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Note: The data cut-off for this product was 12:00pm ET on January 9. ISW will cover subsequent reports in the January 10 Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment.

Ukraine's Western partners reiterated their support for Ukraine and their commitment to the development of Ukraine's defense industrial base (DIB) at the Ukraine Defense Contact Group at Ramstein Air Base in Germany on January 9. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky called for all participants of the group to sign bilateral security agreements with Ukraine in order to strengthen Ukrainian forces and protect Ukraine's energy sector.[1] Zelensky emphasized the importance of providing Ukraine with more air defense systems and stated that Ukraine wants to supply Ukrainian forces with a record number of domestically produced and internationally procured drones in 2025. Ukrainian Defense Minister Rustem Umerov announced that the Ukraine Defense Contact Group approved eight roadmap documents that outline the Ukrainian forces' objectives through 2027 in key areas for international cooperation, including air defense, artillery, armored vehicles, drones, air force, and maritime security.[2] Umerov stated that the roadmaps aim to ensure that the Ukrainian military is compatible with NATO and serve as the basis for medium- and long-term support for Ukraine. US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin told *Bloomberg* ahead of the January 8 Ramstein meeting that Russia has some advantages in the war but is also facing challenges, as evidenced by Russia's turn to North Korea and Iran for assistance in its war against Ukraine.[3]

Ukraine's Western partners announced additional military aid packages at Ramstein Air Base on January 9. Austin announced a new US military aid package for Ukraine under the Presidential Drawdown Authority (PDA) valued at approximately \$500 million.[4] The package includes AIM-7, RIM-7, and AIM-9M air defense missiles; air-to-ground munitions; F-16 support equipment; and small-arms ammunition.[5] German Defense Minister Boris Pistorius announced that Germany will provide Ukraine with an unspecified number of IRIS-T air defense missiles.[6] Polish Deputy Defense Minister Wladyslaw Kosiniak-Kamysz announced that Poland is also preparing a new aid package for Ukraine.[7] UK Defense Secretary John Healey and Latvian Defense Minister Andris Spruds jointly announced that the drone coalition, including the UK, Latvia, Denmark, the Netherlands, and Sweden, will provide Ukraine with 30,000 drones at an unspecified future time after the coalition signed contracts worth 45 million pounds (\$55.4 million).[8]

Russian elites and high-ranking security officials are reportedly frustrated with Russian President Vladimir Putin's efforts to wage a full-scale war in Ukraine with half measures and are increasingly concerned with Putin's timeline to end the war. Sources in the Russian

presidential administration, State Duma, and wider Russian federal government and regional governments told Russian opposition media outlet *Meduza* that Russian elites are increasingly "disappointed" and "tired" of waiting for the war to end and are growing increasingly concerned about the long-term impact of Western sanctions on Russia's economy.[9] Two sources close to the presidential administration noted that the Russian government currently lacks a clear vision for post-war Russia and that an end to the war could be "critical" for the presidential administration if the administration cannot identify a clear narrative and political framework for Russian society after the war. A source in the Russian presidential administration told *Meduza* that Russian elites, primarily high-ranking security officials, are increasingly frustrated with not having "enough" manpower and materiel to conduct the war and assess that Putin needs to conduct "mobilization" and completely transition Russian society and the Russian economy to a wartime footing.

High-ranking Russian security officials appear to be assessing that Russia needs to intensify its war in Ukraine rather than seek an exit via negotiations. *Meduza's* report suggests that Russian security and military officials may recognize that the Russian military is not accomplishing significant territorial gains proportionate to the manpower and materiel losses they are incurring in Ukraine. The Russian military command has, thus far, tolerated taking exorbitant personnel losses in exchange for tactically but not operationally significant advances, and Putin's theory of victory is predicated on accepting such losses so long as Russian forces continue to grind forward in Ukraine.[10] Average daily Russian advances slowed by roughly nine square kilometers in December 2024 after three straight months of increasing territorial gains and personnel losses in September, October, and November 2024, however, and the Russian military command may be less willing than Putin to incur such high casualty rates if Russian forces' rate of advance continues to slow.[11] Russian security and military officials do not appear prepared to abandon the war as a result of these losses, however, but are reportedly instead advocating for Putin to intensify Russia's war effort by calling for additional partial reserve callups and a formal decision to transition to a wartime footing, likely in hopes of flooding the battlefield with manpower and materiel. ISW continues to assess that Putin is resistant to conducting a partial involuntary reserve callup or further mobilizing the Russian economy, as such decisions would be deeply unpopular among Russians and would further strain Russia's labor shortages and economy.[12] It remains unclear if this group of Russian security and military officials calling for further manpower and economic mobilization will succeed in convincing Putin to take more dramatic measures to meet the Russian military's needs in Ukraine, although mounting personnel losses and increasing challenges in meeting voluntary recruitment targets may cause Putin to conduct an involuntary partial reserve callup in the near future.

Russian elites' reported diagnosis of the main problem with Russia's conduct of the war is inaccurate, as Russia's failure to restore maneuver to the battlefield — not a shortage of manpower — is the main factor causing Russia's relatively slow rate of advance. Russian elites' reported focus on mobilizing more Russian personnel indicates that the Russian elites likely view a lack of manpower as Russia's largest constraint to achieving rapid success on the battlefield rather than the ineffectiveness of frontline Russian forces, poor campaign-planning abilities of Russian commanders, and significant armored vehicle shortages that Russian forces are currently suffering.[13] Russian forces have recently demonstrated that they are able to make slow, grinding gains through infantry assaults in the Pokrovsk and Kurakhove directions, but their inability to conduct rapid,

mechanized maneuver has prevented Russian forces from converting these tactical gains into deep penetrations into Ukrainian rear areas.[14]

Both Russian and Ukrainian forces are struggling to restore maneuver to an increasingly transparent battlefield, but the Russian military will also have to address critical shortcomings in its ability to train frontline commanders and plan military operations if Russian forces aspire to conduct the type of rapid, mechanized maneuver that characterized the first few months of the full-scale invasion in early 2022.[15] Ukrainian military officials recently reported that Russian forces are fielding fewer armored vehicles in the Pokrovsk and Kurakhove directions — the two operational directions with the highest intensity of fighting and where Russia has the densest concentrations of its forces — in favor of highly attritional, infantry-led assaults.[16] Russian forces have suffered high and unsustainable armored vehicle losses and have struggled to protect these vehicles from Ukrainian drones on the frontline over the last year, forcing Russian forces to increasingly limit and prioritize where and when to field armored vehicles and conduct mechanized assaults.[17] Dedicating a significant amount of additional Russian manpower to infantry assaults on critical areas of the frontline would likely allow Russian forces to at least sustain or possibly slightly increase their current pace of advance, but only as fast as Russian infantry can travel on foot — far short of the rapid gains, deep penetrations, and significant battlefield victories that the Russian elites likely desire.

***Meduza's* report indicates that Russia's security elite — like Putin himself — is uninterested in a negotiated and peaceful resolution to the war in the near future.** Several sources told *Meduza* that Russian elites were concerned about Putin's ability to extract his territorial demands — the formal recognition of Russian control over the entirety of Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson, and Zaporizhia oblasts, including the parts Russia currently does not occupy — in possible future negotiations and are focused on creating an "image of victory" in post-war Russia.[18] This focus on Russian victory in tandem with the elites' reported desire to intensify the war further indicates that Russian elites support Putin's desire to negotiate only on terms dictated by Russia and to achieve a significant victory to justify the war to Russian society. Putin and other senior Kremlin officials have repeatedly indicated that Russia is unwilling to engage in good-faith negotiations or participate in a meaningful peace negotiation except on terms that amount to Ukraine's full capitulation, and the Russian elite will most likely continue to support Putin's demands over engaging in meaningful negotiations.[19]

A Russian opposition investigative outlet reported that Russian authorities have turned a pretrial detention center (SIZO) in Taganrog, Rostov Oblast into a torture center for Ukrainian prisoners of war (POWs) and imprisoned Ukrainian civilians.[20] Russian opposition outlet *Mediazona* reported that Russian authorities have been torturing Ukrainian POWs and civilians at the SIZO-2 in Taganrog and reported several accounts from Ukrainian POWs detailing the extent and high frequency of the physical and sexual abuse that the Russian guards inflict on the Ukrainian prisoners. The Ukrainian POWs reported that the Russian guards torture Ukrainian POWs, particularly defenders of Mariupol, to coerce them into pleading guilty to extremism charges in sham trials intended to falsely portray Russia as the liberator of Ukraine and justify its occupation of Ukrainian territories. Ukrainian POWs also told *Mediazona* that Russian authorities use the SIZO-2 facility's reputation for torture to threaten Ukrainian prisoners at other facilities and that these Ukrainians are often willing to do "anything" to avoid being transferred to SIZO-2. *Mediazona* also

cited various human rights experts' and lawyers' statements that Russian authorities frequently detain Ukrainian civilians and journalists in occupied Ukraine for even slight suspicion of assisting the Ukrainian military or opposing the Russian war and refuse to release them, provide access to lawyers, or provide medical care. *Mediazona* noted that it is unclear who runs the Taganrog facility, as lawyers for the detained Ukrainians assume that employees of the Russian Federal Penitentiary Service run the facility. The Russian Memorial Center for Human Rights — the successor of the Memorial Human Rights Center that focused on human rights abuses in the Soviet era — reported in October 2024 that the Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) had assumed control over the SIZO-2 facility.[21] The UN has consistently reported on Russian forces' "widespread and systematic torture" of Ukrainian forces as nearly all interviewed Ukrainian POWs describe consistent experiences of torture while in Russian detention.[22]

