

# Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment, April 24, 2023

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April 24, 7pm 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.

**Russian milbloggers speculated that Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered additional military command changes on April 20.** A prominent Russian milblogger claimed that Putin signed a decree on April 20 about a series of military command changes and formally dismissed Commander of the Eastern Military District Colonel General Rustam Muradov.[1] The milblogger noted that Muradov's dismissal likely resulted from his disastrous offensive on Vuhledar that resulted in many casualties among Russian personnel and the loss of much military equipment. The milblogger added that the decree also forced Army General Aleksandr Dvornikov — who reportedly commanded Russian forces in Ukraine in April 2022 — to retire. The milblogger claimed that Putin forced former commander of the Western Military District Colonel General Alexander Zhuravlyov into retirement alongside other unnamed commanders as well. The milblogger claimed that the Kremlin is now relying on newly reappointed Commander of the Russian Airborne Forces Colonel General Mikhail Teplinsky to achieve decisive results.

These reports about command changes and dismissals follow the Kremlin's reported dismissal of Russian Pacific Fleet Commander Admiral Sergei Avakyan on April 19.[2] A Russian milblogger claimed that Avakyan was not fired as a result of poor performance during military drills in the Pacific, but that he will be forming a new "organization" under the rumored control of the "gas sector." [3] It is unclear if this was an intentionally vague reference to the reports about Russian state-owned gas company Gazprom's formation of a private security company. The milblogger noted that he is not sure if the organization will cooperate with the Russian Volunteer Society for Assistance to the Army, Aviation, and Navy of Russia (DOSAAF) or the Young Cadets National Movement (Yunarmiya). ISW previously reported that Russian state gas companies — namely Gazprom — are forming new military formations and that DOSAAF has been proactive in Russian military recruitment efforts.[4]

**Wagner Group financier Yevgeny Prigozhin has launched an information operation to undermine the credibility of Russian state-affiliated private military groups (PMCs).** Prigozhin claimed to visit the positions of "Potok" and the "Alexander Nevsky" units - which Prigozhin characterized as "micro-PMCs" - and harshly criticized the poor condition of these units on April 24.[5] The Potok battalion is reportedly one of three volunteer detachments of the Russian state-owned energy company Gazprom and is analogous to the Russian State Combat Reserve (BARS).[6] The Potok battalion is reportedly subordinated to the Russian Ministry of Defense PMC Redut.[7] Prigozhin claimed that these units are supposed to cover Wagner's flanks and asked how these units can conduct combat operations if they lack the proper supplies and weapons. Prigozhin also criticized the general proliferation of such PMCs, which likely suggests that Prigozhin views these new entities as Wagner's competition.

Wagner-affiliated sources claimed on April 24 that Wagner forces tasked Potok with defending unspecified newly captured positions to allow Wagner to regroup, but that Potok abandoned these positions and allowed Ukrainian forces to recapture the area.[8] Alleged personnel of the Potok unit posted a video message on April 24, blaming the leadership of Gazprom and PMC Redut for failing to provide Potok with proper weapons and supplies as well as blaming Wagner for forbidding the Potok personnel from leaving their positions.[9] Some milbloggers — including Wagner-affiliated milbloggers — criticized the Potok unit for blaming leadership and instead attributed their poor combat performance to their status as volunteers.[10] The milbloggers' and Prigozhin's reports indicate that Wagner has authority over Russian MoD-owned entities, which in turn indicates that Prigozhin has regained some favor with the Kremlin.

**Kremlin authorities proposed equalizing pay between mobilized personnel and volunteers likely in an attempt to incentivize military service.** Russian President Vladimir Putin met with United Russia Secretary Andrey Turchak on April 24 to discuss initiatives to provide benefits to Russian military personnel. Putin expressed support for Turchak's proposal to equalize the salary of "all participants" of the war in Ukraine.[11] Turchak claimed that mobilized personnel currently receive 195,000 rubles (about \$2,400) monthly no matter where they serve, whereas contract soldiers receive the same amount only when serving on the frontlines. Turchak claimed that contract soldiers serving in the rear are receiving salaries "several times less" than those received by soldiers in the same role on the front line. Turchak also proposed to implement other social benefits including: setting an admission quota at Russian universities for veterans, for

those awarded Hero of Russia of three Orders of Courage, and for children of participants in the war; reducing or canceling the commission fees for withdrawing or transferring money; and extending or canceling loans for parents, spouses, and children of veterans in the event of death or severe disability. ISW previously reported on conflicts between different groups of Russian servicemen regarding unequal payments and social benefits, and the Kremlin is likely attempting to appear to resolve these discrepancies to encourage enlistment.[12]

**The Saratov Oblast Investigative Committee detained a former Wagner Group commander who told Russian human rights organization *Gulagu.net* about Wagner’s murder of children and other civilians in Bakhmut.** *Gulagu.net* founder Vladimir Osechkin reported on April 24 that the Saratov Oblast Investigative Committee arrested Wagner commander Azamat Uldarov, who detailed Wagner’s practice of killing children in Bakhmut and the group’s treatment of prisoners of war on Wagner Group financier Yevgeny Prigozhin’s orders (which Prigozhin denied).[13] Osechkin stated that four other Wagner mercenaries accompanied the Investigate Committee and threatened Uldarov with death for his testimony against Prigozhin.[14] Wagner’s cooperation with local investigative authorities indicates that Wagner and Prigozhin are able to influence certain local authorities and security organs. This anecdote further suggests that Wagner is deeply invested in encouraging participation in atrocities in order to build social cohesion among the group and indicates that Wagner uses the threat of retribution to discourage dissenting voices that expose Prigozhin to discredit the wider group.[15]

