

Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment, October 5, 2023

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October 5, 2023, 9:15pm 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 cut-off for this product was 2pm ET on October 5. ISW will cover subsequent reports in the October 6 Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment.

Russian President Vladimir Putin addressed the 20th Valdai Discussion Club on October 5 and promoted multiple long-standing Russian information operations. Putin reiterated the false narrative that the West initiated the conflict in Ukraine in 2014 and claimed that NATO expansion threatens Russian security.[1] Putin claimed that the war in Ukraine is not a “territorial conflict” but is about Russia establishing principles for a new multipolar world order, stating that the UN and modern international law are “outdated and subject to demolition.” ISW recently evaluated claims that Putin launched the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022 because he feared NATO and instead assessed that Putin’s aims were to expand Russia’s power, eradicate Ukrainian statehood, and break up NATO – goals he still pursues.[2] Putin’s expressed goal of establishing a multipolar world order further supports ISW’s assessment that Putin’s goals in Ukraine have also exceeded responding to some supposed NATO threat or conquering limited additional territory.

Putin claimed that Russia has successfully completed testing of the nuclear-power Burevestnik cruise missile and the Sarmat intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM).[3] Putin spoke about the Russian doctrinal uses of nuclear weapons in either a retaliatory strike or in response to an existential threat to Russia and claimed that there is no modern situation that would threaten Russia’s existence and that no aggressor would use nuclear weapons against Russia. ISW has previously assessed that the Kremlin uses nuclear rhetoric to prompt the United States and its allies to pressure Ukraine to negotiate and that Russian nuclear use in Ukraine remains unlikely.[4] Putin also exaggerated Ukrainian personnel and equipment losses, as Russian officials often do, as part of a continued effort to paint the Ukrainian counteroffensive as a failure.[5]

Putin offered a bizarre explanation for Wagner Group financier Yevgeny Prigozhin’s death during a press conference at the Valdai Discussion Club on October 5 to deflect blame from the Kremlin. Putin stated that the Russian Investigative Committee Head Alexander Bastrykin informed him that the investigation found grenade fragments in the bodies of victims onboard Prigozhin’s plane, suggesting that grenades detonated inside the aircraft.[6] The investigative committee has reported publicly only that all 10 people aboard the plane died.[7] Putin

also emphasized that the investigation ruled out external factors that may have caused the plane crash and implied that the plane crash victims may have been using alcohol or drugs onboard that could have led to the negligent handling of grenades (that were presumably on board for some unexplained reason). Putin claimed that, while the investigation did not test the bodies for alcohol and narcotics, the Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) uncovered five kilograms of cocaine during their investigation into Wagner – likely referring to FSB’s televised raids into Prigozhin’s mansion in June and July 2023. Putin added that in his opinion the investigation needs to test the bodies for substances. Putin’s bizarre explanation of the plane crash is likely an attempt to blame Prigozhin for his own and his comrades’ deaths and further disgrace him among his remaining supporters.

Putin continued to deny the existence of private military companies (PMC) in Russia, indicating that the future of the Wagner Group still remains unclear. Putin reiterated the absurd claim that PMCs do not exist in Russia because “there are now laws about private military companies [in Russia]” and called the name of Wagner PMC a “journalistic name,” likely meaning that the media incorrectly labeled the Wagner Group a PMC.[8] Putin claimed that he did not object when the Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) suggested that parts of the Wagner Group participate in the war in Ukraine because Wagner personnel acted voluntarily and “fought heroically,” but noted that the experience with Wagner was “clumsy because it was not based on the law.”[9] Putin also claimed that “several thousand” Wagner personnel signed contracts with the Russian MoD.[10]

Ukrainian forces continued offensive operations near Bakhmut and in western Zaporizhia Oblast and reportedly advanced on October 5. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Ukrainian forces continue to conduct offensive operations in the Melitopol direction (western Zaporizhia Oblast) and offensive actions in the Bakhmut direction.[11] The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Ukrainian forces achieved unspecified successes east of Andriivka (10km southwest of Bakhmut), and Ukrainian Tavriisk Group of Forces Spokesperson Colonel Oleksandr Shtupun reported that Ukrainian forces achieved partial success west of Robotyne (10km south of Orikhiv).[12]

A prominent Russian milblogger justified Russian tactical retreats throughout the Ukrainian counteroffensive as part of an elastic defense. A Russian milblogger amplified a claim reportedly from a Russian frontline soldier that Russian commanders have been choosing to withdraw their forces throughout the counteroffensive period from “broken positions” in order to conduct a “maneuverable and active defense,” likely referring to an elastic defense approach.[13] Other Russian milbloggers have recently indicated that Russian commanders are increasingly needing to choose between either “wasting” their troops in counterattacks to hold tactical positions or standing up to the Russian military command by retreating to previously prepared positions against orders or pressure, thereby risking their careers.[14]

The Russian military may have redeployed elements of the 41st Combined Arms Army (CAA) and elements of the 810th Naval Infantry Brigade to the Kherson direction. A Russian milblogger claimed on October 5 that elements of the 41st CAA (Central Military District) including the 74th Motorized Rifle Brigade and the 55th Motorized Rifle Brigade, as well as unspecified Russian naval infantry elements, are regrouping in the Kherson direction.[15] The milblogger claimed that the Russian naval infantry unit is presumably the 810th Naval Infantry Brigade, which Ukrainian Main Military Intelligence Directorate (GUR) Head Lieutenant General Kyrylo Budanov stated on September 22 had been “completely defeated,” now indicating that the

brigade may have reconstituted or is in the process of reconstituting.[16] Budanov stated on August 31 that elements of the newly formed 25th CAA deployed to the Kupyansk direction in order to replace elements of the 41st CAA, which would begin a “slow” deployment to an unspecified area in southern Ukraine.[17] ISW previously assessed that the Russian military would laterally redeploy elements of the 41st CAA to defend against Ukrainian counteroffensive operations.[18] The milblogger’s claim, if true, would invalidate that assessment and suggests instead that Russian forces continue to be very concerned about potential future Ukrainian operations on the left (east) bank of the Dnipro River.

Russian forces conducted a missile strike on Hroza, Kharkiv Oblast that killed 51 people on October 5 following another series of drone strikes across Ukraine

overnight.[19] Ukrainian Kharkiv Oblast Administration Head Oleh Synhubov reported that all the Hroza strike victims were civilians and that Russian forces likely used an Iskander cruise missile in the strike.[20] The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces launched 29 Shahed-131/136 drones on the night of October 4 to 5, and that Ukrainian forces shot down 24 of the drones.[21]

Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu indicated that the Russian MoD may be establishing training regiments that can also serve as in extremis operational or strategic reserves, although this is a low confidence assessment.

