

# Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment, June 28, 2023

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June 28, 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 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 cutoff for this product was 12pm ET on June 28. ISW will cover subsequent reports in the June 29 Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment.**

**Continued reporting about the deal mediated by Belarusian dictator Alexander Lukashenko to end the Wagner Group's armed rebellion suggests that involved parties may still be negotiating the specifics of the agreement.** Independent Belarusian monitoring group The Hajun Project cited flight tracking data on June 27 suggesting that Wagner Group financier Yevgeny Prigozhin's jet took off from the Machulishchy airfield in Belarus towards Russia, flew to Moscow, and then immediately took off for St. Petersburg.[1] Former Russian officer and prominent critical milblogger Igor Girkin claimed that Prigozhin returned to Russia to negotiate with unspecified Russian officials and the Wagner Commander's Council.[2] ISW cannot independently confirm if Prigozhin did in fact return to Russia, nor the details of the purported visit, but Prigozhin may have returned briefly to work out further details of the deal negotiated by Belarusian dictator Alexander Lukashenko.

Russian sources continued to speculate on the specifics of this deal on June 28. A Wagner-affiliated Russian milblogger posted an interview with a Belarusian Wagner fighter wherein the fighter claimed that Wagner has opened a "new combat direction" in Belarus and that some Wagner fighters will "work in Russia" while some "work in Belarus." [3] Russian opposition outlet *Meduza*, citing a source within the Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) claimed that only 1,000 Wagner fighters went to Belarus with Prigozhin, however.[4] Belarusian opposition channel Belamova additionally claimed that satellite imagery from June 27 shows the construction of a new military object in the Osipovichi raion that was not visible as of June 13, suggesting that the imagery could show the construction of a Wagner training camp in Belarus.[5] It is unclear if construction of the military object appeared before the announcement of the Prigozhin-Lukashenko deal on June 24, and ISW cannot independently confirm if the object is in any way related to Wagner.[6] However, the pervasive speculation surrounding Wagner's position in Belarus suggests that certain aspects of the deal are still being worked out.

**Russian sources speculated that Wagner's rebellion is already having widespread impacts on the Russian command structure.** A prominent Russian milblogger claimed that Wagner's rebellion has prompted "large-scale purges" among the command cadre of the Russian

armed forces and that the Russian MoD is currently undergoing a “crash-test” for loyalty.[7] The milblogger claimed that the Russian Federal Protective Service (FSO) is conducting a review of the Russian military leadership as well as the individual unit commanders.[8] The milblogger claimed that Russian officials are using the MoD’s “indecisiveness” in suppressing the rebellion and “support for paramilitary companies (PMCs)” as pretexts to remove “objectionable” personnel from their positions. The milblogger notably claimed that Russian Airborne Forces (VDV) commander and rumored deputy theater commander Colonel General Mikhail Teplinsky assumed responsibilities as overall theater commander in Ukraine from Chief of the General Staff and current overall theater commander Army General Valery Gerasimov on an unspecified date, but likely after the rebellion. The milblogger emphasized that Gerasimov will retain his post as Chief of the General Staff but will no longer have responsibilities for Russian operations in Ukraine. Another Russian source claimed that an “atmosphere of suspicion has enveloped the General Staff” and that affiliates of Gerasimov are accused of indecision and failure while the affiliates of deputy commander of the joint grouping of forces in Ukraine Army General Sergei Surovikin are accused of complicity in the rebellion.[9] The sources publishing these speculations have largely been accurate in previous reporting on Russian command changes, although the ongoing disruption to human networks and the severe potential consequences related to Prigozhin’s armed rebellion may affect these sources’ accuracy. ISW cannot confirm any of these speculations about the command changes at this time, but it is evident that the armed rebellion is continuing to have substantial ramifications in the information space.

**Russian authorities reportedly arrested Army General Sergei Surovikin on June 28, possibly indicating that the Kremlin intends to purge the MoD of figures viewed as disloyal.** Russian opposition source *The Moscow Times* reported on June 28 that two sources close to the MoD confirmed that the Russian authorities had arrested Surovikin because he chose to side with Prigozhin during the rebellion.[10] *The New York Times* reported on June 28 that US officials briefed on US intelligence stated that Surovikin had advance knowledge of the rebellion, but that US intelligence is still trying to ascertain if Surovikin directly supported Prigozhin’s effort.[11] It is unclear what transpired that would have forced Surovikin to call on Prigozhin to end the rebellion only several hours after its start, although it is possible that he did so under duress instead of out of support for the Russian military leadership. If Russian authorities did arrest Surovikin then the Kremlin will likely use Surovikin and his affiliates as scapegoats to publicly explain why the Russian military and Russian internal security apparatuses responded poorly to the rebellion and to justify a potential overhaul of the Russian military leadership. ISW has previously reported on Surovikin’s notable Wagner affiliations and alleged support for Wagner, and Surovikin is a prime candidate for a scapegoat regardless of the actual level of support he gave to the rebellion.[12]

