



## Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment

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**February 19, 2025, 6:45 pm ET**

**Note: The data cut-off for this product was 1:30 pm ET on February 19 ISW will cover subsequent reports in the February 20 Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment.**

**Russian President Vladimir Putin is reportedly trying to optimize the Russian negotiations delegation to be most effective with the specific individuals whom the United States chooses for its negotiation delegation, likely in an effort to extract maximum concessions from the United States.** Kremlin Spokesperson Dmitry Peskov stated on February 19 that Putin will appoint a negotiator for talks with the United States after the United States appoints its own negotiator.[1] Russian opposition outlet *Meduza* reported on February 19, citing a source close to the Kremlin, that the United States was the first to select its delegation for the February 18 bilateral talks in Saudi Arabia, after which Russia attempted to "select relevant" counterparts for each of the selected US officials.[2] The source claimed that Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF) CEO Kirill Dmitriev's appointment to the delegation appeared largely as a response to US demands that Russia appoint someone that would "understand" the United States. Another source close to the Kremlin told *Meduza* that Putin may appoint his aide Vladimir Medinsky to the Russian negotiations delegation if Ukrainian representatives join future negotiations because Medinsky took part in the Spring 2022 Russian-Ukrainian negotiations in Istanbul. The source claimed that the Kremlin does not need to include Medinsky in the Russian delegation so long as negotiations remain bilateral between the United States and Russia. The *Moscow Times* reported on February 19, citing a diplomatic source familiar with the February 18 US-Russia meeting, that the Kremlin seeks to restore access to roughly \$6 billion worth of frozen Russian Central Bank reserves in the US.[3] The source claimed that the Russian negotiations delegation in Saudi Arabia pushed for the United States to agree that both countries fully resume the operations of their diplomatic missions in the other country and to return Russian diplomatic property in the United States, which US authorities had previously seized on charges of being used for intelligence purposes. US Secretary of State Marco Rubio stated on February 18 that the United States and Russia had agreed to restore "the functionality of [their] respective missions in Washington and Moscow." [4] The Kremlin appears to be attempting to push the United States to accept economic and diplomatic terms that are unrelated to the war in Ukraine, possibly in return for Ukrainian and Western concessions that *are* related to the war.[5] US acceptance of these economic and diplomatic terms – without demanding any Russian concessions on Ukraine in return – would give away leverage that the United States will need to achieve US President Donald Trump's stated objective of achieving a lasting and enduring peace that benefits the United States and Ukraine.

**US Secretary of State Marco Rubio and National Security Adviser Michael Waltz reiterated on February 18 that US President Donald Trump's position that the war in Ukraine must end in a way that is "fair, enduring, sustainable, and acceptable to all**

**parties involved" remains unchanged.**<sup>[6]</sup> Rubio, Waltz, and Special Envoy to the Middle East Steve Witkoff gave an interview to CNN and the Associated Press (AP) on February 18 following bilateral talks with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and Presidential Aide Yuriy Ushakov in Saudi Arabia. Waltz stated that any future end to the war needs to be "permanent," not "temporary as we have seen in the past." Waltz stated that there is going to have to be "some discussion of territory...and security guarantees" and that future talks will discuss Russia's ability to retain any Ukrainian territory that Russia has illegally annexed since February 2022. Rubio answered a question about possible concessions from Russia, stating that these "kinds of things" will happen through "difficult diplomacy in closed rooms." Rubio later noted that there will have to be concessions "made by all sides" in order to bring about an end to the war. Rubio emphasized that a war can only end when "everyone involved" in the war — which Rubio explicitly defined as including Ukraine, Russia, and US partners in Europe — is "okay with" and accepts the end agreement. Rubio answered a question about his assessment of Russia's desire to achieve peace following the talks in Saudi Arabia, stating that Russia appears willing to "begin to engage in a serious process to determine" the mechanism to end the war, but that an outcome will ultimately depend on the willingness of every side in the war to "agree to certain things."

**Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky reiterated on February 19 that Ukraine needs either NATO membership or a strong military and security guarantees for a sustainable peace.** Zelensky emphasized that security guarantees do not necessarily mean deploying peacekeeping forces to Ukraine.<sup>[7]</sup> Zelensky stated that it would be sufficient if the United States provided Ukraine with 20 Patriot air defense systems and the license to domestically produce Patriot missiles.<sup>[8]</sup> Zelensky has repeatedly emphasized Ukraine's need for additional Patriot systems and missiles to defend against Russian missile strikes, particularly those with ballistic missiles targeting Ukrainian energy infrastructure, and his February 19 statements are consistent with previous statements that Ukraine needs a strong military of its own to deter and defend against future Russian aggression.<sup>[9]</sup>

**US Special Representative for Russia and Ukraine Keith Kellogg arrived in Kyiv on February 19 for his first official visit to Ukraine.**<sup>[10]</sup> Kellogg met with Ukrainian Presidential Administration Chief of Staff Andriy Yermak, and Yermak emphasized that Ukraine remains interested in a strategic, long-term, and comprehensive partnership with the United States.<sup>[11]</sup>

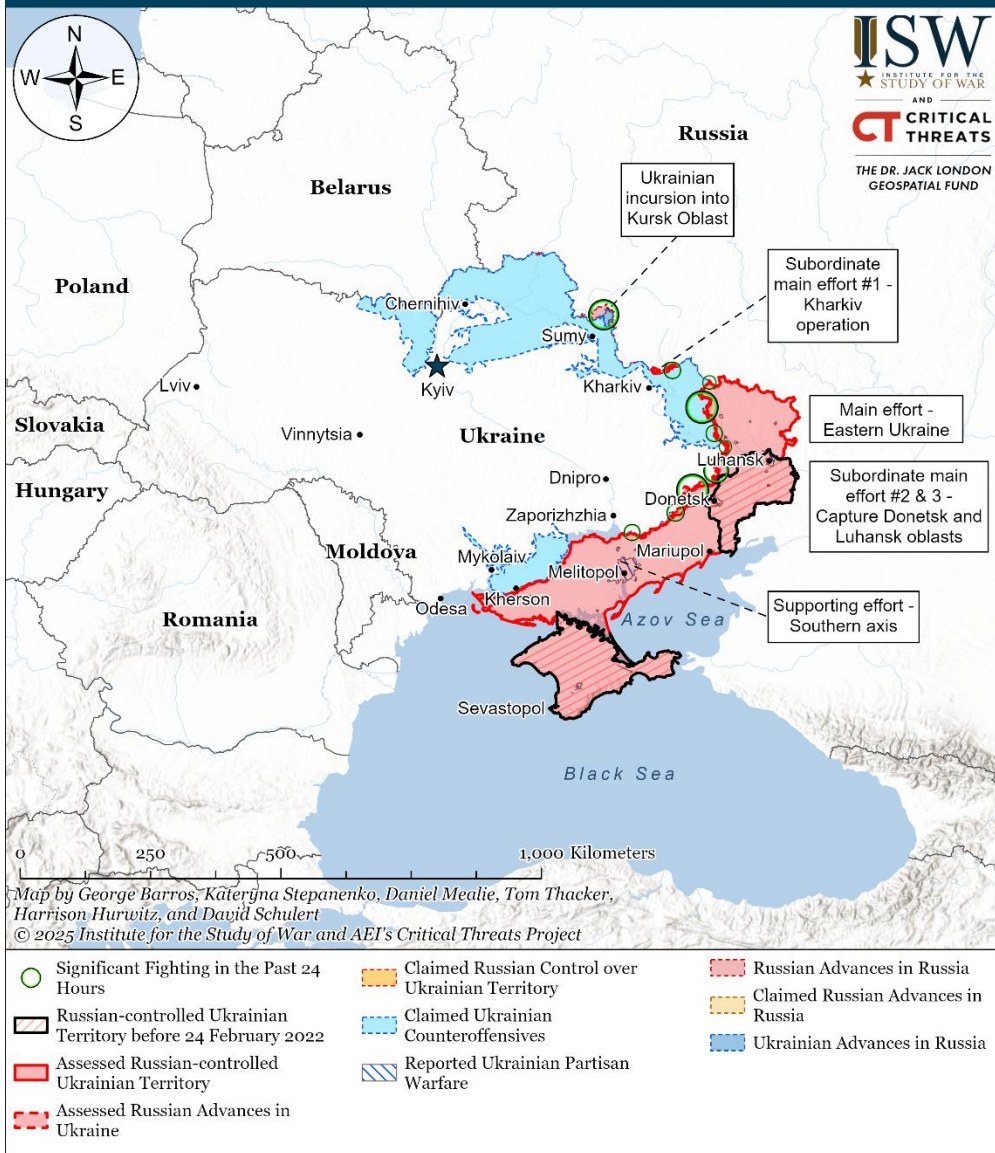
**Ukraine's European partners continue to support Ukraine's military and defense industrial base (DIB).** The Lithuanian Ministry of Defense (MoD) announced on February 19 that a new delivery of trucks, thermal imaging sights, and other military support arrived in Ukraine as part of a package worth 80 million euros (about \$83.3 million) that Lithuania prepared during the Ukraine Defense Contact Group (the Ramstein format) meeting on February 12.<sup>[12]</sup> The Lithuanian MoD estimated that Lithuania's military support for Ukraine in 2025 could reach one billion euros (about \$1.042 billion) and stated that Lithuania plans to focus its support on Ukraine's air defense, ammunition, drone, and anti-drone needs and financing for Ukrainian domestic weapons production.

