

# Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment, December 7

Karolina Hird, Riley Bailey, George Barros, Madison Williams, Yekaterina Klepanchuk,  
and Frederick W. Kagan  
December 7, 7:00 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.

**Russian President Vladimir Putin is setting conditions for a protracted war of conquest in Ukraine.** During a meeting with the Russian Presidential Council for the Development of Civil Society and Human Rights (HRC), Putin remarked that the “special operation” in Ukraine can be a “lengthy process” and that the acquisition of new territory is a significant result of this process for Russia.<sup>1</sup> Putin compared himself favorably with Russian Tsar Peter the Great by noting that Russia now controls the Sea of Azov, which Peter the Great also fought for.<sup>2</sup> This invocation of Russian imperial history explicitly frames Putin's current goals in Ukraine as overtly imperialistic and still maximalist. Putin is conditioning Russian domestic audiences to expect a protracted, grinding war in Ukraine that continues to seek the conquest of additional Ukrainian territory.

The Russian information space responded positively to Putin's assertions and set further conditions for the protraction of the war, with one milblogger comparing Ukraine to Syria and noting that Russian forces did not start meaningfully experiencing victories on the battlefield until years into the operation.<sup>3</sup> ISW has previously observed that the Kremlin has been setting information conditions for the protraction of the war in Ukraine since the summer following Russian forces' dismal failures to secure and retain their primary objectives.<sup>4</sup> This informational conditioning is fundamentally incompatible with any discussions regarding a ceasefire or negotiations. Putin seems unwilling to risk losing domestic momentum by halting his offensive operations even briefly, let alone to pursue an off-ramp short of his full objectives, which, as he is making increasingly clear, appear to include the reconstitution of the Russian Empire in some form.

**Putin notably is using the Russian HRC as a means to consolidate political power in a way that is fundamentally incompatible with basic principles of international human rights law.** As ISW previously reported, Putin changed the composition of the HRC on November 17, removing Russian human rights activists who were critical of Kremlin censorship and installing political and proxy officials as well as a prominent Russian military correspondent.<sup>5</sup> The use of a domestic human rights body to advocate and set conditions for the perpetuation of a genocidal war in Ukraine undermines statements made by the Kremlin on Russia's purported commitment to human rights. Putin's comment accusing the West of using human rights to violate state sovereignty undermines a central premise of the international effort to protect human rights.<sup>6</sup>

**Putin reiterated Russia's formal position on the use of nuclear weapons in a statement to the Russian HRC on December 7 with no noteworthy changes.** Putin claimed that the threat of nuclear war is growing, but that Russia will not be the first to employ nuclear weapons.<sup>7</sup> Putin added, however, that if Russia is not the first to initiate the first use of nuclear weapons, it will also not be the second to do so, because the “possibility of using [a nuclear weapon] in the event of a nuclear strike on [Russian] territory are very limited.”<sup>8</sup> Putin reiterated that Russian nuclear doctrine is premised on self-defense and stated that any Russian nuclear use would be retaliatory. Putin also emphasized that Russia is not “crazy” and is acutely aware of the power of nuclear weapons but will not “brandish” them.

Putin's statements support ISW's previous assessment that while Russian officials may engage in forms of nuclear saber-rattling as part of an information operation meant to undermine Western support for Ukraine, Russian officials have no intention of actually using them on the battlefield.<sup>9</sup>

**NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg stated that the Russian military seeks an operational pause in winter 2022-2023 to regain the initiative and conduct a counteroffensive in spring 2023, partially supporting ISW's prior assessment.**<sup>10</sup> Stoltenberg told the *Financial Times* on December 7 that Russia seeks to “freeze” the fighting in Ukraine “at least for a short period of time so they can regroup, repair, recover... [a]nd then try to launch a bigger offensive next spring.”<sup>11</sup> Stoltenberg's statement supports ISW's assessment that an operational pause would favor Russia by depriving Ukraine of the initiative. An operational pause this winter would likely prematurely culminate Ukraine's counter-offensive operations, increase the likelihood that Ukraine loses the initiative, and grant degraded Russian forces a valuable three-to-four-month reprieve to reconstitute and prepare to fight on better footing.<sup>12</sup>

Putin continues to seem unwilling to pursue such a cessation of fighting, however. The Russian military is continuing offensive operations around Bakhmut and is—so far—denying itself the operational pause that would be consistent with best military practice. Putin's current fixation with continuing offensive operations around Bakhmut and elsewhere is contributing to Ukraine's ability to maintain the military initiative in other parts of the theater. Ukraine's continued operational successes depend on Ukrainian forces' ability to continue successive operations through the winter of 2022-2023 without interruption.<sup>13</sup>

**Russian forces used Iranian-made drones to strike Ukrainian cities for the first time in three weeks, likely as a result of Russian forces having modified the drones for colder weather.** Ukrainian Air Force Command Spokesperson Yuriy Ihnat stated on December 7 that Russian forces resumed the use of Iranian-made loitering munitions after a three-week break and suggested that Russian forces had faced complications using the drones due to icing issues in colder weather.<sup>14</sup> Ukrainian Southern Command Spokesperson Natalia Humenyuk stated on December 7 that Russian forces resumed the use of the Iranian-made drones intending to exhaust Ukrainian air defenses in various areas of activity and open areas of the front in Ukraine.<sup>15</sup> Russian and Ukrainian sources reported that Russian forces deployed Shahed-136 drones in attacks on Kyiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Poltava, Zhytomyr, and Zaporizhia Oblasts.<sup>16</sup> Russian forces have likely modified the drones to operate in colder weather conditions and will likely increase their use in Ukraine in the coming weeks in support of their campaign against Ukrainian critical infrastructure. ISW has previously reported that Russian forces are increasingly reliant on Iranian-made weapon systems due to the depletion of the Russian military's high-precision weapons arsenal.<sup>17</sup>

**Russian efforts to pressure Belarus into joining the war in Ukraine may be causing internal friction in the Belarusian military.** The Ukrainian General Staff reported on December 7 that soldiers of the Belarusian border service and the Belarusian Armed forces are growing increasingly dissatisfied with the activities of the Belarusian military-political leadership due to the threat of Belarus entering the war in Ukraine.<sup>18</sup> ISW has previously assessed that Russian Defense Minister Army General Shoigu met with Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko and Belarusian Defense Minister Major General Viktor Khrenin on December 3 to place further pressure on Belarus to support Russia's offensive campaign in Ukraine.<sup>19</sup> ISW has also previously reported that Belarusian officials, including Lukashenko and Khrenin, have used rhetoric to support an ongoing Russian

information operation aimed at fixing Ukrainian forces on the Belarusian-Ukrainian border with the threat of Belarus entering the war.<sup>20</sup> Russian pressure and the participation of Belarusian officials in the ongoing Russian information operation may be causing unease among Belarusian military personnel. ISW continues to assess that Belarus is highly unlikely to enter the war in Ukraine due to domestic factors that constrain Lukashenko's willingness to do so.