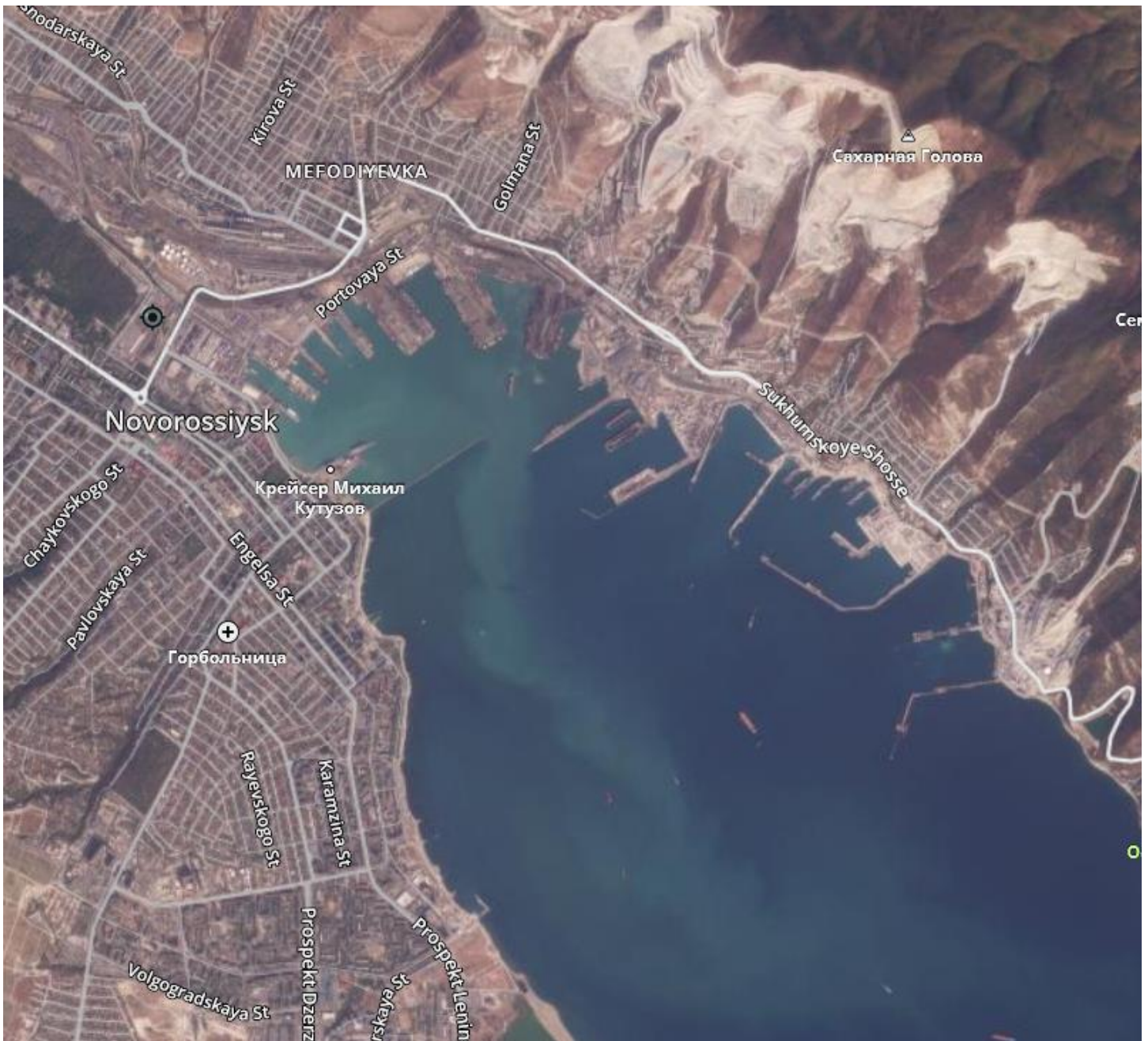
Shoigu stated that the Russian General Staff has formed “nine reserve regiments that are being trained” and that their “natural, constant replenishment is underway.”[22] The wording of Shoigu’s statement is somewhat opaque but seems to suggest that these new units are training regiments through which Russian volunteers flow on their way to the front. This approach would be an improvement over previous Russian practice that often sent individuals or small groups from training areas in Russia either directly into frontline units or to more ad hoc training areas in Ukraine before they went to the front.[23] Sending volunteers to organized training regiments will likely provide them with better preparation to fight before they go to the front. The regiments themselves could presumably also be deployed as combat units in extremis, although at the cost of disrupting part of the training pipeline for the theater as a whole. This assessment is offered with low confidence as it relies on a close reading of a brief and unclear statement. ISW has no independent evidence of this reported change in Russian training.

Shoigu also reasserted the responsibility of Russian federal subjects to form and recruit for Russian volunteer formations. Shoigu thanked Tula Oblast Governor Alexei Dyumin, Republic of Buryatia Head Alexey Tsydenov, and Republic of Sakha Aisen Nikolaev for their efforts to recruit for regional volunteer formations.[24] Shoigu’s praise of Dyumin in particular reasserts Dyumin’s subordinate position; Russian sources previously floated Dyumin as a prospective replacement for Shoigu, and Russian President Vladimir Putin and Shoigu have publicly reasserted Shoigu’s position above Dyumin in the aftermath.[25]

Russia will reportedly build a permanent naval base in Abkhazia, but it will likely remain small.

Russian-backed Abkhazian President Aslan Bzhania announced on October 5 that he had signed an agreement with Russian authorities for the construction of a permanent Russian naval base near occupied Ochamchire, Abkhazia.[26] Kremlin Spokesperson Dmitry Peskov declined to comment on the alleged permanent base in Abkhazia.[27] Publicly available satellite imagery shows that existing port infrastructure near occupied Ochamchire is limited and that the surrounding coastline consists of sandy beaches — terrain largely unsuitable for the construction of naval infrastructure.[28] The existing port is unsuitable to become a primary base for the Russian Black Sea

Fleet, but the Russian military could expand existing naval infrastructure and use the Ochamchire port as a subsidiary base in the future.



Imagery of the Russian naval base in occupied Abkhazia. October 4, 2023.

Image courtesy of Planet Labs PBC.



Imagery of the Russian naval base in occupied Sevastopol, Crimea. October 1, 2023.

Image courtesy of Planet Labs PBC.