**Ukrainian forces likely conducted a naval drone attack against the Russian Black Sea Fleet’s (BSF) base in Sevastopol in the early morning of April 24.** Geolocated footage shows a likely Ukrainian naval drone detonating in the port of Sevastopol reportedly around 3:30am on April 24.[16] The extent of damage from the strike is unclear. The Russian Ministry of Defense announced on April 24 that Ukrainian forces attempted to attack the BSF base in Sevastopol with three unmanned surface vehicles and claimed that Russian forces destroyed all three vehicles.[17] Russian occupation governor of Sevastopol Mikhail Razvozhayev reported that two of the three unmanned surface vehicles entered Striletskyi Bay and that one of them detonated on its own, damaging four residential buildings.[18] Razvozhayev reported that the attack did not damage any military infrastructure.[19] Ukrainian forces have likely targeted the Russian BSF before: the Ukrainian forces likely attacked a Grigorovich-class frigate of the BSF near Sevastopol with unmanned surface vehicles on October 29, 2022.[20]

**Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov arrived in New York City on April 24 to chair a session of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).**[21] Lavrov led a session on April 24 entitled “maintenance of international peace and security” and was met with widespread condemnation by other members of the session.[22] ISW has previously assessed that Russia uses its position at the UNSC as a method of power projection and forecasted that Russia would likely exploit its one-month UNSC presidency to amplify Kremlin talking points about the war in Ukraine.[23]

**The *Wall Street Journal* (WSJ) reported on April 24 that Russian ships are ferrying Iranian ammunition across the Caspian Sea to resupply Russian troops fighting in Ukraine.**[24] The *WSJ*, citing unnamed Middle Eastern officials, stated that cargo ships have carried over 300,000 artillery shells and a million ammunition rounds from Iran to Russia via the Caspian Sea over the past six months. The unnamed officials reportedly said that the last known shipment left Iran for Astrakhan in early March and carried 1,000 containers with 2,000 artillery shells. The *WSJ* noted that the Iranian Ministry of Defense (MoD) has a contract with Russian state-owned joint stock company Rosobronexport for the sale of 74,000 artillery shells at a price of \$1.7 million. A prominent Russian milblogger responded to the report and claimed that he has not yet seen the arrival of this ammunition on the front despite continued Russian–Iranian defense cooperation.[25]

**Krasnoyarsk Krai deputy Konstantin Senchenko resigned on April 24 following the resignation of Krasnoyarsk Krai Governor Aleksandr Uss on April 20.** Senchenko reportedly left Russia over a year ago and actively criticized the war, earning himself a fine in January for “discrediting the army.”[26] Uss reportedly resigned following an offer by Russian President Vladimir Putin to work on the federal level.[27] Senchenko’s and Uss’s resignations may signal discontent with Kremlin leadership on more regional levels of Russian government.

## Key Takeaways

- **Russian milbloggers speculated that Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered additional military command changes on April 20.**
- **Wagner Group financier Yevgeny Prigozhin has launched an information operation to undermine the credibility of Russian state-affiliated private military groups (PMCs).**
- **Kremlin authorities proposed equalizing pay between mobilized personnel and volunteers, likely in an attempt to incentivize military service.**

- **Saratov Oblast Investigative Committee detained a former Wagner Group commander who told Russian human rights organization *Gulagu.net* about Wagner's murder of children and other civilians in Bakhmut.**
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- **Krasnoyarsk Krai deputy Konstantin Senchenko resigned on April 24 following the resignation of Krasnoyarsk Krai Governor Aleksandr Uss on April 20.**
- **Ukrainian forces have made marginal gains south of Kreminna as of April 24 and continue to target Russian logistics nodes in rear areas of Luhansk Oblast.**
- **Russian forces continued ground attacks in and around Bakhmut and along the Avdiivka-Donetsk City frontline.**
- **Some Russian sources denied claims from other Russian milbloggers that Ukrainian forces established enduring positions in east (left) bank Kherson Oblast.**
- **The Kremlin continues crypto-mobilization efforts likely in an attempt to avoid a second wave of formal mobilization.**
- **The Wagner Group may be attempting to fill law enforcement roles in occupied territories.**

# Assessed Control of Terrain in Ukraine and Main Russian Maneuver Axes as of April 24, 2023, 3:00 PM ET



Map by George Barros, Kateryna Stepanenko, Noel Mikkelsen, Daniel Mealie, Thomas Bergeron, Will Kiehm, and Mitchell Belcher - © 2023 Institute for the Study of War and AEI's Critical Threats Project

