

Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment, March 8, 2023
Kateryna Stepanenko, Riley Bailey, Grace Mappes, George Barros, Layne Philipson, and Mason Clark
March 8, 7:45 pm 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.

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Wagner Group financier Yevgeny Prigozhin announced on March 8 that Russian forces captured all of eastern Bakhmut, a claim consistent with available visual evidence.¹ ISW assessed on March 7 that Ukrainian forces completed a controlled withdrawal from eastern Bakhmut across the Bakhmutka River.² A prominent Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces control between 45 to 52 percent of Bakhmut as of March 7.³ This figure is reasonable; ISW assesses that Russian forces now occupy at least 50 percent of Bakhmut as of March 8. Russian forces will likely intensify attacks in northwestern and southwestern Bakhmut (north from Opytne and south from Yahidne, respectively) to circumnavigate the Bakhmutka River.

Russian forces remain unlikely to rapidly exploit a breakthrough beyond Bakhmut if Russian forces capture the city. Prigozhin implied on March 8 that the Russian Ministry of Defense used the Wagner Group to bear the brunt of high-intensity attritional urban warfare in Bakhmut and may discard the Wagner Group after capturing Bakhmut so conventional Russian units can continue to attack.⁴ Prigozhin did not provide an assessment of the likelihood of success of future Russian offensive operations beyond Bakhmut. ISW has not observed any indicators that the Russian military has a well-equipped and prepared reserve force to advance beyond Bakhmut. Most observed Russian units in Donbas are already engaged in offensive operations, including Russian airborne (VDV) elements that joined the Russian offensive in Bakhmut in January 2023.⁵ ISW continues to assess that the Russian offensive in eastern Ukraine will shortly culminate if Russian forces capture Bakhmut, as the Russian military does not have the combat power or reinforcements necessary to exploit a breakthrough near Bakhmut.⁶ NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg stated on March 8 that the Russian capture of Bakhmut would not “necessarily reflect any turning point of the war.”⁷

US Director of National Intelligence Avril Haines stated on March 8 that Russian President Vladimir Putin likely recognizes the Russian military’s current limited capability to sustain a short-term offensive and may pursue a protracted war.⁸ Haines stated on March 8 that Putin is likely only temporarily focused on pursuing short-term military objectives in Ukraine and may believe that prolonging the war will increase the likelihood of achieving his strategic goals. ISW has previously assessed that Putin maintains maximalist war goals in Ukraine despite Russian forces’ currently limited capabilities to achieve these goals.⁹ Haines stated that Russia will increasingly struggle to maintain its current tempo of operations in Ukraine without conducting full mobilization and securing adequate ammunition to mitigate Russia’s current shortage. Haines noted that Russian forces are suffering high losses to take Bakhmut, which Haines characterized as “not

particularly strategic,” supporting ISW’s prior assessments that a Pyrrhic tactical victory in Bakhmut would not further Russia’s operational or strategic battlefield aims.¹⁰ ISW previously assessed on January 15 that the Kremlin was preparing for a strategically decisive effort in 2023 while simultaneously preparing for a protracted war.¹¹

The Kremlin may be attempting to establish a new Russian government-controlled armed formation billed as a volunteer unit through the Russian state-owned energy company Gazprom. A prominent Russian milblogger stated that Gazprom subsidiary Gazprom Neft is forming a volunteer formation analogous to Russian Combat Army Reserve (BARS) units.¹² The milblogger originally claimed that Gazprom Neft is forming a private military company (PMC) and is actively deploying unspecified elements to occupied Donetsk Oblast before later issuing a correction that the Gazprom Neft formation is a volunteer unit, not a PMC. The milblogger claimed Gazprom Neft’s recruitment campaign generated interest in Donetsk City given that the company is offering 400,000 rubles (approximately \$5,260) salary per month and additional compensation for performance bonuses.¹³ The milblogger added that this offered salary is twice the amount offered by the Wagner Group, noting that a volunteer in the Gazprom Neft formation can—with bonuses—earn up to 600,000 rubles (about \$7,890) per month. Gazprom Neft may be attempting to compete with Wagner for recruits from Donetsk Oblast given that Wagner is also conducting its own recruitment campaign in the area.¹⁴

The Russian government previously authorized Gazprom Neft to create a private security organization (not a PMC) on February 6 to protect Russian energy infrastructure.¹⁵ Ukrainian intelligence previously noted that the creation of the Gazprom Neft private security company aligns with an assessed Kremlin effort to sideline Wagner Group financier Yevgeny Prigozhin and mitigate the Kremlin’s dependency on Wagner Group forces.¹⁶ A Russian milblogger also rhetorically questioned when the Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) will become “jealous” of the new Gazprom Neft formations and cut off their access to ammunition—likely referencing the Russian MoD’s conflict with Prigozhin.