## **Key Takeaways**

- **Russian President Vladimir Putin is setting conditions for a protracted war of conquest in Ukraine.**
- **Putin is using Russia's Human Rights Council to consolidate power while rejecting principles of international human rights law.**
- **NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg made comments supporting ISW's previous assessments that an operational pause in the winter of 2022-2023 would favor Russia.**
- **Russian forces used Shahed-136 drones in Ukraine for the first time in three weeks.**
- **Russian efforts to pressure Belarus into joining the war in Ukraine may be causing friction in the Belarusian military.**
- **Russian forces are likely increasing the pace of their counterattacks in eastern Kharkiv and western Luhansk Oblast.**
- **Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Bakhmut and Avdiivka-Donetsk City areas.**
- **Russian forces continued defensive operations and the reorientation of their forces in eastern Kherson Oblast.**
- **Independent Russian media sources indicated that mobilization efforts will continue despite statements from Russian officials to the contrary.**
- **Russian occupation authorities are likely transforming Mariupol, Donetsk Oblast, into a rear military and logistics base for Russian forces.**

# Assessed Control of Terrain in Ukraine and Main Russian Maneuver Axes as of December 7, 2022, 3:00 PM ET



***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.***

- Ukrainian Counteroffensives—Eastern Ukraine
- Russian Main Effort—Eastern Ukraine (comprised of one subordinate and one supporting effort);
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort—Capture the entirety of Donetsk Oblast
- Russian Supporting Effort—Southern Axis
- Russian Mobilization and Force Generation Efforts
- Activities in Russian-occupied Areas

## **Ukrainian Counteroffensives (Ukrainian efforts to liberate Russian-occupied territories)**

### **Eastern Ukraine: (Eastern Kharkiv Oblast-Western Luhansk Oblast)**

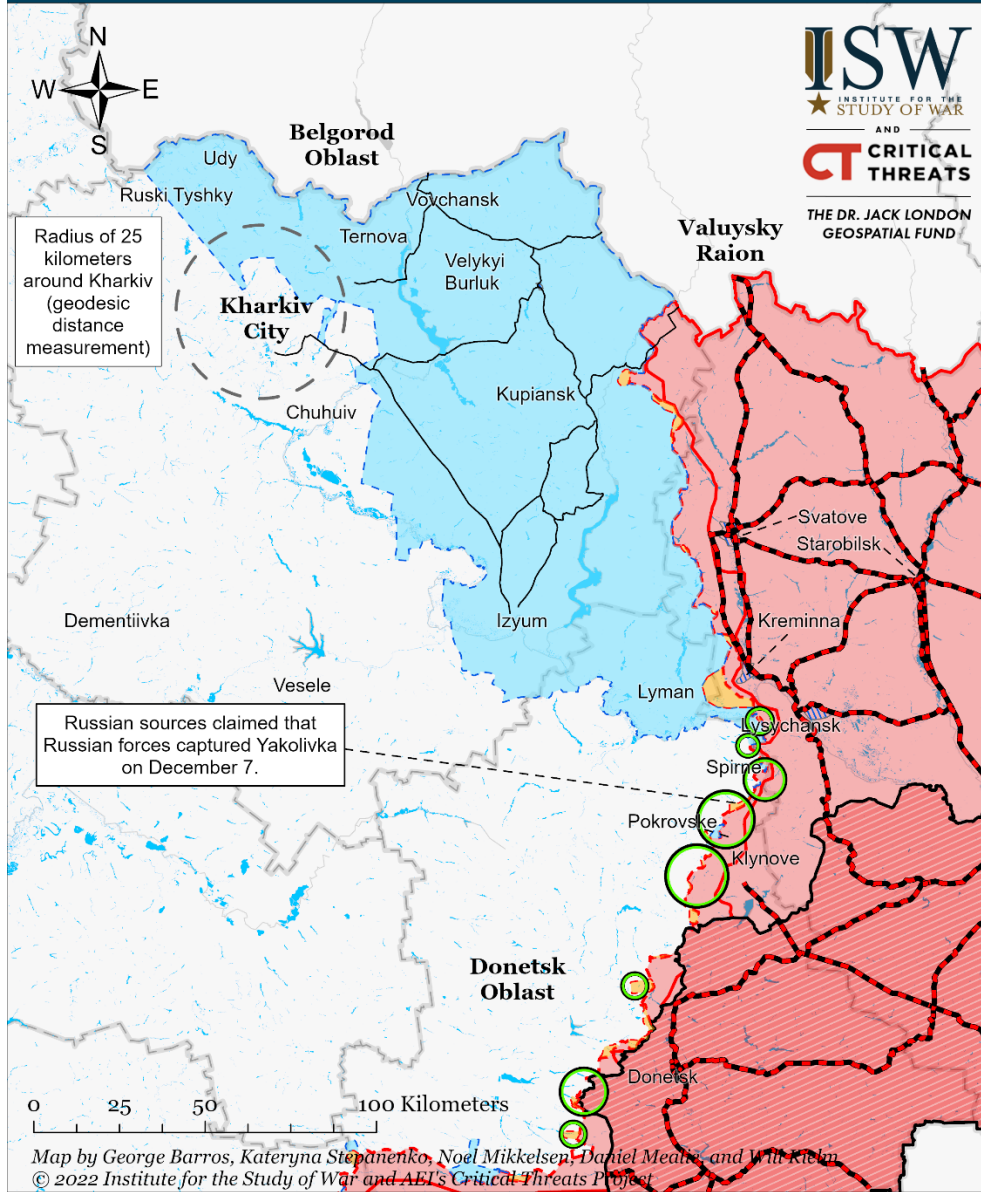
Russian forces are likely increasing the pace of their counterattacks in eastern Kharkiv and western Luhansk Oblast. Ukrainian Eastern Group of Forces Spokesperson Serhiy Cherevaty stated on December 7 that Russian forces are preparing a counteroffensive operation in western Luhansk Oblast, part of which would include operations in the direction of Kupyansk.<sup>21</sup> Cherevaty stated that Ukrainian forces are actively countering Russian counterattacks in the Svatove area as well as elsewhere.<sup>22</sup> A Russian milblogger claimed on December 6 that Russian forces conducted counterattacks along the entire line of the Svatove-Kreminna front.<sup>23</sup> The Russian Ministry of Defense claimed on December 7 that Russian forces continued offensive operations in the direction of Lyman.<sup>24</sup> Russian forces may be preparing for an increased pace of spoiling counterattacks in eastern Kharkiv and western Luhansk Oblast in order to preempt Ukrainian forces from increasing the pace of their eastern counteroffensive as conditions become more conducive for mechanized maneuver warfare in eastern Ukraine due to the winter.

