

Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment, October 10, 2023

Christina Harward, Grace Mappes, Karolina Hird, Nicole Wolkov, and Mason Clark
October 10, 2023, 5:30pm 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 1pm ET on October 10. ISW will cover subsequent reports in the October 11 Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment.

NOTE: ISW has added a new section on Russian information operations and narratives to the daily Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment, found at the end of the update.

Russian forces launched localized offensive operations in the Avdiivka area of Donetsk Oblast and southwest of Orikhiv in western Zaporizhia Oblast on October 9, which are likely intended to fix Ukrainian forces away from the Robotyne area. Russian forces intensified offensive operations northwest of Avdiivka near Ocheretyne, Tonenke, and Berdychi and southwest of Avdiivka on the Vodyane-Opytne line.[1] Russian forces also attacked southwest of Orikhiv on the Pyatykhatky-Zherebyanky line, and Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced up two kilometers in the area.[2] The Ukrainian General Staff confirmed up to three Russian battalions conducted an attack and ISW has observed footage of fighting in the area, but ISW has not observed any confirmation of these claimed Russian advances as of this writing.[3] Russian milbloggers are largely portraying the Avdiivka-area operations as a significant offensive effort aimed at encircling the Ukrainian force grouping in Avdiivka and capturing the city.[4] A successful encirclement of Avdiivka, one of the most heavily fortified areas of the Donetsk Oblast front line, would very likely require more forces than Russia has currently dedicated to the Avdiivka-Donetsk City effort. Russian forces have largely deployed irregular forces along this frontline, primarily elements of the 1st Donetsk People's Republic (DNR) Army Corps and additional volunteer formations that have largely suffered from poor and abusive command culture and tensions with regular Russian units.[5] ISW has observed no recent Russian deployments to this line. Russian forces have also conducted grinding offensive operations for relatively minimal territorial gains near Avdiivka for the past year and a half of the war, and the Russian military command is likely aware that an effort to capture Avdiivka would require more and higher-quality units than those currently deployed in the area.[6]

The increased Russian offensive operations in the Avdiivka and Zherebyanky areas coincide with other localized offensive efforts in Luhansk Oblast and eastern Zaporizhia Oblast, all likely aimed at fixing Ukrainian forces and preventing Ukrainian command from transferring reserves to critical areas of the front in western Zaporizhia Oblast.[7] Ukrainian officials have made a number of statements within the past few weeks to this effect, particularly noting that Russian attacks along the Avdiivka-Donetsk City line are meant to prevent Ukrainians from transferring forces to Zaporizhia Oblast.[8]

Ukrainian forces continued counteroffensive operations near Bakhmut and in western Zaporizhia Oblast and made confirmed advances in the Donetsk-Zaporizhia Oblast border area. Geolocated footage published on October 9 indicates that Ukrainian forces advanced northeast of Mykilske (3km southeast of Vuhledar and about 30km southeast of Velyka Novosilka).[9] The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Ukrainian forces achieved partial success near Andriivka (7km southwest of Bakhmut).[10] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces advanced west of Novofedorivka (15km northeast of Robotyne and 6km northeast of Verbove).[11]

Russian military leadership may have once again replaced the commander of the 58th Combined Arms Army (CAA), suggesting ongoing pervasive Russian command and control issues in western Zaporizhia Oblast. A Russian insider source claimed on October 9 that the Russian command removed Lieutenant General Denis Lyamin from command of the 58th CAA, after Lyamin replaced former commander Major General Ivan Popov on July 13.[12] The insider source claimed that during Lyamin's three-month tenure, the Russian General Staff went to great lengths to conceal the true nature of the situation within units of the 58th CAA, which are currently defending against Ukrainian counteroffensives in western Zaporizhia Oblast, and claimed that this is in large part because Lyamin is a close associate of Chief of the General Staff Army General Valery Gerasimov. The insider source suggested that Gerasimov removed Lyamin from command of the 58th CAA and re-assigned him the position of Chief of Staff of the Central Military District to shield him from criticism over Russian operations in western Zaporizhia Oblast. While ISW cannot independently confirm Lyamin's alleged re-appointment, the suggestion that the 58th CAA has undergone two major command changes in a short

period possibly indicates command-and-control challenges, and at minimum concern among Russian command over the conduct of operations in this key sector of the front.

Russian forces conducted a series of drone strikes targeting southern Ukraine on the night of October 9 to 10. The Ukrainian General Staff and Air Force reported that Ukrainian air defenses downed 27 of the 36 Shahed-131/-136 launched from occupied Cape Chauda, Crimea towards Odesa, Mykolaiv, and Kherson oblasts.[13] Ukrainian Southern Operational Command Spokesperson Captain First Rank Nataliya Humenyuk reported on October 10 that Russian forces are likely conducting strikes using only Shahed drones because the Russian military is attempting to conserve missiles since Russian missile production has slowed due to sanctions.[14] Ukrainian Air Force Spokesperson Colonel Yuriy Ihnat stated that Ukrainian air defense systems will continue to operate as usual during the winter and that Ukrainian forces will strengthen their defense of energy and fuel facilities.[15]

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky announced plans to open a new corridor through Moldova and Romania for the export of Ukrainian grain.[16] Zelensky announced that the overland grain corridor will open soon during a press conference with Romanian President Klaus Iohannis in Bucharest on October 10.[17]

NATO adopted several resolutions aimed at increasing aid to Ukraine on October 9. The NATO Parliamentary Assembly adopted six resolutions related to the war in Ukraine and called for NATO countries to increase and expedite political, military, intelligence, financial, training, and humanitarian support to Ukraine and to “sustain this support for as long as it takes for Ukraine to prevail.”[18] The resolutions also called for the increased and rapid delivery of military equipment to Ukraine, including air defense systems, missiles, and fighter aircraft.

