

Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment, June 2

Karolina Hird, Kateryna Stepanenko, Mason Clark, and George Barros
June 2, 6:15pm ET

Russian forces continued to make incremental, grinding, and costly progress in eastern Ukraine on June 2. Russian troops continued operations to capture Severodonetsk and further operations to capture Lysychansk. Russian military leadership will likely use the capture of these two cities to claim they have “liberated” all of Luhansk Oblast before turning to Donetsk Oblast but Russian forces are unlikely to have the forces necessary to take substantial territory in Donetsk Oblast after suffering further losses around Severodonetsk. Russian forces are evidently limited by terrain in the Donbas and will continue to face challenges crossing the Siverskyi Donets River to complete the encirclement of Severodonetsk-Lysychansk and make further advances westward of Lyman towards Slovyansk via Raihorodok.¹

Russian military leadership continues to experience complications with sufficient force generation and maintaining the morale of mobilized personnel. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that the Donetsk People’s Republic’s (DNR) 1st Army Corps, under Russia’s 8th Combined Arms Army, is conducting forced mobilization in occupied areas of Donetsk Oblast.² Russian forced mobilization is highly unlikely to generate meaningful combat power and will exacerbate low morale and poor discipline in Russian and proxy units. The 113th Regiment of the DNR posted a video appeal to Russian President Vladimir Putin on June 2 wherein forcibly-mobilized soldiers complain they have spent the entire war on the frontline in Kherson without food or medicine, and that mobilization committees did not conduct requisite medical screenings and admitted individuals whose medical conditions should have disqualified them from service.³ Ukraine’s Main Intelligence Directorate additionally released an intercepted phone conversation wherein DNR soldiers similarly complained that physically unfit individuals were forced into service and that mobilized units are experiencing mass drunkenness and general disorder.⁴ Russian forces are additionally struggling to successfully rotate servicemen in and out of combat. Spokesperson for the Odesa Military Administration Maksym Marchenko stated that 30 to 40% of Russian personnel that rotated out of Ukraine refused to return, forcing Russian commanders to send unprepared and unmotivated units back into combat.⁵ This is consistent with complaints made by DNR servicemen that rotation practices are contributing to poor morale and dissatisfaction within units that have been forcibly mobilized.⁶

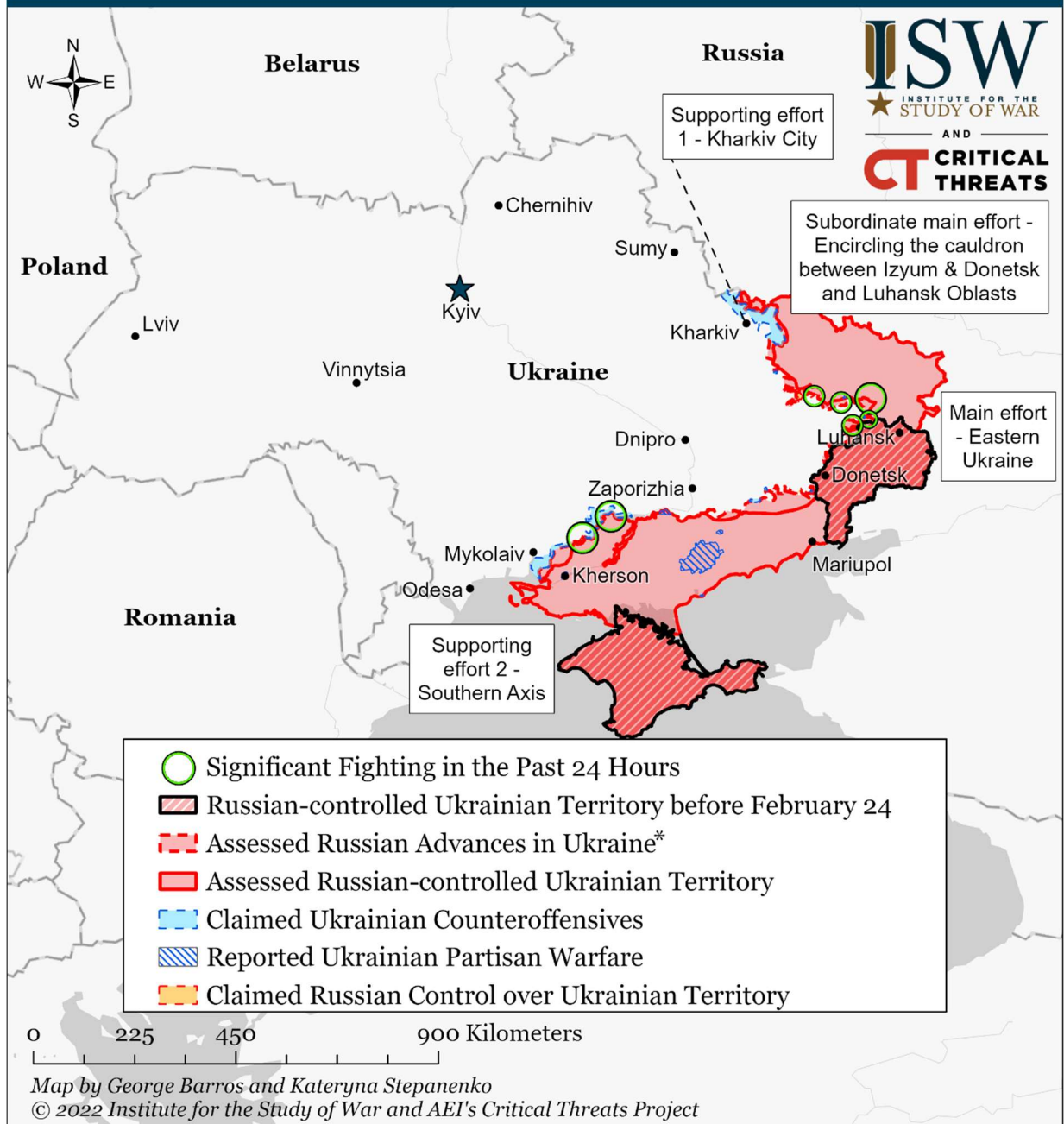
Russian occupation authorities continue to face challenges establishing permanent societal control in newly occupied Ukrainian territories. The Ukrainian Resistance Center reported that Russian occupational administrations “are [only] created on paper” and are incapable of controlling local populations, enforcing the use of the Russian ruble, or conducting bureaucratic processes.⁷ The Ukrainian Resistance Center noted that Ukrainian civilians welcome partisan activity that systematically sabotages Russian occupation rule.