**Ukrainian forces continue to conduct drone strikes against Russian energy facilities supplying the Russian military.** Head of Ukraine's Center for Combatting Disinformation Lieutenant Andriy Kovalenko stated that Ukrainian forces struck the Rosneft Syzran Oil Refinery in Syzran, Samara Oblast on the night of February 18 and 19.<sup>[13]</sup> Kovalenko noted that the refinery has a processing capacity of 8.9 million tons of oil per year and produces fuel, jet fuel, and bitumen. Kovalenko stated that Russian refineries play an important role in supplying Russian troops. Kovalenko stated that the oil refinery stopped operating after the strike, and *Reuters*, citing two industry sources, also reported that the refinery suspended oil processing after the drone strike caused a fire at the primary refining unit.<sup>[14]</sup> The industry sources told *Reuters* that the Syzran refinery had been operating at only 4.7 million tons of capacity in 2024 at least in part due to previous Ukrainian strikes. Russian opposition outlet *Astra* published footage on February 19 of a fire at the refinery, which was later geolocated to within Syzran.<sup>[15]</sup> Samara Oblast Governor Vyacheslav Fedorishchev claimed that Ukrainian forces struck the Syzran Oil Refinery but that there was no "major" damage.<sup>[16]</sup>

### **Key Takeaways:**

- **Russian President Vladimir Putin is reportedly trying to optimize the Russian negotiations delegation to be most effective with the specific individuals whom the United States chooses for its negotiation delegation, likely in an effort to extract maximum concessions from the United States.**
- **US Secretary of State Marco Rubio and National Security Adviser Michael Waltz reiterated on February 18 that US President Donald Trump's position that the war in Ukraine must end in a way that is "fair, enduring, sustainable, and acceptable to all parties involved" remains unchanged.**
- **Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky reiterated on February 19 that Ukraine needs either NATO membership or a strong military and security guarantees for a sustainable peace.**
- **US Special Representative for Russia and Ukraine Keith Kellogg arrived in Kyiv on February 19 for his first official visit to Ukraine.**
- **Ukrainian forces continue to conduct drone strikes against Russian energy facilities supplying the Russian military.**
- **Ukrainian forces recently advanced near Vovchansk and Toretsk, and Russian forces recently advanced near Borova, Siversk, Pokrovsk, Kurakhove, and Velyka Novosilka.**
- **Russian federal subjects are reportedly halting their recruitment of foreigners who do not speak Russian for service in the Russian military.**

## Assessed Control of Terrain in the Russo-Ukrainian War February 19, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



***We do not report in detail on Russian war crimes because these activities are well-covered in Western media and do not directly affect the military operations we are assessing and forecasting. We will continue to evaluate and report on the effects of these criminal activities on the Ukrainian military and the Ukrainian population and specifically on combat in Ukrainian urban areas. We utterly condemn Russian violations of the laws of armed conflict and the Geneva Conventions and crimes against humanity even though we do not describe them in these reports.***

- Ukrainian Operations in the Russian Federation
- Russian Main Effort – Eastern Ukraine (comprised of three subordinate main efforts)

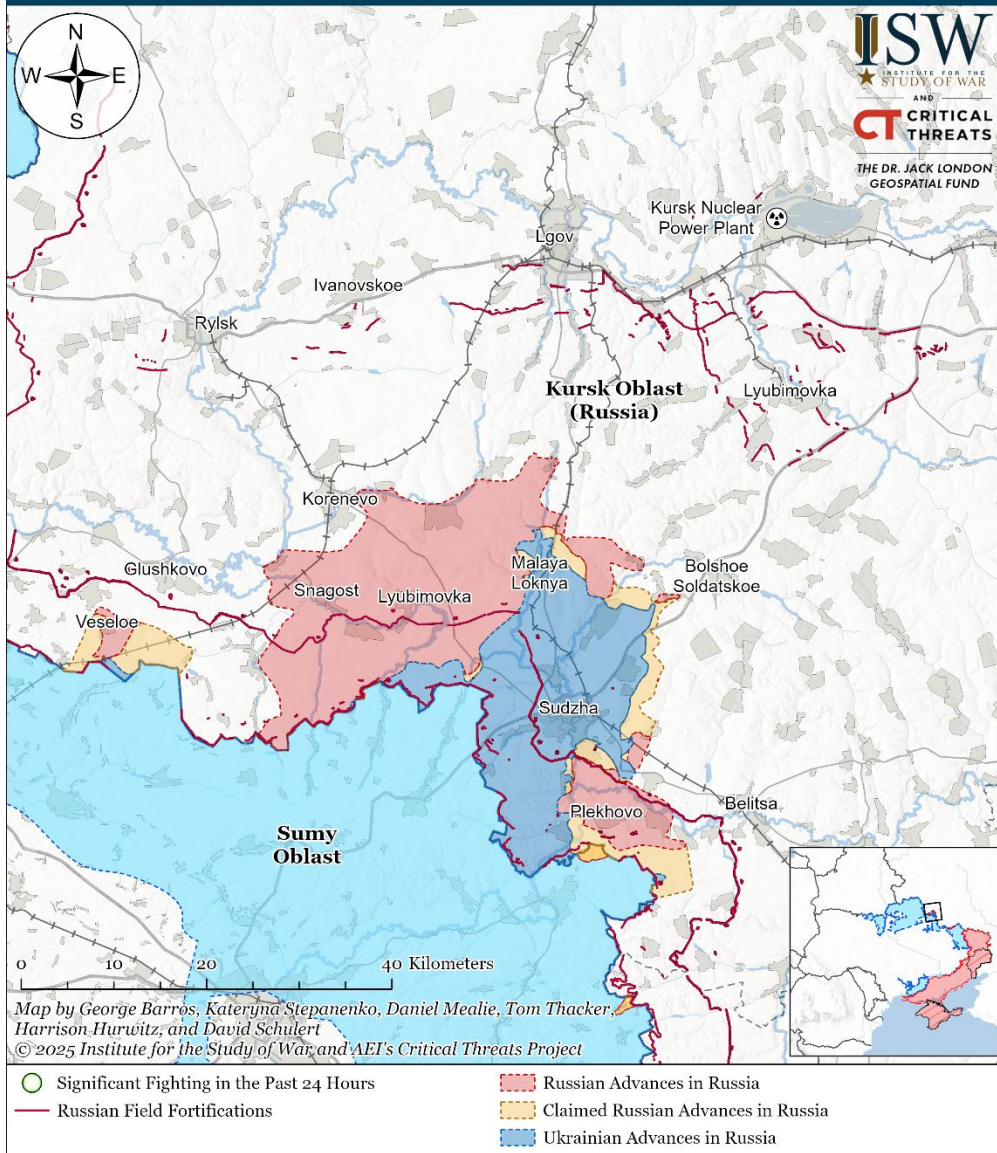
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #1 – Push Ukrainian forces back from the international border with Belgorod Oblast and approach to within tube artillery range of Kharkiv City
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #2 – Capture the remainder of Luhansk Oblast and push westward into eastern Kharkiv Oblast and encircle northern Donetsk Oblast
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #3 – Capture the entirety of Donetsk Oblast
- Russian Supporting Effort – Southern Axis
- Russian Air, Missile, and Drone Campaign
- Russian Mobilization and Force Generation Efforts
- Russian Technological Adaptations
- Activities in Russian-occupied areas
- Significant Activity in Belarus

## Ukrainian Operations in the Russian Federation

**Russian forces continued offensive operations in Kursk Oblast on February 19 but did not make any confirmed advances.** Russian forces continued ground attacks northwest of Sudzha near Sverdlikovo, north of Sudzha near Pogrebki, and southeast of Sudzha near Guyevo.<sup>[17]</sup> Russian sources claimed that Ukrainian forces counterattacked near Sverdlikovo.<sup>[18]</sup>



## Assessed Control of Terrain in the Kursk Direction February 19, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



Unconfirmed Russian-claimed advances: Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced roughly 1.2 kilometers near Lebedevka, in unspecified areas along the Loknya River (both northwest of Sudzha), and near Sverdlikovo.[19]

Russian President Vladimir Putin claimed on February 19 that elements of the Russian 810th Naval Infantry Brigade (Black Sea Fleet [BSF]) crossed the Kursk Oblast-Ukraine international border.[20] Ukrainian officials denied this claim and reported that Ukrainian forces repelled Russian sabotage and reconnaissance groups attempting to cross the international border, including one recently in the Nikolayev-Darino-Zhuravka direction (northwest of Sudzha).[21] Ukraine's State Border Service

