



## Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment

**Karolina Hird, Angelica Evans, Nicole Wolkov, Grace Mappes, and Frederick W. Kagan**

**May 14, 2024, 8:35pm 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.

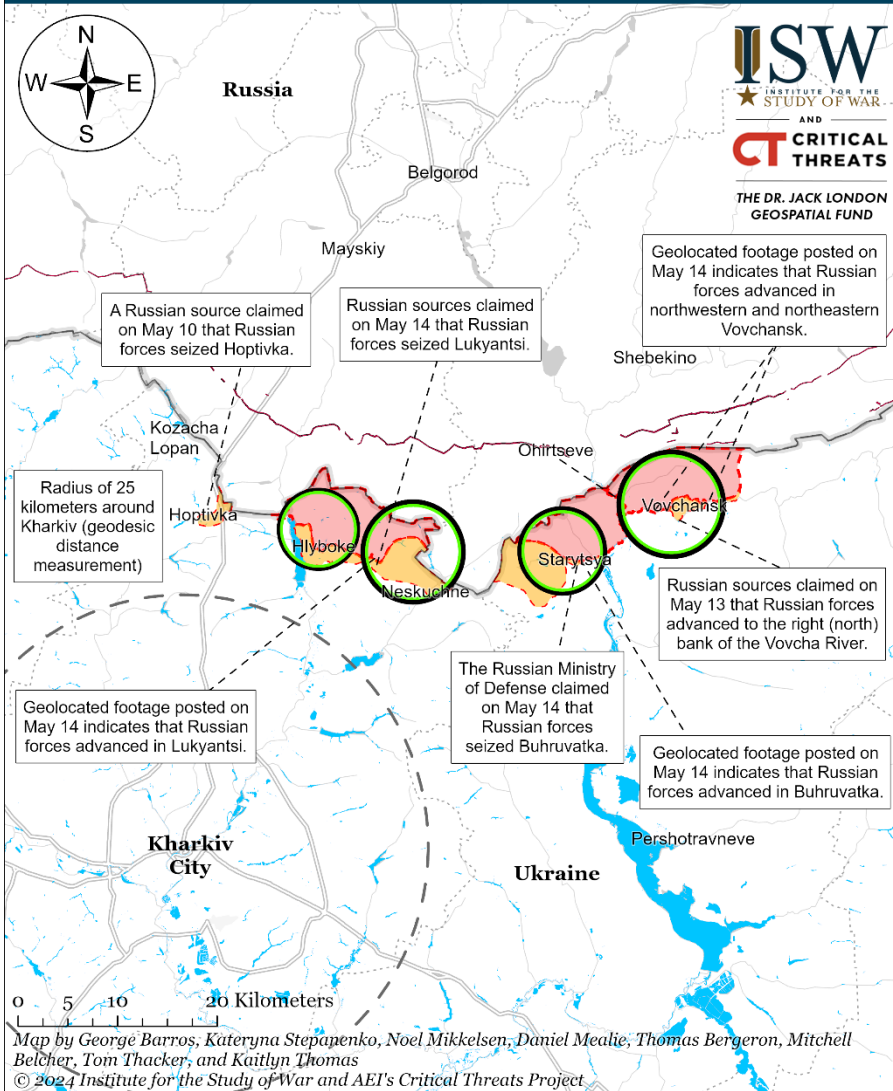
**Note: The data cut-off for this product was 3:15pm ET on May 14. ISW will cover subsequent reports in the May 15 Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment.**

**The pace of Russian offensive operations in northern Kharkiv Oblast appears to have slowed over the past 24 hours, and the pattern of Russian offensive activity in this area is consistent with ISW's assessment that Russian forces are prioritizing the creation of a "buffer zone" in the international border area over a deeper penetration of Kharkiv Oblast.** Several Ukrainian military officials reported on May 14 that they believe the situation in Kharkiv Oblast is slowly stabilizing — Ukraine's Main Military Intelligence Directorate (GUR) Head Lieutenant General Kyrylo Budanov stated on May 14 that the situation in Kharkiv Oblast began stabilizing on the night of May 13 into May 14 as additional Ukrainian units deployed to the area and began defending against Russian advances.[1] The Ukrainian General Staff and Ukrainian Khortytsia Group of Forces Spokesperson Lieutenant Colonel Nazar Voloshyn noted that Ukrainian forces have begun to "clear" Vovchansk by targeting visible Russian assault groups in the settlement.[2] Several Russian and Ukrainian sources also reported that Russian forces are using new tactics in this direction — using smaller assault groups of no more than five people to penetrate Ukrainian positions before merging with other small assault groups to unite into a larger strike group.[3] Drone footage purportedly from Vovchansk shows Russian foot mobile infantry operating within the settlement in small squad-sized assault groups, consistent with Ukrainian reports.[4]

The use of small assault groups, however, may be contributing to higher Russian manpower and materiel losses and slowing the overall pace of the Russian offensive in this direction. One Russian military commentator, who previously served as a "Storm-Z" unit instructor, complained that footage of small Russian assault groups is indicative of poor training and preparation, not an effective new tactic.[5] Ukrainian military observer Kostyantyn Mashovets noted that growing Russian losses in this direction are leading to a decrease in the overall pace of offensive operations.[6] Ukrainian Chief of the General Staff Major General Anatoliy Barhylevych suggested that Russian forces have lost up to 1,740

soldiers in this direction over just the past day, which would be a very high rate of losses.[7] ISW cannot independently confirm this number, but the purported loss rate may be consistent with the generally slower rate of offensive operations observed on May 14. If the pace of Russian operations remains relatively lower, Russian forces will likely focus on consolidating new positions and building out a lateral salient in Kharkiv Oblast by merging the Lyptsi and Vovchansk efforts and creating a "buffer zone" in the border area, as opposed to pushing further into the oblast, as ISW has previously assessed.[8]

# Assessed Control of Terrain Around Kharkiv as of May 14, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



Map by George Barros, Kateryna Stepanenko, Noel Mikkelsen, Daniel Mealie, Thomas Bergeron, Mitchell Belcher, Tom Thacker, and Kaitlyn Thomas  
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- Significant Fighting in the past 24 Hours
- Assessed Russian Advances in Ukraine \*
- Reported Ukrainian Partisan Warfare
- Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory before February 24
- Claimed Russian Control over Ukrainian Territory
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- 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.

Note: A Russian source claimed on May 14 that Russian forces seized 10 settlements and more than 186 square kilometers in Kharkiv Oblast over the past three days. A Ukrainian source stated on May 12 that Russian forces seized about 100 square kilometers near the Kharkiv Oblast border. A Russian source claimed on May 12 that Russian forces advanced 30 kilometers wide and seven kilometers deep near Ohirtseve. A Russian source claimed on May 12 that Russian forces advanced approximately four kilometers in the Kharkiv direction. A Ukrainian source claimed on May 12 that Russian forces advanced between 3.2 and 3.7 kilometers towards Hlyboke and Lukyantsi. A Russian source claimed on May 12 that Russian forces seized a total of 88.98 square kilometers in the Kharkiv direction. A Russian source claimed on May 12 that Russian forces advanced 20 kilometers wide and eight kilometers deep at the western Russian penetration in the Kharkiv direction. A Russian source claimed on May 12 that Russian forces seized approximately 27 square kilometers in the Vovchansk direction.

**Russian President Vladimir Putin's candidate for Russian Defense Minister Andrei Belousov outlined his and Putin's intended priorities for the Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) during a speech to the Russian Federation Council on May 14.** Belousov stated that Putin has set two tasks for a Belousov-led Russian MoD – ensuring the full integration of the Russian military's economy into the general Russian economy and making the Russian MoD as open to innovation as possible.[9] Belousov stated that the Russian MoD's "most pressing issue" is equipping and supplying the Russian military with modern equipment, ammunition, missiles, communications equipment, drones, and electronic warfare (EW) systems. Belousov stated that his other top priorities are the implementation of the 2025 state defense order, the Russian MoD's annual request for new weapons and equipment from the Russian defense industry, and recruitment efforts, but noted that there is no need to discuss "emergency measures" such as a partial or general mobilization of Russian citizens. Belousov noted that the Russian MoD must optimize its spending and gain greater control over the Russian defense industry. Belousov's identified priorities are largely consistent with ISW's assessment that Belousov's appointment indicates that Putin is taking significant steps towards mobilizing the Russian economy and defense industry to support a protracted war effort in Ukraine and possibly prepare for a future confrontation with NATO.[10]