Key Takeaways

- **Russian operations to advance on Slovyansk from the southeast of Izyum and west of Lyman continue to make little progress and are unlikely to do so in the coming days, as Russian forces continue to prioritize Severodonetsk at the expense of other axes of advance.**

- **Russian forces continued assaults against Severodonetsk and Lysychansk in order to claim full control of Luhansk Oblast.**
- **Russian forces made incremental advances around Avdiivka.**
- **Ukrainian counteroffensives in northwestern Kherson Oblast pushed Russian forces to the eastern bank of the Inhulets River and will likely continue to disrupt Russian ground lines of communication (GLOCs) along the T2207 highway.**
- **The Kremlin continued to pursue inconsistent occupational measures in southern Ukraine, indicating both widespread Ukrainian resistance and likely Kremlin indecision on how to integrate occupied territory.**

Assessed Control of Terrain in Ukraine and Main Russian Maneuver Axes as of June 2, 2022, 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 those 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 population and specifically on combat in Ukrainian urban areas. We utterly condemn these Russian violations of the laws of armed conflict, Geneva Conventions, and humanity even though we do not describe them in these reports.

ISW has updated its assessment of the four primary efforts Russian forces are engaged in at this time. We have stopped coverage of Mariupol as a separate effort since the city's fall. We had added a new section on activities in Russian-occupied areas:

- Main effort—Eastern Ukraine (comprised of one subordinate and three supporting efforts);
- Subordinate main effort- Encirclement of Ukrainian troops in the cauldron between Izyum and Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts
- Supporting effort 1—Kharkiv City;
- Supporting effort 2—Southern axis;
- Activities in Russian-occupied areas

Main Effort—Eastern Ukraine

Subordinate Main Effort—Southern Kharkiv, Donetsk, Luhansk Oblasts (Russian objective: Encircle Ukrainian forces in Eastern Ukraine and capture the entirety of Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts, the claimed territory of Russia's proxies in Donbas)

