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March 13, 2025, 9:00 pm ET

Note: The data cut-off for this product was 12:15 pm ET on March 13. ISW will cover subsequent reports in the March 14 Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment.

Russian President Vladimir Putin rejected the ceasefire proposal that the United States and Ukraine recently agreed upon in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia and offered an alternative proposal that undermines US President Donald Trump's stated goal of securing a lasting peace in Ukraine. Putin claimed on March 13 that he "agrees" with the temporary ceasefire proposal and that the "idea itself is correct" but that the cessation of hostilities "should be such that it would lead to long-term peace and eliminate the initial causes" of the war.[1] Putin thus rejected one of the main principles of the US-Ukrainian proposal — that the temporary ceasefire precede formal negotiations to end the war.[2] Putin also claimed that there are questions that "require painstaking research from both sides." Putin questioned several aspects of the US-Ukrainian temporary ceasefire proposal. Putin asked what would happen to the remaining Ukrainian salient in Kursk Oblast and whether Ukraine would be allowed to continue to mobilize forces, train newly mobilized soldiers, and receive military aid from its partners and allies. Putin questioned the control and verification measures of a temporary ceasefire and who would give the orders to stop fighting. Putin suggested that he may call President Trump to discuss the "issues" involved in the ceasefire proposal. Putin postured military strength during his rejection of the ceasefire proposal, highlighting recent Russian successes in pushing Ukrainian forces out of Kursk Oblast and claiming that Russian forces are advancing in "almost all areas of combat."

Putin's rejection of the ceasefire is consistent with March 12 reports from Russian insider sources about the Kremlin's likely response to the proposal.[3] *Bloomberg* reported on March 12 that sources familiar with the Kremlin's thinking and the situation stated that Putin will "stretch the timeline" for agreeing to the temporary ceasefire in order to ensure that his stipulations "are taken into account." A source close to the Kremlin stated that Russia may demand a halt to weapons supplies to Ukraine as a condition of the temporary ceasefire. Russian opposition outlet *Verstka* reported on March 12 that a source close to the Russian Presidential Administration stated that the Kremlin would "formally" give a "positive response" to the temporary ceasefire proposal but would also demand "impossible conditions" to which Ukraine cannot agree. The source stated that Putin wants to remove Ukraine from talks so that Russia can engage in negotiations with the United States alone while also "correcting the situation on the front" to strengthen Russia's negotiating position. ISW assessed on March 12 that these Russian insider source leaks may have been intentional and part of a Russian negotiating strategy that aims to push the United States to renegotiate its deal with Ukraine on the temporary ceasefire.[4] Putin's response to the ceasefire offer suggests that they may also have been at least partially accurate.

Putin is offering an alternative ceasefire agreement that is contrary to the intentions and goals of the US-Ukrainian ceasefire proposal. The US-Ukrainian ceasefire proposal calls for a renewable 30-day cessation of combat operations along the entire frontline, a moratorium on long-range missile and drone strikes, and a cessation of operations in the Black Sea.[5] The proposal allows for Russia and Ukraine to extend the ceasefire and assumes the continuation of US intelligence sharing and US and other military assistance to Ukraine. The US-Ukrainian ceasefire proposal was explicitly aimed at allowing Russia and Ukraine to demonstrate their willingness to make peace and separates the temporary ceasefire from future negotiations to end the war.

Putin's envisioned ceasefire agreement would grant Russia greatly disproportionate advantages and set conditions for the Kremlin to renew hostilities on terms extremely favorable to Russia. Putin's envisioned ceasefire agreement would likely require the United States and Ukraine's other supporters to pause military assistance to Ukraine and require Ukraine to stop recruiting and training personnel. Such a ceasefire agreement would begin to disarm Ukraine if renewed for a long period of time by preventing its military from reconstituting, training, and equipping itself and would cause Ukraine and the West to surrender significant leverage to Russia. Putin did not suggest that Russia would also cease military recruitment efforts, the production of military equipment, and the receipt of military aid from Russia's allies. Russia's ability to continue these measures during a potential ceasefire while preventing Ukraine from doing so would allow Russia to resume offensive operations with better manned and equipped units at a time of its choosing. Russian forces are currently on the offensive across the theater, as Putin observed, so demands that would prevent Ukrainian forces from reconstituting can only be intended to preserve or enhance Russia's ability to resume the offensive at a later date. Such demands would seem a clear indication that Putin is not, in fact, committed to making peace.

Putin's attempts to introduce a new ceasefire agreement on terms that asymmetrically benefit Russia ignore Trump's stated intention that the ceasefire set conditions for negotiations toward a more comprehensive peace agreement in the future. An agreement along the lines Putin appears to be offering would undermine the Trump administration's stated objective of bringing about a sustainable peace in Ukraine, would reinforce Putin's belief that Russia can militarily defeat Ukraine, and would incentivize Putin to resume military operations against Ukraine rather than making any concessions in formal negotiations to end the war.

Putin is holding the ceasefire proposal hostage and is attempting to extract preemptive concessions ahead of formal negotiations to end the war. Putin refused to accept the US-Ukrainian ceasefire proposal on its own terms and is instead demanding additional conditions that would contribute directly to the Kremlin's war aims. US Secretary of State Marco Rubio stated on March 11 that the US will "know what the impediment is to peace" in Ukraine if Putin rejected the ceasefire proposal.[6] ISW continues to assess that Putin is disinterested in good faith peace negotiations to end the war.[7] Putin remains committed to accomplishing his long-term goals of installing a pro-Russian puppet regime in Ukraine, undermining Ukraine's ability to defend itself against future Russian aggression and preventing Ukraine's accession to NATO. **Putin's rejection of the ceasefire proposal underscores Putin's commitment to securing his objectives in Ukraine, particularly Ukraine's demilitarization, and disinterest in any pause in fighting that does**

not result in Ukrainian capitulation or at least set conditions for a successful renewal of Russian offensive operations in the future.

Russian forces continue to clear Ukrainian forces from Sudzha and its environs as Russian troops advance closer to the border in Kursk Oblast slowed on March 13 compared to recent days. Ukrainian Commander-in-Chief General Oleksandr Syrskyi stated on March 12 that he ordered Ukrainian forces to withdraw from some unspecified positions within the Kursk salient and move to more advantageous defensive positions in Kursk Oblast in order to save Ukrainian lives.[8] The Russian Ministry of Defense's (MoD) Main Military-Political Directorate Deputy Head and Akhmat Spetsnaz Commander, Major General Apti Alaudinov, claimed that Russian forces seized and cleared Sudzha and are attacking the remaining settlements along the international border.[9] Russian sources claimed that Russian forces are clearing Sudzha and seized Podol (immediately south of Sudzha), Goncharovka (just west of Sudzha), Zaoleshenka (just northwest of Sudzha), Rubanshchina (west of Sudzha), and Molovoi (south of Sudzha).[10] Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces are advancing towards Oleshnya (southwest of Sudzha immediately on the Russian-Ukrainian border) and that Ukrainian forces maintain positions in Oleshnya, Gogolevka (northeast of Oleshnya), Guyevo (south of Sudzha), and Gornal (southwest of Guyevo immediately on the Russian-Ukrainian border).[11] A Russian milblogger continued to claim that renewed Ukrainian HIMARS strikes are slowing the rate of Russian advances south of Sudzha.[12] Drone operators from the "Rubikon" Center for Advanced Unmanned Technologies are reportedly operating near Sudzha.[13]

Russian forces also marginally advanced in northern Sumy Oblast. Geolocated footage published on March 12 indicates that Russian forces advanced northwest of Basivka (northeast of Sumy City).[14] Syrskyi stated that Russian airborne (VDV) and Spetsnaz forces are attacking along the international border and attempting to advance further into Sumy Oblast.[15] Ukraine's State Border Service Spokesperson Andriy Demchenko stated on March 12 that Russian forces are attempting to interdict Ukrainian ground lines of communication (GLOCs) along the international border near Novenke (northeast of Sumy City).[16] A Ukrainian source affiliated with Ukrainian military intelligence stated on March 13 that Russian forces are using all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) in northern Sumy Oblast and are attempting to leverage their manpower advantage to advance in the area.[17] Russian milbloggers claimed that Ukrainian forces are counterattacking near Zhuravka, Basivka, and Novenke (all northeast of Sumy City).[18]

Russian milbloggers theorized on March 13 that Russian forces may launch an organized offensive operation into northern Sumy Oblast in the coming weeks and months and may also attack into Chernihiv Oblast — in line with Russian President Vladimir Putin's March 12 statements.[19] One Russian milblogger claimed that an offensive into Sumy Oblast would significantly strengthen Russia's position in future peace negotiations.[20] Putin asked Russian Chief of the General Staff General Valery Gerasimov during a visit to a Russian command post in Kursk Oblast on March 12 to "think in the future about creating a security zone" along the Ukrainian-Russian international border.[21] Putin and other Kremlin officials previously justified Russia's offensive operation into northern Kharkiv Oblast as an attempt to establish a "buffer zone" to protect Belgorod City from Ukrainian shelling.[22] Putin may assess that Russian forces can make significant advances into northern Ukraine following their relatively quicker advances in Kursk Oblast over the previous

week, despite the fact that Russian forces have failed to make significant advances in northern Kharkiv Oblast over the last ten months.

