

Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment, June 24, 2023

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June 24, 2023, 10pm ET

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

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

Note: The data cutoff for this product was 4pm ET on June 24. ISW will cover subsequent reports in the June 25 Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment. Due to their coverage of an armed rebellion in Russia, many Russian sources did not discuss the situation on the battlefield in Ukraine, and ISW's coverage of kinetic activity on the frontlines is therefore relatively limited today.

The Kremlin announced late on June 24 that Belarusian dictator Alexander Lukashenko negotiated a deal under which Wagner Group financier Yevgeny Prigozhin will travel to Belarus without facing criminal charges in Russia; some portion of Wagner Group fighters will sign contracts with the Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD); and no Wagner personnel will be charged for their involvement in an armed rebellion. Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov announced that Russian authorities will drop the criminal case against Prigozhin and that Prigozhin will go to Belarus, thanking Lukashenko for his role in mediating the deal with the "higher goal to avoid bloodshed."^[1] Lukashenko's press service earlier broke the news about the deal, reporting that Lukashenko negotiated with Prigozhin and claiming that Lukashenko and Putin agreed to undertake "bilateral actions" to resolve the crisis earlier in the day.^[2] Lukashenko stressed the importance of avoiding a "bloody massacre" and ensuring security guarantees for Wagner fighters.^[3] Prigozhin released an audio message after the initial Belarusian report, claiming his "march for justice" achieved its goal and that he ordered Wagner forces back to their training grounds to prevent the situation from turning bloody (after Wagner forces already killed over a dozen Russian personnel).^[4] Prigozhin notably did not mention Lukashenko's involvement or the details of any negotiated deal in his own statement. **The specifics of the deal, how and on what timeline it will be implemented, the expected outcomes for each party, and the extent to which all involved parties will follow the agreement, remain unclear at this time.**

The Wagner Group encircled the Russian Southern Military District (SMD)'s headquarters in Rostov-on-Don and drove to within 330km of Moscow City on June 23 and 24, prior to the announcement of the deal. Wagner forces will reportedly soon begin withdrawing to their bases, and footage reportedly depicts Prigozhin departing Rostov-on-Don. Widely circulated social media footage posted in the early hours of June 24 depicted Wagner forces establishing a cordon around SMD headquarters in Rostov-on-Don, and Wagner-affiliated sources later posted footage showing Prigozhin walking around the headquarters with Deputy Defense Minister Colonel General Yunus-Bek Yevkurov and Deputy Chief of Military

Intelligence Lieutenant General Vladimir Alekseyev while demanding to see Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu and Chief of the General Staff Valery Gerasimov.[5] Geolocated footage posted around 1030 Moscow time confirms that Wagner personnel crossed the administrative border of Voronezh Oblast at the Burgaevka checkpoint, where Russian personnel laid down their arms and surrendered to Wagner.[6] Footage posted a few hours later depicted a column of Wagner vehicles and equipment traveling through a checkpoint on the M4 Rostov-on-Don-Voronezh-Moscow highway near the Ikorets River, about 85km south of Voronezh City.[7] Geolocated footage showed a Wagner contingent with two Pantsir-1 air defense systems moving through Buturlinovka, about 135km southeast of Voronezh City.[8] Russian sources claimed that this Wagner convoy split off from the main convoy in order to seize an airbase near Buturlinovka, although ISW has not observed visual confirmation that any Wagner fighters did so.[9] Russian sources posted footage reportedly of Russian Ka-52 helicopters striking claimed Wagner targets on the highway in Voronezh.[10] Wagner forces may have shot down up to three Mi-8 MTPR electronic warfare helicopters, one Mi-8 helicopter, one Ka-52 helicopter, one Mi-35 helicopter, one Mi-28 helicopter, and one An-26/Il-28 transport aircraft, resulting in the deaths of at least 13 pilots and airmen - and one of the single deadliest days for the Russian air force of the war in Ukraine to date.[11]

Geolocated footage posted in the early afternoon Moscow time on June 24 showed Wagner troops reaching Lipetsk Oblast and continuing north on the M4 highway towards Moscow.[12] Russian forces began digging up sections of the M4 in Lipetsk Oblast in order to inhibit Wagner's movement.[13] By nearly 1800 Moscow time, available visual evidence placed Wagner forces in Krasnoe, northern Lipetsk Oblast, about 330km south of Moscow.[14] Russian security forces reportedly began preparing defensive lines on the southern bank of the Oka River in Moscow Oblast, and unverified reports claim that locals spotted Wagner fighters in Kashira, 95km south of Moscow.[15] ISW has not observed visual confirmation of Wagner fighters closer to Moscow than Krasnoe, despite claims they reached Kashira. Kremlin newswire *RIA Novosti* posted footage following the announcement of the deal on the evening of June 24 depicting columns of Wagner equipment and personnel departing Rostov-on-Don.[16] ISW has not observed additional visual evidence of Wagner withdrawals as of the time of this publication.

Wagner Group columns on the M4 highway possessed a substantial amount of heavy equipment. Various milbloggers claimed that the Wagner column was comprised of up to 4,000 personnel and between 40 to 50 pieces of equipment, including MRAPs, T-90M main battle tanks, BMP infantry fighting vehicles, Pantsir air defense systems, and Grad MLRS systems.[17] One milblogger remarked that Wagner's apparent combination of a fast-moving convoy protected by a layered mobile air defense umbrella (comprised of Pantsirs and MANPADs) that effectively defended ground forces from Russian government aircraft was reminiscent of Wagner's tactics during previous operations in Libya, though the Wagner Group's theoretical ability to sustain independent operations in Russia is unclear.[18]

The Kremlin struggled to cohere an effective rapid response to Wagner's advances, highlighting internal security weaknesses likely due to surprise and the impact of heavy losses in Ukraine. As ISW reported on June 23, Russian authorities mobilized Rosgvardia (Russian National Guard) special police (OMON) and special rapid response (SOBR) units in response to Prigozhin's initial announcement of the armed rebellion.[19] Several Russian milbloggers reported that Rosgvardia columns were activated and were seen in Moscow Oblast and *en route* to Rostov