Russian forces continued to defend their positions in the direction of Svatove amidst Russian claims of continued Ukrainian counteroffensive operations on December 7. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces are defending in the direction of Kupyansk.<sup>25</sup> A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces continued limited attempts to break through in certain areas of the front in eastern Ukraine using small groups of forces.<sup>26</sup> The Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces are preparing to attack Russian positions along the Lyman-Peryshi-Synkivka line.<sup>27</sup> A Georgia-based open-source intelligence organization forecasted that Ukrainian forces are likely planning to surround Svatove and not assault it head-on.<sup>28</sup> ISW does not make assessments about specific future Ukrainian operations.

Russian forces conducted limited counterattacks as Ukrainian forces reportedly continued counteroffensive operations in the Kreminna area on December 7. The Ukrainian General staff reported

that Ukrainian forces repelled a Russian assault on Bilohorivka (12 km south of Kreminna).<sup>29</sup> A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces attacked Ukrainian positions in the direction of Chervonopopivka (6km north of Kreminna) and that Ukrainian forces withdrew from strongholds southwest of Ploshchanka (17km northwest of Kreminna).<sup>30</sup> Another Russian milblogger claimed that elements of the Russian 144th Guards Motorized Rifle Division of the 20th Guards Combined Arms Army are slowly advancing in the vicinity of Kreminna.<sup>31</sup> A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces conducted assaults within 21km northwest of Kreminna near Ploshchanka and Chervonopopivka as well as along the Makiivka-Ploshchanka highway.<sup>32</sup> The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces continued routine indirect fire along the line of contact in eastern Kharkiv and western Luhansk oblasts.<sup>33</sup>

# Assessed Control of Terrain Around Kharkiv as of December 7, 2022, 3:00 PM ET



Map by George Barros, Kateryna Stepanenko, Noel Mikkelsen, Daniel Meade\* and Will Klein  
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Significant Fighting in the past 24 Hours	Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory before February 24	Claimed Russian Control over Ukrainian Territory
Key Ukrainian Roads	Assessed Russian Advances in Ukraine*	Claimed Ukrainian Counteroffensives
Russian Ground Lines of Communication	Assessed Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory	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.

Luhansk Oblast Head Serhiy Haidai stated on December 3 that Ukrainian forces liberated 13 unspecified settlements in Luhansk Oblast. ISW will update our maps when independent sources disclose the area of Ukrainian advances.

## **Russian Main Effort—Eastern Ukraine**

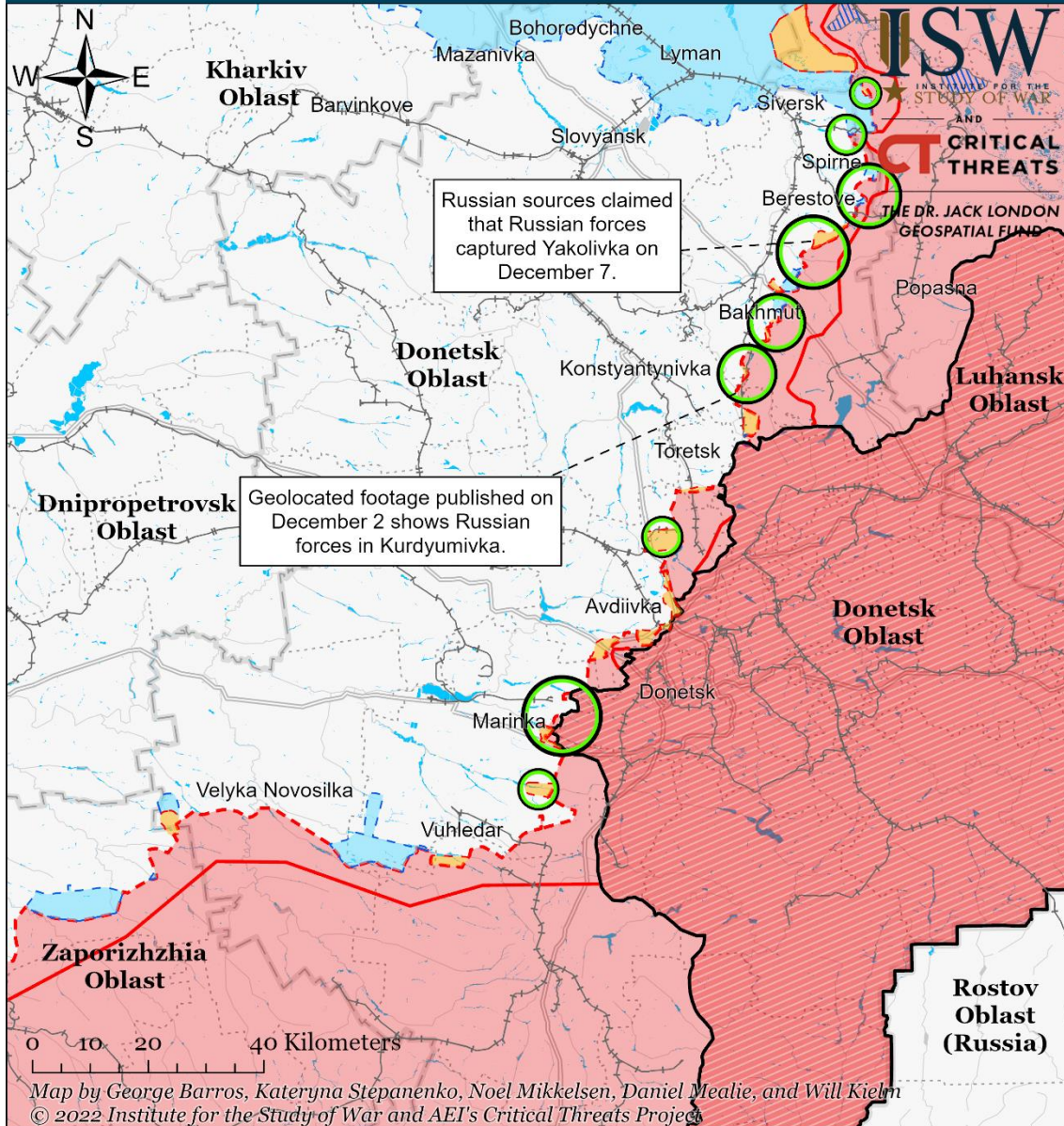
### **Russian Subordinate Main Effort—Donetsk Oblast (Russian objective: Capture the entirety of Donetsk Oblast, the claimed territory of Russia’s proxies in Donbas)**