Kremlin officials continue to use narratives similar to those that the Kremlin has used to justify its invasions of Ukraine to set informational conditions to justify future aggression against NATO member states. Russian Presidential Aide and former Security Council Secretary Nikolai Patrushev claimed in an interview with Russian national security-focused magazine *National Defense* published on March 13 that NATO "traditionally" uses threats as its main instrument in interstate relations and that NATO's "European wing" is continuing its policy on "blocking" Russia in the Baltic region. Patrushev claimed that the United Kingdom (UK) is "orchestrating" NATO's "aggravation of the situation" as part of efforts to disrupt negotiations on Ukraine and Russian and American attempts to normalize their bilateral relations. Patrushev also claimed that the Finnish population, unlike Finnish authorities, is friendly to Russia and that the UK has approved Finnish authorities to "do everything to deprive their country [Finland] of its sovereignty." Patrushev threateningly claimed that the Gulf of Finland has a historical "geographic affiliation with Russia" and that "it should not be forgotten that Finland was part of the Russian Empire." Patrushev claimed that the Russian Empire "respected" and "preserved" the Finnish people and language in the Grand Duchy of Finland. Patrushev appeared to try to compare Russia's current war against Ukraine to the Soviet-Finnish Winter War in 1939–1940. Patrushev claimed that Finnish attempts to seize Soviet lands and "actively militarize" created a threat to the USSR and that Finland was "indiscriminately exterminating" the Slavic population in Karelia. Patrushev claimed that the West is "again turning [Finland] into a springboard" for aggression against Russia. The Kremlin has used similar false narratives about the Ukrainian government's discrimination of Russian-speaking minorities in Ukraine and the military threats that Ukraine supposedly poses to Russia in order to justify Moscow's invasions of Ukraine. Patrushev's claims that the UK is "orchestrating" Finland's and the Baltic states' allegedly threatening behavior are likely part of the Kremlin's ongoing efforts to drive wedges between the United States and Europe and to weaken NATO.[23] The Kremlin appears to be using the same general narrative playbook that it has used against Ukraine and other former Soviet states but is adjusting its narratives to exploit any tensions among Western states.

Russian forces continue to execute Ukrainian prisoners of war (POW) in violation of international law. Ukrainian Ombudsman Dmytro Lubinets reported on March 13 that there is footage of Russian forces allegedly executing five unarmed Ukrainian POWs in an unspecified area.[24] Russian opposition outlet *Astra* reported on March 13 that there is footage reportedly filmed near Kazachya Loknya (north of Sudzha in Kursk Oblast) showing five deceased Ukrainian POWs.[25] ISW has observed and reported on numerous instances of Russian servicemembers executing Ukrainian POWs along the frontline in Ukraine and Kursk Oblast and continues to assess that this is a systemic trend in the Russian military and that Russian commanders are either complicit in or directly enabling their subordinates to conduct such atrocities.[26]

Russia will likely expand its permanent military basing in Belarus to enhance Russia's force posture against NATO's eastern flank. Russian President Vladimir Putin and Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko met in Moscow on March 13 and ratified the Russian-Belarus Union State treaty on security guarantees.[27] The treaty permits Russia to establish military bases and infrastructure in Belarus.[28] Putin noted that the treaty on security guarantees defines Russia's and

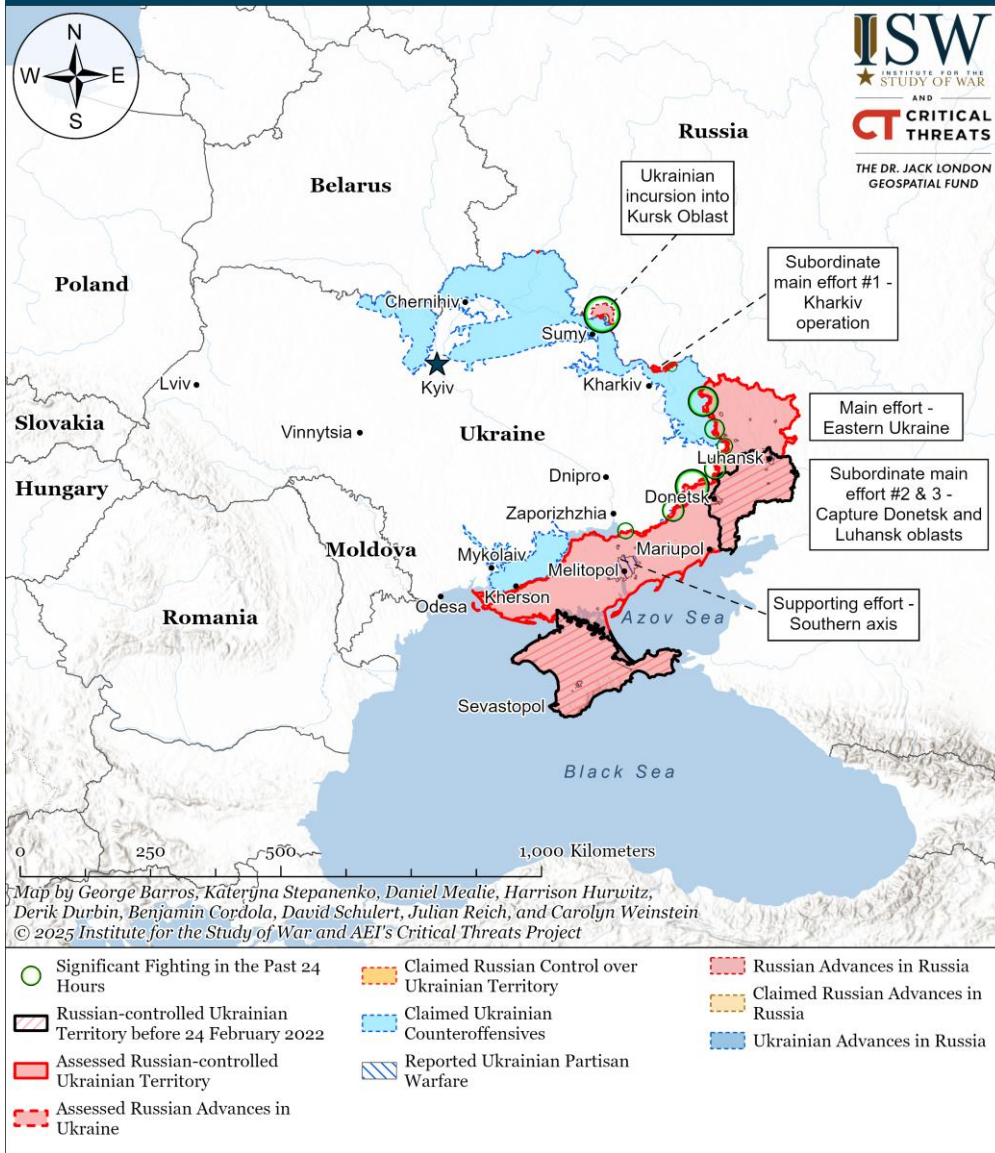
Belarus' mutual allied obligations to ensure their defense and security using "the entire available arsenal of forces and means." Putin noted that Russia has deployed a joint Regional Group of Forces, modern Russian defense systems, and tactical nuclear weapons to Belarusian territory — all of which Putin claimed "reliably covers" the western borders of Belarus and Russia. ISW forecasted in 2021 that Russia may deploy a permanent Russian force presence in Belarus in order to increase Russia's capacity to threaten NATO's eastern flank and continues to assess that the Kremlin is using the Union State framework to advance its strategic effort to de facto annex Belarus.[29]