Oblast.[20] However, ISW has not observed any reports or footage suggesting that Rosgvardia units engaged with Wagner at any point. Rosgvardia's founding mission is to protect internal threats to the security of the Russian government such as an advance on Moscow, and it is notable that Rosgvardia failed to engage even as Wagner captured critical military assets in Rostov-on-Don and destroyed Russian military aircraft.[21] Some Russian commentators additionally noted that the majority of personnel activated for domestic defense were conscripts and Rosgvardia units, and questioned why Russian authorities decided to mobilize conscripts instead of activating wider and more specialized security forces.[22] Ramzan Kadyrov's Chechen forces, also theoretically specialized in domestic security, claimed to have activated in response to Wagner advances but never actually met or engaged Wagner - unsurprisingly, and in line with Kadyrov's paramount objective of maintaining his own internal security force.[23] **The Kremlin's dedicated internal security organs failed to respond to an independent military force capturing the headquarters of the SMD and advancing on Moscow - and Wagner likely could have reached the outskirts of Moscow if Prigozhin chose to order them to do so.**

Russian sources were quick to emphasize that Wagner's armed rebellion did not impact Russian forces in Ukraine, but Wagner's actions demonstrated Russia's lack of reserves in rear areas. The Russian MoD immediately blamed Prigozhin's armed rebellion for presenting Ukrainian forces with opportunities, claiming that Ukrainian forces began launching assaults in the Bakhmut direction to exploit the internal upheaval.[24] Russian sources widely voiced concerns that the rebellion could disrupt Russian forces' ability to defend against Ukrainian counteroffensives, but many milbloggers asserted that Russian forces are continuing to repel Ukrainian attacks.[25] A prominent milblogger specifically applauded elements of the SMD serving along the Avdiivka - Donetsk City front for continuing necessary work at the front despite the "mess" with the SMD headquarters in Rostov-on-Don.[26] Another prominent milblogger argued that Wagner's armed rebellion did not disrupt Russian frontline combat or aviation operations.[27] Prigozhin indicated that he did not want to disrupt ongoing Russian operations in Ukraine or impede Russian military aircraft flying out of airfields in Rostov Oblast likely to avoid further criticism of his effort.[28] Prigozhin may have also intended to hold the potential to storm SMD headquarters and disrupt Russian operations in Ukraine as leverage in his conflict with the MoD and demands to Putin, and therefore did not launch attacks on the headquarters or MoD personnel that could have led to severe tactical impacts in Ukraine. However, Prigozhin's rebellion has illustrated that Russian forces lack reserves in many rear areas and almost certainly will degrade the morale of Russian personnel in Ukraine, knowledge that Ukrainian forces may use to adjust attempts at breaking through Russian defenses.

Putin unsurprisingly elected to back the Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) and its ongoing efforts to centralize control of Russian irregular forces (including Wagner) over Prigozhin. Prigozhin attempted to justify his armed rebellion by accusing the Russian MoD - namely Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu and Chief of the Russian General Staff Army General Valery Gerasimov - of causing irreversible Russian losses on the battlefield and for striking a Wagner base, but notably did not criticize Putin.[29] Prigozhin may have deliberately designed his justification to allow Putin to publicly use Shoigu and Gerasimov as scapegoats for his invasion of Ukraine. Putin, however, denounced Prigozhin (without explicitly naming him) during his televised speech the morning of June 24, indirectly accusing Prigozhin of initiating an armed rebellion and committing treason due to "exorbitant ambitions and personal interests." [30] Putin's harsh stance indicated that he remains aligned with the Russian MoD institution - which has consistently proved loyal to him despite numerous military failures and has previously appeared to have Putin's support - and its efforts to formalize Russian irregular units, rather than relying on independent actors like the Wagner Group, as Prigozhin desired.[31]

The Lukashenko-brokered agreement will very likely eliminate Wagner Group as a Prigozhin-led independent actor in its current form, although elements of the organization may endure under existing and new capacities. The Lukashenko-brokered deal notably strips Prigozhin of control of Wagner Group in exchange for dropping criminal charges for rebellion and treason. The deal will, if executed as framed by Peskov, subordinate some portion of the Wagner Group under the Russian MoD, as Defense Minister Shoigu has long desired. However, it is unclear how the Kremlin will define Wagner personnel as having not participated in the rebellion, and Peskov's announcement does not specify the fate of Wagner personnel who *did* participate, other than receiving a pardon. These personnel could potentially sign contracts with the MoD on an individual basis; demobilize in Russia (a likely dangerous course of action for Kremlin internal security), travel to Belarus in some capacity, or deploy abroad to support Wagner's previous main effort of operations in Africa or the Middle East. It is unclear if Wagner forces will willingly cooperate in their integration under the Russian MoD, or if the Russian Armed Forces will willingly serve alongside Wagner Group personnel in the future. Putin's stance on Shoigu and Gerasimov remains unclear at this time, and Peskov specified that any military reshuffles are exclusively Putin's prerogative and were "hardly" discussed during the negotiations.[32]

Prigozhin likely gambled that his only avenue to retain Wagner Group as an independent force was to march against the Russian MoD, likely intending to secure defections in the Russian military but overestimating his own prospects. Prigozhin likely viewed the MoD's July 1 deadline to formalize control over all irregular formations, including Wagner, as an existential threat to his political (and possibly personal) survival. He likely therefore elected to risk using his forces in a bid to change the MoD's leadership rather than lose Wagner Group entirely, and as ISW assessed on June 23, his only real hope for lasting success was to secure MoD defections, and he did not do so.[33] Prigozhin almost certainly planned this effort in advance due to the observed coordination and speed of Wagner movements, but ISW cannot confirm this hypothesis from the open source.