**Russian authorities detained Russian Deputy Defense Minister and Russian MoD Main Personnel Directorate Head Lieutenant General Yuri Kuznetsov on May 13 on charges of accepting large-scale bribes.** The Russian Investigative Committee and Russian media reported on May 14 that the Russian 235th Garrison Military Court detained Kuznetsov on suspicion of accepting a large bribe in the period 2021-2023 while serving as the head of the Russian General Staff's 8th Directorate, which is in charge of the protection of state secrets.[11] The Russian Investigative Committee reported that authorities raided Kuznetsov's home and discovered over 100 million rubles (about \$1 million) worth of cash, including foreign currency, and luxury items. Moscow's Basmanny Raion Court also detained Russian businessman Lev Martirosyan as part of Kuznetsov's case.[12] Russian outlet *Kommersant* reported that Martirosyan bribed Kuznetsov with a total of 30.5 million rubles (\$333,935) to help Martirosyan's hotel companies win government contracts.[13] *Kommersant* reported that the same Investigative Committee department is investigating Kuznetsov's and detained Russian Deputy Defense Minister Timur Ivanov's cases and that the Investigative Committee is forming a special team to investigate similar cases involving high-ranking military personnel. Russian authorities detained Ivanov on April 24 on charges of accepting bribes.[14] Ongoing speculation about further changes within the Russian military and political leadership prompted Russian sources to speculate about the possible return of disgraced Wagner-affiliated Army General Sergei Surovikin to Russian President Vladimir Putin's favor, but Russian sources concluded that insider reports that Surovikin is in Moscow are inaccurate.[15]

**Putin appointed former Tula Oblast Governor Alexei Dyumin and former Security Council Secretary Nikolai Patrushev as his presidential assistants on May 14, further re-balancing his ministerial cabinet for his fifth term.**[16] Kremlin Spokesperson Dmitry Peskov noted that Dyumin will oversee issues regarding the Russian defense industrial base (DIB), State Council, and sports policy, while Patrushev will oversee the strategic development of the Russian shipbuilding industry as well as "other areas, perhaps." [17] Russian presidential assistants typically help the Russian president in the execution of their powers, including by preparing proposals for presidential work and by participating in official meetings alongside the president.[18] Presidential assistants may perform other tasks as the president orders. Dyumin's appointment as Putin's assistant on DIB issues is consistent with Putin's apparent effort to restructure the Russian economy for a

protracted war — Dyumin generally has a positive reputation amongst Russian commentators and is seen as a solid and effective professional, and Putin likely is hoping to leverage Dyumin's good reputation to manage his own.[19]

Russian commentators received the news of Patrushev's new position less certainly, however. Russian opposition outlet *Meduza*, citing sources close to the Kremlin, stated that its sources were "stunned" when they saw that Putin had removed Patrushev from the Security Council, and even more "shocked" that his new position is to be Putin's assistant on shipbuilding.[20] Putin may have moved Patrushev to this new position in order to rebalance the *siloviki*-run power vertical that exists within the Russian security services, as ISW previously reported Putin tends to do with powerful *siloviki*. [21] Patrushev is reportedly a close Putin ally, the individual personally responsible for the assassination of Wagner Group financier Yevgeny Prigozhin, and Putin's personal diplomat who frequently conducted diplomatic trips on Putin's behalf, according to Western reporting.[22] Putin can continue to use Patrushev's connections and experience even if Patrushev is nominally acting as an expert on "shipbuilding" strategy. The new position is nevertheless an obvious demotion.

**The Georgian parliament passed Georgia's Russian-style "foreign agents" bill in its third and final reading on May 14, amid continued protests against the bill in Tbilisi.** The Georgian parliament passed the bill in an 84 to 30 vote, after which it will go to Georgian President Salome Zurbashvili to for final signature.[23] *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's (RFE/RL)* Georgian service reported that members of the European Socialist party and the People's Force party, a breakaway party from the ruling Georgian Dream, supported the bill alongside Georgian Dream members.[24] Georgian President Salome Zurbashvili previously stated that she intended to veto the bill, although *RFE/RL's* Georgian service noted that Georgian Dream has enough votes to override her veto.[25] Zurbashvili also proposed postponing the law's entry into force until November 1, after the October 26 Georgian parliamentary elections.[26] Georgian opposition figures and Western officials have expressed concern that the Georgian government could also utilize the bill to target and justify domestic repression and that its passage could block Georgia's path to joining the European Union (EU).[27] US Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs James O'Brien previously met with senior Georgian officials and opposition members in Tbilisi on April 14. O'Brien stated that Georgian Dream party founder and former Georgian Prime Minister Bidzina Ivanishvili refused to meet with him because Ivanishvili claimed that the US had "de facto" sanctioned him, which O'Brien stated was false.[28] ISW has recently observed Ivanishvili and the Georgian State Security Service (SUS) intensifying their use of established Kremlin information operations and increasing rhetorical alignment with Russia against the West.[29] Georgian Dream actors likely intend to purposefully derail long-term Georgian efforts for Euro-Atlantic integration, which plays into continued Russian hybrid operations to divide, destabilize, and weaken Georgia.[30]

**US Secretary of State Antony Blinken stated that the United States is interested in a bilateral security agreement with Ukraine during a visit to Kyiv on May 14.** Blinken stated during a speech in Kyiv that more than 32 NATO states are negotiating 10-year bilateral security commitments with Ukraine, including nine states with completed agreements.[31] Blinken also reiterated the US commitment to supporting Ukraine's military and industrial efforts. Blinken met with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and Ukrainian Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal on May 14 and is expected to meet with Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba on May 15.[32] Zelensky and Blinken discussed the importance of newly arrived US security assistance in helping Ukrainian forces repel Russian attacks along the frontline and long-term security and economic support for Ukraine.

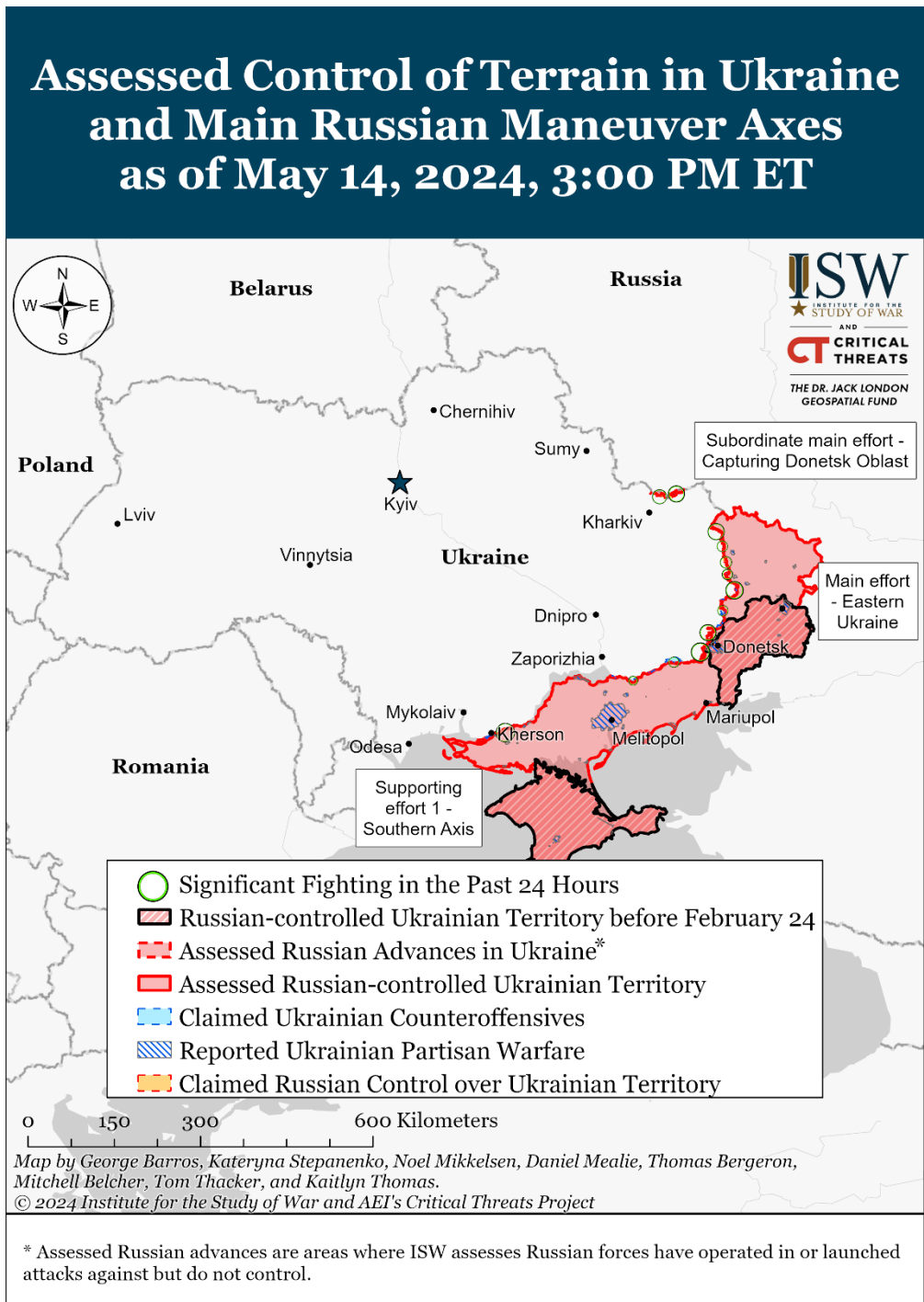
**Likely Ukrainian actors conducted a strike against a Russian railway line in Volgograd Oblast on May 14.** Geolocated footage published on May 14 purportedly shows the aftermath of a likely Ukrainian drone strike against a train in Samofalovka.[33] The train was allegedly transporting fuel.[34] Volga Railway's Press Service stated that "unauthorized persons" derailed several cars of a freight train, and unspecified Russian operational services reported that the derailment and subsequent fire damaged almost 300 meters of railway tracks.[35]