Key Takeaways:

- **Russian forces launched localized offensive operations in the Avdiivka area of Donetsk Oblast and southwest of Orikhiv in western Zaporizhia Oblast on October 9, which are likely intended to fix Ukrainian forces away from the Robotyne area.**
- **The Ukrainian General Staff confirmed up to three Russian battalions conducted an attack and ISW has observed footage of fighting in the area, but ISW has not observed any confirmation of these claimed Russian advances as of writing.**
- **Ukrainian forces continued counteroffensive operations near Bakhmut and in western Zaporizhia Oblast and made confirmed advances in the Donetsk-Zaporizhia Oblast border area.**
- **Russian military leadership may have once again replaced the commander of the 58th Combined Arms Army (CAA), suggesting ongoing pervasive Russian command and control issues in western Zaporizhia Oblast.**
- **Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky announced plans to open a new corridor through Moldova and Romania for the export of Ukrainian grain.**
- **Russian forces conducted offensive operations along the Kupyansk-Svatove-Kreminna line, near Bakhmut, along the Avdiivka-Donetsk City line, in western Donetsk Oblast, in the Donetsk-Zaporizhia Oblast border area, and in western Zaporizhia Oblast and advanced in some areas on October 10.**
- **The Ukrainian Resistance Center reported that Luhansk Oblast occupation authorities are cracking down against Ukrainian underground communication networks.**

Assessed Control of Terrain in Ukraine and Main Russian Maneuver Axes as of October 10, 2023, 3:00 PM ET



Map by George Barros, Kateryna Stepanenko, Noel Mikkelsen, Daniel Mealie, Thomas Bergeron, Mitchell Belcher, Megan Wilson, and Shaylei Dauphinais

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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.

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 Information Operations and Narratives

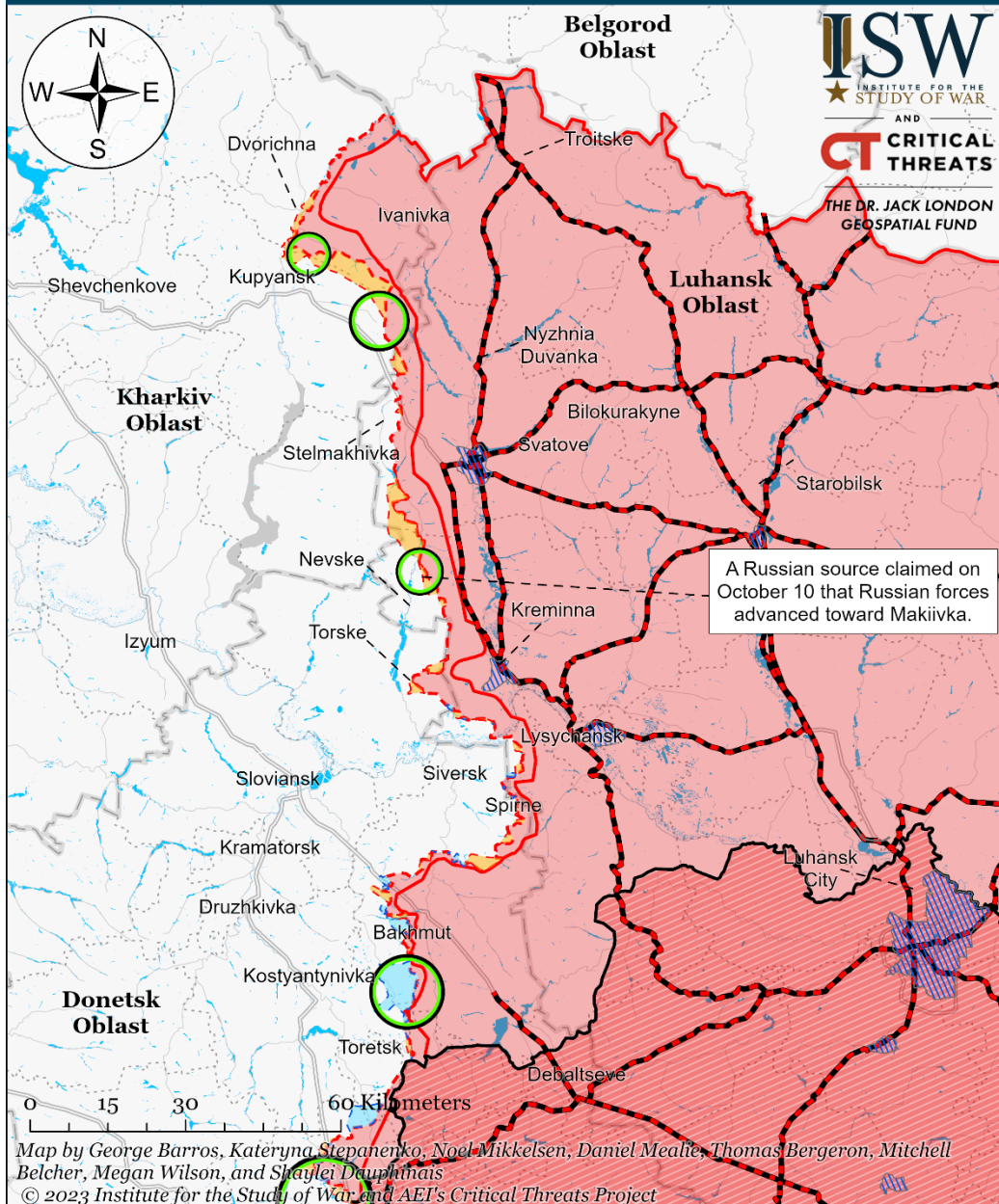
Russian Main Effort – Eastern Ukraine

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

Russian forces continued ground attacks along the Kupyansk-Svatove-Kreminna line on October 10 and reportedly advanced in some areas. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Ukrainian forces repelled Russian attacks in the Kupyansk direction near Synkivka (8km northeast of Kupyansk) and Ivanivka (20km southeast of Kupyansk) and southwest of Svatove near Makiivka (20km southwest).[19] One Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces deployed “powerful armored groups” to launch large-scale offensive operations near Synkivka, Ivanivka, and Makiivka, and another milblogger claimed that Russian forces captured several Ukrainian positions near Synkivka.[20] Russian sources claimed that elements of the 6th Combined Arms Army (Western Military District) are deployed in the Kupyansk direction, while elements of the newly formed 25th Combined Arms Army are attacking Ukrainian positions near Makiivka.[21] Another prominent Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces have nearly reached the eastern outskirts of Makiivka and advanced along the entire Novovodyane-Ploshchanka line (about 20km northwest of Kreminna).[22] Ukrainian Eastern Group of Forces Spokesperson Captain Ilya Yevlash noted that Russian forces have increasingly deployed motorized rifle units, tank battalions, and “Storm-Z” assault companies to the Kupyansk-Svatove-Kreminna line and are using poorly trained “Storm-Z” elements for reconnaissance and mine-detection purposes.[23]