Prigozhin's rebellion further eroded his existing support base in the ultranationalist community, Russian government, and within elements of Wagner Group itself. Prigozhin's armed rebellion likely further eroded existing support for Wagner by forcing Wagner-affiliated regional authorities and recruitment organizations to denounce Prigozhin's effort. Kursk Oblast Governor Roman Starovoyt called on Prigozhin to stop his plans and to prevent an internal conflict.[34] Starovoyt acknowledged that Kursk Oblast previously cooperated with Wagner to train personnel for local militias.[35] "Union of Donbas Volunteers" Head Alexander Borodai also denounced Wagner's armed rebellion as a stab in the back against Russia.[36] Prigozhin has likely previously relied on the "Union of Donbas Volunteers" to access the Russian ultranationalist community's recruitment pool.[37] Prigozhin also likely angered many Wagner personnel and Wagner-sympathetic ultranationalists by not following through with his attempted march on Moscow. A Wagner-affiliated milblogger claimed that Wagner prepared for the march on Moscow in advance and intended to provoke the evacuation of top officials and leadership from the city.[38] The milblogger decried that Prigozhin, "a politician with dubious prospects," destroyed the whole effort.[39] The notable criticism of Prigozhin from a Wagner-affiliated milblogger is likely reflective of widespread discontent among the pro-Wagner information space that previously applauded the rebellion.[40] One prominent Russian milblogger noted that many Russian milbloggers who have

supported Wagner in the past ignored the rebellion or made neutral statements about it.[41] The alleged agreement that Prigozhin reached with Lukashenko and the Kremlin is likely to upset Wagner personnel as it represents the end of Prigozhin's effort to insulate Wagner from subordination to the MoD. It is unclear at this time if Prigozhin secured buy-in from Wagner commanders or rank-and-file personnel before making the alleged agreement, and many Wagner personnel will likely be displeased with the potential of signing contracts with the MoD, demobilizing, or deploying away from Ukraine.

The optics of Belarusian President Lukashenko playing a direct role in halting a military advance on Moscow are humiliating to Putin and may have secured Lukashenko other benefits.

The Belarusian Presidential Press Service announced that Putin informed Lukashenko about the unfolding situation in southern Russia the morning of June 24, suggesting Putin approached Lukashenko to resolve the armed rebellion, though the Belarusian government often spins interactions with the Kremlin to its advantage and this framing is unconfirmed.[42] Lukashenko reportedly used his own "existing channels" to clarify the situation on the ground and negotiate with Prigozhin.[43] Lukashenko's reported access to previously established channels and successful negotiation with Prigozhin likely indicates Lukashenko has unspecified influence over Prigozhin he could leverage to deescalate the situation.[44] Lukashenko previously used Wagner forces to advance his election campaign after Belarusian authorities arrested 3 Russian citizens who allegedly belonged to the Wagner Group in late July 2020.[45] Lukashenko accused the alleged Wagner operatives of planning to interfere with Belarusian elections despite Wagner forces openly using Belarus as a transit country for their missions in the past.[46] The incident resulted in Lukashenko initiating a call with Putin on August 15, 2020, and releasing 32 Wagner personnel.[47] Lukashenko will likely seek to use the de-escalation of the armed rebellion to advance his goals, such as delaying the formalization of the Russia-Belarus Union State or preventing Putin from using Belarusian forces in Ukraine.

The Kremlin now faces a deeply unstable equilibrium. The Lukashenko-negotiated deal is a short-term fix, not a long-term solution, and Prigozhin's rebellion exposed severe weaknesses in the Kremlin and Russian MoD.

Suggestions that Prigozhin's rebellion, the Kremlin's response, and Lukashenko's mediation were all staged by the Kremlin are absurd. The imagery of Putin appearing on national television to call for the end of an armed rebellion and warning of a repeat of the 1917 revolution – and then requiring mediation from a foreign leader to resolve the rebellion – will have a lasting impact. The rebellion exposed the weakness of the Russian security forces and demonstrated Putin's inability to use his forces in a timely manner to repel an internal threat and further eroded his monopoly on force. Prigozhin's rapid drive towards Moscow ridiculed much of the Russian regular forces – and highlighted to any and all security figures, state-owned enterprises, and other key figures in the Russian government that private military forces separate from the central state can achieve impressive results. Wagner's drive also showcased the degradation of Russia's military reserves, which are almost entirely committed to fighting in Ukraine, as well as the dangers of reliance on inexperienced conscripts to defend Russia's borders. The Kremlin struggled to respond quickly in the information space and residents in Rostov-on-Don did not oppose Wagner and in some cases greeted them warmly – not inherently demonstrating opposition to Putin but at minimum acceptance of Prigozhin's actions.[48] Finally, the Kremlin's apparent surprise at Prigozhin's move does not reflect well on Russia's domestic intelligence service, the FSB. Prigozhin consistently escalated his rhetoric against the Russian MoD prior to his armed rebellion and Putin failed to mitigate this risk.[49] We cannot and will not speculate on the concrete impacts of Prigozhin's rebellion and the Kremlin's weak response and are not forecasting an imminent collapse of the Russian government, as some have done. Nonetheless, Prigozhin's rebellion and the resolution of the events of June 23 and 24 - though not necessarily the Prigozhin/Kremlin

struggle writ large - will likely substantially damage Putin's government and the Russian war effort in Ukraine.

Russian forces launched their largest series of missile strikes against Ukraine in recent months on June 24, despite the armed rebellion within Russia. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces launched 40 Kh-101/Kh-555 cruise missiles from ten strategic Tu-95 bombers from the Caspian Sea, nine Kh-22 cruise missiles from eight strategic 22M3 bombers from the northern direction, and two Kalibr sea-based cruise missiles from the Black Sea as well as two S-300 anti-aircraft missiles and three Shahed-131/136 drones.[50] The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Ukrainian air defenses shot down all 40 Kh-101/Kh-555 cruise missiles, two Shahed-131/136 drones, and one Kalibr cruise missile.[51] Ukrainian officials reported that Russian forces struck residential areas in Kyiv as well as Dnipro City and Kryvyi Rih in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast.[52] The Russian MoD claimed that Russian forces struck Ukrainian electronic intelligence centers and aviation equipment at an airfield in Kirovohrad Oblast and fuel storage facilities in Dnipro City.[53] Prigozhin stated earlier in the day that Russian aviation units operating in Ukraine were flying according to their schedules and that Wagner's control over military infrastructure in Rostov Oblast, including the Rostov airfield, would not disrupt Russian operations.[54] If Prigozhin was able to disrupt operations connected to the large strike series from the SMD headquarters in Rostov-on-Don, he likely refrained from doing so to avoid criticism that he was undermining the Russian war effort.