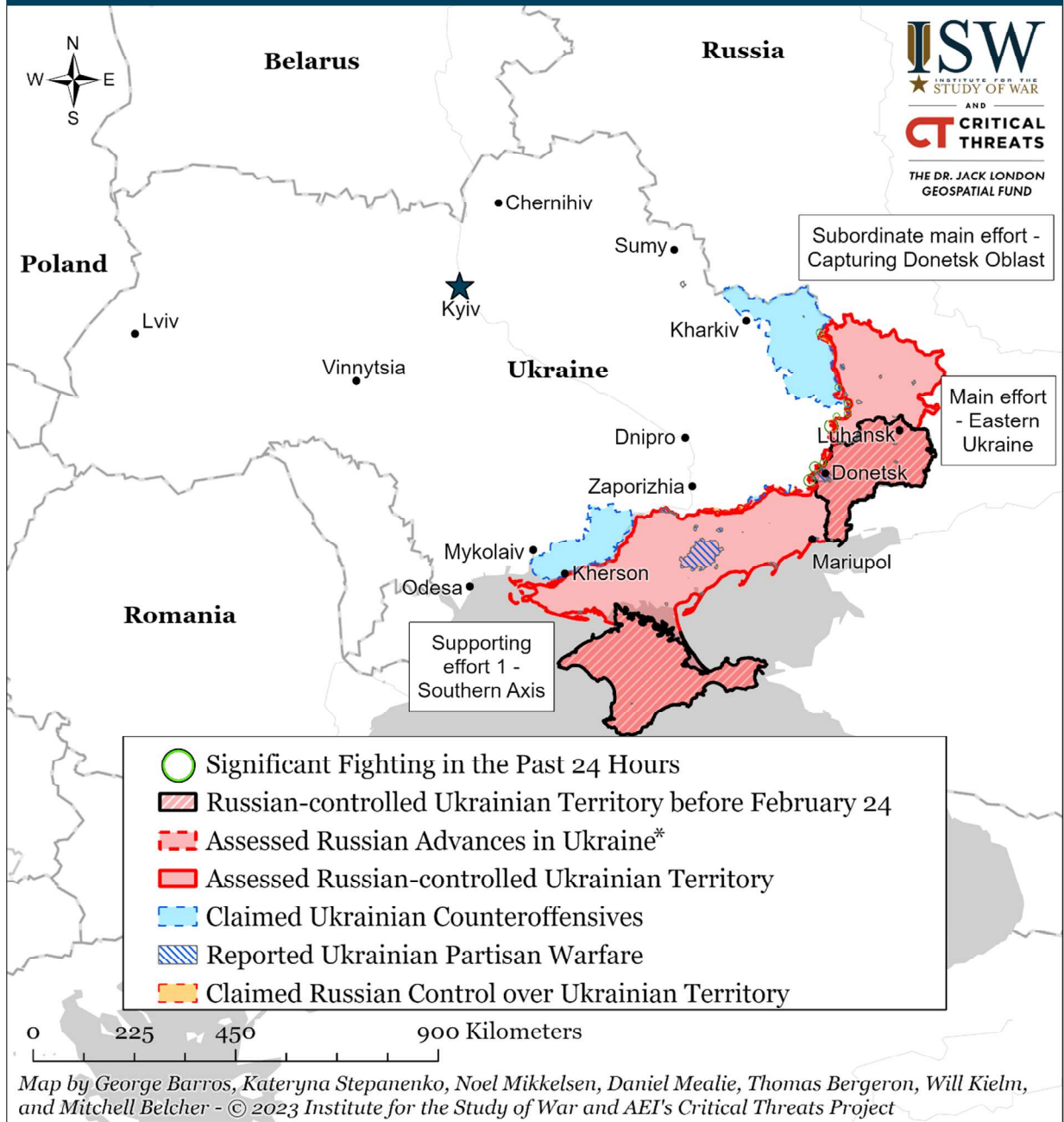
A US official denied on March 8 that US intelligence assessed that a pro-Ukrainian group sabotaged the Nord Stream pipelines in September 2022. US National Security Council (NSC) spokesperson Andrienne Watson stated on March 8 that the NSC is unable to confirm the *New York Times* March 7 report that US officials reviewed unverified intelligence suggesting a pro-Ukrainian group conducted the attack.¹⁷ Watson stated that the anonymous claims in the report did not come from downgraded intelligence shared by the US government and that sources were not authorized to speak on the US government’s behalf.¹⁸

German and Polish officials announced that Germany and Poland will deliver 28 Leopard 2 tanks to Ukraine in March 2023, which will bolster Ukraine’s capabilities to conduct a counteroffensive amidst high Russian tank losses. German Defense Minister Boris Pistorius announced on March 8 that Germany will deliver 18 Leopard 2 tanks to Ukraine by the end of March, and Polish Defense Minister Mariusz Blaszczak announced that Poland will deliver 10 more tanks by the end of the week.¹⁹ These tanks, though below the quantities that the Ukrainian military needs, will augment Ukraine’s capabilities to conduct counteroffensive operations, particularly due to the degraded state of Russian armored units. Dutch open-source group Oryx reported that it verified Russian losses of over 1,000 T-72 tank variants in Ukraine as of March 8.²⁰ Oryx verified 1,079 destroyed Russian tanks and 549 captured Russian tanks as of February 24, and estimated on February 9 that Russian forces had committed roughly 3,000 tanks to the war in Ukraine.²¹

Key Takeaways

- **Wagner Group financier Yevgeny Prigozhin announced on March 8 that Russian forces captured all of eastern Bakhmut, a claim consistent with available visual evidence**
- **Russian forces remain unlikely to exploit a breakthrough beyond Bakhmut if Russian forces capture the city.**
- **The Kremlin may be attempting to establish a new Russian government-controlled armed formation billed as a volunteer unit through the Russian state-owned energy company Gazprom.**
- **A US official denied that US intelligence assessed that a pro-Ukrainian group sabotaged the Nord Stream pipelines in September 2022.**
- **German and Polish officials announced that Germany and Poland will deliver 28 Leopard 2 tanks to Ukraine in March 2023, which will bolster Ukraine's capabilities to conduct a counteroffensive amidst high Russian tank losses.**
- **Russian forces continued to conduct ground attacks on the Kupyansk-Svatove-Kreminna line.**
- **Russian forces continued offensive operations around Bakhmut on March 8 but have not succeeded in completing a turning movement around the city.**
- **Russian forces continued offensive operations along the outskirts of Donetsk City.**
- **Russian sources claimed that Ukrainian forces landed on the Dnipro River Delta islands for the third consecutive day.**
- **The Kremlin is doubling down on reviving volunteer recruitment campaigns throughout Russia and occupied Ukraine.**
- **Russian hospitals are continuing to form new medical centers in Russia in an effort to maximize the capacity for overfilling hospitals in occupied territories to treat wounded Russian servicemen.**

Assessed Control of Terrain in Ukraine and Main Russian Maneuver Axes as of March 8, 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.