Spokesperson Andriy Demchenko stated that the border service has not seen any Russian attempts to break through the Ukrainian border.[22]

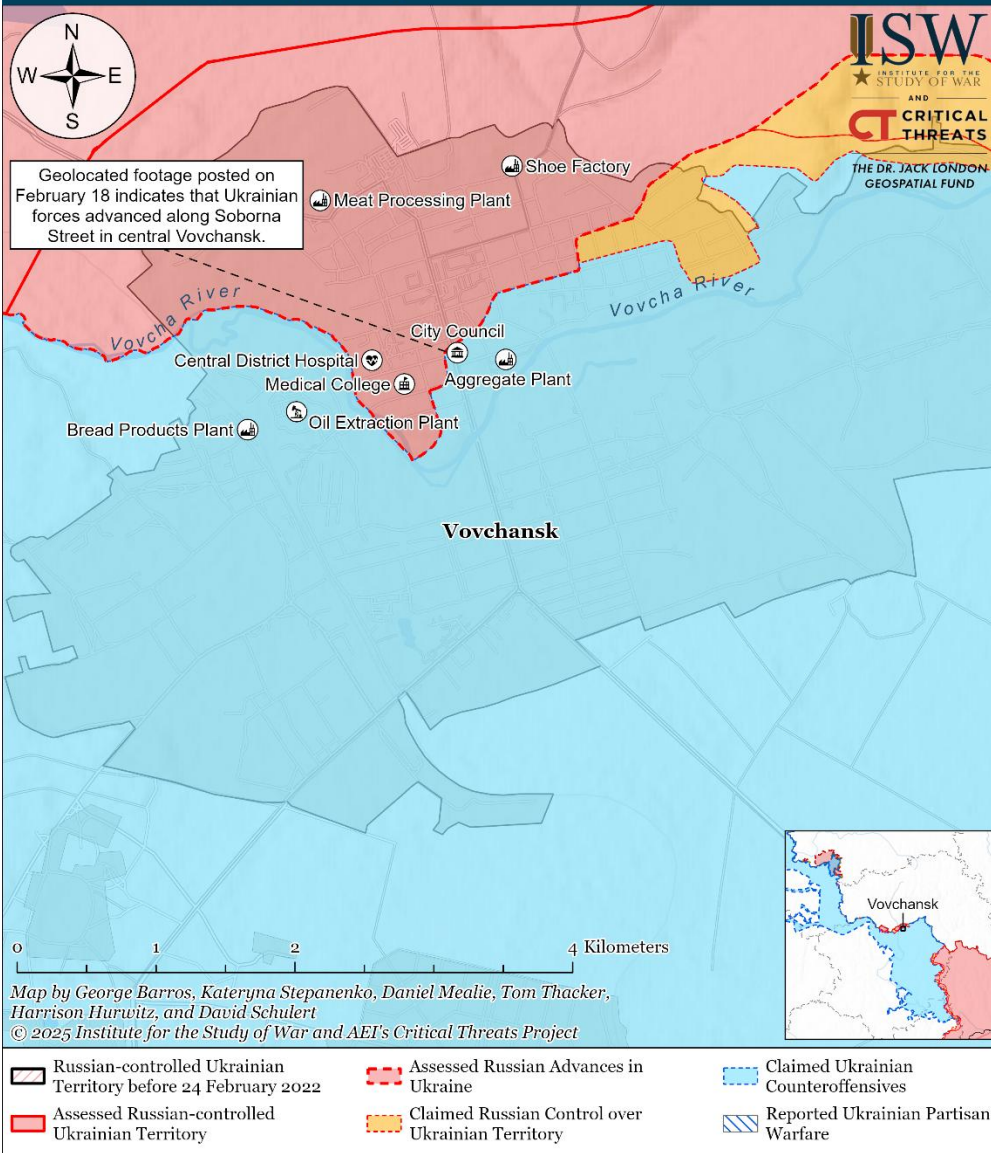
Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 34th Motorized Rifle Brigade (49th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Southern Military District [SMD]) reportedly continue operating near Pogrebki; and elements of the 155th Naval Infantry Brigade (Pacific Fleet), 1140th Artillery Regiment (76th Airborne [VDV] Division), and "Anvar Spetsnaz" detachment (possibly referring to the BARS-25 "Anvar" volunteer detachment) reportedly continue operating in Kursk Oblast.[23]

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

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

**Ukrainian forces recently advanced northeast of Kharkiv City.** Russian forces continued limited ground attacks northeast of Kharkiv City near Vovchansk on February 19.[24]

## Assessed Control of Terrain in Vovchansk February 19, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



Assessed Ukrainian advances: Geolocated footage published on February 18 indicates that Ukrainian forces recently advanced within central Vovchansk.<sup>[25]</sup>

An officer in a Ukrainian brigade operating near Vovchansk stated that Russian forces have increased the intensity of their ground attacks in Vovchansk during colder weather as part of efforts to advance to the southern bank of the Vovcha River.<sup>[26]</sup>

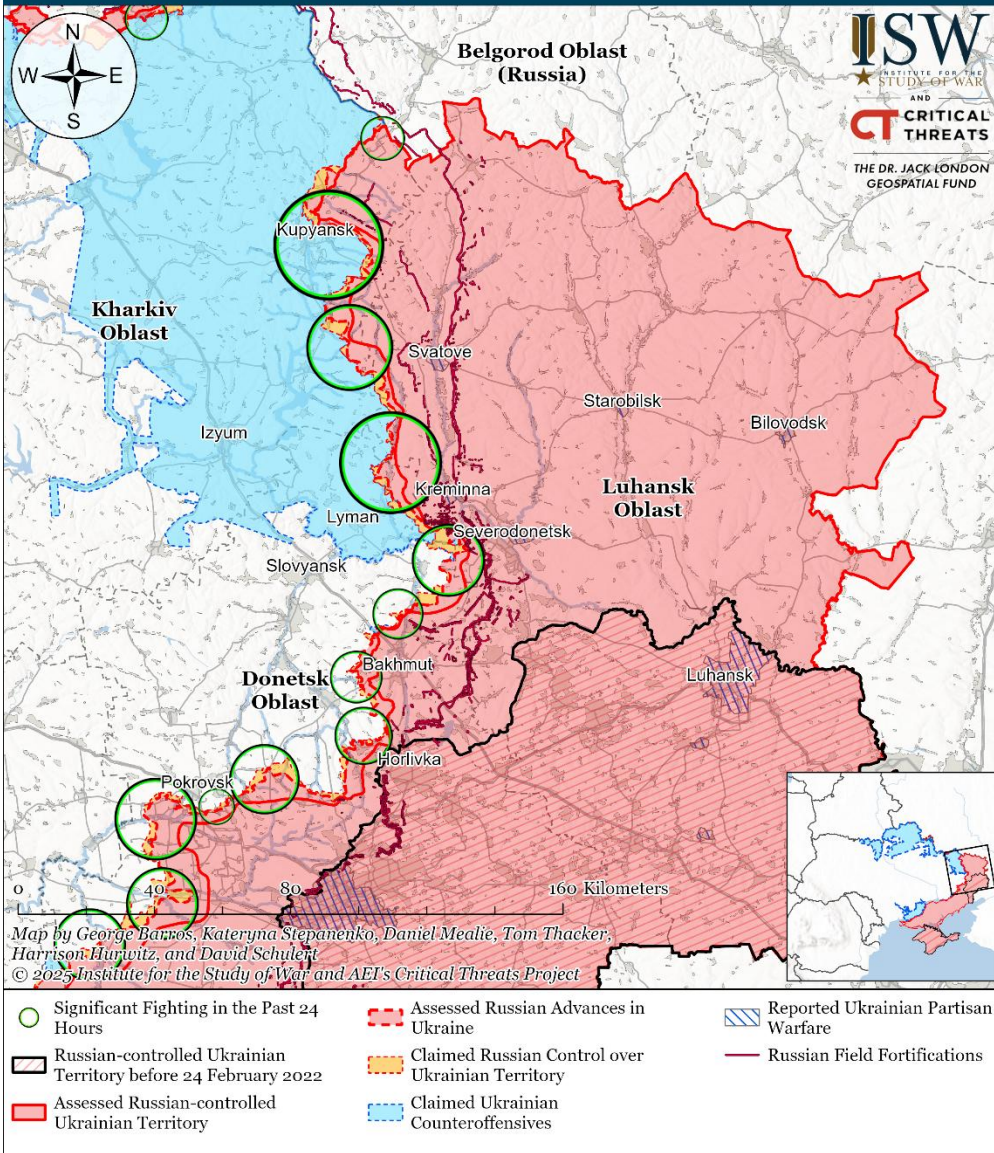


**Russian Subordinate Main Effort #2 – Luhansk Oblast (Russian objective: Capture the remainder of Luhansk Oblast and push westward into eastern Kharkiv Oblast and northern Donetsk Oblast)**