**Estonian Defense Minister Hanno Pevkur clarified that Estonia is not currently considering sending its forces to deep rear areas in Ukraine for non-combat roles.**[36] Pevkur stated on May 14 that previous discussions about possibly sending troops to deep rear areas of Ukraine have not gained traction in either Estonia or the European Union (EU) and noted that Estonia would not take such a measure alone. *Breaking Defense* reported on May 13 that National Security Advisor to the Estonian President, Madis Roll, stated that the Estonian government is "seriously" considering sending Estonian troops to western Ukraine to take over non-combat roles in the rear from Ukrainian troops, allowing Ukrainian forces to deploy to frontline areas.[37] Roll clarified to *Breaking Defense* on May 14 that the discussion of sending Estonian forces to Ukraine in non-combat roles is "not dead" and "ongoing in Estonia in general." [38]

#### **Key Takeaways:**

- **The pace of Russian offensive operations in northern Kharkiv Oblast appears to have slowed over the past 24 hours, and the pattern of Russian offensive activity in this area is consistent with ISW's assessment that Russian forces are prioritizing the creation of a "buffer zone" in the international border area over a deeper penetration of Kharkiv Oblast.**
- **Russian President Vladimir Putin's candidate for Russian Defense Minister Andrei Belousov outlined his and Putin's intended priorities for the Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) during a speech to the Russian Federation Council on May 14.**
- **Russian authorities detained Russian Deputy Defense Minister and Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) Main Personnel Directorate Head Lieutenant General Yuri Kuznetsov on May 13 on charges of accepting large-scale bribes.**
- **Putin appointed former Tula Oblast Governor Alexei Dyumin and former Security Council Secretary Nikolai Patrushev as his presidential assistants on May 14, further re-balancing his ministerial cabinet for his fifth term.**
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- **Likely Ukrainian actors conducted a strike against a Russian railway line in Volgograd Oblast on May 14.**
- **Russian forces recently marginally advanced near Lyptsi, Vovchansk, Svatove, Chasiv Yar, Avdiivka, Donetsk City, and Krynyky.**

- **The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) is reportedly coercing Russian citizens and migrants into Russian military service through false job opportunities, likely as part of ongoing crypto-mobilization efforts.**
- **Ukrainian officials continue efforts to return forcibly deported Ukrainian children to Ukrainian-controlled territory from Russia.**



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

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

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

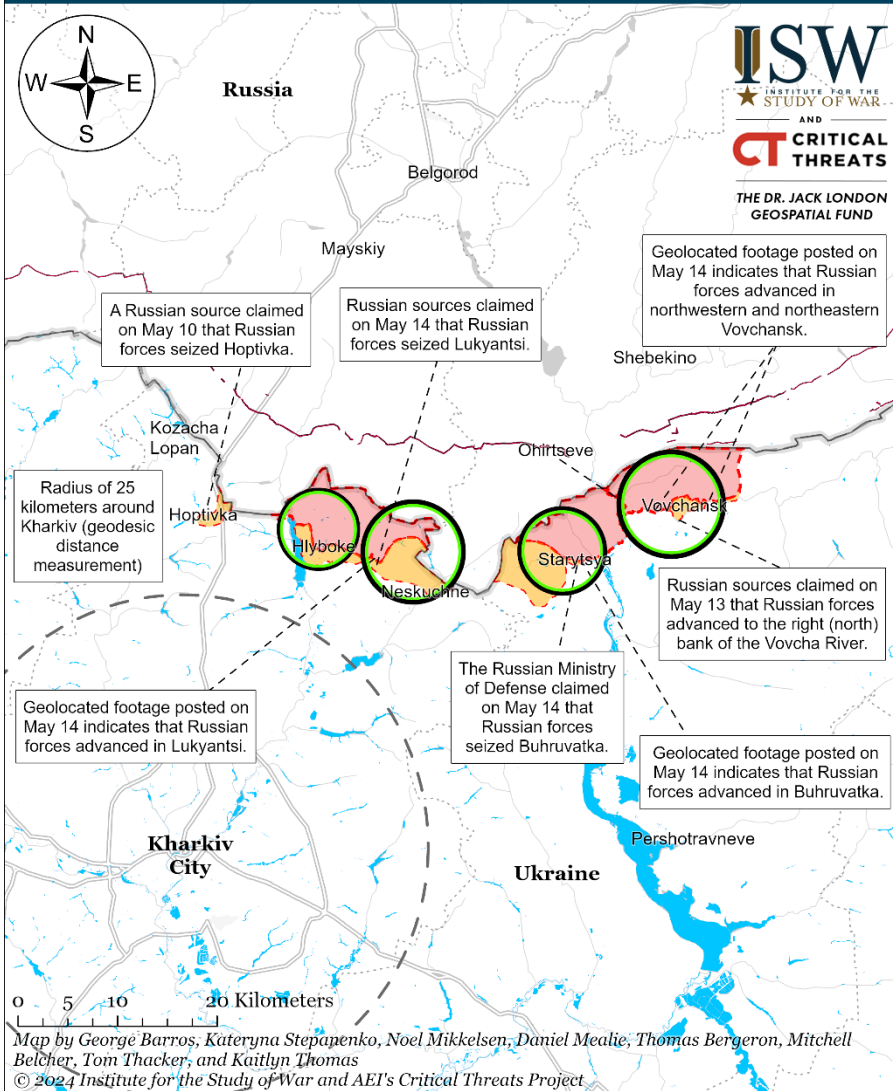
***NOTE: ISW is adding a section to cover Russian offensive operations along the Belgorod-Kharkiv axis as these offensive operations comprise an operational effort separate from Russian offensive operations along the Kupyansk-Svatove-Kreminna line. ISW may enlarge the scope of this section should Russian forces expand offensive operations along the Russian-Ukrainian international border in northeastern Ukraine.***

Russian forces continued to make marginal tactical advances in the Lyptsi direction (north of Kharkiv City). Geolocated footage published on May 13 shows that Russian forces advanced southward to the intersection of Skhilna Road and Chervonyi Lane in eastern Lukyantsi (northeast of Lyptsi).[39] Russian sources claimed that Russian forces have seized the entirety of Lukyantsi and are operating in the fields southeast of Lukyantsi.[40] ISW has not yet observed visual confirmation of Russian forces operating in southern Lukyantsi or southeast of the settlement, however. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Ukrainian forces "repositioned" near Lukyantsi to save the lives of Ukrainian personnel, likely a tacit acknowledgment of Russian advances into the settlement.[41] Ukrainian sources and Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces continue efforts to reach the outskirts of Lyptsi from the Hlyboke (north of Lyptsi) and Lukyantsi directions.[42] Ukrainian military observer Kostyantyn Mashovets noted that elements of the 79th and 280th motorized rifle regiments (18th Motorized Rifle Division, 11th Army Corps, Baltic Sea Fleet) and the 7th Motorized Rifle Regiment (directly subordinate to the 11th Army Corps) are operating in



northern Kharkiv Oblast.[43] A Russian milblogger claimed that an assault group of the former Wagner Group has also deployed to northern Kharkiv Oblast as part of the Russian Northern Group of Forces, although ISW has not yet independently confirmed the presence of former Wagner fighters in this area.[44]