Ukrainian forces conducted counteroffensive operations on at least two sectors of the front and reportedly made advances on June 24. Ukrainian Deputy Defense Minister Hanna Malyar stated on June 24 that Ukrainian forces launched simultaneous assaults and made progress north and southwest of Bakhmut.[55] Malyar also stated that Ukrainian forces continue to engage in heavy fighting along the Zaporizhia front.[56] Ukrainian Tavrisk Group of Forces Commander Brigadier General Oleksandr Tarnavskiy reported on June 23 that Ukrainian forces achieved successes and advances in an unspecified area of the Tavrisk (Zaporizhia) direction.[57] Russian milbloggers claimed that intensified Ukrainian assaults and decreased Russian artillery fire contributed to Ukrainian advances south of Orikhiv during the night of June 23 and on June 24.[58] The Russian MoD claimed that Ukrainian forces also conducted unsuccessful offensive operations in the South Donetsk and Lyman directions.[59] Ukrainian Main Intelligence Directorate (GUR) representative Vadym Skibitsky stated on June 24 that Ukrainian forces will likely continue active offensive and defensive operations for the next two to three months.[60]

Key Takeaways

- **The Kremlin announced late on June 24 that Belarusian dictator Alexander Lukashenko negotiated a deal under which Wagner Group financier Yevgeny Prigozhin will travel to Belarus without facing criminal charges in Russia; some portion of Wagner Group fighters will sign contracts with the Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD); and no Wagner personnel will be charged for their involvement in an armed rebellion.**
- **The Wagner Group encircled the Russian Southern Military District (SMD)'s headquarters in Rostov-on-Don and drove to within 330km of Moscow City prior to the announcement of the deal. Wagner forces will reportedly begin withdrawing to their bases soon, and footage reportedly depicts Prigozhin departing Rostov-on-Don.**
- **The Kremlin struggled to cohere an effective rapid response to Wagner's advances, highlighting internal security weaknesses likely due to surprise and the impact of heavy losses in Ukraine.**

- **Putin unsurprisingly elected to back the Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) and its ongoing efforts to centralize control of Russian irregular forces (including Wagner) over Prigozhin.**
- **The Lukashenko-brokered agreement will very likely eliminate Wagner Group as a Prigozhin-led independent actor in its current form, although elements of the organization may endure under existing and new capacities.**
- **Prigozhin likely gambled that his only avenue to retain Wagner Group as an independent force was to march against the Russian MoD, likely intending to secure defections in the Russian military but overestimating his own prospects.**
- **The optics of Belarusian President Lukashenko playing a direct role in halting a military advance on Moscow are humiliating to Putin and may have secured Lukashenko other benefits.**
- **The Kremlin now faces a deeply unstable equilibrium. The Lukashenko-negotiated deal is a short-term fix, not a long-term solution, and Prigozhin's rebellion exposed severe weaknesses in the Kremlin and Russian MoD.**
- **Russian forces launched their largest series of missile strikes against Ukraine in recent months on June 24, despite the armed rebellion within Russia.**
- **Ukrainian forces conducted counteroffensive operations on at least two sectors of the front and reportedly made advances on June 24, and regular fighting continued on other sectors of the line.**

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



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

- Russian Main Effort – Eastern Ukraine (comprised of two subordinate main efforts)
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #1 – Capture the remainder of Luhansk Oblast and push westward into eastern Kharkiv Oblast and encircle northern Donetsk Oblast
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #2 – Capture the entirety of Donetsk Oblast
- Russian Supporting Effort – Southern Axis
- Russian Mobilization and Force Generation Efforts
- Activities in Russian-occupied areas

