



# Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment

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

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

**Note: The data cutoff for this product was 12:30 pm ET on July 1. ISW will cover subsequent reports in the July 2 Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment.**

**Russian sources claimed that Ukrainian forces conducted counteroffensive operations in at least four sectors of the frontline on July 1.** The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) claimed that Russian forces repelled Ukrainian assaults in the Bakhmut area and along the Avdiivka-Donetsk City front.<sup>1</sup> Russian milbloggers claimed that Ukrainian forces made marginal gains near Rozdolivka (18km north of Bakhmut) and unspecified gains near Klishchiivka (7km southwest of Bakhmut).<sup>2</sup> Russian sources claimed that Ukrainian forces continued offensive operations along the administrative border between Zaporizhia and Donetsk oblasts and made gains southwest of Velyka Novosilka.<sup>3</sup> Russian sources claimed that Ukrainian forces conducted offensive operations south and southwest of Orikhiv in western Zaporizhia Oblast, with one milblogger claiming that Ukrainian forces made gains up 1.5km deep and 6km wide in the direction of Robotyne (12km south of Orikhiv).<sup>4</sup> Other milbloggers claimed that Ukrainian forces are still at least 1.5km north of Robotyne as of July 1, consistent with ISW's current assessment of the control of terrain in the area.<sup>5</sup>

**US Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Mark Milley acknowledged that Ukrainian counteroffensive operations will take longer than some Western observers had expected.** Milley stated that Ukrainian forces are deliberately working through difficult minefields and advancing from 500m to 2,000m a day.<sup>6</sup> Milley reiterated that he expects Ukrainian counteroffensive operations to last up to 10 weeks and urged people to realize that the Ukrainian counteroffensive will be a long and likely costly operation.<sup>7</sup> Russian sources are increasingly claiming that Ukrainian forces are currently conducting assaults in southern Ukraine with smaller infantry groups and fewer armored vehicles than during earlier counteroffensive operations.<sup>8</sup> Russian sources also claim that Ukrainian forces are conducting reconnaissance-in-force operations in southern Ukraine in even smaller groups, some of them allegedly with seven to nine personnel.<sup>9</sup> These claims about Ukrainian operations suggest that Ukrainian forces are not currently attempting the kind of large-scale operations that would result in rapid territorial advances. Ukrainian officials have routinely indicated that Ukrainian forces have yet to commit a substantial portion of their forces to counteroffensive operations and have yet to launch the main phase of the counteroffensive.<sup>10</sup>

**Russian officials and sources celebrated claims that Russian forces defeated small-scale Ukrainian landings in east (left) bank Kherson Oblast on July 1 as if they had won a major victory.**



Kherson Oblast Occupation Head Vladimir Saldo claimed that servicemen of the Russian “Dnepr” Group of Forces cleared areas near the Antonivsky Bridge on the eastern bank of the Dnipro River after special forces elements conducted a surprise landing on Ukrainian forces’ rear positions overnight.<sup>11</sup> Saldo claimed that elements of a “Storm” detachment, the 61st Naval Infantry Brigade (Northern Fleet), the 126th Coastal Defense Brigade (22nd Army Corps, Black Sea Fleet), the 127th Reserve Brigade (likely a new reserve unit), and the 205th Separate Motorized Rifle Brigade (49th Combined Arms Army, Southern Military District [SMD]) participated in the operation that decisively repelled Ukrainian forces from their position near Antonivsky Bridge. Saldo also claimed that Ukrainian forces no longer have any “bridgeheads” on the eastern bank, and a Kremlin-affiliated milblogger claimed that Russian forces were able to advance to the dacha areas near the Antonivsky Bridge after launching an Iskander ballistic missile at the bridge on June 30.<sup>12</sup> A Crimean-based Russian blogger also claimed that elements of the 7th Guards Mountain Air Assault (VDV) Division using T-72 tanks also participated in an attack against Ukrainian positions near the Antonivsky Bridge.<sup>13</sup> The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) claimed that Russian forces eliminated a Ukrainian sabotage group that attempted to land on the island north of Oleshky (9km southeast of Kherson City) - likely referring to the Antonivsky Bridge area.<sup>14</sup> The Russian MoD also demonstratively awarded servicemen of the 80th Arctic Motorized Rifle Brigade (14th Army Corps, Northern Fleet) - a unit within the Russian “Dnepr” Group of Forces - for destroying Ukrainian military equipment in Kherson Oblast.<sup>15</sup> The Russian MoD also published an interview with the commander of the 80th Arctic Motorized Rifle Brigade who claimed that Russian forces fully restored their positions along the coast of the Dnipro River and along the islands and repelled all Ukrainian attempts to cross the river.<sup>16</sup> Russian sources notably did not provide any evidence that Russian forces regained control over coastal areas and many Russian sources reported that clearing operations near the dacha areas adjacent to the Antonivsky Bridge are still ongoing as of July 1.<sup>17</sup>

