

Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment, January 14, 2024

Angelica Evans, Nicole Wolkov, Karolina Hird, Kateryna Stepanenko, and Frederick W. Kagan
January 14, 2024, 5:30 pm ET

Click [here](#) to see ISW's interactive map of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. This map is updated daily alongside the static maps present in this report.

Click [here](#) to see ISW's 3D control of terrain topographic map of Ukraine. Use of a computer (not a mobile device) is strongly recommended for using this data-heavy tool.

Click [here](#) to access ISW's archive of interactive time-lapse maps of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. These maps complement the static control-of-terrain map that ISW produces daily by showing a dynamic frontline. ISW will update this time-lapse map archive monthly.

Note: The data cut-off for this product was 1:30pm ET on January 14. ISW will cover subsequent reports in the January 15 Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment.

Note: ISW has added a new section on Ukrainian defense industrial base (DIB) efforts to the daily Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment to track the development of Ukraine's DIB and the international support for Ukraine's DIB efforts. ISW will be publishing its assessments in this section based on public announcements, media reporting, and official statements.

Click [here](#) to read ISW's new analysis on Ukrainian long-term efforts to develop a self-sufficient DIB with US and European support.

Russian sources claimed that Russian forces are preparing to launch a new offensive in the coming weeks once the ground freezes in eastern and southern Ukraine. Russian literary critic and alternative historian Sergey Pereslegin claimed on January 12 that Russian forces will launch a large-scale offensive effort in Ukraine sometime between January 12 and February 2 after the ground freezes and likely after Ukrainian forces grow "exhausted" of defending their positions in Avdiivka and east (left) bank Kherson Oblast.[1] Pereslegin claimed that Russians should be more concerned about Russia launching its offensive at the wrong time or making the same "mistakes" that Ukraine made during its 2023 counteroffensive than of a renewed Ukrainian offensive effort in 2024.[2] Pereslegin also expressed concern that Russia does not have enough manpower to conduct the large-scale offensive effort he is anticipating.[3] A prominent Russian milblogger claimed on January 14 that the number of Russian military personnel on the frontline allows Russian forces to conduct localized tactical maneuvers but is unlikely to support operationally significant "breakthroughs." [4] The milblogger claimed that freezing weather is impacting Russian and Ukrainian ground activity and artillery and drone systems throughout the front, particularly in the Kherson direction.[5] A Russian milblogger claimed on January 12 that freezing weather conditions are preventing Russian forces from conducting ground operations and advancing north of Verbove in western Zaporizhia Oblast.[6] The Ukrainian Southern Operational Command reported that Russian aviation is unable to operate in southern Ukraine due to freezing weather conditions.[7] Former Roscosmos (Russian space agency) head and ultranationalist figure Dmitry Rogozin claimed on January 14 that the frontline in western Zaporizhia Oblast is "buzzing like a bee hive" due to the large number of Ukrainian drones operating, however.[8] Rogozin claimed that Ukrainian forces devote half a dozen drones to striking each valuable target in western Zaporizhia Oblast and that intense Ukrainian drone use is complicating Russian personnel rotations.[9] ISW previously assessed that freezing temperatures in Ukraine are likely currently constraining operations along the front but will likely create more favorable terrain for mechanized maneuver warfare as the ground freezes in the coming weeks.[10] ISW continues to assess that Russian forces will likely try to sustain or intensify localized offensive operations throughout eastern Ukraine in an attempt to seize and retain the initiative regardless of winter weather and terrain conditions.[11] ISW also assesses, however, that Russian forces will be unable to make operationally significant breakthroughs.

Russian forces likely continue to experiment and adapt their missile and drone strike packages against Ukraine in an effort to penetrate Ukrainian air defenses. A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces have recently been launching strikes against Ukraine using a variety of missile types, including hypersonic Kh-47 Kinzhal ballistic missiles.[12] The milblogger claimed that Russian forces launched unspecified air decoys and Shahed drones in order to overwhelm Ukrainian air defense systems so that Russian forces could conduct successful missile strikes.[13] ISW has observed Russian forces experimenting with various combinations of drone and missile strikes in an effort to penetrate Ukrainian air defense systems as Ukrainian forces have adapted to Russian strike patterns.[14] ISW previously assessed that Russia may be intensifying efforts to source ballistic missiles from abroad because ballistic missiles may be more successful in striking targets in Ukraine in some circumstances.[15] Ukrainian Air Force Spokesperson Colonel Yuriy Ihnat

stated on January 14 that sanctions are likely reducing the quality of Russian missiles.[16] The reported decrease in quality of Russian missiles may further hinder Russia's ability to conduct successful strike series against Ukraine.

Representatives from 83 countries met to discuss the implementation of Ukraine's Peace Formula on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland on January 14.[17] Ukrainian Presidential Administration Chief of Staff Andriy Yermak also met with Romanian State Secretary Julian Fota to discuss bilateral security guarantees pursuant to the G7's July 2023 joint declaration of support for Ukraine, making Romania the 9th country to begin bilateral security negotiations with Ukraine.[18] Swiss Foreign Minister Ignazio Cassis and Yermak noted the importance of involving China in peace negotiations between Russia and Ukraine.[19] Cassis argued that the West "must find a way to include Russia" in the peace process and stated that "there will be no peace if Russia does not have its say." [20] It is unclear what Cassis meant by the call for Russia to "have its say." ISW has long assessed that Putin does not intend to negotiate with Ukraine in good faith and that Russia's goals in Ukraine — which are tantamount to full Ukrainian and Western surrender — remain unchanged.[21]