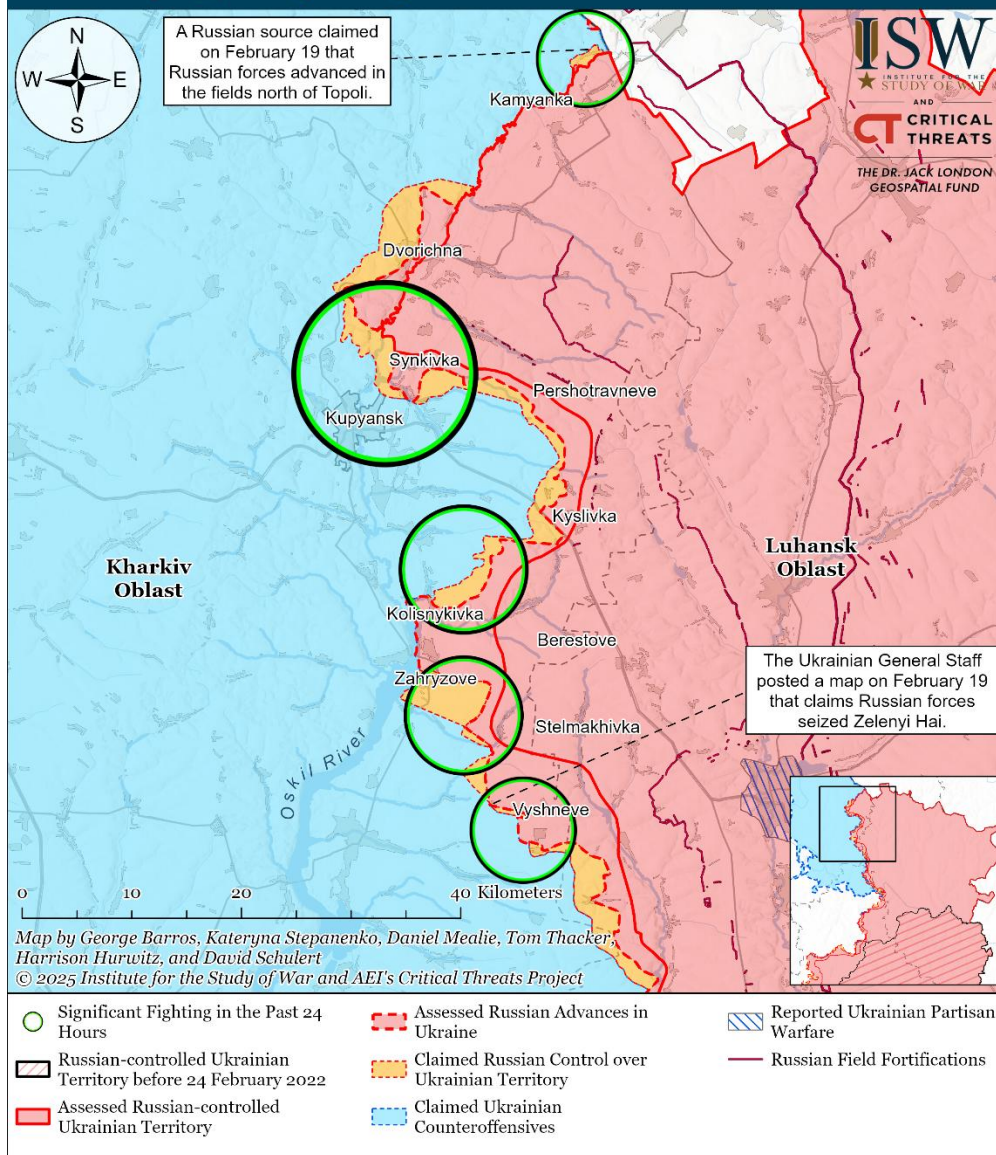
**Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Kupyansk direction on February 19 but did not make any confirmed advances.** Russian forces conducted offensive operations northeast of Kupyansk near Holubivka and toward Mala Shapkivka, east of Kupyansk near Petropavlivka, and southeast of Kupyansk near Pishchane on February 18 and 19.[27] A Ukrainian brigade operating in the Kupyansk direction stated that Russian forces conducted an at least reinforced platoon-sized mechanized assault and that Ukrainian forces destroyed three armored personnel carriers and one tank.[28] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces counterattacked near Topoli (north of Kupyansk along the international border).[29]

# Assessed Control of Terrain in Luhansk Oblast

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## Assessed Control of Terrain in the Kupyansk Direction February 19, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



Unconfirmed Russian-claimed advances: Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced in central Topoli and north of the settlement, north of Novomlynsk (north of Kupyansk), and near Holubivka.[30]

The spokesperson a Ukrainian brigade operating in the Kupyansk direction stated that Russian forces are attacking in groups ranging from two to 30 personnel in size.[31] The spokesperson stated that Russian forces first deploy less well trained infantry to detect Ukrainian firing positions, then conduct strikes on Ukrainian positions, and then deploy better trained infantry to attack the Ukrainian flanks.

**Russian forces recently advanced in the Borova direction.** Russian forces conducted offensive operations northeast of Borova near Zahryzove and Lozova, east of Borova near Kopanky, and southeast of Borova near Makiivka on February 18 and 19.[32]

Assessed Russian advances: The Ukrainian General Staff published a map on February 19 indicating that Russian forces recently seized Zelenyi Hai (east of Borova).[33]

Unconfirmed Russian-claimed advances: A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced southwest of Makiivka.[34]

**Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Lyman direction on February 19 but did not make any confirmed advances.** Russian forces conducted offensive operations northeast of Lyman near Novolyubivka, Nevske, Yampolivka, and Kolodyazi and east of Lyman in the Serebryanske forest area on February 18 and 19.[35]

Unconfirmed Russian-claimed advances: A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced southeast of Novolyubivka.[36]

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

**Russian forces recently advanced in the Siversk direction.** Russian forces conducted offensive operations northeast of Siversk near Hryhorivka and Bilohorivka and east of Siversk near Verkhokamyanske on February 18 and 19.[37]

Assessed Russian advances: The Ukrainian General Staff published a map on February 19 indicating that Russian forces recently advanced north of Mykolaivka (southwest of Siversk).[38]

Unconfirmed Russian-claimed advances: A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces marginally advanced in Bilohorivka.[39]

Order of Battle: Artillery elements of the Russian 123rd Motorized Rifle Brigade (3rd Combined Arms Army [CAA], formerly 2nd Luhansk People's Republic Army Corps [AC], Southern Military District [SMD]) are reportedly operating in the Siversk direction.[40]

**Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Chasiv Yar direction on February 19 but did not advance.** Russian forces conducted offensive operations near Chasiv Yar itself, northeast of Chasiv Yar near Vasyukivka, and south of Chasiv Yar toward Oleksandro-Shulytne on February 18 and 19.[41]

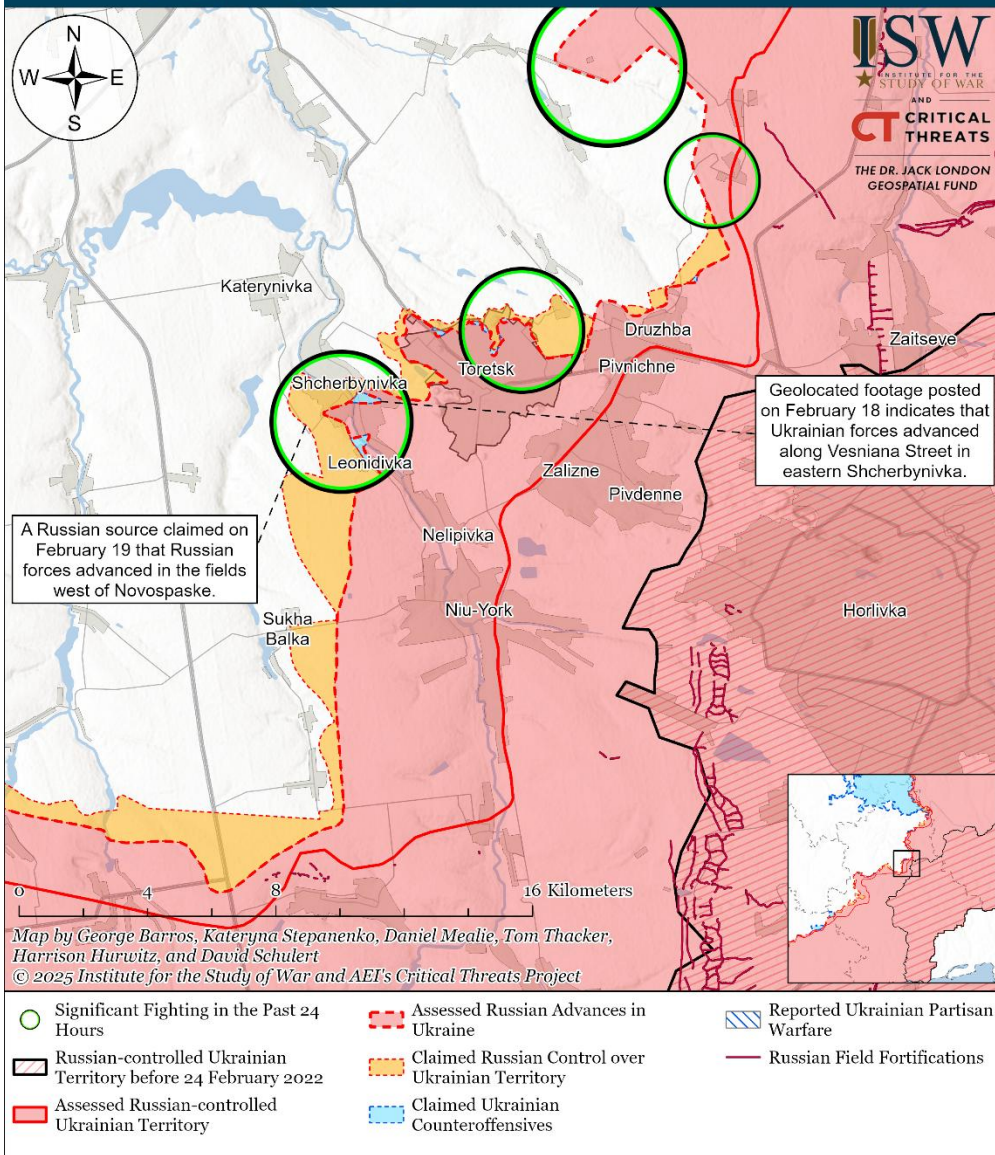
Order of Battle: Elements of the "Shustry" Detachment of Chechen Akhmat Spetsnaz are reportedly operating near Chasiv Yar.[42]