Key Takeaways:

- **Russian President Vladimir Putin rejected the ceasefire proposal that the United States and Ukraine recently agreed upon in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia and offered an alternative proposal that undermines US President Donald Trump's stated goal of securing a lasting peace in Ukraine.**
- **Putin is offering an alternative ceasefire agreement that is contrary to the intentions and goals of the US-Ukrainian ceasefire proposal.**
- **Putin's envisioned ceasefire agreement would grant Russia greatly disproportionate advantages and set conditions for the Kremlin to renew hostilities on terms extremely favorable to Russia.**
- **Putin is holding the ceasefire proposal hostage and is attempting to extract preemptive concessions ahead of formal negotiations to end the war.**
- **Russian forces continue to clear Ukrainian forces from Sudzha and its environs as Russian troops advance closer to the border in Kursk Oblast slowed on March 13 compared to recent days.**
- **Russian milbloggers theorized on March 13 that Russian forces may launch an organized offensive operation into northern Sumy Oblast in the coming weeks and months and may also attack into Chernihiv Oblast — in line with Russian President Vladimir Putin's March 12 statements.**
- **Kremlin officials continue to use narratives similar to those that the Kremlin has used to justify its invasions of Ukraine to set informational conditions to justify future aggression against NATO member states.**
- **Russian forces continue to execute Ukrainian prisoners of war (POW) in violation of international law**
- **Russia will likely expand its permanent military basing in Belarus to enhance Russia's force posture against NATO's eastern flank.**
- **Ukrainian forces recently advanced near Pokrovsk, and Russian forces recently advanced in Sumy Oblast and near Lyman, Siversk, and Toretsk.**
- **Russia continues its crypto-mobilization efforts against the backdrop of US efforts to start the negotiation process to end the war.**

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Russo-Ukrainian War

March 13, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



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

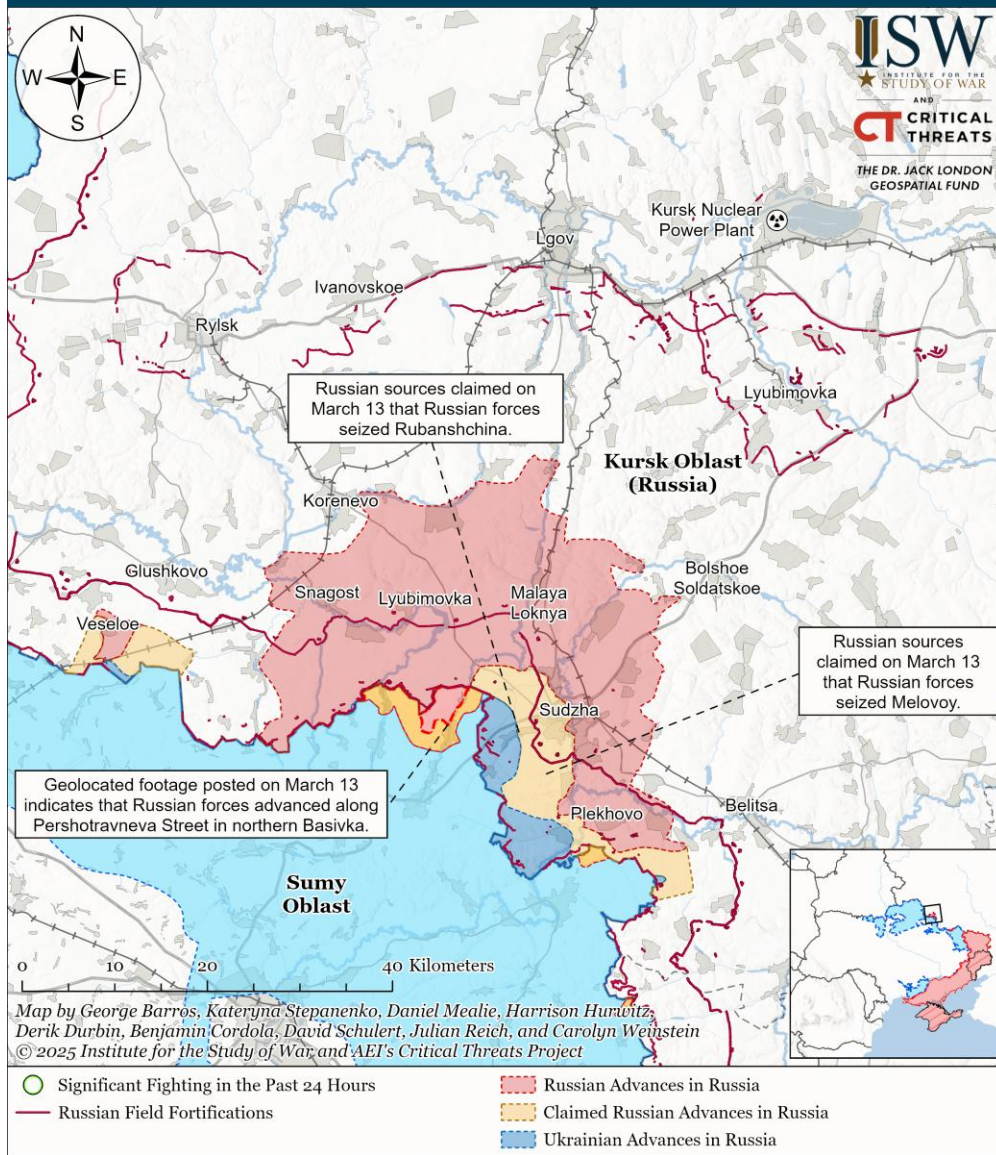
- Ukrainian Operations in the Russian Federation
- Russian Main Effort – Eastern Ukraine (comprised of three subordinate main efforts)

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

Ukrainian Operations in the Russian Federation

See topline text for reports on Russian activity in Kursk Oblast and northern Sumy Oblast.

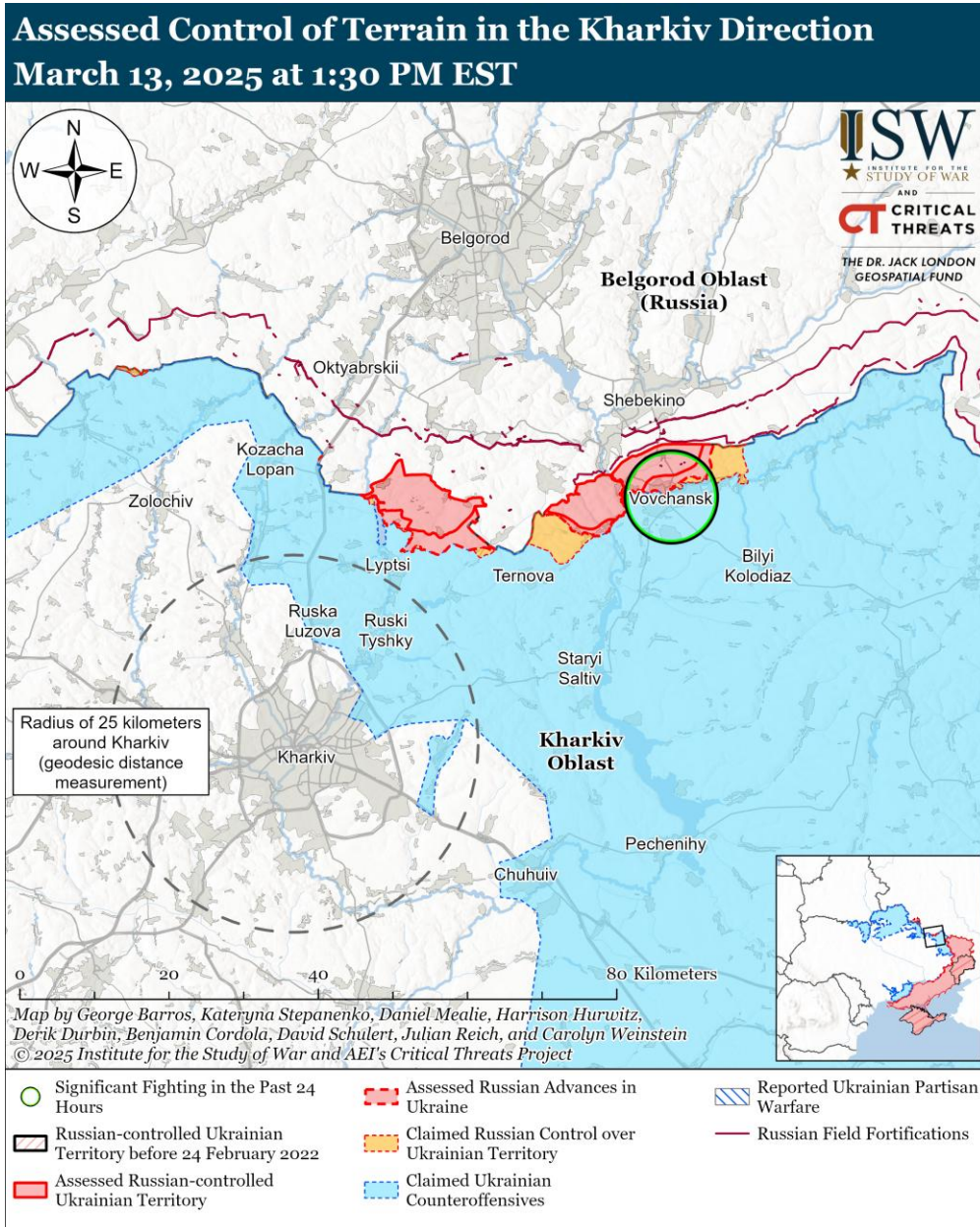
Assessed Control of Terrain in the Kursk Direction March 13, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