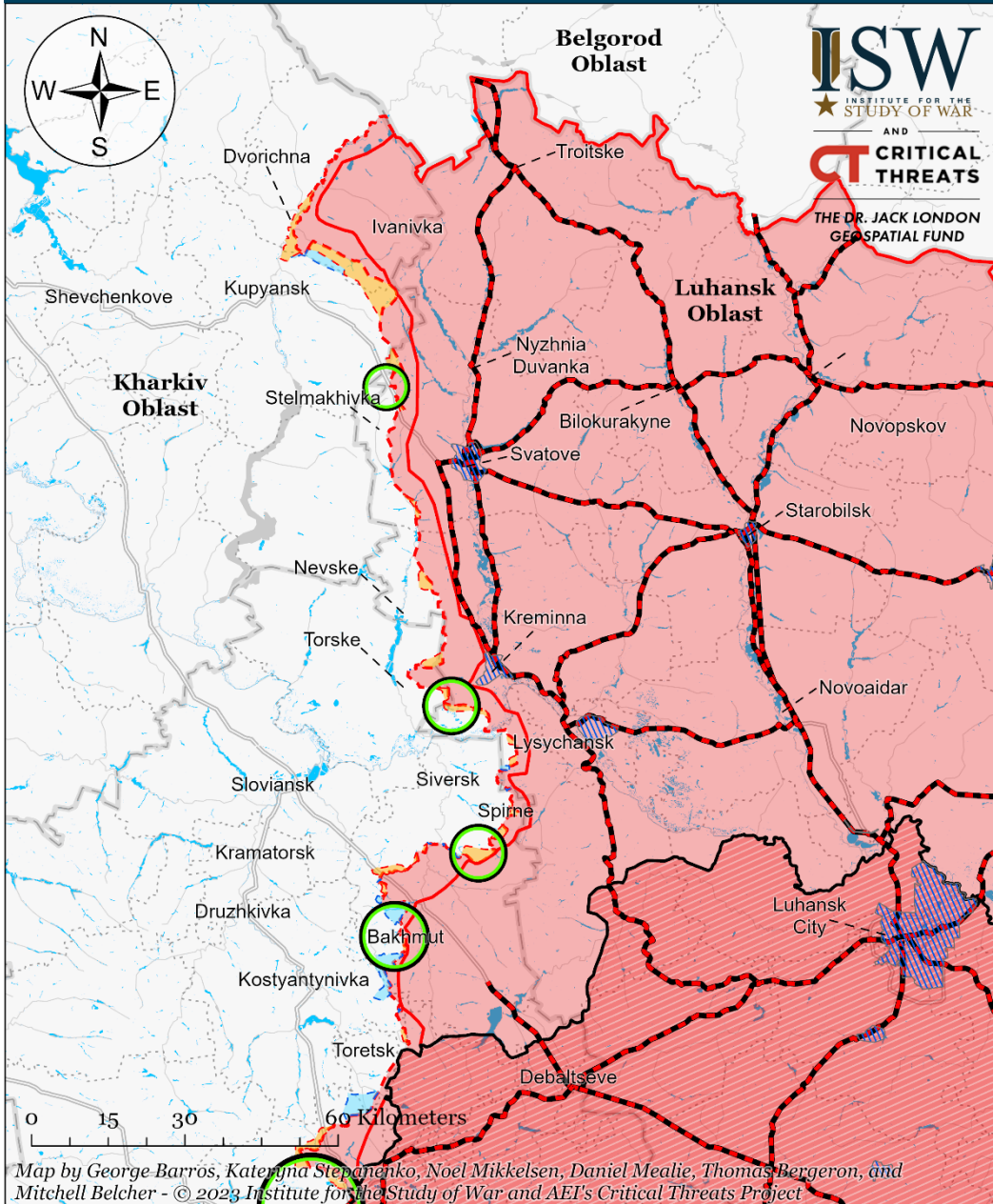
Russian Main Effort – Eastern Ukraine

Russian Subordinate Main Effort #1 – Luhansk Oblast (Russian objective: Capture the remainder of Luhansk Oblast and push westward into eastern Kharkiv Oblast and northern Donetsk Oblast)

Russian forces continued limited ground attacks along the Kupyansk-Svatove line on June 24. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces conducted unsuccessful offensive operations near Berestove, Kharkiv Oblast (28km southeast of Kupyansk).[61] A Ukrainian junior sergeant serving in the Kupyansk direction reported that Russian forces are unsuccessfully attempting to move closer to Kupyansk.[62] The junior sergeant also reported that unspecified Chechen units are operating in the Kupyansk direction, although ISW has not observed any visual confirmation of Chechen forces recently operating in this direction.[63] The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) claimed that Russian forces destroyed three Ukrainian sabotage and reconnaissance groups near Berestove and Yahidne (24km southeast of Kupyansk).[64]

Russian forces continued ground attacks near Kreminna amid Russian claims of continued Ukrainian assaults in the area on June 24. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces conducted unsuccessful offensive operations south of Dibrova (7km southwest of Kreminna).[65] Ukrainian Eastern Group of Forces Spokesperson Colonel Serhiy Cherevaty reported that the intensity of Russian attacks has declined in the Svatove and Kreminna directions.[66] The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) claimed that the Russian Central Grouping of Forces repelled four Ukrainian attacks in the Serebrianska forest area (11km south of Kreminna).[67] The Russian MoD claimed that Russian forces suppressed three Ukrainian sabotage and reconnaissance groups near Yampolivka (17km west of Kreminna), Torske (15km west of Kreminna), and Dibrova.[68]

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Luhansk Oblast as of June 24, 2023, 3:00 PM ET



- 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

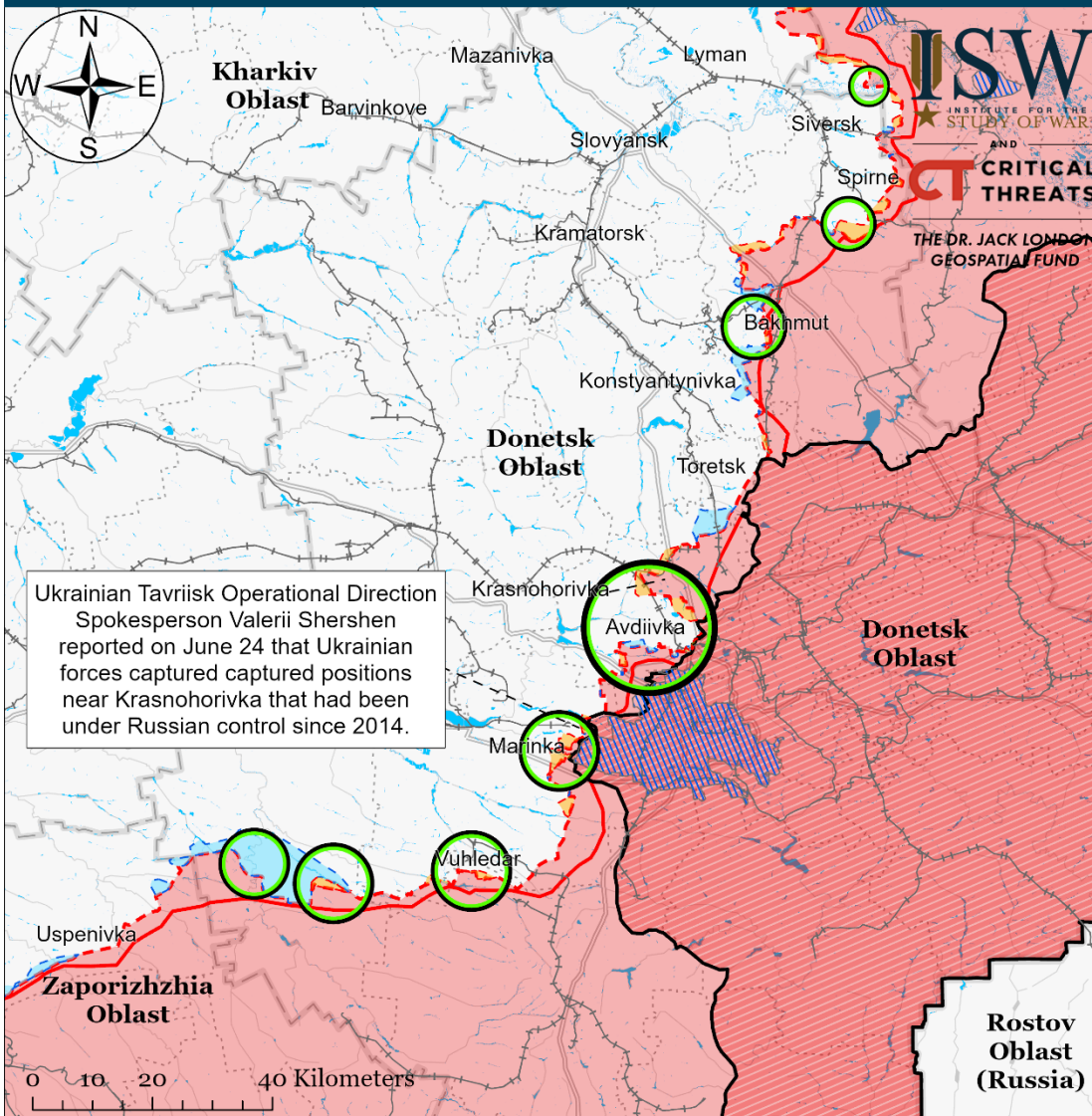
* Assessed Russian advances are areas where ISW assesses Russian forces have operated in or launched attacks against but do not control.