The UN condemned the recent surge in Russian executions of Ukrainian POWs. UN Deputy Human Rights Chief Nada Al-Nashif called on Russian authorities on January 8 to halt the summary executions of Ukrainian POWs and prosecute those who engage in these executions following a recent surge in credible reports of more executions.[23] Al-Nashif noted that the UN has verified 68 cases of Russian forces conducting summary executions of Ukrainian POWs since the start of the war. ISW has frequently reported that Russian forces are conducting frontline executions of Ukrainian POWs and continues to assess that Russian military commanders are either complicit in or enabling their subordinates to conduct these executions.[24]

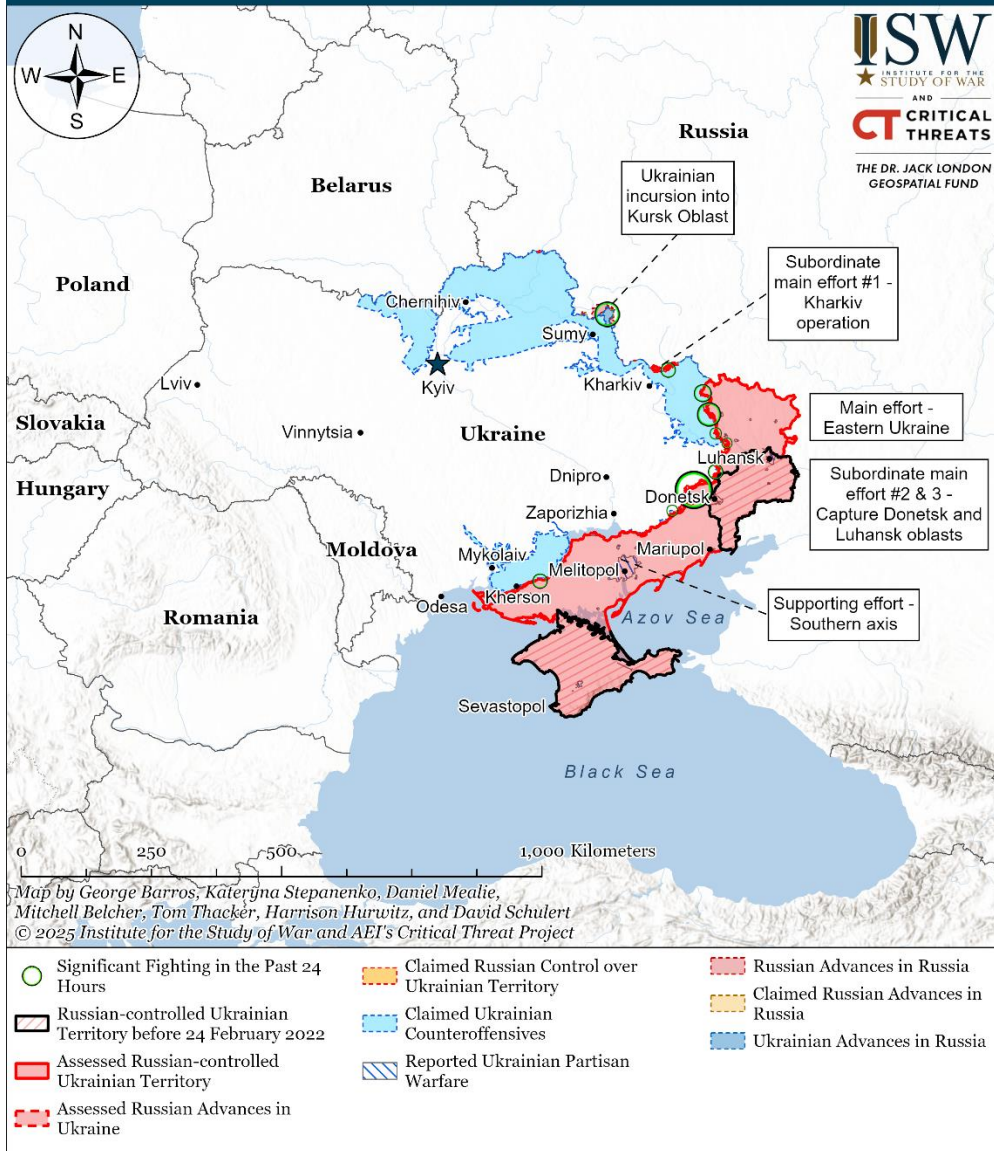
The Armenian government approved a draft law on January 9, beginning Armenia's accession process into the EU.[25] Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan announced on January 9 that the Armenian government does not object to the law's adoption and noted that the Armenian population must approve the decision on Armenia's possible future EU membership through a referendum.[26]

Key Takeaways:

- **Ukraine's Western partners reiterated their support for Ukraine and their commitment to the development of Ukraine's defense industrial base (DIB) at the Ukraine Defense Contact Group at Ramstein Air Base in Germany on January 9.**
- **Ukraine's Western partners announced additional military aid packages at Ramstein Air Base on January 9.**
- **Russian elites and high-ranking security officials are reportedly frustrated with Russian President Vladimir Putin's efforts to wage a full-scale war in Ukraine with half measures and are increasingly concerned with Putin's timeline to end the war.**
- **High-ranking Russian security officials appear to be assessing that Russia needs to intensify its war in Ukraine rather than seek an exit via negotiations.**
- **Russian elites' reported diagnosis of the main problem with Russia's conduct of the war is inaccurate, as Russia's failure to restore maneuver to the battlefield — not a shortage of manpower — is the main factor causing Russia's relatively slow rate of advance.**

- ***Meduza's* report indicates that Russia's security elite — like Putin himself — is uninterested in a negotiated and peaceful resolution to the war in the near future.**
- **A Russian opposition investigative outlet reported that Russian authorities have turned a pretrial detention center (SIZO) in Taganrog, Rostov Oblast into a torture center for Ukrainian prisoners of war (POWs) and imprisoned Ukrainian civilians.**
- **The UN condemned the recent surge in Russian executions of Ukrainian POWs.**
- **The Armenian government approved a draft law on January 9, beginning Armenia's accession process into the EU.**
- **Russian forces recently advanced near Borova and Pokrovsk and in Kursk Oblast.**
- **Ukrainian forces recently advanced near Sudzha.**
- **Russian officials continue to indicate that the Kremlin intends to further militarize the Russian government and Russian society in the long term.**

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Russo-Ukrainian War 9 January 2025, 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)

