Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces repelled Ukrainian attacks west of Robotyne and near Novoprokopivka (2km south of Robotyne) and Verbove (9km east of Robotyne).[55] The Russian MoD claimed that Russian forces also repelled a Ukrainian ground attack near Nesteryanka (12km northwest of Robotyne).[56] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces are preparing to intensify attacks near Verbove when the weather improves.[57]

Russian forces continued ground attacks in western Zaporizhia Oblast and reportedly marginally advanced on December 4. Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces marginally advanced north of Verbove, but another milblogger claimed that Russian forces did not advance during attacks west of Robotyne and near Novoprokopivka and Verbove.[58] The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Ukrainian forces repelled Russian attacks south of Robotyne and near Novopokrovka (12km northeast of Robotyne).[59]

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Pyatykhatky and Robotyne as of December 4, 2023, 3:00 PM ET

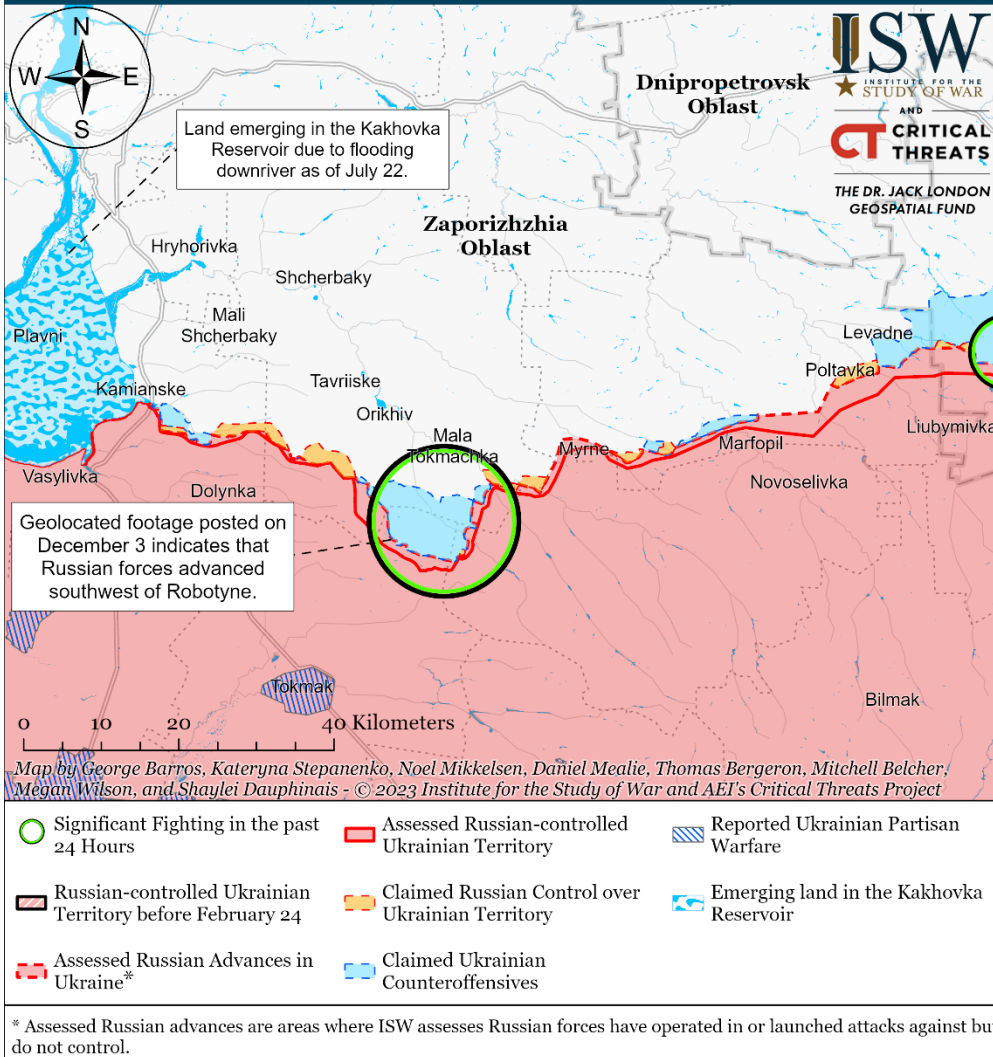


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- Significant Fighting in the past 24 Hours
- Assessed Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory
- Reported Ukrainian Partisan Warfare
- Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory before February 24
- Claimed Russian Control over Ukrainian Territory
- Emerging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