Russian forces continued ground attacks around Bakhmut on December 7. The Ukrainian General Staff stated that Ukrainian troops repelled attempted Russian attacks on Bakhmut itself, northeast of Bakhmut near Verkhokamyanske (27km northeast of Bakhmut), Spirne (25km northeast of Bakhmut), Yakovlivka (12km northeast of Bakhmut), and south of Bakhmut near Bila Hora (15km southwest of Bakhmut) and Kurdiumivka (15km southwest of Bakhmut).<sup>34</sup> The attack on Bila Hora suggests that Russian forces may have crossed the Siverskyi Donets Donbas canal in Kurdiumivka and are pushing west.<sup>35</sup> Russian sources widely claimed that Wagner Group fighters took control of Yakovlivka and that fierce fighting is ongoing near Bakhmut in Opytne, Klishchiivka, and Soledar.<sup>36</sup> One Russian milblogger remarked that the daily small arms ammunition use of Wagner Group forces in the Bakhmut area is 2,000 rounds per day per person.<sup>37</sup> The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) claimed that Ukrainian troops unsuccessfully attempted to regain certain lost positions south of Bakhmut.<sup>38</sup> Russian sources largely discussed the intensity of operations in this area and emphasized high Ukrainian losses.<sup>39</sup>

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Avdiivka-Donetsk City area on December 7. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian troops attacked northeast of Avdiivka toward Novobakhmutivka (13km northeast of Avdiivka) and on the southwestern outskirts of Donetsk City near Marinka and Novomykhailivka.<sup>40</sup> The Donetsk People’s Republic (DNR) People’s Militia posted footage of the 1st and 3rd DNR battalions reportedly striking Ukrainian positions in Avdiivka and southwest of Avdiivka in Vodiane.<sup>41</sup> A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian troops advanced slightly westward of Novoselivka (15km northeast of Avdiivka) and reached the H20 Kostiantynivka-Donetsk City highway.<sup>42</sup> DNR Head Denis Pushilin noted that the Russian capture of Avdiivka is of critical importance in order to alleviate the artillery pressure of claimed Ukrainian strikes on Donetsk City.<sup>43</sup> The Russian MoD claimed that Ukrainian forces attempted to regain lost positions southwest of Donetsk City in the Vuhledar area.<sup>44</sup>



# Assessed Control of Terrain Around Donetsk as of December 7, 2022, 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
- Major Railroads
- 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.

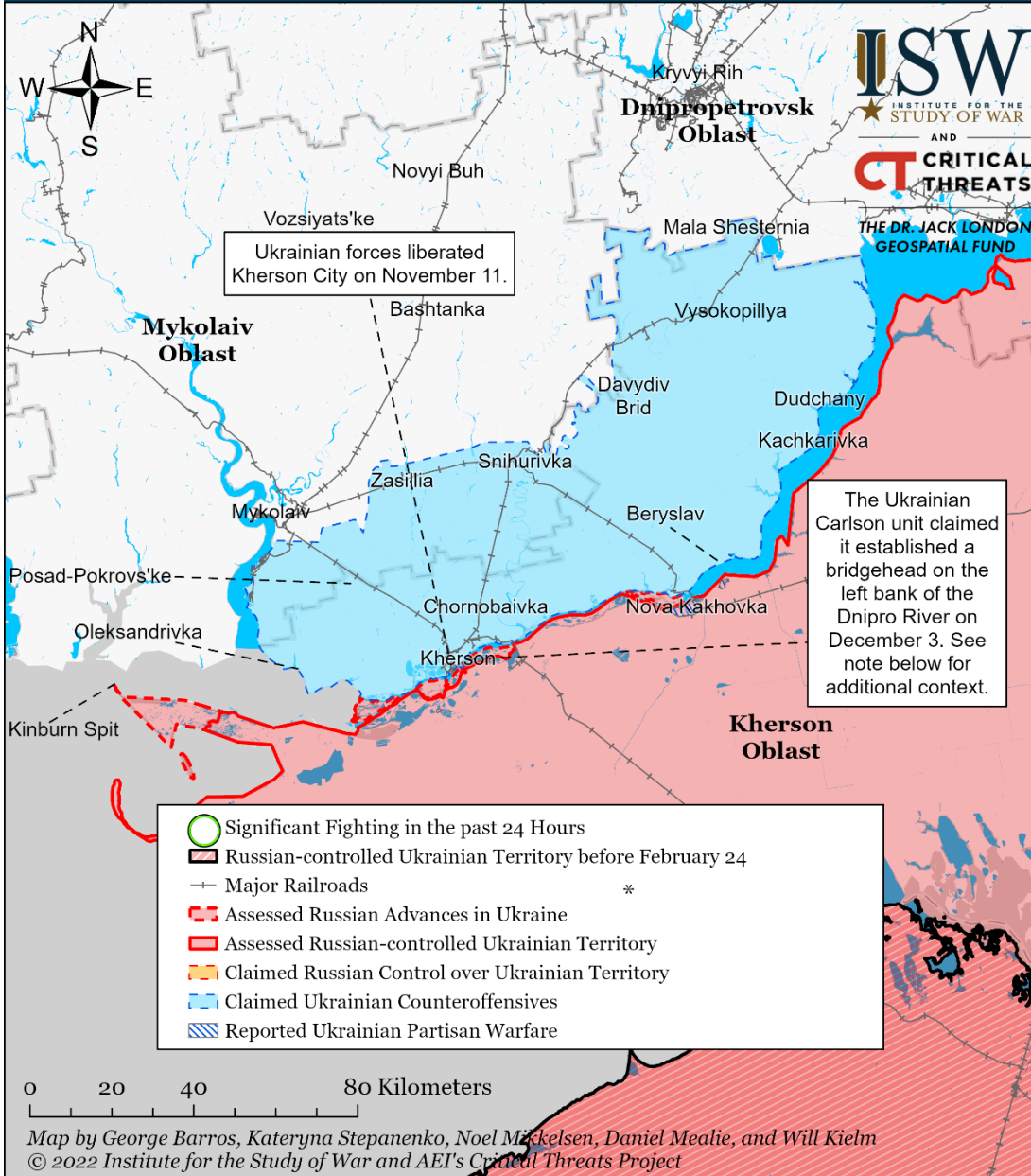
## **Supporting Effort—Southern Axis (Russian objective: Maintain frontline positions and secure rear areas against Ukrainian strikes)**