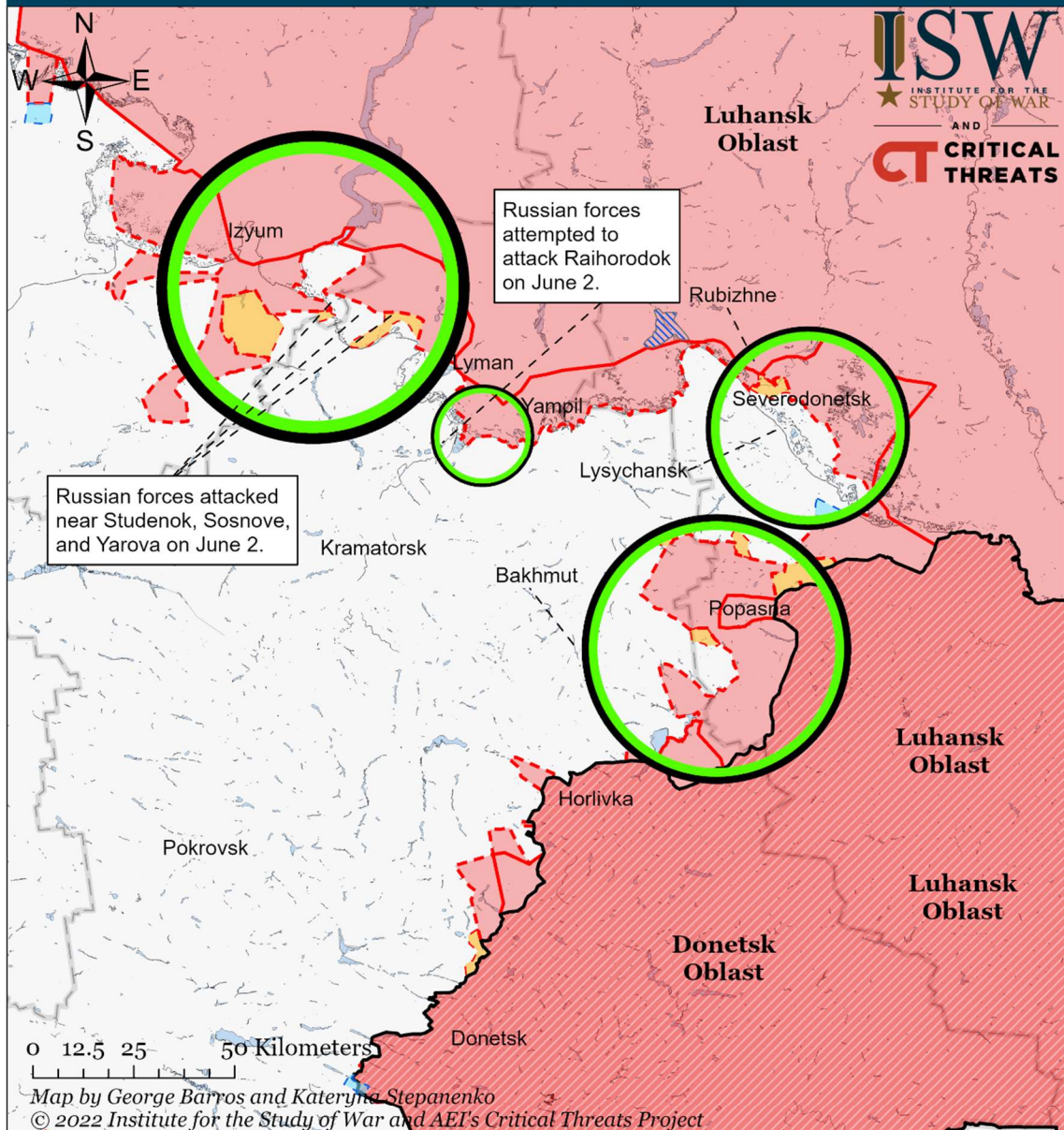
Russian forces conducted limited unsuccessful attacks and continued efforts to resume larger-scale offensives southeast of Izyum towards Slovyansk on June 2. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces focused on maintaining their current positions southeast of Izyum and shelled Dovhenke, Kurulka, Virnopillya, and Dolyna in order to set conditions to renew offensive operations towards Slovyansk.⁸ Russian forces additionally conducted unsuccessful assault operations around Studenok, Sosnove, Svyatohirsk, and Yarova, several settlements southeast of Izyum along roadways connecting to the Izyum-Slovyansk highway near the Kharkiv-Donetsk Oblast border.⁹ Russian troops likely seek to capture this highway to exploit road access to support advances on Slovyansk. Russian forces in the Lyman reportedly attempted an additional, unsuccessful assault on Raihorodok, northeast of Slovyansk.¹⁰ Russian forces attempting to advance on Slovyansk from both Izyum and Lyman remain largely stalled and are unlikely to make significant progress in the coming days, particularly as the majority of Russian forces continue to focus on Severodonetsk.

Russian forces continued ground assaults in and around Severodonetsk on June 2.¹¹ Head of the Luhansk People's Republic (LNR) Leonid Pasechnik claimed that the LNR controls all of Luhansk Oblast except for Severodonetsk and Lysychansk.¹² Deputy Chief of the Main Operations Department of the Ukrainian General Staff Oleksiy Gromov notably stated that despite Russian efforts to surround Severodonetsk, Ukrainian troops do not need to fully withdraw from the city.¹³ Russian forces conducted unsuccessful ground attacks to the south of Severodonetsk-Lysychansk in Bobrove and Ustynivka.¹⁴ The UK Ministry of Defense stated that Russian forces will likely be inhibited in their attempt to advance into Lysychansk from Severodonetsk (if they are first able to capture Severodonetsk itself) due to the tactical challenge of crossing the Siverskyi Donets River.¹⁵ The UK Ministry of Defense additionally noted that Russian forces will likely need a brief tactical pause to prepare for subsequent

attempts to cross the Siverskyi Donets River if they intend further operations into Luhansk and Donetsk Oblasts.¹⁶