Key Takeaways:

- **Russian President Vladimir Putin addressed the 20th Valdai Discussion Club on October 5 and promoted multiple long-standing Russian information operations.**
- **Putin offered a bizarre explanation for Wagner Group financier Yevgeny Prigozhin's death during a press conference at the Valdai Discussion Club on October 5 to deflect blame from the Kremlin.**
- **Ukrainian forces continued offensive operations near Bakhmut and in western Zaporizhia Oblast and reportedly advanced on October 5.**

- **The Russian military may have redeployed elements of the 41st Combined Arms Army (CAA) and elements of the 810th Naval Infantry Brigade to the Kherson direction.**
- **Russian forces conducted a missile strike on Hroza, Kharkiv Oblast that killed 51 people on October 5 following another series of drone strikes across Ukraine overnight.**
- **Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu indicated that the Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) may be establishing training regiments that can also serve as in extremis operational or strategic reserves, although this is a low confidence assessment.**
- **Russia will reportedly build a permanent naval base in Abkhazia, but it will likely remain small.**
- **Russian forces conducted offensive operations along the Kupyansk-Svatove-Kreminna line, near Bakhmut, along the Avdiivka-Donetsk City line, in the western Donetsk-eastern Zaporizhia Oblast border area, and in western Zaporizhia Oblast but did not advance on October 5.**
- **Russia continues to use the personal data of Russian citizens for crypto-mobilization efforts.**
- **Russian occupation officials continue to advertise programs for the forcible removal and deportation of Ukrainian children.**

Assessed Control of Terrain in Ukraine and Main Russian Maneuver Axes as of October 5, 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

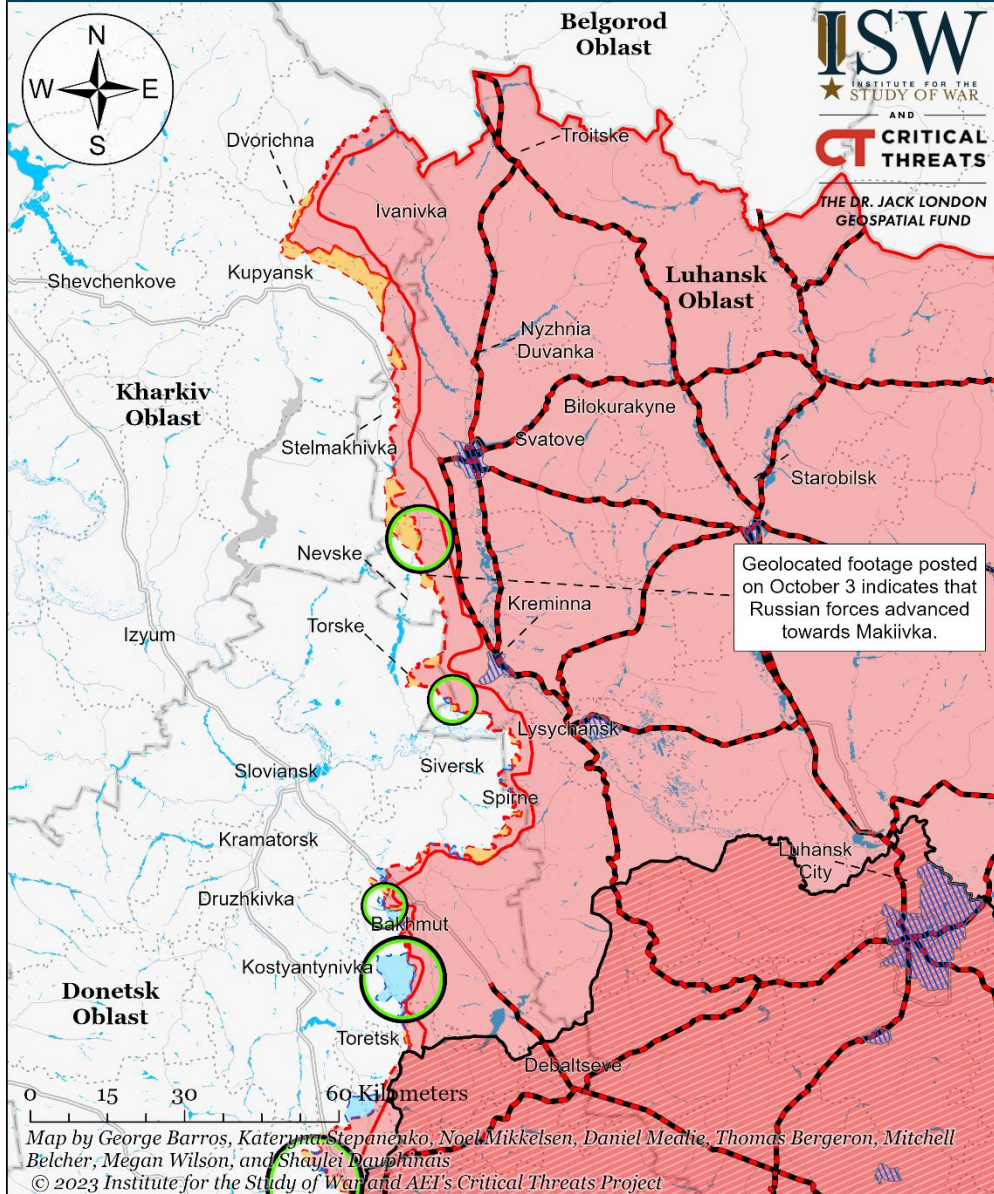
Russian Subordinate Main Effort #1 – Luhansk Oblast (Russian objective: Capture the remainder of Luhansk Oblast and push westward into eastern Kharkiv Oblast and northern Donetsk Oblast)

The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Ukrainian forces repelled a limited Russian attack north of Zybyne, Kharkiv Oblast (immediately east of Vovchansk and 3km south of the international border), likely a cross-border raid originating from Russian territory.[29]

Russian forces reportedly increased the intensity of combat operations along the Kupyansk-Svatove-Kreminna line on October 5 but did not make confirmed territorial gains. Ukrainian Eastern Group of Forces Spokesperson Captain Ilya Yevlash stated that Russian forces intensified combat operations in the Kupyansk-Lyman direction and are focusing their efforts on offensive operations Makiivka, Luhansk Oblast (22km northwest of Kreminna), where eight combat engagements occurred in the last day.[30] A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces seized new positions near Makiivka, but ISW has observed no confirmation of this claim.[31] Another Russian milblogger claimed on October 4 that Russian forces made tactical advances west of Svatove and that positional battles continue northeast of Kupyansk.[32] The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Ukrainian forces repelled Russian attacks east of Makiivka and northwest of Dibrova, Luhansk Oblast (7km southwest of Kreminna).[33]