\* 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

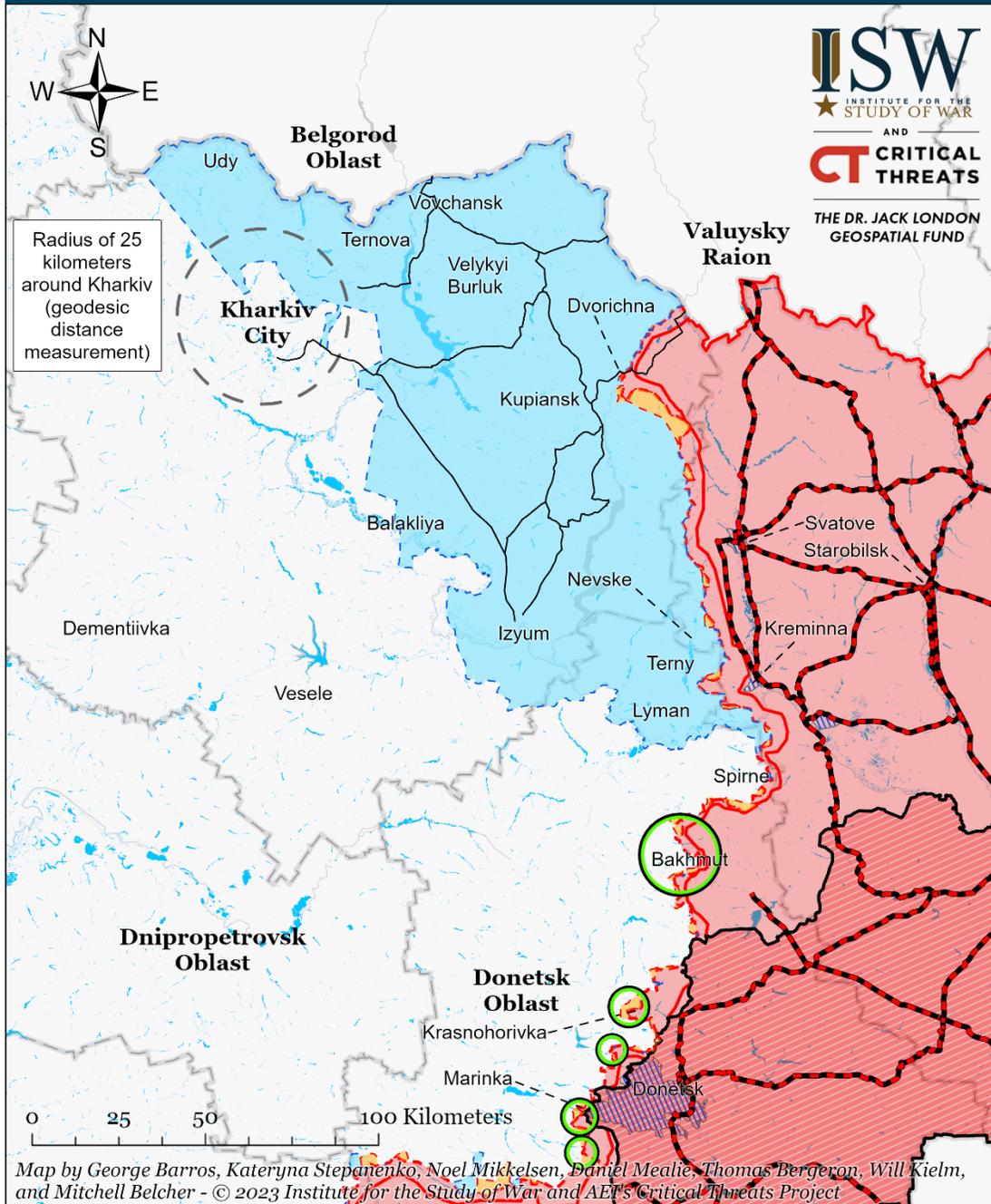
### **Russian Main Effort – Eastern Ukraine**

#### **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)**

Ukrainian forces have made marginal gains south of Kreminna as of April 24. Geolocated footage posted on April 24 shows that Ukrainian forces have made marginal advances northeast of Verkhokamianske (18km south of Kreminna) and southeast of Bilohorivka (12km south of Kreminna) on unspecified dates.[28] A Russian milblogger claimed on April 24 that Ukrainian forces recaptured unspecified positions near Bilohorivka and that Russian forces conducted unsuccessful ground attacks near Nevske (18km northwest of Kreminna) and Makiivka (22km northwest of Kreminna).[29] The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces did not conduct offensive actions along the Kupyansk-Svatove-Kreminna line on April 23 and 24.[30] Ukrainian Eastern Group of Forces Commander Colonel General Oleksandr Syrskyi stated on April 24 that Russian forces are conducting unsuccessful assaults in the Lyman direction, however.[31] Ukrainian Severodonetsk Raion Military Administration Head Roman Vlasenko reported on April 23 that Russian forces are building fortifications around Severodonetsk and other large cities and roads in occupied Luhansk Oblast.[32]

Ukrainian forces continue to target Russian logistics nodes in rear areas of Luhansk Oblast. Russian occupation officials claimed that Ukrainian forces conducted a HIMARS strike against Alchevsk (over 50km from the front line on the T0504 highway) on April 22.[33] Former Luhansk People's Republic (LNR) Ambassador to Russia Rodion Miroshnik claimed on April 24 that Ukrainian forces struck an oil depot in occupied Rovenky, Luhansk Oblast (over 100 kilometers from the front line at the T1320 and T1322 intersection).[34] Geolocated footage shows firefighters struggling to put out a fire in Rovenky.[35]