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

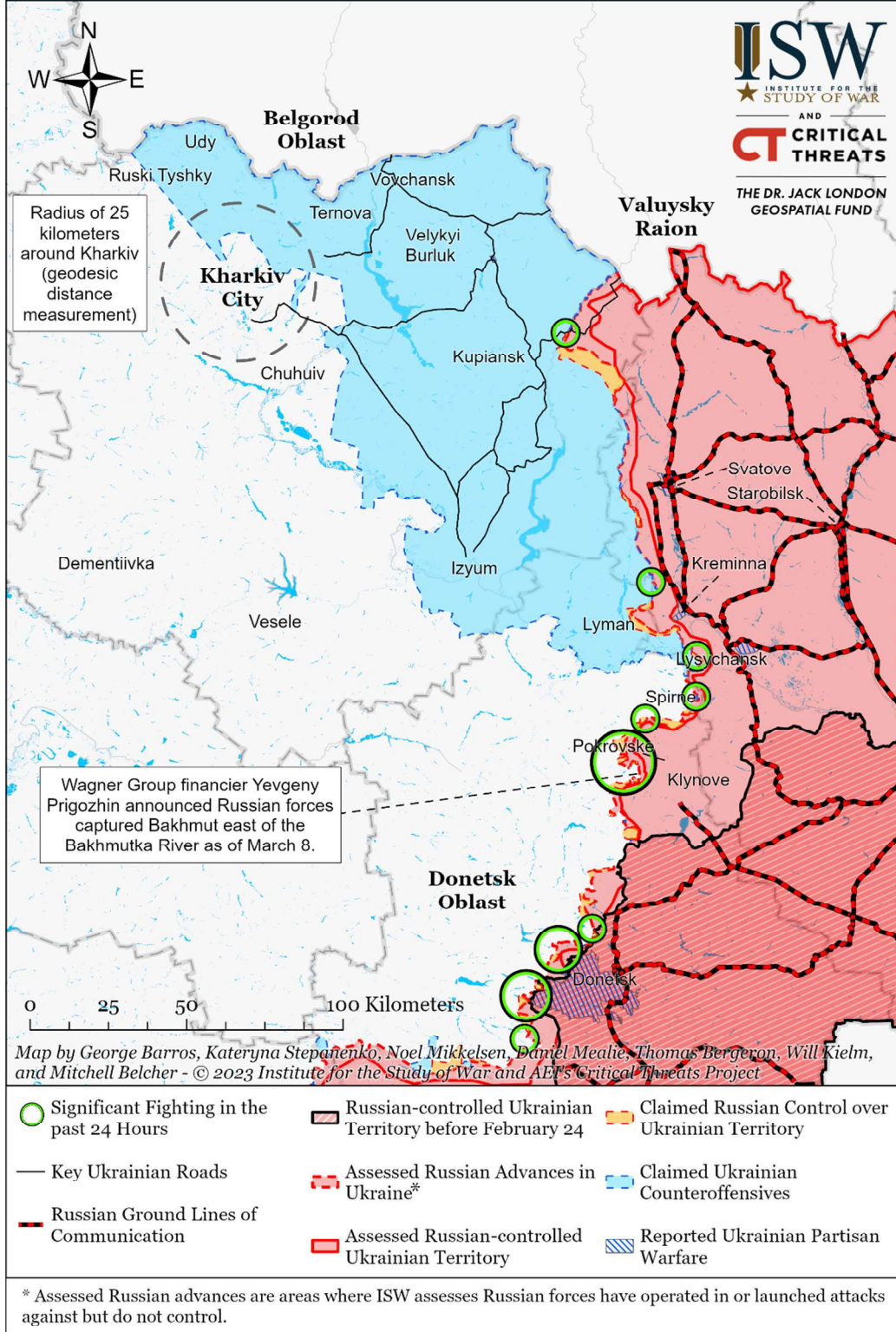
- Russian Main Effort—Eastern Ukraine (comprised of two subordinate main efforts)
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #1—Capture the remainder of Luhansk Oblast and push westward into eastern Kharkiv Oblast and encircle northern Donetsk Oblast
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #2—Capture the entirety of 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 continue offensive operations into eastern Kharkiv Oblast and northern Donetsk Oblast)

Russian forces continued to conduct ground attacks on the Kupyansk-Svatove-Kreminna line on March 8. Geolocated footage posted on March 8 shows that Wagner Group forces made marginal territorial advances east of Spirne (25km southeast of Kreminna).²² The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces conducted unsuccessful operations northwest of Svatove near Hryanykivka (54km northwest) and around Kreminna near Nevske (19km northwest), Bilohorivka (12km south), Spirne, Vyimka (26km south), and Fedorivka (33km southwest).²³ Ukrainian Luhansk Oblast Head Serhiy Haidai reported battles near Stelmakhivka (15km west of Svatove), Novoselivske (15km northwest), and Kuzemivka (13km northwest).²⁴ A Russian source claimed that Ukrainian tactical groups probed Russian defenses near Hryanykivka.²⁵ A Russian source claimed that Russian forces made unspecified advances towards Kirovsk (17km west of Kreminna) and conducted ground attacks near Kreminna towards Nevske, Makiivka (22km northwest), and Bilohorivka.²⁶

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Kharkiv as of March 8, 2023, 3:00 PM ET



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

Russian forces continued offensive operations around Bakhmut on March 8 but have not succeeded in completing a turning movement around the city. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces continued storming Ukrainian positions in Bakhmut and conducted unsuccessful offensive operations within 11km north of Bakhmut near Berkhivka, Dubovo-Vasylivka, Orikhovo-Vasylivka, and Bohdanivka as well as within 6km southwest of Bakhmut near Ivanivske and Klishchiivka.²⁷ A Russian milblogger claimed that Wagner Group fighters advanced towards Zaliznianske (10km north of Bakhmut) and Hryhorivka (9km northwest of Bakhmut).²⁸ Geolocated footage published on March 8 indicates that Russian forces have likely advanced closer to a section of the T0504 highway in southwestern Bakhmut.²⁹