Russian forces continued ground, rocket, and artillery strikes around Donetsk Oblast on June 2.¹⁷ Russian forces continued offensive operations to the east of Bakhmut around Komyshevka, Mykailivka, Vrubivka, Berestove, Bilohorivka, Svitlodarsk, and Nahirne in order to cut ground lines of communication (GLOCs) northeast of Bakhmut and support continuing but slow-moving operations to encircle Severodonetsk-Lysychansk from the south.¹⁸ The DNR claimed that the Russian grouping in the Donetsk City-Avdiiivka area made incremental gains around Avdiiivka and reportedly broke through Ukrainian defenses in Verkhnotoreske, though ISW cannot independently confirm this claim.¹⁹

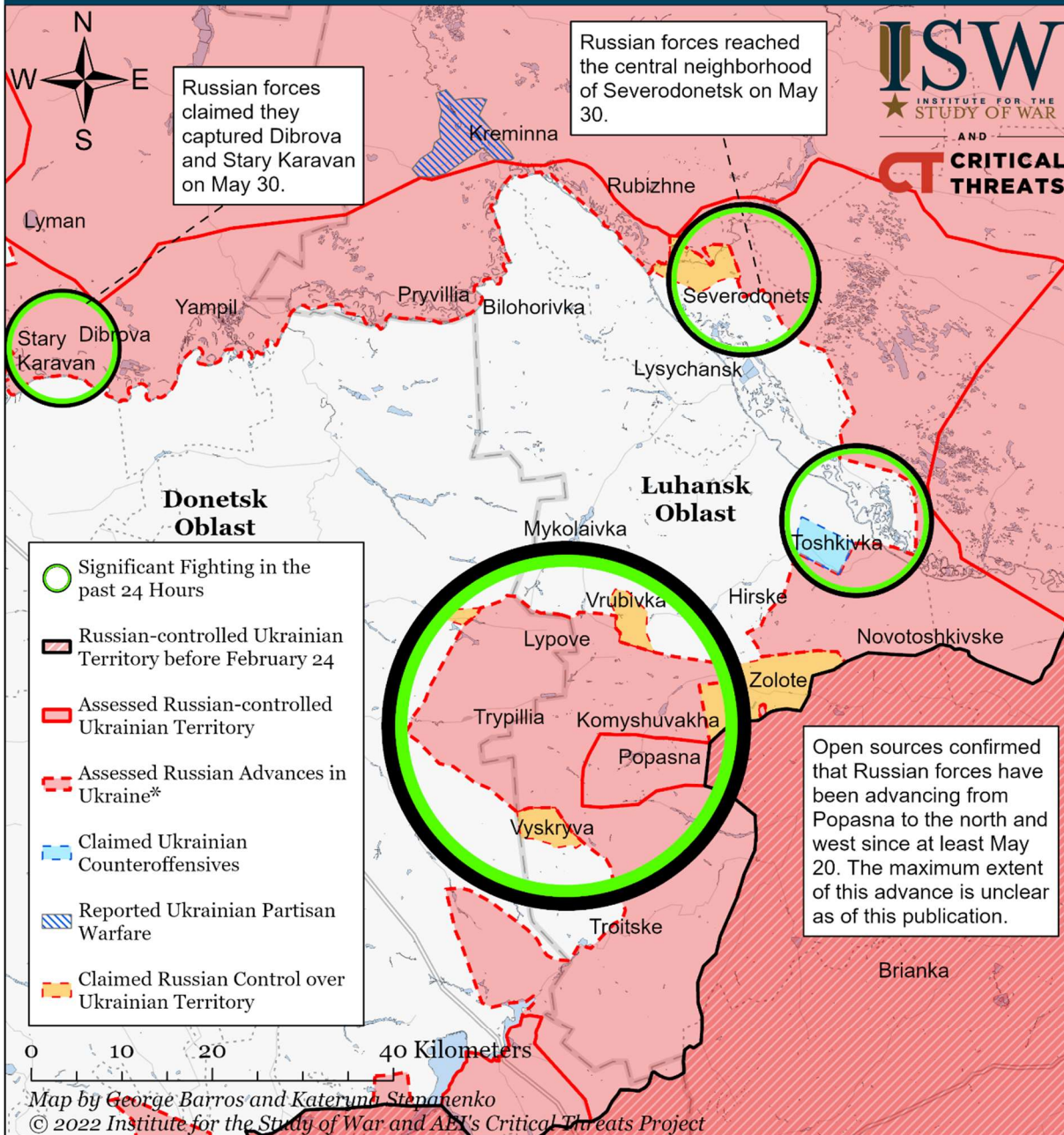
Assessed Control of Terrain Around Luhansk as of June 2, 2022, 3:00 PM ET



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

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

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Severodonetsk as of June 2, 2022, 3:00 PM ET