The Kremlin continues to undertake measures to undermine the Republic of Tatarstan's autonomy within the Russian Federation and cultural heritage despite the republic's sacrifices on behalf of the Russian war in Ukraine. Russian Tatar activist and political scientist Ruslan Aisin reported that Russian officials cut funding for the state program for preservation, study, and development of Tatarstan's state languages by 12.5 percent in 2023.[22] Aisin stated that officials originally planned to spend 126.8 million rubles (around \$1.4 million) on the program but cut the funding by 15.8 million rubles (about \$180,000). Aisin argued that these cuts are likely related to the Kremlin's efforts to finance the war effort in Ukraine and undermine Tatarstan's identity. Aisin observed that Tatarstan backed away from its state policy on strengthening its identity alongside the country-wide Russian identity in the fall of 2023 and argued that the Kremlin likely had seen an opportunity to save money on Tatarstan's efforts to preserve its culture, language, and identity. Aisin also implied that the Kremlin is favoring an all-Russian identity. The Kremlin directed Tatarstan officials in January 2023 to abolish the title of the republic's president and refer to Tatarstan's leader as "glava" (regional head).[23] Tatarstan has been supporting the Russian war effort by forming and financing the recruitment of regional volunteer battalions, some of which suffered tremendous losses on the battlefield in 2022 and 2023.[24] *BBC's Russian Service* and independent Russian outlet *Mediazona* also confirmed that at least 922 servicemen from Tatarstan died in Ukraine — a number that is likely significantly higher — as of January 11.[25]

The Russian Investigative Committee will officially open a case into the fire that destroyed a large Wildberries warehouse in St. Petersburg. Russian Investigative Committee Head Alexander Bastrykin ordered the Investigative Committee to look into the fire and investigate Wildberries managers for abuse of power and violations of fire safety compliance rules.[26] St. Petersburg-based outlet *Fontanka* reported that Wildberries has been unable to establish contact with at least 66 employees who were at the warehouse during the fire.[27] Russian authorities have otherwise not offered additional information about the circumstances of the fire, which some Russian sources suggested may have broken out the day after a fight between migrant workers and a subsequent mobilization raid on the warehouse.[28]

Key Takeaways:

- **Russian sources claimed that Russian forces are preparing to launch a new offensive in the coming weeks once the ground freezes in eastern and southern Ukraine.**
- **Russian forces likely continue to experiment and adapt their missile and drone strike packages against Ukraine in an effort to penetrate Ukrainian air defenses.**
- **Representatives from 83 countries met to discuss the implementation of Ukraine's Peace Formula on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland on January 14.**
- **The Kremlin continues to undertake measures to undermine the Republic of Tatarstan's autonomy within the Russian Federation and cultural heritage despite the republic's sacrifices on behalf of the Russian war in Ukraine.**
- **The Russian Investigative Committee will officially open a case into the fire that destroyed a large Wildberries warehouse in St. Petersburg.**
- **Positional engagements continued along the Kupyansk-Kreminna line, near Bakhmut and Avdiivka, in the Donetsk-Zaporizhia Oblast border area, in western Zaporizhia Oblast, and on the east (left) bank of Kherson Oblast.**
- **Moscow-based international exhibition-forum "Russia" opened the Russian Ministry of Defense's (MoD) "Army of Children" exhibit on January 14 to educate children about the military and careers in the Russian Armed Forces.**
- **Swedish Defense Materiel Administration announced on January 14 that it had signed an agreement with Nordic Ammunition Company (Nammo) to increase the production and deliveries of 155mm artillery ammunition to support Ukraine's needs.**

- The Kremlin is funding select non-profit organizations operating in occupied areas that propagate Kremlin social narratives.

Assessed Control of Terrain in Ukraine and Main Russian Maneuver Axes as of January 14, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