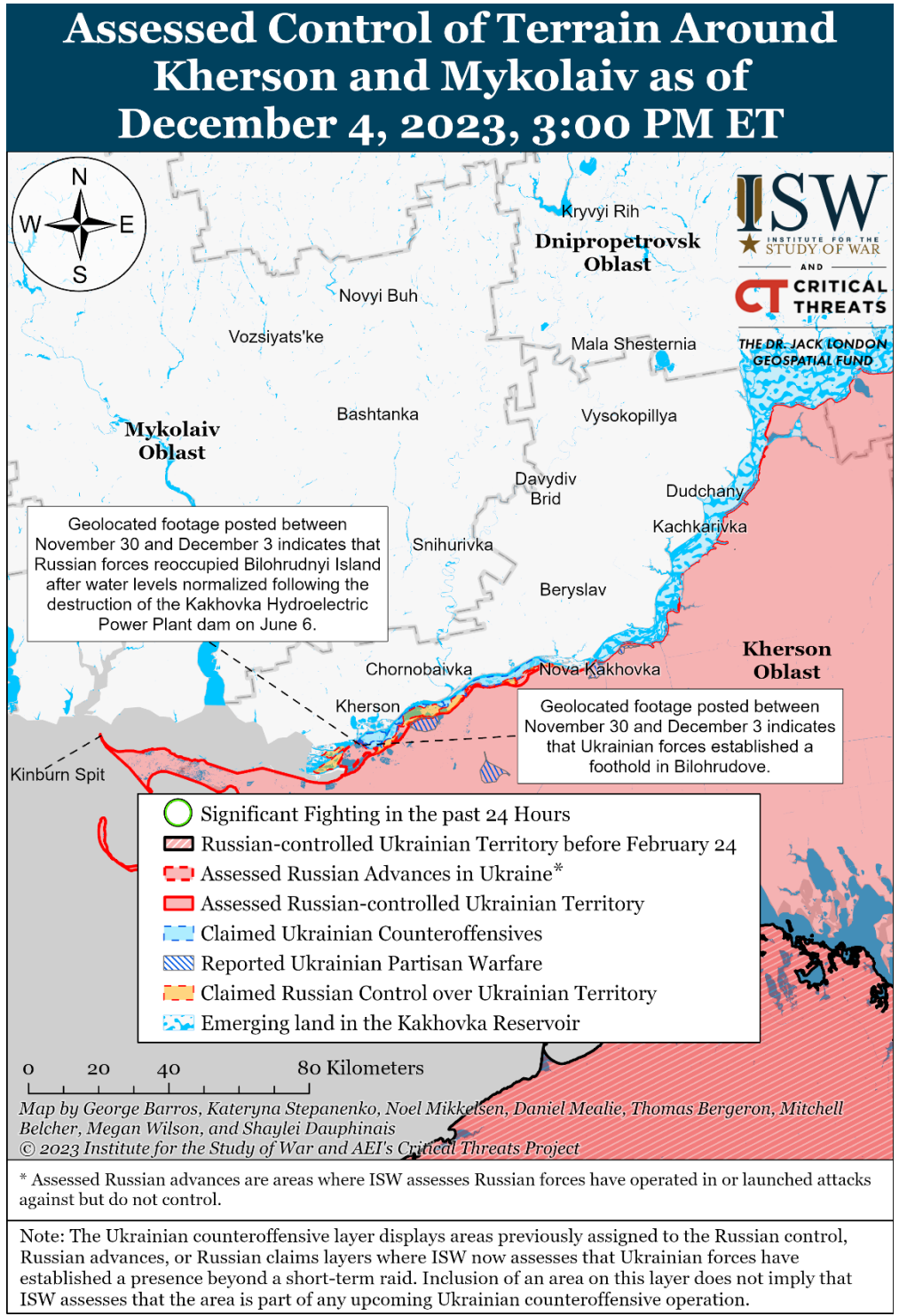
* Assessed Russian advances are areas where ISW assesses Russian forces have operated in or launched attacks against but do not control.