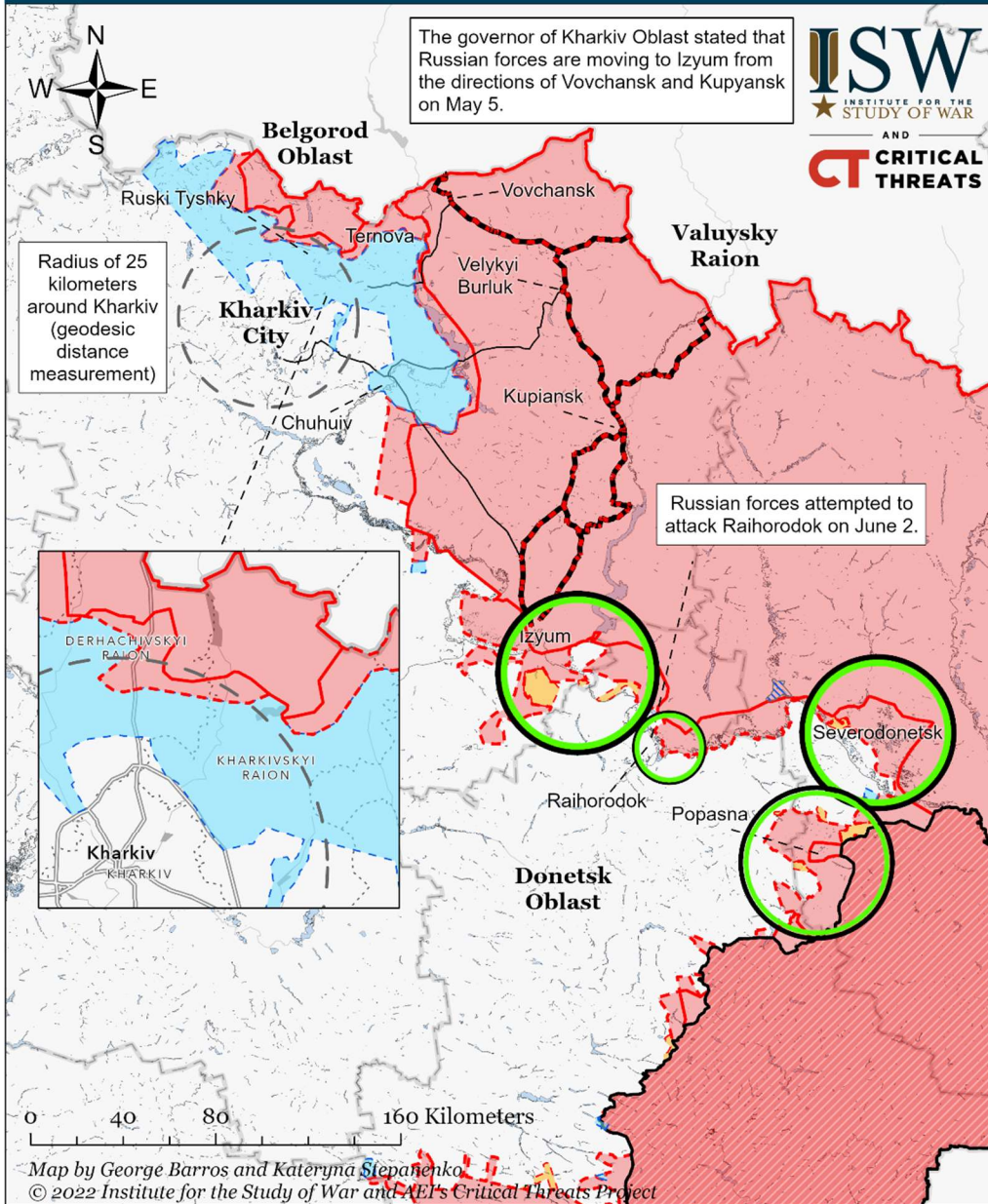
* Assessed Russian advances are areas where ISW assesses Russian forces have operated in or launched attacks against but do not control.

Note: We expanded Russian advances to the eastern part of Severodonetsk based on the Ukrainian General Staff report that Russian forces advanced in eastern Severodonetsk on June 1. We recessed assessed Russian advances near Bobrove given the Ukrainian General Staff reported on June 2 that Russian forces failed to capture Bobrove.

Supporting Effort #1—Kharkiv City (Russian objective: Withdraw forces to the north and defend ground lines of communication (GLOCs) to Izyum)

Russian forces conducted rocket and artillery strikes on Kharkiv City and northern Kharkiv Oblast on June 2.²⁰ Russian forces shelled residential districts of Kharkiv City, Tsyrkuny, Chuhuiv, Prudyanka, and Mykhailivka in an attempt to maintain their positions to the north of Kharkiv City.²¹ A Russian Telegram channel claimed that clashes between Russian and Ukrainian troops occurred in Vesele and Tsupivka, both north of Kharkiv City, indicating that local fighting continues along the frontline in northern Kharkiv Oblast.²²

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Kharkiv as of June 2, 2022, 3:00 PM ET



Radius of 25 kilometers around Kharkiv (geodesic distance measurement)

The governor of Kharkiv Oblast stated that Russian forces are moving to Izyum from the directions of Vovchansk and Kupyansk on May 5.