**The exaggerated Russian praise for defeating a small Ukrainian landing suggests either that the Russian military command sincerely fears a Ukrainian attack on east bank Kherson Oblast or that it is desperate for an informational victory following the Wagner Group’s armed rebellion or both.** Russian sources previously claimed that a grouping of around 70 Ukrainian servicemen held positions near the Antonivsky Bridge and that the Russian “Dnepr” Group of Forces’ military command had been consistently ordering Russian forces to eliminate the Ukrainian “bridgehead” despite significant personnel and equipment losses.<sup>18</sup> The Russian “Dnepr” Group of Forces is reportedly headquartered in Rostov-on-Don likely within the SMD headquarters.<sup>19</sup> Wagner forces notably surrounded the SMD headquarters during the armed rebellion on June 24, and the Russian MoD is likely trying to recover the headquarters’ reputation. A Kremlin-affiliated milblogger also expressed concern that Ukrainian forces will continue to conduct small unit sorties across the Dnipro River and will launch a large-scale attack to reach Oleshky to break through to southwestern Kherson Oblast.<sup>20</sup> ISW makes no effort to forecast Ukrainian operations, but the milblogger’s statements suggest that the Russian military command may be increasingly concerned over a potential Ukrainian landing on east bank Kherson Oblast.

**Russian forces are likely responding to Ukrainian operations around Bakhmut by pulling forces from elsewhere in Ukraine.** Ukrainian Eastern Group of Forces Spokesperson Colonel Serhiy Cherevaty reported on July 1 that Russian forces recently transferred an unspecified Russian Airborne Forces (VDV) regiment from the Lyman direction (the area west of Kreminna) to the Bakhmut direction.<sup>21</sup> Geolocated footage published on June 30 shows the 137th Guards Airborne Regiment (106th Airborne Division) operating south of Rozdolivka (18km north of Bakhmut).<sup>22</sup> A Russian milblogger also claimed that elements of the 98th VDV Division are now operating in the Bakhmut direction.<sup>23</sup> ISW has previously observed elements of the 237th Air



Assault Regiment (76th VDV Division) and the 331st Airborne Regiment (98th VDV Division) operating in the Lyman direction, although ISW has not seen any visual confirmation of elements of either formation near Bakhmut recently.<sup>24</sup> Cherevaty reported that Russian forces replaced the VDV regiment in the Lyman direction with unspecified territorial defense forces, indicating that Russian forces may be redeploying more elite units to the Bakhmut area and replacing the elite units with inferior formations.<sup>25</sup> Ukrainian Deputy Defense Minister Hanna Malyar previously stated that Russian forces transferred some of their most-combat capable units from the Kherson direction to the Bakhmut and Zaporizhia directions in the week following the start of Ukrainian counteroffensives on June 4.<sup>26</sup> Cherevaty stated that Bakhmut continues to offer Russian forces more propaganda value than military benefits and suggested that Russian forces may be concentrating elite forces in the Bakhmut area to preserve the perceived informational victory resulting from the capture of Bakhmut on May 21.<sup>27</sup> If Russian reinforcements already sent to Bakhmut are insufficient to hold Russian gains in the area the Russian command may face difficult choices about whether to risk creating serious vulnerabilities in Kherson or Luhansk oblasts or to begin drawing forces away from southern Ukraine.

**Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky stated that the Russians might initiate an intentional radioactive leak at the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP) as part of a potential Russian strategy to freeze the war.** Zelensky stated in an interview with Spanish news outlet *El Mundo* published on June 30 that Russian forces may attempt to remotely detonate the ZNPP if Ukrainian authorities are able to pass control of the ZNPP to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).<sup>28</sup> Zelensky stated that Russian forces may cause a radiological incident to halt maneuver warfare and buy more time for Russia to recruit more personnel and produce more military equipment.<sup>29</sup> Zelensky also reported that about 5,000 Russian forces remain at the ZNPP with military equipment. ISW continues to assess that Russia remains unlikely to cause a radiological incident at the ZNPP since Russia would not be able to control the impacts of the incident, which would degrade Russia's ability to operate and govern in occupied southern Ukraine.<sup>30</sup> Russian forces could conduct various possible man-made radiological incidents at varying levels of severity; however, ISW continues to assess that the consequences of a Russian radiological incident would outweigh any benefit for Russian forces at this time.<sup>31</sup> Russia is likely continuing to use the threat of a radiological incident to constrain Ukrainian counteroffensive actions and degrade Western military assistance support for Ukraine.

**Russian propagandists are likely conducting an information campaign to destroy the Wagner Group's reputation as a uniquely effective fighting force in support of the Russian Ministry of Defense's (MoD) effort to dismantle the Wagner Group and integrate former Wagner fighters into MoD structures.** Russian state TV channel *Rossiya-1* aired a segment on June 30 trivializing the Wagner Group's effectiveness in Ukraine, calling into question the "constructed myth about the Wagner Group's [high level of] effectiveness."<sup>32</sup> The segment implied that there is a popular misconception in Russia that Wagner forces are extraordinarily effective and argued that regular Russian forces are more effective than the Wagner private military company (PMC). *Rossiya-1* argued that regular Russian forces captured a geographically larger and more important city of Mariupol (in 71 days) much faster than Wagner Group forces were able to capture Bakhmut (in 224 days). Many Russian milbloggers – including Wagner-linked milbloggers – decried the report as a shameless rewriting of history and part of a "vile agenda" designed to "consign [Wagner PMC] feats to oblivion."<sup>33</sup> The Kremlin media apparatus is likely targeting Russian public perception of the Wagner PMC to decrease the group's popularity as the MoD may seek to effectively disband the Wagner Group in Ukraine and reorganize its elements within the Russian MoD.<sup>34</sup> This segment is likely a supporting effort within Russian President Vladimir Putin's assessed campaign to destroy Wagner Group financier Yevgeny Prigozhin's personal reputation.<sup>35</sup>



## Key Takeaways:

- Russian sources claimed that Ukrainian forces conducted counteroffensive operations in at least four sectors of the frontline on July 1.
- US Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Mark Milley acknowledged that Ukrainian counteroffensive operations will take longer than some Western observers had expected.
- Russian officials and sources celebrated claims that Russian forces defeated small-scale Ukrainian landings in east (left) bank Kherson Oblast on July 1 as if they had won a major victory.
- The exaggerated Russian praise for defeating a small Ukrainian landing suggests either that the Russian military command sincerely fears a Ukrainian attack on east bank Kherson Oblast or that it is desperate for an informational victory following the Wagner Group's armed rebellion or both.
- Russian forces are likely responding to Ukrainian operations around Bakhmut by pulling forces from elsewhere in Ukraine.
- Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky stated that the Russians might initiate an intentional radioactive leak at the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP) as part of a potential Russian strategy to freeze the war.
- Russian propagandists are likely conducting an information campaign to destroy the Wagner Group's reputation as a uniquely effective fighting force in support of the Russian Ministry of Defense's (MoD) effort to dismantle the Wagner Group and integrate former Wagner fighters into MoD structures.
- Russian forces continued limited offensive operations along the Svatove-Kreminna line.
- Ukrainian forces continued to conduct ground attacks around Bakhmut.
- Russian forces continued to conduct limited ground attacks in and transfer airborne (VDV) elements to the Bakhmut area.
- Russian forces continued to conduct limited ground attacks along the Avdiivka-Donetsk City line.
- Russian forces continued to counterattack recently-liberated Ukrainian positions on the administrative border between Donetsk and Zaporizhzhia oblasts.
- Ukrainian forces continued counteroffensive operations in western Zaporizhzhia Oblast.
- Russian security procedures on the Kerch Strait bridge are likely slowing down Russian logistics from Russia to occupied Crimea.
- Iran may be sending materiel and personnel to Russia to help construct a factory in the Republic of Tatarstan that will reportedly make Iranian combat drones.
- Ukrainian and Western sources continue to report on the abductions of Ukrainian children and adults in the occupied territories.