# Assessed Control of Terrain Around Kharkiv as of April 24, 2023, 3:00 PM ET



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

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

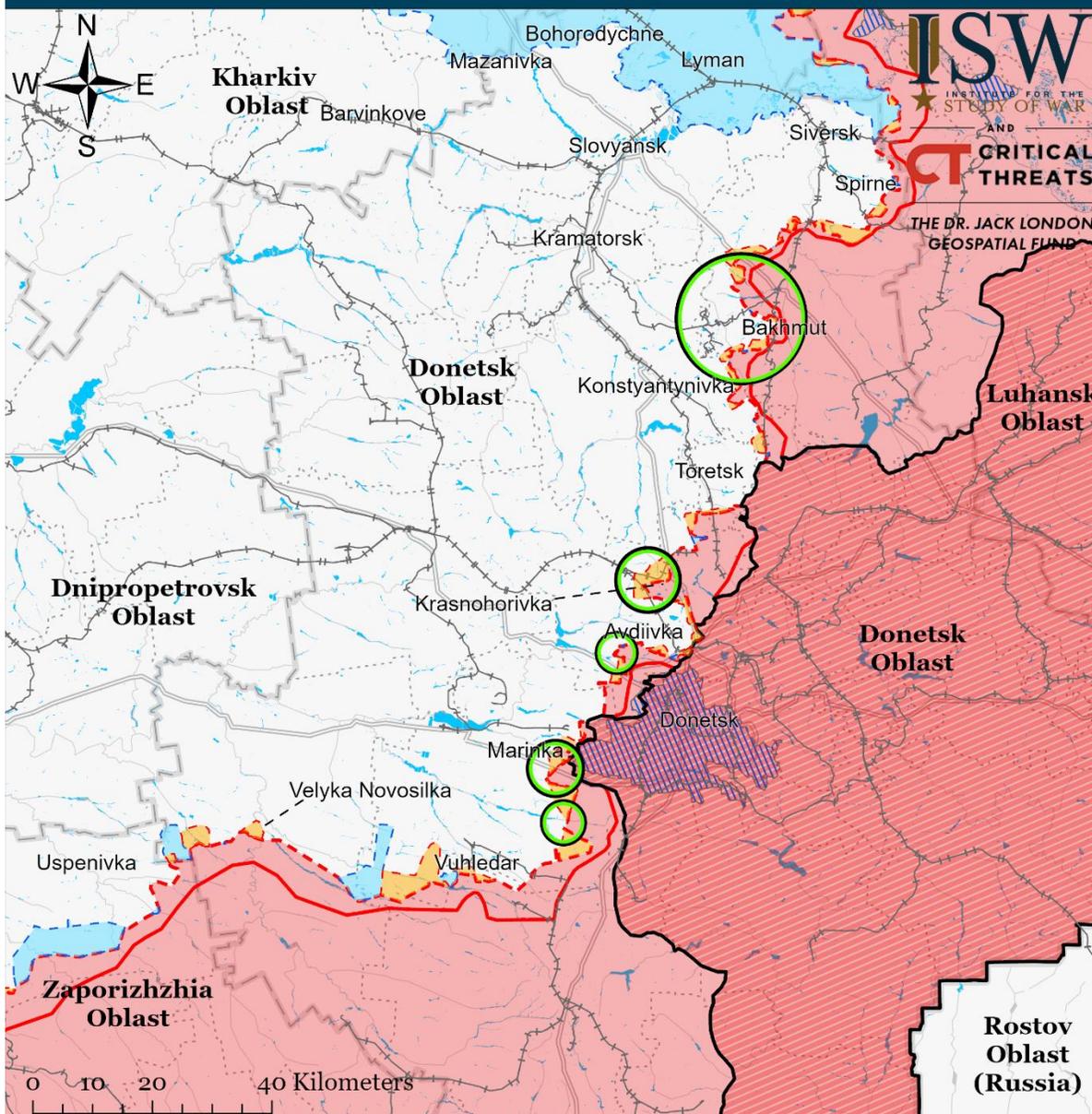
**Russian Subordinate Main Effort #2 – Donetsk Oblast (Russian Objective: Capture the entirety of Donetsk Oblast, the claimed territory of Russia’s proxies in Donbas)**

Russian forces continued ground attacks in and around Bakhmut and did not make any confirmed territorial gains in the city on April 23 and 24. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces continued attacking in Bakhmut and that Ukrainian forces repelled Russian ground attacks near Novomarkove (12km northwest of Bakhmut), Hryhorivka (8km northwest of Bakhmut), Bohdanivka (5km northwest of Bakhmut), Khromove (immediately northwest of Bakhmut), and Ivanivske (immediately southwest of Bakhmut) on April 23 and 24.[36] The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) claimed on April 23 that Wagner Group forces captured two unspecified blocks in western Bakhmut.[37] Russian milbloggers claimed that Ukrainian forces continue fighting to push Russian forces back from the Khromove-Chasiv Yar road, along which one milblogger claimed Wagner forces advanced, and that Russian forces conducted positional battles northwest of Bakhmut near Orikhovo-Vasylivka (11km northwest of Bakhmut).[38] The milbloggers also claimed that Wagner Group forces advanced in northern and western Bakhmut, including near the rail station, on April 23 and 24.[39] Wagner Group financier Yevgeny Prigozhin claimed that Wagner’s job is to wear down Ukrainian forces ahead of a possible counteroffensive, as the fall of Bakhmut will not change Russia’s operational situation on the Donetsk Oblast axis.[40]

Russian forces continued to conduct ground attacks along the Avdiivka-Donetsk City line on April 24. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Ukrainian forces repelled Russian ground attacks near Novokalynove (8km north of Avdiivka), Stepove (3km northwest of Avdiivka), Pervomaiske (11km southwest of Avdiivka), Marinka (immediately west of Donetsk City), and Novomykhailivka (10km southwest of Donetsk City) on April 23 and 24.[41] Russian milbloggers claimed on April 23 that Russian forces advanced northwest of Vodyane (6km southwest of Avdiivka) and conducted ground attacks near Krasnohorivka (4km north of Avdiivka) and Novobakhmutivka (8km northwest of Avdiivka).[42] A milblogger claimed on April 24 that Russian forces advanced near Nevelske and attacked near Keramik (10km north of Avdiivka).[43] Ukrainian Joint Press Center of the Tavriisk Defense Forces Spokesperson Colonel Oleksiy Dmytrashkivskyi stated on April 24 that Russian forces deployed an unspecified tank brigade to the Avdiivka area.[44]