# Assessed Control of Terrain Around Kharkiv as of May 14, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



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GEOSPATIAL FUND

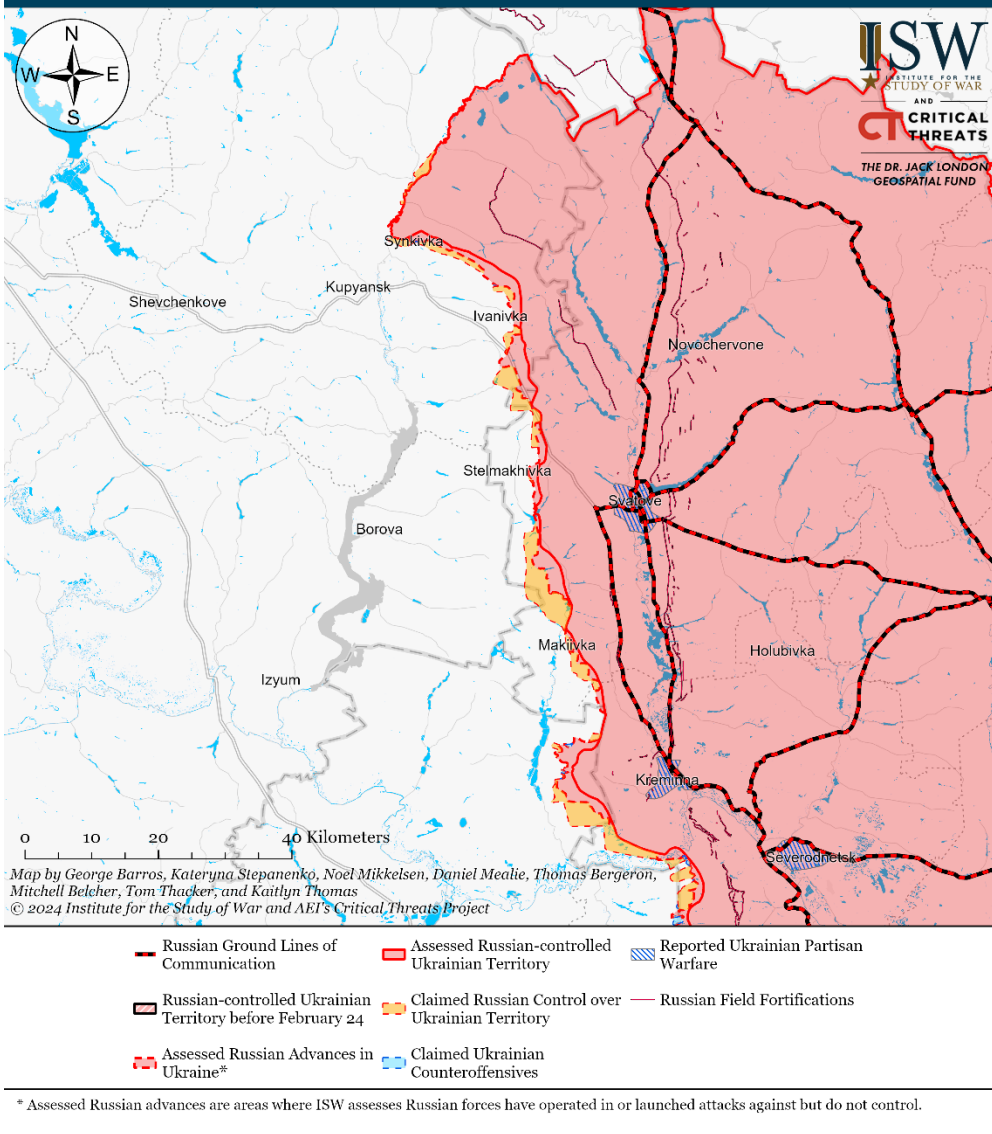
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Russian forces also continued to make tactical advances in and around Vovchansk (northeast of Kharkiv City). Geolocated footage published on May 14 shows that Russian forces have advanced along Slobozhanska Street in northwestern Vovchansk.[45] Additional geolocated footage published on May 14 shows that Russian forces have advanced in northeastern Vovchansk near Zarichna Street.[46] Russian sources reported that Russian forces have advanced in northwestern and northeastern Vovchansk, consistent with the available geolocated footage.[47] ISW has notably not yet observed any confirmation of Russian forces operating on the southern (left) bank of the Vovcha River in Vovchansk thus far. Geolocated footage published on May 14 also confirms that Russian forces have advanced into central Buhruvatka (southwest of Vovchansk) and in forest areas north of Buhruvatka.[48] The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) claimed that Russian forces seized Buhruvatka, which is consistent with geolocated evidence and reports from other Russian sources.[49] The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces are attacking towards Vovchansk from the direction of Shebekino, Belgorod Oblast and that there is fighting on the outskirts of the settlement.[50] Mashovets noted that elements of the 47th Tank Division (1st Guards Tank Army, Moscow Military District [MMD]) and 6th Combined Arms Army (MMD) are operating in the Vovchansk direction.[51] Mashovets also reported that there are already about 5-6 Russian motorized rifle battalions, reinforced with tank units, committed to the Vovchansk direction.

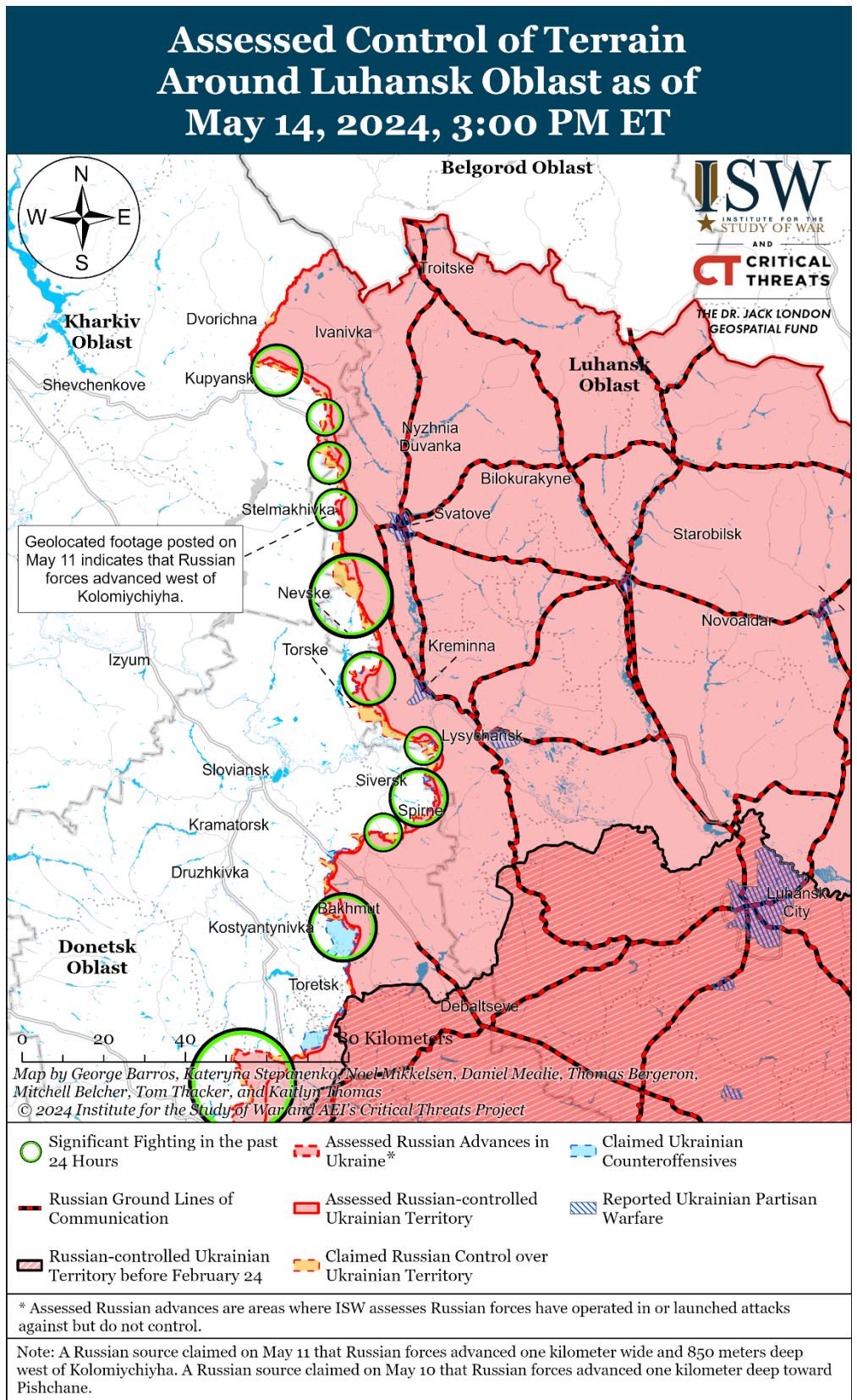
## Assessed Control of Terrain Around Kupyansk as of May 14, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



### **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 made a confirmed advance northwest of Svatove amid continued offensive operations along the Kupyansk-Svatove-Kreminna line on May 14. Geolocated footage published on May 14 indicates that Russian forces recently marginally advanced southeast of Stelmakhivka (northwest of Svatove), and a Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced near the settlement.[52] Russian forces continued assaults northeast of Kupyansk near Synkivka, Vilshana, Lyman Pershyi, and Petropavlivka; southeast of Kupyansk near Krokmalne and Berestove; west of Svatove near Myasozharivka; southwest of Svatove near Kovalivka, Novoyehorivka, Ploshchanka, Makiivka, and Chervonopopivka; west of Kreminna near Terny and Ivanivka; southwest of Kreminna

near Dibrova and the Serebryanske forest area; and south of Kreminna near Bilohorivka.[53]