Ukrainian forces reportedly continued limited offensive operations in the Kreminna area but did not advance on October 5. The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) claimed that Russian forces repelled two Ukrainian attacks near Dibrova.[34] Russian milbloggers claimed that Ukrainian forces attacked Russian positions near Torske (14km west of Kreminna) on October 4 and 5.[35]

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Luhansk Oblast as of October 5, 2023, 3:00 PM ET



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

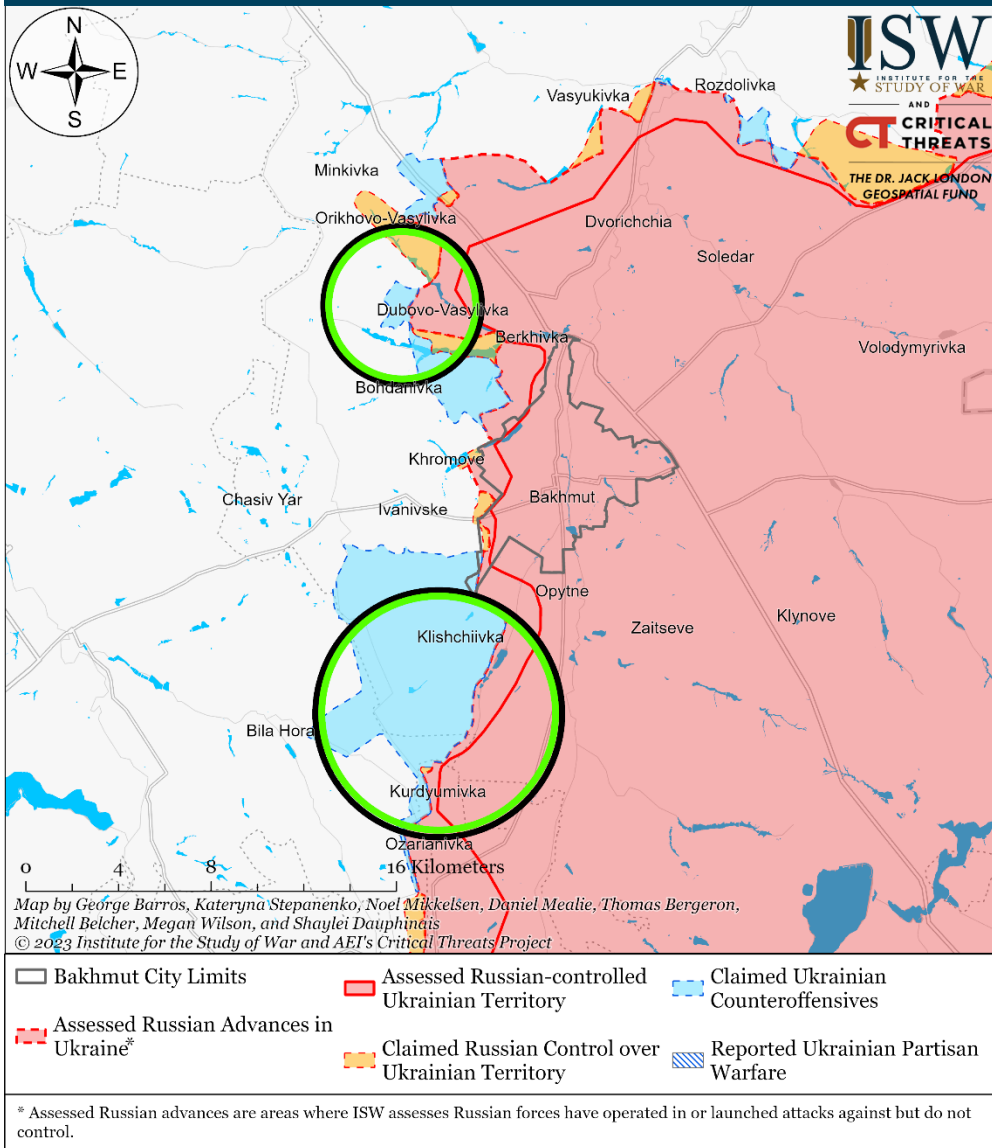
* Assessed Russian advances are areas where ISW assesses Russian forces have operated in or launched attacks against but do not control.

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 forces conducted offensive operations near Bakhmut and reportedly advanced on October 5. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Ukrainian forces achieved unspecified success east of Andriivka (10km southwest of Bakhmut).[36] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces are advancing towards the railway line near Klishchiivka (7km southwest of Bakhmut).[37] Other Russian milbloggers claimed that Ukrainian forces unsuccessfully attacked towards the railway near Klishchiivka and Andriivka.[38] Russian sources claimed that elements of the Russian 132nd Motorized Rifle Brigade (1st Donetsk People’s Republic [DNR] Army Corps) repelled a Ukrainian attack in the Horlivka direction, likely referring to the area between the Bakhmut and Avdiivka directions.[39]

Russian forces conducted offensive operations near Bakhmut but did not advance on October 5. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces unsuccessfully tried to recapture lost positions east of Dylivka (15km southwest of Bakhmut) and near Hryhorivka (9km northwest of Bakhmut), Klishchiivka, and Andriivka.[40] Russian sources claimed on October 4 and 5 that Russian forces still hold recently captured positions near Orikhovo-Vasylivka (11km northwest of Bakhmut).[41]

