

**Christina Harward, Angelica Evans, Grace Mappes, Olivia Gibson, Daria Novikov, and George Barros with Nate Trotter**

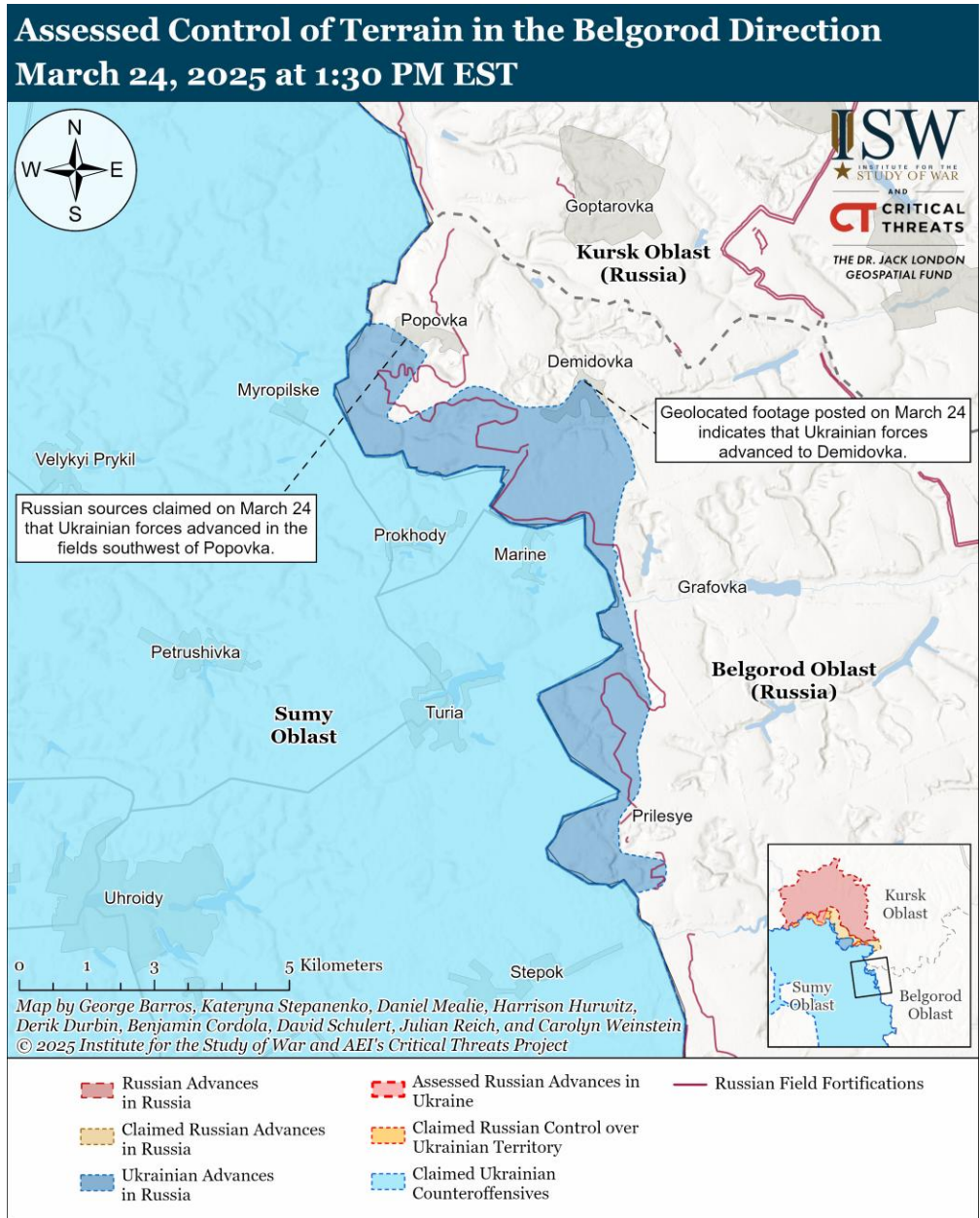
**March 24, 2025, 5:15pm ET**

**Note: The data cut-off for this product was 11:15am ET on March 24. ISW will cover subsequent reports in the March 25 Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment.**

**US and Russian delegations met in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia on March 24 following US–Ukrainian talks on March 23 about the details of temporary ceasefires on long-range strikes and in the Black Sea.** Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky stated on March 23 that the US–Ukrainian talks are "more technical in nature."<sup>[1]</sup> Ukrainian Defense Minister Rustem Umerov stated on March 23 that the US–Ukrainian talks discussed proposals for the safety of energy and infrastructure facilities and that the talks were "productive and focused."<sup>[2]</sup> A source familiar with the bilateral negotiations in Saudi Arabia told Ukrainian outlet *Suspilne* that the Russian-US meeting on March 24 will consider the ceasefire agreements that Ukraine agreed to on March 23.<sup>[3]</sup> The source stated that the discussions focused on moratoriums on strikes against energy facilities and civilian infrastructure and attacks in the Black Sea. Ukrainian Presidential Office Advisor Serhii Leshchenko stated that the US–Ukrainian talks concerned a ceasefire against strikes on Russian "facilities at seas and rivers" and against Ukrainian ports in Kherson, Mykolaiv, and Odesa oblasts.<sup>[4]</sup> Leshchenko stated that the Ukrainian delegation will hold additional discussions with the US delegation following the US–Russian talks on March 24.<sup>[5]</sup> *Suspilne* reported that the US delegation in the US–Russian talks includes State Department Policy Planning Director Michael Anton, US Special Envoy to Ukraine Keith Kellogg, and National Security Advisor Mike Waltz and that the Russian delegation includes Russian Federation Council International Affairs Committee Chairperson Grigory Karasin and Advisor to the Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) Director Colonel General Sergei Beseda.<sup>[6]</sup> Saudi Arabian state-owned outlet *Al Arabiya* reported that US National Security Council member Andrew Peek is also participating in the US delegation in the US–Russian talks.<sup>[7]</sup> Kremlin wire *TASS* reported that the US and Russian delegations will release a joint statement on March 25.<sup>[8]</sup> ISW will report on the details of the various bilateral talks as information becomes available in the coming days.

**Ukrainian forces recently advanced in Demidovka along the international border in northwestern Belgorod Oblast amid ongoing Ukrainian attacks in the area.** Geolocated footage published on March 24 indicates that Ukrainian forces recently advanced in central Demidovka (northwest of Belgorod City).<sup>[9]</sup> Russian milbloggers acknowledged that Ukrainian forces advanced into southern Demidovka but denied that Ukrainian forces seized the settlement.<sup>[10]</sup> Ukrainian forces began limited attacks into northwestern Belgorod Oblast on March 18 and have made marginal advances towards Grafovka (southeast of Demidovka) and Prilesye (south of Demidovka) over the last six days.<sup>[11]</sup> Russian milbloggers claimed on March 24 that Ukrainian forces also began attacking towards Popovka (west of Demidovka).<sup>[12]</sup> Russian milbloggers claimed that Ukrainian forces are

operating all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) and some armored vehicles and attacking in small infantry groups.[13] Russian sources claimed that Russia redeployed border guards, Chechen Akhmat forces, elements of the Russian Northern Grouping of Forces, and elements of the 155th Naval Infantry Brigade (Pacific Fleet) to respond to the Ukrainian attacks in northwestern Belgorod Oblast.[14] ISW will not offer an assessment of Ukraine's intent behind these attacks at this time.