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

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

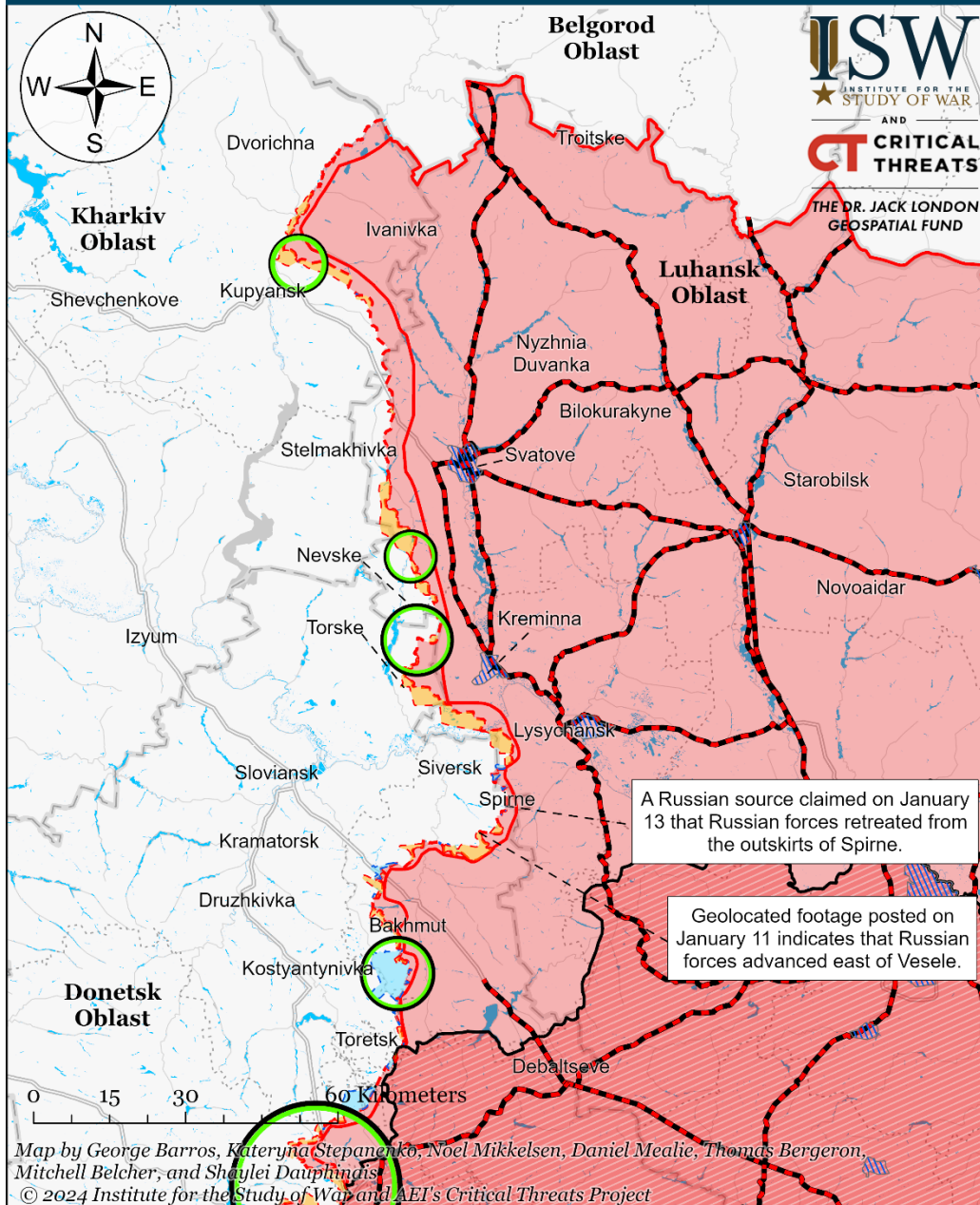
- Russian Main Effort – Eastern Ukraine (comprised of two subordinate main efforts)
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #1 – Capture the remainder of Luhansk Oblast and push westward into eastern Kharkiv Oblast and encircle northern Donetsk Oblast
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #2 – Capture the entirety of Donetsk Oblast
- Russian Supporting Effort – Southern Axis
- Russian Mobilization and Force Generation Efforts
- Russian Technological Adaptations
- Ukrainian Defense Industrial Base Efforts
- Activities in Russian-Occupied Areas
- Russian Information Operations and Narratives
- Significant Activity in Belarus

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)

Positional engagements continued along the Kupyansk-Svatove-Kreminna line on January 14. Russian and Ukrainian sources reported fighting northeast of Kupyansk near Synkivka and Petropavlivka, southwest of Svatove near Makiivka, west of Kreminna near Terny, and south of Kreminna in the Serebryanske forest area and near Bilohorivka.[29] Ukrainian Ground Forces Spokesperson Lieutenant Colonel Volodymyr Fityo stated on January 13 that cold weather in the Kupyansk-Kreminna direction is influencing Ukrainian activities on this sector of the front and suggested that Russian forces may be surrendering more often in this area due to extreme weather conditions.[30] Elements of the 6th Combined Arms Army (Western Military District), including its 25th Motorized Rifle Brigade, continue to operate in the Kupyansk direction.[31]

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Luhansk Oblast as of January 14, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



A Russian source claimed on January 13 that Russian forces retreated from the outskirts of Spirne.

Geolocated footage posted on January 11 indicates that Russian forces advanced east of Vesele.

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.

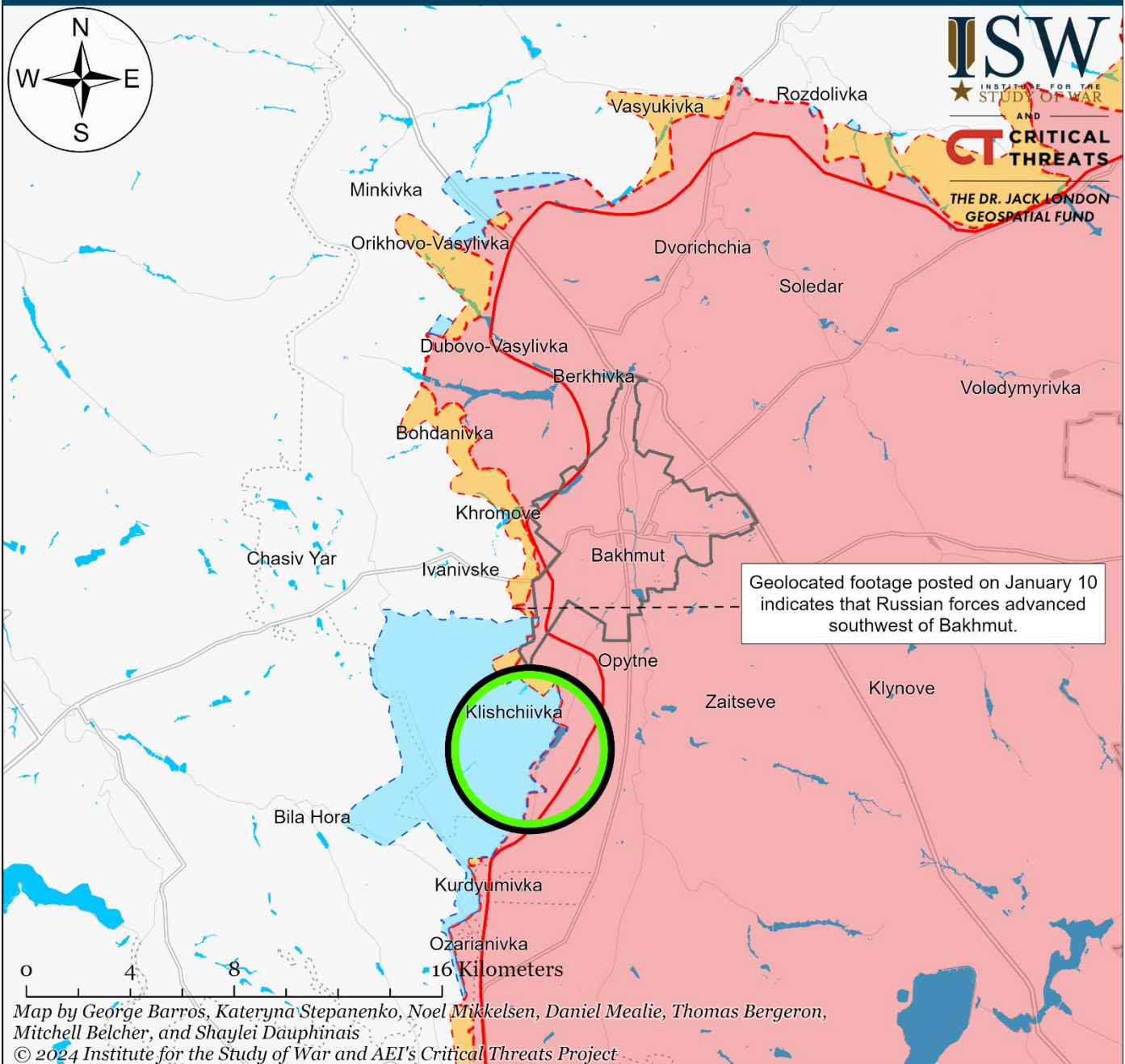
Note: A Russian source claimed on January 11 that Ukrainian forces captured 1.7 square kilometers of territory near Orlyanske. A Russian source claimed on January 10 that Russian forces advanced up to three kilometers in the Serebryanske Forest.