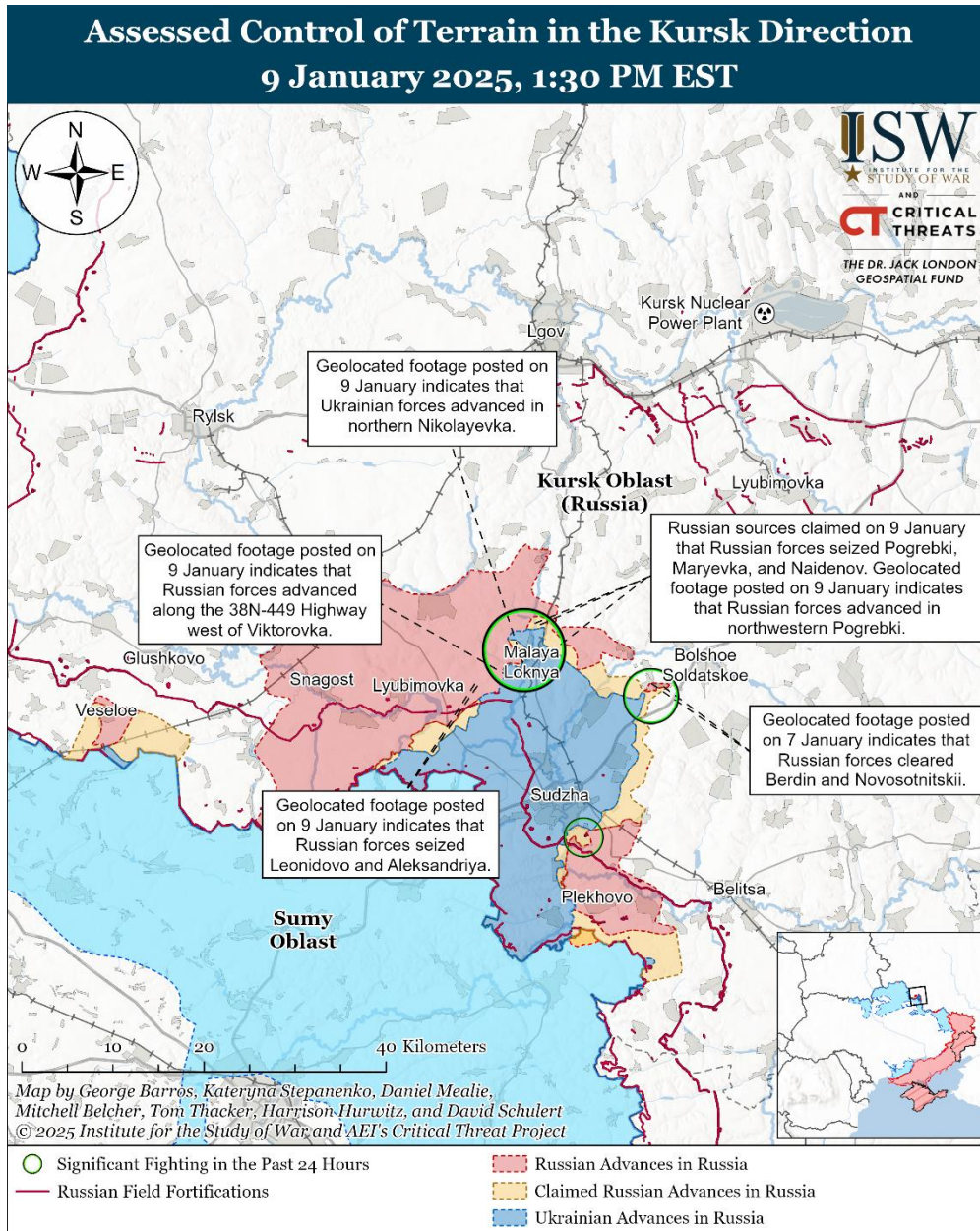
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #1 — Push Ukrainian forces back from the international border with Belgorod Oblast and approach to within tube artillery range of Kharkiv City
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #2 — Capture the remainder of Luhansk Oblast and push westward into eastern Kharkiv Oblast 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 recently intensified offensive operations aimed at retaking the remainder of Kursk Oblast and advanced during a reinforced battalion-sized mechanized assault northwest of Sudzha on January 9. Geolocated footage published by a Ukrainian brigade operating in Kursk Oblast on January 9 indicates that Russian forces seized Leonidovo and Aleksandriya and advanced northwest of Nikolskyi and west of Viktorovka (all northwest of Sudzha) during a reinforced battalion-sized mechanized assault.[27] The Ukrainian brigade that repelled the attack reported that Russian forces conducted the assault in six waves and that Russian forces used 50 tanks, infantry fighting vehicles (IFVs), armored personnel carriers (APCs), and civilian vehicles in the attack.[28] The brigade reported that it destroyed an unspecified number of Russian vehicles during the assault. Additional geolocated footage published on January 8 and 9 indicates that Russian forces advanced in Pogrebki (northeast of Sudzha at the northernmost point of the Ukrainian salient) and marginally advanced in Makhnovka (east of Sudzha).[29] Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces seized Pogrebki and advanced further south, but ISW has not observed confirmation of these more maximalist claims.[30] Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces are attacking throughout the salient, including near Sudzha itself; northeast of Sudzha near Staraya Sorochina; northeast of Sudzha near Russkoye Porechnoye and Cherkasskoye Porechnoye; east of Sudzha near Bondarevka and Makhnovka; and southeast of Sudzha near Guyevo and Kurilovka.[31] Russian forces reintensified assaults in Kursk Oblast on January 5 and have conducted assaults throughout the salient over the last four days after mainly focusing on advancing east of Sudzha in recent months.[32] Elements of the Russian 106th Airborne (VDV) Division are reportedly operating near Sverdlikovo (east of Sudzha).[33] Elements of the Russian 30th Motorized Rifle Regiment (72nd Motorized Rifle Division, 44th Army Corps [AC], Leningrad Military District [LMD]) and the Chechen Akhmat "Kashtana" Spetsnaz detachment are reportedly operating near Berdin and elements of the Chechen Akhmat "Aida" Spetsnaz detachment are reportedly operating near Cherkasskoye Porechnoye.[34]

Ukrainian forces recently advanced northwest of Sudzha. Geolocated footage published on January 9 indicates that Ukrainian forces recently advanced in western Nikolayevka (further northwest of

Sudzha).[35] Russian milbloggers claimed that Ukrainian forces are counterattacking near Pogrebki, Novaya Sorochina (northwest of Sudzha), Staraya Sorochina, and Nikolayevka.[36]

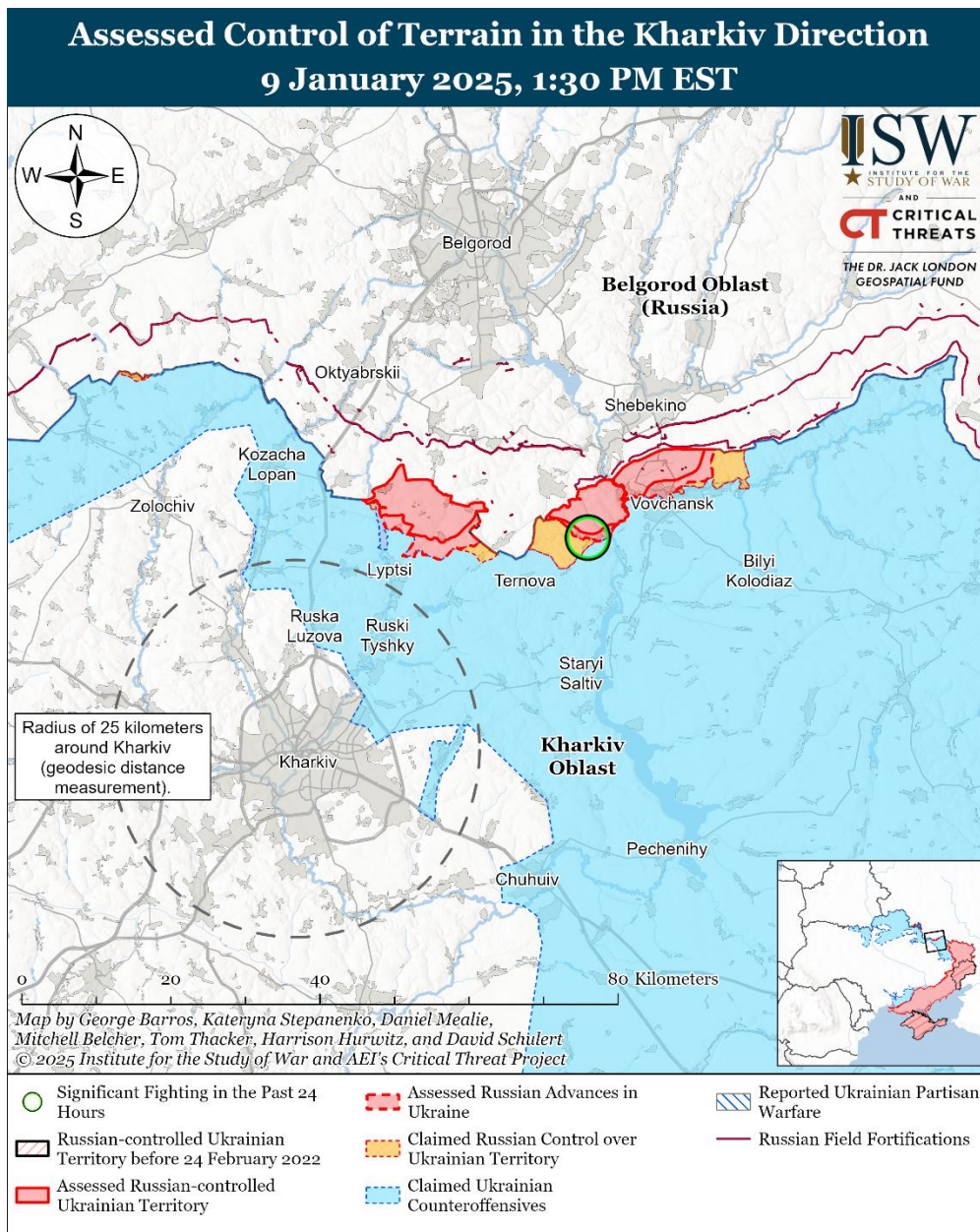


Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky stated on January 9 that 4,000 North Korean military personnel have been killed or wounded during the war to date, presumably in Kursk Oblast.[37] North Korea deployed roughly 12,000 troops to support Russia's war effort in 2024, and Zelensky's statement indicates that Ukrainian forces have killed or wounded roughly one-third of the North Korean troops deployed to Russia.[38] Zelensky stated in late December 2024 that over 3,000 North Korean personnel had been killed or wounded in Kursk Oblast.[39]