Ukrainian forces appear to be leveraging long-range strikes to complicate Russian logistics and command and control (C2) in the area. Ukrainian forces recently conducted two strikes on Russian command posts in western Belgorod Oblast, destroying communications equipment.[15] Ukraine's Special Operations Forces (SSO) reported on March 24 that Ukrainian forces downed four Russian helicopters over Belgorod Oblast.[16] Russian milbloggers claimed that Ukrainian forces recently struck a bridge near Grafovka and another bridge near Nadezhevka (east of Grafovka), likely to

complicate Russian logistics in the area.[17] Russian milbloggers claimed that Ukrainian drone strikes, shelling, and HIMARS strikes are also complicating Russian forces' ability to hold some positions in the area.[18]

**The Kremlin is recirculating existing narratives aimed at undermining support for Ukraine amid the negotiations in Riyadh and likely remains uninterested in conducting meaningful negotiations to end the war.** Kremlin officials are likely attempting to capitalize on the current lack of available details about the US–Ukrainian and US–Russian discussions in Riyadh on March 23 and 24. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov accused Ukraine of being "well-bred Nazis" who lack agency as part of Kremlin efforts to justify the Kremlin's demand of "denazification" — or regime change and the installation of a pro-Russian proxy government in Kyiv — as a condition to end the war in Ukraine.[19] Lavrov also reiterated claims accusing European countries of seeking to prolong the war in Ukraine, likely to drive a wedge between Europe and the United States. Kremlin Spokesperson Dmitry Peskov accused Ukraine of violating the proposed moratorium on energy strikes, despite the fact that the proposed moratorium agreement and its contours are not yet finalized and are currently under discussion in Riyadh.[20] Peskov and Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) Spokesperson Maria Zakharova attempted to temper domestic expectations for the ongoing talks, stating that there is no need to expect breakthroughs and there is still a lot of work to do on technical issues.[21] These statements continue to signal to the domestic Russian audience that Russians should not expect a meaningful peace in Ukraine in the near term and support Kremlin condition-setting for a protracted war effort.[22]

Recent statements by Russian diplomats and academics indicate that the Kremlin likely aims to prioritize bilateral discussions with the United States over talks to end the war in Ukraine and will set this expectation within Russian society. Russian State Duma Foreign Affairs Committee Vyacheslav Nikonov recently told the *New York Times* (NYT) that Russian President Vladimir Putin sees bilateral Russian-US relations as "more important than the question of Ukraine." [23] Other Russian officials and voices indicated to the NYT that it is more important for Russia to accomplish its goals in bilateral US–Russian relations regarding alleviating sanctions pressure, constraining NATO, and seeking a "broader deal" — which likely includes US–Russian bilateral terms — before agreeing to any ceasefire in Ukraine.[24]

**Russia continues to persecute religious minorities, especially Evangelical Christian communities in occupied Kherson Oblast as part of a wider campaign in occupied Ukraine aimed at destroying independent Ukrainian national and religious identities.**

The Ukrainian Resistance Center reported on March 23 that Russian occupation officials are forcibly converting and reconsecrating Ukrainian churches into the Russian Orthodox Church Moscow Patriarchate (ROC MP) in occupied Kherson Oblast.[25] The Ukrainian Resistance Center reported that ROC MP priests watch Russian occupation officials torture Ukrainian Protestant Christian believers and force Ukrainian children to pray for the "Russkiy Mir" (Russian World) — a Kremlin-promoted geopolitical concept with amorphous parameters that broadly encompasses Russian language, culture, Orthodoxy, and media. ISW has previously reported on Russia's religious oppression in occupied Ukraine, including arbitrary detention and assassinations of Ukrainian clergy or religious leaders and the looting, desecration, and deliberate destruction of places of worship.[26] ISW has also reported at length on Russia's systematic repression of Ukrainian Orthodox communities and other religious

minorities, particularly Ukrainian Protestants and Baptists who have faced Russian brutality and other repressions throughout southern Ukraine.[27]

**Key Takeaways:**

- **US and Russian delegations met in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia on March 24 following US–Ukrainian talks on March 23 about the details of temporary ceasefires on long-range strikes and in the Black Sea.**
- **Ukrainian forces recently advanced in Demidovka along the international border in northwestern Belgorod Oblast amid ongoing Ukrainian attacks in the area.**
- **The Kremlin is recirculating existing narratives aimed at undermining support for Ukraine amid the negotiations in Riyadh and likely remains uninterested in conducting meaningful negotiations to end the war.**
- **Russia continues to persecute religious minorities, especially Evangelical Christian communities in occupied Kherson Oblast as part of a wider campaign in occupied Ukraine aimed at destroying independent Ukrainian national and religious identities.**
- **Ukrainian forces recently advanced in Belgorod Oblast and near Toretsk and Pokrovsk, and Russian forces recently advanced near Siversk, Toretsk, Pokrovsk, and Velyka Novosilka.**
- **Russian forces are reportedly failing to adequately provision first person view (FPV) drone units amid ongoing efforts to centralize Russian drone operations under the Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD).**



# Assessed Control of Terrain in the Russo-Ukrainian War

## March 24, 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**

#### **Russian forces continue to attack limited Ukrainian positions in Kursk Oblast on March 24 but did not advance.**

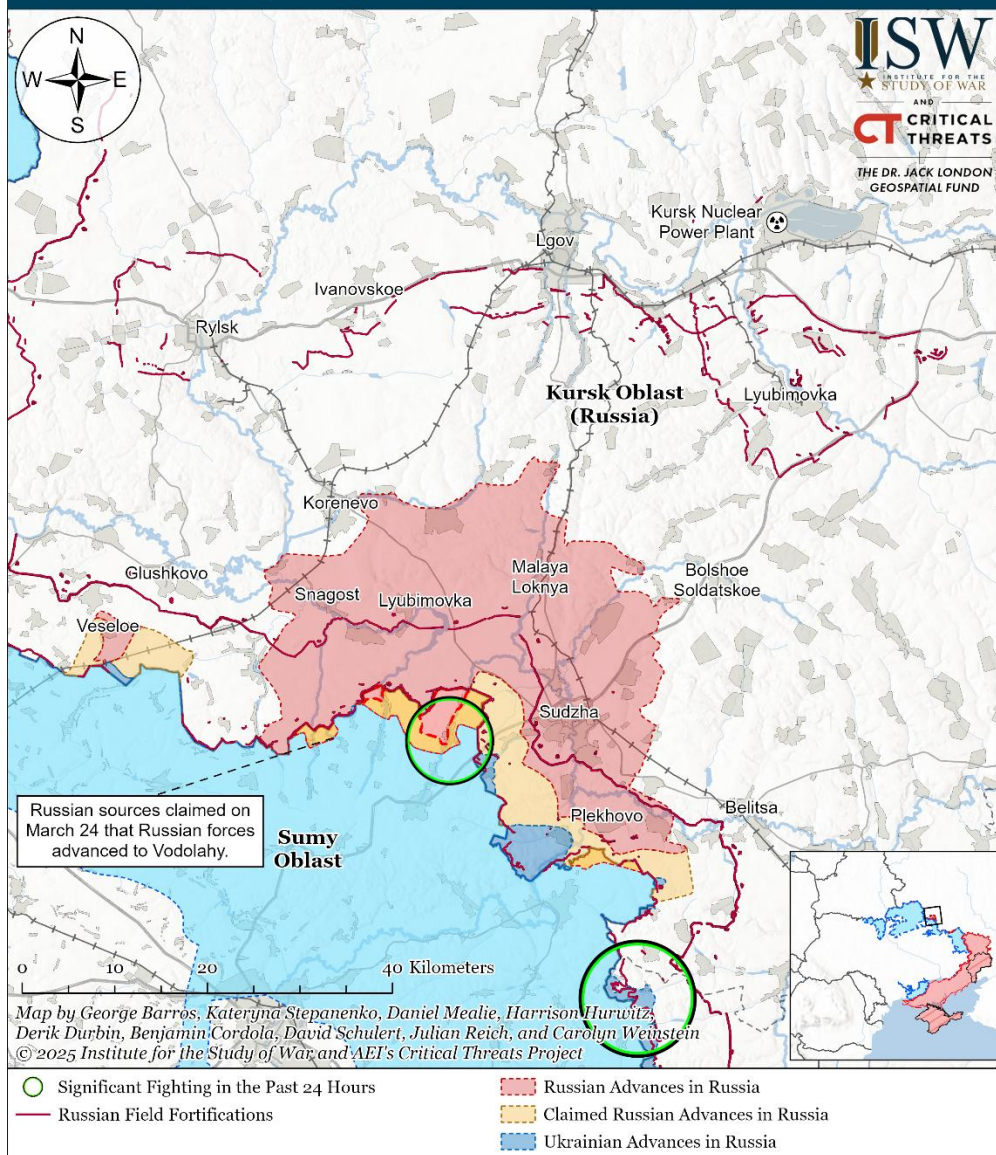
Unconfirmed claims: Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced in the fields east and southeast of Oleshnya (southwest of Sudzha) and northeast and south of Guyevo (south of Sudzha).[28]

Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces are attacking Gogolevka (west of Sudzha) and near the Sudzha checkpoint along the international border southwest of Sudzha.[29] Russian milbloggers claimed that Ukrainian forces maintain positions southwest of Sudzha in Oleshnya and south of Sudzha in Guyevo and Gornal.[30] Some Russian milbloggers denied limited Russian reports that Russian forces seized Guyevo and Gogolevka.[31]

Ukraine's State Border Guard Service Spokesperson Andriy Demchenko stated on March 24 that Russia has accumulated a "significant" number of personnel and equipment in Kursk Oblast.[32]

Order of Battle: Drone operators of the Russian "Rubikon" Center for Advanced Unmanned Technologies reportedly continue to operate in Kursk Oblast.[33] Elements of the Russian 810th Naval Infantry Brigade (Black Sea Fleet) are reportedly operating near Makhnovka (southeast of Sudzha).[34] Elements of the Russian 51st Airborne (VDV) Regiment (106th VDV Division) are reportedly operating near the Sudzha checkpoint.[35]

## Assessed Control of Terrain in the Kursk Direction March 24, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



### Russian forces continued attacking into northern Sumy Oblast on March 24 but did not advance.

Unconfirmed Claims: Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced into northern Volodymyrivka and Vodolahy (north of Sumy City), southeast of Zhuravka (northeast of Sumy City) and that elements of the 51st VDV Regiment are advancing northeast of Basivka (southeast of Zhuravka).[36] A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces recently advanced in the field northeast and east of Oleksandriya (northeast of Sumy City).[37]

Demchenko stated that Russian forces are trying to advance near Zhuravka and Novenke (east of Zhuravka).[38] Russian milbloggers claimed that fighting continued along the Volodymyrivka-

Vasylivka-Zhuravka line (north to northeast of Sumy City along the international border) and near Basivka.[39]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 56th VDV Regiment (7th VDV Division) are reportedly operating in northern Sumy Oblast.[40]

*See topline text for reports of Ukrainian activity in Belgorod Oblast.*

### **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 24 but did not advance.**

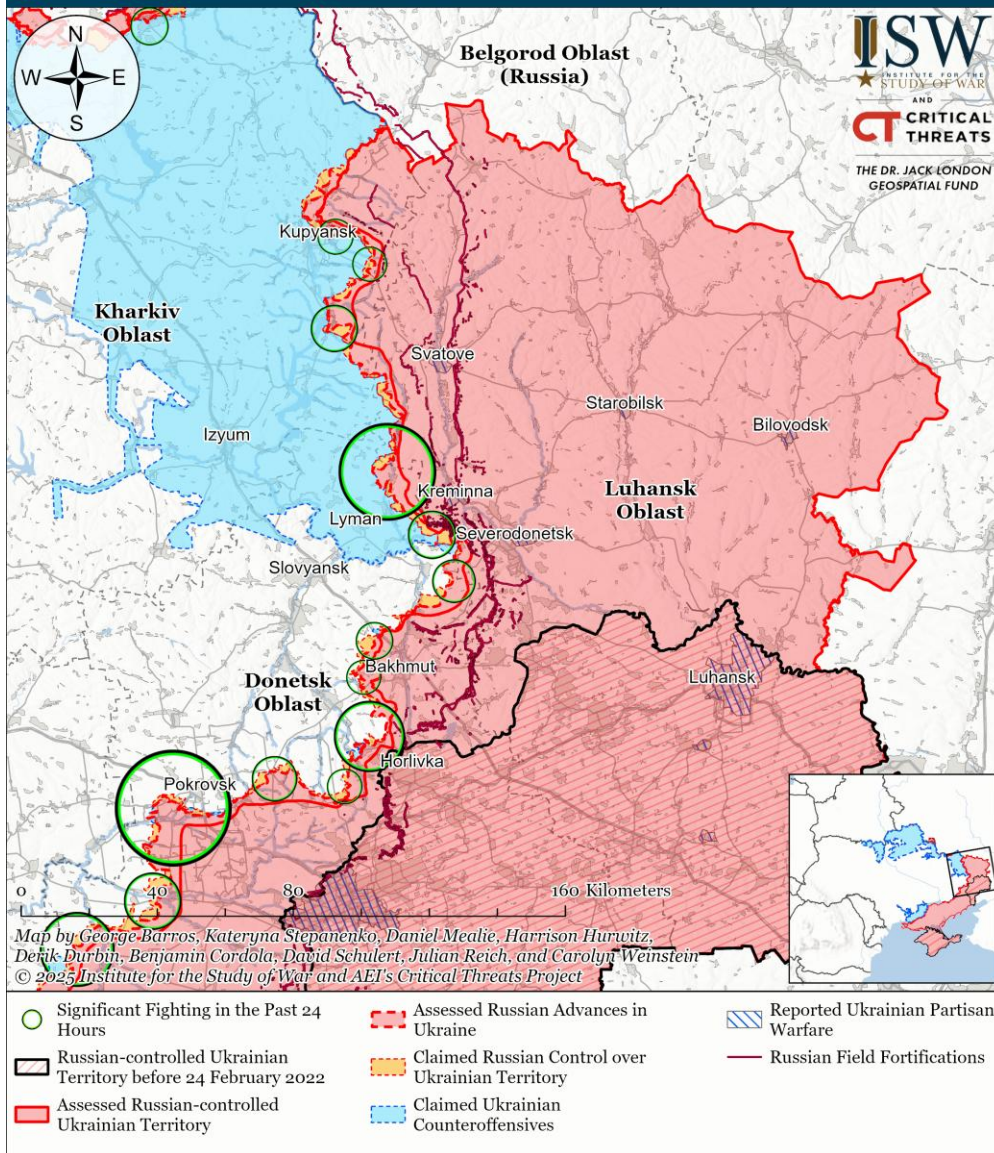
Russian forces conducted ground attacks north of Kharkiv City near Hlyboke and northeast of Kharkiv City near Vovchansk on March 23 and 24.[41]

Order of Battle: Reconnaissance and artillery units of the Chechen "Akhmat" Spetsnaz "Vakha" Battalion and Russian 245th Motorized Rifle Regiment (47th Tank Division, 1st Guards Tank Army [GTA], Moscow Military District [MMD]) are reportedly striking Ukrainian targets near Udy (northwest of Kharkiv City near the international border).[42]

#### **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)**



## Assessed Control of Terrain in Luhansk Oblast March 24, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



### Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Kupyansk direction on March 24 but did not make confirmed advances.

Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced north of Stepova Novoselivka (southeast of Kupyansk) but that Ukrainian forces maintain positions in the settlement.[43] Another Russian milblogger claimed on March 24 that Russian forces advanced in eastern and western Topoli (northeast of Kupyansk along the international border).[44]

Russian forces continued offensive operations northeast of Kupyansk near Dvorichna and Topoli, east of Kupyansk near Petropavlivka, and southeast of Kupyansk near Stepova Novoselivka on March 23 and 24.[45]

The spokesperson of a Ukrainian brigade operating in the Kupyansk direction reported that Russian forces are attacking less frequently as compared to two to three weeks ago (early and mid-March 2024), likely due to manpower and equipment losses.[46] The spokesperson stated that Russian forces are using fewer pieces of heavy equipment. The spokesperson for a Ukrainian regiment operating in the Kupyansk direction reported on March 24 that Russian infantry continue attempts to cross the Oskil River but are suffering from heavy losses and cannot conduct evacuations.[47] The spokesperson stated that there are roughly 500 Russian servicemembers dispersed in positions along the west (right) bank of the Oskil River.