Assessed Control of Terrain in Bakhmut as of October 5, 2023, 3:00 PM ET

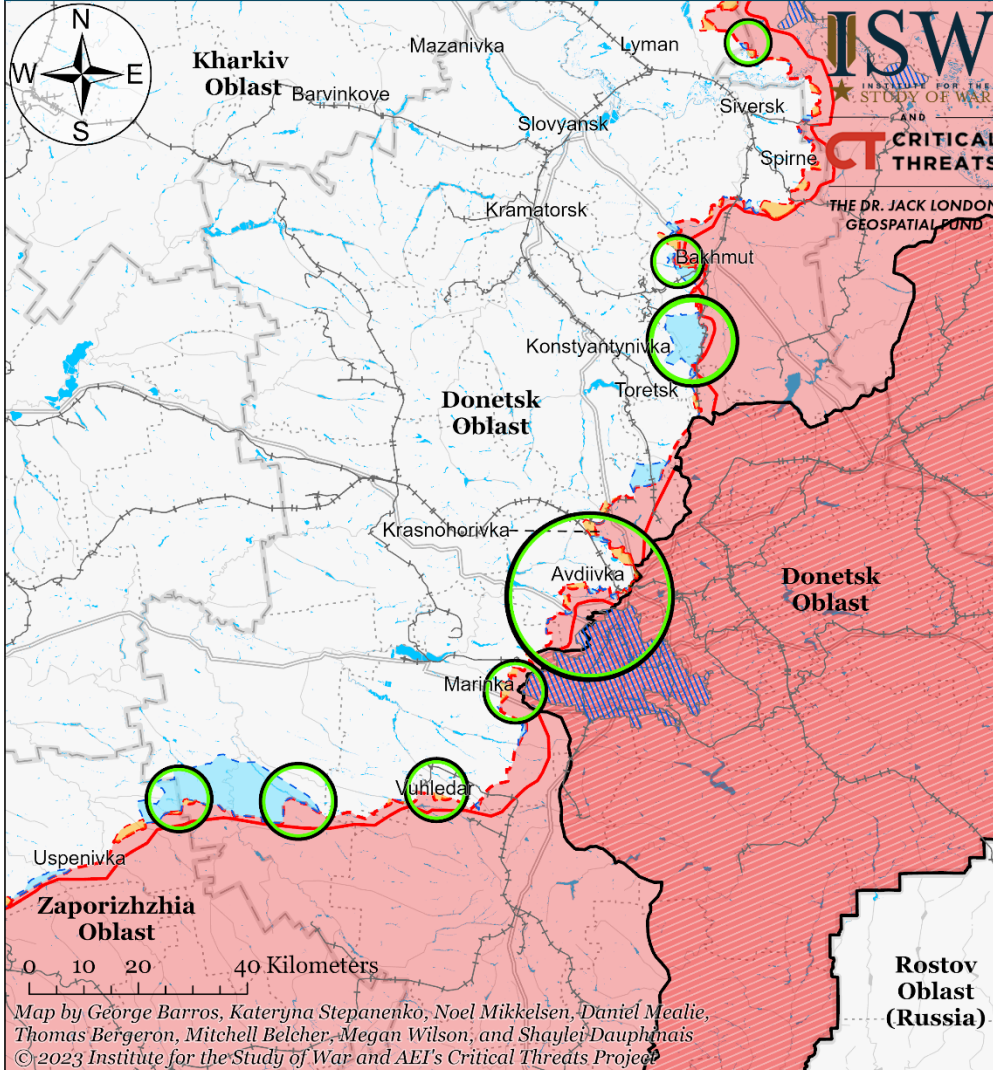


The Russian MoD claimed that Ukrainian forces unsuccessfully attacked near Krasnohorivka (either 8km northwest of Avdiivka or directly west of Donetsk City) and Pervomaiske (11km southwest of Avdiivka) along the Avdiivka-Donetsk City line on October 5.[42]

Russian forces conducted offensive operations along the Avdiivka-Donetsk City line but did not advance on October 5. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces unsuccessfully tried to recapture lost positions near Avdiivka and improve their tactical positions near Lastochkyne (6km west of Avdiivka).[43] The Ukrainian General Staff also reported that Russian forces unsuccessfully attacked near Marinka (on the western outskirts of Donetsk City), Krasnohorivka, and Novomykhailivka (10km southwest of Donetsk City).[44] Ukrainian Tavriisk Group of Forces

Spokesperson Colonel Oleksandr Shtupun stated that Russian forces unsuccessfully attacked up to 20 times per day in the Avdiivka and Marinka directions.[45] A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces conducted assault operations in Marinka and attacked near Krasnohorivka and Pervomaiske but did not specify an outcome.[46]

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Donetsk as of October 5, 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.

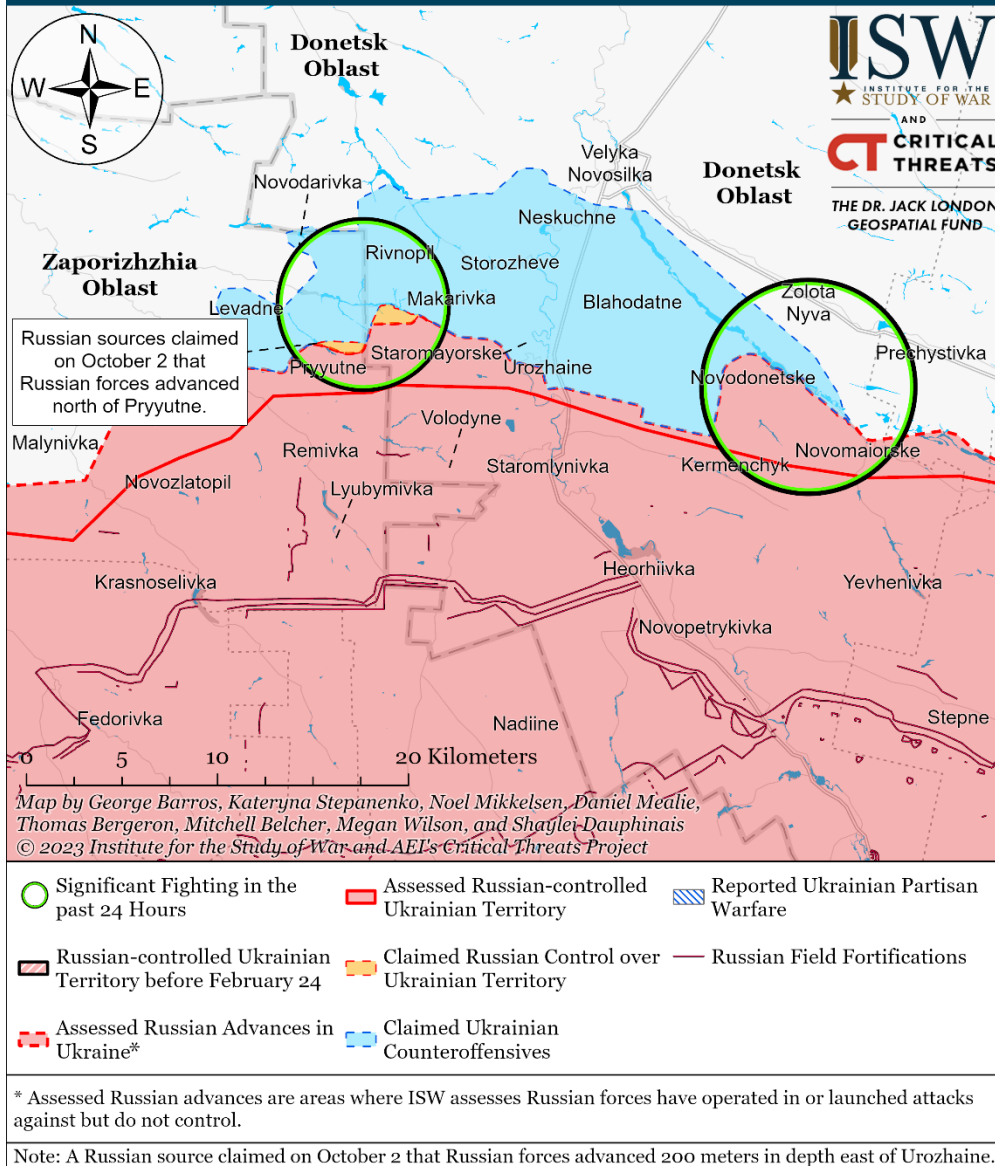
Note: A Russian source claimed on October 2 that Russian forces advanced 200 meters in depth east of Urozhaine.