Russian forces continued to conduct defensive operations and are likely continuing to reorientate their forces in eastern Kherson Oblast as of December 7. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces are defending positions on the left (east) bank of the Dnipro River in Kherson Oblast as well as strengthening its grouping of forces there.<sup>45</sup> Kherson Oblast Head Serhiy Khlan reported that Russian forces have decreased the number of their personnel on the eastern bank, where they are primarily stationed in observation posts.<sup>46</sup> Khlan also stated that Russian forces plan to pull major forces up from rear positions in eastern Kherson Oblast and elsewhere if Ukrainian forces attack Russian positions on the east bank.<sup>47</sup> Khlan also reported that Russian forces continue to construct trenches in eastern Kherson Oblast.<sup>48</sup> Russian Don Brigade commander Alexei Kondratiev denied that Ukrainian forces control any part of the Kinburn spit on December 7 in response to recent reports from Ukrainian officials that Ukrainian forces are conducting operations on the Kinburn Spit.<sup>49</sup>

Ukrainian forces continued to strike Russian positions and rear areas in Kherson Oblast on December 7. A Ukrainian source reported that Ukrainian shelled Nova Kakhovka and Hopry (near Hola Prystan) in Kherson Oblast.<sup>50</sup> A Russian source claimed that Ukrainian forces struck Hola Prystan with HIMARS rockets.<sup>51</sup> A Russian source also claimed that Russian air defenses repelled Ukrainian drone attacks targeting the Belbek airfield in Sevastopol in Russian-occupied Crimea.<sup>52</sup>

Russian forces continued routine artillery and missile strikes west of Hulyaipole, on the west bank of the Dnipro River in Kherson Oblast, and in Dnipropetrovsk and Mykolaiv oblasts on December 7.<sup>53</sup> Ukrainian sources reported that Russian forces struck Kherson City, Ochakiv, Nikopol, and Zaporizhzhia City.<sup>54</sup> The Zaporizhzhia Oblast Administration reported that Russian forces also conducted drone attacks on targets in Zaporizhzhia City and that Ukrainian air defenses shot down six of the drones.<sup>55</sup> A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces also struck Dnipro City using Shahed-136 drones.<sup>56</sup> Dnipropetrovsk Head Valentyn Reznichenko reported that Ukrainian air defenses shot down all eight Russian Shahed-136 drones in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast.<sup>57</sup>

# Assessed Control of Terrain Around Kherson and Mykolaiv as of December 7, 2022, 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.

Light reconnaissance elements of the Ukrainian Carlson special volunteer unit placed a Ukrainian flag on a tower in the wetlands on the left bank of the Dnipro River, approximately 600 meters south of Kherson City and claimed the area will become a Ukrainian bridgehead that will support future operations to further liberate southern Kherson on December 3. ISW does not assess that Ukrainian forces have established a bridgehead or lodgment in this location as Carlson claimed as of December 3. The Carlson element's ability to operate in the area uncontested and the lack of observed Russian fortifications or defensive forces in the area indicate that Russian forces do not exercise full control over the area. Russian control lines are likely south of the Konka River.

**Note: ISW will report on activities in Kherson Oblast as part of the Southern Axis in this and subsequent updates. Ukraine's counteroffensive in right-bank Kherson Oblast has accomplished its stated objectives, so ISW will not present a Southern Ukraine counteroffensive section until Ukrainian forces resume counteroffensives in southern Ukraine.**

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

Independent Russian media sources indicated that Russian mobilization will continue, despite official Russian claims to the contrary. Russian President Vladimir Putin stated in a meeting with the Council on Civil Society and Human Rights (HRC) on December 7 that discussing additional mobilization measures “does not make sense” since there is “no need for the state and the Ministry of Defense today.”<sup>58</sup> Kremlin Spokesperson Dmitry Peskov similarly deflected inquiries about another wave of mobilization, stating that “there are a lot of provocative messages, [however], we must focus on the information from the Ministry of Defense and the President.”<sup>59</sup> An independent Russian media source notably reported on December 5 that mobilization efforts may resume on December 12 and that 700,000 more Russians will mobilize between December and February.<sup>60</sup> This date is sooner than ISW has previously reported and is a direct contradiction to official Russian claims concerning mobilization.<sup>61</sup> Another independent Russian media source shared intercepted audio on December 5 of a Moscow mobilization official demanding that her employees pass out mobilization summonses at night.<sup>62</sup> Putin signed a federal law on December 5 that suspends civil service work if a civil service worker is mobilized.<sup>63</sup> A Russian milblogger also amplified a report that the government of Moscow City recently threatened criminal prosecution of those who did not appear to military registration and enlistment offices after receiving mobilization summonses.<sup>64</sup>

A Russian independent news source reported that Russian mobilization officials will target pro-Ukrainian sympathizers in Russia in the next wave of mobilization. This source reported that mobilization officials, with the aid of the Russian Ministry of Education and Russian universities, will specifically target students who “sympathize with the opponents of the war” and have participated in protests.<sup>65</sup> The report stated that officials will place these students in a special database of the Center for Combating Extremism of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation (Center “E”) and will ensure that students in the database receive summonses.<sup>66</sup>

The Russian government attempted to assure its public that Russian forces no longer face logistical and equipment challenges, despite Russian milblogger claims to the contrary. Putin stated in a meeting with the Council on Civil Society and Human Rights (HRC) on December 7 that problems with equipment provision and other logistical support issues for Russian forces have “already been solved” and that he will look into any reports that require additional attention.<sup>67</sup> Putin subsequently claimed that fewer soldiers are fleeing the frontlines.<sup>68</sup> The Russian MoD continued to boast about effective training for mobilized personnel with videos of Russian forces training in the Republic of Buryatia, Saratov Oblast, and Belarus.<sup>69</sup> A prominent Russian milblogger stated that the situation on the frontlines has stabilized in many ways and that Russian industry is now working.<sup>70</sup> A Russian source reported that those attending the meeting with Putin and the HRC were not allowed to bring up sensitive issues related to

the war including the ongoing protest of mothers and wives of the mobilized.<sup>71</sup> A Russian milblogger stated that if Putin must personally deal with the provision of equipment to the Russian military, then the problem is not a logistical one, but a greater issue with the management of the military.<sup>72</sup> Another Russian milblogger condemned Russian military authorities for the lack of supplies and training, contrasting the logistical failures of the Russian forces with the successes of Wagner and stating that the Russian military must get its priorities straight.<sup>73</sup>