The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) claimed that Ukrainian forces conducted unsuccessful attacks near Kupyansk and Kreminna on October 10.[24]

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Luhansk Oblast as of October 10, 2023, 3:00 PM ET



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|---|--|-------------------------------------|
| 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.

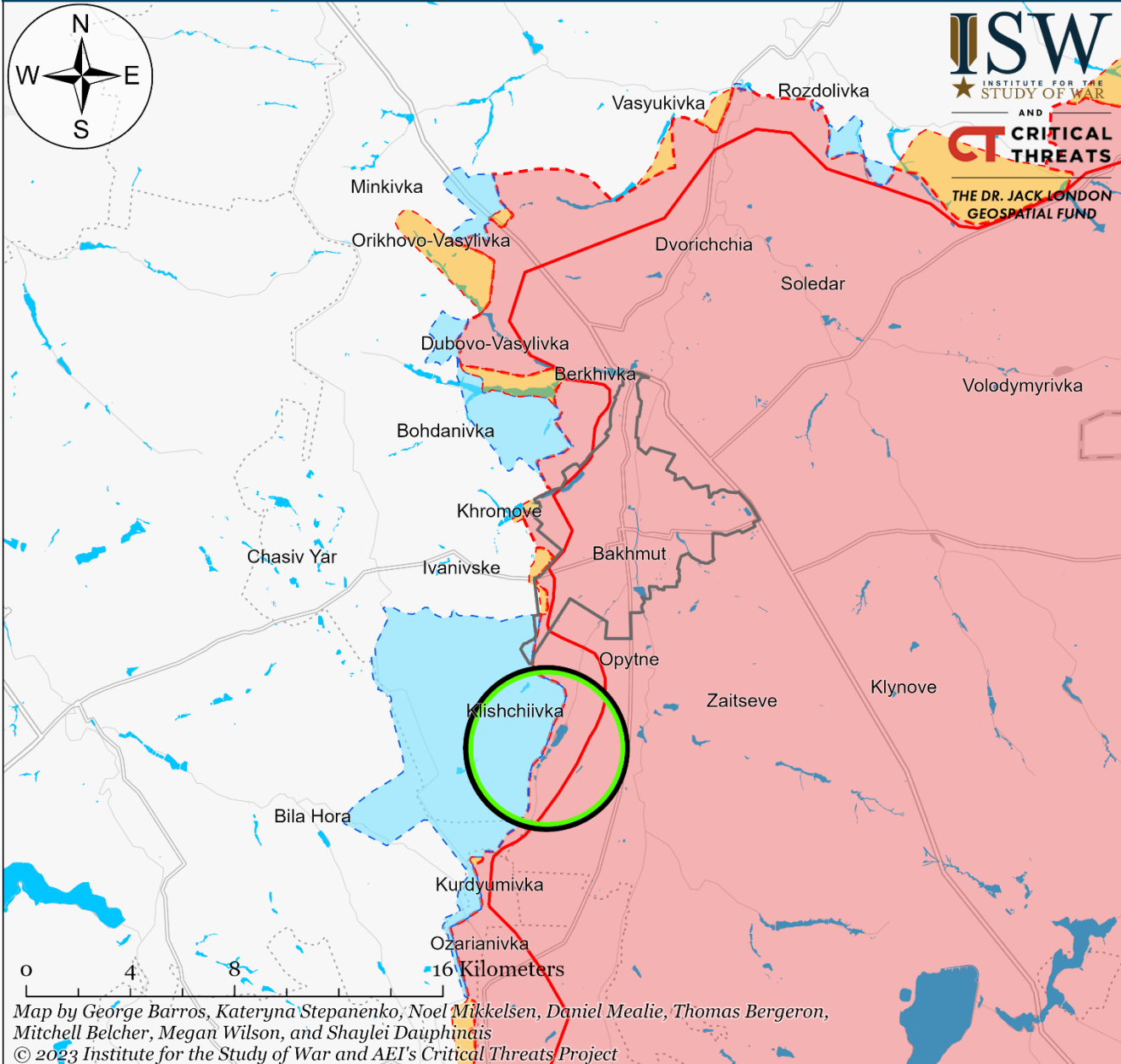
Note: A Russian source claimed on October 9 that Russian forces advanced up to one kilometer near Makiivka. Russian milbloggers claimed on October 8 that Russian forces are entrenched 600 meters east from Makiivka. A Russian source claimed on October 6 that Russian forces advanced up to 500 meters in the Kupyansk direction.