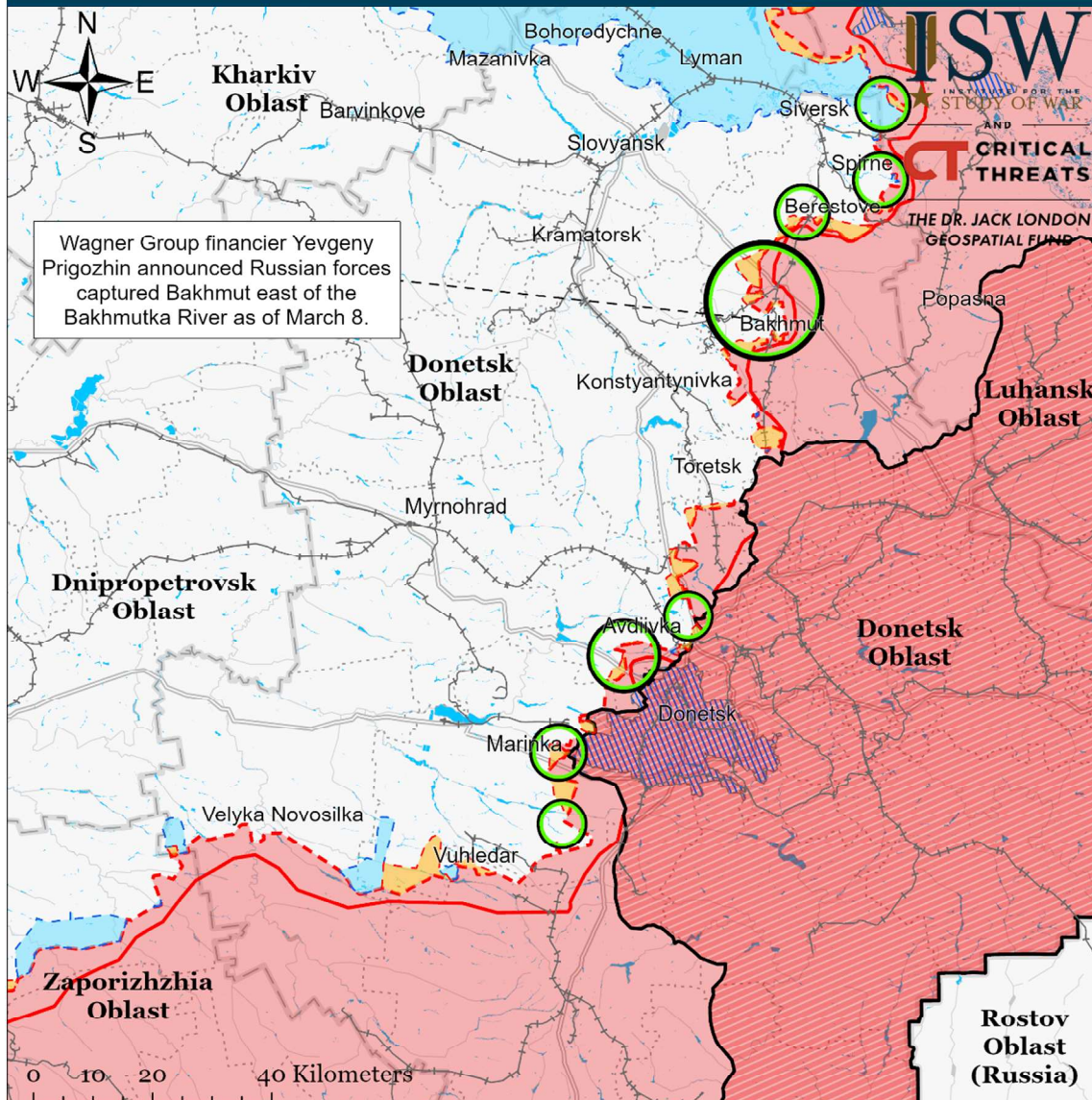
Wagner Group financier Yevgeny Prigozhin and several Russian milbloggers claimed on March 8 that Russian forces control all of Bakhmut east of the Bakhmutka River, as ISW assessed on March 7.³⁰ Russian milbloggers claimed that Wagner fighters continued attempts to advance in the northern and southern parts of Bakhmut and that Ukrainian forces are continuing to withdraw individual units from the city.³¹ A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces semi-encircled Ukrainian forces along the western banks of the Bakhmutka river in Bakhmut and that Ukrainian forces will not be able to withdraw from these areas without suffering heavy losses.³² Russian milbloggers claimed on March 7 that Russian forces are interdicting all remaining Ukrainian ground lines of communications (GLOCs) into Bakhmut, including country roads between Chasiv Yar (11km west of Bakhmut) and Khromove (2km west of Bakhmut).³³ A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces conducted counterattacks near Ivanivske (6km west of Bakhmut) and towards Klishchiivka (6km southwest of Bakhmut) on March 7.³⁴ The Ukrainian General Staff's reporting of Russian offensive actions near Klishchiivka, a settlement Russian forces have controlled since at least early January 2023, may indicate that Ukrainian forces have pushed Russian forces further away from the T0504 highway, although ISW has not seen any visual confirmation that Ukrainian forces have done so. A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces also advanced towards Stupochky (11km west of Bakhmut).³⁵

Russian forces may be increasing the pace of offensive operations northwest of Bakhmut. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces conducted more than 30 assaults near Orikhovo-Vasylivka (11km northwest of Bakhmut), roughly thirty percent of the total Russian offensive operations that the General Staff reported in Ukraine on March 8.³⁶ The reported high pace of Russian assaults around Orikhovo-Vasylivka is likely too far northwest of Bakhmut to effectively aid in the attempted Russian turning movement around Bakhmut, given Orikhovo-Vasylivka is over eight km from the closest Ukrainian supply route through Khromove. Prominent Russian milbloggers are increasingly discussing the possibility of Ukrainian counteroffensives in the Bakhmut area, with some referencing Minkivka (14km northwest of Bakhmut) as a potential area where Ukrainian forces may start these operations.³⁷ Russian forces may be conducting a high pace of operations well northwest of Bakhmut to spoil future Ukrainian counterattacks that could relieve pressure on Ukrainian forces in Bakhmut.