Russian forces attempted to attack Raihorodok on June 2.

Map by George Barros and Kateryna Stepanenko
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- Significant Fighting in the past 24 Hours
- Key Ukrainian Roads
- Russian Ground Lines of Communication
- Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory before February 24
- Assessed Russian Advances in Ukraine*
- Assessed Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory
- Claimed Russian Control over Ukrainian Territory
- Claimed Ukrainian Counteroffensives
- Reported Ukrainian Partisan Warfare

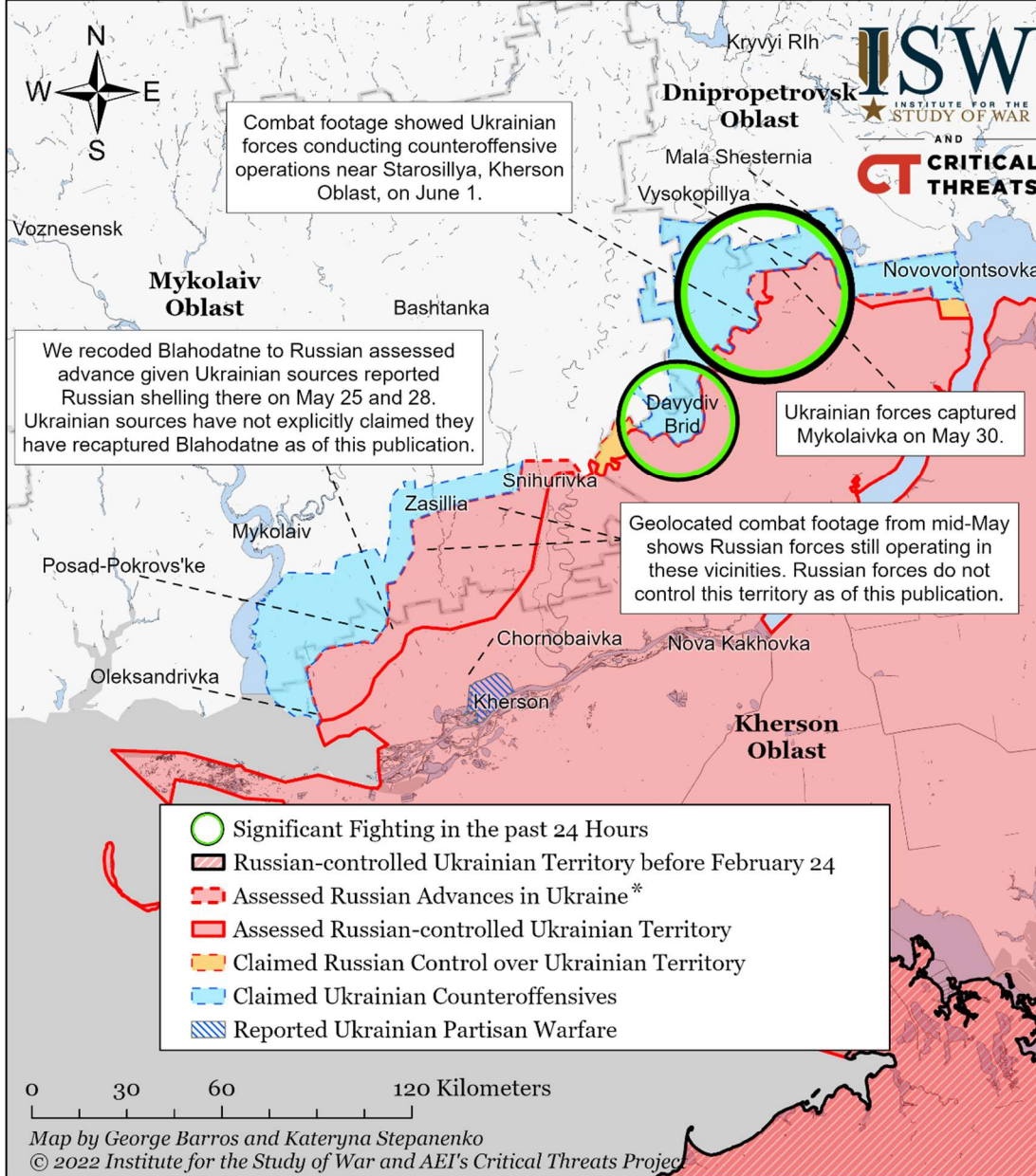
* Assessed Russian advances are areas where ISW assesses Russian forces have operated in or launched attacks against but do not control.