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

Russian sources claimed that Ukrainian forces conducted unsuccessful offensive operations in the western Donetsk-eastern Zaporizhia Oblast border area on October 5. The Russian MoD and other Russian sources claimed that Russian forces repelled Ukrainian attacks near Staromayorske (9km south of Velyka Novosilka), Novodarivka (15km southwest of Velyka Novosilka), and Pryyutne (16km southwest of Velyka Novosilka).[47] A Russian milblogger claimed on October 4 that Ukrainian forces attacked near Urozhaine (9km south of Velyka Novosilka).[48]

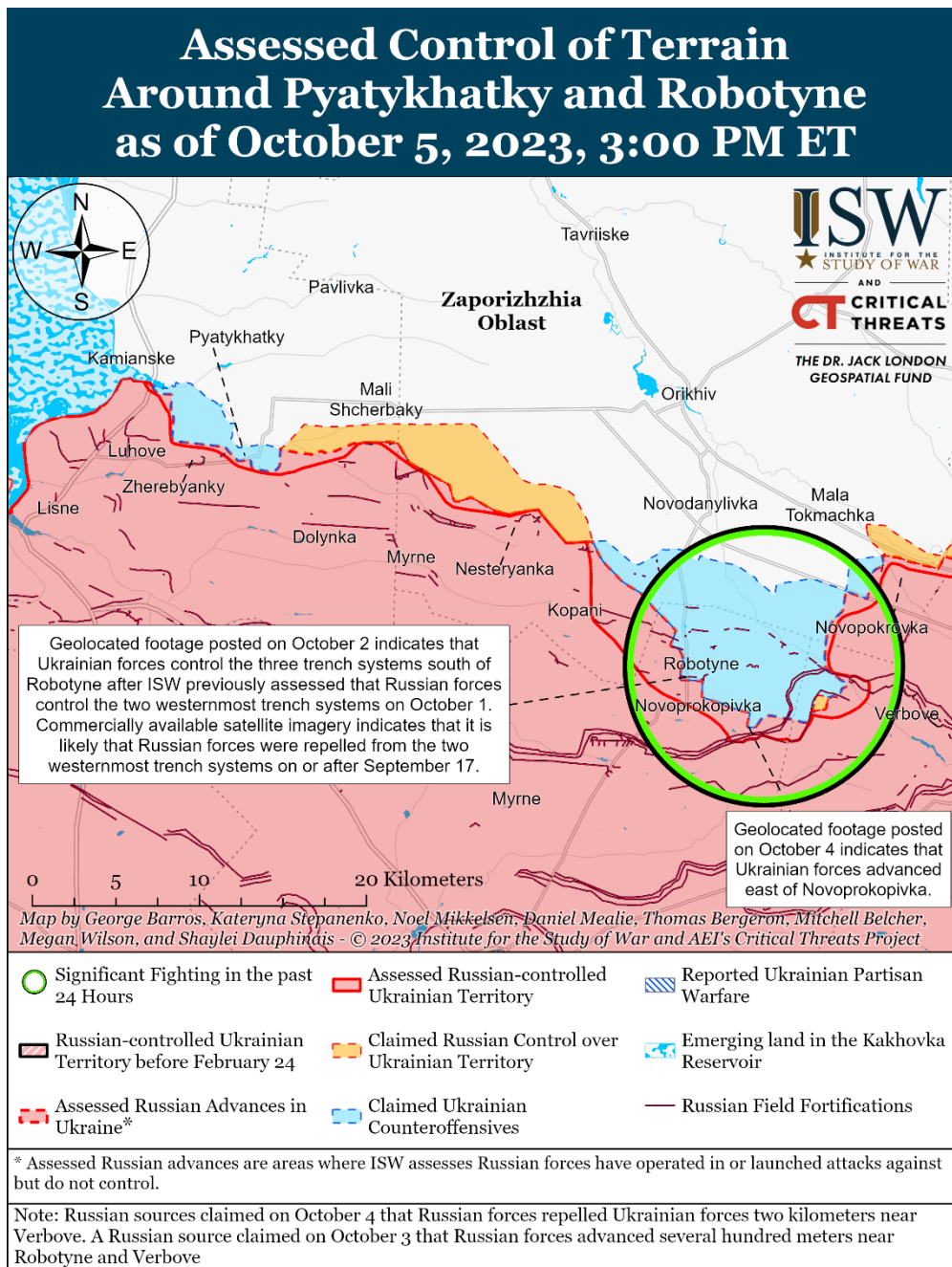
Russian forces conducted offensive operations in the western Donetsk-eastern Zaporizhia Oblast border area on October 5 but did not advance. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Ukrainian forces repelled Russian attacks near Zolota Nyva (12km southeast of Velyka Novosilka) and Rivnopil (10km southwest of Velyka Novosilka).[49] A Russian milblogger claimed on October 4 that Russian forces attempted to recapture lost positions near Urozhaine and Novomayorske (18km southeast of Velyka Novosilka).[50]

Assessed Control of Terrain Around the Vremivka Salient as of October 5, 2023, 3:00 PM ET