Russian forces continued offensive operations along the outskirts of Donetsk City on March 8. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces conducted unsuccessful offensive operations within 17km north of Avdiivka near Kamianka and Oleksandropil and within 36km southwest of Avdiivka near Sieverne, Pervomaiske, Nevelske, Vodyane, Marinka, and Novomyhailivka.³⁸ The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces conducted more than 20 offensive assaults near

Marinka (27km southwest of Avdiivka), roughly a fifth of the total Russian offensive operations that the General Staff reported in Ukraine on March 8.³⁹ A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces conducted assaults near Pobieda (32km southwest of Avdiivka) and Krasnohorivka (21km southwest of Avdiivka) as well as towards Ukrainian fortified areas near Avdiivka from Spartak (4km south of Avdiivka) and Opytne (3km south of Avdiivka).⁴⁰ Another milblogger claimed that Russian forces are conducting positional offensive operations near Avdiivka.⁴¹ Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces resumed offensive operations in the direction of Krasnohorivka (9km north of Avdiivka) and captured Vesele (7km north of Avdiivka), although ISW has not observed any visual confirmation of these claims.⁴² Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces intend to pressure Ukrainian forces in Avdiivka from the north in the direction of Vesele and from the south in the direction of Vodyane (8km southwest of Avdiivka), where the Donetsk People's Republic (DNR) 1st Slavic Brigade is reportedly attempting to advance.⁴³ Russian forces have increased their tempo of offensive operations north of Avdiivka in recent weeks, likely as part of a tactical shift similar to changing Russian tactics in assaults on Marinka. Russian forces have increasingly sought in recent weeks to pressure Ukrainian forces to leave Marinka through assaults on the north and south of the settlement, instead of continuing costly frontal assaults on heavily defended Ukrainian positions. Russian forces do not currently have the necessary combat power in the Avdiivka area to advance on Avdiivka from the north and south and are highly unlikely to do so unless they deploy significant reinforcements to the area.

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Donetsk as of March 8, 2023, 3:00 PM ET



Map by George Barros, Kateryna Stepanenko, Noel Mikkelsen, Daniel Mealie, Thomas Bergeron, Will Kiern, 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
- Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory before February 24
- Assessed Russian Advances in Ukraine*
- Claimed Russian Control over Ukrainian Territory
- Claimed Ukrainian Counteroffensives
- Major Railroads
- Reported Ukrainian Partisan Warfare

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

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

Russian sources claimed that Ukrainian forces landed on the Dnipro River Delta islands for the third consecutive day on March 8.⁴⁴ A Russian source claimed on March 8 that Russian forces fired on Ukrainian positions on the Dnipro River Delta islands and that positional battles are ongoing on the island.⁴⁵ Ukraine's Southern Operational Command reported on March 7 that Ukrainian forces destroyed a Russian ammunition depot on Velykyi Potemkin Island just southwest of Kherson City.⁴⁶

Russian sources claimed on March 8 that Ukrainian forces conducted a UAV strike against Enerhodar, Zaporizhia Oblast, starting a fire in a field.⁴⁷ Russian sources claimed that the fire spread over four hectares of land, threatening a power line that supports Enerhodar and local infrastructure.⁴⁸ A Russian source claimed that the fire does not threaten the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP), however.⁴⁹ Ukrainian Mariupol Mayor Advisor Petro Andryushenko implied on March 8 that pro-Ukrainian actors may have conducted strikes that started the fire.⁵⁰ ISW has extensively reported on Russian forces' militarization of the ZNPP and the surrounding area.⁵¹

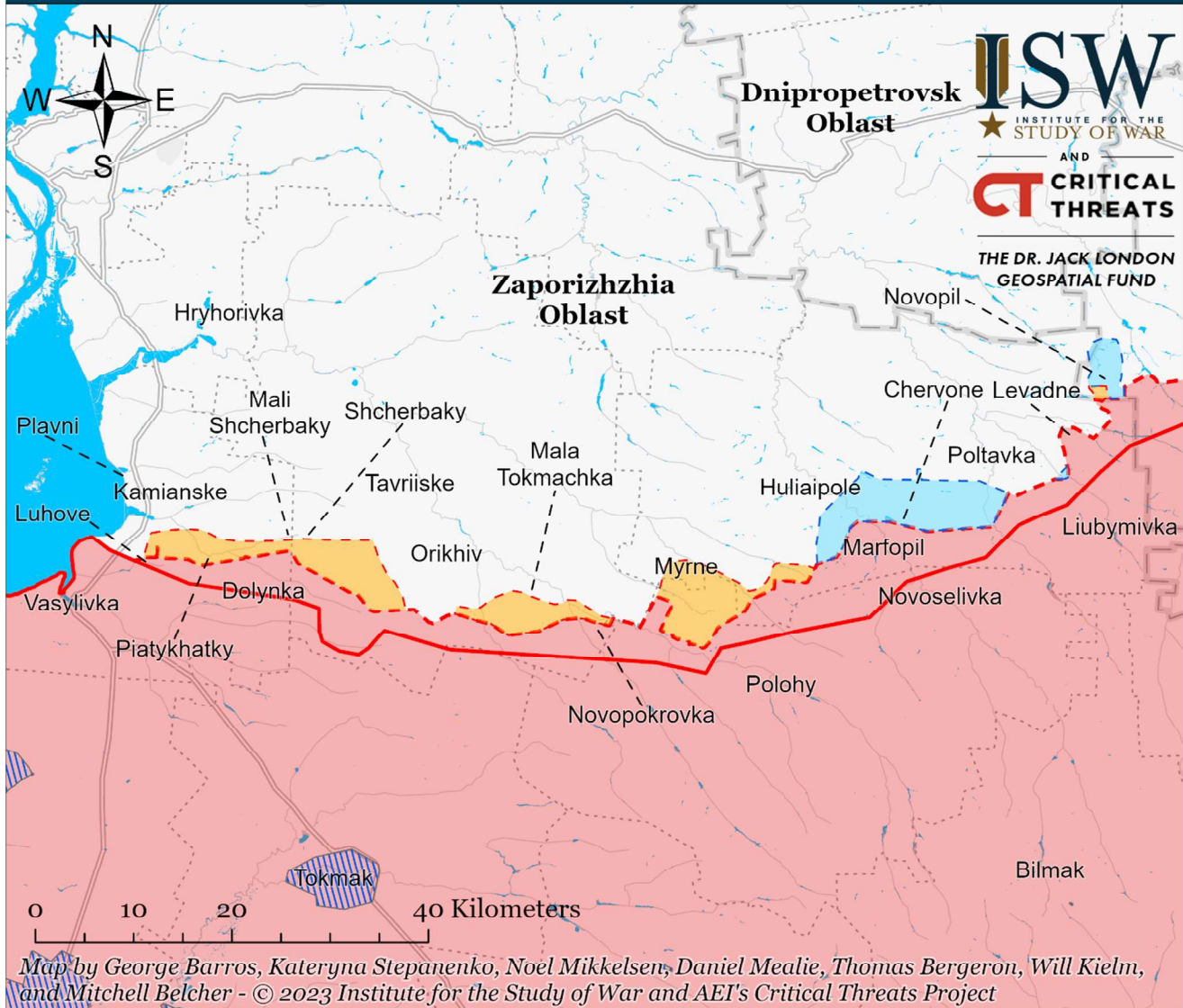
Russian forces continued routine strikes against areas west of Hulyaipole and in Kherson, Dnipropetrovsk, and Mykolaiv oblasts on March 8.⁵²