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

Ukrainian forces intensified counteroffensive operations in the Bakhmut area on June 24. Ukrainian Deputy Defense Minister Hanna Malyar reported that Ukrainian forces launched simultaneous offensive operations near Bakhmut itself; north of Bakhmut near Orikhovo-Vasylivka (11km northwest of Bakhmut), Bohdanivka (8km northwest of Bakhmut) and Yahidne (2km north of Bakhmut); and southwest of Bakhmut near Klishchiivka (7km southwest of Bakhmut) and Kurdyumivka (13km southwest of Bakhmut).[69] Malyar reported that Ukrainian forces achieved unspecified progress in all directions where Ukrainian forces are conducting offensives in the Bakhmut area.[70] The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) claimed that Russian elements of the Southern Grouping of Forces repelled Ukrainian assaults near Vesele (20km northeast of Bakhmut) and Bakhmut.[71] The Russian MoD claimed on June 23 that Ukrainian forces are taking advantage of Wagner Group financier Yevgeny Prigozhin’s armed rebellion to start new offensive operations in the Bakhmut direction.[72] Russian milbloggers claimed that Ukrainian forces significantly intensified the tempo of their operations in the Bakhmut direction, but that Russian forces maintained their positions in the area.[73] The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces conducted an unsuccessful offensive operation near Ivanivske (6km west of Bakhmut) and Vesele.[74]

Ukrainian and Russian forces continued limited ground attacks along the Avdiivka-Donetsk City front on June 24. The Russian MoD claimed that Russian elements of the Southern Grouping of Forces repelled Ukrainian attacks near Avdiivka, Pervomaiske (11km southwest of Avdiivka), and Marinka (27km southwest of Avdiivka).[75] Ukrainian Tavrisk Group of Forces Spokesperson Captain Valeriy Shershen reported that Ukrainian forces captured territory that Russian forces have controlled since 2014 near Krasnohorivka (22km southwest of Avdiivka) in the past week.[76] A prominent Russian milblogger accused Ukrainian sources of spreading false information about Ukrainian advances near Donetsk City, Novomykhailivka (36km southwest of Avdiivka), and Krasnohorivka.[77] The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces conducted unsuccessful offensive operations near Avdiivka and Marinka.[78] A BARS-13 (Russian Combat Reserve of the Country) affiliated source claimed that Russian forces advanced towards Marinka and captured Ukrainian strongholds in the area on June 23, although ISW has not observed visual confirmation of these claims.[79]

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



Ukrainian Tavriisk Operational Direction Spokesperson Valerii Shershen reported on June 24 that Ukrainian forces captured captured positions near Krasnohorivka that had been under Russian control since 2014.

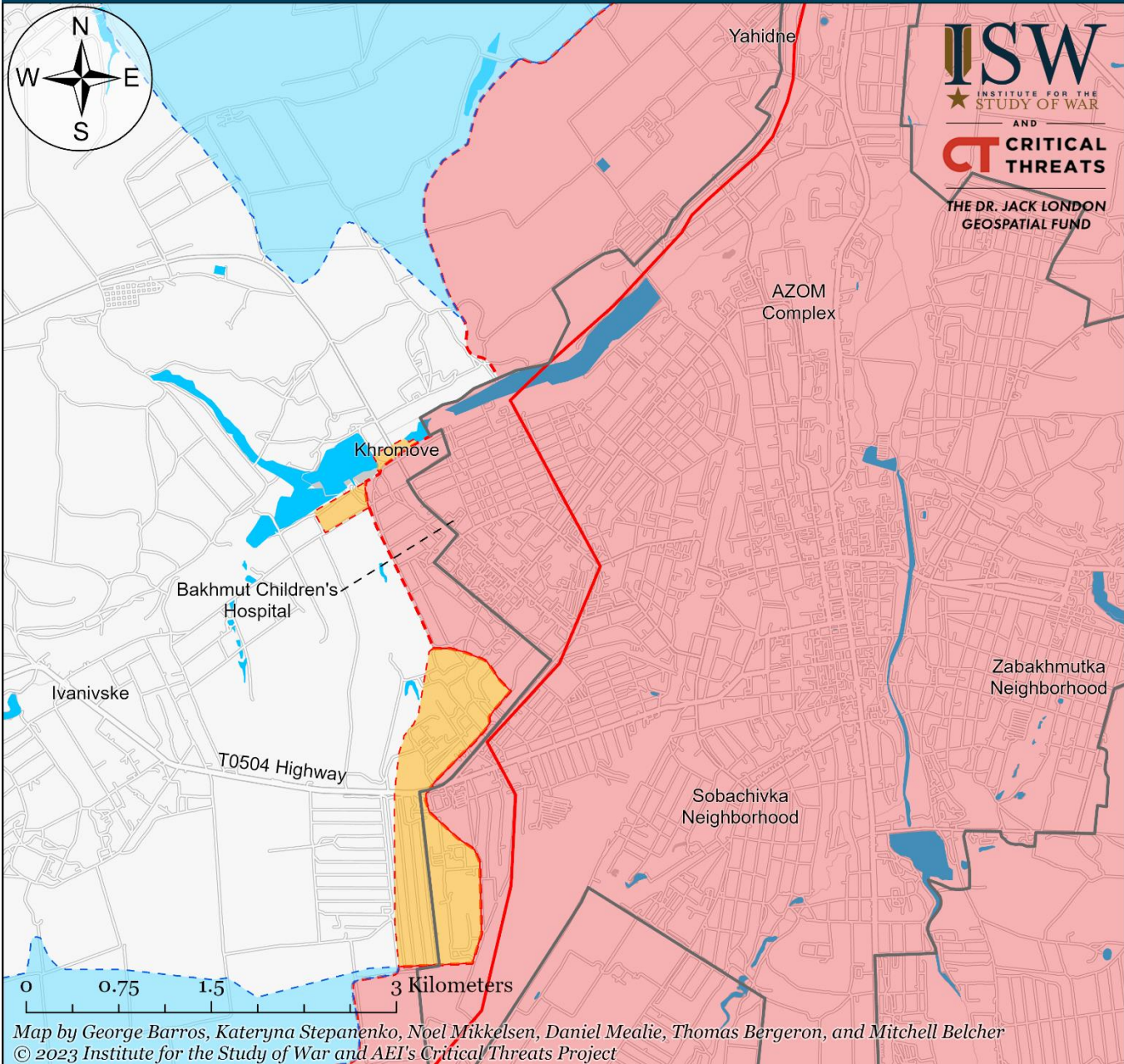
Map by George Barros, Kateryna Stepanenko, Noel Mikkelsen, Daniel Mealie, Thomas Bergeron, and Mitchell Belcher - © 2023 Institute for the Study of War and AEI's Critical Threats Project