**The Kremlin will likely attempt to balance a desire to mitigate the widespread disdain for MoD establishment figures that fueled Wagner’s rebellion while also trying to disempower those who may have sympathized with the rebellion.** Segments of the pro-war ultranationalist community and the Russian military have routinely criticized Gerasimov and Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu for their management of the war in Ukraine, and Prigozhin’s avowed goal of forcibly removing the two generals suggests that the Kremlin may view Gerasimov’s and Shoigu’s unpopularity as a direct threat to Putin’s ability to retain support among key constituencies and the military.[13] ISW previously assessed that the Kremlin is likely attempting to signal that Shoigu will maintain his position, but the Kremlin has yet to promote Gerasimov in a similar way in the days following the rebellion.[14] The Kremlin may attempt to placate disdain for the MoD establishment by reducing Gerasimov’s role in operations in Ukraine, although he is highly likely to

maintain, at least nominally, the position of overall theater commander and his long-term role as Chief of the General Staff. ISW has previously assessed that Gerasimov's removal from either position would be too damaging to Putin's and the MoD's reputation. Putin could attempt to avoid fallout from future command changes by increasingly rewarding commanders with responsibility beyond their official positions.[15] Putin is likely further incentivized not to publicly replace Gerasimov out of fears of legitimizing rebellion as a successful means of blackmail. The speculations that Gerasimov's role is diminishing in Ukraine may suggest that Putin is diverting Gerasimov to another effort instead of completely demoting him. Putin likely values Gerasimov for his loyalty above all else, and he may task Gerasimov with staff changes within the MoD focused on loyalty should the Kremlin decide to overhaul the Russian military leadership.[16]

The Kremlin may have chosen Teplinsky as a *de facto* overall theater commander because he is reportedly widely popular among the Russian rank-and-file and the Russian ultranationalist community.[17] Teplinsky previously commanded forces alongside Wagner around Bakhmut in the winter of 2023, but it is not immediately clear if Teplinsky supported Wagner more generally as Surovikin reportedly did, and Teplinsky remained silent during the armed rebellion.[18] Teplinsky reportedly expressed dissatisfaction with the current military command directly to Putin in late February and assumed a leading military command position in April 2023, becoming one of the most notable anti-Gerasimov commanders aside from Surovikin.[19] Teplinsky is allegedly in charge of sectors of the front where Russian forces are currently defending against Ukrainian counteroffensive operations, and speculations of his *de facto* appointment to overall theater commander may indicate that the Kremlin sought to reward Teplinsky for overseeing doctrinal Russian defensive operations in these areas of the front or to find a public face for the war effort who can claim credit for showing at least basic military competence to offset or distract from the attention Prigozhin had received for the seizure of Bakhmut.[20] The Kremlin may choose to assign responsibilities for command in Ukraine in such a way that Russian military officials privately recognize that an anti-Gerasimov figure controls the war effort in Ukraine without the Kremlin having to acknowledge that fact publicly. The Kremlin will likely struggle to balance between appeasing discontent with the MoD and purging it of disloyal figures without contradicting its rhetoric and actions. Should it find that balance too hard to strike it may choose to pursue only one of the goals. In that event, the Kremlin will almost certainly choose the effort of purging disloyal figures regardless of continued ire towards the MoD leadership.

**Russian sources claimed that the Kremlin is punishing Russian forces that it perceives to have failed in their response to the rebellion.** Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian pilots who refused to strike the Wagner convoys and Russian border guards who refused to open fire on Wagner are now facing unspecified criminal prosecution.[21] The Kremlin may punish lower ranking Russian servicemen to create additional scapegoats for their response to the rebellion, although refusal to obey legal and direct orders would be grounds for courts martial in any military, and an order to fire on forces engaged in armed rebellion would very likely be legal. ISW cannot confirm these milblogger claims at this time.

**The Russian Duma is considering additional measures to increase control over the information space and promote self-censorship within broad internet communities.** First Deputy Chairperson for the State Duma Education Committee Yana Lantratova stated on June 27 that the State Duma will propose to appoint a body "authorized to monitor the activities of bloggers." [22] Lantratova also stated that Duma deputies will submit an additional bill on the registration of bloggers as "mass media" and that defines the rights and obligations of

bloggers.[23] While reporting on this bill does not specify military correspondents or milbloggers, it is likely that milbloggers will fall into the broad category of “bloggers” and will be subject to increased regulation and control by the proposed monitoring body and resultant bill. ISW has previously reported on the efforts of Russian authorities to increase censorship of milbloggers and military commentators.[24] The Duma may have suggested this law using the broad category of “blogger” to avoid drawing specific ire from milbloggers, who largely did not comment on these updates on July 28.

**Belarus formally ratified an agreement on the establishment of joint Russian-Belarusian training centers in Belarus on June 28.** Belarusian media reported that Belarusian deputies adopted a draft law on the ratification of an agreement between Russia and Belarus on the “establishment and operation of combat training centers for joint training of military personnel” of Belarusian and Russian military personnel.[25] Belarusian Defense Minister Viktor Khrenin noted that the main tasks of these combat training centers is the “unification of combat training” by Russian and Belarusian forces.[26] ISW previously assessed in April of 2021 that Russia opened such training centers in Belarus to set conditions for further permanent military basing as part of the wider Russian effort to entirely subordinate Belarus under Kremlin control.[27] The agreement on joint training centers was previously signed on March 28, 2023, on the basis of an October 31, 2022, draft treaty law.[28] The ratification of the pre-existing agreement is the next step in the Kremlin’s ongoing campaign to secure the military subordination of Belarus and is not related to the reported deal between Wagner Group financier Yevgeny Prigozhin and Belarusian dictator Alexander Lukashenko on Wagner’s exile to Belarus following the June 23-24 armed rebellion.

**Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu held a phone conversation with the Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran Major General Mohammad Bagheri on June 28.** Russian media reported that Shoigu and Bagheri discussed issues of bilateral military and military-technical cooperation, regional security, and the wider international situation and announced their intention to deepen bilateral dialogue and develop additional defense contracts.[29] Bagheri is responsible for Iranian military policy and strategic guidance, and previously met with Shoigu in Moscow in October 2021.[30] Bagheri’s senior role within Iran’s security apparatus suggests that he could be discussing arms sales with Shoigu. Iranian officials have previously expressed interest in receiving Russian fighter jets and air defense systems in return for Iran’s support for the Russian war effort, though these sales have not yet materialized.[31] ISW and the Critical Threats Project had previously assessed that Iran is seeking to leverage arms sales to generate revenue for the Iranian economy.[32]

**Unconfirmed reports claim that Russian military police allegedly detained Wagner Group commanders in Syria.** Saudi Arabian TV channel *Al Hadath* reportedly stated on June 27 on air that Russian military police detained the head of Wagner’s branch in Suwayda, Syria, and three other “high-ranking” Wagner commanders at the Hmeimim Air Base and visited Wagner offices in Damascus, Hama, and Deir ez Zor.[33] Russian news outlet *Kommersant* reported that Wagner commander Dmitry Utkin later denied these claims of Wagner personnel arrests in Syria on his Telegram channel.[34] Another Wagner-affiliated Telegram channel also denied the arrests.[35] ISW is unable to independently verify these claims at this time.