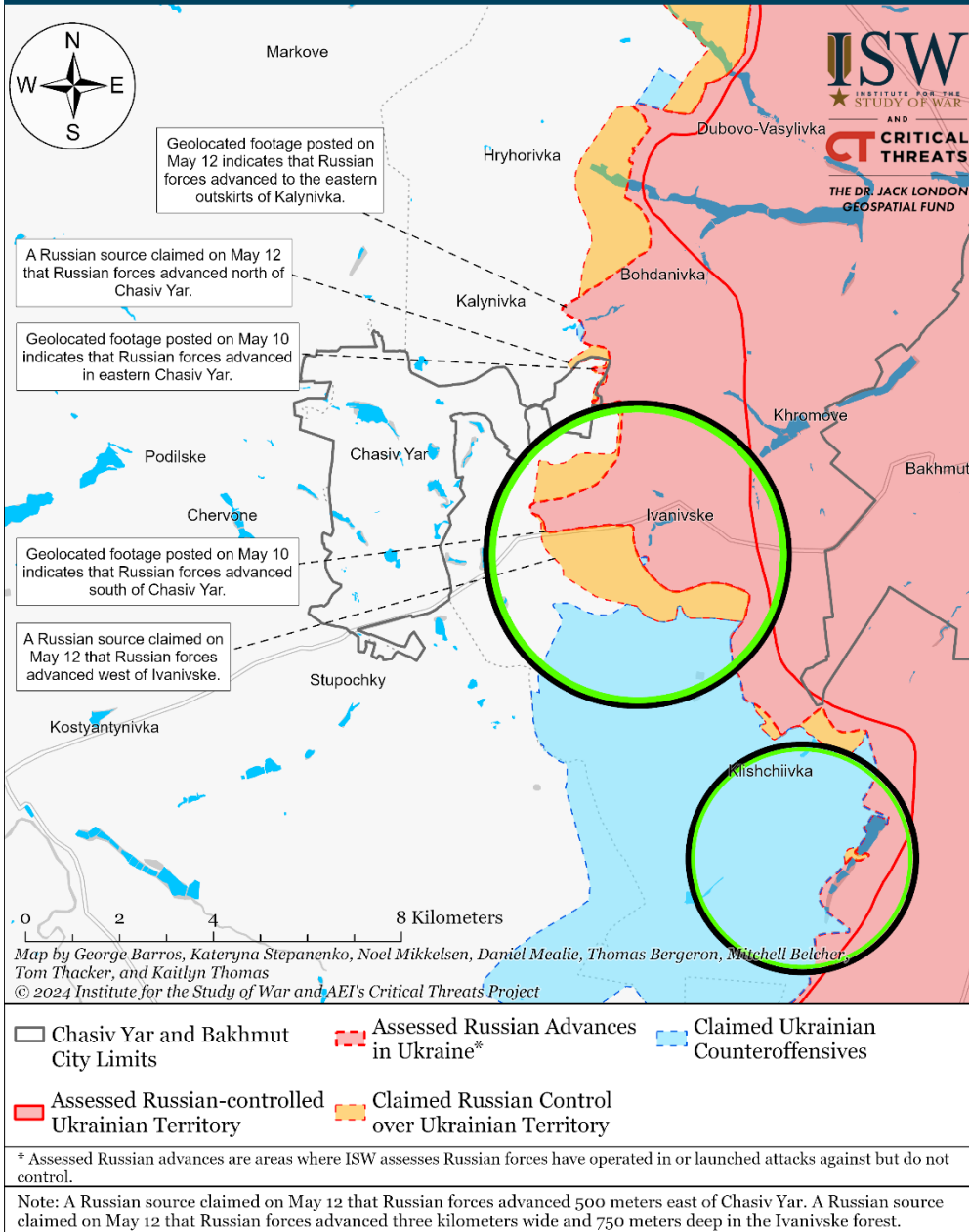


### **Russian Subordinate Main Effort #3 – Donetsk Oblast (Russian objective: Capture the entirety of Donetsk Oblast, the claimed territory of Russia’s proxies in Donbas)**

Russian forces continued ground attacks east of Siversk (northeast of Bakhmut) near Verkhokamyanske; southeast of Siversk near Ivano-Darivka and Spirne; and south of Siversk near Rozdolivka and Vyimka on May 14.[54]

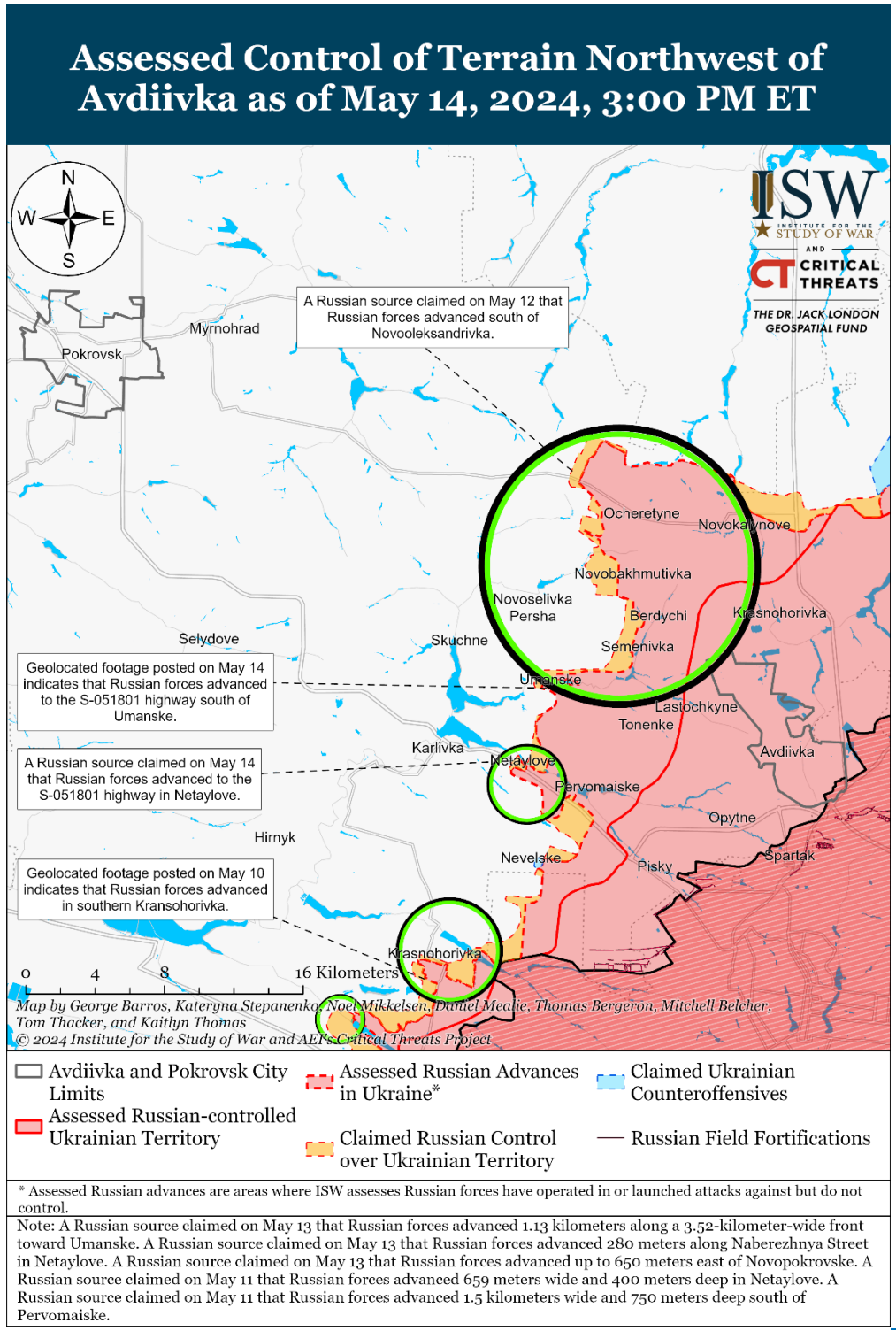
Russian forces recently marginally advanced northeast and east of Chasiv Yar amid continued ground attacks in the area on May 14. Geolocated footage published on May 12 and 13 shows that Russian forces marginally advanced on the eastern outskirts of Kalynivka (northeast of Chasiv Yar) and in the Kanal Microraion (easternmost Chasiv Yar), respectively.[55] Russian sources claimed that Russian forces also marginally advanced in the dacha area north of Kanal Microraion and near Bohdanivka (northeast of Chasiv Yar), but ISW has not observed visual confirmation of these claims.[56] The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Ukrainian forces "changed" unspecified positions in the Kramatorsk (Chasiv Yar) direction to preserve Ukrainian personnel.[57] Russian forces also continued ground attacks near Novyi Microraion (eastern Chasiv Yar), east of Chasiv Yar near Ivanivske, and southeast of Chasiv Yar near Klishchiivka and Bila Hora.[58] The commander of a Ukrainian brigade operating in the Chasiv Yar direction stated that Russian forces are assaulting the area with smaller forces and are primarily using "Storm V" and "Storm B" units staffed with penal recruits for infantry-led attacks in the area.[59] ISW has not observed previous mentions of "Storm-B" units before, and they are likely a different iteration of the "Storm-Z" assault group built on convict recruits. The commander also stated that Russian forces have an unspecified number of mechanized units in reserve. Elements of the Russian 98th Airborne (VDV) Division and 58th Spetsnaz Battalion (Main Directorate of the Russian General Staff [GRU]) continue operating in the Chasiv Yar direction, and elements of Chechen Akhmat Spetsnaz and the Russian 4th Motorized Rifle Brigade (2nd Luhansk People's Republic Army Corps [LNR AC]) are reportedly fighting near Ivanivske.[60]