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





***conflict, Geneva Conventions, and humanity even though we do not describe them in these reports.***

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

### **Russian Main Effort – Eastern Ukraine**

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

Russian forces continued limited offensive operations along the Svatove-Kreminna line on July 1. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces conducted unsuccessful offensive operations near Novoselivske (16km northwest of Svatove), Nevske (18km northwest of Kreminna), Dibrova (6km southwest of Kreminna), and the Serebryanske forest area (11km south of Kreminna).<sup>36</sup> Geolocated footage published on June 30 shows elements of the Russian 104th Air Assault Regiment (76th Airborne Division) striking Ukrainian positions southeast of Dibrova.<sup>37</sup> Russian milbloggers claimed that Ukrainian forces unsuccessfully tried to counterattack near Torske (16km west of Kreminna) on June 30 and that Russian Airborne Forces (VDV) continued assaults in forest areas near Kreminna on July 1.<sup>38</sup>

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

Ukrainian forces continued to conduct ground attacks around Bakhmut on July 1. Russian milbloggers claimed that Ukrainian troops advanced from Pryvillia (10km northwest of Bakhmut) along the E40 highway and near Klishchiivka (7km southwest of Bakhmut).<sup>39</sup> The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) and other Russian sources claimed that Russian forces repelled Ukrainian attacks near Bakhmut, Vesele (20km northeast of Bakhmut), Zaliznyanske (13km north of Bakhmut), Yahidne (2km north of Bakhmut), and Kurdyumivka (13km southwest of Bakhmut).<sup>40</sup> Russian sources claimed on June 30 that Ukrainian forces attacked near Rozdolivka (19km northeast of Bakhmut), causing Russian forces to retreat about 150 meters, and near Zaitseve (22km south of Bakhmut) and Horlivka (26km south of Bakhmut).<sup>41</sup>

Russian forces continue to conduct limited ground attacks in and transfer airborne (VDV) elements to the Bakhmut area. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces conducted unsuccessful offensive operations near Bohdanivka (8km northwest of Bakhmut) and Khromove (immediately west of Bakhmut).<sup>42</sup> A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces attacked near Rozdolivka (19km north of Bakhmut).<sup>43</sup> Ukrainian Eastern Group of Forces Spokesperson Colonel Serhiy Cherevaty stated that Russian forces transferred an unspecified VDV regiment from the Lyman direction to areas north of Bakhmut and are concentrating Russia’s best forces in the Bakhmut direction.<sup>44</sup> Geolocated footage published on June 30 shows elements of the 137th Air Assault Regiment of the 106th VDV Division operating south of Rozdolivka.<sup>45</sup> Footage published on June 30



purportedly shows elements of the Russian 200th Motorized Rifle Brigade (14th Army Corps, Northern Fleet) and the “Alexander Nevsky” volunteer reconnaissance and assault brigade operating near Soledar (12km northeast of Bakhmut).<sup>46</sup>