**Ukrainian forces conducted counteroffensive operations in at least four sectors of the front.** The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Ukrainian forces are conducting offensive

operations in the Bakhmut direction, along the western Donetsk-eastern Zaporizhia administrative border, and in western Zaporizhian.[36] The Russian MoD claimed that Russian forces repelled Ukrainian attacks south of Kreminna.[37] Ukrainian Defense Minister Oleksii Reznikov stated in an interview with *Financial Times* published on June 28 that the “main event” of the Ukrainian counteroffensive has not yet started.[38]

## Key Takeaways

- **Continued reporting about the deal mediated by Belarusian dictator Alexander Lukashenko to end the Wagner Group’s armed rebellion suggests that involved parties may still be negotiating the specifics of the agreement.**
- **Russian sources speculated that Wagner’s rebellion is already having widespread impacts on the Russian command structure.**
- **Russian authorities reportedly arrested Army General Sergei Surovikin on June 28, possibly indicating that the Kremlin intends to purge the MoD of figures viewed as disloyal.**
- **The Kremlin will likely attempt to balance a desire to mitigate the widespread disdain for MoD establishment figures that fueled Wagner’s rebellion while also trying to disempower those who may have sympathized with the rebellion.**
- **The Russian Duma is considering additional measures to increase control over the information space and promote self-censorship within broad internet communities.**
- **Belarus formally ratified an agreement on the establishment of joint Russian-Belarusian training centers in Belarus on June 28.**
- **Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu held a phone conversation with the Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran Major General Mohammad Bagheri on June 28.**
- **Unconfirmed reports claim that Russian military police allegedly detained Wagner Group commanders in Syria.**
- **Ukrainian forces conducted counteroffensive operations in at least four sectors of the front.**
- **Russian and Ukrainian forces conducted ground attacks near Kreminna, Bakhmut, and in western Donetsk Oblast.**
- **Russian forces conducted a strike on civilian infrastructure in Kramatorsk in Donetsk Oblast on the night of June 27.**
- **Russian sources claimed that Ukrainian forces continued counteroffensive operations in western Zaporizhia Oblast and conducted limited probing attacks on the east (left) bank of the Dnipro River near the Antonivsky Bridge in Kherson Oblast on June 27 and 28.**
- **Russian sources reported on continued Russian efforts to clarify terms and conditions for military service.**
- **Russian and occupation officials continue efforts to deconflict legal discrepancies as part of the incorporation of occupied territories.**

# Assessed Control of Terrain in Ukraine and Main Russian Maneuver Axes as of June 28, 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 these Russian violations of the laws of armed conflict, Geneva Conventions, and humanity even though we do not describe them in these reports.***

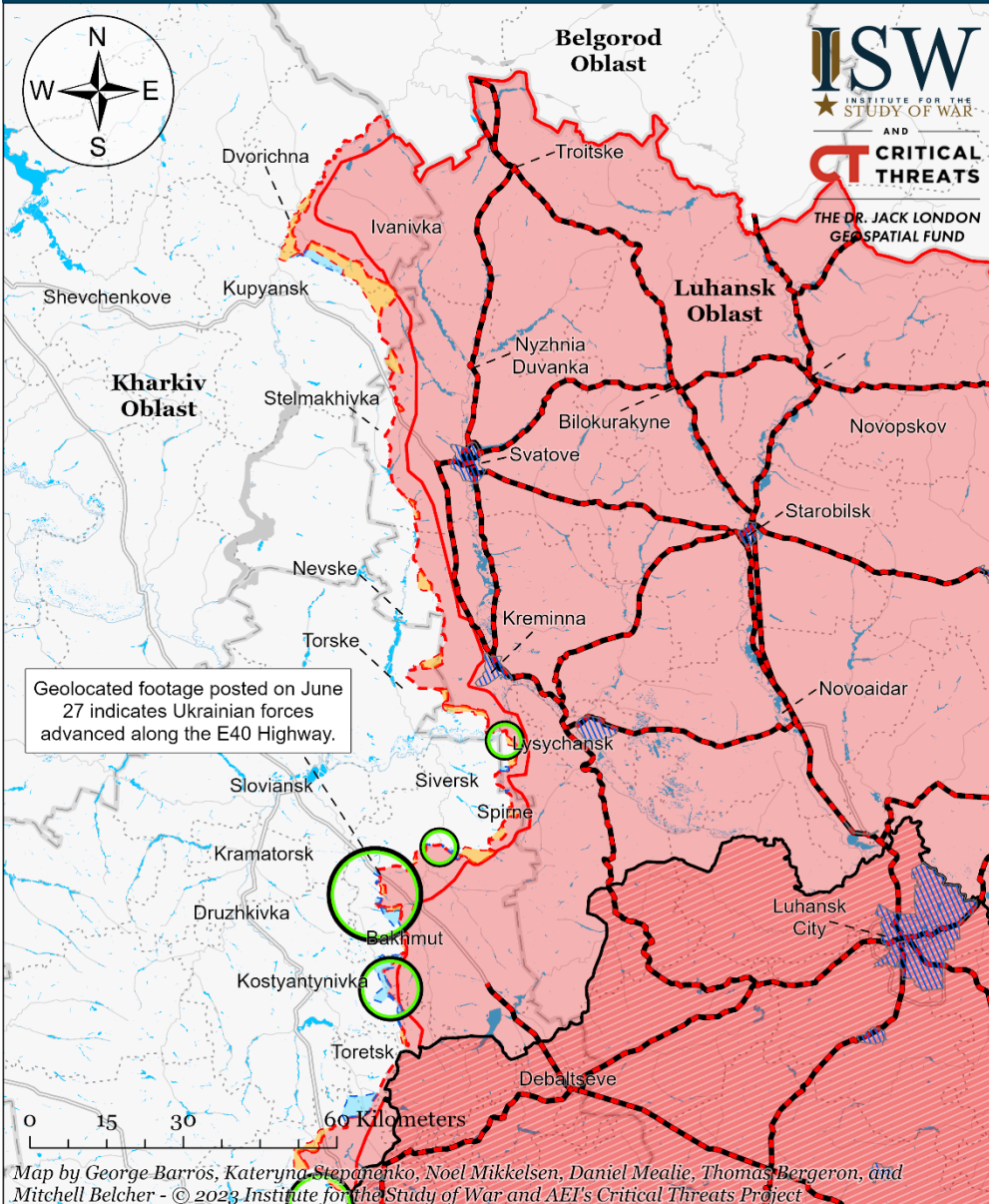
- Russian Main Effort – Eastern Ukraine (comprised of two subordinate main efforts)
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #1 – Capture the remainder of Luhansk Oblast and push westward into eastern Kharkiv Oblast and encircle northern Donetsk Oblast
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #2 – Capture the entirety of Donetsk Oblast
- Russian Supporting Effort – Southern Axis
- Russian Mobilization and Force Generation Efforts
- Activities in Russian-occupied areas