Order of Battle: Ukrainian military observer Kostyantyn Mashovets stated that elements of the Russian 69th Motorized Rifle Division (6th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Leningrad Military District [LMD]) resumed attacks near Dvorichna.[48] Elements of the Russian 153rd Tank Regiment (47th Tank Division, 1st Guards Tank Army [GTA], Moscow Military District [MMD]) and 352nd Motorized Rifle Regiment (11th Army Corps (AC), LMD) are reportedly operating near Ivanivka (southeast of Kupyansk).[49]

**Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Borova direction on March 24 but did not advance.**

Unconfirmed claims: Mashovets stated that Ukrainian forces advanced toward Raihorodka (east of Borova and east of Nadiya).[50]

Russian forces continued offensive operations northeast of Borova near Zahryzove and Bohuslavka and east of Borova near Nadiya and in the direction of Stepove on March 23 and 24.[51]

The commander of a Ukrainian battalion operating in the Lyman direction stated on March 23 that Ukraine's seizure of Nadiya (east of Borova) enables Ukrainian forces to maintain fire control over the Zherebets River, Raihorodka, and Dzherelne (north of Nadiya) and to complicate Russian mechanized assaults against Kopanky (west of Nadiya).[52] The spokesperson of a Ukrainian brigade operating in the Lyman direction reported on March 24 that Russian forces are attempting to bypass Nadiya and conduct assaults in small squads of five to six people.[53] A Russian milblogger claimed on March 23 that Ukrainian forces have not seized Nadiya and that the frontline is one to 1.5 kilometers west of the settlement.[54]

Order of Battle: Mashovets stated that elements of the Russian 2nd Motorized Rifle Division (1st GTA, MMD) are operating near Zahryzove and that elements of the 4th Tank Division, with support from the 27th Motorized Rifle Brigade (both of the 1st GTA, MMD), are operating near Lozova and Andriivka (formerly Pervomaiske) (both northeast of Borova).[55]

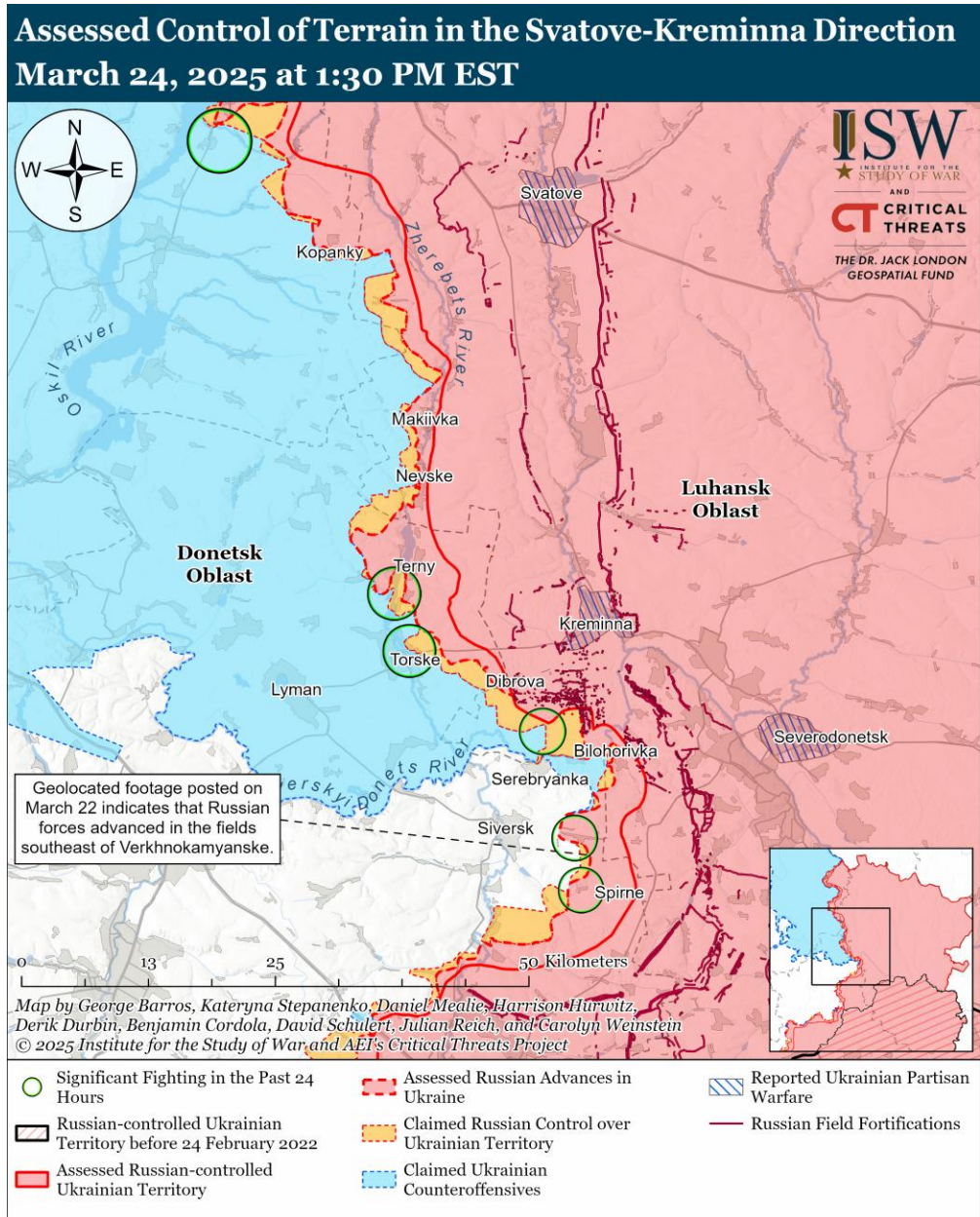
**Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Lyman direction on March 24 but did not advance.**

Russian forces conducted offensive operations northeast of Lyman near Yampolivka and toward Zelena Dolyna, Novomykhailivka, Nove, and Zarichne and southeast of Lyman near the Serebryanske forest area on March 23 and 24.[56]

A Ukrainian brigade operating in the Lyman direction stated on March 24 that Russian forces maintain a 10-to-one manpower advantage over Ukrainian forces in parts of this direction and that Russian

forces in the area are mostly well-trained soldiers who have signed contracts with the Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD).[57] The brigade stated that Russian forces are mostly attacking in infantry groups.

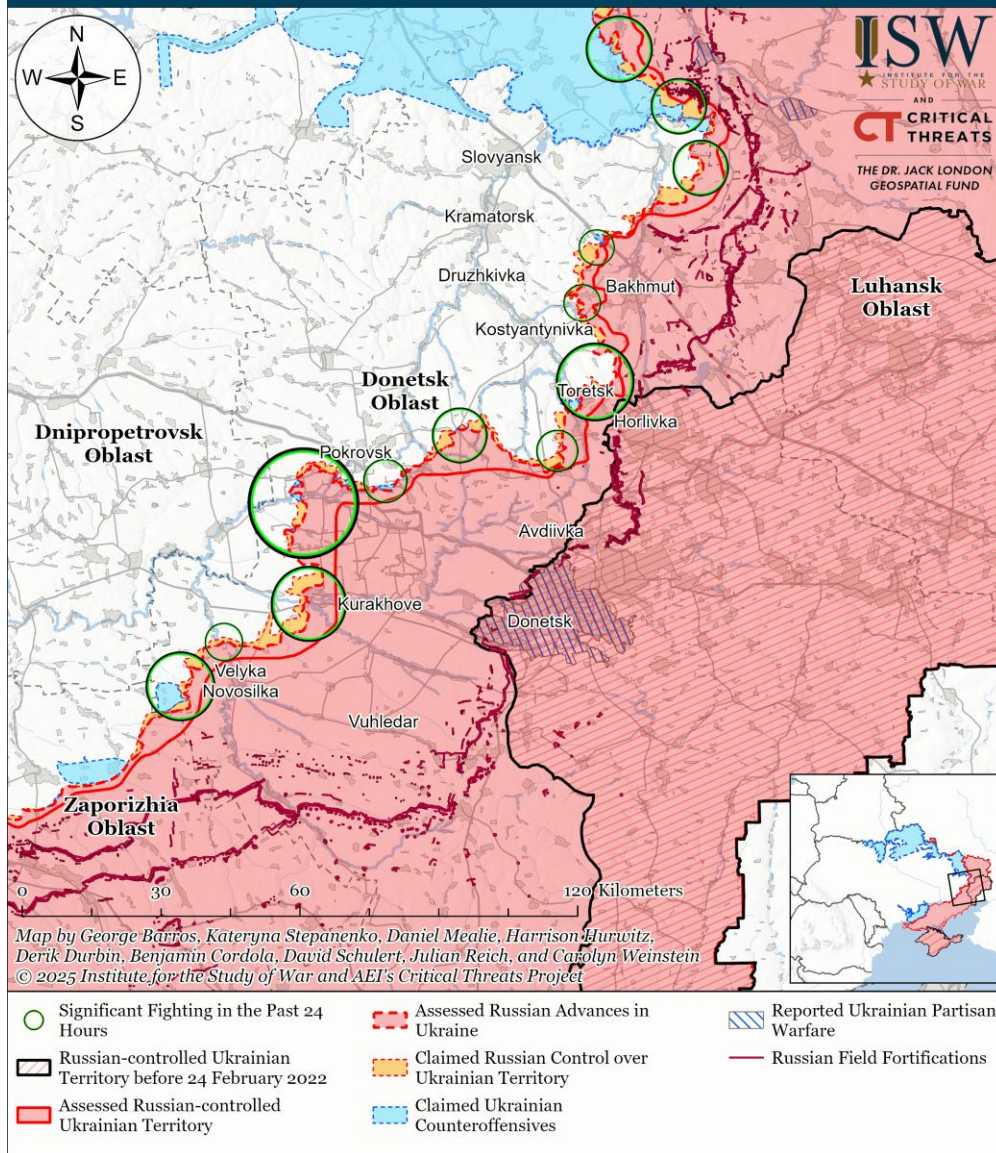
Order of Battle: Mashovets stated on March 24 that elements of the Russian 3rd Motorized Rifle Division (20th CAA, MMD) are attacking near Makiivka (northeast of Lyman) and that elements of the 144th Motorized Rifle Division (20th CAA, MMD) are attacking near Ivanivka and Kolodyazi (both northeast of Lyman).[58]