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 on October 9 and reportedly advanced. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Ukrainian forces continue offensive operations south of Bakhmut and achieved partial success near Andriivka (7km southwest of Bakhmut).[25] The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) claimed that Russian forces repelled Ukrainian attacks near Klishchiivka (5km southwest of Bakhmut) and Kurdyumivka (13km southwest of Bakhmut).[26] A Russian milblogger claimed that fighting is ongoing near the railway line near Andriivka and Klishchiivka.[27]

Russian forces conducted offensive operations near Bakhmut on October 9 but did not make any confirmed advances. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Ukrainian forces repelled Russian attacks towards Chasiv Yar (5km west of Bakhmut), Klishchiivka, and Andriivka.[28] A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces attacked from Dubovo-Vasylivka (6km northwest of Bakhmut) toward Bohdanivka (5km northwest of Bakhmut).[29] A Ukrainian military observer stated on October 10 that as of October 6 a Russian operational-tactical group consisting of regular forces, BARS (Russian Army Combat Reserve), 1st Donetsk People’s Republic (DNR) Army Corps, 2nd Luhansk People’s Republic (LNR) Army Corps, Territorial Defense, and “Storm-Z” assault units are operating in the Bakhmut direction.[30] The military observer also reported that this operational-tactical group has 60 to 65 percent of all arms and military equipment in the Russian Southern Grouping of Forces (which is committed throughout Donetsk Oblast) but that over half of the operational-tactical group’s brigade and regiment level units have personnel shortages of 30 to 35 percent and about 10 to 15 percent of brigade and regiment level units have a personnel shortage of up to 55 to 60 percent.[31]

Assessed Control of Terrain in Bakhmut as of October 10, 2023, 3:00 PM ET



Map by George Barros, Kateryna Stepanenko, Noel Mikkelsen, Daniel Mealie, Thomas Bergeron, Mitchell Belcher, Megan Wilson, and Shaylei Dauphinais
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- Bakhmut City Limits
- Assessed Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory
- Claimed Ukrainian Counteroffensives
- Assessed Russian Advances in Ukraine*
- Claimed Russian Control over Ukrainian Territory
- 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.

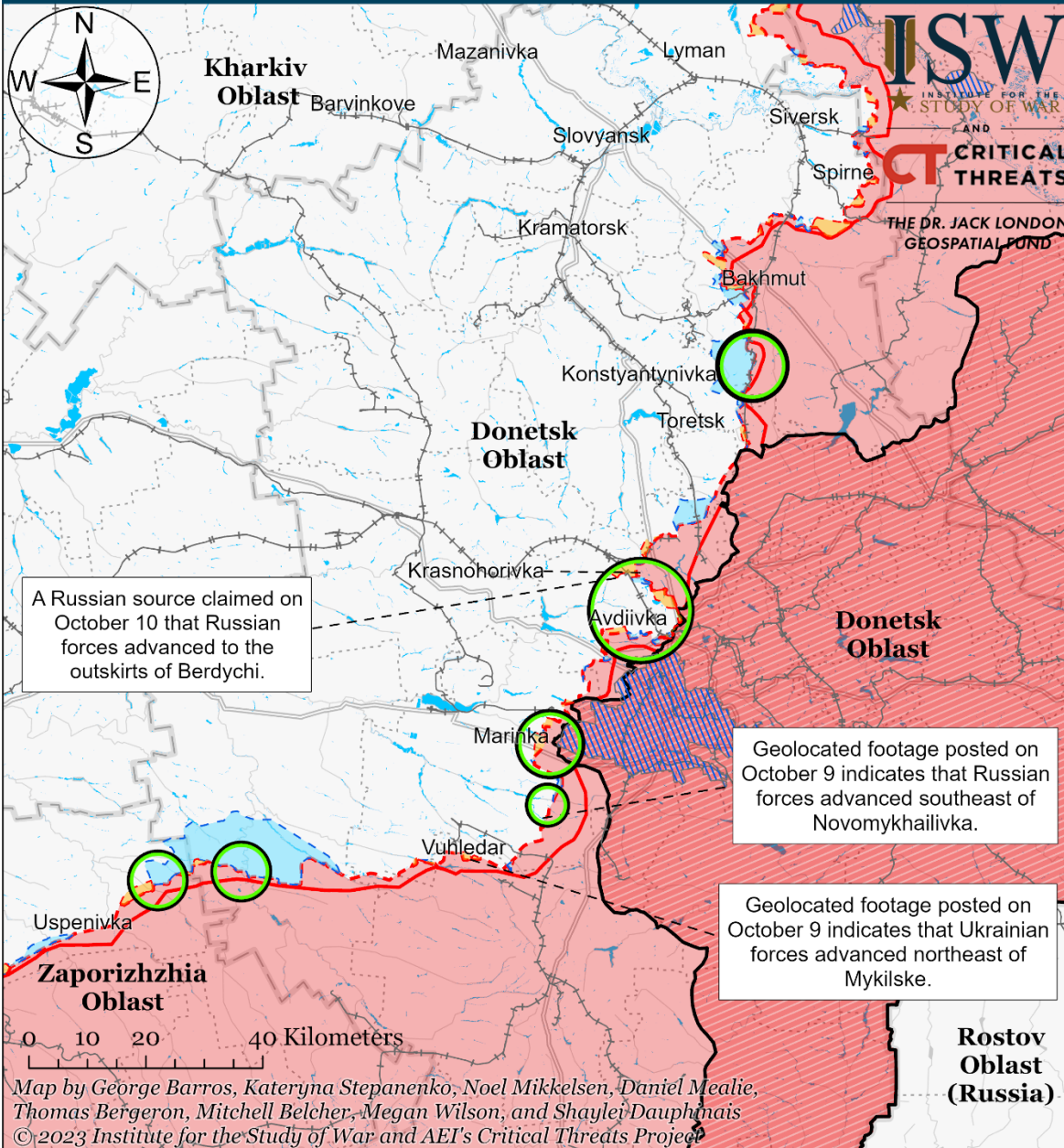
Note: Ukrainian Eastern Group of Forces Spokesperson Captain Ilya Yevlash reported on October 7 that Ukrainian forces advanced one hundred to three hundred meters in the Bakhmut direction over the last 24 hours. Russian sources claimed on October 7 that Russian forces penetrated Ukrainian defenses and advanced up to one kilometer in the area of Yahidne.