# Assessed Control of Terrain near Chasiv Yar as of May 14, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



Russian forces recently marginally advanced west of Avdiivka and continued ground attacks in the area on May 14. Geolocated footage published on May 14 shows that Russian forces advanced south of Umanske (west of Avdiivka) and reached the S-051801 Novoselivka Persha-Umanske-Yasnobrodivka road.[61] Russian milbloggers additionally claimed that Russian forces advanced south of Pervomaiske (southwest of Avdiivka) and further within Netaylove (southwest of Avdiivka), but ISW has not observed visual confirmation of these claims.[62] The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Ukrainian forces "changed" positions in some unspecified areas and that Russian forces achieved unspecified

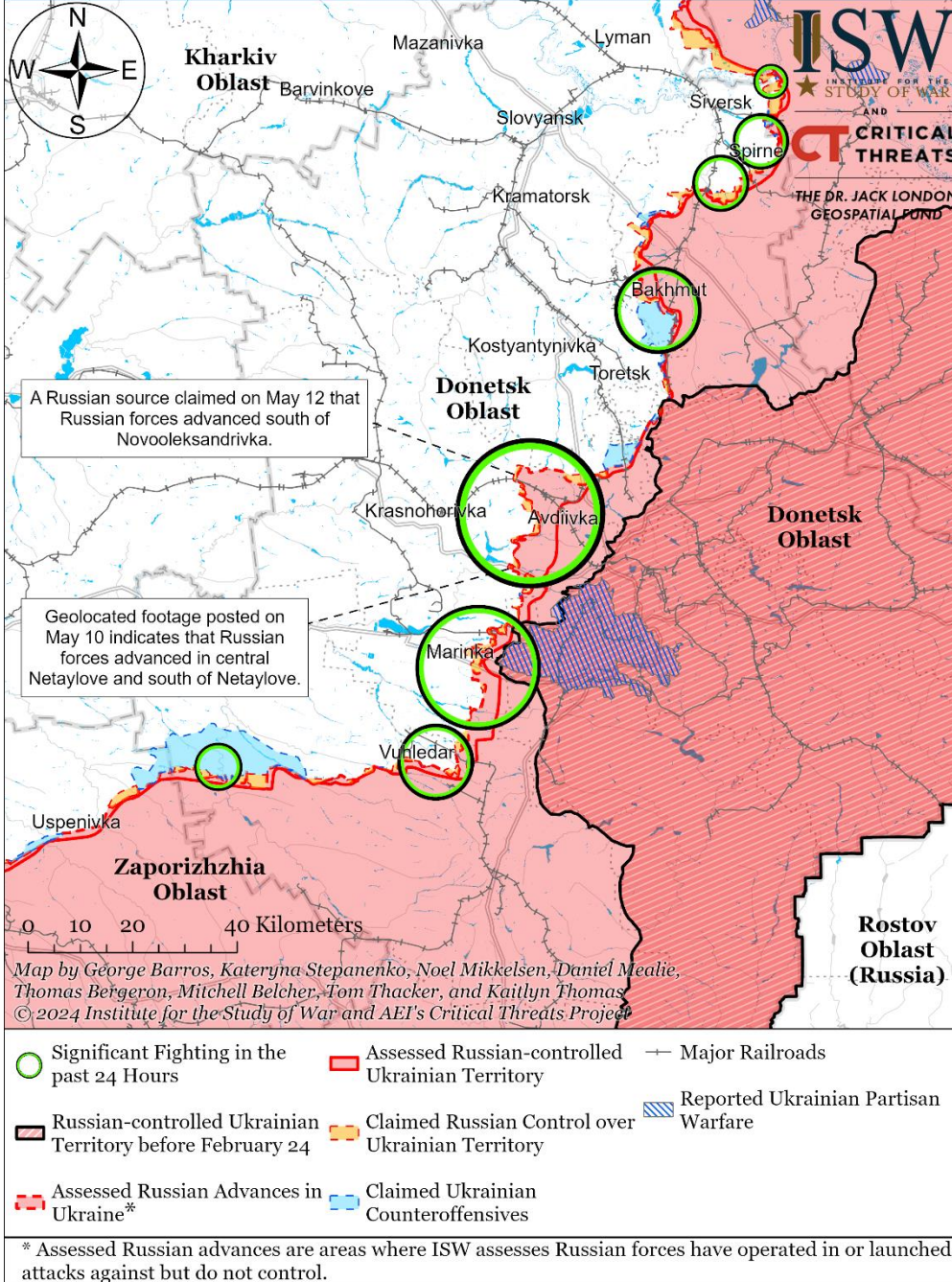
tactical successes in the Pokrovsk (Avdiivka) direction.[63] Russian forces also continued ground attacks northwest of Avdiivka near Ocheretyne, Novooleksandrivka, Yevhenivka, Kalynove, Arkhanhelske, Solovyove, and Sokil; and west of Avdiivka near Umanske, Semenivka, and Yasnobrodivka.[64]





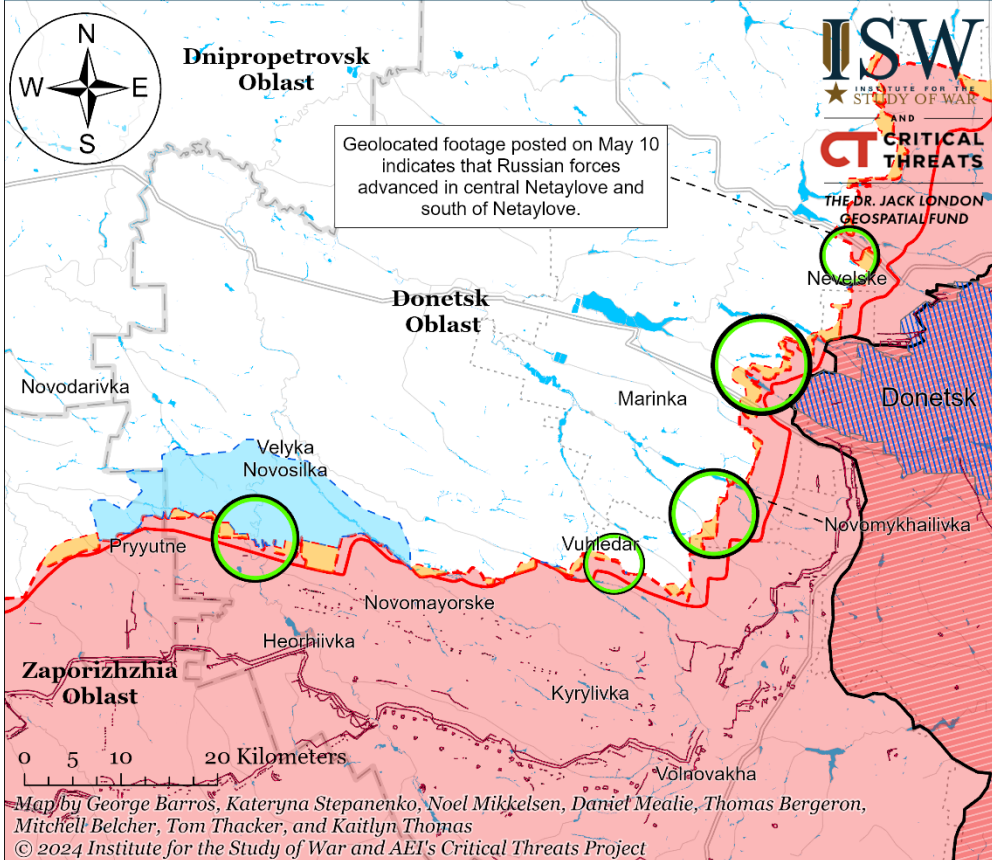
Russian forces reportedly marginally advanced west of Donetsk City amid continued ground assaults west and southwest of Donetsk City on May 14. Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces continued to marginally advance in Krasnohorivka (west of Donetsk City).[65] The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces achieved an unspecified marginal success in the Kurakhove direction (west of Donetsk City).[66] Russian forces also continued ground attacks west of Donetsk City near Heorhiivka and southwest of Donetsk City near Novomykhailivka and Vodyane.[67] Elements of the Russian 5th Motorized Rifle Brigade (1st Donetsk People's Republic [DNR] AC ), 238th Motorized Rifle Brigade (8th CAA, Southern Military District [SMD]), and 68th AC (Eastern Military District [EMD]) are reportedly fighting near Krasnohorivka.[68]

# Assessed Control of Terrain Around Donetsk as of May 14, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



Russian forces continued ground attacks in the Donetsk-Zaporizhzhia Oblast border area near Staromayorske and Urozhaine (both south of Velyka Novosilka) on May 14.[69]

# Assessed Control of Terrain in Western Donetsk Oblast as of May 14, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