## **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 and Ukrainian forces conducted limited ground attacks south of Kreminna on June 28. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces conducted unsuccessful offensive operations near Bilohorivka (10km south of Kreminna).[39] A Russian milblogger claimed on June 27 that Russian forces successfully conducted assaults on Ukrainian positions near Kreminna. The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) claimed on June 28 that Russian forces repelled Ukrainian attacks near Kuzmyne (3km southwest of Kreminna), Hryhorivka (11km south of Kreminna), and Vesele (30km south of Kreminna).[40]

# Assessed Control of Terrain Around Luhansk Oblast as of June 28, 2023, 3:00 PM ET



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

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



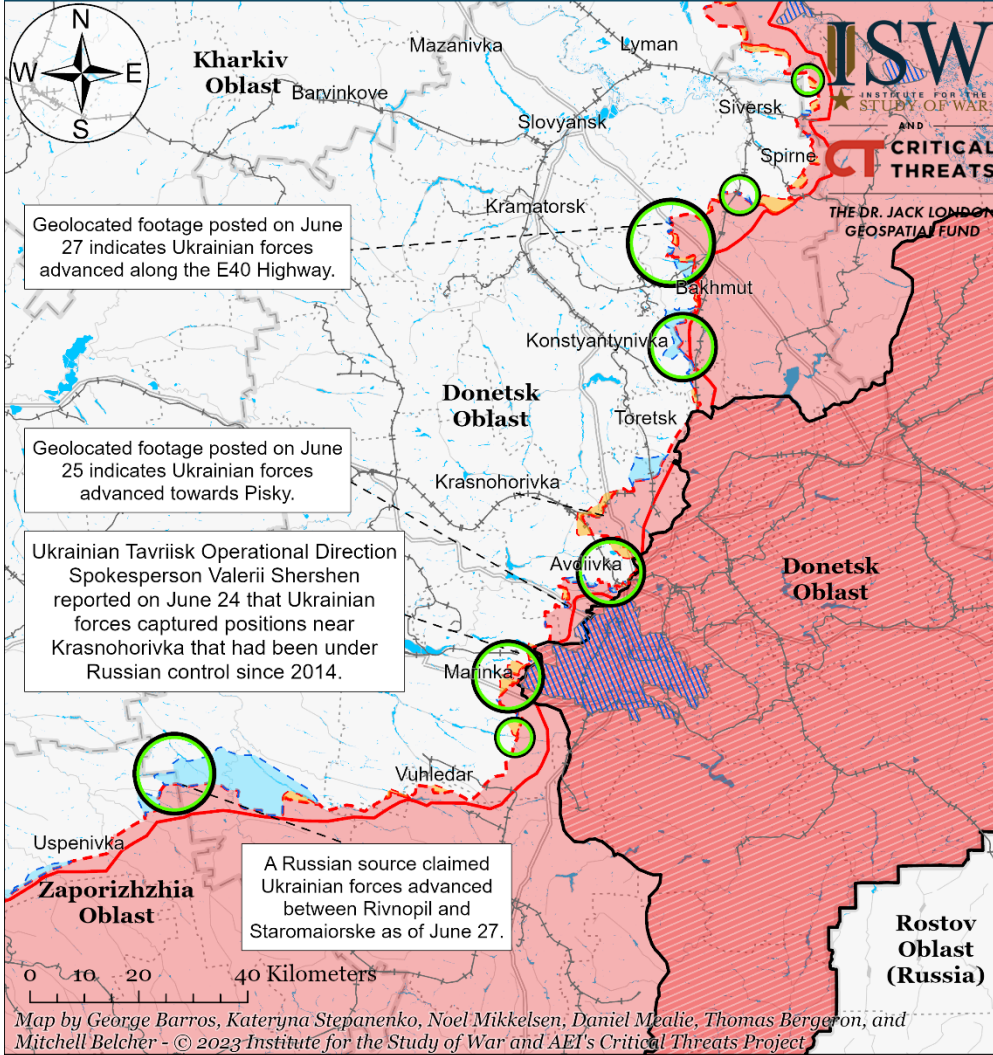
## **Russian Subordinate Main Effort #2 – Donetsk Oblast (Russian Objective: Capture the entirety of Donetsk Oblast, the claimed territory of Russia’s proxies in Donbas)**