Supporting Effort #2—Southern Axis (Objective: Defend Kherson and Zaporozhia Oblasts against Ukrainian counterattacks)

Ukrainian counteroffensives in northwestern Kherson Oblast likely pushed Russian forces back to their established defensive positions on the eastern bank of the Inhulets River on June 2. Geolocated drone footage confirms Ukrainian forces conducted a counteroffensive near Starosillya, a settlement on the eastern bank of the Inhulets River and just 12 kilometers south of the northernmost area of Russian control.²³ Kherson Oblast Military Administration Head Hannadiy Lahuta reported that Ukrainian forces liberated 20 unnamed villages in Kherson Oblast, likely referring to the settlements on the western bank of the Inhulets River.²⁴ ISW cannot independently confirm these territorial changes at this time, but Ukrainian defenders have likely secured the western Ihululets riverbank. Ukrainian forces on the west bank of the Ihulets River are likely able to fire on and disrupt Russian ground lines of communication (GLOCs) that stretch along the T2207 highway within a kilometer of the river.²⁵

Russian forces are taking measures to hinder further Ukrainian counteroffensives on the western Kherson-Mykaloiv Oblast border. The Ukrainian Southern Operational Command reported that Ukrainian forces are planning a counteroffensive in Mykolaiv Oblast and engaged in heavy battles with Russian forces in the Oblast on June 2.²⁶ Russian military Telegram channel Rybar claimed that Ukrainian forces will attempt to liberate Snihurivka, approximately 66 kilometers east of Mykolaiv City.²⁷ Russian forces conducted a missile strike on a railway bridge northwest of Mykolaiv City likely to preempt the transfer of Ukrainian forces and equipment in the area.²⁸ Russian occupation authorities continued to cut off telecommunications signals in Zaporizhia and Kherson Oblasts, and Ukrainian officials speculated that Russian forces fear Ukrainian counteroffensives and partisan activity in occupied settlements and seek to limit Ukrainian communications.²⁹

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Kherson and Mykolaiv as of June 2, 2022, 3:00 PM ET



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

Note: We recoded assessed Russian advance back to the assessed Russian control line on the left bank of the Inhulets River in Kherson Oblast given we have not seen Russian forces operating on the right bank of the river given the ongoing Ukrainian counteroffensive in the area. Combat footage from Starosillya from June 1 supports this assessment. We advanced Ukrainian counteroffensives to Davydiv Brid given Ukrainian media is referring to the settlement as Ukrainian-liberated. We will update our map when we collect more data. We also expanded Russian control to Vysokopillia, Potmkyne, and Novovozenesnske after observing Ukrainian casualties that failed to capture Vysokopillia on May 31.

Activity in Russian-occupied areas (Russian objective: consolidate administrative control of occupied areas; set conditions for potential annexation into the Russian Federation or some other future political arrangement of Moscow’s choosing)

The Kremlin continues to send mixed signals about its plans to integrate occupied Ukrainian territories – likely indicating the Kremlin has not decided on a single course of action. Kremlin Spokesperson Dmitry Peskov said that a referendum to integrate Donbas to Russia is “hardly possible” without fully ensuring security in the region, but did not specify what the Kremlin would consider “ensuring security.”³⁰ Leader of the “Fair Russia” Party (part of the pro-Kremlin “systemic opposition” of parties not directly affiliated with Putin’s United Russia party but not posing any real opposition) Sergei Mironov said that any Ukrainian Oblast may join Russia, likely in support of other claims by Russian State Duma members that the Kremlin will annex Kherson, Donetsk, and Luhansk Oblast as soon as July.³¹ Russian Senator Andrey Turchak announced the opening of a United Russia “humanitarian center” in Kherson City and claimed to have negotiated industrial cooperation agreements between Kherson Oblast and Russia, but exact Russian plans for occupied Kherson remain unclear.³² Russian-backed occupation authorities in Zaporizhia also announced the “nationalization” of Ukrainian state property, including the Zaporizhia Nuclear Power Plant (NPP), which could suggest that the Kremlin seeks to economically exploit newly occupied territories with or without direct annexation.³³ Russian Deputy Prime Minister Marat Khusnullin previously stated that the Zaporizhia NPP will exclusively work for Russia and will sell electricity to Ukraine.³⁴ Ukrainian state energy company “Energoatom” noted that Russia physically cannot export electricity from the Zaporizhia NPP as Russia is not connected to the Ukrainian or European energy grid.³⁵

The fate of the Mariupol defenders taken prisoner by Russian forces remains unclear. Ukrainian Deputy Defense Minister Hanna Malyar reported that Ukrainian officials are discussing prisoner exchanges with Russian forces, but refused to comment on the status of the negotiations.³⁶ Russian sources claimed that members of the Ukrainian Azov Regiment are imprisoned in Olenivka, approximately 22 kilometers from Donetsk City.³⁷