Map by George Barros, Kateryna Stepanenko, Noel Mikkelsen, Daniel Mealie, Thomas Bergeron, Mitchell Belcher, Tom Thacker, and Kaitlyn Thomas  
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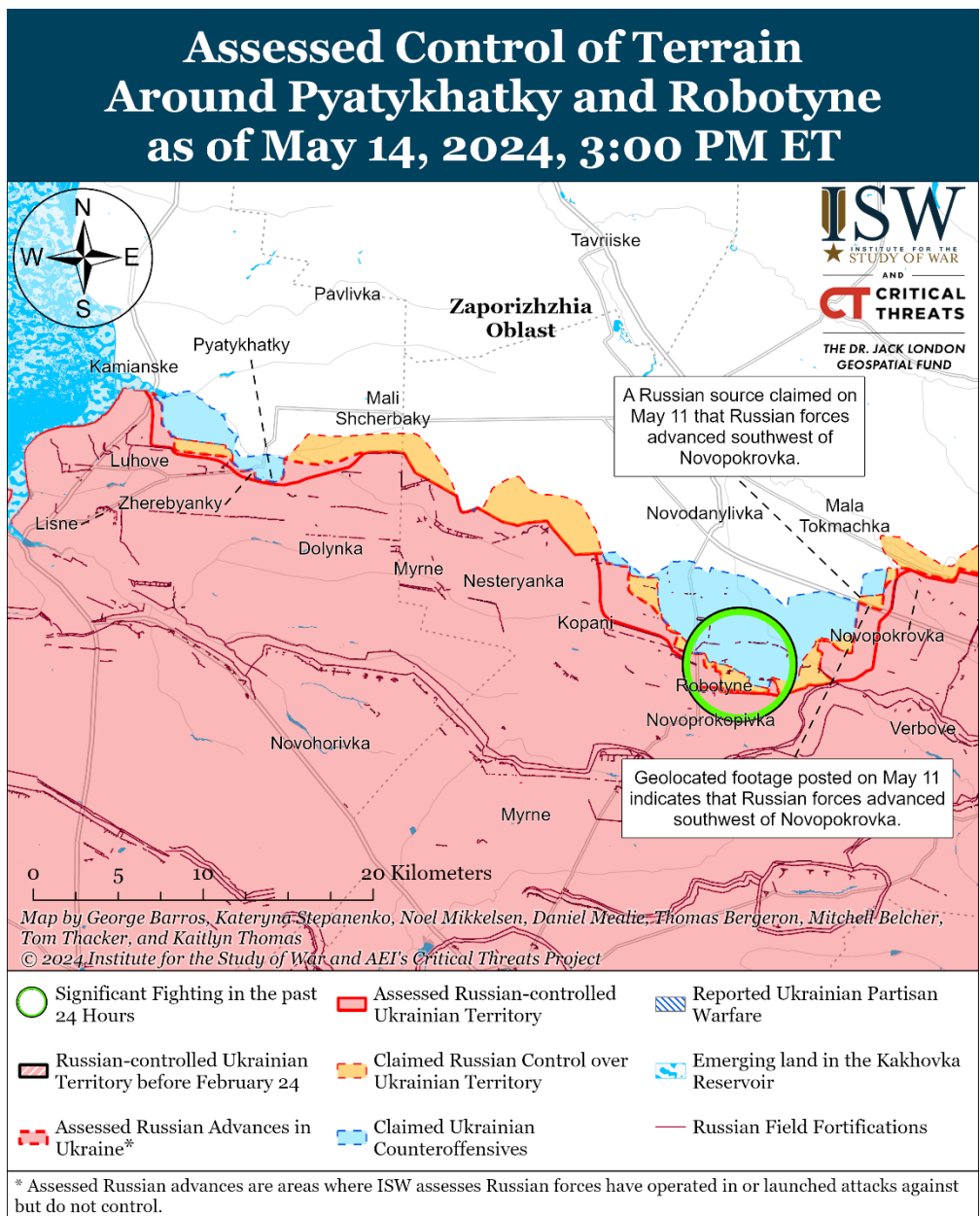
\* Assessed Russian advances are areas where ISW assesses Russian forces have operated in or launched attacks against but do not control.

Note: A Russian source claimed on May 13 that Russian forces advanced approximately three kilometers near Krasnohorivka. A Russian source claimed on May 12 that Russian forces advanced 3.72 kilometers wide and 1.15 kilometers deep in Krasnohorivka.

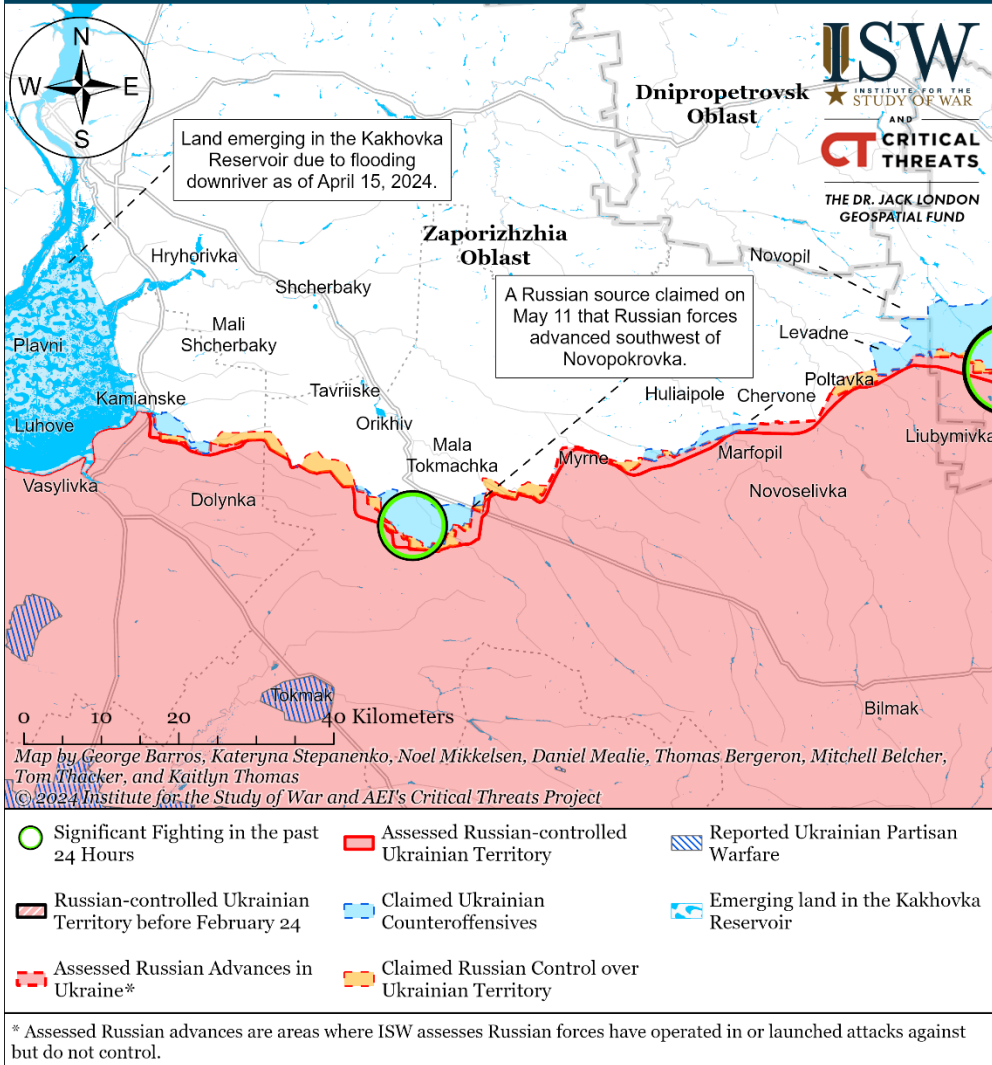
## **Russian Supporting Effort – Southern Axis (Russian objective: Maintain frontline positions and secure rear areas against Ukrainian strikes)**

Russian forces continued ground assaults in western Zaporizhia Oblast on May 14, but there were no confirmed changes to the frontline. A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced northwest of Verbove (east of Robotyne), although ISW has not observed visual confirmation of this claim.[70] Russian forces continued assaults near Robotyne from the direction of Novoprokopivka

(south of Robotyne).[71] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces recently intensified their drone operations in the Zaporizhzhia direction.[72] Elements of the Russian 392nd Motorized Rifle Regiment (likely a reformed Soviet-era unit) are reportedly operating in the Zaporizhzhia direction.[73]