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 and Ukrainian forces continued positional engagements in the Siversk direction (northeastern Donetsk Oblast) on January 14, but there were no confirmed changes to the frontline in this area. Russian and Ukrainian sources stated that positional battles continued near Verkhokamyanske (6km east of Siversk) and Vesele (14km southeast of Siversk).[32] A prominent Kremlin-affiliated milblogger claimed on January 13 that Russian forces withdrew from the outskirts of Spirne (12km southeast of Siversk).[33] Elements of the Russian 6th Motorized Rifle Brigade (2nd Luhansk People’s Republic’s [LNR] Army Corps) reportedly continue to operate near Spirne.[34]

Russian and Ukrainian forces continued positional engagements near Bakhmut on January 14, but there were no confirmed changes to the frontline in this area. A prominent Kremlin-affiliated Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced northwest of Bohdanivka (northwest of Bakhmut), although ISW has not observed visual evidence to confirm this claim.[35] Russian and Ukrainian sources stated that positional engagements continued west of Bakhmut near Khromove and southwest of Bakhmut near Klishchivka, Andriivka, and Niu York (west of Horlivka).[36] The spokesperson of a Ukrainian brigade operating in the Bakhmut direction stated that Russian forces have increased the number of troops in the Bakhmut direction to about 80,000 personnel, and that units of the Russian “Volunteer Corps” are conducting assaults in the Bakhmut direction.[37]

Assessed Control of Terrain in Bakhmut as of January 14, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



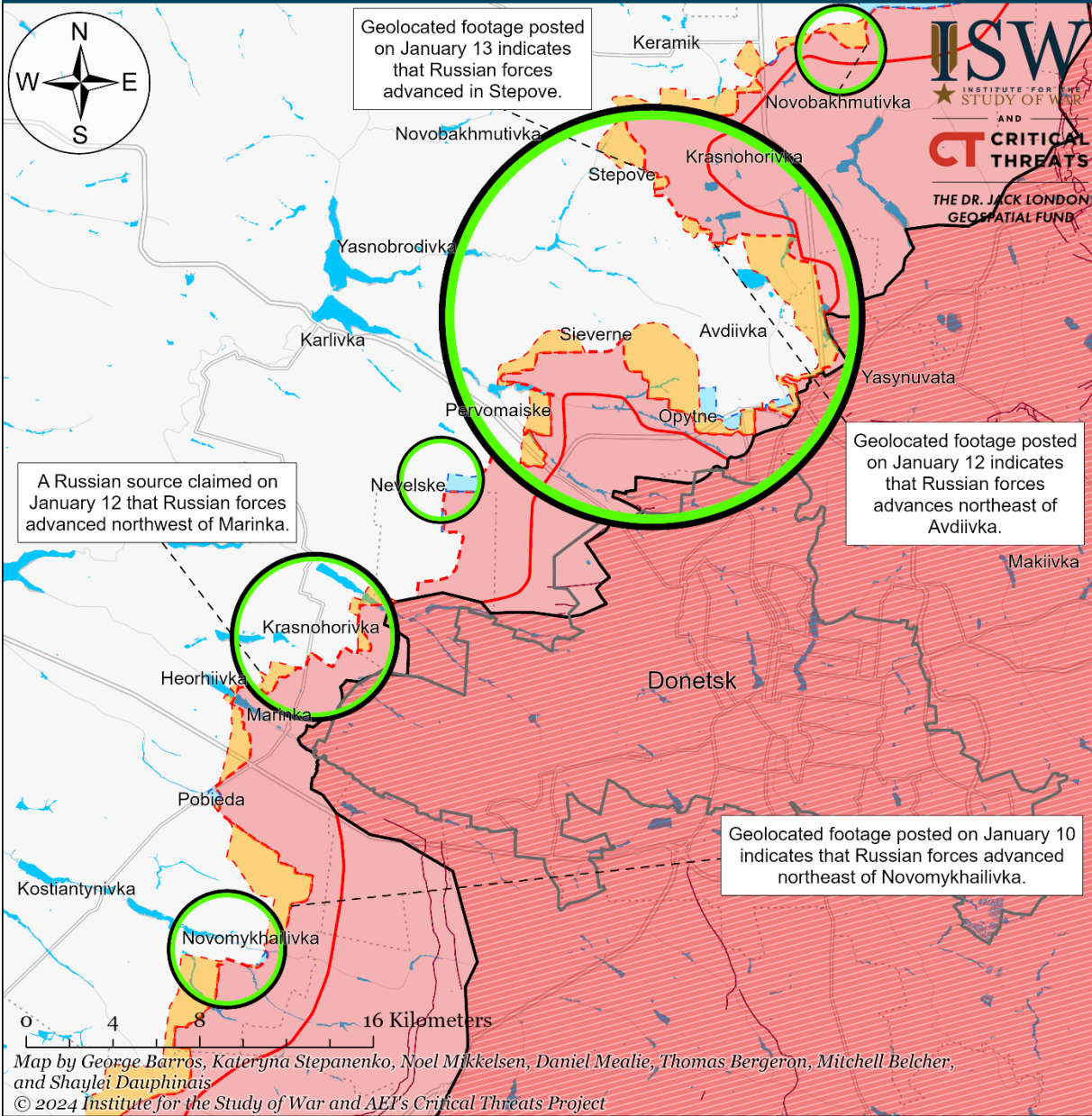
Map by George Barros, Kateryna Stepanenko, Noel Mikkelsen, Daniel Mealie, Thomas Bergeron, Mitchell Belcher, and Shaylei Dauphinais
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- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| Bakhmut City Limits | 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.