¹ <https://twitter.com/DefenceHQ/status/1532238230137057281>

² <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/330999902546428>

³ <https://twitter.com/GirkinGirkin/status/1532206218042916865>

⁴ <https://gur.gov.ua/content/druzhyny-blokuiut-viiskovu-chastynu-dnriivtsi-shcho-sluzhat-v-okupatsiinii-armii-skarzhatsia-na-bezlad-ta-bezpravnist-perekhoplennia.html>;

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=euJaDQP6jjQ&ab_channel=%D0%93%D0%BE%D0%BB%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%BD%D0%B5%D1%83%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%B2%D0%BB%D1%96%D0%BD%D0%BD%D1%8F%D1%80%D0%BE%D0%B7%D0%B2%D1%96%D0%B4%D0%BA%D0%B8%D0%9C%D0%9E%D0%A3%D0%BA%D1%80%D0%B0%D1%97%D0%BD%D0%B8

⁵ <https://t.me/odeskaODA/610>

⁶ <https://gur.gov.ua/content/druzhyny-blokuiut-viiskovu-chastynu-dnriivtsi-shcho-sluzhat-v-okupatsiinii-armii-skarzhatsia-na-bezlad-ta-bezpravnist-perekhoplennia.html>;

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=euJaDQP6jjQ&ab_channel=%D0%93%D0%BE%D0%BB%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%BD%D0%B5%D1%83%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%B2%D0%BB%D1%96%D0%BD%D0%BD%D1%8F%D1%80%D0%BE%D0%B7%D0%B2%D1%96%D0%B4%D0%BA%D0%B8%D0%9C%D0%9E%D0%A3%D0%BA%D1%80%D0%B0%D1%97%D0%BD%D0%B8

⁷ <https://sprotyv.mod.gov dot ua/2022/06/02/okupanty-imituyut-stvorenniya-rosijskyh-administracij-i-ne-mozhut-protydiyaty-ruhu-oporu/>

⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/330568765922875>

⁹ <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/330999902546428>; <https://t.me/epoddubny/11039>

¹⁰ <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/330568765922875>

¹¹ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KRapsXYeAxx&ab_channel=UkrinformTV;
<https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/330999902546428>;
<https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/330568765922875>; <https://t.me/luhanskaVTSA/3111>;
<https://t.me/luhanskaVTSA/3107>

¹² <https://t.me/voenkorKotenok/36946>

¹³ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KRapsXYeAxx&ab_channel=UkrinformTV

¹⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/330568765922875>; <https://t.me/luhanskaVTSA/3107>

¹⁵ <https://twitter.com/DefenceHQ/status/1532238230137057281>

¹⁶ <https://twitter.com/DefenceHQ/status/1532238230137057281>

¹⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/330999902546428>;
<https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/330568765922875>

¹⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/330999902546428>;
<https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/330568765922875>; <https://t.me/milinfofive/84346>

¹⁹ https://t.me/nm_dnr/8163

²⁰ <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/330999902546428>;
<https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/330568765922875>; <https://t.me/synegubov/3364>

²¹ <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/330999902546428>;
<https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/330568765922875>; <https://t.me/synegubov/3364>

²² <https://t.me/swodki/108082>

²³ https://twitter.com/Blue_Sauron/status/1532004263848722435;
<https://twitter.com/5urpher/status/1532077412888227840>;
<https://twitter.com/GeoConfirmed/status/1532083906475966468>

²⁴ <https://news.yahoo.com/ukraine-says-retaken-20-villages-182616294.html>

²⁵ <https://understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-june-1>

²⁶ <https://www.facebook.com/okPivden/posts/2071429826361593>

²⁷ <https://t.me/rybar/33448>

²⁸ <https://t.me/swodki/108510>; <https://t.me/swodki/108463>; <https://t.me/mykolaiivskaODA/1410>

²⁹ https://t.me/zoda_gov_ua/8557; <https://t.me/khersonskaODA/472>; <https://sprotyv.mod.gov dot ua/2022/06/01/chez-strah-posylennya-oporu-okupanty-vidklyuchyly-hersonshynu-vid-zvyazku/>

³⁰ <https://t.me/stranaua/45202>

³¹ <https://understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-june-1>

³² <https://t.me/readovkanews/35689>; <https://t.me/readovkanews/35687>

³³ <https://t.me/stranaua/45240>

³⁴ <https://understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-may-18>; <https://m dot business-gazeta.ru/news/550416>; <https://t.me/voenkorKotenok/36486>

³⁵ <https://ru.krymr.com/amp/rossiya-ukraina-voyna-energodar-zaporozhskaya-aes-zakhvat/31863811.html>

³⁶ <https://t.me/mariupolnow/12414>

³⁷ <https://t.me/readovkanews/35707>; <https://t.me/readovkanews/35701>