Russian Main Effort — Eastern Ukraine

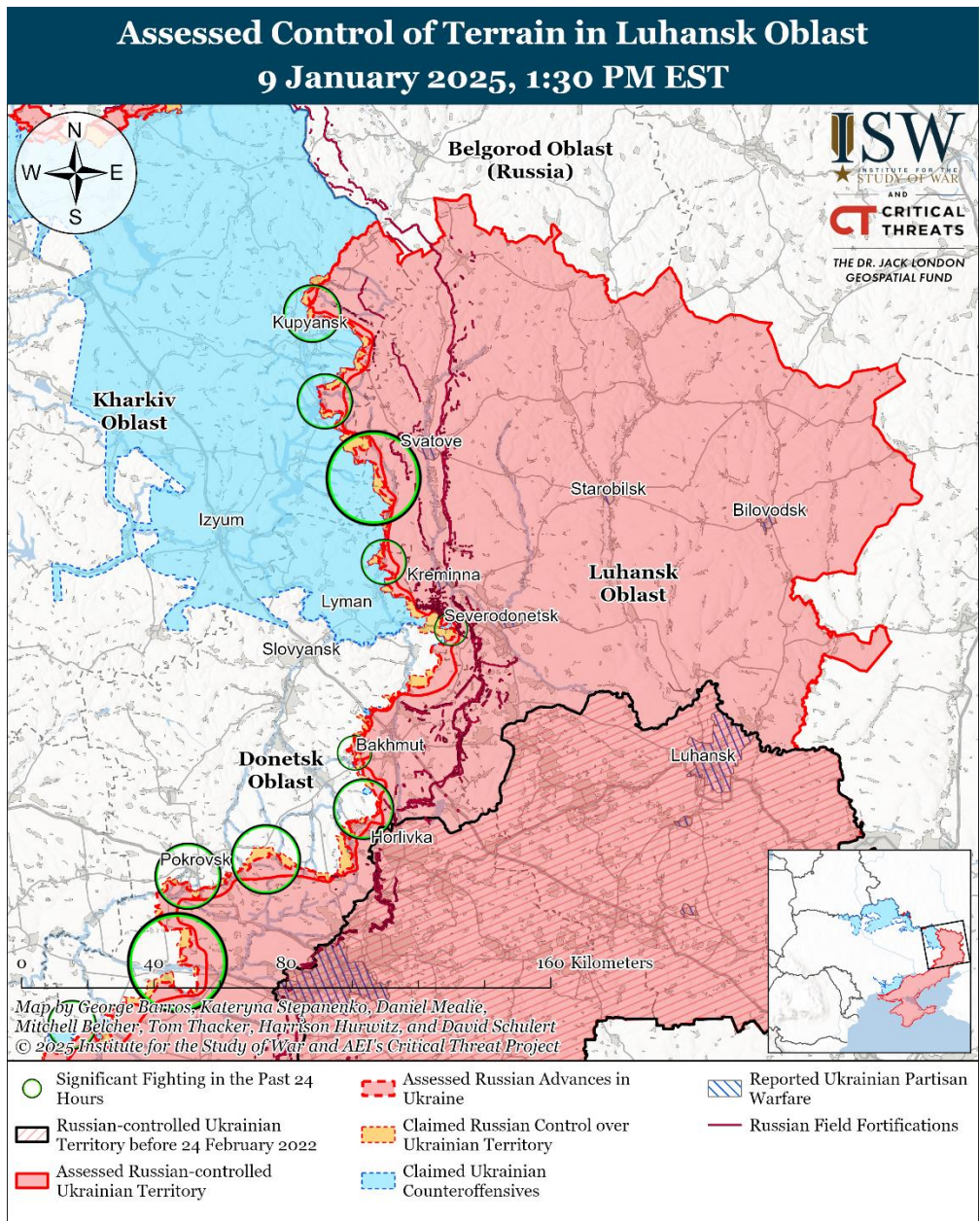
Russian Subordinate Main Effort #1 – Kharkiv Oblast (Russian objective: Push Ukrainian forces back from the international border with Belgorod Oblast and approach to within tube artillery range of Kharkiv City)

Russian forces continued limited ground attacks northeast of Kharkiv City near Starytsya and Vovchansk on January 8 and 9 but did not make any confirmed advances.[40] Drone operators of the Russian 69th Motorized Rifle Division (6th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Leningrad Military District [LMD]) are reportedly operating in the Vovchansk direction.[41]



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)

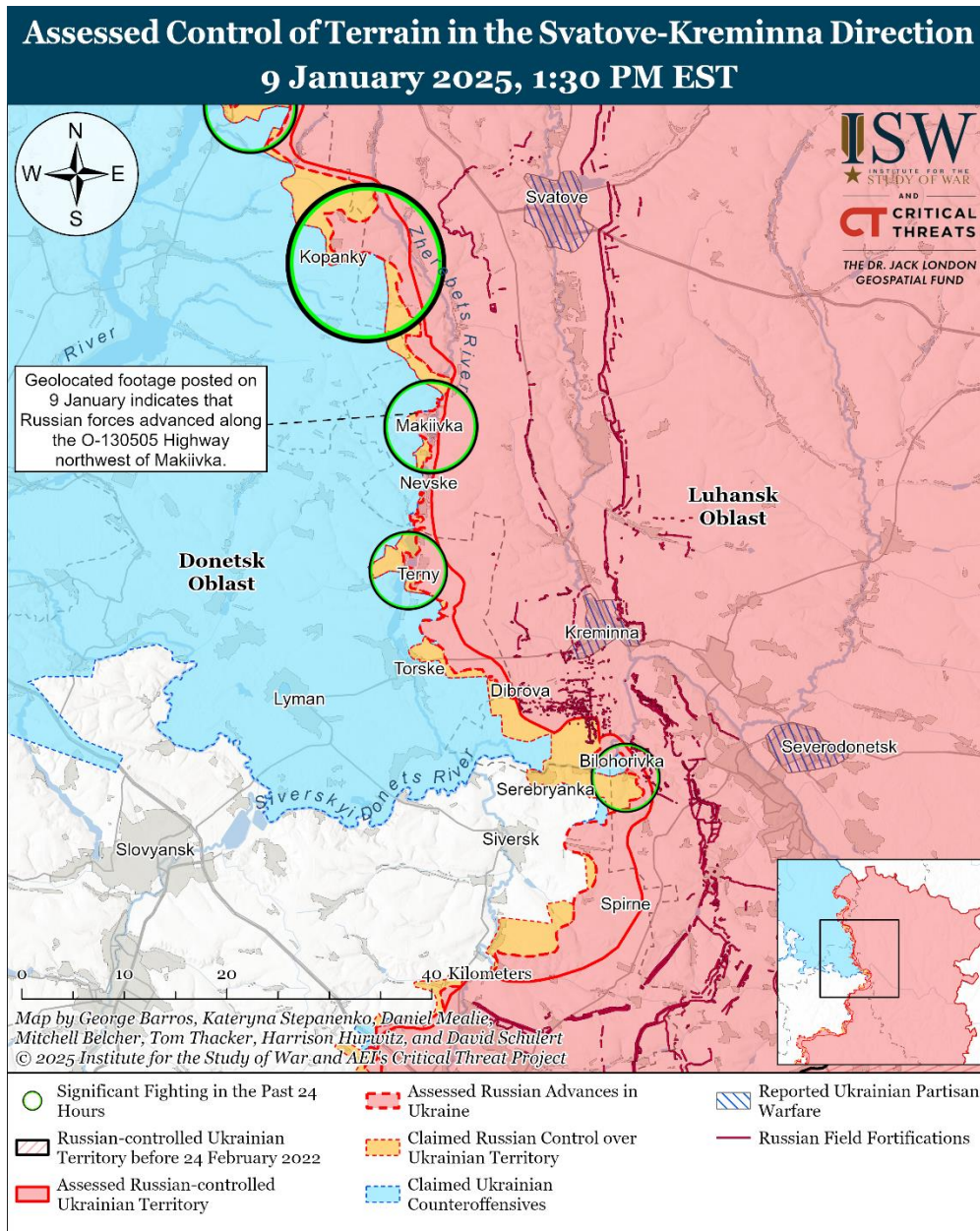
Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Kupyansk direction on January 9 but did not make further advances. A Russian source claimed that Russian forces advanced up to five kilometers south of Dvorichna (north of Kupyansk) but ISW has not observed confirmation of this claim.[42] An officer in a Ukrainian brigade operating in the Kupyansk direction stated that Russian forces are attempting to seize on poor weather conditions to advance in squad-sized infantry groups in this direction.[43] Russian forces continued assaults north of Kupyansk near Zapadne and Holubivka and northeast of Kupyansk near Petropavlivka on January 8 and 9.[44]