Positional fighting continued near Avdiivka on January 14, but there were no confirmed changes to the frontline in this area. Russian forces reportedly advanced in an area up to 260 meters wide and 120 meters deep east of the Avdiivka Coke Plant (northwest of Avdiivka), and elements of the Russian 114th Motorized Rifle Brigade (1st Donetsk People's Republic's [DNR] Army Corps) and 15th Motorized Rifle Brigade (2nd LNR Army Corps) advanced southeast of the Avdiivka waste heap (northwest of Avdiivka).[38] Ukrainian military observer Kostyantyn Mashovets stated that Ukrainian forces withdrew from Stepove (northwest of Avdiivka), while Russian sources claimed that Ukrainian forces remain in the western part of the settlement.[39] ISW has not observed visual confirmation of any Russian advances in Stepove as of January 14. Positional battles continued northwest of Avdiivka near Novobakhmutivka, Stepove, Berdychi, and the Avdiivka Coke Plant; and south and southwest of Avdiivka near the Avdiivka industrial zone, Sieverne, Pervomaiske, Nevelske, and Krasnohorivka.[40] Elements of the Russian 132nd Motorized Rifle Brigade (1st DNR Army Corps) reportedly continue to operate near Novokalynove (northwest of Avdiivka).[41]

Assessed Control of Terrain near Donetsk City as of January 14, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



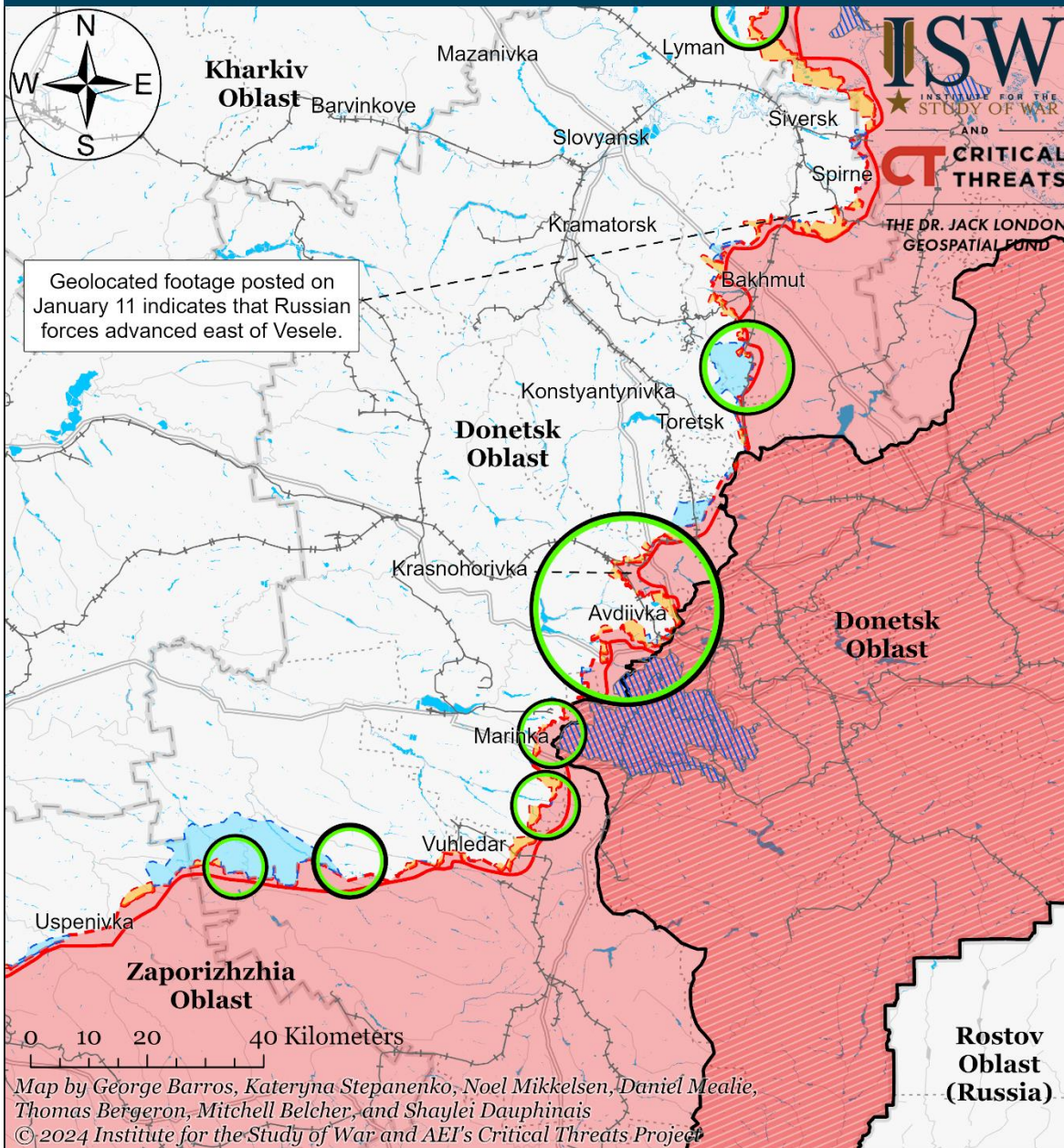
- Donetsk City Limits
- Assessed Russian Advances in Ukraine*
- Claimed Ukrainian Counteroffensives
- Assessed Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory
- Claimed Russian Control over Ukrainian Territory
- Russian Field Fortifications