The Ukrainian General Staff reported on April 23 and 24 that Russian forces did not conduct any ground attacks in western Donetsk Oblast.[45] Dmytrashkivskyi stated on April 23 that Russian forces conducted a large airstrike series against Vuhledar, and warned on April 23 and 24 that recent increases in indirect fire against Vuhledar indicate that Russian forces may be preparing for another offensive push in the area.[46] Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces broke through Ukrainian defenses near Velyka Novosilka (32km northwest of Vuhledar) and attacked Vuhledar on April 23.[47] ISW continues to assess that Russian forces likely lack the combat strength necessary to sustain any meaningful offensive in the Vuhledar direction, particularly while the battle for Bakhmut is ongoing.[48]

# Assessed Control of Terrain Around Donetsk as of April 24, 2023, 3:00 PM ET

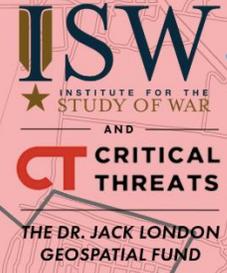
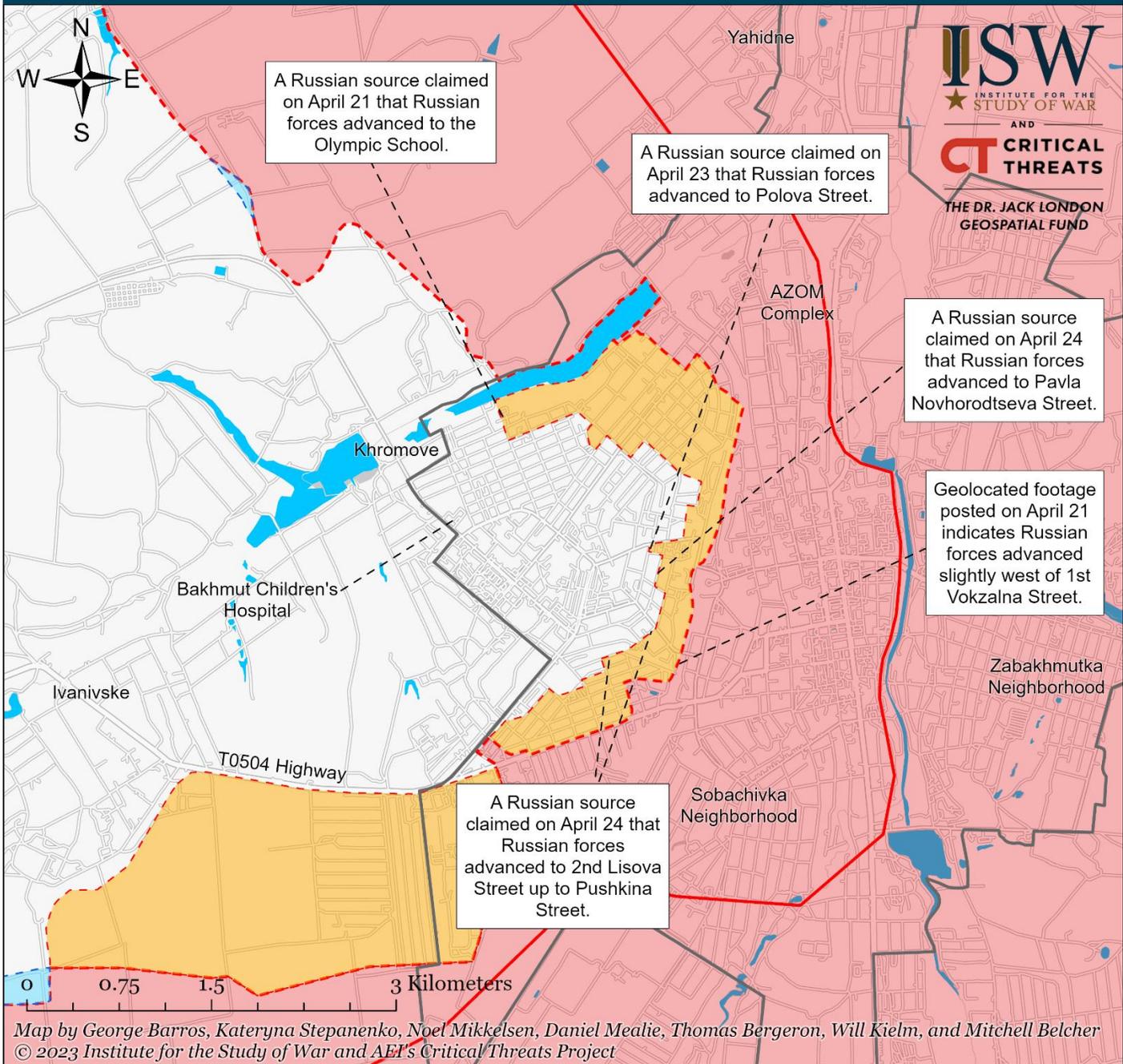


Map by George Barros, Kateryna Stepanenko, Noel Mikkelsen, Daniel Mealie, Thomas Bergeron, Will Kiern, and Mitchell Belcher - ©2023 Institute for the Study of War and AEI's Critical Threats Project

- |   |  |                                     |
|---|--|-------------------------------------|
| Significant Fighting in the past 24 Hours                 | Assessed Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory  | Major Railroads                     |
| Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory before February 24 | Claimed Russian Control over Ukrainian Territory | Reported Ukrainian Partisan Warfare |
| 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.

# Assessed Control of Terrain in Bakhmut as of April 24, 2023, 3:00 PM ET



- 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.