Russian forces intensified offensive operations near Avdiivka on October 9 but did not make confirmed advances. The Ukrainian General Staff reported up to three Russian battalions with tank and armored vehicle support intensified offensive operations near Avdiivka, Tonenke (7km northwest of Avdiivka), Keramik (14km northwest of Avdiivka), and Pervomaiske (11km southwest of Avdiivka).[32] Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces attacked from Krasnohorivka (8km northwest of Avdiivka) toward Berdychi (10km northwest of Avdiivka), along the Opytne-Vodyane line (3-7km southwest of Avdiivka), and near Tonenke and Pervomaiske after intense artillery preparation.[33] A Kremlin-affiliated Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces reached the outskirts of Berdychi but denied other Russian reports that Russian forces captured the settlement.[34] Russian sources also claimed that fighting is ongoing near Ocheretyne (15km northwest of Avdiivka).[35] Russian sources claimed that Russian forces captured unspecified positions near Avdiivka and Krasnohorivka.[36] Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces intend to cut off Ukrainian ground lines of communication (GLOCs) that supply Ukrainian forces in Avdiivka and encircle them, though Russian forces are likely conducting fixing operations intended to pin Ukrainian forces near Avdiivka rather than attempting to complete a full operational encirclement of the settlement.[37] Russian milbloggers noted that Ukrainian forces have built extensive fortifications in Avdiivka since 2014, making it difficult for Russian forces to break through Ukrainian defenses.[38]

Russian forces conducted offensive operations near Marinka on October 9 but did not make confirmed advances. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces unsuccessfully attacked near Marinka and Novomykhailivka (10km south of Marinka).[39] A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces attacked Novomykhailivka and conducted a “powerful” assault on Marinka.[40] Footage published on October 9 purportedly shows elements of the 150th Motorized Rifle Division (8th Combined Arms Army, Southern Military District) operating in Marinka.[41]

The Russian MoD claimed on October 10 that Russian forces repelled Ukrainian attacks on Vodyane (7km southwest of Avdiivka).[42]

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Donetsk as of October 10, 2023, 3:00 PM ET



A Russian source claimed on October 10 that Russian forces advanced to the outskirts of Berdychi.

Geolocated footage posted on October 9 indicates that Russian forces advanced southeast of Novomykhailivka.

Geolocated footage posted on October 9 indicates that Ukrainian forces advanced northeast of Mykilske.

Map by George Barros, Kateryna Stepanenko, Noel Mikkelsen, Daniel Mealie, Thomas Bergeron, Mitchell Belcher, Megan Wilson, and Shayley Dauphinais
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- Significant Fighting in the past 24 Hours
- Assessed Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory
- Claimed Russian Control over Ukrainian Territory
- Assessed Russian Advances in Ukraine*
- Claimed Ukrainian Counteroffensives
- Major Railroads
- Reported Ukrainian Partisan Warfare

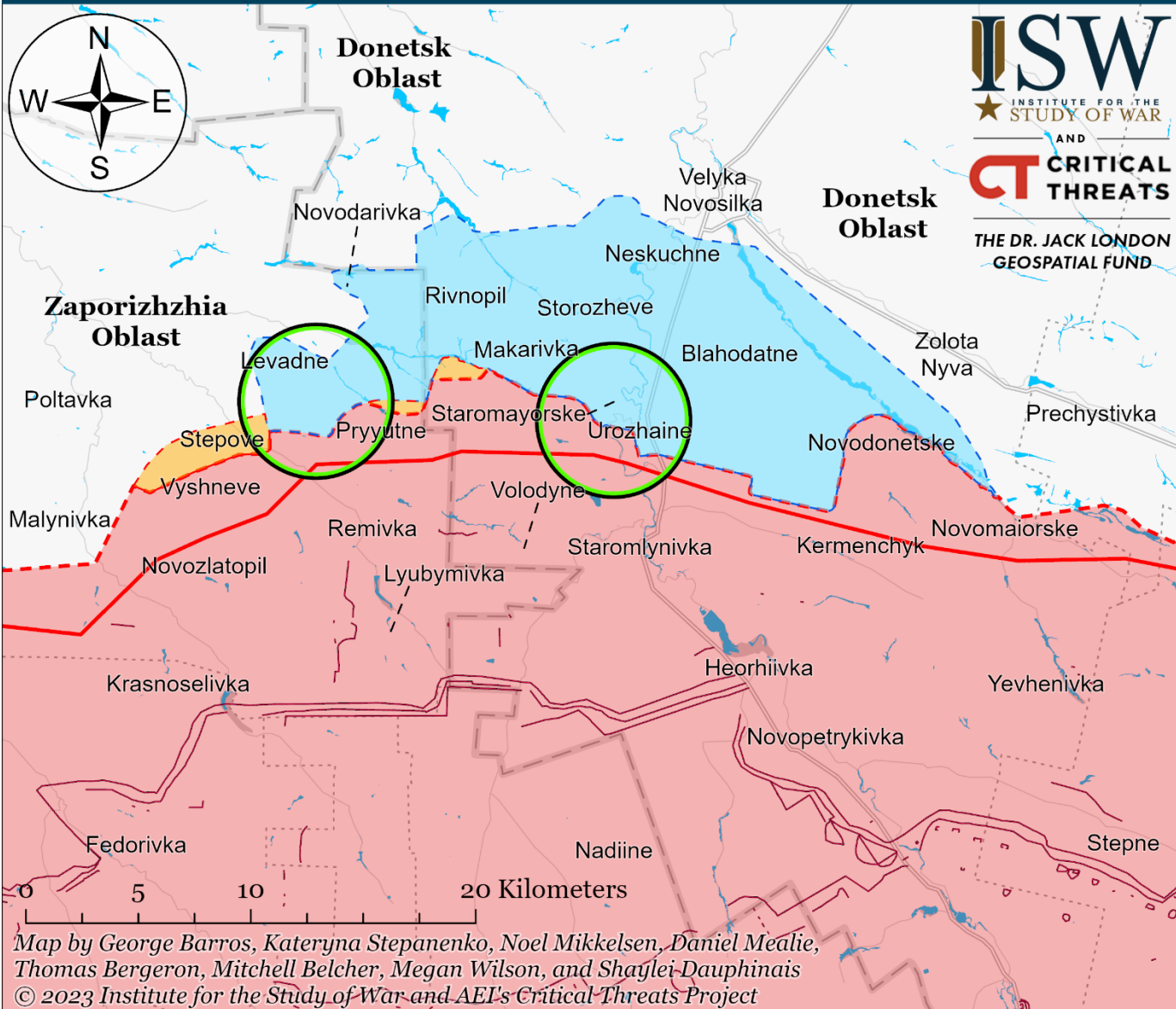
* Assessed Russian advances are areas where ISW assesses Russian forces have operated in or launched attacks against but do not control.