**Ukrainian forces recently advanced in the Toretsk direction.** Russian forces conducted offensive operations near Toretsk itself; northeast of Toretsk near Ozaryanivka, Dyliivka, and Krymske; east of Toretsk near Leonidivka; and west of Toretsk near Shcherbynivka on February 18 and 19.[43] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces are counterattacking near Krymske.[44]

Assessed Ukrainian advances: Geolocated footage published on February 18 indicates that Ukrainian forces recently advanced in eastern Shcherbynivka.[45]



## Assessed Control of Terrain in the Toretsk Direction February 19, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



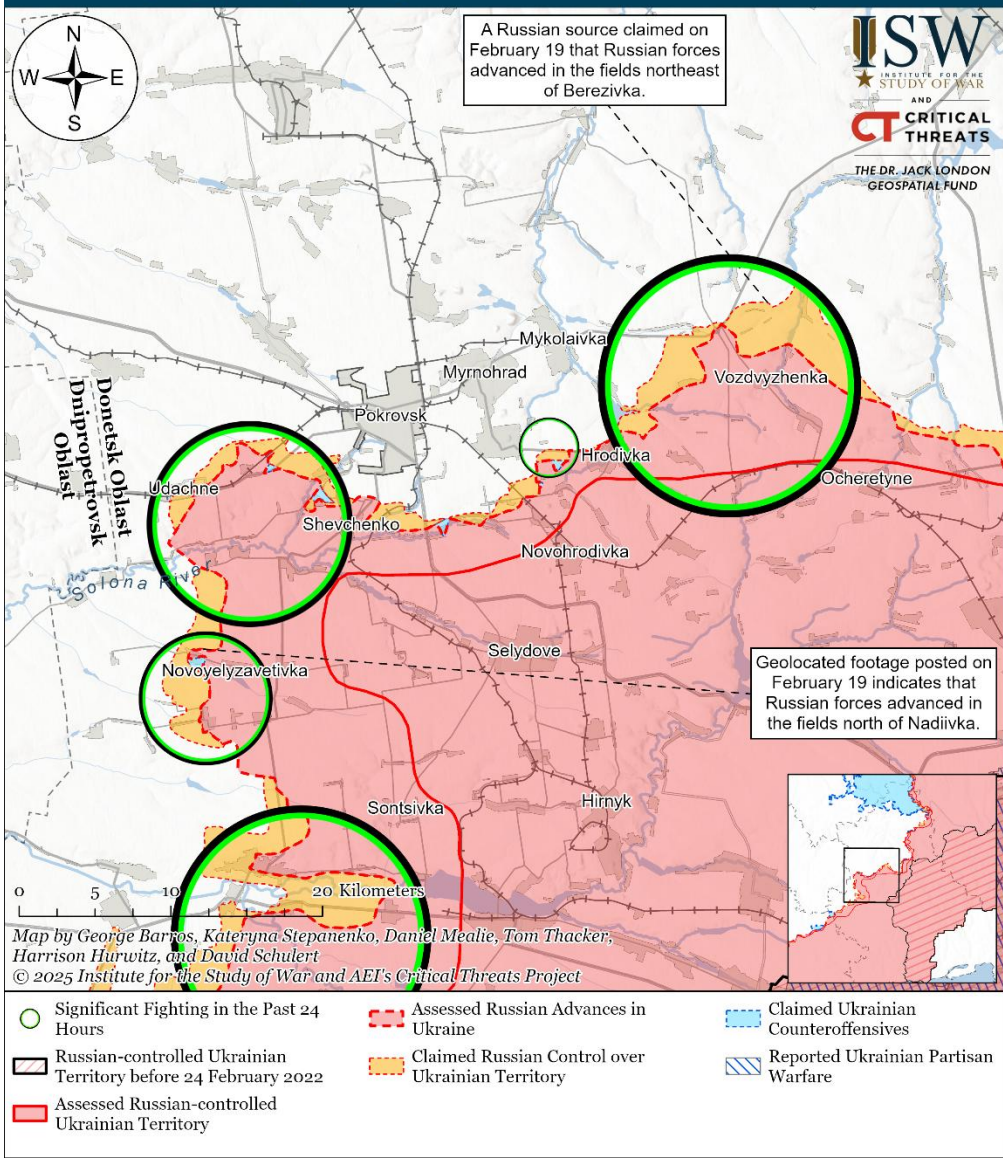
Unconfirmed Russian-claimed advances: Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced north of Druzhba (east of Toretsk), in Novospaske (west of Toretsk), and west of Leonidivka.[46]

The chief of staff of a Ukrainian battalion operating in the Toretsk direction stated that Russian forces rarely use vehicles in urban areas but are using small infantry groups or even single servicemembers to advance house to house.[47]

Order of Battle: Ukrainian military observer Kostyantyn Mashovets stated that elements of the Russian 9th Motorized Rifle Brigade (51st CAA, formerly 1st Donetsk People's Republic [DNR] AC, SMD) are operating in Toretsk.[48] Drone operators of the Russian "Vega" Spetsnaz Detachment (24th Guards Spetsnaz Brigade, Main Intelligence Directorate of the Russian General Staff [GRU]) are reportedly operating in Toretsk, and elements of the 9th Motorized Rifle Brigade (51st CAA) are reportedly operating near Novospaske.[49]

**Russian forces recently advanced in the Pokrovsk direction.** Russian forces continued attacking northeast of Pokrovsk near Vodyane Druhe, Zelene Pole, Malynivka, and Tarasivka; east of Pokrovsk near Myrolyubivka, Yelyzavetivka, Novotoretske, and Promin; southeast of Pokrovsk near Lysivka; south of Pokrovsk near Novoukrainka; and southwest of Pokrovsk near Pishchane, Kotlyne, Udachne, Uspenivka, Nadiivka, Novooleksandrivka, Kotlyarivka, Preobrazhenka, and Zaporizhzhia on February 18 and 19.[50] Mashovets stated that Ukrainian forces successfully counterattacked near Dachenske and advanced south of the settlement.[51] Russian milbloggers claimed that Ukrainian forces counterattacked near Zaporizhzhia, Preobrazhenka, Tarasivka, and Yelyzavetivka.[52]

## Assessed Control of Terrain in the Pokrovsk Direction February 19, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on February 19 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced north of Nadiivka.[53]

Unconfirmed Russian-claimed advances: Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced near Myrne, Novolyubivka, and Berezivka [54]

The spokesperson of a Ukrainian brigade operating in the Pokrovsk direction stated on February 19 that Russian forces continue to attack in small infantry groups and only use civilian vehicles confiscated