Russian forces continued to conduct limited ground attacks along the Avdiivka-Donetsk City line on July 1. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces conducted unsuccessful offensive operations near Avdiivka, Pervomaiske (11km southwest of Avdiivka), and Marinka (immediately southwest of Donetsk City).<sup>47</sup> A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces unsuccessfully conducted assault operations near Marinka, Pobieda (5km southwest of Donetsk City), and Novomykhailivka (30km southwest of Donetsk City) and that Ukrainian forces made limited advances in the Pisky direction (9km southwest of Avdiivka).<sup>48</sup> The Russian MoD claimed that Russian forces repelled Ukrainian attacks near Lastochkyne (4km northwest of Avdiivka), Vesele (3km northeast of Avdiivka), and Pervomaiske.<sup>49</sup> Geolocated footage published on July 1 shows Ukrainian drones striking Chechen “Akhmat” forces near Marinka.<sup>50</sup>

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

Russian forces continued to counterattack recently liberated Ukrainian positions on the administrative border between Donetsk and Zaporizhia oblasts on July 1. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces unsuccessfully attacked Rivnopil (11km southwest of Velyka Novosilka).<sup>51</sup> The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) claimed that the Donetsk People’s Republic’s “Vostok” forces repelled two Ukrainian attacks in the area of Staromayorske (10km southwest of Velyka Novosilka) and that Russian forces stopped two Ukrainian sabotage and reconnaissance groups in the area of Novodarivka (16km southwest of Velyka Novosilka).<sup>52</sup> Ukrainian Tavriisk Defense Forces Spokesperson Captain Valeriy Shershen stated that Ukrainian forces continue consolidating newly liberated lines and are demining territories in the general Tavriisk (Zaporizhia) direction.<sup>53</sup> A Kremlin-affiliated milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces successfully advanced towards Pryyutne (17km southwest of Velyka Novosilka) and in the vicinity of Novodonetske (15km southeast of Velyka Novosilka).<sup>54</sup>

Ukrainian forces continued counteroffensive operations in western Zaporizhia Oblast on July 1. A Kremlin-affiliated milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces continued counteroffensive operations in the direction of Robotyne (14km south of Orikhiv) and advanced in an area up to 1.5km deep and 6km wide.<sup>55</sup> Another milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces of up to platoon size attacked in the direction of Robotyne and are still at least 1.5km north of Robotyne as of July 1 and that Ukrainian forces periodically engage elements of the 810th Naval Infantry Brigade of the Black Sea Fleet in the area.<sup>56</sup> The 810th Naval Infantry Brigade was notably heavily degraded in failed assaults against Vuhledar in winter-spring 2022-2023.<sup>57</sup> The Russian MoD claimed that Russian forces repelled a Ukrainian sabotage and reconnaissance group near Robotyne.<sup>58</sup> Russian sources claimed that fighting is ongoing north of Robotyne and that Pyatykhatky (25km southwest of Orikhiv) remains a contested “gray zone.”<sup>59</sup> Russian sources claimed that small Ukrainian assault groups attempted to liberate Pyatykhatky but were unsuccessful due to Russian artillery fire in the area.<sup>60</sup> Russian sources observed that Ukrainian forces are operating in small sabotage and reconnaissance groups and are not using many armored vehicles in western Zaporizhia Oblast.<sup>61</sup>

Russian sources claimed that Ukrainian forces launched Storm Shadow missile strikes at Berdyansk on July 1.<sup>62</sup> Russian sources claimed that Russian forces shot down both missiles over Berdyansk.<sup>63</sup> ISW reviewed imagery of the airfield in Berdyansk on July 1 and did not observe any evidence of damage to Russian helicopters on the airfield.



Russian security procedures on the Kerch Strait bridge are likely slowing down Russian logistics from Russia to occupied Crimea. Crimean Occupation Minister of Transport Nikolai Lukashenko claimed on July 1 that a major traffic jam formed at the entrance of the Kerch Strait bridge in Krasnodar Krai and that wait times for security inspections are up to two hours.<sup>64</sup>

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

Iran may be sending materiel and personnel to Russia to help construct a factory in the Republic of Tatarstan to manufacture Iranian combat drones. A Russian milblogger claimed on June 30 that a Pouya airline Il-76TD Iranian cargo plane that normally flies from Iran to Moscow recently flew from Iran to Nizhnekamsk, Republic of Tatarstan.<sup>65</sup> US National Security Council Spokesperson John Kirby stated on June 9 that Iran is helping Russia build a drone manufacturing factory in Yelabluga (20km from Nizhnekamsk) and that the facility could be operational by early 2024.<sup>66</sup> *The Wall Street Journal* reported in February 2023 that the facility may be able to produce 6,000 Iranian Shahed drones “in the coming years.”<sup>67</sup>