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Kherson and Mykolaiv as of March 8, 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.

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Zaporizhia as of March 8, 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
- 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.

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

The Kremlin is doubling down on reviving volunteer recruitment campaigns throughout Russia and occupied Ukraine. Kremlin Spokesperson Dmitry Peskov reported that Russian President Vladimir Putin met with Zaporizhia Oblast Occupation Head Yevgeny Balitskyi on March 7 to discuss the security and legal status of the Sudoplatov volunteer battalion among other topics pertaining to the occupied region.⁵³ The Sudoplatov volunteer battalion is reportedly based out of occupied Zaporizhia Oblast and has Serbian, Turkish, and Scandinavian recruits. Balitskyi announced on March 6 that he planned to specifically ask Putin to resolve legal and bureaucratic problems that complicate the procurement of weapons and military equipment for volunteer units.⁵⁴ Balitskyi added that he would ask Putin to “get involved from his position because everyone understands that battalions are needed and that volunteers are needed.”⁵⁵ The official readout did not disclose Putin’s response to Balitskyi’s requests, but the Kremlin’s increasing public interactions with the topic of volunteer recruitment indicate that Putin is embracing this effort—likely to avoid declaring mobilization. The Kremlin barely acknowledged similar volunteer recruitment movements over the summer of 2022, and Putin’s direct recognition of problems with the volunteer recruitment campaign is likely an attempt to incentivize more Russians to enlist. These appearances suggest that the Kremlin hopes to restore public trust in enlistment by appearing to resolve persistent legal, financial, and social problems with the original volunteer recruitment campaign in the summer of 2022.

The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) appears to be renewing its competition with Wagner Group for recruits. The Russian government approved rules for issuing veteran certificates to volunteers, which would allow combat participants to apply for state benefits.⁵⁶ These rules only apply to “citizens who joined volunteer formations created by decision of the authorities to assist in the fulfillment of tasks assigned to the Russian Armed Forces” during the war in Ukraine.⁵⁷ Russian opposition outlet *Meduza* observed that while the Russian MoD denotes Wagner as a voluntary force, Wagner mercenaries are not legally covered by such provisions because they were not officially created by the Kremlin.⁵⁸ ISW previously assessed that Wagner operates as a quasi-official armed formation, which receives supplies from the Kremlin but is not legally tied to the Kremlin to nominally maintain its covert operations.⁵⁹ It is unclear how such rules will apply to other irregular formations such as the Russian Combat Army Reserve (BARS-2021) initiative, which the Russian General Staff originally created but then later haphazardly offloaded to quasi-official ultranationalist networks.⁶⁰

Russia’s invasion of Ukraine continues to drain Russian federal subjects’ budgets. Governor of Primorsky Krai Oleg Kozhemyako stated on March 7 that his administration has spent more than four billion rubles (approximately \$52.6 million) to support Russian servicemen and their families as of January 10.⁶¹ Kozhemyako claimed that Primorsky Krai spent 2.2 billion rubles on military equipment and supplies, while the rest went into different financial compensations. While ISW cannot independently verify Kozhemyako’s claims, it is very likely the Kremlin continues to heavily tap into regional budgets to finance its war. Primorsky Krai also had one of the most active volunteer recruitment campaigns over the summer of 2022 to reinforce the 155th Naval Infantry Brigade. ISW previously assessed that it costs a federal subject around \$1.2 million per month to pay the salaries for a volunteer unit of 400 men receiving a monthly salary of \$3,000, let alone sustain the unit.⁶²

Members of the Russian ultranationalist community complained that Russian military officials are continuing to disregard the crucial role that Russian civil society and volunteer crowdfunding efforts play in procuring drones and quadcopters for the Russian war effort in favor of corruption schemes.⁶³ Some Russian milbloggers argued that the Russian MoD is not delivering on its advertised domestically produced drones and or developing new drones.⁶⁴

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

Russian occupation authorities continue to withhold social benefits from Ukrainians refusing to obtain Russian passports in occupied territories. The Ukrainian Resistance Center reported on March 8 that Russian forces are ceasing social benefits payments to civilians in occupied territories if they do not obtain Russian passports.⁶⁵ The Center amplified Russian-appointed Zaporizhia Oblast occupation officials' claims that Ukrainians in occupied Zaporizhia Oblast must not only obtain Russian passports but also denounce their Ukrainian citizenship, even though Russian law allows dual citizenship.⁶⁶ Luhansk Oblast Head Serhiy Haidai stated on March 8 that Russian occupation authorities are not paying workers in occupied Luhansk Oblast who do not present Russian documents.⁶⁷ The Ukrainian Resistance Center stated that the Kremlin intends to issue passports to 80 percent of residents in occupied territories before the planned September 2023 local elections.⁶⁸

Luhansk Oblast Head Serhiy Haidai stated on March 8 that Russian occupation authorities are not paying workers who moved from Russia to occupied Luhansk Oblast the amounts they had been promised.⁶⁹ ISW has consistently reported that Russian occupation authorities have promised high salaries to incentivize Russian citizens to work in occupied territories in an effort to staff industries that struggle to retain the necessary personnel to maintain operations.