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Zaporizhzhia as of December 4, 2023, 3:00 PM ET



Ukrainian forces continued ground operations on the east (left) bank of Kherson Oblast on December 4 and recently established a confirmed position on Bilohrudnyi Island southwest of Kherson City. Geolocated footage published on November 30, December 1, and December 3 shows Ukrainian forces engaging Russian forces in the settlement of Bilohrudove (11km southwest of Kherson City) indicating that Russian forces likely control most of Bilohrudnyi Island and that Ukrainian forces have recently established positions near Bilohrudove.[60] A Russian milblogger also claimed that Ukrainian forces have positions in Bilohrudove as of December 4.[61] Another Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces temporarily advanced south of Krynky (30km northeast of Kherson City and 2km from the Dniro River) but that Russian artillery fire forced Ukrainian forces to withdraw from the new position.[62] Other milbloggers claimed that fighting is ongoing near Krynky but that neither Ukrainian nor Russian forces have made recent advances.[63] A Russian milblogger amplified claims that unspecified Russian Airborne (VDV) elements and elements of the 70th Motorized Rifle Division

(18th Combined Arms Army) are experiencing tension due to poor performance against Ukrainian forces in Krynyky.[64] Ukrainian military observer Kostyantyn Mashovets reported that the Russian “Dnepr” Group of Forces in Kherson Oblast is taking advantage of poor weather to regroup and is concentrating its main assets against the Ukrainian foothold in Krynyky.[65]



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

Select Russian Duma deputies appear to be at odds over the issue of extending Russian conscript service. Russian State Duma Defense Committee Chairman Andrei Kartapolov dismissed a Duma deputy's call for increased conscript service periods. Duma Deputy and former Deputy Commander of the Southern Military District (SMD) Lieutenant General Andrei Gurulev proposed on December 3 that the Russian military require conscripts to serve for two years instead of one.[66] Gurulev claimed that a two-year requirement would increase the quantity of conscripts without having to increase the number of conscripts called up.[67] Gurulev also claimed that two-year service terms would increase the quality of conscript training.[68] Gurulev claimed that this increased service term would also help build up the Russian border protection troops, which Gurulev claimed have proven recently to be ineffective.[69] Duma Deputy Viktor Sobolev supported Gurulev's call as a way for conscripts to be "truly combat-ready." [70] Kartapolov rejected Gurulev's call on December 4 and claimed that conscripts are "capable of mastering a military specialty in one year" so a second year would be a waste of time, government resources, and labor.[71]

The Russian MoD proposed unspecified changes to military medical examination requirements. The Russian MoD submitted a draft proposal on December 3 to change the "organization" of medical examinations of military conscripts, contract personnel, mobilized reserves, and those called up for military training for those who have diseases that do not have a "significant impact" on their ability to perform military duties.[72] The MoD did not offer specifics about what these changes would entail, but this is likely part of the longstanding Russian effort to expand categories of personnel liable for military service.

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

Russian state-owned defense conglomerate Rostec stated on November 29 that its electronics subsidiary Roselektronika created a new "friend or foe" drone recognition system that can identify "friendly" drones from an altitude of up to five kilometers and from a distance up to 100 kilometers.[73] Rostec stated that the identification system weighs no more than 150 grams and can be integrated into a wide range of drones.