* 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 January 11 that Russian forces advanced up to 730 meters along a 1.82-kilometers-wide front near the Solonenka Gully on January 9 and 800 meters along a 960-meter-wide front on January 10, citing unspecified Ukrainian sources. A Russian source claimed on January 10 that Russian forces advanced 700 meters along a four-kilometers-wide front near the Solonenka Gully. Russian sources claimed on January 10 that Russian forces captured two square kilometers of territory in the Kurakhove direction. A Russian source claimed on January 11 that Russian forces advanced two kilometers in the Novomykhailivka direction.

Positional engagements continued west and southwest of Donetsk City on January 14, but there were no confirmed changes to the frontline in this area. Russian forces reportedly advanced southwest of Novomykhailivka (southwest of Donetsk City), and elements of the Russian 255th Motorized Rifle Regiment (20th Motorized Rifle Division, 8th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Southern Military District [SMD]) and 155th Naval Infantry Brigade (Pacific Fleet) reportedly advanced north of Novomykhailivka.[42] ISW has not observed visual evidence to confirm these claims. Positional engagements are ongoing west of Donetsk City near Krasnohorivka and southwest of Donetsk City near Marinka, Novomykhailivka, and Heorhiivka.[43] Elements of the Russian 238th Artillery Brigade (8th CAA, SMD) are reportedly operating near Heorhiivka.[44] ISW previously observed claims at the end of December 2023 that elements of the 238th Artillery Brigade were operating near Horlivka (southeast of Bakhmut and northeast of Avdiivka).[45]

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



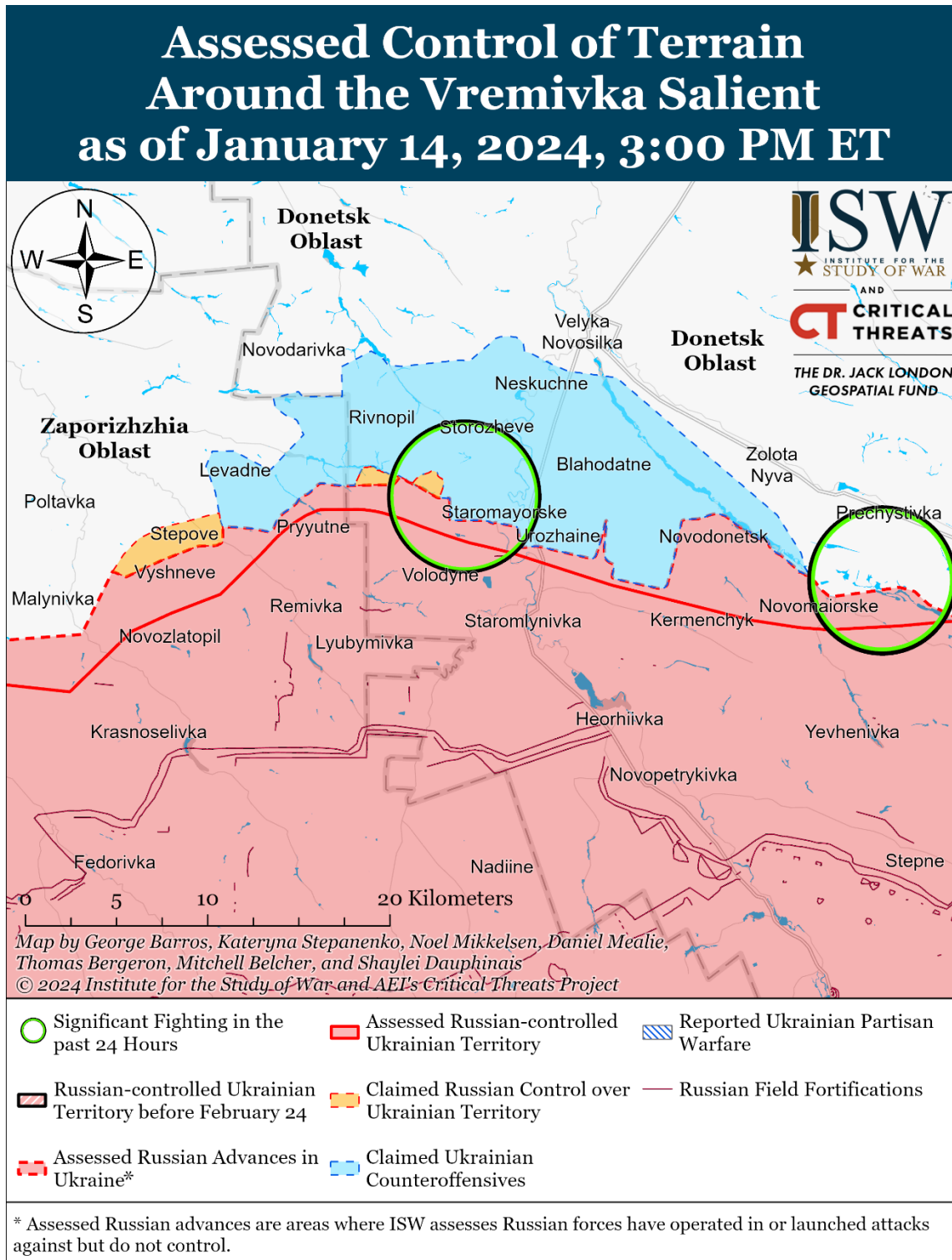
Map by George Barros, Kateryna Stepanenko, Noel Mikkelsen, Daniel Mealie, Thomas Bergeron, Mitchell Belcher, and Shaylei Dauphinais
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- Significant Fighting in the past 24 Hours
- Assessed Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory
- Russian-controlled Ukrainian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