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

Ukrainian forces conducted offensive operations in western Donetsk Oblast and in the western Donetsk-eastern Zaporizhia Oblast border area on October 10 and made confirmed marginal advances. Geolocated footage published on October 9 indicates that Ukrainian forces advanced northeast of Mykilske (3km southeast of Vuhledar and about 30km southeast of Velyka Novosilka).[43] The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) claimed that Ukrainian forces unsuccessfully attacked near Pryutne (16km southwest of Velyka Novosilka) and west of Novodonetske (12km southeast of Velyka Novosilka).[44] A Russian milblogger claimed on October 10 that Ukrainian forces unsuccessfully attacked near Mykilske and northwest of Novomayorske (18km southeast of Velyka Novosilka).[45]

Russian forces conducted offensive operations in western Donetsk and in the western Donetsk-eastern Zaporizhia Oblast border area and reportedly advanced on October 10. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces unsuccessfully attacked near Staromayorske (9km south of Velyka Novosilka) and that Ukrainian forces are holding Russian forces back near Levadne (18km southwest of Velyka Novosilka).[46] Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces captured up to 10 strongholds in unspecified areas on the left flank in the Vremivka direction, but ISW has not observed visual evidence of this claim.[47] A Russian news aggregator claimed that Russian forces unsuccessfully attacked near Pryutne on October 9.[48] A Russian milblogger claimed that elements of the Russian 155th Naval Infantry Brigade (Pacific Fleet) are operating near Mykilske and that elements of the Russian 40th Naval Infantry Brigade (Pacific Fleet) are operating north and northwest of Novomayorske.[49]

Assessed Control of Terrain Around the Vremivka Salient as of October 10, 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
- Assessed Russian Advances in Ukraine*
- Claimed Ukrainian Counteroffensives
- Russian Field Fortifications

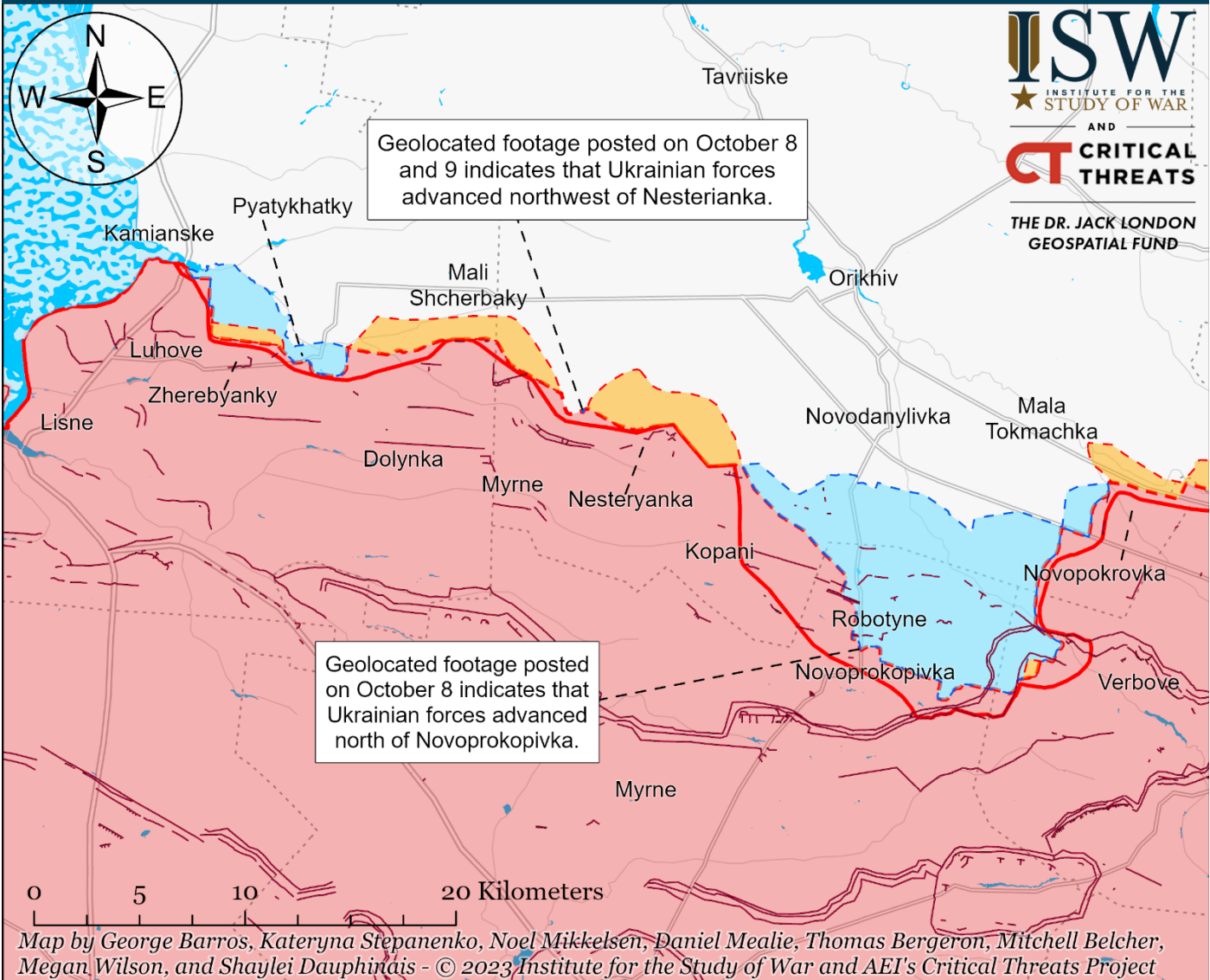
* Assessed Russian advances are areas where ISW assesses Russian forces have operated in or launched attacks against but do not control.