Ukrainian and Russian forces conducted limited ground attacks around Bakhmut. Geolocated footage published on June 27 shows that Ukrainian forces have advanced north of Orikhovo-Vasylivka (11km northwest of Bakhmut).[41] The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Ukrainian forces conducted offensive operations in the Bakhmut direction near Rozdolivka (19km northeast of Bakhmut), Zalizyanske (13km north of Bakhmut), Paraskoviivka (3km northeast of Bakhmut), Berkhivka (6km north of Bakhmut), Klishchiivka (6km southwest of Bakhmut), and Kurdiiumivka (13km southwest of Bakhmut).[42] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces advanced near Klishchiivka and conducted unsuccessful attacks from Berkhivka.[43] Another Russian milblogger claimed on June 27 that Ukrainian forces conducted attacks along the entire line of contact from Yakovlivka (14km northeast of Bakhmut) to Kurdiiumivka.[44] A Russian milblogger also claimed that Russian forces repelled Ukrainian attacks near Vasyukivka (15km north of Bakhmut) and Rozdolivka and that elements of the 106th Guards Airborne (VDV) Division repelled a Ukrainian attack near Soledar (12km northeast of Bakhmut). [45] Geolocated footage published on June 28 and from June 26 shows that Russian forces have advanced west of Dubovo-Vasylivka (about 6km northwest of Bakhmut).[46] Russian sources claimed that Russian forces advanced near Berkhivka.[47] The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces conducted unsuccessful offensive operations near Rozdolivka, Orikhovo-Vasylivka, Bohdanivka (5km northwest of Bakhmut), and Bila Hora (12km southwest of Bakhmut).[48]

Russian forces conducted limited ground attacks along the Avdiivka-Donetsk City line on June 28. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces conducted unsuccessful offensive operations near Avdiivka, Marinka (on the southwestern outskirts of Donetsk City), Pobieda (32km southwest of Avdiivka), and Novomykhailivka (36km southwest of Avdiivka).[49] Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces unsuccessfully attacked near Pervomaiske (6km southwest of Avdiivka) and that Russian forces are conducting assault operations south of Marinka from captured positions in the “Zverinets” fortified area.[50] Footage published on June 27 purportedly shows the Donetsk People’s Republic (DNR) 1st Slavic Brigade operating in the Avdiivka direction.[51]

Russian forces conducted a strike on civilian infrastructure in Kramatorsk in Donetsk Oblast on the night of June 27. Ukrainian Donetsk Oblast Military Administration Head Pavlo Kyrylenko reported that Russian forces struck a residential area and a restaurant.[52] Ukrainian Presidential Office Head Andriy Yermak reported that the second missile struck Bilenke (on the northeastern outskirts of Kramatorsk).[53] Russian sources attempted to justify the strike on Kramatorsk by claiming that Ukrainian commanders had been at the restaurant, although ISW has not observed evidence to verify this claim.[54] Russian forces likely violated international law by conducting an indiscriminate attack on civilian infrastructure.[55]