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

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

Note: Ukrainian Tavriisk Operational Direction Spokesperson Valerii Shershen reported on June 24 that Ukrainian forces captured positions near Krasnohorivka that had been under Russian control since 2014. ISW cannot assess the exact areas of advances at this time due to a lack of sufficient evidence.

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



Map by George Barros, Kateryna Stepanenko, Noel Mikkelsen, Daniel Mealie, Thomas Bergeron, and Mitchell Belcher
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- Bakhmut City Limits
- Assessed Russian Advances in Ukraine*
- Assessed Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory
- Claimed Russian Control over Ukrainian Territory
- Claimed Ukrainian Counteroffensives
- Reported Ukrainian Partisan Warfare

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

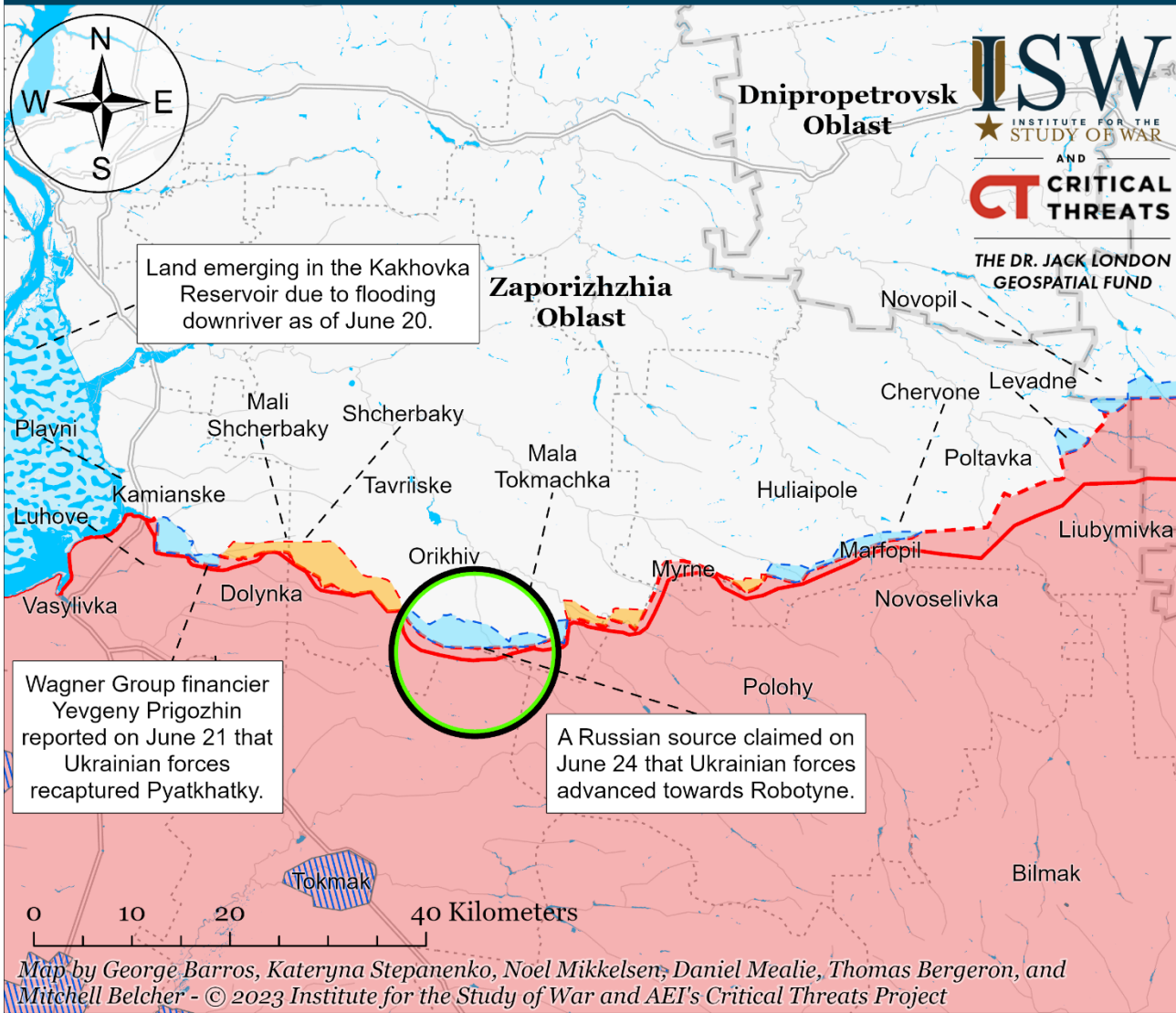
Russian Supporting Effort – Southern Axis (Russian objective: Maintain frontline positions and secure rear areas against Ukrainian strikes)

Russian forces conducted limited ground attacks in western Donetsk Oblast on June 24. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces conducted unsuccessful offensive operations near Vuhledar (30km southwest of Donetsk City).[\[80\]](#)

Russian sources claimed that Ukrainian forces continued ground attacks on the administrative border between Donetsk and Zaporizhia oblasts. The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) claimed that Russian elements of the Eastern Grouping of Forces repelled three Ukrainian assaults south and southwest of Velyka Novosilka.[\[81\]](#) The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces unsuccessfully counterattacked near Zolota Nyva (13km southeast of Velyka Novosilka) and attempted to recapture lost positions near Makarivka (7km south of Velyka Novosilka).[\[82\]](#)