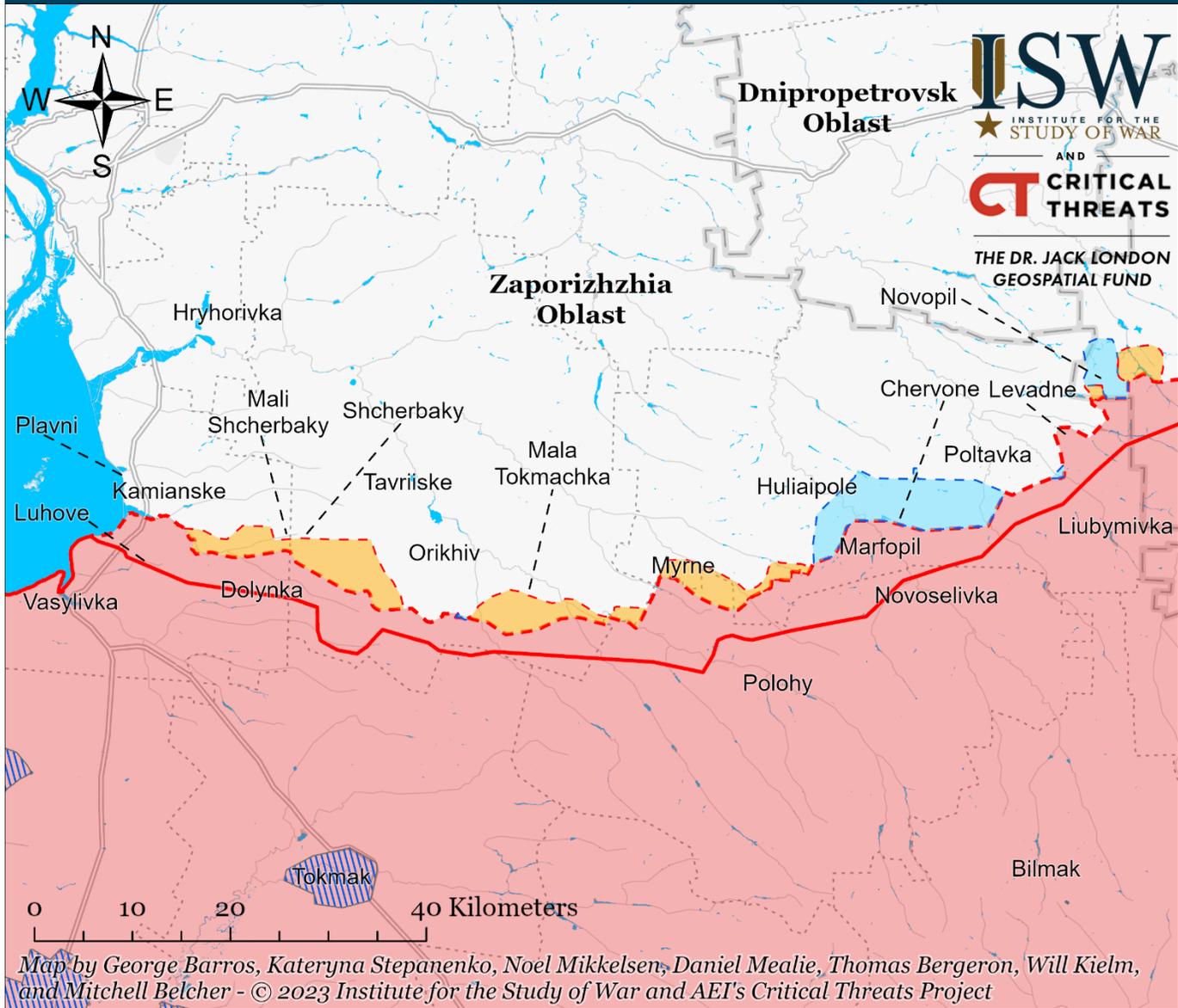
**Russian Supporting Effort – Southern Axis (Russian objective: Maintain frontline positions and secure rear areas against Ukrainian strikes)**

Some Russian sources denied claims from other Russian milbloggers that Ukrainian forces established enduring positions in east (left) bank Kherson Oblast. Kherson Oblast occupation head Vladimir Saldo claimed on April 23 that Ukrainian forces have not established a bridgehead across the Dnipro River, instead claiming that Ukrainian forces only conduct periodic raids which Russian forces repel.[49] Saldo emphasized his claim that Russian forces are in full control of east bank Kherson Oblast. Some prominent, including Kremlin-affiliated, Russian milbloggers also denied the presence of a Ukrainian bridgehead across the Dnipro River on April 24.[50] Other milbloggers criticized Saldo for falsely portraying the operational situation in Kherson Oblast to Russian authorities, criticisms reminiscent of those levied after the fall of Kherson City in November 2022.[51] One milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces are attempting to establish a foothold on Velyki Potemkin Island (immediately southwest of Kherson City).[52] ISW does not assess that Ukrainian forces have established a bridgehead across the Dnipro River as of April 24. ISW assessed on April 22 that Ukrainian forces have established an enduring presence in certain areas of east bank Kherson Oblast but not a bridgehead.[53]

Russian forces continue to conduct defensive actions in Zaporizhia Oblast. Spokesperson for the Ukrainian Defense Forces in the Tavriisk operational direction Colonel Oleksiy Dmytrashkivskyi stated on April 23 that Russian forces continue to build fortifications, establish anti-tank measures, and mine positions in the Novopavlivka and Orikhiv directions.[54] Geolocated footage published on April 24 shows elements of the 177th Naval Infantry Regiment of the Caspian Sea Flotilla operating near Dorozhnianka in Zaporizhia Oblast.[55] Footage published on April 23 shows elements of the 127th Motorized Rifle Division (5th Combined Arms Army, Eastern Military District) operating in the Zaporizhia direction.[56] Russian forces conducted routine shelling west of Hulyaipole in Zaporizhia and Kherson oblasts.[57]

Russian milbloggers expressed continued concern over a possible Ukrainian counteroffensive along the Zaporizhia Oblast frontline on April 23 and 24. Russian milbloggers claimed that Ukrainian forces are concentrating in the Zaporizhia Oblast and are preparing to strike toward Orikhiv (50km southeast of Zaporizhzhia City), Rabotyne (14km south of Orikhiv), and Ocheretuvate (29km southeast of Orikhiv).[58] Zaporizhia Oblast occupation deputy Vladimir Rogov claimed that Ukrainian forces are concentrating near Hulyaipole and actively deploying equipment along the Zaporizhia Oblast frontline.[59] Rogov claimed that Ukrainian forces may attempt to cross the Kakhovka Reservoir to take Enerhodar or reach the Sea of Azov and take the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP) after a successful counteroffensive.