Russian hospitals are continuing to form new medical centers in Russia in an effort to treat wounded Russian servicemen that cannot be treated in overfilled hospitals in occupied Ukraine. A Russian milblogger claimed on March 8 that the Moscow-based Voronovskoe Medical Center will construct a new hospital in Moscow Oblast to treat wounded Russian servicemen and Ukrainian civilians in Ukraine as hospitals in occupied territories consistently remain overfilled and understaffed.⁷⁰ Russian occupation officials may use medical treatment schemes to deport more Ukrainian civilians to Russia, however.

Significant activity in Belarus (ISW assesses that a Russian or Belarusian attack into northern Ukraine in early 2023 is extraordinarily unlikely and has thus restructured this section of the update. It will no longer include counter-indicators for such an offensive.

ISW will continue to report daily observed Russian and Belarusian military activity in Belarus, but these are not indicators that Russian and Belarusian forces are preparing for an imminent attack on Ukraine from Belarus. ISW will revise this text and its assessment if it observes any unambiguous indicators that Russia or Belarus is preparing to attack northern Ukraine.

Nothing significant to report.

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.

¹ https://t.me/concordgroup_official/564

² <https://understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-march-7-2023>

³ https://t.me/boris_rozhin/79924

⁴ https://t.me/concordgroup_official/565; https://t.me/concordgroup_official/566

⁵ <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-january-28-2023>;

<https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-february-19-2023>

⁶ <https://understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-march-7-2023>

⁷ <https://www.barrons.com/news/bakhmut-may-fall-in-coming-days-nato-chief-c57a83d8>; <https://www.rferl.org/a/ukraine-nato-bakhmut-fall/32308660.html>

⁸ <https://www.nytimes.com/live/2023/03/08/world/russia-ukraine-news/the-us-intelligence-chief-says-russia-lacks-the-forces-to-make-major-territorial-gains-this-year?smid=url-share>

⁹ <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-update-february-5-2023>;

<https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-february-25-2023>;

<https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-february-24-2023>;

<https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-january-15-2023>

¹⁰ <https://understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-march-6-2023>;

<https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-march-5-2023>;

<https://understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-february-27-2023>;

<https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-january-28-2023>;

<https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-january-21-2023>;

<https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-november-30>

¹¹ <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-january-15-2023>

¹² <https://t.me/voenkorKotenok/45904>; <https://t.me/voenkorKotenok/45911>

¹³ <https://t.me/voenkorKotenok/45904>

¹⁴ <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-march-5-2023>

¹⁵ <https://ria.ru/20230206/okhrana-1850151290.html>

¹⁶ <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-february-7-2023>

¹⁷ https://twitter.com/NSC_Spox/status/1633484265064132610?s=20

¹⁸ https://twitter.com/NSC_Spox/status/1633484265064132610?s=20

¹⁹ https://twitter.com/BMVG_Bundeswehr/status/1633415431489822720?cxt=HHwWgIC9ycirh6stAAAA;

<https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/poland-says-it-will-send-10-more-leopard-2-tanks-ukraine-this-week-2023-03-07/>

²⁰ <https://twitter.com/RomanObens/status/1633154700303298564>

²¹ <https://www.oryxspioenkop.com/2022/02/attack-on-europe-documenting-equipment.html>;

<https://www.cnn.com/2023/02/09/europe/1000-russian-tanks-destroyed-ukraine-war-intl-hnk-ml/index.html>

²² https://t.me/ngu_war_for_peace/9109; <https://twitter.com/blinzka/status/1633485218081538055?s=20>;

https://twitter.com/SerDer_Daniels/status/1633481487101091842

²³ https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbid02FNbzX8ysiqbJLgXHmKEBhHtmVPnDFVyt1uRykjSAnRZc2eZCQkGVSymwS_YQ98EoPl;

<https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbid0DjvK6eXSGtmfresPJDFJYguRQLWJr3ZkVmAnpdae4rwhviGcTa4LGoCh2AQzTJeml>

²⁴ <https://t.me/luhanskaVTSA/9131>; https://t.me/serhiy_hayday/9591

²⁵ <https://t.me/rybar/44359>

²⁶[https://www.facebook.com/Thebaltimorewashingtoninternationalpenshow/posts/pfbid01RFNb9uBBhapZMaRe7wopbBUAw7Wfz oopBbK9HxPRKDZMRGAZ89Y8ozi9wsWo9Dcl?__cft__\[0\]=AZV6M3sL8NjuAri1_oDckQtTbLdPRAK_oPKORlXmGaYTxVdCTpuGkkjtROF6 eYwPzC7OYPPpKAAkdTIZCmIPer_X23jCGI_kn2F4z_jNjsrOMSbHt64ysW88LI4RJ1zeYTgBKgB91-n_NzYrJiI9MjmFHRYU1pTs9YKDuclSQX8eh_i6iOOO_iWIXBxciv-TcsOoJltPHMr6U2gR2KAQVQCr&__tn__=%2CO%2CP-R](https://www.facebook.com/Thebaltimorewashingtoninternationalpenshow/posts/pfbid01RFNb9uBBhapZMaRe7wopbBUAw7Wfz oopBbK9HxPRKDZMRGAZ89Y8ozi9wsWo9Dcl?__cft__[0]=AZV6M3sL8NjuAri1_oDckQtTbLdPRAK_oPKORlXmGaYTxVdCTpuGkkjtROF6 eYwPzC7OYPPpKAAkdTIZCmIPer_X23jCGI_kn2F4z_jNjsrOMSbHt64ysW88LI4RJ1zeYTgBKgB91-n_NzYrJiI9MjmFHRYU1pTs9YKDuclSQX8eh_i6iOOO_iWIXBxciv-TcsOoJltPHMr6U2gR2KAQVQCr&__tn__=%2CO%2CP-R)