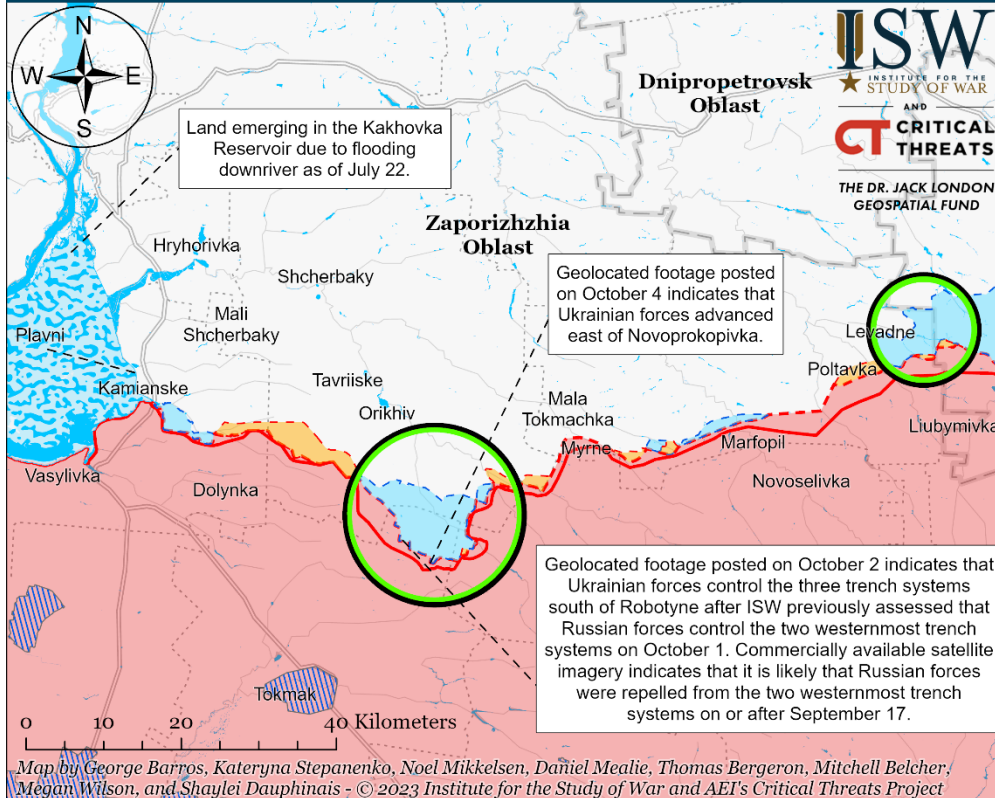


Ukrainian forces conducted offensive operations in western Zaporizhzhia Oblast on October 5 and reportedly advanced. Ukrainian Tavriisk Group of Forces Spokesperson Colonel Oleksandr Shtupun reported that Ukrainian forces achieved partial success west of Robotyne (10km south of Orikhiv).[51] The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Ukrainian forces continue to conduct offensive operations in the Melitopol direction (western Zaporizhzhia Oblast).[52] Russian milbloggers claimed that Ukrainian forces attempted to advance along the Robotyne-Verbove line (10km south to 18km southeast of Orikhiv), in the Kopani direction (11km southwest of Orikhiv), and near Novoprokopivka (16km south of Orikhiv).[53] A Russian milblogger claimed on October 4 that Ukrainian forces made limited advances along the Kopani-Robotyne-Verbove line.[54]

Russian forces conducted offensive operations in western Zaporizhzhia Oblast on October 5 and did not make confirmed gains. A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces successfully pushed Ukrainian forces out of positions near Verbove.[55] The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Ukrainian forces repelled Russian attacks south of Robotyne and near Verbove (18km southeast of Orikhiv).[56] Shtupun reported that Russian forces continue attempting to regain lost positions west of Verbove and southeast of Mala Tokmachka (9km southeast of Orikhiv).[57] Footage published on October 5 purportedly shows elements of the Russian BARS-1 (Russian Combat Army Reserve) operating near Mala Tokmachka.[58]



Assessed Control of Terrain Around Zaporizhzhia as of October 5, 2023, 3:00 PM ET



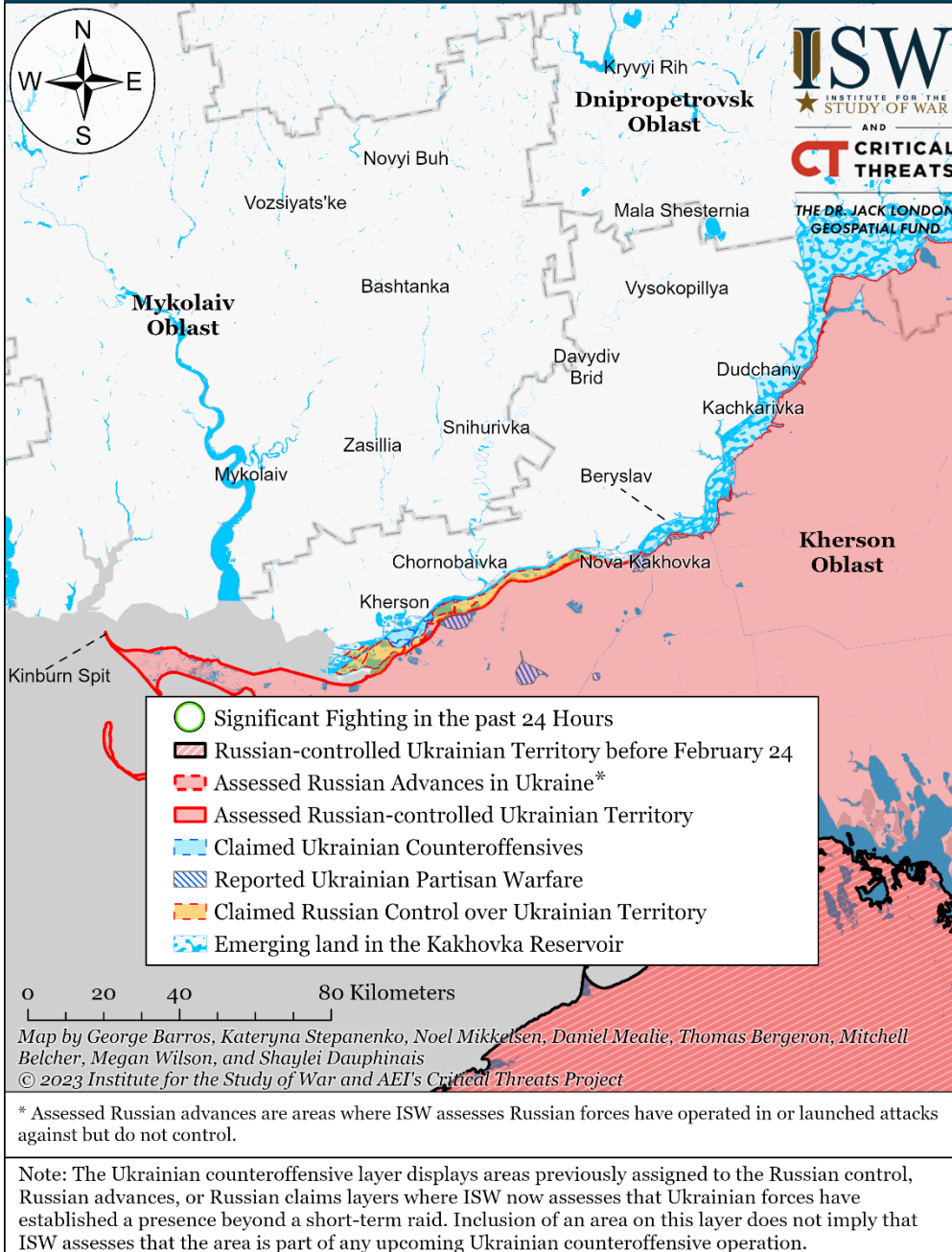
- Significant Fighting in the past 24 Hours
- Assessed Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory
- Reported Ukrainian Partisan Warfare
- Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory before February 24
- Claimed Russian Control over Ukrainian Territory
- Emerging land in the Kakhovka Reservoir
- Assessed Russian 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: Russian sources claimed on October 4 that Russian forces repelled Ukrainian forces two kilometers near Verbove. A Russian source claimed on October 3 that Russian forces advanced several hundred meters near Robotyne and Verbove.