Russian forces recently advanced southeast of Borova amid ongoing offensive operations in the Borova direction January 9. Geolocated footage published on January 9 indicates that Russian forces advanced west and northwest of Makiivka (southeast of Borova).[45] Russian forces continued assaults northeast of Borova near Koliznykvika, Zahryzove, Zelenyi Hai, Borisovka Andriivka, and Kopanky; east of Borova

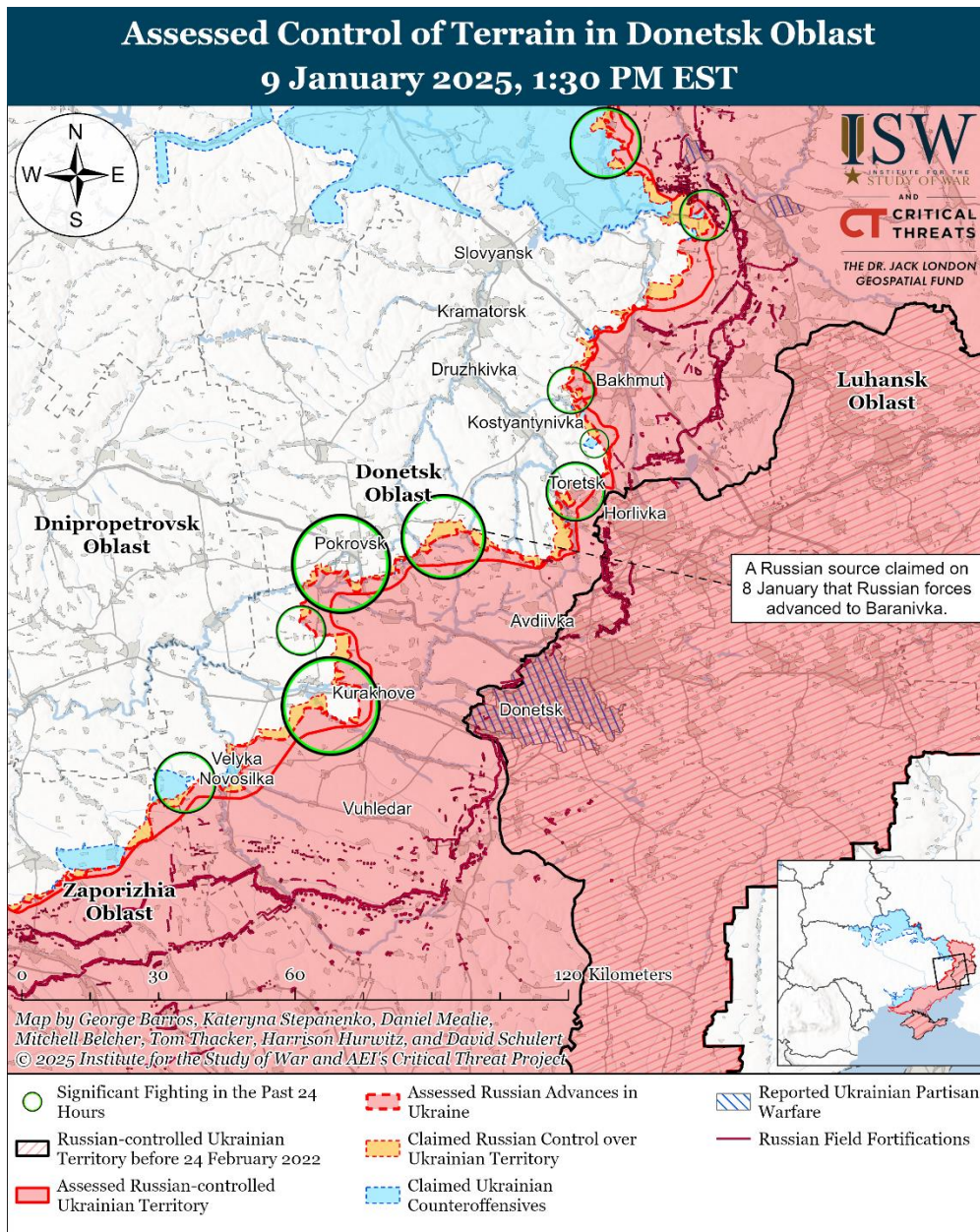
near Novoyehorivka, and Tverdokhlibove; and southeast of Borova near Makiivka and Hrekiivka on January 8 and 9.[46]

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Lyman direction on January 9 but did not make confirmed advances. A Russian source claimed that Russian forces advanced up to and are attacking a tactical height near Kolodyazi (northeast of Lyman), but ISW has not observed confirmation of this claim.[47] Russian forces continued offensive operations northeast of Lyman near Ivanivka and Terny on January 8 and 9.[48] Elements of the Russian 144th Motorized Rifle Division (20th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Moscow Military District [MMD]) reportedly continue to operate near Terny.[49]



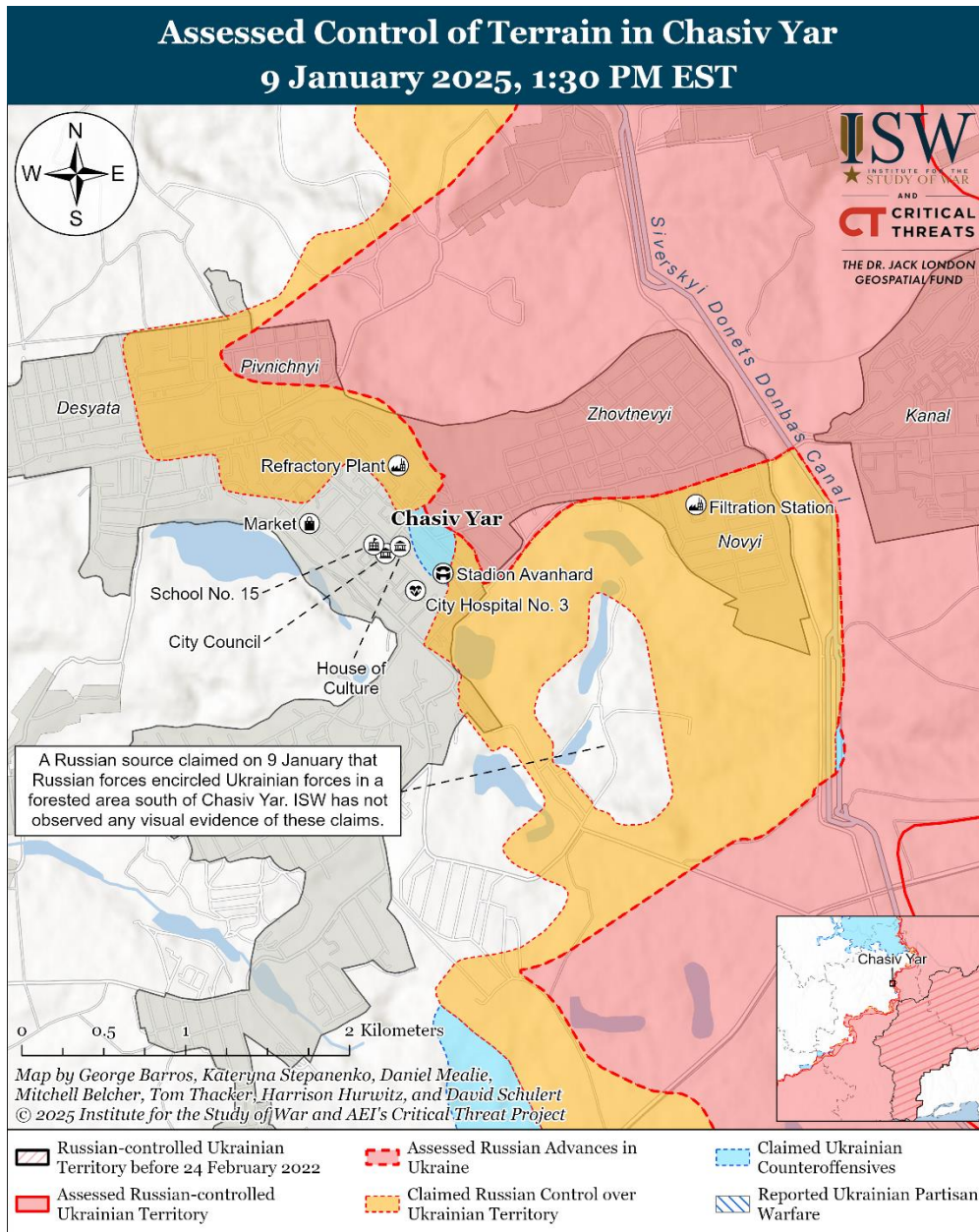
Russian Subordinate Main Effort #3 – Donetsk Oblast (Russian objective: Capture the entirety of Donetsk Oblast, the claimed territory of Russia’s proxies in Donbas)

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Siversk direction on January 9 but did not make any confirmed advances. Russian forces conducted offensive operations near Bilohorivka (northeast of Siversk) on January 8 and 9.[50] A Russian milblogger claimed on January 9 that Russian forces advanced one kilometer south of Verkhokamyanske (east of Siversk) and occupied the tactical heights south and west of the settlement, but ISW has not observed confirmation of this claim.[51] The milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces maintain positions in Verkhokamyanske and are trying to counterattack from Serebryanka (north of Siversk).



Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Chasiv Yar direction on January 9 but did not make confirmed advances. A Russian milblogger claimed on January 9 that Russian forces advanced northwestward and southeastward near a forested area in Chasiv Yar and along the T-05-04 Bakhmut-Kostyantynivka highway northeast of Stupochky (south of Chasiv Yar), but ISW has not observed

confirmation of this claim.[52] Russian forces attacked within Chasiv Yar and south of Chasiv Yar near Bila Hora on January 8 and 9.[53] The commander of a Ukrainian drone battalion operating in the Kramatorsk (Chasiv Yar) direction stated on January 8 that Russian forces are conducting assaults in small infantry groups and with armored vehicle support, using buggies, and trying to penetrate the Ukrainian rear with sabotage and reconnaissance groups.[54]

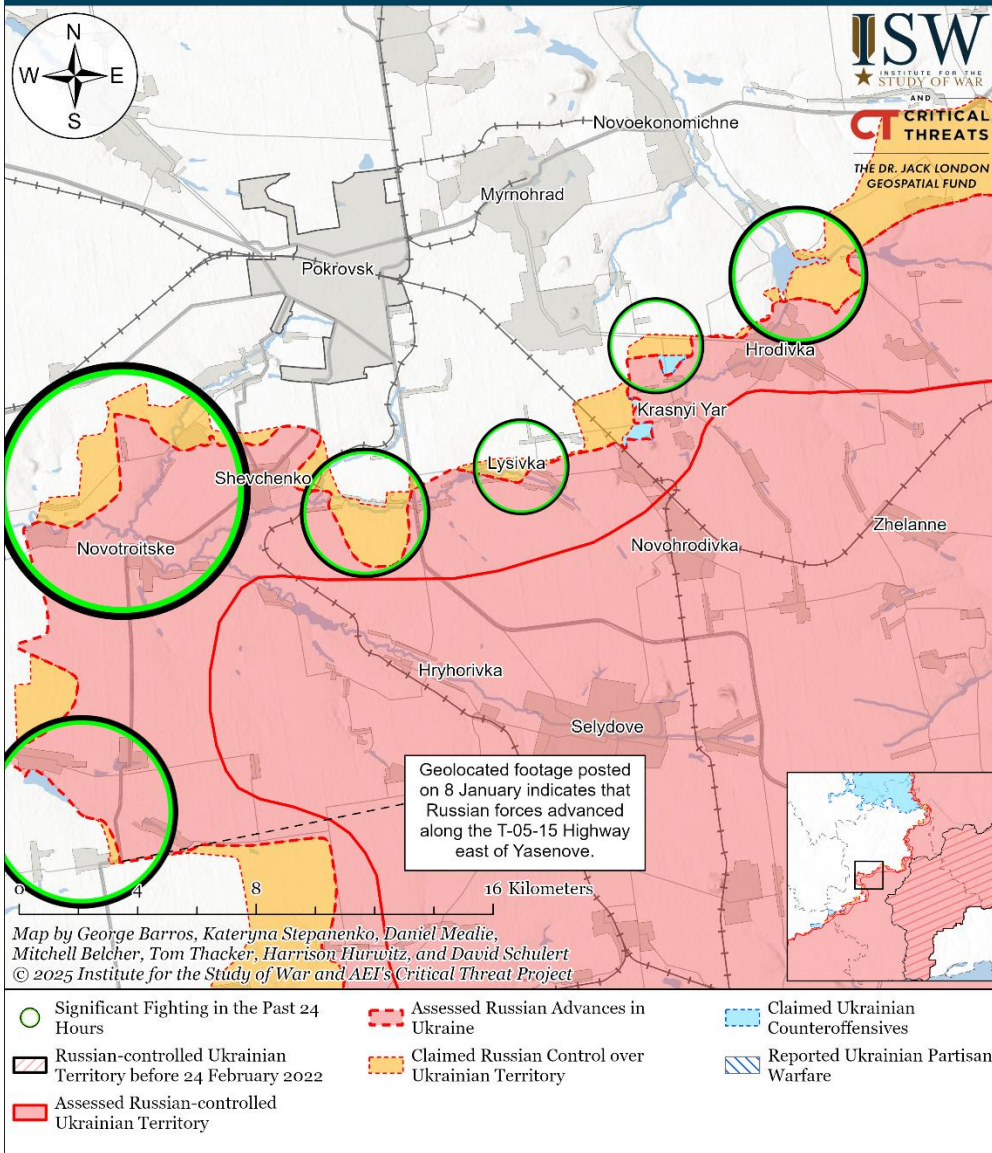


Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Toretsk direction on January 9 but did not make confirmed advances. Russian forces attacked near Toretsk, north of Toretsk near Dylivka, and west of Toretsk near Shcherbynivka on January 8 and 9.[55] A Russian milblogger claimed on January 8 that Russian forces have almost fully pushed Ukrainian forces to the outskirts of Toretsk.[56] Drone elements of the Russian 80th "Sparta" Separate Reconnaissance Battalion and 132nd Motorized Rifle

Brigade (both of the 51st Combined Arms Army [CAA], formerly 1st Donetsk People's Republic Army Corps [DNR AC]) reportedly continue to operate in the Toretsk direction.[57]