²⁷<https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbid0DjvK6eXSGtmfresPJDFjYguRQLWJr3ZkVmAnpdae4rwhviGcTa4LGoCh2AQ zTJeml>

²⁸ <https://t.me/wargonzo/11287>

²⁹ <https://twitter.com/herooftheday10/status/1633365143496146944>;
<https://twitter.com/PauliusZaleckas/status/1633496084394770432>

³⁰ https://t.me/concordgroup_official/565 ; <https://t.me/kommunist/16251>; https://t.me/miroshnik_r/10716;
https://t.me/boris_rozhin/79949 ; <https://t.me/rybar/44365> ; <https://t.me/brussinf/5728> ; <https://t.me/milchronicles/1635> ;
<https://t.me/brussinf/5730>; https://t.me/boris_rozhin/79976 ; <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-march-7-2023>

³¹ <https://t.me/milchronicles/1635> ; <https://t.me/brussinf/5728> ; <https://t.me/rybar/44365>

³² <https://t.me/rybar/44367>

³³ <https://t.me/rybar/44359> ; <https://t.me/voenkorKotenok/45903>; https://t.me/boris_rozhin/79924 ;

³⁴ <https://t.me/voenkorKotenok/45903>; https://t.me/boris_rozhin/79924

³⁵ <https://t.me/wargonzo/11287>

³⁶<https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbid0DjvK6eXSGtmfresPJDFjYguRQLWJr3ZkVmAnpdae4rwhviGcTa4LGoCh2AQ zTJeml>

³⁷ <https://t.me/rybar/44367> ; <https://t.me/voenkorKotenok/45903>; https://t.me/boris_rozhin/79924

³⁸<https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbid02FNbzX8ysiqbJLgXhMkEBhHtmVPnDFVyt1uRykJSAAnRZc2eZCQkGVSymwS YQ98EoPI> ;
<https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbid0DjvK6eXSGtmfresPJDFjYguRQLWJr3ZkVmAnpdae4rwhviGcTa4LGoCh2AQ zTJeml>

³⁹<https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbid0DjvK6eXSGtmfresPJDFjYguRQLWJr3ZkVmAnpdae4rwhviGcTa4LGoCh2AQ zTJeml>

⁴⁰ <https://t.me/wargonzo/11287>; <https://t.me/wargonzo/11288>

⁴¹ <https://t.me/rybar/44370>

⁴² <https://t.me/rybar/44370> ; <https://t.me/voenkorKotenok/45912> ; <https://t.me/milinfoLive/97771>

⁴³ <https://t.me/voenkorKotenok/45912> ; <https://t.me/milinfoLive/97771> ; <https://t.me/rybar/44370>

⁴⁴ <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-march-7-2023>;
<https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-march-6-2023>

⁴⁵ https://t.me/boris_rozhin/79955

⁴⁶<https://www.facebook.com/sergey.khlan/posts/pfbid09RclGu2tcXaYVhVr7qKqHod1UApQdDwEBcVZ6iLiMCseUTKYrZ5AZN1bsfAse HR9l>

⁴⁷ https://t.me/energodar_ru/5084; <https://t.me/voenkorKotenok/45916>; https://t.me/russkiy_opolchenec/36010;
https://t.me/actual_energodar/2423

⁴⁸ https://t.me/energodar_ru/5084; <https://t.me/voenkorKotenok/45916>; https://t.me/russkiy_opolchenec/36010;
https://t.me/actual_energodar/2423

⁴⁹ https://t.me/energodar_ru/5084

⁵⁰ <https://t.me/andriyshTime/7455>

⁵¹ <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-september-12>;
<https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-november-21>;
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<https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-august-25>;
<https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-february-20-2023>;
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- ⁵² https://t.me/gachi_defence/7961; https://t.me/zoda_gov_ua/17281; <https://t.me/rybar/44361>; <https://t.me/wargonzo/11287>; <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbid0DjvK6eXSGtmfresPJdFYguRQLWJr3ZkVmAnpdae4rwhviGcTa4LGoCh2AQzTJeml>;
- <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbid02FNbzX8ysiqbJLgXHmKEBhHtmVPnDFVyt1uRykjSAnRZc2eZCQkGVSymwSYQ98EoPI>
- ⁵³ <https://t.me/vrogov/8030>; <https://tass dot ru/politika/17215631>; <https://tass dot ru/politika/17202615>
- ⁵⁴ <https://tass dot ru/politika/17202615>
- ⁵⁵ <https://tass dot ru/politika/17202615>
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- ⁵⁷ <https://t.me/meduzalive/79880>
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- ⁶¹ <https://tass dot ru/obschestvo/17208941>; <http://notes.citeam.org/mobi-mar-6-7#o91t>
- ⁶² <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-volunteer-units-and-battalions>
- ⁶³ <https://t.me/MedvedevVesti/13299>; <https://t.me/rybar/44371> ; <https://t.me/NeoficialniyBeZsonoV/23034>
- ⁶⁴ <https://t.me/MedvedevVesti/13299>; <https://t.me/NeoficialniyBeZsonoV/23037>; <https://t.me/rybar/44371>;
- <https://t.me/rsotmdivision/5552>; <https://t.me/strelkovii/4158>
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- ⁶⁷ <https://t.me/luhanskaVTSA/9125>; <https://t.me/luhanskaVTSA/9126>
- ⁶⁸ <https://sprotyv.mod dot gov.ua/2023/03/08/vorog-perestane-platyty-soczdpomogu-meshkanczyam-tot-yakshho-ti-ne-otrymayut-pasport-rf/>
- ⁶⁹ <https://t.me/luhanskaVTSA/9125>; <https://t.me/luhanskaVTSA/9126>
- ⁷⁰ <https://t.me/epoddubny/15113>