Regional Russian officials continue to form irregular volunteer battalions to support Russian force generation efforts. Khabarovsk Krai Governor Mikhail Degtyarev reportedly formed two new volunteer battalions on June 26, the “Erofi Khabarov” Battalion and the “Maxim Passard” Battalion.<sup>68</sup> The two new volunteer battalions will reportedly join the Khabarovsk Krai-based “Baron Kofi” Battalion already operating in Ukraine.<sup>69</sup> Recruits will reportedly receive a one-time 300,000-ruble (\$3,450) payment when joining these new volunteer formations.<sup>70</sup>

Russian arms manufacturer Lobaev Arms claimed that it has created new hardware that will allow Russian forces in Ukraine to operate commercially available drones under electronic warfare jamming conditions that completely suppress satellite navigation.<sup>71</sup> Lobaev claimed that the hardware will allow Russian forces to use commercially available M2, M2 pro, M2 Air, M3 Classic, M30T, and M300RTK drones when satellite navigation is suppressed and that the company is working on adapting the hardware for other drone types.<sup>72</sup> Lobaev added that Lobaev Arms continues to work alongside the Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD), the Russian Federal Security Service (FSB), the Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs, and Russian volunteer groups on sending drone systems to Russian forces in Ukraine.<sup>73</sup>

Ukrainian officials stated that Russian occupation officials are preparing for another mobilization wave in occupied territories. The Ukrainian Resistance Center reported on July 1 that the Zaporizhia Oblast occupation administration is preparing mobilization processes at 44 military registration centers in occupied Zaporizhia Oblast and that Russian occupation officials plan to add all citizens of conscription age to conscription lists.<sup>74</sup> The Resistance Center reported that Zaporizhia Oblast Occupation Head Yevgeny Balitsky plans to frame the new mobilization wave as a recruitment effort for militias in occupied Zaporizhia Oblast.<sup>75</sup>

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

Ukrainian and Western sources continue to report on the abductions of Ukrainian children and adults in the occupied territories. *NBC News* released an investigative report into Russian officials deporting 46 Ukrainian orphans from then-occupied Kherson City to occupied Crimea in late October 2022.<sup>76</sup> *NBC News* investigated a



video posted by United Russia Party Deputy Igor Kastyukevich that showed Russian officials and Ukrainian collaborators abducting Ukrainian orphans weeks prior to the Ukrainian liberation of Kherson City in November 2022.<sup>77</sup> *NBC News* reported that senior Russian officials claimed that the children remain in Crimea, though Ukrainian officials stated they are concerned the children could disappear into Russia before Ukrainian officials can secure the children's return.<sup>78</sup> Ukrainian outlet *Hromadske* released its own investigative report into the abductions and reported that the Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine filed charges against Igor Kastyukevich, the acting director of the orphanage, and a Kherson Oblast occupation administration official for their involvement in the abductions.<sup>79</sup> The Ukrainian Resistance Center, citing Ukrainian partisans, reported that Russian authorities have detained around 600 people in Zaporizhia and Kherson oblasts recently and that their current whereabouts are unknown.<sup>80</sup> The Resistance Center reported that these punitive measures are directed against citizens who openly criticize the Russian occupation.<sup>81</sup>

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

Wagner Group financier Yevgeny Prigozhin's private jet reportedly landed in Minsk on July 1. Publicly available flight tracking information indicates that Prigozhin's plane departed from St. Petersburg and approached Minsk in the early morning of July 1.<sup>82</sup> A Belarusian source reported that Prigozhin's plane landed in Minsk on July 1.<sup>83</sup> Prigozhin's plane previously traveled from Rostov to Moscow, and then from Moscow to Minsk on June 27.<sup>84</sup> Prigozhin's exact whereabouts are unknown as of July 1.