Russian sources claimed that Ukrainian forces conducted offensive operations in western Zaporizhia Oblast and reportedly advanced on October 10. A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces advanced west of Novofedorivka (15km northeast of Robotyne and 6km northeast of Verbove) but unsuccessfully attacked Novofedorivka itself.[50] Another milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces unsuccessfully attacked Novoprokopivka (2km south of Robotyne).[51]

Russian forces conducted offensive operations in the Orikhiv sector of western Zaporizhia Oblast but did not make any confirmed advances on October 10. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces unsuccessfully attacked near Verbove (11km southeast of Robotyne) and in the area of Inzhenerne (23km east of Robotyne).[52] Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces counterattacked near Novoprokopivka and northwest of Verbove.[53]

Russian sources claimed that Russian forces initiated a renewed offensive effort west of Orikhiv in western Zaporizhia Oblast and reportedly advanced in this area on October 10. Several Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces conducted offensive operations near Zherybyanky (30 km northwest of Robotyne and 26km southwest of Orikhiv).[54] Russian sources made several different claims of the specifics of Russian advances in this area. A Kremlin-affiliated Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced north of Zherybyanky.[55] A Russian source claimed that Russian forces advanced up to 2km into Ukrainian defenses near Zherybyanky and Pyatykhatky (29km northwest of Robotyne and 25km southwest of Orikhiv) line, whereas another Russian source claimed that Russian forces advanced several hundred meters in this area.[56]

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Pyatykhatky and Robotyne as of October 10, 2023, 3:00 PM ET

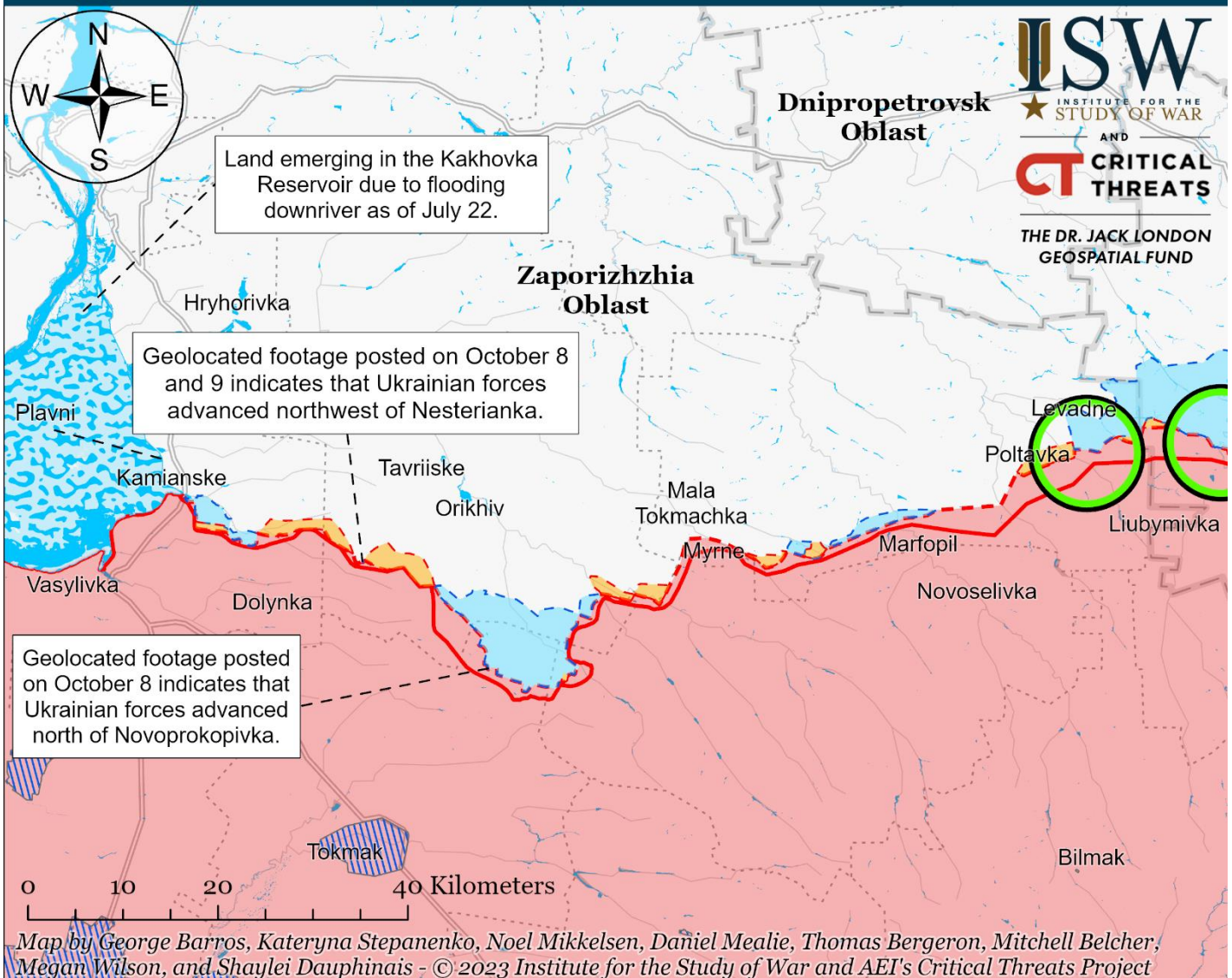


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|---|--|---|
| Significant Fighting in the past 24 Hours | Assessed Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory | Reported Ukrainian Partisan Warfare |
| Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory before February 24 | Claimed Russian Control over Ukrainian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

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

Note: A Russian source claimed on October 10 that Russian forces advanced up to two kilometers near Pyatykhatky.

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Zaporizhzhia as of October 10, 2023, 3:00 PM ET



- Significant Fighting in the past 24 Hours
- Assessed Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory
- Reported Ukrainian Partisan Warfare
- 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: A Russian source claimed on October 10 that Russian forces advanced up to two kilometers near Pyatykhatky.