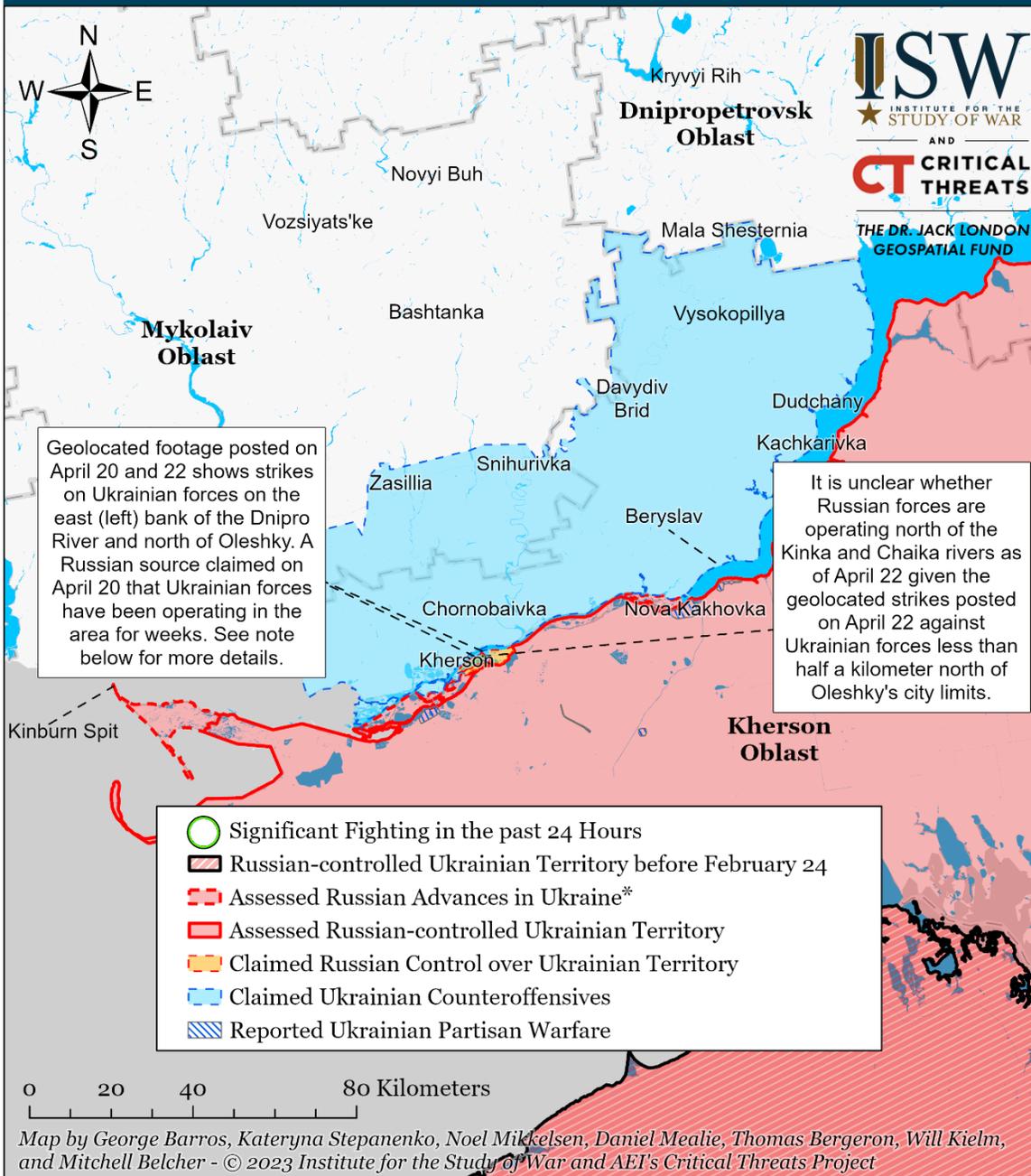
# Assessed Control of Terrain Around Zaporizhzhia as of April 24, 2023, 3:00 PM ET



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

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

# Assessed Control of Terrain Around Kherson and Mykolaiv as of April 24, 2023, 3:00 PM ET



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

Note: Geolocated footage posted on April 20 and 22 shows Russian forces striking Ukrainian forces on the east (left) bank of the Dniro River and near the E97 highway less than half a kilometer north of Oleshky's city limits. Russian milbloggers Rybar and "Thirteenth" claimed on April 20 that unspecified Ukrainian forces successfully landed on the left (east) bank of the Dniro River and established positions west of the Antonivsky bridge, and have established stable supply lines to these positions. Russian milblogger "Thirteenth" claimed on April 20 that Ukrainian forces have been operating in the area for weeks and that Russian forces control an area 1.5 kilometers behind the Antonivsky bridge, but that Ukrainian forces control the rest. It is still unclear whether Russian forces are operating north of the Kinka and Chaika rivers given the geolocated strikes against Ukrainian forces less than half a kilometer north of Oleshky's city limits.