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

**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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<sup>1</sup> [https://t.me/mod\\_russia/28000](https://t.me/mod_russia/28000)

<sup>2</sup> <https://t.me/rybar/49206> ; <https://t.me/wargonzo/13592>

<sup>3</sup> [https://t.me/mod\\_russia/28005](https://t.me/mod_russia/28005) ; <https://t.me/wargonzo/13592> ; [https://t.me/mod\\_russia/28000](https://t.me/mod_russia/28000) ; <https://t.me/rybar/49214>

<sup>4</sup> <https://t.me/wargonzo/13592> ; <https://t.me/wargonzo/13604> ; [https://t.me/boris\\_rozhin/90932](https://t.me/boris_rozhin/90932) ; <https://t.me/rybar/49215> ; [https://t.me/rusich\\_army/9683](https://t.me/rusich_army/9683) ; [https://t.me/rusich\\_army/9687](https://t.me/rusich_army/9687) ; <https://t.me/RVvoenkor/48491> ; <https://t.me/rybar/49215> ; [https://t.me/rusich\\_army/9678](https://t.me/rusich_army/9678) ; [https://t.me/mod\\_russia/28000](https://t.me/mod_russia/28000)

<sup>5</sup> [https://t.me/rusich\\_army/9683](https://t.me/rusich_army/9683) ; [https://t.me/rusich\\_army/9687](https://t.me/rusich_army/9687) ; [https://t.me/boris\\_rozhin/90932](https://t.me/boris_rozhin/90932)

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-66075786>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-66075786>





<sup>8</sup> <https://t.me/rybar/49214> ; <https://t.me/rybar/49206> ; <https://t.me/RVvoenkor/48491> ;  
<https://t.me/RVvoenkor/48428> ; <https://t.me/wargonzo/13568> ; . [https://t.me/dva\\_majors/19772](https://t.me/dva_majors/19772) ;  
[https://t.me/romanov\\_92/39755](https://t.me/romanov_92/39755) ; <https://t.me/vrogov/10582> ; [https://t.me/rusich\\_army/9534](https://t.me/rusich_army/9534)  
<sup>9</sup> <https://t.me/wargonzo/13604> ; [https://t.me/rusich\\_army/9678](https://t.me/rusich_army/9678)  
<sup>10</sup> <https://isw.pub/UkrWar062023> ; <https://isw.pub/UkrWar062823> ; <https://isw.pub/UkrWar062523> ;  
<sup>11</sup> [https://t.me/SALDO\\_VGA/960](https://t.me/SALDO_VGA/960)  
<sup>12</sup> <https://t.me/rybar/49213>  
<sup>13</sup> [https://kherson-news\\_dot\\_ru/society/2023/06/30/160653.html](https://kherson-news_dot_ru/society/2023/06/30/160653.html)  
<sup>14</sup> [https://t.me/mod\\_russia/28001](https://t.me/mod_russia/28001)  
<sup>15</sup> [https://t.me/mod\\_russia/27987](https://t.me/mod_russia/27987) ; [https://t.me/mod\\_russia/27988](https://t.me/mod_russia/27988)  
<sup>16</sup> [https://t.me/mod\\_russia/27988](https://t.me/mod_russia/27988)  
<sup>17</sup> <https://t.me/RVvoenkor/48472> ; <https://t.me/bayraktar1070/1347> ; [https://t.me/taVricheskii\\_kaZachok/7160](https://t.me/taVricheskii_kaZachok/7160) ;  
[https://t.me/basurin\\_e/3428](https://t.me/basurin_e/3428) ; [https://t.me/negumanitarnaya\\_pomosch\\_Z/8466](https://t.me/negumanitarnaya_pomosch_Z/8466) ; [https://t.me/dva\\_majors/19940](https://t.me/dva_majors/19940) ;  
[https://t.me/dva\\_majors/19937](https://t.me/dva_majors/19937) ; [https://t.me/dva\\_majors/19935](https://t.me/dva_majors/19935)

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-june-30-2023>  
<sup>19</sup> <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-june-30-2023>  
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