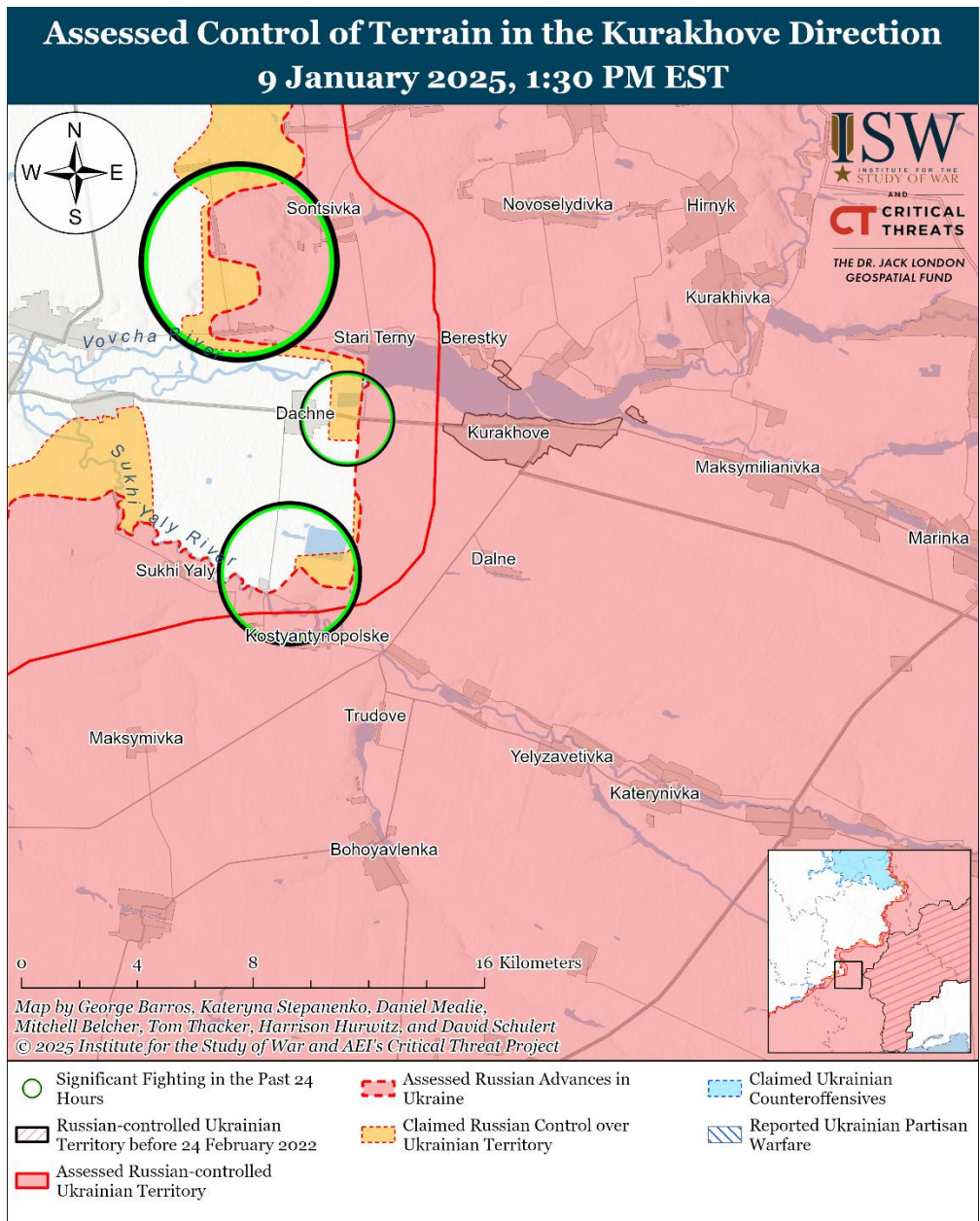
Russian forces recently advanced in the Pokrovsk direction amid continued offensive operations in the area on January 9. Geolocated footage published on January 8 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced east of Yasenove (south of Pokrovsk).[58] Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced southeast of Kotlyne (west of Pokrovsk), to Yasenove, near Vovkove, on the outskirts of Zvirove (all southwest of Pokrovsk), two kilometers wide and 500 meters deep south of Baranivka, within Baranivka, 700 meters near Vozdvyzhenka (both east of Pokrovsk), and 500 meters within Novoyelyzavetivka (southwest of Pokrovsk).[59] ISW has not observed confirmation of these claims, however. Russian forces conducted offensive operations near Pokrovsk itself; east of Pokrovsk near Baranivka, Myrolyubivka, Yelyzavetivka, Vodyane Druhe, and Pomin; southeast of Pokrovsk near Lysivka; south of Pokrovsk near Zelene and Novyi Trud; southwest of Pokrovsk near Pishchane, Zvirove, Uspenivka, Novovasylivka, Nadiivka, Solone, and Novoyelyzavetivka; and west of Pokrovsk near Kotlyne on January 8 and 9.[60] Russian sources claimed that Russian forces are attempting to bypass central Pishchane from the north and that one of the Russian military's main goals in the Pokrovsk direction is to advance to Udachne (southwest of Pokrovsk), from which the milblogger claimed Russian forces are 1.5 kilometers.[61] ISW has observed geolocated evidence to assess that Russian forces are roughly four kilometers from Udachne. A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces maintain a presence in western Novovasylivka.[62] An acting spokesperson of a Ukrainian brigade operating in the Pokrovsk direction stated that Russian forces are attacking almost all day and night in the area but do not have sufficient forces and means to attack Pokrovsk in head-on frontal assaults and are attempting to bypass the town.[63] The spokesperson stating that Russian forces are not using much equipment in the area and are mostly moving on foot.

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Pokrovsk Direction 9 January 2025, 1:30 PM EST



Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Kurakhove direction on January 9 but did not make any confirmed advances. Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced one kilometer deep near Slovyanka, 400 meters deep near Petropavlivka (both northwest of Kurakhove), and 2.5 kilometers south of Kurakhove.[64] ISW has not observed confirmation of these claims, however. Russian forces conducted offensive operations near Kurakhove itself; northwest of Kurakhove near Sribne, Shevchenko, Petropavlivka, and Slovyanka; west of Kurakhove towards Kostyantynopil and Andriivka; south of Kurakhove near Dachne; and southwest of Kurakhove near Kostyantynopolske, and Yantarne on January 8 and 9.[65] A Russian source claimed that Ukrainian forces are counterattacking near Petropavlivka and on the C-051122 Yantarne-Dachne road.[66] Ukrainian Khortytsia Group of Forces Spokesperson Major Viktor Trehubov stated that Ukrainian forces are still present near and Kurakhivske Thermal Power Plant (TPP) west of Kurakhove and are repelling Russian

attacks in the area.[67] Elements of the Russian 110th Motorized Rifle Brigade (51st CAA) are reportedly operating in Kurakhove; elements of the 20th Motorized Rifle Division (8th CAA, SMD) are reportedly operating south of Kurakhove; elements of the 381st Artillery Regiment (150th Motorized Rifle Division, 8th CAA, SMD) are reportedly operating near Dachne; elements of the 11th Air Force and Air Defense Army (Russian Aerospace Forces [VKS] and Eastern Military District [EMD]) are reportedly operating near Kostyantynopil; and elements of the "Grachi" Spetsnaz detachment are reportedly operating near Kurakhove.[68]



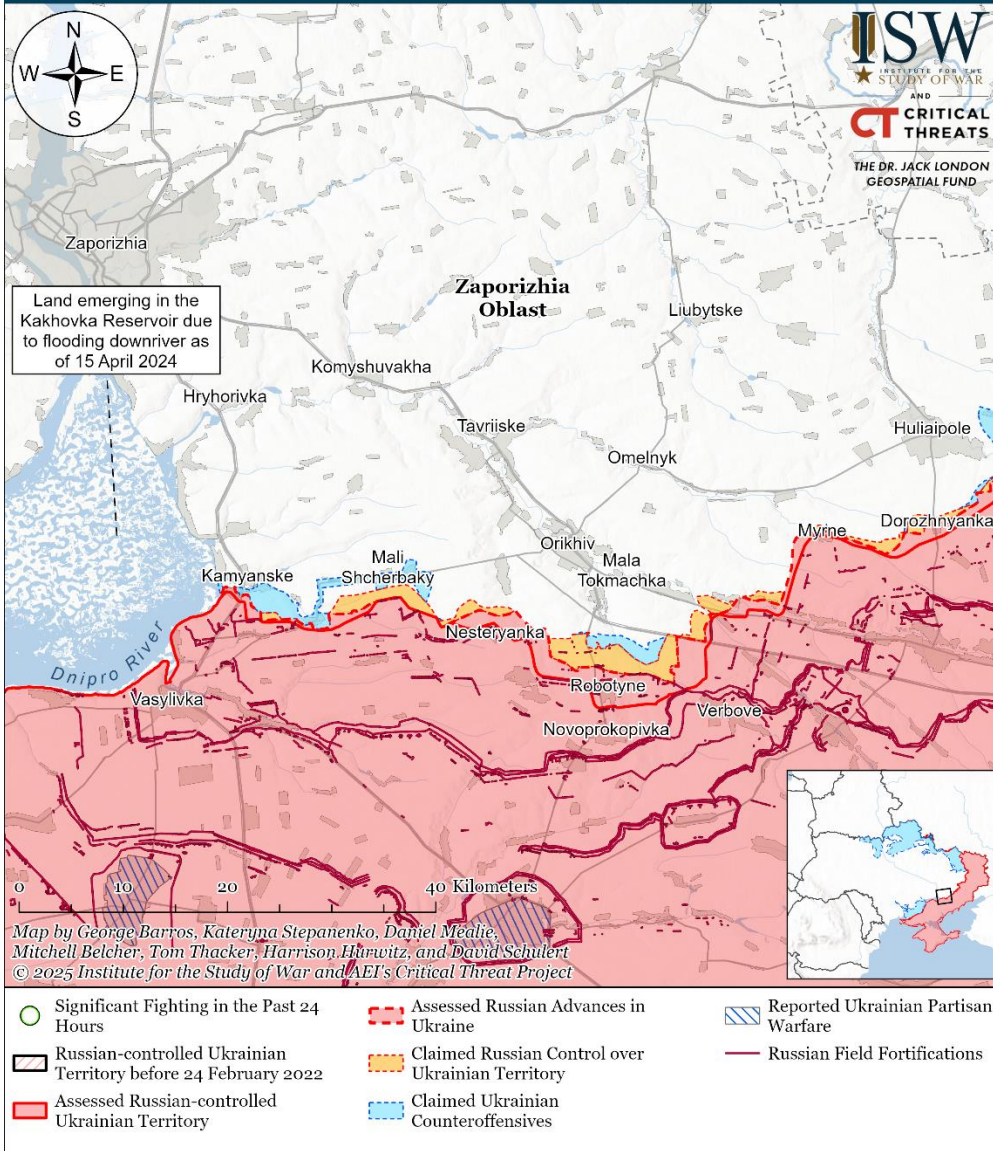
Geolocated footage published on January 8 confirms that Ukrainian forces struck a command post of the Russian 8th CAA (SMD) in occupied Khartsyzk, Donetsk Oblast on January 8.[69]