Russia continues to suffer from low morale and economic strain due to poorly-implemented mobilization. Russian sources continued to report instances of low morale in the Russian forces including one suicide, another attempted suicide, and multiple deaths due to alcohol abuse among the mobilized.<sup>74</sup> Russian media reported that a Russian mobilized soldier accidentally killed another servicemember in a training accident at a training ground in Luga, Leningrad Oblast on December 6.<sup>75</sup> A Russian source reported that the Russian National Guard deployed to entertain children in Elizavetino, Transbaikalia, because all male breadwinners were mobilized in that town.<sup>76</sup> Another Russian source stated that villagers and local officials have supported the livelihoods of struggling families of the mobilized by sharing in tasks like slaughtering pigs on a farm or catching crucian carp.<sup>77</sup> One Russian milblogger lamented that poor Russian cities are subsidizing mobilization by “plugging holes from the last crumbs” while Moscow Oblast has a multi-million-dollar budget.<sup>78</sup>

The Wagner Group experienced a case of desertion on December 6. A Russian source reported that an unidentified man in camouflage shot and wounded police officers in Novoshakhtinsk, Rostov Oblast, before escaping.<sup>79</sup> Russian and Ukrainian sources reported that authorities apprehended the man on December 7 and identified him as a convict recruited into the Wagner Group from a penal colony in Ufa, Republic of Bashkortostan.<sup>80</sup> Wagner Group financier Yevgeny Prigozhin responded to the case by stating that it is of a “closed operational nature.”<sup>81</sup> Prigozhin assured that a Wagner task force will conduct an investigation of the case.

**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 efforts to tighten social control in occupied territories by deporting children to Russia. Luhansk People’s Republic (LNR) head Leonid Pasechnik reported that United Russia’s Humanitarian Cooperation Headquarters head Anna Kuznetsova spent a weekend visiting Popasna Raion and Rovenky of occupied Luhansk Oblast with a humanitarian mission on December 5.<sup>82</sup> Kuznetsova noted that the Headquarters is sending children affected by the war to Sochi, Krasnodar Krai, for “rehabilitation.” Luhansk Oblast Administration Head Serhiy Haidai reported that Russian occupation officials are transporting children from Luhansk Oblast to the Chechen Republic for patriotic education.<sup>83</sup> Haidai stated that there are already more than 100 cases of deportation. The forcible transfer of children of one group to another “with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group” is a violation of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.<sup>84</sup>

Russian occupation authorities seem to be transforming Mariupol, Donetsk Oblast, into a rear military and logistics base for Russian forces. The Ukrainian advisor to the Mayor of Mariupol Petro Andryushchenko reported that Russian forces settled in Ahrobaza and Berdyanske near Mariupol, resulting in military patrols on the village streets.<sup>85</sup> Andryushchenko further reported that occupation

officials installed a mobile checkpoint for cars and male pedestrians in the “Morning Market” area of Mariupol for the first time since September.<sup>86</sup> The actions seem to be concerted efforts to increase security measures in Mariupol and the surrounding region.

Ukrainian partisans reportedly attempted an attack on Melitopol occupation administration deputy head Nikolai Volyk in Melitopol, Zaporizhia Oblast, with an improvised explosive device on December 7.<sup>87</sup> The sources reported that the attack did not injure Volyk.

Ukrainian authorities continue to enforce tough measures on occupation collaborators. The office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine announced on December 7 that it convicted a Ukrainian Orthodox Church Moscow Patriarchate priest in Severodonetsk, Luhansk Oblast, for providing information about Ukrainian forces to Russian forces since April 2022.<sup>88</sup>

**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> <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/70046> <https://t.me/rybar/41821>; <https://ria.ru/20221207/putin-1837018497.html>; [https://t.me/rian\\_ru/187966](https://t.me/rian_ru/187966); [https://t.me/rian\\_ru/187968](https://t.me/rian_ru/187968)

<sup>2</sup> <https://tass.com/politics/1547333>

<sup>3</sup> [https://t.me/boris\\_rozhin/72229](https://t.me/boris_rozhin/72229)

<sup>4</sup> <https://isw.pub/RusCampaignJuly19>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-november-17>

<sup>6</sup> <https://tass.com/politics/1547263>

<sup>7</sup> <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/70046>

<sup>8</sup> <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/70046>

<sup>9</sup> <https://isw.pub/UkrWar110622>; <https://isw.pub/UkrWar110622>;

<sup>10</sup> <https://understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-december-4>

<sup>11</sup> [https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions\\_209984.htm](https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_209984.htm)

<sup>12</sup> <https://understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-december-4>

<sup>13</sup> <https://understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-december-4>

<sup>14</sup> <https://armyinform.com.ua/2022/12/07/yurij-ignat-syly-ppo-vidpracyuvaly-vchora-po-dronah-kamikadze-na-vidminno/>; <https://nv.ua/ukr/ukraine/events/ppo-ukrajini-zbila-vsi-iranski-droni-novini-ukrajini-50289293.html>

<sup>15</sup> <https://armyinform.com.ua/2022/12/07/yurij-ignat-syly-ppo-vidpracyuvaly-vchora-po-dronah-kamikadze-na-vidminno/>; <https://nv.ua/ukr/ukraine/events/ppo-ukrajini-zbila-vsi-iranski-droni-novini-ukrajini-50289293.html>

<sup>16</sup> <https://t.me/kommunist/13981>; <https://t.me/rybar/41805>; <https://t.me/readovkanews/48389>; <https://t.me/stranaua/79119>; <https://t.me/readovkanews/48381>; <https://t.me/readovkanews/48382>; <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbid0SWy7AAu7QMdxZP73fyrSmV3tzk5yXsq91VkN6JcMWz4erDLm4MB9HdoWqhKs7fl>; <https://t.me/dnipropetrovskaODA/2673>

<sup>17</sup> <https://isw.pub/UkrWar110122>

<sup>18</sup>

<https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbid08ERrBJJor2mUkZyp3z7qAYGSXEcycpnnpqAq7QSBq6U1HZiixVz9wGkcBxMNDtLrI>