# Assessed Control of Terrain Around Donetsk as of June 28, 2023, 3:00 PM ET

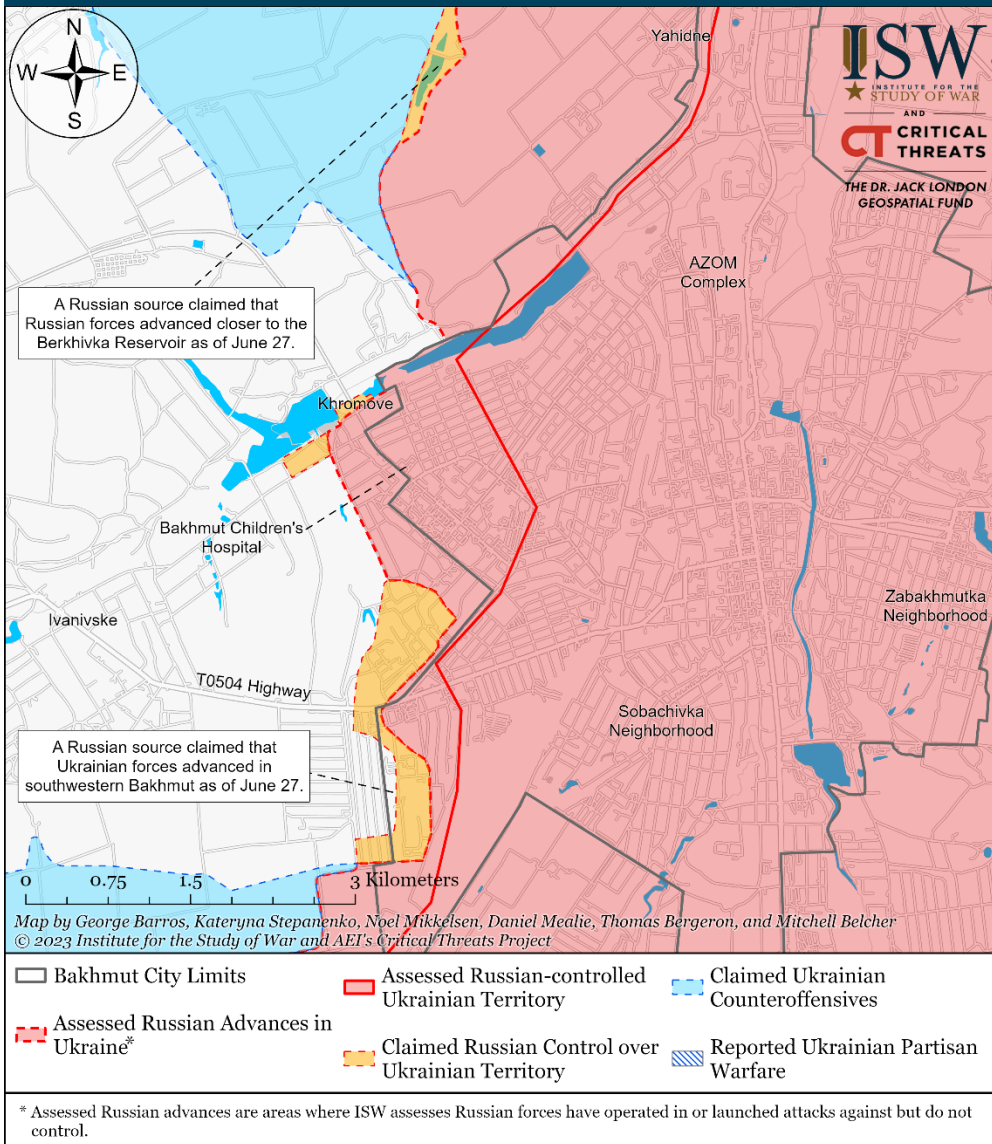


- Significant Fighting in the past 24 Hours
- Assessed Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory
- Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory before February 24
- Assessed Russian Advances in Ukraine\*
- Claimed Russian Control over Ukrainian Territory
- Claimed Ukrainian Counteroffensives
- + Major Railroads
- 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: Ukrainian Tavriisk Operational Direction Spokesperson Valerii Shershen reported on June 24 that Ukrainian forces captured positions near Krasnohorivka that had been under Russian control since 2014. ISW cannot assess the exact areas of advances at this time due to a lack of sufficient evidence.

## Assessed Control of Terrain in Bakhmut as of June 28, 2023, 3:00 PM ET



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

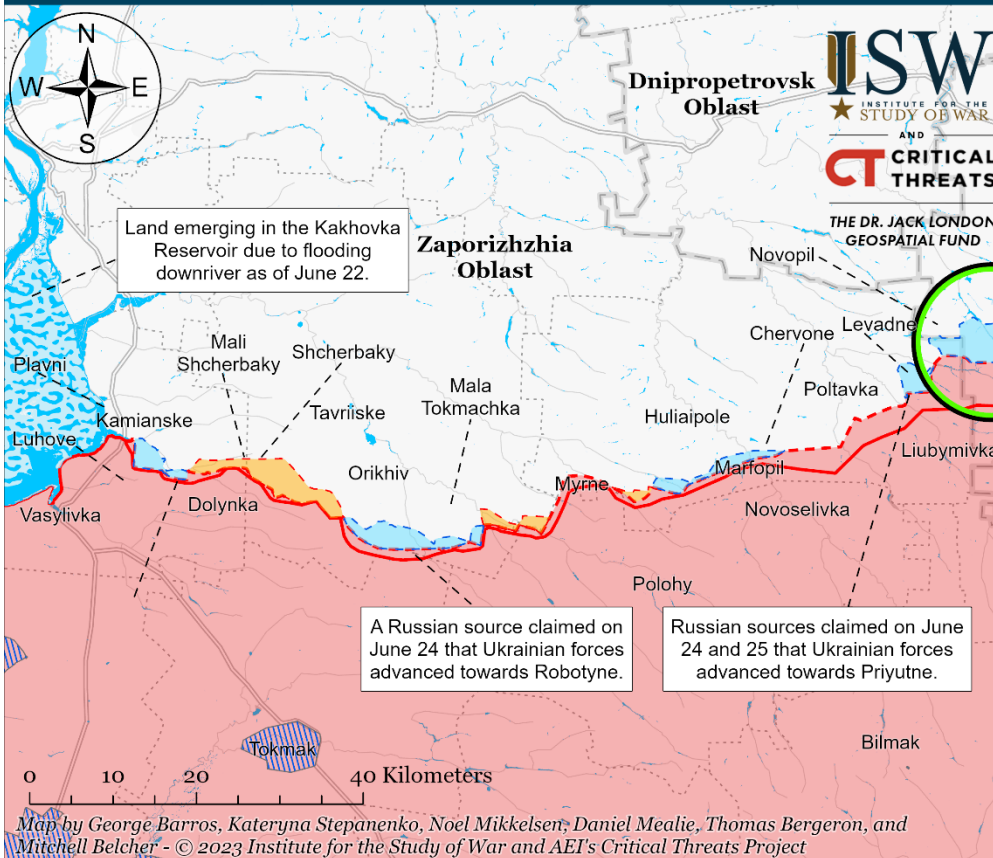
Russian and Ukrainian forces conducted ground attacks in western Donetsk Oblast on June 28. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces conducted unsuccessful offensive operations near Rivnopil (10km southwest of Velyka Novosilka along the Donetsk-Zaporizhia Oblast border).[56] Russian sources, including the Russian MoD claimed that Ukrainian forces conducted attacks in the Rivnopil area towards Staromaiorske (9km south of Velyka Novosilka).[57] Russian milbloggers claimed that Ukrainian troops took up new positions along the Rivnopil-Staromaiorske line and advanced towards Priyutne (15km southwest of Velyka Novosilka).[58]