Ukrainian outlet *Suspilne* reported on March 13, citing sources in Ukrainian intelligence, that drone operators of Ukraine's Main Military Intelligence Directorate (GUR) struck the Kaluga Aerated Concrete Plant in Kaluga City.[30] The sources stated that Russia set up a temporary drone production line at the facility. Kaluga Oblast Governor Vladislav Shapsha stated that debris from downed drones struck an industrial enterprise in Dzerzhinsky Raion, causing a fire.[31]

Russian Main Effort – Eastern Ukraine

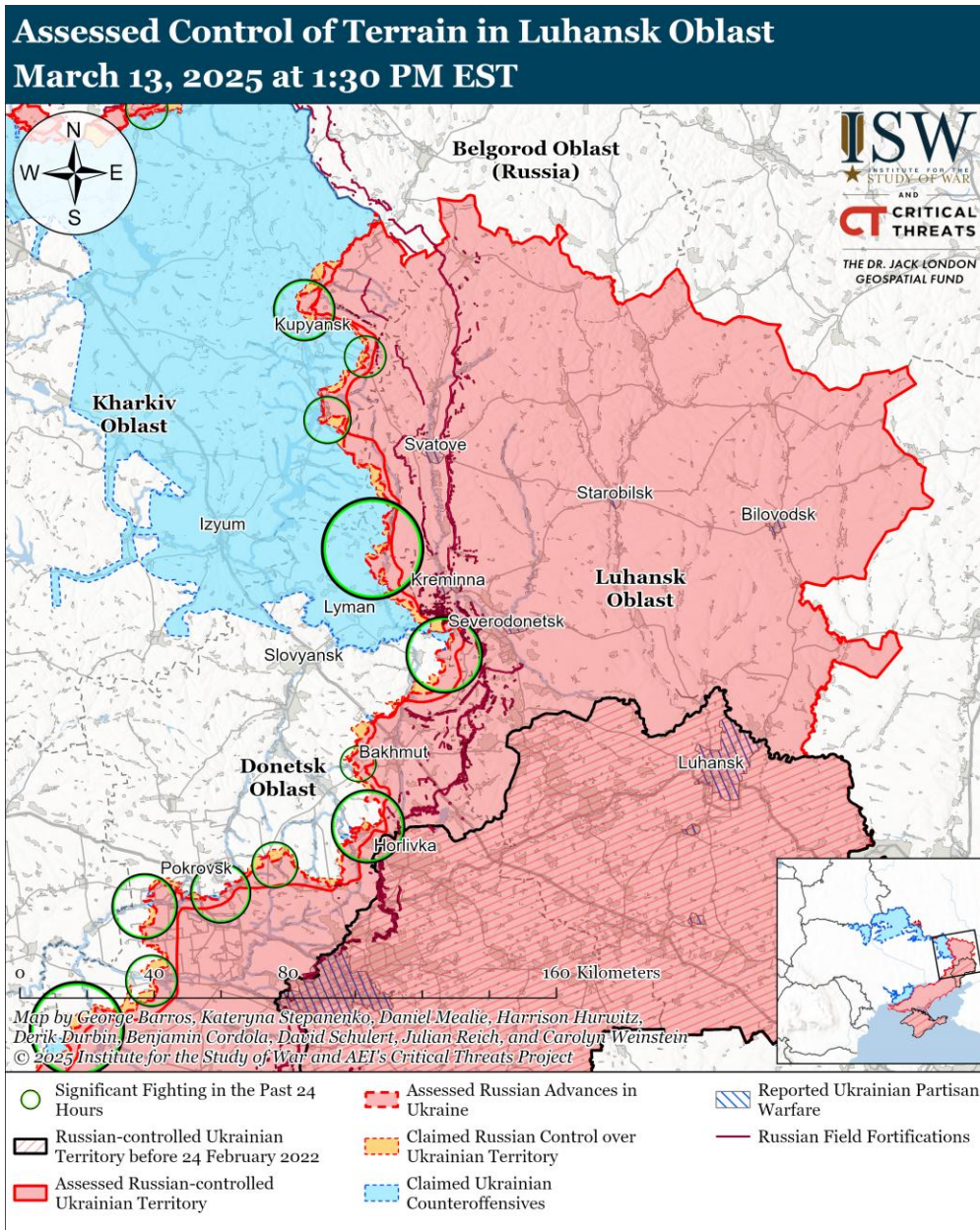
Russian Subordinate Main Effort #1 – Kharkiv Oblast (Russian objective: Push Ukrainian forces back from the international border with Belgorod Oblast and approach to within tube artillery range of Kharkiv City)



Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Kharkiv direction on March 13 but did not advance.

Russian forces conducted offensive operations northeast of Kharkiv City near Vovchansk on March 12 and 13.[32]

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 March 13 but did not make confirmed advances.

Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed on March 13 that Russian forces advanced 700 meters from bridgeheads in the Fyholivka-Novomlynsk area towards Krasne Pershe and 600 meters in the Topoli direction towards Kamyanka (all northeast of Kupyansk).[33] Ukrainian military observer Kostyantyn Mashovets stated on March 13 that Ukrainian forces maintain defensive positions in western Zapadne (north of Kupyansk) and in northwestern Dvorichna (northeast of Kupyansk) despite

Russian attempts to entirely seize these settlements.[34] Mashovets also stated that Ukrainian forces counterattacked in the area west of Synkivka and the Oskil River's east (left) bank and north of Kupyansk near eastern Zapadne and successfully pushed Russian forces back east of the Kupyansk-Dvorichna P-79 road between Zapadne and Doroshivka (west of Zapadne).[35]

Russian forces continued conducting ground attacks north of Kupyansk near Doroshivka; northeast of Kupyansk near Topoli and Krasne Pershe along the Oskil River as part of Russian efforts to establish a new bridgehead on the river's west (right) bank; east of Kupyansk near Petropavlivka; and southeast of Kupyansk near Stepova Novoselivka on March 12 and 13.[36] Russian forces are reportedly increasing their operational tempo in the Kupyansk direction. Ukrainian military officials operating in the Kupyansk and Lyman directions reported that Russian forces recently increased their activity in the area and that Russian forces are attacking with mechanized equipment and large numbers of personnel.[37] Khortytsia Group of Forces Spokesperson Major Viktor Trehubov stated that Russian forces used previous icy weather to transfer equipment and infantry across the frozen Oskil River to the west (right) bank.[38]

Order of Battle: Mashovets stated that elements of the Russian 25th Motorized Rifle Brigade (6th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Leningrad Military District [LMD]) are operating near Synkivka.[39]

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Borova direction on March 13, but did not make confirmed advances.

Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed on March 13 that Russian forces advanced west of Kolisnykivka and southwest of Kruhlyakivka (both northeast of Borova) in the direction of Bohuslavka (south of Kruhlyakivka).[40]

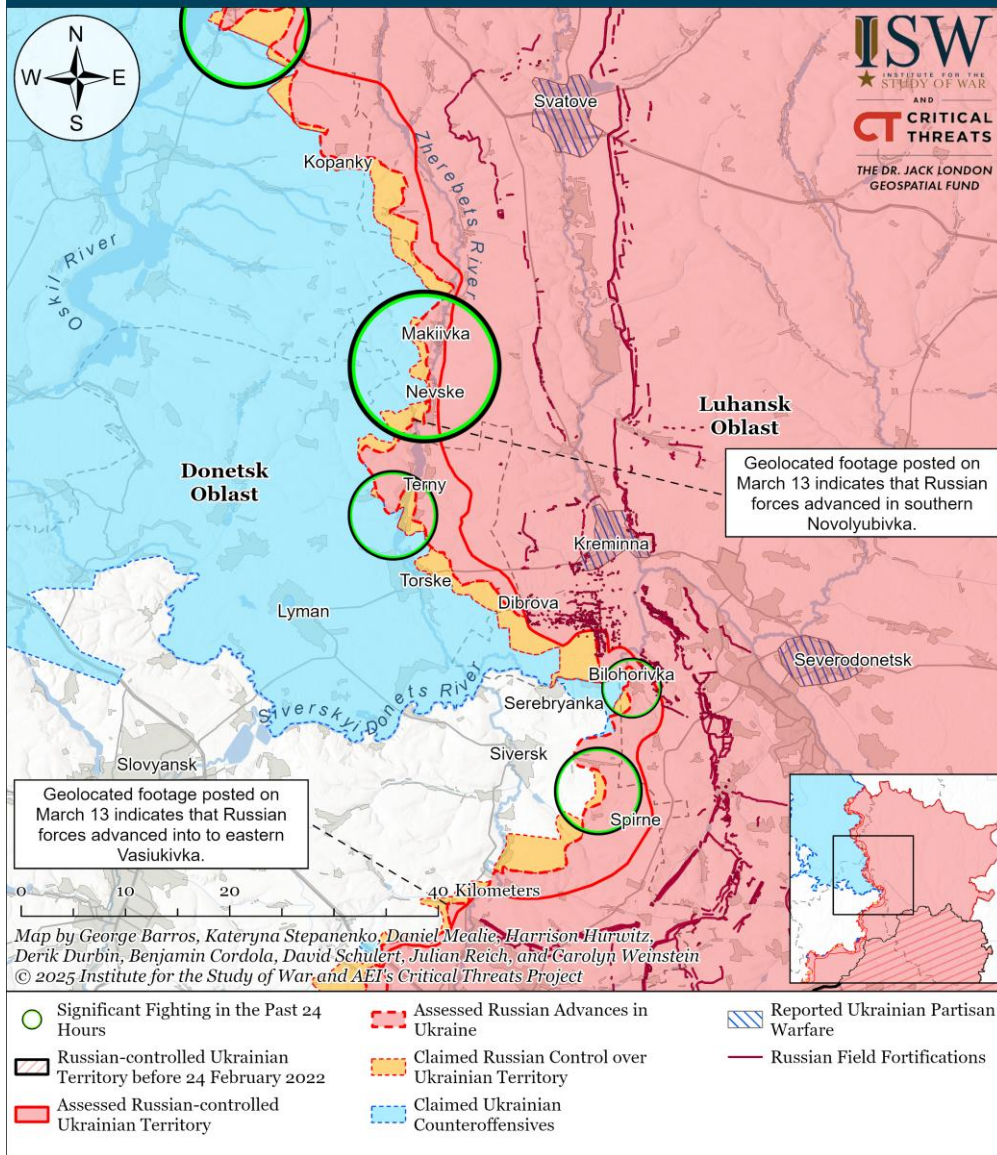
Russian forces conducted ground attacks northeast of Borova near Bohuslavka and southeast of Borova near Hrekivka on March 12 and 13.[41] Ukrainian forces reportedly conducted counterattacks east of Borova near Nadiya.[42]

Order of Battle: Elements of Russia's 1st Guards Motorized Rifle Regiment (2nd Guards Motorized Rifle Division, 1st Guards Tank Army [GTA], MMD) are reportedly operating in the vicinity of Bohuslavka and southern Zahryzove (northeast of Borova).[43] Elements of the 752nd Motorized Rifle Regiment (3rd Motorized Rifle Division, 20th CAA, MMD) are reportedly operating near Nadiya.[44]

Russian forces recently advanced in the Lyman direction.

Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on March 13 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced in southern Novolyubivka (northeast of Lyman).[45]

**Assessed Control of Terrain in the Svatove-Kreminna Direction
March 13, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST**



Russian forces continued ground attacks north of Lyman toward Nove, Zelena Dolyna, and Novomykhailivka and northeast of Lyman near Yampolivka, Myrne, and Kolodyazi on March 12 and 13.[46] Russian forces are reportedly attacking in the direction of Nove and south of Yampolivka against organized Ukrainian defenses.[47]

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

Russian forces recently advanced in the Siversk direction.

Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on March 12 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced to the T-0513 Siversk-Bakhmut highway northwest of Sakko i Vantsetti (southeast

of Siversk).[48] Additional geolocated footage published on March 13 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced to eastern Vasyukivka (west of Sakko i Vantsetti).[49]

Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced two kilometers in the forested area south of Hryhorivka (northeast of Siversk).[50]

Russian forces conducted offensive operations northeast of Siversk near Bilohorivka, east of Siversk near Verkhokamyanske, and southeast of Siversk near Ivano-Darivka on March 12 and 13.[51]

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Chasiv Yar direction on March 13 but did not advance.

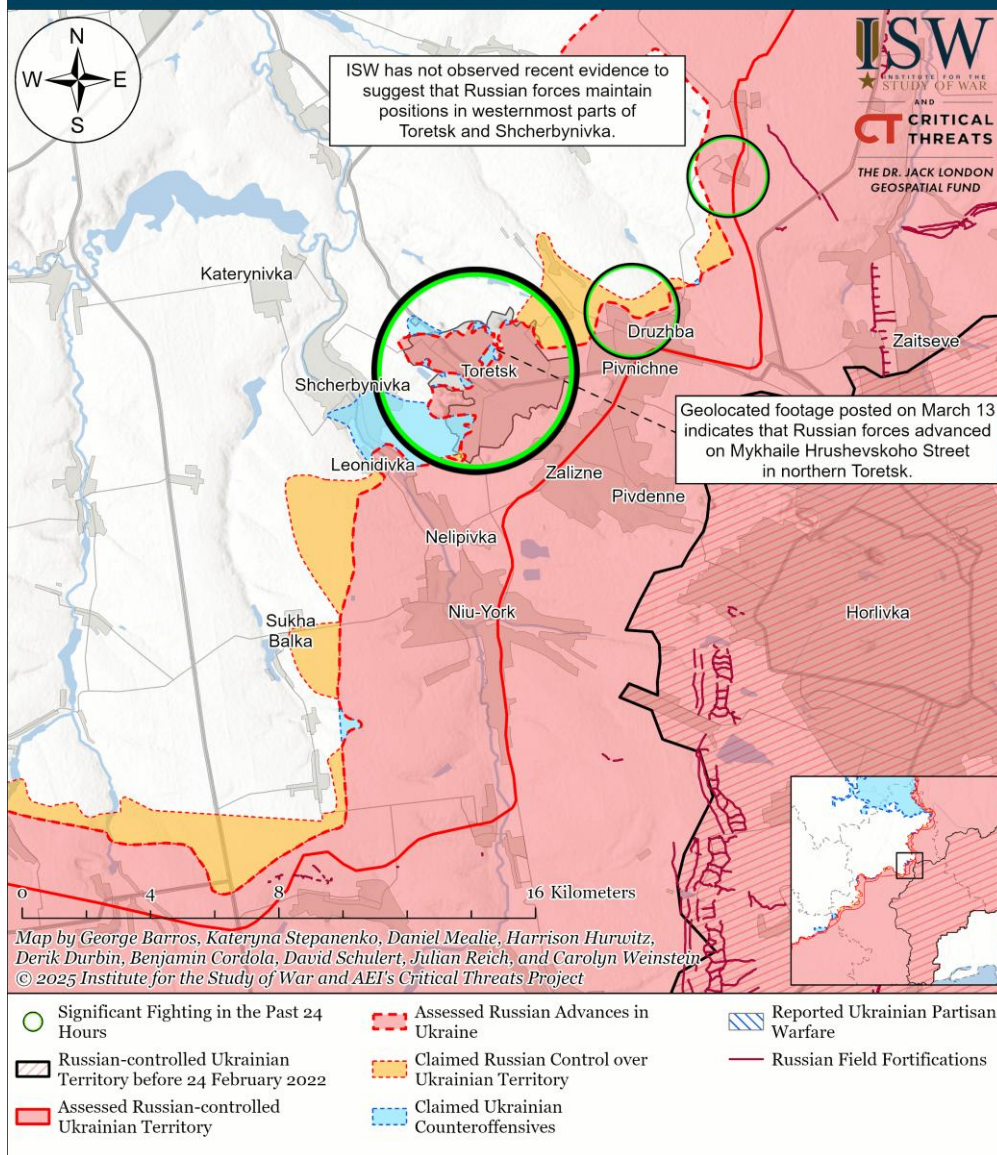
Russian forces conducted offensive operations near Chasiv Yar itself and southeast of Chasiv Yar near Ozaryanivka on March 13.[52]

Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed that unspecified Russian airborne (VDV) elements advanced within Chasiv Yar.[53]

A Russian milblogger claimed that difficult terrain and Ukrainian first-person view (FPV) drone activity are complicating Russian advances near Stupochky (south of Chasiv Yar).[54] The milblogger claimed that Russian forces are using FPV drones with fiber-optic cables in order to overcome Ukrainian electronic warfare (EW) systems in the Chasiv Yar direction.

Russian forces recently advanced in the Toretsk direction.

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Toretsk Direction March 13, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on March 13 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced along Mykhaila Hrushevs'koho Street in northern Toretsk.[55]

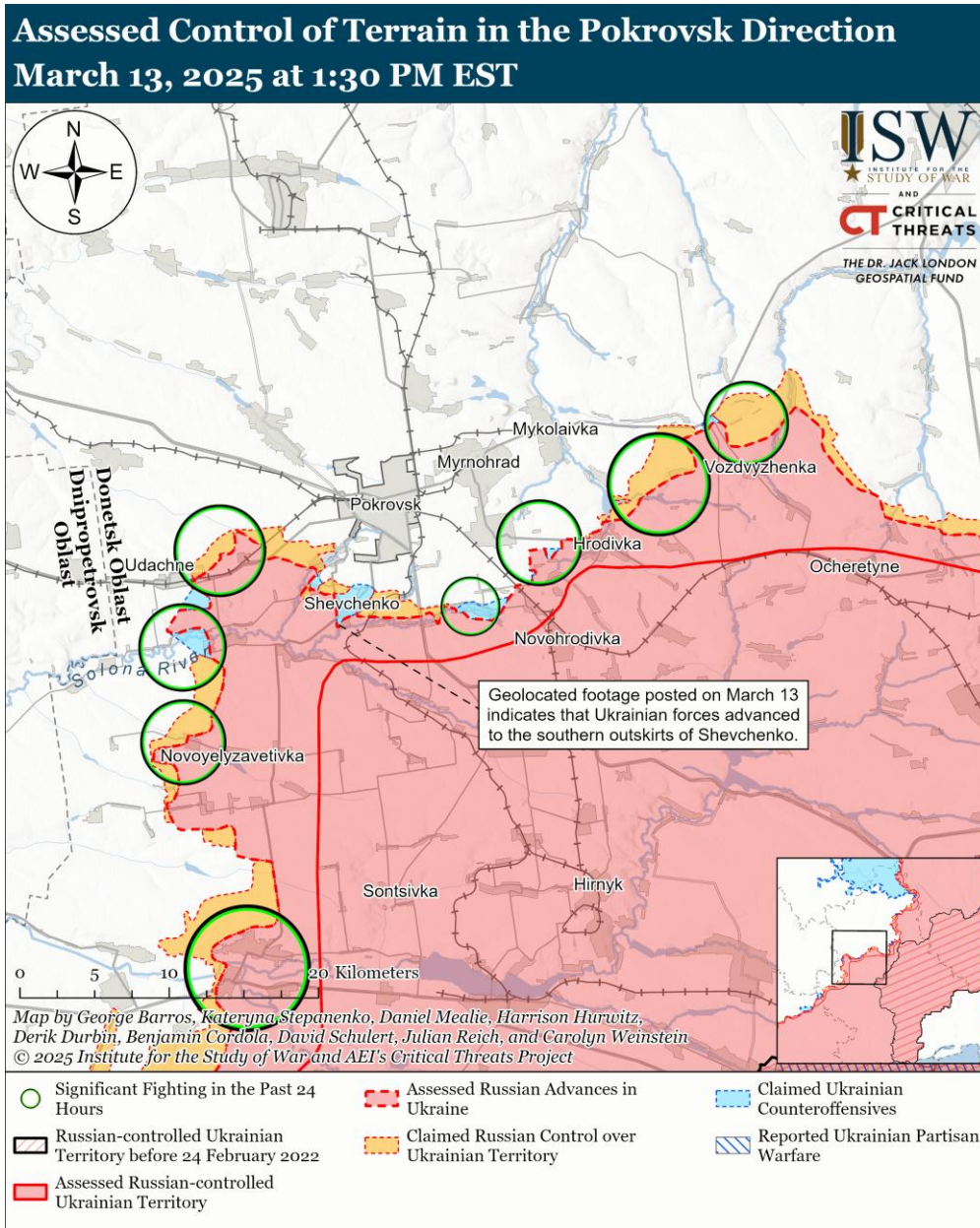
ISW reassessed assessed Russian advances from its map in northwestern Toretsk and Shcherbynivka (west of Toretsk), as ISW has not observed evidence of an enduring Russian presence in these areas, and because ISW has observed limited Ukrainian counterattacks in central Toretsk. These changes did not occur in the past 24 hours. Russian milbloggers have recently claimed that Ukrainian forces have counterattacked and seized positions in the area.[56]

Russian forces conducted offensive operations near Toretsk itself; east of Toretsk near Druzhba; and southwest of Toretsk near Leonidivka on March 12 and 13.[57] Russian milbloggers claimed that Ukrainian forces are counterattacking within and near Toretsk.[58]

Ukrainian Luhansk Group of Forces Spokesperson Lieutenant Colonel Dmytro Zaporozhets stated that Russian forces have recently significantly increased the number of artillery strikes and assaults in the Toretsk direction and have increased the size of their infantry assault groups from two-to-five personnel to up to 10 personnel.[59]

Order of Battle: Zaporozhets stated that elements of the Russian 150th Motorized Rifle Division (8th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Southern Military District [SMD]) are operating in the Toretsk direction.[60]

Ukrainian forces recently advanced in the Pokrovsk direction.



Assessed Ukrainian advances: Geolocated footage published on March 11 and 13 indicates that Ukrainian forces recently advanced to the southern outskirts of Shevchenko (south of Pokrovsk) and have seized most of the settlement.[61] ISW cannot confirm that Ukrainian forces have entirely liberated Shevchenko at this time, however.