<sup>19</sup> <https://isw.pub/UkrWar120322>

<sup>20</sup> <https://isw.pub/UkrWar110222>; <https://isw.pub/UkrWar120122>; <https://isw.pub/UkrWar113022>

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<sup>21</sup> <https://gordonua.com/ukr/news/war/rosijski-okupanti-gotujut-kontrnastup-u-luganskij-oblasti-mozhlivo-na-kup-janskomu-naprijamku-zsu-1639698.html>; [https://lb.ua/society/2022/12/07/538388\\_okupanti\\_gotuyut\\_kontrataku.html](https://lb.ua/society/2022/12/07/538388_okupanti_gotuyut_kontrataku.html)

<sup>22</sup> <https://gordonua.com/ukr/news/war/rosijski-okupanti-gotujut-kontrnastup-u-luganskij-oblasti-mozhlivo-na-kup-janskomu-naprijamku-zsu-1639698.html>; [https://lb.ua/society/2022/12/07/538388\\_okupanti\\_gotuyut\\_kontrataku.html](https://lb.ua/society/2022/12/07/538388_okupanti_gotuyut_kontrataku.html)

<sup>23</sup> <https://t.me/vysokygovorit/10206>

<sup>24</sup> [https://t.me/mod\\_russia/22428](https://t.me/mod_russia/22428)

<sup>25</sup>

<https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbid0SWy7AAu7QMdxZP73fyrSmV3tzkke5yXsq91VkN6JcMWz4erDLm4MB9HdoWqhKs7fl>

<sup>26</sup> <https://t.me/rybar/41812>

<sup>27</sup> <https://t.me/rybar/41812>

<sup>28</sup> <https://t.me/CITeam/2945> ; <https://t.me/csources/162917>

<sup>29</sup>

<https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbid08ERrBJJor2mUkZyp3z7qAYGSXEcyppnnpqAq7QSBq6U1HZiixVz9wGkcBxMNDtLrI>

<sup>30</sup> <https://t.me/vysokygovorit/10206>

<sup>31</sup> <https://t.me/vysokygovorit/10206>

<sup>32</sup> <https://t.me/rybar/41812>

<sup>33</sup>

<https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbid08ERrBJJor2mUkZyp3z7qAYGSXEcyppnnpqAq7QSBq6U1HZiixVz9wGkcBxMNDtLrI> ;

<https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbid0SWy7AAu7QMdxZP73fyrSmV3tzkke5yXsq91VkN6JcMWz4erDLm4MB9HdoWqhKs7fl>

<sup>34</sup>

<https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbid08ERrBJJor2mUkZyp3z7qAYGSXEcyppnnpqAq7QSBq6U1HZiixVz9wGkcBxMNDtLrI>

<sup>35</sup> <https://twitter.com/Militarylandnet/status/1600407413277876224?s=20&t=F5LA2QqQDySxbErBDkFxBg>

<sup>36</sup> <https://t.me/kommunist/14008>; [https://t.me/grey\\_zone/16093](https://t.me/grey_zone/16093); <https://t.me/epoddubny/14037>;

[https://t.me/boris\\_rozhin/72199](https://t.me/boris_rozhin/72199); [https://t.me/boris\\_rozhin/72200](https://t.me/boris_rozhin/72200); <https://t.me/voenkorKotenok/43416>;

<https://t.me/milinfo/94154>; <https://t.me/rybar/41815>

<sup>37</sup> <https://t.me/yaremshooter/499>

<sup>38</sup> [https://t.me/mod\\_russia/22428](https://t.me/mod_russia/22428)

<sup>39</sup> <https://t.me/rybar/41815>; <https://t.me/wargonzo/9639>; [https://t.me/riz\\_the\\_kraken/54823](https://t.me/riz_the_kraken/54823)

<sup>40</sup>

<https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbid08ERrBJJor2mUkZyp3z7qAYGSXEcyppnnpqAq7QSBq6U1HZiixVz9wGkcBxMNDtLrI>

<sup>41</sup> [https://t.me/nm\\_dnr/9546](https://t.me/nm_dnr/9546); [https://t.me/nm\\_dnr/9545](https://t.me/nm_dnr/9545); <https://t.me/zhogaartem/130>

<sup>42</sup> <https://t.me/wargonzo/9639>

<sup>43</sup> <https://tass.ru/interviews/16512507>

<sup>44</sup> [https://t.me/mod\\_russia/22428](https://t.me/mod_russia/22428)

<sup>45</sup>

<https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbid08ERrBJJor2mUkZyp3z7qAYGSXEcyppnnpqAq7QSBq6U1HZiixVz9wGkcBxMNDtLrI>

<sup>46</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/sergey.khlan/posts/5755118334609527>

<sup>47</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/sergey.khlan/posts/5755118334609527>

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<sup>48</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/sergey.khlan/posts/5755118334609527>

<sup>49</sup> [https://t.me/boris\\_rozhin/72202](https://t.me/boris_rozhin/72202)

<sup>50</sup> <https://t.me/hueviyherson/30501> ; <https://t.me/hueviyherson/30493> ; <https://t.me/hueviyherson/30494> ; <https://t.me/hueviyherson/30495>

<sup>51</sup> <https://t.me/readovkanews/48424>

<sup>52</sup> <https://t.me/readovkanews/48396>

<sup>53</sup>

<https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbid08ERrBJor2mUkZyp3z7qAYGSXEcyppnnpqAq7QSBq6U1HZiixVz9wGkcBxMNDtLrI> ; <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbid0SWy7AAu7QMdxZP73fyrSmV3tzkke5yXsq91Vkn6JcMWz4erDLm4MB9HdoWqhKs7fl> ; <https://t.me/khersonskaODA/2338> ; [https://t.me/zoda\\_gov\\_ua/15292](https://t.me/zoda_gov_ua/15292) ; <https://t.me/mykolaivskaODA/3693> ; [https://t.me/zoda\\_gov\\_ua/15287](https://t.me/zoda_gov_ua/15287) ; <https://t.me/dnipropetrovskaODA/2673> ; <https://t.me/vilkul/2352> ; [https://t.me/Yevtushenko\\_E/1669](https://t.me/Yevtushenko_E/1669)

<sup>54</sup> [https://t.me/zoda\\_gov\\_ua/15287](https://t.me/zoda_gov_ua/15287) ; <https://t.me/khersonskaODA/2338> ; <https://t.me/mykolaivskaODA/3693> ; <https://t.me/dnipropetrovskaODA/2673>