Russian sources claimed that Ukrainian forces continued counteroffensive operations in western Zaporizhia Oblast on June 28. Russian milbloggers claimed that Ukrainian troops attempted to advance along the Pyatykhatky-Zherebryanky line (25km southwest of Orikhiv) and that elements of the 429th Motorized Rifle Regiment (19th Motorized Rifle Division, 58th Combined Arms Army, Southern Military District), unspecified naval infantry units, and the “Sudoplatov” volunteer battalion, and a North Ossetian battalion repelled Ukrainian attacks on this sector.[59] A Russian milblogger additionally claimed that Ukrainian troops attempted to attack southeast of Orikhiv near Luhivske and towards Robotyne (13km due south of Orikhiv).[60]

Russian sources claimed that Ukrainian forces conducted limited probing attacks on the east (left) bank of the Dnipro River near the Antonivsky Bridge on June 27 and 28. The Russian MoD claimed that Russian ground and artillery units destroyed a Ukrainian sabotage and reconnaissance group that attempted to land on the east bank near the Antonivsky Bridge.[61] A Russian milblogger claimed that as of the end of the day on June 27, Russian aerospace forces unsuccessfully attempted to strike Ukrainian positions in this area with aircraft but were ultimately unsuccessful because Ukrainian forces deployed S-300 surface-to-air missile systems to shoreline areas on the west (right) bank.[62] Several Russian milbloggers warned that the Ukrainian forces are preparing for additional offensive operations to cross the Dnipro River in this sector.[63] Geolocated footage posted on June 27 shows Russian airborne (VDV) forces operating in Oleshky (about 5km due south of the Antonivsky bridge on the east bank).[64]

Ukrainian forces targeted rear areas of Zaporizhia Oblast on June 27-28. Russian and Ukrainian sources reported the sounds of explosions following likely Ukrainian missile strikes near Prymorsk (west of Berdyansk) and Kamianka (north of Berdyansk).[65] Russian and Ukrainian sources additionally reported explosions in occupied Melitopol on June 27 and 28.[66]

# Assessed Control of Terrain Around Zaporizhia as of June 28, 2023, 3:00 PM ET

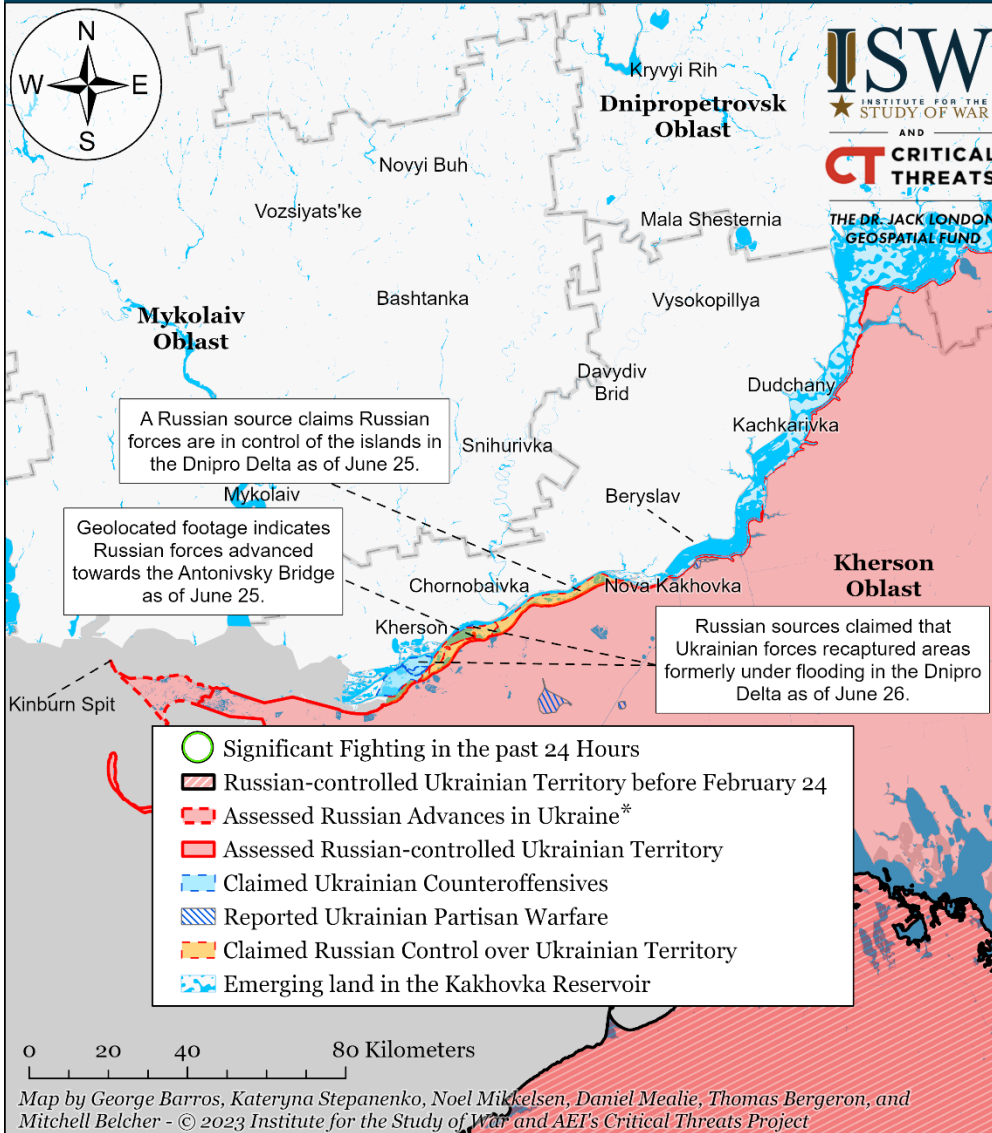


	Significant Fighting in the past 24 Hours		Assessed Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory		Reported Ukrainian Partisan Warfare
	Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory before February 24		Claimed Russian Control over Ukrainian Territory		Emerging land in the Kakhovka Reservoir
	Assessed Russian Advances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

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

Note: Ukrainian Deputy Defense Minister Hanna Malyar claimed on June 26 that Ukrainian forces recaptured 17 square kilometers in the past week and 130 square kilometers since the start of the counteroffensive.