Unconfirmed claims: Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced west of Nadiivka toward Kotlyarivka and south and southeast of Sribne (all southwest of Pokrovsk).[62] A Russian source claimed that Ukrainian forces marginally advanced in southern Udachne (southwest of Pokrovsk) and that Russian forces pushed Ukrainian forces to the northern outskirts of Shevchenko.[63]

Russian forces attacked northeast of Pokrovsk near Vodyane Druhe; east of Pokrovsk near Yelyzavetivka and Promin; southeast of Pokrovsk near Lysivka, Novotroitske, and Dachenske; south of Pokrovsk near Shevchenko and Zelene; and southwest of Pokrovsk near Pishchane, Kotlyne, Uspenivka, Sribne, Novooleksandrivka, Novoserhiivka, Kotlyarivka, Zvirove, Novoukrainka, Yasenove, and Nadiivka on March 12 and 13.[64] Russian milbloggers claimed that Ukrainian forces are counterattacking near Shevchenko and Udachne.[65]

The spokesperson for a Ukrainian brigade operating in the Pokrovsk direction stated on March 13 that Russian activity in the area has decreased compared to the start of March 2025, that Russian forces continue to attack in small infantry groups, and that Russian forces are using fewer light armored vehicles in the area.[66] The spokesperson noted that Russian forces conduct more assaults when the weather is cloudy - likely due to the decreased risk of Ukrainian drone strikes and reconnaissance - and do not use vehicles during clear weather. The spokesperson stated that Russian forces attack along the same route and at the same time and that the first group of Russian forces often attack without weapons. Ukrainian military observer Kostyantyn Mashovets stated on March 13 that Ukrainian forces occupy Preobrazhenka (southwest of Pokrovsk), which is hampering Russian advances in Nadiivka (north of Preobrazhenka) and along the Sribne-Troitske line (southwest of Pokrovsk and south of Preobrazhenka).[67] A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces occupy roughly 50 percent of Shevchenko.[68] A Russian source claimed that Russian forces are trying to regain lost positions in Udachne, Pishchane, Shevchenko, and Zelene.[69]

Order of Battle: Drone operators of the Russian 33rd Motorized Rifle Regiment (20th Motorized Rifle Division, 8th CAA, SMD) are reportedly operating near Tarasivka (northeast of Pokrovsk), and elements of the 400th Artillery Regiment, 228th Motorized Rifle Regiment (both reportedly of the 90th Tank Division, 41st CAA, Central Military District [CMD]) and 589th Motorized Rifle Regiment (27th Motorized Rifle Division, 2nd CAA, CMD) are reportedly operating in the Pokrovsk direction.[70]

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Kurakhove direction on March 13 but did not advance.

Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed on March 13 that Russian forces advanced west of Rozlyv (southwest of Kurakhove).[71]

Russian forces attacked west of Kurakhove near Kostyantynopil, Andriivka, and Oleksiivka and southwest of Kurakhove near Rozlyv on March 12 and 13.[72]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 11th Air Force and Air Defense Army (Russian Aerospace Forces [VKS] and Eastern Military District [EMD]) are reportedly operating near Bahatyr (west of Kurakhove).[73] Mashovets stated that elements of the Russian 110th and 114th motorized rifle brigades (both 51st CAA, formerly 1st Donetsk People's Republic Army Corps [DNR AC], SMD) are operating near Andriivka and that elements of the 36th Motorized Rifle Brigade (29th CAA, EMD), 39th Motorized Rifle Brigade (68th AC, EMD), and 57th Motorized Rifle Brigade (5th CAA, EMD) are operating in the Kurakhove direction.[74]

Russian Presidential Administration First Deputy Head Sergei Kiriienko and DNR Head Denis Pushilin visited Russian-occupied Kurakhove on March 13, and Kiriienko spoke with soldiers of the 5th Motorized Rifle Brigade (51st CAA).[75]

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Velyka Novosilka direction on March 13 but did not make any confirmed advances.

Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed on March 13 that Russian forces advanced east of Dniproenerhiya (north of Velyka Novosilka) and north and west of Burlatske (northwest of Velyka Novosilka).[76]

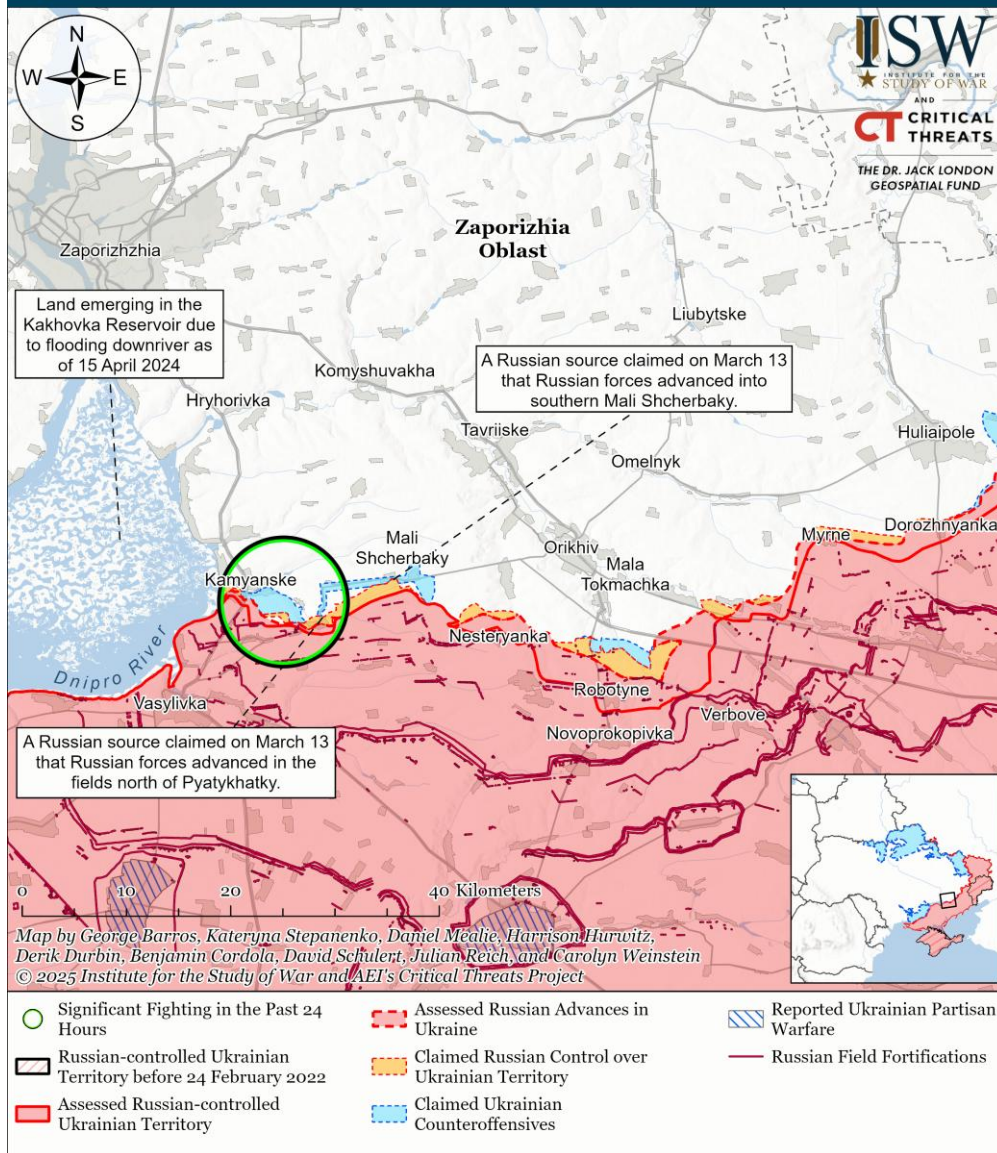
Russian forces attacked northwest of Velyka Novosilka near Burlatske; west of Velyka Novosilka near Pryvilne and Novosilka; and southwest of Velyka Novosilka near Novopil and Novodarivka on March 12 and 13.[77]

Mashovets stated on March 13 that Ukrainian counterattacks forced Russian forces to withdraw eastward from Novosilka and from the area between Burlatske and Pryvilne.[78]

Order of Battle: Mashovets stated that elements of the Russian 40th Naval Infantry Brigade (Pacific Fleet); 336th Naval Infantry Brigade (Baltic Fleet); 60th Motorized Rifle Brigade (5th CAA); 37th Motorized Rifle Brigade (36th CAA, EMD); 5th Tank Brigade (36th CAA); and 34th Motorized Rifle Brigade (49th CAA, SMD) are reportedly operating in the Velyka Novosilka direction.[79] Mashovets stated that elements of the Russian 127th Motorized Rifle Division are operating on the Shevchenko-Burlatske-Pryvilne-Vilne Pole line (northwest of Velyka Novosilka). Elements of the Russian 394th Motorized Rifle Regiment (127th Motorized Rifle Division, 5th CAA) are reportedly operating near Burlatske.[80]

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

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Zaporizhia Direction March 13, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