A Russian milblogger indicated that the Russian MoD is likely trying to suppress Russian milbloggers' reporting following the purported Ukrainian Main Military Intelligence Directorate (GUR) raid on occupied Crimea on October 4. A Russian milblogger denied reports that GUR special agents landed on the Crimean shore and called on milbloggers to stop lying and fearing the Russian MoD press service.[59] The Russian MoD acknowledged the raid on October 4 and claimed that Russian forces repelled the Ukrainian personnel.[60]

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Kherson and Mykolaiv as of October 5, 2023, 3:00 PM ET



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

Russia continues to use the personal data of Russian citizens for crypto-mobilization efforts. Russian State Duma Defense Committee Chairperson Andrei Kartapolov stated that Russia will require private

medical clinics to provide patient data to military registration and enlistment offices through a unified registry of conscripts.[61] Kartapolov stated that the Russian government is preparing additional initiatives that will also require the Ministry of Health, Federal Tax Service, and Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD) to transmit personal data to the unified registry.

Russian soldiers continue to commit crimes outside of the combat zone in Ukraine. Russian opposition outlet *Verstka* reported that Russia has prosecuted 147 military personnel for murder outside of combat zones thus far in 2023, a sharp increase from prior years.[62] *Verstka* reported that Russia only prosecuted 15 military personnel for murder outside of a combat zone in 2022, 21 in 2021, and 14 in 2020. Russian opposition outlet *Agentstvo Novosti* reported that there are at least 20 known cases of Russian soldiers committing violent crimes killing a total of 27 people, and former Wagner personnel accounted for over half the crimes: 12 crimes with 19 victims.[63]

Ukrainian sources continue to indicate that Russia continues recruiting military personnel in occupied territories. Ukrainian Mariupol Mayor Petro Andryushchenko amplified a Russian military recruitment advertisement presumably posted in Mariupol as of September 28.[64] The posting advertises contract service with 204,000 ruble (\$2,034) monthly salaries and one-time 195,000 ruble (\$1,945) bonuses.

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 occupation officials continue to advertise programs for the forcible removal and deportation of Ukrainian children. Kherson Oblast occupation chairperson Andrei Alekseenko claimed on October 4 that over the summer, nearly 2,700 children from occupied Kherson Oblast “rested” at health camps in Crimea and the Russian Federation.[65] Alekseenko named several children’s camps in occupied Crimea, Krasnodar Krai, and the Adygea Republic and reported that children from Kherson Oblast additionally went to “resorts” in Valdai, Novgorod Oblast, Moscow Oblast, and the Kabardino-Balkarian Republic.[66] Alekseenko additionally claimed that Ukrainian children will continue to take part in “cultural” and “educational” programs in Moscow and St. Petersburg throughout the fall months.[67]

Russian officials continue to purposefully obfuscate statistics regarding the number of Ukrainian children removed from their homes and deported to Russia. Ukrainian Human Rights Commissioner Dmytro Lubinets emphasized on October 5 that Russian officials have not provided a list of Ukrainian children in Russia that Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov recently claimed to have provided to Ukrainian officials.[68] Lubinets stated that Ukrainian officials have repeatedly requested this information from the Russian government but that Russia has not provided such information either directly to the Ukrainian government or through intermediaries.[69] Lubinets stated that Russia claims that over 70,000 Ukrainian children are in Russia but that Ukraine is unable to verify this number.

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)

Belarus hosted a meeting of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) Council of Ministers in Grodno on October 5 to coordinate joint military training and scientific work.[70] Delegations from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Tajikistan attended the meeting. The Belarusian Ministry of Defense (MoD) did not report on the presence of an Armenian delegation.[71]

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.

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] <http://kremlin dot ru/events/president/news/72444>

[2] <https://understandingwar.org/backgrounder/weakness-lethal-why-putin-invaded-ukraine-and-how-war-must-end>

[3] <http://kremlin dot ru/events/president/news/72444>

[4] <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-november-6>

[5] <http://kremlin dot ru/events/president/news/72444> ; <https://isw.pub/UkrWar091223> ; <https://isw.pub/UkrWar072923> ; <https://isw.pub/UkrWar072723>

[6] <https://www.kommersant dot ru/doc/6254149>

[7] <https://apnews.com/article/yevgeny-prigozhin-wagner-group-russia-crash-obituary-ocod4e6619ef9cb89df6a45a431ff53c>

[8] <https://tass dot ru/politika/18924575>

[9] <https://tass dot ru/politika/18924575>

[10] <http://kremlin dot ru/events/president/news/72444>

[11] <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbid02zcWnphePVbx2vjSSnha7GDHfW8TEaiwTAvZADuKjUxZk1gRfzQA9kj9TdBH8SHegl>

[12] <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbid02zcWnphePVbx2vjSSnha7GDHfW8TEaiwTAvZADuKjUxZk1gRfzQA9kj9TdBH8SHegl> ; <https://armyinform dot com.ua/2023/10/04/na->

tavrijskomu-napryamku-ukrayinski-pidrozdily-prosunulysya-vglyb-oborony-protyvnyka-na-vidstan-vid-100-do-600-metriv/

[13] https://t.me/multi_XAM/827

[14] <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgroundunder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-october-2-2023> ; <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgroundunder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-september-24-2023> ; <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgroundunder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-october-3-2023>

[15] <https://t.me/voenkorKotenok/51000>

[16] <https://t.me/voenkorKotenok/51000> ; <https://www.understandingwar.org/sites/default/files/Ssept%2023%20Russian%20Offensive%20Campaign%20Assessment%20PDF.pdf>

[17] <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgroundunder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-september-1-2023>

[18] <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgroundunder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-september-1-2023> ; <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgroundunder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-september-23-2023>

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