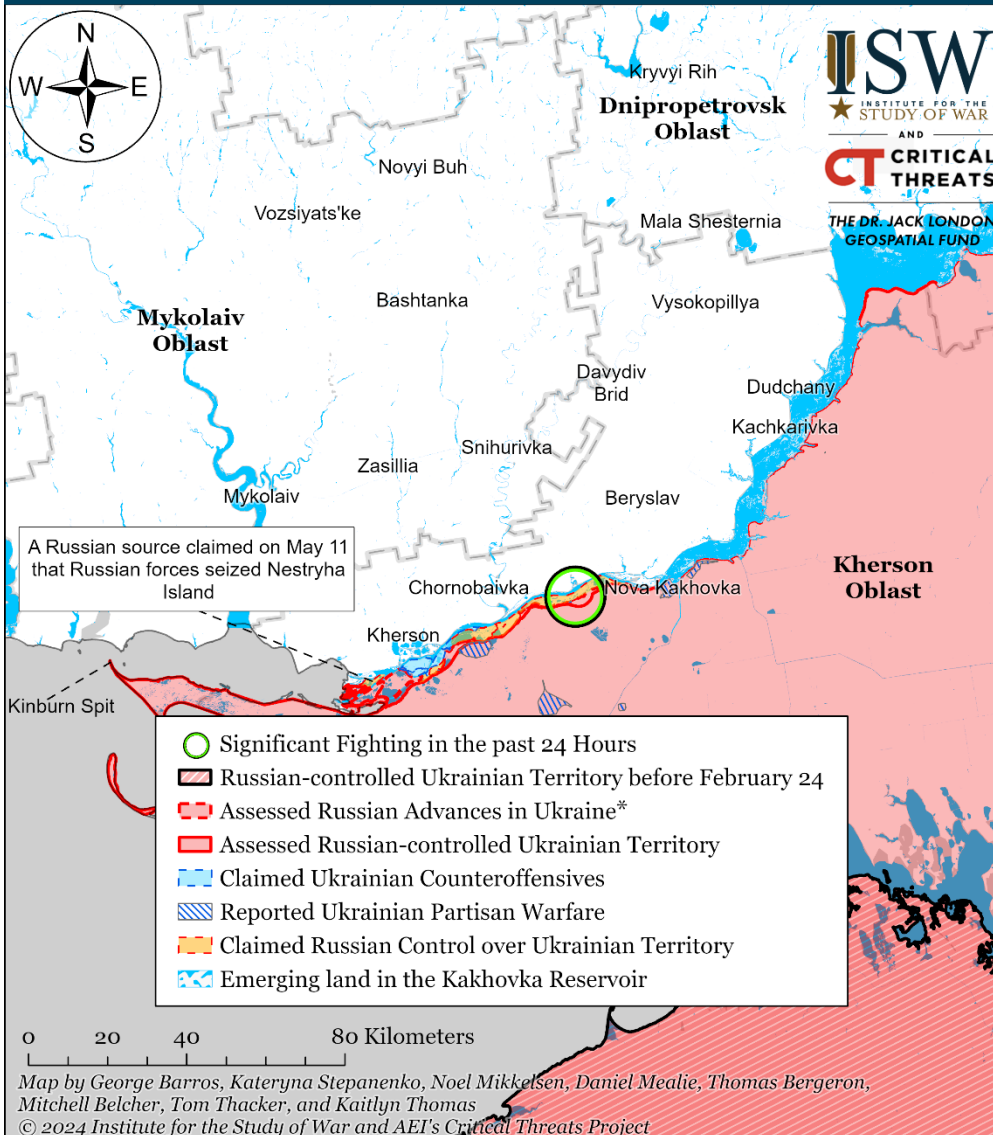


# Assessed Control of Terrain Around Zaporizhia as of May 14, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



Russian forces recently marginally advanced in Krynky amid continued positional fighting in the east (left) bank of Kherson Oblast on May 14. Geolocated footage published on May 13 indicates that Russian forces recently marginally advanced up to a section of Ostapa Vyshni Street within Krynky.[74] Russian forces continued assaults near Krynky from the Oleshkivsky Pisky nature reserve southwest of Krynky and near Kozachi Laheri (just southwest of Krynky).[75] Ukraine's Southern Operational Command and Navy Spokesperson Captain Third Rank Dmytro Pletenchuk reported that Russian forces have not attacked Nestryha Island in the past two days and are focusing their attacks on Krynky.[76]

# Assessed Control of Terrain Around Kherson and Mykolaiv as of May 14, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



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

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

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

Russian forces conducted a limited series of drone and missile strikes against Ukraine on the night of May 13 to 14. Ukrainian Air Force Commander Mykola Oleschuk reported that Russian forces launched

18 Shahed-136/131 drones and an Iskander-M ballistic missile from occupied Crimea.[77] Ukrainian forces reportedly destroyed all 18 Shahed drones over Kyiv, Donetsk, Dnipropetrovsk, Cherkassy, Kirovohrad, Zaporizhia, Kherson, and Khmelnytskyi oblasts.

The *New York Times* (*NYT*), citing data from the Ukrainian Air Force's daily reports, reported on May 14 that constrained Ukrainian air defenses are increasingly failing to destroy Russian missiles.[78] Ukrainian Air Force Spokesperson Major Ilya Yevlash told *NYT* that Ukrainian forces cannot afford to unnecessarily deplete their limited stockpiles of air defense missiles and are employing "non-standard" methods, likely referring to Ukraine's mobile fire groups, to destroy Russian drones and missiles. Yevlash noted that Ukraine is constantly moving its air defense systems in response to Russia's changing tactics and target set and to protect Ukraine's limited air defense systems.

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

The Russian MoD is reportedly coercing Russian citizens and migrants into Russian military service through false job opportunities, likely as part of ongoing crypto-mobilization efforts. *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's (RFE/RL) Systema* project reported on May 14 that the Russian MoD is recruiting Russian citizens and migrants to Russian MoD-controlled companies through false contracts with the promise of a one-time payment of 405,000 rubles (about \$4,400).[79] *Systema* reported that legitimate Russian companies participate in this scheme to show their loyalty to the Russian government and retain their current employees, likely to protect them from crypto-mobilization. The Russian MoD reportedly immediately sends individuals recruited under false job contracts to fight in Ukraine. *Systema* reported that these false job opportunity schemes target Russian, Belarusian, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Uzbek, Indian, and Congolese citizens.

Rosgvardia Head Viktor Zolotov confirmed on May 14 that elements of Rosgvardia are using heavy weaponry in Ukraine. Zolotov claimed that Rosgvardia's 116th Special Purpose Brigade has 36 tanks, 15 mortars, and an unspecified number of artillery systems and is currently operating in occupied Donetsk Oblast.[80] Zolotov announced on June 27, 2023, that Rosgvardia would receive heavy weapons and tanks.[81]

The Russian government is likely continuing attempts to nationalize Russian defense industrial base (DIB) enterprises. Russian outlet *RBK* reported on May 14 that Yaroslavl Oblast's Arbitration Court seized the assets of the Yaroslavl Shipyard company that produces vessels for the Russian Navy.[82] One of *RBK's* sources assessed that the Russian government will likely nationalize Yaroslavl Shipyard.

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

A prominent Kremlin-affiliated Russian milblogger claimed that the Russian MoD and Tula Oblast government are supporting a project to build unmanned naval drones. The milblogger posted footage purportedly showing Russian forces testing a naval drone with a 250-kilometer range and a 250-kilogram warhead in Tula Oblast.[83]

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

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

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

Ukrainian officials continue efforts to return forcibly deported Ukrainian children to Ukrainian-controlled territory from Russia. The Ukrainian Ministry for Reintegration reported on May 14 that the Ukrainian Cabinet of Ministers approved a new procedure for identifying, returning, and providing social support for deported Ukrainian children, including orphans and children without parental care.[84] The procedure will develop an individual return plan for each child.

Occupation officials continue to forcibly transport and detain Ukrainian citizens within Russian controlled territory. The Crimean Human Rights Group published a report on May 12 confirming that Russian authorities abducted at least 72 Ukrainian civilians from occupied Kherson and Zaporizhia oblasts and transferred them to occupied Simferopol, Crimea to stand trial for alleged crimes between January and March 2024.[85] The Crimean Human Rights Group reported that Russian authorities have detained at least 201 Ukrainian citizens for political and religious reasons. Ukraine's Presidential Representation in Crimea reported on May 13 that Russia has illegally imprisoned 218 people in occupied Crimea, including 133 Crimean Tatars.[86]

Russian officials continue efforts to Russify and indoctrinate Ukrainian citizens and children using Russian cultural and historical legacies, including forcibly deporting Ukrainian students to Russia. The Ukrainian Resistance Center reported on May 12 that occupation officials taught Ukrainian children history lessons about the Soviet Union's contributions during the Great Patriotic War (Second World War) in honor of Russia's May 9th Victory Day holiday.[87] The Kherson Oblast occupation administration reported that the Skadovsk Museum of Local History held a public event to teach Ukrainian children about the war using known Kremlin narratives.[88] The Kherson Oblast occupation administration also stated on May 13 that occupation officials will send 1,200 Ukrainian teenagers from occupied Kherson Oblast to Kabardino-Balkaria State University in Russia for a program aimed at indoctrinating the students into Russian historical and cultural narratives.[89] The Ukrainian Resistance Center reported that occupation authorities sent 100 college students from Donetsk State University to Moscow for a patriotic youth program intended to convince Ukrainian students that Ukraine does not exist and belongs to Russia.[90]

## **Russian Information Operations and Narratives**

Russian officials and pro-Kremlin actors continue a number of information operations aimed at discrediting the Ukrainian government and undermining Ukrainians' morale and trust in the military. Russian actors made a number of claims accusing the Ukrainian military of being unprepared to defend against the Russian offensive operations in northern Kharkiv Oblast, inflating the degree of Russian successes in northern Kharkiv Oblast, and accusing the Ukrainian government of corruption and unethical practices regarding the war.[91]



## **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)**

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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