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



## Assessed Control of Terrain in Donetsk Oblast March 24, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



### Russian forces recently advanced in the Siversk direction.

Assessed Russian advances: Footage published on March 22 and geolocated on March 24 indicates that Russian forces recently marginally advanced in the fields south of Verkhokamyanske (east of Siversk).[59]

Russian forces attacked northeast of Siversk near Bilohorivka, east of Siversk near Verkhokamyanske, and southeast of Siversk near Ivano-Darivka on March 23 and 24.[60]

### Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Chasiv Yar direction on March 24 but did not advance.

Russian forces attacked near Chasiv Yar itself, north of Chasiv Yar near Minkivka, northeast of Chasiv Yar near Orikhovo-Vasylivka, and south of Chasiv Yar near Stupochky on March 23 and 24.[61]

A Russian milblogger claimed on March 23 that Russian forces are attacking in Shevchenko Microraiion in southern Chasiv Yar with armored vehicle support.[62]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 98th Airborne (VDV) Division, including its 215th Reconnaissance Battalion and 331st VDV Regiment, reportedly continue to operate near Chasiv Yar.[63]

### **Ukrainian and Russian forces recently advanced in the Toretsk direction.**

Assessed Ukrainian advances: Geolocated footage published on March 24 indicates that Ukrainian forces recently advanced along Mykhaila Hrushevskoho Street in central Toretsk and in northern Nelipivka (south of Toretsk).[64]

Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on March 24 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced along Darhomyzhskoho and Donetska streets in northern Toretsk, along Budivelnykiv Street in southwestern Toretsk, and along Radianska Street in northern Oleksandropil (southwest of Toretsk).[65]

Unconfirmed claims: Russian milbloggers claimed on March 24 that Russian forces regained lost positions near the Toretska Mine in northern Toretsk and advanced into Krymske (north of Toretsk).[66] Another Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced in northwestern Zabalka Microraiion in southern Toretsk.[67] Russian milbloggers claimed on March 24 that elements of the Russian 68th Tank Regiment (150th Motorized Rifle Division, 8th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Southern Military District [SMD]) advanced into southern Panteleymonivka (southwest of Toretsk) and Oleksandropil.[68]

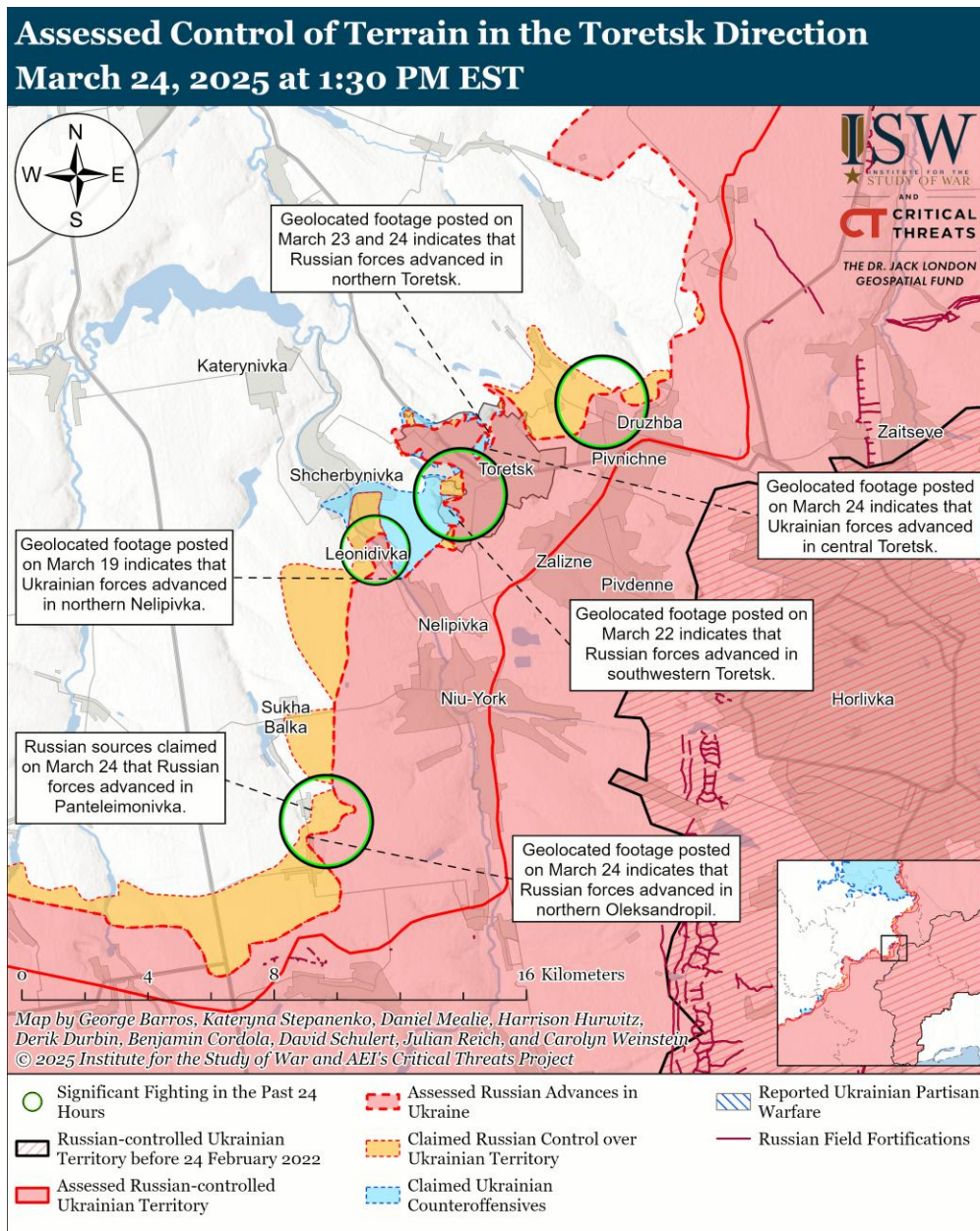
Russian forces attacked near Toretsk itself; north of Toretsk near Krymske, Dachne and Dyliivka; west of Toretsk near Shcherbynivka; and southwest of Toretsk near Panteleymonivka and Oleksandropil on March 23 and 24.[69]

Ukrainian Luhansk Group of Forces Spokesperson Lieutenant Colonel Dmytro Zaporozhets reported on March 24 that Russian forces are increasingly deploying fiber-optic capable drones in the Toretsk direction.[70] The deputy commander of a Ukrainian battalion operating in the Toretsk direction reported that Russian forces are using drones to drop explosives and incendiary devices onto Ukrainian positions in residential buildings and that Russian forces are relying increasingly on drones, particularly fiber-optic capable drones.[71] The deputy commander stated that Russian authorities dismissed the Russian commander of an unspecified division operating in the Toretsk direction as Russian forces have been unable to advance in the area and that Russian higher command is now controlling the force grouping in the area. Elements of the 150th and 20th motorized rifle divisions (both of the 8th CAA, SMD) are operating in the Toretsk direction.[72]