# Assessed Control of Terrain Around Kherson and Mykolaiv as of June 28, 2023, 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 Mobilization and Force Generation Efforts (Russian objective: Expand combat power without conducting general mobilization)

Russian sources reported on continued Russian efforts to clarify terms and condition for military service. Russian opposition media reported that the Russian State Duma rejected or returned for

revision 10draft laws specifying further expectations or deferrals from military service, including entrepreneurs, medical personnel in rural areas, recipients of PhDs, persons with a disabled dependent child, persons whose relatives had died in military service, and persons serving in an alternative civilian capacity.[67] Russian opposition media also reported that Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a law permitting prisoners and those under criminal investigation to be released from punishment if they sign a contract with the MoD.[68]

Russian authorities continue efforts to promote social benefits for families of servicemen in order to frame military service as more attractive. Russian milbloggers claimed that the Russian government is sponsoring two weeks of free summer camp for 3,000 children of Russian military personnel serving in Ukraine from Moscow Oblast.[69]

A Ukrainian source claimed that residents of the occupied territories are weary of continued mobilization. Ukrainian Mariupol Mayoral Advisor Petro Andryushchenko claimed that the wives of mobilized Donetsk People's Republic (DNR) forces have begun to complain about their husbands' continued service and are advocating for their husbands' return home since the DNR is technically part of Russia under new Russian laws and the active phase of partial mobilization has ended in Russia.[70] Andryushchenko amplified a Russian DNR official's Telegram post reporting that the status of mobilized DNR forces is "not defined" under current Russian law, which prevents them from being demobilized.[71] Andryushchenko claimed that under the current conditions it is possible that the mobilized DNR forces will fight and die for Russia and never return home.[72] The continued incongruity between laws pertaining to the mobilization of DNR forces and those pertaining to Russian forces is likely to continue having adverse impacts of force generation capabilities in occupied territories.

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

Russian and occupation officials continue efforts to deconflict legal discrepancies as part of the incorporation of occupied territories. A Kremlin-affiliated milblogger claimed that Russian authorities oversaw the transfer of the sham trials of 22 "Azov militants" accused of "participating in a terrorist organization and forcibly seizing power" from Mariupol in occupied Donetsk Oblast to Rostov-on-Don, Rostov Oblast.[73] The milblogger claimed that bureaucratic challenges delayed the criminal case after the court decided to try the case in accordance with Russian laws despite the fact that the case was initiated under the Criminal Codes of the Donetsk People's Republic (DNR).[74] Russian authorities are clearly continuing to face issues streamlining criminal law in occupied territories with Russian criminal code.

Russian occupation administrations continue forced passportization in occupied territories. Ukrainian Deputy Defense Minister Hanna Malyar reported that Russian occupation administrations are withholding free medical care from civilians who do not have or have not applied for Russian passports in Hornostaivka, Kairy, and Zavodivka in occupied Kherson Oblast.[75] The Ukrainian Resistance Center reported that Russian forces have intensified raids and detention of civilians without Russian passports in Enerhodar and other surrounding settlements in Zaporizhia Oblast and have later subjected detained residents to the confiscation of their personal property, psychological pressure, and torture.[76] The Ukrainian Resistance Center also reported that Russian forces are

detaining minors in order to pressure parents who have pro-Ukraine sentiments or have not yet acquired Russian passports.[77] The Ukrainian Resistance Center also reported that occupation administrations are simplifying the procedure to attain Russian citizenship and work permits in pursuit of Russian efforts to relocate residents from occupied territories to Russia.[78] Russian Senator Konstantin Basyuk claimed that the Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs has designed a simplified process for dual Russian-Ukrainian citizens to voluntarily renounce their Ukrainian citizenship under a law on signed on March 18, 2023 .[79]

Russian and occupation administrations continue the illegal deportation of Ukrainian children to Russia. Russian opposition media reported that Russian Commissioner for Children’s Rights Maria Lvova-Belova claimed that Russia has taken 380 Ukrainian children from the occupied territories and placed them with Russian families since the end of 2022.[80] Russian opposition media claimed that it’s possible that up to three times as many children have been placed with Russian families according to a 2022 report that found 1,184 children arrived in Rostov Oblast from the occupied territories “without legal guardians.”[81] Chair of Kherson Oblast occupation government Andrey Alekseyenko reported on June 27 that over two thousand children from Kherson Oblast will be sent to camps throughout Russia, including camps in Krasnodar Krai, Crimea, and the Republic of Agydea.[82] Alekseyenko claimed that more than two thousand graduates will be sent to summer programs at Russian universities and another four thousand children will be sent to 78 “school camps” in the occupied Kherson Oblast.[83] A pro-Russian Telegram channel associated with the Kherson Oblast occupation administration claimed that 185 children from the Henichesk Raion of occupied Kherson Oblast were sent to a 21 day “health camp” in the Republic of Agydea in Russia.[84]

**Significant activity in Belarus (Russian efforts to increase its military presence in Belarus and further integrate Belarus into Russian-favorable frameworks). ISW will continue to report daily observed Russian and Belarusian military activity in Belarus, as part of ongoing Kremlin efforts to increase their control over Belarus and other Russian actions 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.**

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[1] [https://t.me/Hajun\\_BY/7028](https://t.me/Hajun_BY/7028);  
[https://twitter.com/Hajun\\_BY/status/1673782283654897664?s=20](https://twitter.com/Hajun_BY/status/1673782283654897664?s=20)

[2] <https://t.me/strelkovii/5783>

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