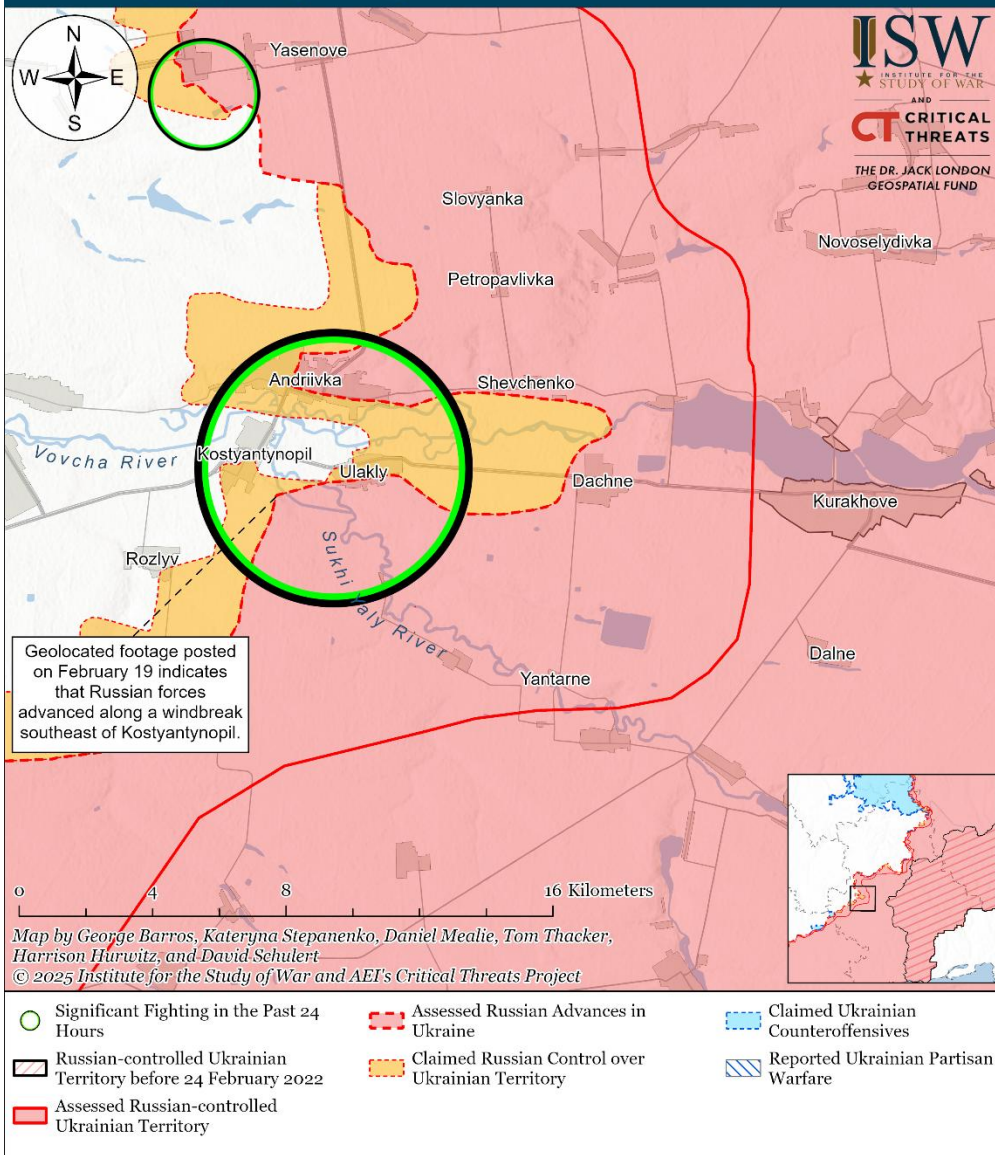
from Ukrainian civilians in occupied Ukraine.[55]

Order of Battle: Mashovets stated that elements of the Russian 5th Motorized Rifle Brigade (51st CAA) are attacking toward Yelyzavetivka.[56] Mashovets stated that elements of the 74th and 55th motorized rifle brigades (both of the 41st CAA, Central Military District [CMD]) and 30th and 15th motorized rifle brigades (both of the 2nd CAA, CMD) are operating along the Pishchane-Kotlyne-Udachne-Uspenivka line.[57] Mashovets stated that elements of the 87th Rifle Regiment (90th Tank Division, 41st CAA) and 433rd Motorized Rifle Regiment (27th Motorized Rifle Division, 2nd CAA) are operating near and south of Uspenivka. Mashovets stated that elements of the 6th, 80th, and 239th tank regiments and 228th Motorized Rifle Regiments (all of the 90th Tank Division) are operating along the Nadiivka-Sribne line (southwest of Pokrovsk).[58]

**Russian forces recently advanced in the Kurakhove direction.** Russian forces continued attacking west of Kurakhove near Kostyantynopil, Andriivka, and Ulakly and toward Oleksiivka and southwest of Kurakhove near Rozdolne on February 18 and 19.[59]



## Assessed Control of Terrain in the Kurakhove Direction February 19, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on February 16 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced southeast of Kostyantynopil.[60]

Unconfirmed Russian-claimed advances: Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced northwest of Andriivka and south of Rozlyv (southwest of Kurakhove).[61]

The spokesperson of a Ukrainian brigade operating in the Novopavlivka (Kurakhove) direction stated on February 19 that Russian forces recently conducted a roughly reinforced battalion-sized mechanized

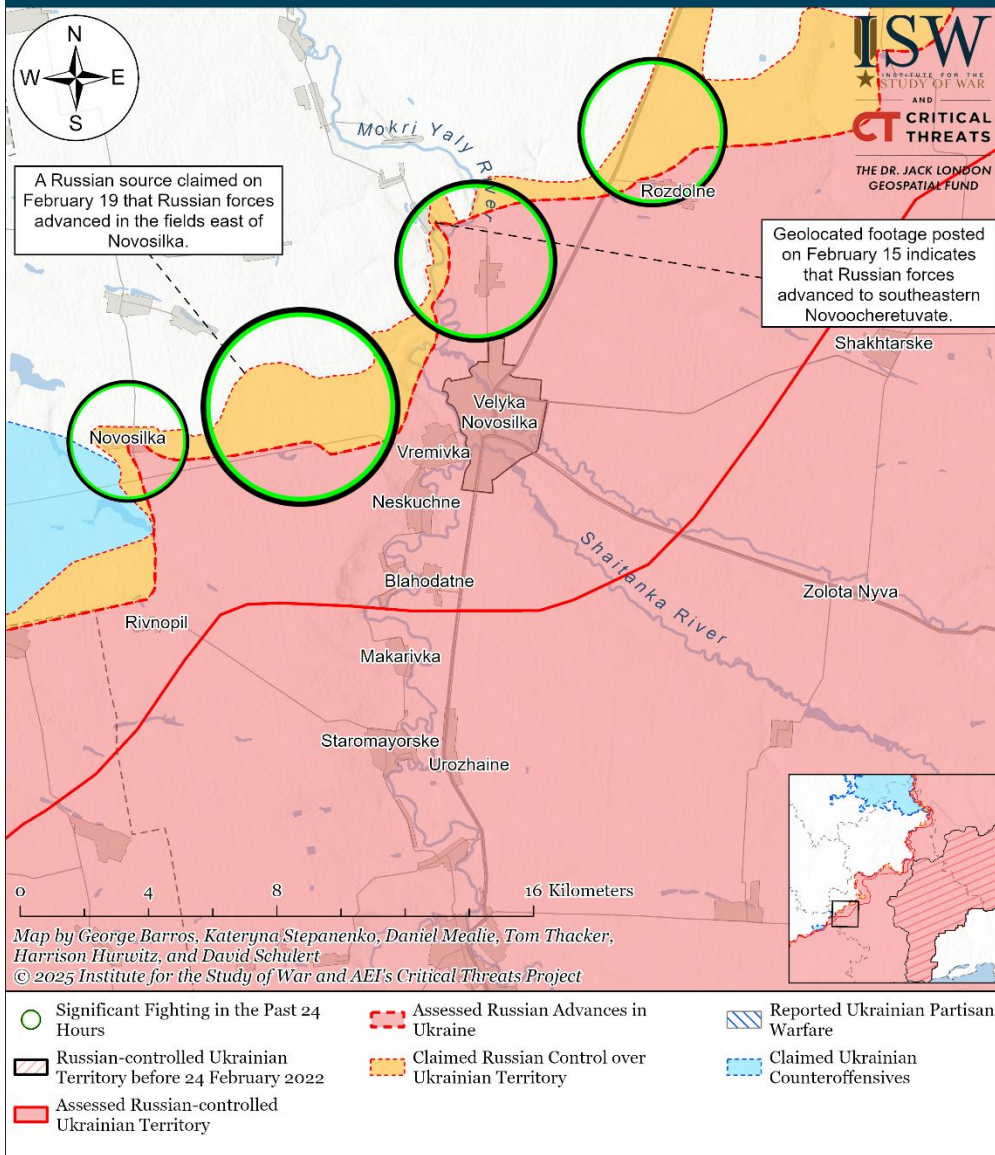


assault in the Kurakhove direction with roughly 40 armored vehicles in several columns.[62] The spokesperson stated that Ukrainian drone operators destroyed roughly 20 armored vehicles. The spokesperson is likely referring to the roughly battalion-sized mechanized assault near Bahatyr (west of Kurakhove) on February 15.[63] The deputy commander of a Ukrainian brigade operating in the Novopavlivka direction stated that Russian forces previously used "hundreds of thousands " of artillery shells but are now focusing on artillery accuracy.[64]

Order of Battle: Mashovets stated that elements of the Russian 67th Rifle Regiment (90th Tank Division) are operating near Andriivka.[65] Mashovets stated that elements of the 110th and 114th motorized rifle brigades (both of the 51st CAA), 36th Motorized Rifle Brigade (29th CAA, Eastern Military District [EMD]), 39th Motorized Rifle Brigade (68th AC, EMD), and 57th Motorized Rifle Brigade (5th CAA, EMD) are operating along the Dachne-Ulakly line.