Order of Battle: Drone operators of the Russian 39th Motorized Rifle Brigade (68th Army Corps [AC], Eastern Military District [EMD]) are reportedly striking Ukrainian positions near Kleban Byk (northwest of Toretsk).[73] ISW has not previously observed elements of the 39th Motorized Rifle Brigade operating in the Toretsk direction, as the brigade has been recently operating in the Kurakhove



direction.[74] Elements of the Russian 20th Motorized Rifle Regiment (possibly a reformed Soviet unit) are reportedly operating south of Toretsk.[75]



**Ukrainian and Russian forces recently advanced in the Pokrovsk direction.**

Assessed Ukrainian advances: Geolocated footage published on March 23 indicates that Ukrainian forces recently advanced in northeastern Vodyane Druhe (east of Pokrovsk) and southwest of Nadiivka (southwest of Pokrovsk).[76]

Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on March 24 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced in southwestern Uspenivka (southwest of Pokrovsk).[77]

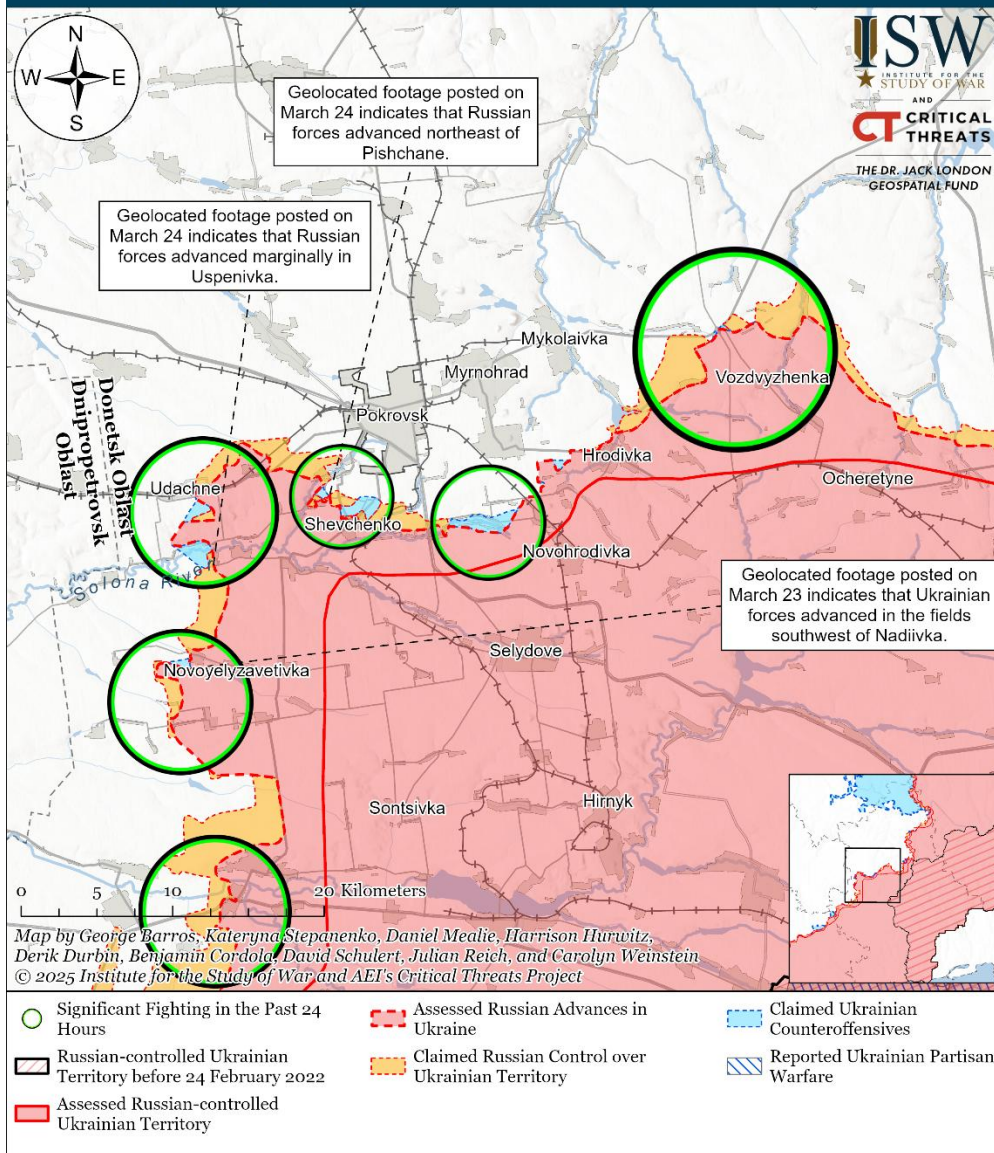
Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced near Udachne (southwest of Pokrovsk).[78] A Russian source claimed that Ukrainian forces maintain positions on the western outskirts of Solone (southwest of Pokrovsk).[79]

Russian forces conducted offensive operations near Pokrovsk itself; east of Pokrovsk near Yelyzavetivka and Vodyane Druhe; southeast of Pokrovsk near Lysivka and Sukhyi Yar; south of Pokrovsk near Vidrozhennya (formerly Novyi Trud) and Shevchenko; southwest of Pokrovsk near Kotlyne, Udachne, Novooleksandrivka, Uspenivka, Novoandriivka, Kotlyarivka, Bohdanivka, and Novoserhiivka; and northwest of Pokrovsk toward Serhiivka on March 23 and 24.[80] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces are counterattacking near Shevchenko, Pishchane (southwest of Pokrovsk), and Solone.[81]

The spokesperson of a Ukrainian brigade operating in the Pokrovsk direction stated that Russian forces are assembling in several settlements and are increasing their numbers of command staff, equipment, and infantry.[82] The spokesperson stated that Russian forces are attacking in small assault groups and are using motorcycles to approach frontline areas.[83]

Order of Battle: Ukrainian military observer Kostyantyn Mashovets stated that elements of the Russian 90th Tank Division (41st CAA, Central Military District [CMD]) reactivated in the Novopavlivka direction and are attacking in the Nadivka-Kotlyarivka direction and the Sribne-Troitske direction (all southwest of Pokrovsk).[84] Elements of the Russian 33rd Motorized Rifle Regiment (20th Motorized Rifle Division) are reportedly operating near Tarasivka (northeast of Pokrovsk).[85] Elements of the 5th Motorized Rifle Brigade (51st CAA, formerly 1st Donetsk People's Republic Army Corps [DNR AC], SMD) are reportedly operating in the Pokrovsk direction.[86]

## Assessed Control of Terrain in the Pokrovsk Direction March 24, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



### Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Kurakhove direction on March 24 but did not advance.

Russian forces conducted offensive operations west of Kurakhove near Kostyantynopil, Oleksiivka, Andriivka, and Ulakly and southwest of Kurakhove near Rozlyv on March 23 and 24.[87]

Order of Battle: Mashovets stated that elements of the Russian 110th and 114th motorized rifle brigades (both of the 51st CAA) are attacking near Andriivka and Kostyantynopil.[88]