Ukrainian forces continued counteroffensive operations in western Zaporizhia Oblast and reportedly made gains on June 24. Ukrainian Deputy Defense Minister Hanna Malyar reported that heavy fighting continues along all lines of Ukrainian attack in southern Ukraine.[\[83\]](#) A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces intensified assaults towards Robotyne (12km south of Orikhiv) on the night of June 23 after stopping assaults southwest of Orikhiv.[\[84\]](#) The milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces occupied Russian trench positions near Robotyne and that decreased Russian artillery fire facilitated Ukrainian advances.[\[85\]](#) A prominent Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces advanced 1.5km towards Robotyne from the north and occupied new positions as of the evening of June 24.[\[86\]](#) The milblogger claimed that Russian forces are transferring elements of the 22nd Separate Guards Special Purpose (GRU) Brigade and the Russian Airborne forces' (VDV) 45th Guards Spetsnaz Brigade to the area to prevent further Ukrainian advances.[\[87\]](#) Another Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces stopped advancing on Robotyne by the evening of June 24.[\[88\]](#)

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Zaporizhia as of June 24, 2023, 3:00 PM ET

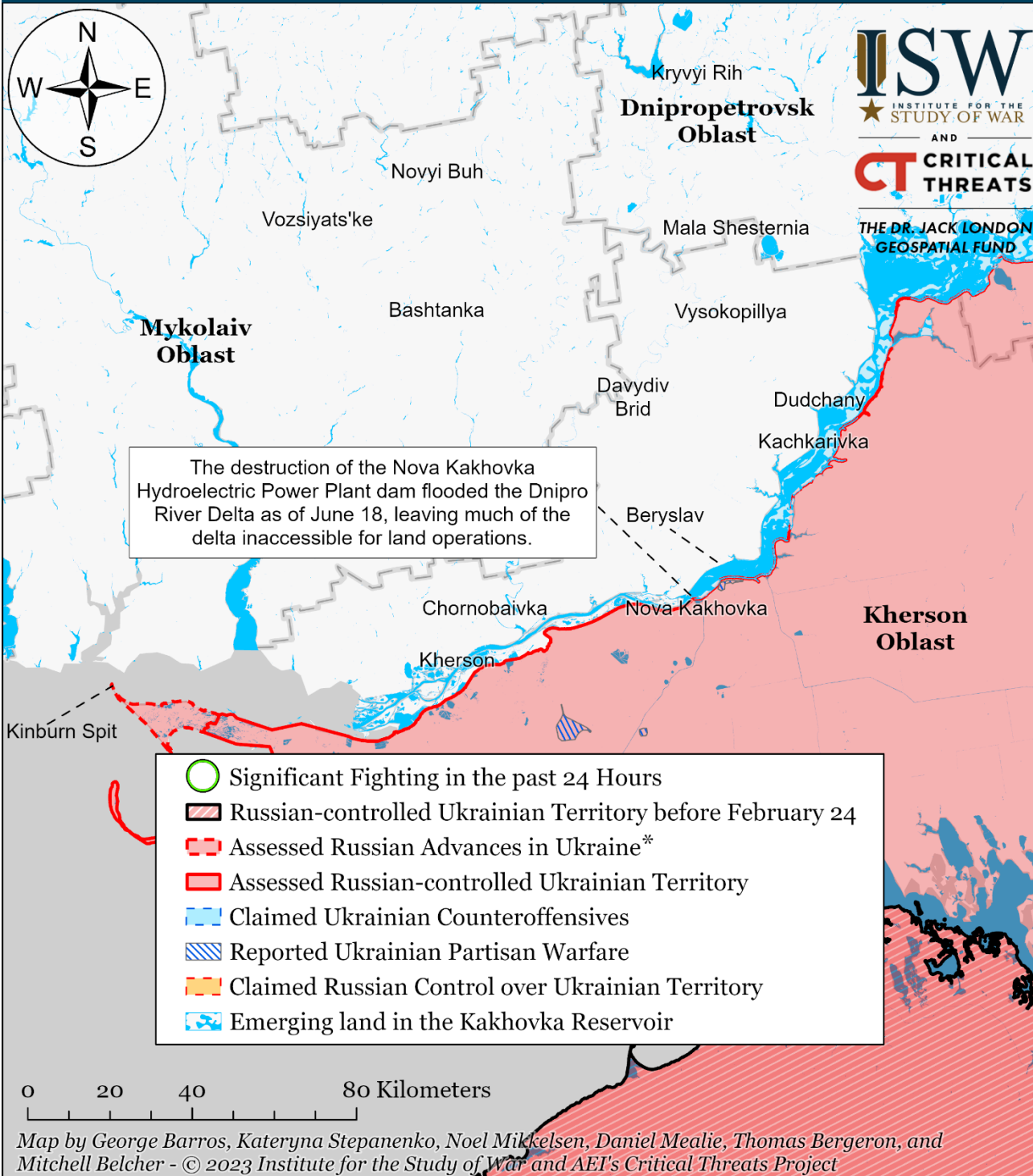


- Significant Fighting in the past 24 Hours
- Assessed Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory
- Reported Ukrainian Partisan Warfare
- Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory before February 24
- Claimed Russian Control over Ukrainian Territory
- Emerging land in the Kakhovka Reservoir
- Assessed Russian 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.

Note: A Russian source reported on June 24 that Ukrainian forces advanced 1.5 kilometers north of Robotyne over the last 24 hours.

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



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

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

ISW is holding today's force generation section in light of other developments within Russia.

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

ISW is holding today's occupation section in light of other developments within Russia.

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

ISW will continue to report daily observed Russian and Belarusian military activity in Belarus, as part of ongoing Kremlin efforts to increase their control over Belarus and other Russian actions in Belarus.

See topline text.

A spokesperson of the Kastus Kalinouski Regiment, a Belarusian volunteer unit serving alongside the Ukrainian Armed Forces, claimed on June 24 that the regiment has a large number of reserves in Belarus and urged Belarusians to join an unspecified future operation to take control of the country.[89] It is unclear if the regiment's announcement was rhetorical posturing in light of Wagner Group financier Yevgeny Prigozhin's armed rebellion in Russia or a legitimate announcement that the regiment plans to start operations in Belarus.

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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