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

The Kremlin continues crypto-mobilization efforts likely in an attempt to avoid a second wave of formal mobilization. A Russian milblogger claimed that mobile contract service recruitment centers operate in many cities across Russia.[60] The Ukrainian Resistance Center reported on April 24 that the Kremlin plans to mobilize migrants from Central Asia by threatening to deport them and revoke their Russian citizenship if they do not fight in the war and by promising a faster path to citizenship in exchange for military service to those that want Russian citizenship.[61] Russian authorities likely are targeting Central Asian migrants for conscription due to ongoing complaints from mobilized Russian personnel and their relatives over lack of payment and poor treatment and little protest from Central Asian governments over their citizens fighting in Ukraine.

The Kremlin continues to shift the financial burden of the war onto regional authorities. Chechen Republic Head Ramzan Kadyrov posted footage on April 23 purportedly showing the 94th Operational Regiment of the 46th Separate Operational Brigade of the North Caucasus District National Guard (Rosgvardia) departing Chechnya for Ukraine.[62] Kadyrov claimed that Khasmagomed Magomadov commands the 94th Operational Regiment and that the Akhmat-Haji Kadyrov Regional Public Fund provided equipment and support for the regiment.

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

The Wagner Group may be attempting to fill law enforcement roles in occupied territories. Kherson Oblast Administration Advisor Serhiy Khlan stated on April 22 that Wagner forces arrived on the east (left) bank in Kherson Oblast in an effort to control the civilian population and are looting private property at an accelerated pace.[63] ISW has previously reported on Chechen Head Ramzan Kadyrov's efforts to import Chechen elements to Ukraine for similar purposes.[64]

Russian officials and occupation authorities continue to target Ukrainian children in an effort to consolidate societal control of occupied territories. Luhansk People's Republic (LNR) Head Leonid Pasechnik stated on April 24 that occupied Luhansk Oblast is holding a "Knowledge First" federal educational marathon and will host famous personalities of Donbas and Russia who will inform Ukrainian children of opportunities and projects available to them under Russian occupation.[65] The Ukrainian Resistance Center reported on April 24 that Russian occupation authorities and "Movement of the First" representatives are encouraging children in occupied territories to write reports denouncing their parents.[66]

## **Significant activity in Belarus (ISW assesses that a Russian or Belarusian attack into northern Ukraine in early 2023 is extraordinarily unlikely and has thus restructured this section of the update. It will no longer include counter-indicators for such an offensive.)**

**ISW will continue to report daily observed Russian and Belarusian military activity in Belarus, but these are not indicators that Russian and Belarusian forces are preparing for an imminent attack on Ukraine from Belarus. ISW will revise this text and its assessment if it observes any unambiguous indicators that Russia or Belarus is preparing to attack northern Ukraine.**

Belarusian forces continued combat readiness checks in Belarus on April 23 and 24.[67]

**Note: ISW does not receive any classified material from any source, uses only publicly available information, and draws extensively on Russian, Ukrainian, and Western reporting and social media as well as commercially available satellite imagery and other geospatial data as the basis for these reports. References to all sources used are provided in the endnotes of each update.**

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[1] <https://t.me/voenkorKotenok/47032>

[2] <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgroundunder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-april-20-2023>

[3] [https://t.me/Sladkov\\_plus/7553](https://t.me/Sladkov_plus/7553)

[4] <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgroundunder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-march-8-2023>

[5] <https://t.me/brussinf/5885>; [https://t.me/concordgroup\\_official/821](https://t.me/concordgroup_official/821); <https://bloknot dot ru/obshhestvo/nichto-inoe-kak-genotsid-evgenij-prigozhin-rezko-vy-skazalsya-o-problemah-mikro-chvk-1096270.html>

[6] [https://t.me/grey\\_zone/18415](https://t.me/grey_zone/18415)

[7] [https://t.me/grey\\_zone/18415](https://t.me/grey_zone/18415)

[8] [https://t.me/z\\_arhiv/20608](https://t.me/z_arhiv/20608);

[9] <https://topwar dot ru/215573-bojcy-dobrovolcheskogo-batalona-potok-chvk-gazprom-pokinuli-pozicii-ogoliv-flangi-chvk-vagner.html>

[10] [https://t.me/grey\\_zone/18415](https://t.me/grey_zone/18415); [https://t.me/z\\_arhiv/20608](https://t.me/z_arhiv/20608); <https://t.me/moscowcalling/23325>

[11] <http://kremlin dot ru/events/president/news/70975>

[12] <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-november-2>

[13] <https://isw.pub/UkrWar041723>

[14] <https://t.me/NetGulagu/4891>

[15] <https://isw.pub/UkrWar041723>

[16] <https://twitter.com/GeoConfirmed/status/1650412137045544961?s=20>;  
<https://twitter.com/Osinttechnical/status/1650332066632876034?s=20> ;  
<https://twitter.com/Dmojavensis/status/1650387934799974400> ;  
<https://twitter.com/Dmojavensis/status/1650319989436731394> ; [https://t.me/boris\\_rozhin/83741](https://t.me/boris_rozhin/83741)

[17] [https://t.me/boris\\_rozhin/83754](https://t.me/boris_rozhin/83754)

[18] <https://t.me/razvozhaev/2619>; [https://t.me/basurin\\_e/997](https://t.me/basurin_e/997); <https://t.me/readovkanews/57434>;  
<https://t.me/readovkanews/57446>; [https://t.me/boris\\_rozhin/83748](https://t.me/boris_rozhin/83748); <https://t.me/rybar/46188>;  
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