### Russian forces recently advanced near Velyka Novosilka.

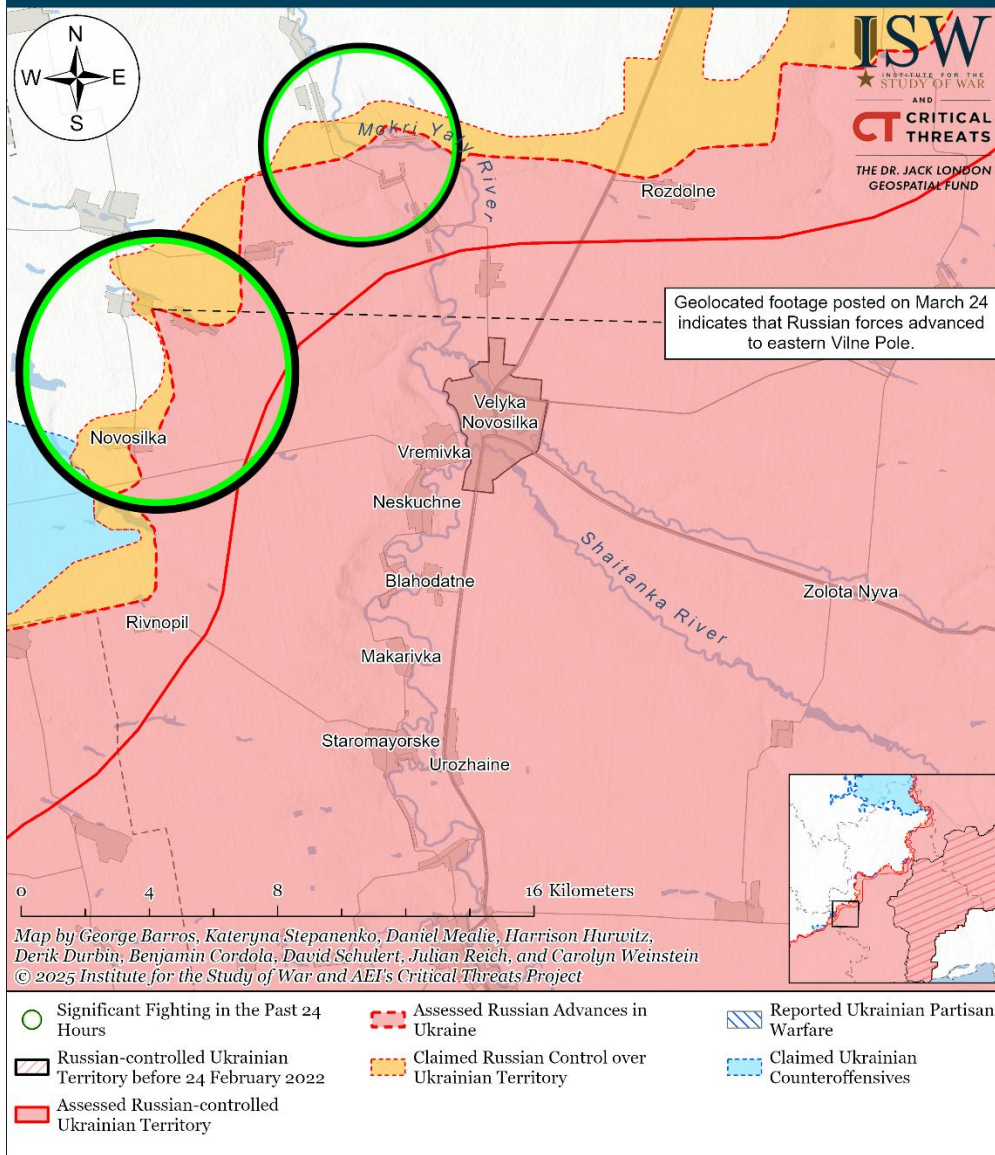
Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on March 24 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced in eastern Vilne Pole (west of Velyka Novosilka).[89]

Russian forces conducted offensive operations north of Velyka Novosilka near Skudne and Vesele; west of Velyka Novosilka near Vilne Pole and Novosilka; and southwest of Velyka Novosilka near Novopil on March 23 and 24.[90] Mashovets stated that Russian forces have not seized Burlatske (northwest of Velyka Novosilka) or Pryvilne (southwest of Burlatske).[91]

Order of Battle: Mashovets stated that elements of the Russian 127th Motorized Rifle Division (5th CAA, EMD) are attacking near Burlatske, Dniproenerihya (north of Velyka Novosilka), Skudne, and Vesele.[92] Mashovets stated that elements of the 40th Naval Infantry Brigade (Pacific Fleet), 336th Naval Infantry Brigade (Baltic Fleet), 60th Motorized Rifle Brigade (5th CAA, EMD), and 5th Tank Brigade (36th CAA, EMD) are operating near Velyka Novosilka. Elements of the 14th Spetsnaz Brigade (Russian General Staff's Main Directorate [GRU]) are reportedly operating in the Shakhtarske direction (east of Velyka Novosilka).[93] Drone operators of 77th Reconnaissance Battalion (127th Motorized Rifle Division, 5th CAA, EMD) and artillery of the 305th Artillery Brigade (5th CAA, EMD) are reportedly operating near Burlatske.[94]



**Assessed Control of Terrain in the Velyka Novosilka Direction  
March 24, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST**



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

**Neither Russian nor Ukrainian sources reported ground activity in the Hulyaipole direction on March 23.**

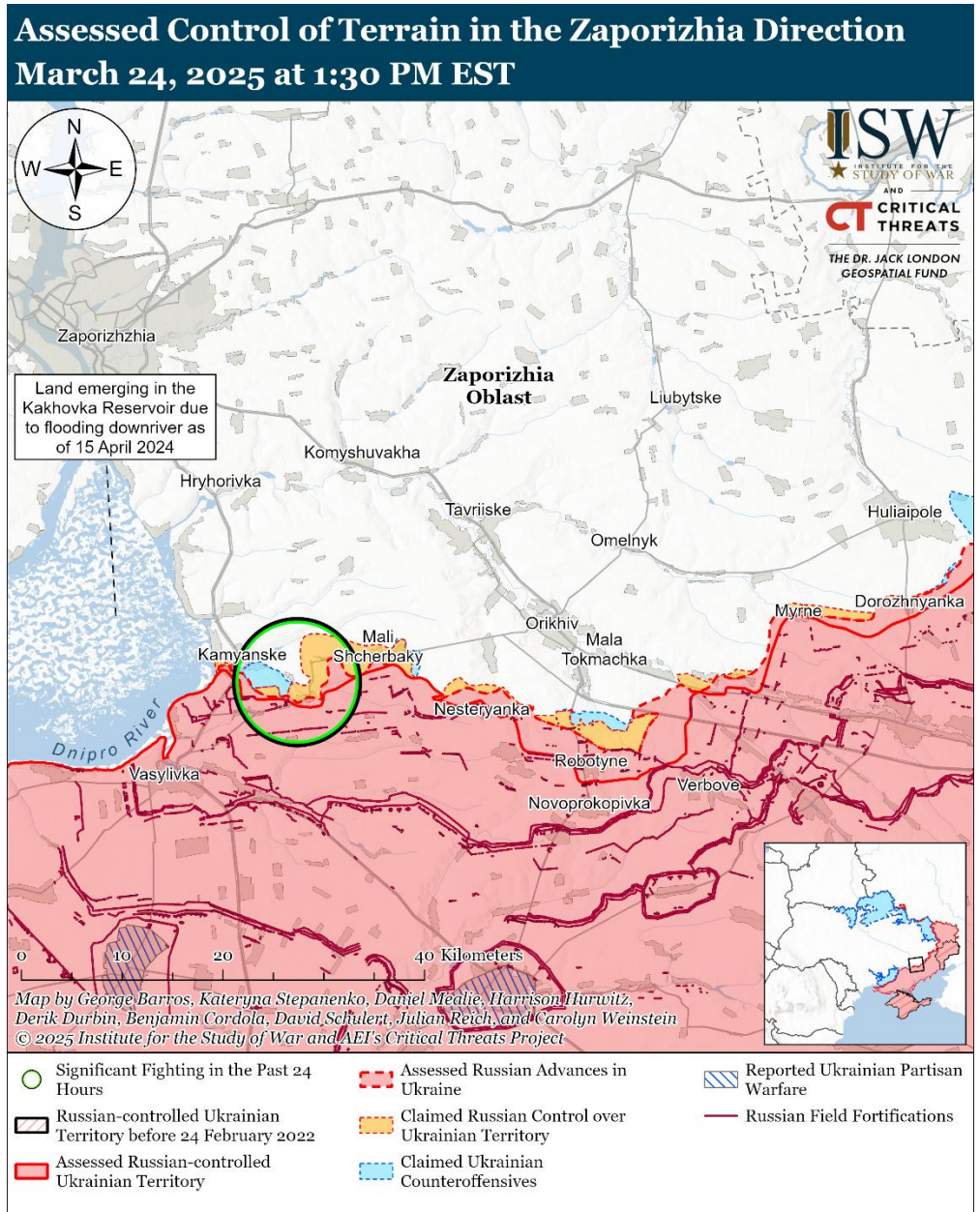
Order of Battle: Drone operators of the Russian 1198th Motorized Rifle Regiment (reportedly of the 35th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Eastern Military District [EMD] or possibly a reformed Soviet-era unit) are reportedly striking Ukrainian positions in the Polohy direction.[95]