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

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

Russian and Ukrainian forces continued positional fighting in the Donetsk-Zaporizhzhia Oblast border area on January 14, but there were no confirmed changes to the frontline in this area. A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces captured unspecified positions north of Kermenchyk and Staromlynivka (both south of Velyka Novosilka), although ISW has not observed visual evidence of this claim.[46] Positional fighting continued south of Prechystivka (southeast of Velyka Novosilka), west of Staromayorske (south of Velyka Novosilka), south of Rivnopil (southwest of Velyka Novosilka), and near Chervone (southwest of Velyka Novosilka).[47]



A Kremlin-affiliated milblogger claimed on January 13 that Ukrainian forces conducted unsuccessful drone and missile strikes against occupied Mariupol in Donetsk Oblast and Berdyansk in Zaporizhzhia Oblast.[48]

Positional engagements continued in western Zaporizhzhia Oblast on January 14, but there were no confirmed changes to the frontline in this area. Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced near Robotyne and Kamianske (northwest of Robotyne) and southwest of Verbove (east of Robotyne).[49] One Russian milblogger claimed, citing unspecified Ukrainian sources, that Russian forces advanced west of Verbove up to 1.9 kilometers wide and 500 meters in depth.[50] ISW has not observed visual evidence of these claims. Positional fighting continued near Kopani (northwest of Robotyne), Robotyne, Novoprokopivka (south of Robotyne), Verbove, and Novofedorivka (northeast of Robotyne).[51] Elements of the Russian 247th Airborne (VDV) Regiment (7th VDV Division) are reportedly operating near Verbove and elements of the newly formed 49th Separate Air Assault Brigade (reportedly subordinated to the 58th Combined Arms Army, Southern Military District) are reportedly operating in the Orikhiv direction.[52] ISW previously reported claims that Russian forces are forming air assault brigades within combined arms ground formations and that the one of these brigades, the 49th Separate Air Assault Brigade, is already active in the Zaporizhzhia direction.[53]



Ukrainian forces maintain positions in east (left) bank Kherson Oblast amid continued positional fighting on January 14, but there were no confirmed changes to the frontline in this area. Russian and Ukrainian forces continued positional engagements near Krynky and Pishchanivka in east bank Kherson Oblast.[54] A Kremlin-affiliated milblogger claimed on January 13 that the Russian 20th Air Defense Regiment (4th Guards Air and Air Defense Forces Army, Southern Military District) repelled a Ukrainian HIMARS strike in Kherson Oblast.[55]



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

Moscow-based international exhibition-forum “Russia” opened the Russian Ministry of Defense’s (MoD) “Army of Children. City of Professions. The future of the country” exhibit on January 14 to educate children about the military and careers in the Russian Armed Forces.[56] The exhibit allows children to visit a virtual command post, an interactive combat medicine zone, and a drone operations section to learn how to operate drones. The exhibit also has zones dedicated to teaching children about programming, cybersports, and “professions in the Russian MoD.”[57]

Russia continues to recruit personnel via crypto mobilization schemes and coercion. A prominent Russian milblogger claimed that Russian military registration and enlistment offices resumed their recruitment of men interested in signing contracts for voluntary service within the Russian forces.[58] The milblogger added that there are many Russian servicemen interested in leaving combat operations in Ukraine to serve in Africa but noted that such transfers are impossible. Head of the independent Russian human rights organization “Rus Sidyashchaya” (Russia Behind Bars) Olga Romanova claimed that Russian officials are deliberately turning off heating in prisons to coerce more prisoners to volunteer to fight in Ukraine.[59]