**Russian forces recently advanced in the Velyka Novosilka direction.** Russian forces conducted offensive operations northwest of Velyka Novosilka towards Burlatske, west of Velyka Novosilka near Novosilka and towards Pryvilne, and southwest of Velyka Novosilka near Novopil on February 18 and 19.[66]

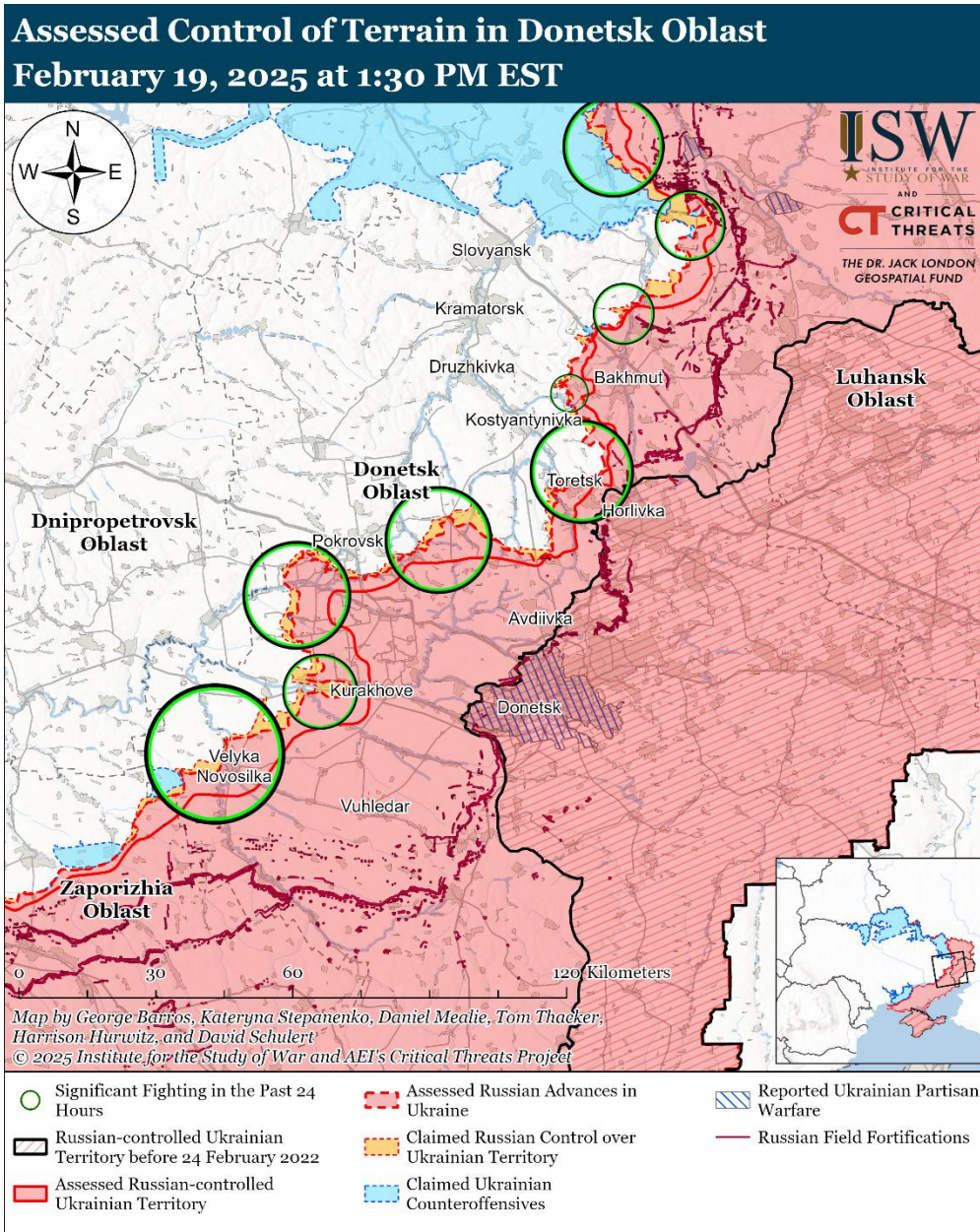
## Assessed Control of Terrain in the Velyka Novosilka Direction February 19, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on February 15 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced to southeastern Novoocheretuvate (north of Velyka Novosilka).[67]

Unconfirmed Russian-claimed advances: Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced east of Novoocheretuvate, southeast of Pryvilne, and east of Novosilka.[68] A Russian source claimed that Russian forces have seized most of Novoocheretuvate and Novosilka.[69]

Order of Battle: Mashovets stated that elements of the Russian 127th Motorized Rifle Division (5th CAA, EMD), 40th Naval Infantry Brigade (Pacific Fleet), 336th Naval Infantry Brigade (Baltic Fleet), and 34th Motorized Rifle Brigade (49th CAA, SMD) are operating north and northwest of Velyka Novosilka.[70] Elements of the 57th Motorized Rifle Brigade (5th CAA, EMD) are reportedly operating in Novosilka.[71]

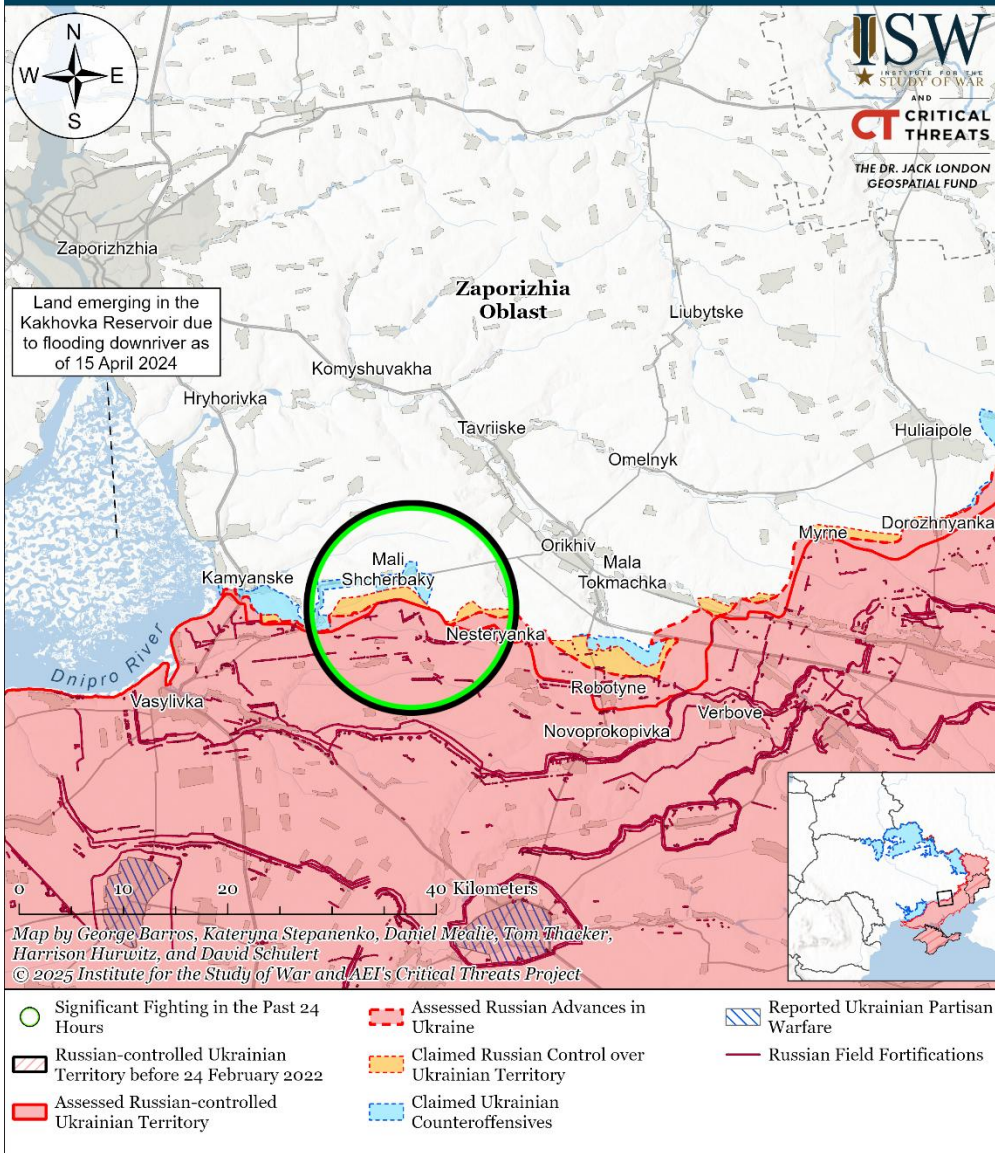


**Russian Supporting Effort – Southern Axis (Russian objective: Maintain frontline positions and secure rear areas against Ukrainian strikes)**