**Russian forces continued offensive operations in the western Zaporizhia direction on March 24 but did not advance.**



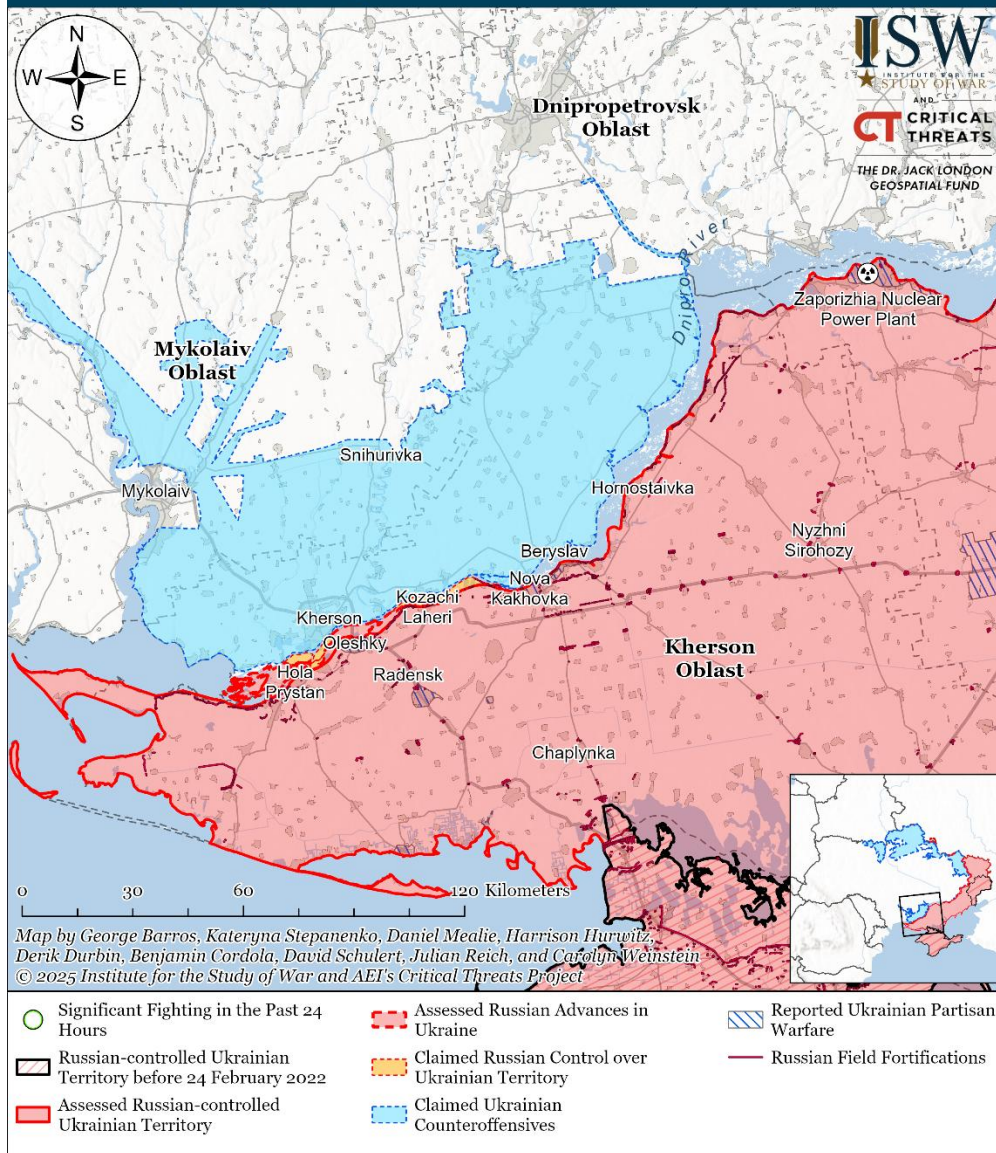
Russian forces attacked northwest of Robotyne near Lobkove, Maly Shcherbaky, and Stepove on March 24.[96]

Order of Battle: Ukrainian military observer Kostyantyn Mashovets reported on March 24 that elements of the Russian 108th VDV Regiment (7th VDV Division) are operating in the Pyatykhatky-Stepove area (northwest of Robotyne).[97]



**Neither Ukrainian nor Russian sources reported ground activity in the Kherson direction on March 24.**

## Assessed Control of Terrain in the Kherson Direction March 24, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



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

Russian forces conducted a series of missile and drone strikes against Ukraine on the night of March 23 and 24. The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Russian forces launched 99 Shahed and decoy drones from the directions of Kursk City; Millerovo, Rostov Oblast; and Primorsko-Akhtarsk, Krasnodar Krai.[98] The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Ukrainian forces shot down 57 drones and that 36 drones were "lost," likely due to Ukrainian electronic warfare (EW) interference. Ukrainian officials reported that Russian forces struck Kyiv, Kharkiv, Sumy, Kirovohrad, and Zaporizhia oblasts and conducted a missile strike against civilian infrastructure in Sumy City.[99]

Ukrainian Air Force Spokesperson Colonel Yuriy Ihnat stated that Russian strike campaigns are designed to destroy infrastructure, strike military targets, and terrorize the local Ukrainian population.[100] Ihnat noted that Russian forces intentionally launch a large number of drones targeting densely populated cities knowing that drone debris will damage the cities regardless of how successful Ukrainian air defense is. Ihnat stated that Russian forces are regularly modifying Shahed drones with different explosives and guidance systems.

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

Russian forces are reportedly failing to adequately provision first person view (FPV) drone units amid ongoing efforts to centralize Russian drone operations under the Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD). A Russian milblogger claimed on March 23 that Russian FPV drone crews only receive an allotted 5-6 FPV drones per day from the Russian MoD and that these drones are often poor quality, leaving the crews with 2-3 usable drones.[101] The milblogger, who reportedly provides assistance to frontline Russian forces, claimed that drone crews ask for additional assistance and to exchange poor-quality drones with functional drones as well as parts to repair other drones. The milblogger complained that Russia is wasting federal funds on low-quality drones instead of producing high-quality drones. The milblogger suggested that the MoD could provide drone crews with 20-30 low quality drones so that drone crews can use their components to assemble roughly 10 functional drones. The milblogger also complained that the MoD sends soldiers to hidden FPV drone crew positions with new drones daily, which reveals their positions to Ukrainian forces.[102] The Russian MoD began efforts in August 2024 to centralize ad-hoc Russian drone units, and ISW previously assessed that these formalization efforts would likely degrade Russian drone effectiveness.[103]

Russia continues efforts to invest in long-term drone production and innovation. The Russian Government ordered on March 20 to allocate a grant of 1.28 billion rubles (about \$15.2 million) to build a research and production center for civilian unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) in 2026, and will allocate a total of 21 billion rubles (about \$250 million) to create a network of 16 drone research and production centers through 2028.[104]

Russia continues to establish regional veterans' programs as part of long-term efforts to militarize the Russian government and establish promotion pipelines to reward veterans for their continued loyalty to the Kremlin. Omsk Oblast Governor Vitaly Khotsenko announced on March 19 the creation of the regional "Time of Heroes" program, which provides job training for Russian veterans of the war in Ukraine, called the "Movement of Heroes." [105] Khotsenko stated that the "Movement of Heroes" program's first class will accept applications until April 7 and announce participants in July 2025. The Kremlin has appointed graduates of the federal "Time of Heroes" programs to high level positions in the Russian federal, regional, and local governments -- likely to militarize Russian society and prevent veterans from becoming a disenfranchised political cleavage that could pose a risk to the Kremlin's regime security.[106]

### **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)**

Russia continues efforts to increase control over Belarus through Union State integration efforts. Belarusian Security Council Secretary Lieutenant General Alexander Volfovich stated on March 23 that the Belarusian and Russian ministries of foreign affairs (MFAs) will create an institution of special representatives to monitor the implementation of the Union State security guarantees.[107]

**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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