Russian sources continued to discuss Ukrainian operations in the Dnipro River Delta. A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces unsuccessfully attempted to land on unspecified islands in the Dnipro River.[57] Another Russian milblogger claimed that fighting is ongoing on the Dnipro islands.[58] A Russian source claimed that Ukrainian activity on the Dnipro islands has decreased due to worsening weather conditions.[59]



A Ukrainian official stated that Russian ground lines of communications (GLOCs) in occupied Crimea and southern Ukraine are unable to operate at full capacity. Ukrainian Southern Operational Command Spokesperson Captain First Rank Nataliya Humenyuk stated that the Henichesk, Chonhar, and Kerch Strait bridges in occupied Crimea are not fully open, leading the Russian military to increasingly use the M17 (Kherson City-Dzhankoy-Feodosia-Kerch) highway that connects occupied Ukraine to Russia.[60]

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

The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) continues efforts to portray itself as effectively mobilizing the Russian defense industrial base (DIB). Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu visited the Almaz-Antey Aerospace Defense Concern's Ulyanovsk Mechanical Plant and inspected the production of Buk-M3 medium-range anti-aircraft missile systems on October 10.[61] Ulyanovsk Mechanical Plant General Director Sergei Churin stated that the plant shipped one division's worth of Buk-M3 systems to the MoD already in September 2023 and will ship another division's worth in October.[62]

Russian authorities are expanding drone production and drone training facilities to occupied areas of Ukraine. Zaporizhia Oblast occupation head Yevgeny Balitsky announced on October 9 that a drone production base for assembling attack drones, reconnaissance drones, and loitering munitions and for training drone operators has begun operating in occupied Zaporizhia Oblast.[63] Balitsky stated that this production base will support both the occupation administration's "Sudoplatov" volunteer battalion and other Russian forces operating in occupied Zaporizhia Oblast.

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)

The Ukrainian Resistance Center reported that Luhansk Oblast occupation authorities are cracking down on Ukrainian underground communication networks.[64] The Resistance Center reported that occupation authorities installed wired internet that users can only access with identification and that authorities will question users who log on through a VPN on these networks.[65] The Resistance Center stated that authorities have not created restrictions to monitor traffic yet due to technical constraints but announced their intent to do so to discourage Ukrainians from providing information to the Ukrainian military.[66]

Russian Information Operations and Narratives

NOTE: ISW continues to assess that the Kremlin has and will continue to exploit the Hamas attacks in Israel to advance several Russian information operations about Russia's invasion of Ukraine. However, ISW has notably not observed any evidence — and does not assess — that the Kremlin supported, directed, or is involved in the Hamas attacks.

The Kremlin continues efforts to maintain Russia's influence in the Middle East against the backdrop of the ongoing war in Israel. Russian President Vladimir Putin met with Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed al-Sudani at the Kremlin on October 10, marking the first meeting between the two since al-Sudani took office in October 2022.[67] Russian media reported that the meeting had already been planned before Hamas attacks in Israel began on October 7, but Putin and al-Sudani nevertheless reportedly discussed the situation in Israel, as well as the development of "multifaceted" Russo-Iraqi cooperation.[68] Putin told al-Sudani that he believes that the war in Israel is the result of US foreign policy failures and called for the creation of an independent Palestinian state.[69] Putin's remarks to al-Sudani do not necessarily represent an inflection in Russia's posturing vis-a-vis the wider Middle East. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky emphasized on October 9 that Russia benefits from conflict and instability in the Middle East, which is consistent with ISW's running assessment that the Kremlin has and will continue to exploit the war in Israel to advance information operations and bolster Russia's geopolitical reputation.[70]

The Russian Investigative Committee announced on October 10 that it has completed its investigation into the April 2 attack that killed prominent Russian milblogger Maxim Fomin (Vladlen Tatarsky).[71] The Investigative Committee reported that it transferred the case to the Russian prosecutor's office after closing its investigations into Daria Trepova, who Russian authorities accused of planning and carrying out the attack, and Dmitry Kasintsev, who authorities charged with harboring Trepova after the attack.[72] ISW previously reported that Russian authorities accused Ukraine of staging the assassination through Trepova.[73]

Russian officials continue to invoke Russia's potential revocation of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty to further a running nuclear brinkmanship information operation. Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov claimed on

October 10 that Russia has “no choice” but to withdraw from the treaty in order to balance its status with the US and emphasized that Russia will resume nuclear tests if the US also does so.[74] Ryabkov then went on to make baseless claims that Russia has evidence to suggest that the US either has recently or is currently preparing for nuclear tests in Nevada.[75] Ryabkov likely made this claim to further set conditions for the revocation of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty by accusing the US of essentially forcing Russia’s hand.

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.

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] <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbid027GuNhcGtNfwp521bfNRDsF1VpELHSJ7M2ZPy5TySWKzhVGnnz30554MfZNaTL8oxl>; <https://t.me/rybar/53051> ; <https://t.me/budnisvo/1597> ; <https://t.me/RVvoenkor/54600> ; <https://t.me/RVvoenkor/54600> ; <https://t.me/RVvoenkor/54573>; <https://t.me/RVvoenkor/54558> ; https://t.me/dva_majors/27120 ; https://t.me/dva_majors/27122 ; https://t.me/dva_majors/27110 ; <https://t.me/DnevnikDesantnika/3899> ; <https://t.me/sashakots/42683> ; <https://t.me/RtrDonetsk/20804> ; https://t.me/dva_majors/27145 ; https://t.me/boris_rozhin/100181 ; <https://t.me/voenkorKotenok/51178>

[2] <https://t.me/rybar/53065> ; https://t.me/dva_majors/27155 ; <https://t.me/batalyon15/3110> ; <https://t.me/batalyon15/3113> ; <https://t.me/sashakots/42690>; <https://t.me/vrogov/12424>

[3] <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbid027GuNhcGtNfwp521bfNRDsF1VpELHSJ7M2ZPy5TySWKzhVGnnz30554MfZNaTL8oxl>

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