Rostec subsidiary United Aircraft Corporation (UAC) has reportedly recently delivered various modernized aircraft to the Russian military. Rostec stated on December 2 that the UAC Irkutsk Aviation Plant transferred new Su-30SM2 fighter aircraft and Yak-130 combat training aircraft to the Russian MoD.[74] Rostec stated that the Su-30SM2s have improved avionics, increased detection and identification ranges of air targets, and new high-precision weapons.[75] Russian state newswire TASS reported on December 4 that the UAC Nizhny Novgorod Sokol Aviation Plant also transferred modernized MiG-31 interceptor aircraft to the Russian MoD as part of the completion of the state defense order for 2023.[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)

Russian Presidential

Administration Head for Domestic Policy Andrei Yarin reportedly visited occupied Ukraine as part of ongoing efforts to legitimize Russian authority over occupied Ukraine ahead of the March 2024 Russian presidential election. The Ukrainian Resistance Center reported on December 5 that Yarin visited occupied Ukraine to improve occupation election commissions and prepare falsified data to ensure an unspecified minimum voter turnout.[77] Russian outlet *RBK* reported on November 14 that unnamed Russian government sources claimed that Yarin would lead Russian President Vladimir Putin's presidential election campaign headquarters in the event that Putin announces his candidacy.[78]

Russian Information Operations and Narratives

Nothing significant to report.

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)

See topline text.

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.



[1] https://www.kommersant dot ru/doc/6379089?from=top_main_7; <https://www.rbc dot ru/economics/04/12/2023/656c83409a79471d72124f2d>

[2] https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/6379089?from=top_main_7

[3] <https://www.rbc dot ru/economics/04/12/2023/656c83409a79471d72124f2d>

[4] <https://isw.pub/UkrWar112623>

[5] <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbidoZYdkx9eo2ZeVYMGxJYQcJfegJPLtjgPxFbM26fFvvr9ecifSfomZjzP1xDAek7a9l> ;
<https://www.facebook.com/OperationalCommandSouth/posts/pfbidop82igEhHNeivfWC9crhBN3rhJFL2vR33qJdJDxfVaJkVp5otJE7ndRE88GxtVWTl>

[6] <https://www.rbc dot ua/rus/news/avto-probigom-top-5-naykrashchih-legkih-komertsiiynih-1701661157.html>

[7] <https://www.rbc dot ua/ukr/news/trivogi-cherez-mig-shahedi-ta-patriot-golovne-1701696499.html>

[8] <https://www.rheinmetall.com/en/media/news-watch/news/2023/12/2023-12-04-rheinmetall-wins-artillery-ammunition-order-for-ukraine>

[9] <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/russian-drones-turn-screw-on-ukraine-while-the-west-is-distracted-6bbb05j6> ; <https://susplne dot media/631940-times-britania-peredala-ukraini-raketi-martlet/>

[10] <https://armyinform dot com.ua/2023/12/04/ministry-oborony-ukrayiny-i-belgiyi-obgovoryly-posylennya-oboronno-promyslovogo-spivrobotnyctva/>

[11] <https://president.gov dot ua/news/andrij-yermak-obgovoriv-iz-dzhejkom-sallivanom-pidgotovku-do-87433>

[12] <https://www.belta dot by/president/view/lukashenko-na-peregovorah-s-si-tszinpinom-belarus-byla-est-i-budet-nadezhnym-partnerom-dlja-kitaja-603221-2023/>

[13] <https://www.belta dot by/president/view/lukashenko-podderzhal-kitaj-v-idee-postroenija-soobschestva-edinoj-sudby-chelovechestva-603223-2023/> ; <https://www.belta dot by/president/view/lukashenko-na-peregovorah-s-si-tszinpinom-belarus-byla-est-i-budet-nadezhnym-partnerom-dlja-kitaja-603221-2023/>

[14] https://t.me/pul_1/10697 ; <https://www.kommersant dot ru/doc/6379589> ; https://t.me/pul_1/10698

[15] <https://www.belta dot by/world/view/si-tszinpin-kitaj-vystupaet-protiv-vmeshatelstva-vneshnih-sil-vo-vnutrennie-dela-belarusi-603264-2023/> ; [dot ru/doc/6379589](https://www.kommersant dot ru/doc/6379589)<https://www.kommersant dot ru/doc/6379589>

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