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Velyka Novosilka direction on January 8 and 9 but did not make confirmed advances. Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced northeast of Novyi Komar (north of Velyka Novosilka), towards Novosilka (west of Velyka Novosilka), northeast of Rivnopil, and west and northwest of Neskuchne (both southwest of Velyka Novosilka).[70] ISW has not observed confirmation of these claims, however. Russian forces attacked west of Velyka Novosilka near Novosilka and north of Velyka Novosilka near Novyi Komar on January 8 and 9.[71]

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

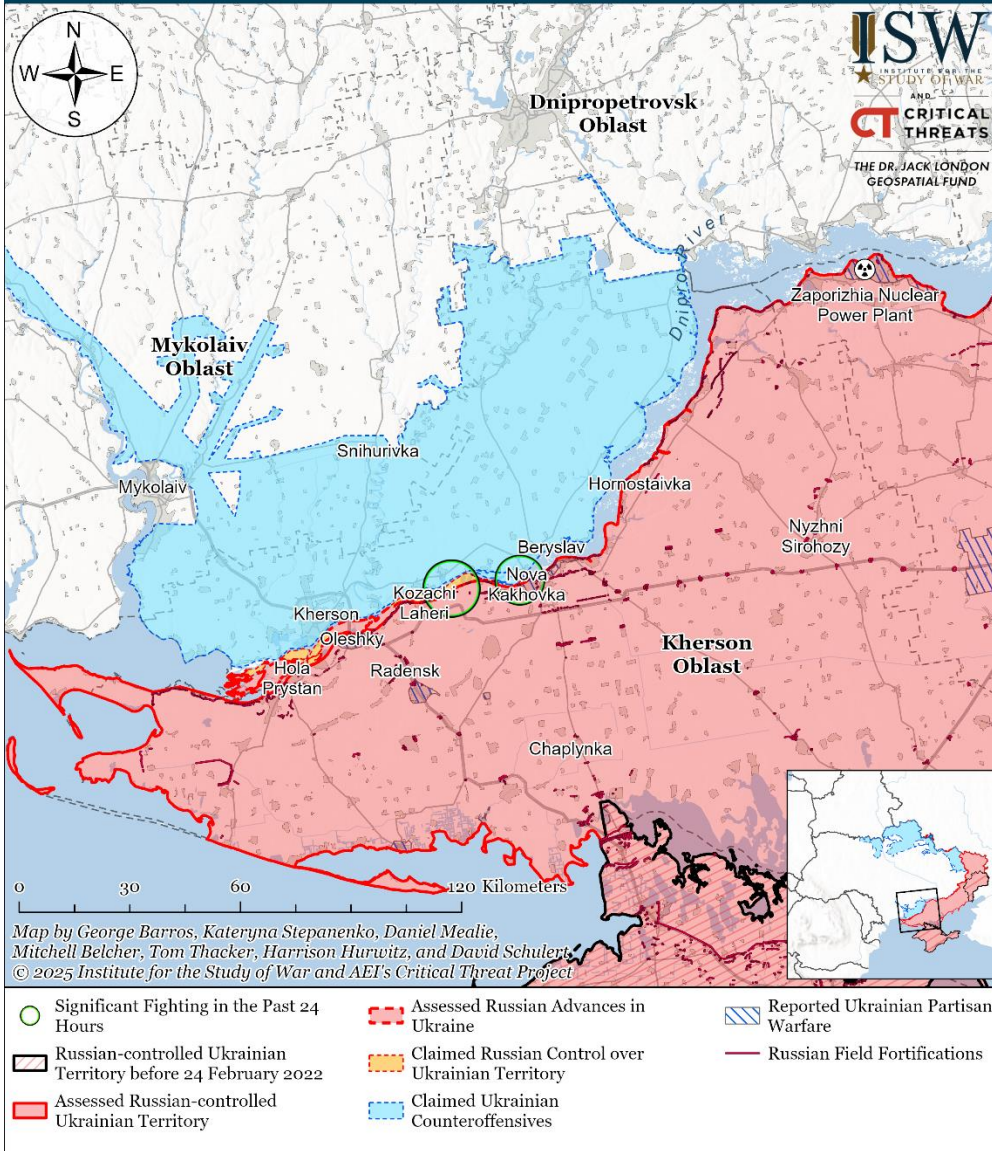
Russian forces continued offensive operations in western Zaporizhia Oblast including near Mala Tokmachka (northeast of Robotyne) on January 9 but did not make any confirmed advances.[72] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces counterattacked in western Zaporizhia Oblast.[73] Elements of the Russian 291st Motorized Rifle Regiment (42nd Motorized Rifle Division, 58th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Southern Military District [SMD]) reportedly continue to operate in the Zaporizhia direction.[74]

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Zaporizhia Direction 9 January 2025, 1:30 PM EST



Russian forces continued assaults in the Dniro direction and on the islands of the Dniro River Delta, including near Kozatskyi Island (northeast of Kherson City), on January 8 and 9 but did not make any confirmed advances.[75]

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Kherson Direction 9 January 2025, 1:30 PM EST



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

Russian forces conducted drone and missile strikes against Ukraine overnight on January 8 to 9 and on the afternoon of January 9. The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Russian forces launched 70 Shahed and decoy drones from the directions of Oryol, Kursk, and Bryansk oblasts; Millerovo, Rostov Oblast; and Primorsko-Akhtarsk, Krasnodar Krai on the night of January 8 to 9.[76] The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Ukrainian forces downed 46 drones over Poltava, Sumy, Kharkiv, Cherkasy, Chernihiv, Kyiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Kherson, and Mykolaiv oblasts; that 24 drones were "lost," likely due to Ukrainian electronic warfare (EW) interference; and that falling debris from downed Russian drones damaged residential homes in Kharkiv, Sumy, and Cherkasy oblasts. The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Ukrainian forces downed three Russian Iskander-K cruise missiles targeting Kryvyi Rih,

Dnipropetrovsk Oblast on the afternoon of January 9.[77] Kharkiv Oblast Administration Head Oleh Synehubov reported that Russian forces conducted drone strikes against a civilian enterprise in Nemyshlianskyi Urban Raion, Kharkiv City during the afternoon of January 9.[78]

Zaporizhia Oblast Military Administration Head Ivan Fedorov reported on January 9 that the Russian glide bomb strike against Zaporizhzhia City on January 8 killed 13 and injured at least 116, an increase from the 63 injured reported on January 8.[79]

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

Russian officials continue to indicate that the Kremlin intends to further militarize the Russian government and Russian society in the long term. Russian opposition outlet *Meduza* reported on January 9, citing various Russian federal government sources, that the Kremlin's vision for after the war in Ukraine includes electing an unspecified "certain proportion" of Russian military veterans to the Russian State Duma.[80] *Meduza's* sources characterized such an election as only a "superficial proposal" to "somehow distract [Russian] politicians and people" from Russia's poor conduct of the war in Ukraine, but such an election would likely see a large number of radicalized veterans placed in government positions and would contribute to militarizing a significant portion of the Russian federal government in the medium- to long-term. The Kremlin has been using its Time of Heroes veteran program to appoint Kremlin-selected veterans of the war in Ukraine to various positions within Russian local, regional, and federal government as it continues to set conditions to prepare for a possible future military conflict against NATO.[81]

Russian federal subjects continue offering financial incentives to encourage Russians to sign contracts to fight in Ukraine. A Ukrainian source posted an image of a Tula Oblast advertisement promising a five million-ruble (about \$48,898) annual salary (or a 416.6 thousand ruble-monthly salary) to Russians who sign contracts with the Russian Airborne Forces (VDV) by March 1, 2025.[82]

Russian authorities continue to force Ukrainians living under Russian occupation to serve in the Russian military. Ukraine's Main Military Intelligence Directorate (GUR) reported that Russian occupation authorities forced 300 Ukrainian citizens living in occupied Zaporizhia and Kherson oblasts to serve in the Russian military between October 1 and December 31, 2024.[83] The GUR reported that Russian authorities are also attempting to coerce residents of occupied Luhansk Oblast into signing Russian military contracts and promised one-time payments of 2.5 million rubles (about \$24,450) to any recruits from occupied Luhansk Oblast.

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 reporting on 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)

Russian opposition outlet *Meduza* reported that the Kremlin may be considering reviving a pre-war plan to effectively assume complete control over Belarus after the end of the war in Ukraine. *Meduza* reported on January 9 that an unnamed insider source close to the Russian presidential administration claimed that the Russian government is considering plans to "annex" Belarus and frame this annexation as a "deeper integration" of Belarus with Russia by establishing a common government, likely referring to the Union State framework.[84] The source claimed that the Kremlin's ability to annex Belarus ultimately depends upon the cooperation of Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko but that Lukashenko "clearly wants to remain a full-fledged ruler" separate from the Kremlin. The Kremlin has maintained steady pressure to integrate Belarus under Russian control through the Union State framework even during the war in Ukraine and is reportedly planning to completely subsume Belarus by 2030.[85]

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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