<sup>55</sup> [https://t.me/zoda\\_gov\\_ua/15287](https://t.me/zoda_gov_ua/15287)

<sup>56</sup> <https://t.me/rybar/41805>

<sup>57</sup> <https://t.me/dnipropetrovskaODA/2673>

<sup>58</sup> [https://ria\\_dot\\_ru/20221207/putin-1837018497.html](https://ria_dot_ru/20221207/putin-1837018497.html) ; [https://t.me/rian\\_ru/187966](https://t.me/rian_ru/187966) ; [https://t.me/rian\\_ru/187968](https://t.me/rian_ru/187968)

<sup>59</sup> <https://t.me/guberniaband/5250> ; <https://notes.citeam.org/mobilization-dec-5-6>

<sup>60</sup> <https://t.me/volyamedia/487> ; <https://t.me/volyamedia/479> ; <https://notes.citeam.org/mobilization-dec-5-6>

<sup>61</sup> <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-december-6>

<sup>62</sup> [https://twitter.com/the\\_ins\\_ru/status/1599695091672576004?s=20&t=S-h73JI3G5PICi05NiHf3A](https://twitter.com/the_ins_ru/status/1599695091672576004?s=20&t=S-h73JI3G5PICi05NiHf3A)

<sup>63</sup> [https://publication.pravo\(dot\)gov.ru/Document/View/0001202212050012?index=0&rangeSize=1](https://publication.pravo(dot)gov.ru/Document/View/0001202212050012?index=0&rangeSize=1) ; [https://ria\(dot\)ru/20221205/zakon-1836435752.html](https://ria(dot)ru/20221205/zakon-1836435752.html) ; [https://notes.citeam\\_dot\\_org/mobilization-dec-5-6](https://notes.citeam_dot_org/mobilization-dec-5-6)

<sup>64</sup> <https://t.me/avtozaklive/17135> ; [https://t.me/msk\\_gde/2798](https://t.me/msk_gde/2798)

<sup>65</sup> <https://t.me/volyamedia/487>

<sup>66</sup> <https://t.me/volyamedia/487>

<sup>67</sup> [https://ria\\_dot\\_ru/20221207/putin-1837018497.html](https://ria_dot_ru/20221207/putin-1837018497.html) ; [https://t.me/rian\\_ru/187966](https://t.me/rian_ru/187966) ; [https://t.me/rian\\_ru/187968](https://t.me/rian_ru/187968)

<sup>68</sup> [https://ria\\_dot\\_ru/20221207/putin-1837018497.html](https://ria_dot_ru/20221207/putin-1837018497.html) ; [https://t.me/rian\\_ru/187966](https://t.me/rian_ru/187966) ; [https://t.me/rian\\_ru/187968](https://t.me/rian_ru/187968)

<sup>69</sup> [https://t.me/mod\\_russia/22393](https://t.me/mod_russia/22393) ; [https://t.me/mod\\_russia/22413](https://t.me/mod_russia/22413) ; [https://t.me/mod\\_russia/22412](https://t.me/mod_russia/22412)

<sup>70</sup> <https://t.me/truekpru/100788> ; <https://t.me/sashakots/37525>

<sup>71</sup> <https://t.me/svobodnieslova/1023> ; <https://t.me/svobodnieslova/1022>

<sup>72</sup> [https://t.me/grey\\_zone/16095](https://t.me/grey_zone/16095) ; [https://t.me/Hard\\_Blog\\_Line/8457](https://t.me/Hard_Blog_Line/8457)

<sup>73</sup> <https://t.me/vladlentatarsky/17922>

<sup>74</sup> [https://t.me/ostorozhno\\_novosti/13047](https://t.me/ostorozhno_novosti/13047) ; <https://notes.citeam.org/mobilization-dec-5-6> ; <https://t.me/bazabazon/14835> ; <https://t.me/perm36/8995> ; <https://notes.citeam.org/mobilization-dec-5-6>

<sup>75</sup> [https://t.me/ostorozhno\\_novosti/13040](https://t.me/ostorozhno_novosti/13040) ; <https://notes.citeam.org/mobilization-dec-5-6>

<sup>76</sup> <https://t.me/mobilizationnews/5223>

<sup>77</sup> [https://29\(dot\)ru/text/animals/2022/12/05/71872019/](https://29(dot)ru/text/animals/2022/12/05/71872019/) ; <https://notes.citeam.org/mobilization-dec-5-6> ; [https://vk.com/wall-187580720\\_36771](https://vk.com/wall-187580720_36771)

<sup>78</sup> [https://t.me/notes\\_veterans/6947](https://t.me/notes_veterans/6947)

<sup>79</sup> <https://t.me/bazabazon/14826> ; <https://t.me/bazabazon/14825> ; <https://t.me/bazabazon/14824> ; <https://t.me/bazabazon/14828>

<sup>80</sup> <https://t.me/bazabazon/14837> ; <https://t.me/bazabazon/14838> ; <https://t.me/bazabazon/14842> ; [https://twitter.com/bad\\_moskal/status/1600448863189360640](https://twitter.com/bad_moskal/status/1600448863189360640) ;



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<https://t.me/stranaua/79134> ; <https://t.me/stranaua/79132>

<sup>81</sup> [https://t.me/concordgroup\\_official/103](https://t.me/concordgroup_official/103)

<sup>82</sup> [https://t.me/glava\\_Inr\\_info/547](https://t.me/glava_Inr_info/547)

<sup>83</sup> [https://t.me/serhiy\\_hayday/8848](https://t.me/serhiy_hayday/8848)

<sup>84</sup> [https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/atrocities-crimes/Doc.1\\_Convention%20on%20the%20Prevention%20and%20Punishment%20of%20the%20Crime%20of%20Genocide.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/atrocities-crimes/Doc.1_Convention%20on%20the%20Prevention%20and%20Punishment%20of%20the%20Crime%20of%20Genocide.pdf)

<sup>85</sup> <https://t.me/andriyshTime/4846>

<sup>86</sup> <https://t.me/andriyshTime/4846>

<sup>87</sup> <https://ria.ru/20221207/volyk-1836868863.html> ; <https://t.me/readovkanews/48395> ;

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<sup>88</sup> <https://www.gp.gov.ua/ua/posts/do-12-rokiv-za-gratami-zasudzeno-svyashhennika-upc-mp-v-luganskii-oblasti-za-informuvannya-voroga-pro-pozyciyi-ukrayinskix-zaxisnikiv>