**Russian forces continued ground attacks in western Zaporizhia Oblast on February 19 but did not advance.** Russian forces conducted assaults northwest of Robotyne near Mali Shcherbaky, Novoandriivka, and Stepove on February 18 and 19.[72]



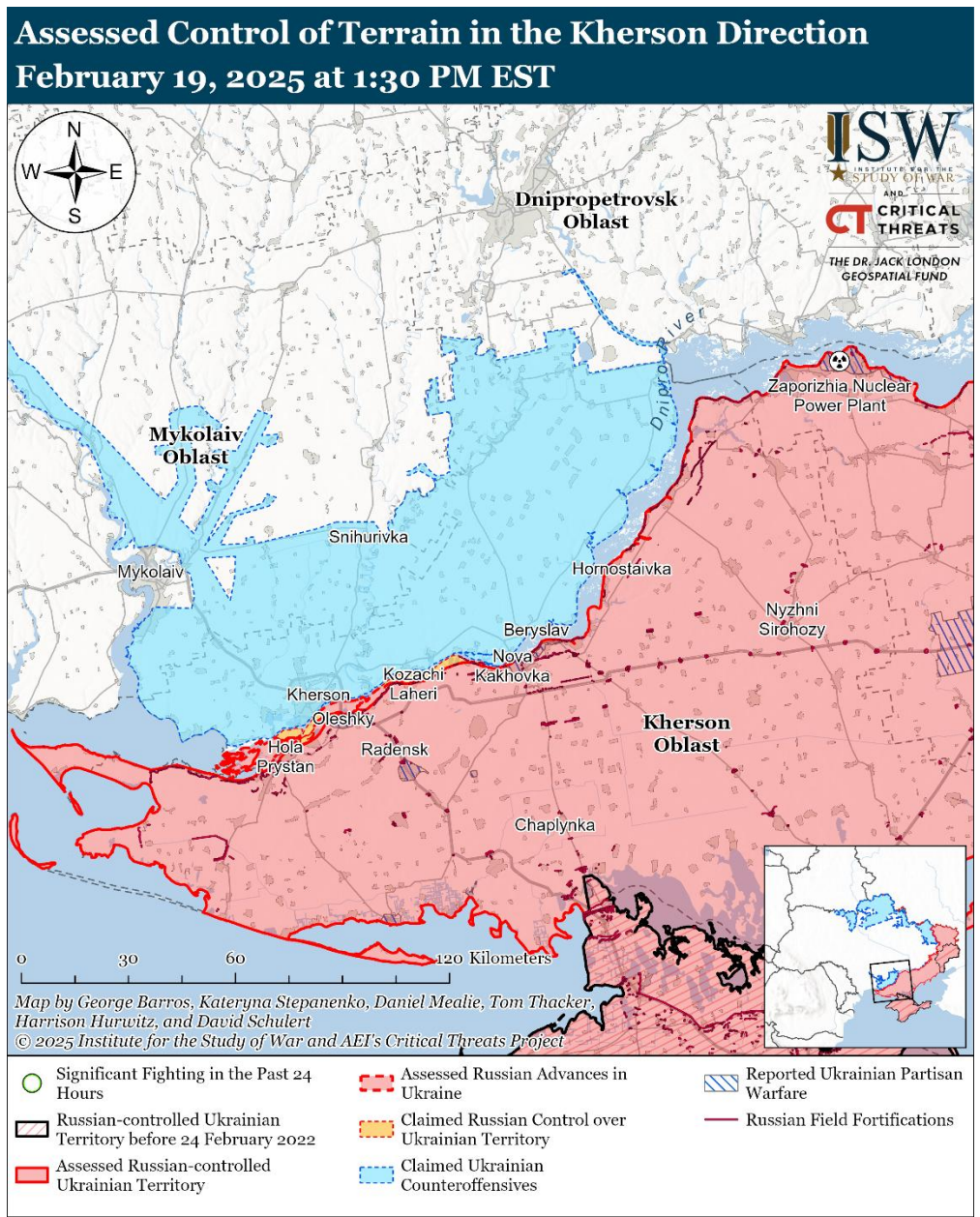
## Assessed Control of Terrain in the Zaporizhia Direction February 19, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



A Ukrainian brigade operating in Zaporizhia Oblast published footage on February 19 of Ukrainian drones destroying a Russian Tor M-2, a Buk M-2, and a Buk M-3 air defense system in the past day.[73] The Ukrainian General Staff reported on February 19 that Ukrainian forces struck a position of the Russian 64th Motorized Rifle Brigade (35th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Eastern Military District [EMD]) near Chumatske (south of Hulyaipole in the Russian rear).[74]

**Neither Russian nor Ukrainian sources reported fighting in the Kherson direction on February 19.**

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 80th Arctic Motorized Rifle Brigade (14th Army Corps [AC], Leningrad Military District [LMD]) reportedly continue operating in the Kherson direction.[75]



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

Russian forces conducted a series of drone and missile strikes against Ukraine on the night of February 18 and 19. The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Russian forces struck Sumy Oblast with two Iskander-M/Kn-23 ballistic missiles launched from Voronezh Oblast.[76] The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Russian forces also launched 167 Shahed and decoy drones from Oryol, Bryansk, and Kursk oblasts; Millerovo, Rostov Oblast; Shatalove, Smolensk Oblast; and Primorsko-Akhtarsk, Krasnodar Krai. The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Ukrainian forces shot down 106 drones over Kharkiv, Poltava, Sumy,



Chernihiv, Cherkasy, Kyiv, Kirovohrad, Khmelnytskyi, Zhytomyr, Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporizhia, Kherson, Odesa, and Mykolaiv oblasts and that 56 decoy drones were "lost," likely due to Ukrainian electronic warfare (EW) interference. Ukrainian officials reported that Russian drones struck Odesa, Kyiv, Sumy, Cherkasy, and Zaporizhia oblasts and that Russian drones struck energy infrastructure in Odesa City.[77]

Ukraine's State Emergency Service reported on February 19 that emergency services are still working to extinguish the smoldering fires at the Chornobyl Nuclear Power Plant (NPP) following the February 14 Russian drone strike against the NPP.[78]

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

Russian federal subjects are reportedly halting their recruitment of foreigners who do not speak Russian for service in the Russian military. Russian opposition outlet *Verstka* reported on February 19 that authorities in Moscow Oblast are not deploying those who signed military service contracts but do not speak Russian to training, and a source stated that there are currently 150 Chinese citizens who have signed contracts but are waiting for orders.[79] Two military recruiters told *Verstka* that other unspecified federal subjects have also largely stopped recruiting foreigners who do not speak Russian. A military recruiter suggested that language barriers are causing issues on the frontline, but *Verstka* noted that friction due to language barriers is not new among Russian frontline forces.

The Kremlin continues efforts to posture the Russian defense industrial base (DIB) as highly productive. Russian President Vladimir Putin visited the Radar MMS defense enterprise in St. Petersburg on February 19 and awarded the enterprise with the state "Order of Alexander Nevsky" award.[80] Putin highlighted the enterprise's role in manufacturing advanced drones, radio electronic and telecommunications equipment, earth surface monitoring systems, and navigation systems that support Russian detection and precision strike capabilities. Russian Security Council Deputy Chairperson Dmitry Medvedev visited the Kazan Gunpowder Plant on February 19 and claimed that modernization allowed the plant to increase its production of ammunition for multiple unspecified weapons.[81]

Russian milbloggers continue to raise alarm about the Russian military command's poor treatment of wounded personnel. A Russian milblogger published an address reportedly from a battalion commander in the 5th Motorized Rifle Brigade (51st Combined Arms Army [CAA], formerly 1st Donetsk People's Republic [DNR AC], Southern Military District [SMD]) to wounded personnel who requested to be pulled from combat, in which the battalion commander reprimanded the injured soldiers for using their injury payments and complaining about their injuries.[82] Another Russian milblogger and former Storm-Z instructor, who frequently complains about systemic issues in the Russian military, criticized the battalion commander for his reprimands.[83] The milblogger accused the battalion commander of failing to manage his forces and criticized the commander's belief that being able to shoot a gun is sufficient recovery from an injury.

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

Nothing significant to report.

**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)**

*ISW is not publishing coverage of activities in Russian-occupied areas today.*

**Significant activity in Belarus (Russian efforts to increase its military presence in Belarus and further integrate Belarus into Russian-favorable frameworks)**

Nothing significant to report.

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

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BABELSTREET

[1] [https://t.me/tass\\_agency/301494](https://t.me/tass_agency/301494) ; <https://tass dot ru/politika/23183285>

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