A Kremlin-affiliated milblogger claimed that different Russian irregular armed formations continue to have discrepancies in their compensations, legal statuses, and eligibility for state benefits – a complaint that is at odds with Russian President Vladimir Putin’s recent efforts to reassure his constituencies that the Kremlin is attempting to resolve these problems.[60] The milblogger claimed that volunteers who sign voluntary military service contracts with Moscow Oblast have different legal statuses from volunteers who sign similar contracts with private military companies (PMCs).[61] The milblogger claimed that volunteers who signed contracts with Moscow Oblast qualify for government benefits and compensation but that fighters in state-run Redut PMC only receive payments from Redut because these volunteers do not sign contracts with the Russian MoD. Redut volunteers and elements of other irregular formations such as the “Nevsky” detachment are reportedly not eligible for government support. Another prominent Russian milblogger observed that there are ongoing debates about the differences in one-time enlistment bonuses that Russian federal subjects offer to volunteers.[62]

The Russian MoD announced on January 11 that the Project 22350 *Admiral Golovko* Admiral Gorshkov-class frigate arrived at its permanent base in Severomorsk, Murmansk Oblast after it was accepted into the Russian Northern Fleet on December 25, 2023.[63]

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

A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces will soon need devices that can warn them about the approach of enemy drones as part of their personal armor protection equipment.[64] The milblogger called on Russian military officials to conduct tests, select suppliers, and open assembly lines for drone detector devices. The milblogger's comments highlight the increased prevalence of drones throughout the combat zone in Ukraine and assessed that Russian forces will need to technologically innovate in order to remain competitive in a drone-dominated battlefield.

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

Click [here](#) to read ISW’s new analysis on Ukrainian long-term efforts to develop a self-sufficient defense industrial base (DIB) with US and European support.

The Swedish Defense Materiel Administration announced on January 14 that it signed an agreement with the Nordic Ammunition Company (Nammo) to increase the production and deliveries of 155mm artillery ammunition to support Ukraine’s needs.[65] The agreement seeks to increase investment in artillery ammunition production in Sweden and aims to shorten ammunition delivery times. Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Denmark signed an agreement on the joint procurement of ammunition to support Ukraine within the Nordic Defense Cooperation and signed the first contract for Nammo to produce 155mm artillery ammunition for Ukraine in October 2023.[66]

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 Kremlin is funding select non-profit organizations operating in occupied areas to propagate Kremlin social narratives. Zaporizhia Oblast occupation head Yevgeny Balitsky stated on January 14 that the Russian Presidential Grants Fund, a

Kremlin-run organization that issues grants to "socially-oriented" non-profit organizations, is awarding several non-profit groups in occupied Zaporizhia Oblast grant funding.[67] Balitsky reported that the Presidential Grants Fund awarded the Zaporizhia Oblast branches of the National-Cultural Autonomy of Belarusians, the National-Cultural Autonomy of Greeks, the All-Russian Society of the Deaf, and the Southern Center for Sociocultural and Patriotic Work.[68] Balitsky noted that the National-Cultural Autonomy of Belarusians will introduce youth in occupied Zaporizhia Oblast to the history of the Great Patriotic War (Second World War), which the Kremlin frequently invokes to further informational narratives about Russian exceptionalism. The Kremlin is likely seeking to empower ideologically aligned organizations in occupied areas to further spread social control.[69]

Russian Information Operations and Narratives

Russian President Vladimir Putin continues attempts to convince the Russian public that the Russian economy is resilient and in fact is becoming stronger despite international sanctions and the fallout of the war in Ukraine.[70] Putin claimed on January 14 that Russia's economy is the first in Europe and fifth globally in terms of purchasing power parity and that Russia is becoming increasingly technologically and economically independent.[71]

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)

Assistant to the Belarusian Defense Minister and Head of the International Military Cooperation and Assistance Department, Colonel Valery Ravenko, reiterated Belarusian commitment to cooperation with Russia and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) on January 14.[72] Ravenko stated that Belarus held 623 events relating to international cooperation, of which over 300 were with Russia. Ravenko claimed that Belarusian–Russian cooperation is an “equal relationship” and that Belarus is interested in developing partnerships with countries in southwestern and southeastern Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

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://tlgrm dot ru/channels/@peresleginserg/854>;
<https://twitter.com/GirkinGirkin/status/1746526914099949908/photo/1>

[2] <https://tlgrm dot ru/channels/@peresleginserg/854>;
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[3] <https://tlgrm dot ru/channels/@peresleginserg/854>;
<https://twitter.com/GirkinGirkin/status/1746526914099949908/photo/1>

[4] https://t.me/dva_majors/32784

[5] https://t.me/dva_majors/32784

[6] <https://t.me/DnevnikDesantnika/6384>

[7] <https://www.facebook.com/OperationalCommandSouth/posts/pfbido2zabzVdDXvhZJcZGJncv73Y9DdCKncMQ6aX8eNHReGo283BKPnsJb2zSwTRtv6wYCl>

[8] https://t.me/rogozin_do/5279 ; <https://twitter.com/GirkinGirkin/status/1746507339866259949>

[9] https://t.me/rogozin_do/5279 ; <https://twitter.com/GirkinGirkin/status/1746507339866259949>

[10] <https://isw.pub/UkrWar011124>

[11] <https://isw.pub/UkrWar011124> ; <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-december-21-2023> ; <https://isw.pub/UkrWar121323> ; <https://isw.pub/UkrWar112123>

[12] https://t.me/dva_majors/32784

[13] https://t.me/dva_majors/32784

[14] <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-january-8-2024> ; <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-january-2-2024> ; <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-january-4-2024>

[15] <https://isw.pub/UkrWar011024> ; <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-january-4-2024>

[16] <https://armyinform.com dot ua/2024/01/14/u-povitryanyh-sylah-ukrayiny-pobachyly-zminy-yakosti-rosijskyh-raket/>

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