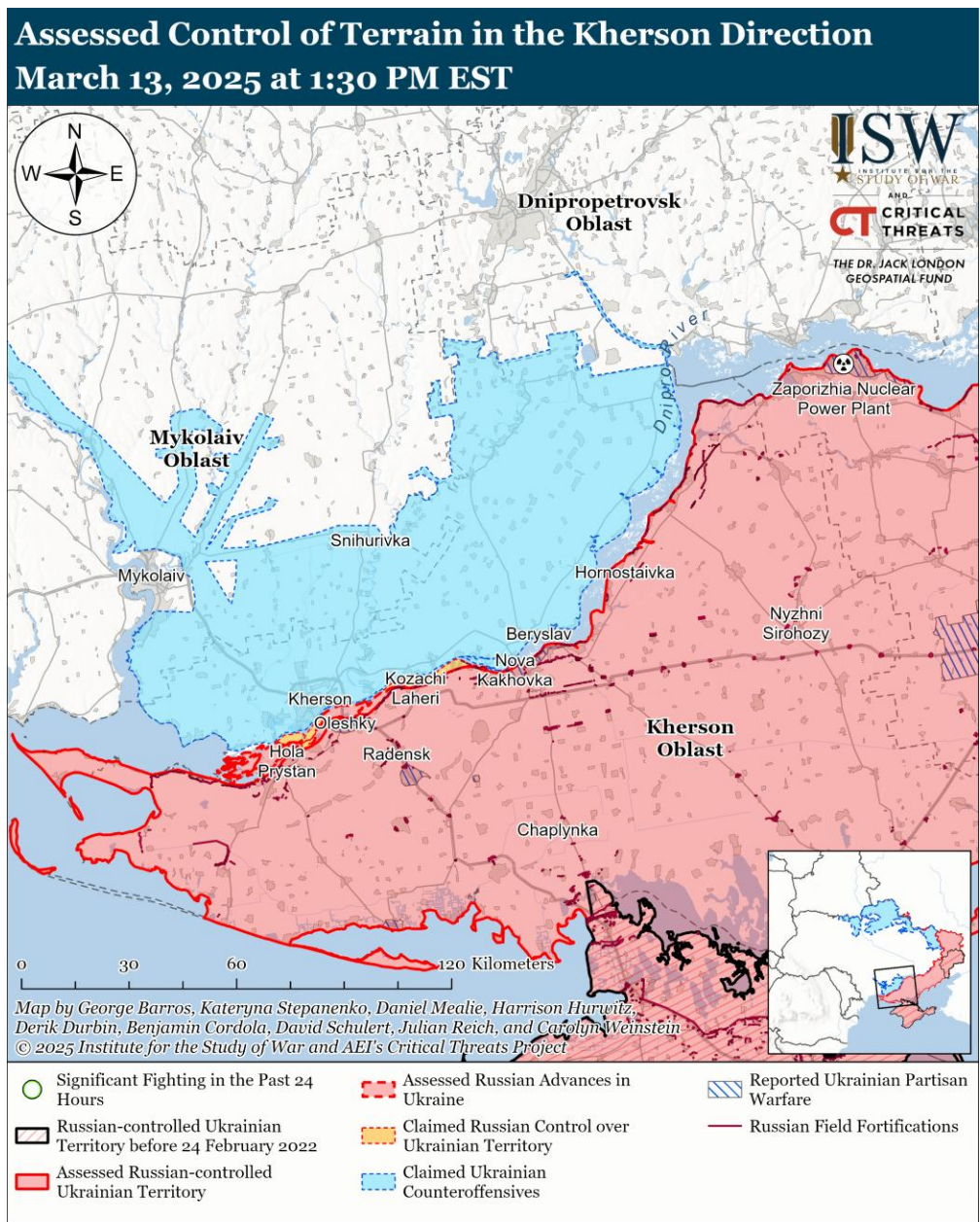
Russian forces continued ground attacks in western Zaporizhia Oblast on March 13 but did not make any confirmed advances.

Unconfirmed claims: Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces seized Pyatykhatky (northwest of Robotyne) and advanced north of Pyatykhatky, southeast and southwest of Mali Shcherbaky (northwest of Robotyne), and in southern Mali Shcherbaky.[81]

Russian forces conducted ground attacks northwest of Robotyne near Pyatykhatky, Stepove, Shcherbaky, and Kamyanske and toward Novoandriivka on March 12 and 13.[82]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 247th Airborne (VDV) Regiment (7th VDV Division) are reportedly operating in the Zaporizhia direction, and elements of the Chechen "Vostok-Akhmat" Battalion are reportedly striking Ukrainian positions near Novodanylivka (north of Robotyne).[83]

Neither Russian nor Ukrainian sources reported ground attacks in the Kherson direction on March 13.



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

Russian forces conducted a series of missile and drone strikes against Ukraine on the night of March 12 to 13. The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Russian forces launched an Iskander-M ballistic missile from Kursk Oblast and 117 Shahed and decoy drones from the directions of Kursk and Bryansk cities;

Millerovo, Rostov Oblast; and Primorsko-Akhtarsk, Krasnodar Krai.[84] The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Ukrainian forces shot down 74 drones over Kharkiv, Poltava, Sumy, Chernihiv, Kyiv, Khmelnytskyi, Vinnytsia, Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporizhia, Odesa, and Mykolaiv oblasts and that 38 decoy drones were "lost," likely due to Ukrainian electronic warfare (EW) interference. Ukrainian officials stated that Russian forces struck critical and civilian infrastructure in Sumy, Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv, Kyiv, Chernihiv, Odesa, and Zaporizhia oblasts.[85]

Ukrainian outlet *Suspilne* reported on March 13 that the Ukrainian public organization Independent Anti-Corruption Commission (NAKO) stated that Russia is increasing its production of guided glide bombs with at least 26 factories in Russia involved in the production of glide bomb components.[86] NAKO noted that not all of these factories are linked to the Russian government. NAKO noted that Russia recently improved the bombs' "Comet" navigation system, which Russia also installs on drones and missiles. NAKO senior researcher Viktoriya Vyshnivska stated that Russia increased the number of antennas in the "Comet" navigation system from eight to twelve to decrease the chances of Ukrainian forces interfering with the projectiles. Vyshnivska noted that it is impossible to completely isolate Russia with sanctions as NAKO reported that Russia uses hundreds of shell and offshore companies to purchase significant amounts of microelectronics for glide bombs. Ukrainian Air Force Spokesperson Colonel Yuriy Ihnat stated that destroying Russian aircraft capable of launching glide bombs is one of the best ways to counter Russian glide bomb strikes and an advisor on electronic intelligence and countermeasures of the Ukrainian Ministry of Strategic Industry, Ilya Kukharenko, noted that Ukrainian electronic countermeasures against glide bombs include spoofing Russian onboard aircraft radars and using electronic warfare (EW) systems to influence the navigation of each individual aerial bomb.

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

Russia continues its crypto-mobilization efforts against the backdrop of US efforts to start the negotiation process to end the war. Russian opposition outlet *Verstka* reported on March 13 that a source in Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin's office stated that Moscow City is continuing to recruit volunteer servicemembers (*dobrovoltsi*) to fight in Ukraine and that Russian authorities have issued no guidance to slow military recruitment efforts.[87] Another source based in Moscow City stated that Russian authorities are continuing to distribute advertisements for military recruitment "as usual." A source from an unspecified regional government told *Verstka* that there are "no signs" that Russia is "even close" to winding down its military recruitment efforts, and another source in a military registration and enlistment office in Siberia cited the threat of a future war with NATO as one justification to continue recruitment efforts. Another government source based in Russia's Far East told *Verstka* that Russian authorities will continue recruitment efforts quietly in the background until they receive further instruction from the Kremlin.

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

Nothing significant to report.

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

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

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

Russian President Vladimir Putin and Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko highlighted Russian-Belarusian economic and defense industrial cooperation efforts during a joint press conference on March 13.[88] Lukashenko stated that Putin approved the construction of another plant to produce unspecified drones in Belarus. Putin highlighted Russian-Belarusian cooperation in aircraft manufacturing and the development of artificial intelligence (AI), and Lukashenko claimed that Western sanctions against Russia and Belarus have pushed the two states to develop their microelectronics manufacturing industries. Lukashenko stated that Russia and Belarus closely cooperate on import substitution as Belarus exports components for cars and aircraft to Russia.

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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