

Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment

Karolina Hird, Mason Clark, George Barros, and Grace Mappes

June 14, 5:00 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.

The Belarusian Armed Forces began a command-staff exercise focused on testing command and control capabilities on June 14. However, Belarus remains unlikely to join the war in Ukraine on behalf of Russia. Head of Logistics for the Belarusian Armed Forces Major General Andrei Burdyko announced that the exercise will involve military authorities, unspecified military units, and logistics organizations and is intended to improve the coherency of command-and-control and logistics support to increase the overall level of training and practical skills of personnel in a “dynamically changing environment.”¹ Despite the launch of this exercise, Belarus remains unlikely to join the war in Ukraine due to the threat of domestic unrest that President Alexander Lukashenko faces if he involves already-limited Belarusian military assets in combat.² Any Belarusian entrance into the war would also likely provoke further crippling sanctions on Belarus. Any unsupported Belarusian attack against northern Ukraine would likely be highly ineffective, and the quality of Belarusian troops remains low. ISW will continue to monitor Belarusian movements but does not forecast a Belarusian entrance into the war at this time.

Russian authorities may be accelerating plans to annex occupied areas of Ukraine and are arranging political and administrative contingencies for control of annexed territories. Russian military correspondent Sasha Kots posted an image of a map that was displayed at the St. Petersburg Economic Forum depicting a proposed scheme for the “administrative-territorial” division of Ukraine following the war on a three-to-five-year transition scale.³ The proposed scheme divides Ukrainian oblasts into Russian “territorial districts” and suggests the manner in which Russian authorities hope to incorporate Ukrainian territory directly into Russia. Advisor to the Mayor of Mariupol Petro Andryushchenko additionally outlined a series of indicators that he claimed suggest that Russian authorities are planning to annex occupied Donetsk Oblast as soon as September 1, 2022.⁴ Andryushchenko stated that the leadership of occupied Donetsk has entirely passed from authorities of the Donetsk People’s Republic (DNR) to Russian officials and that Russian educational authorities are already referring to Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhia, and Kherson as regions of Russia. Andryushchenko additionally stated that the financial and legal systems in occupied Donetsk have already transitioned to Russian systems. Despite the apparent lack of a Kremlin-backed mandate concerning the condition of occupied areas, Russian authorities are likely pushing to expedite a comprehensive annexation process in order to consolidate control over Ukrainian territories and integrate them into Russia’s political and economic environment. However, the Kremlin retains several options in occupied Ukrainian territory and is not bound to any single annexation plan.

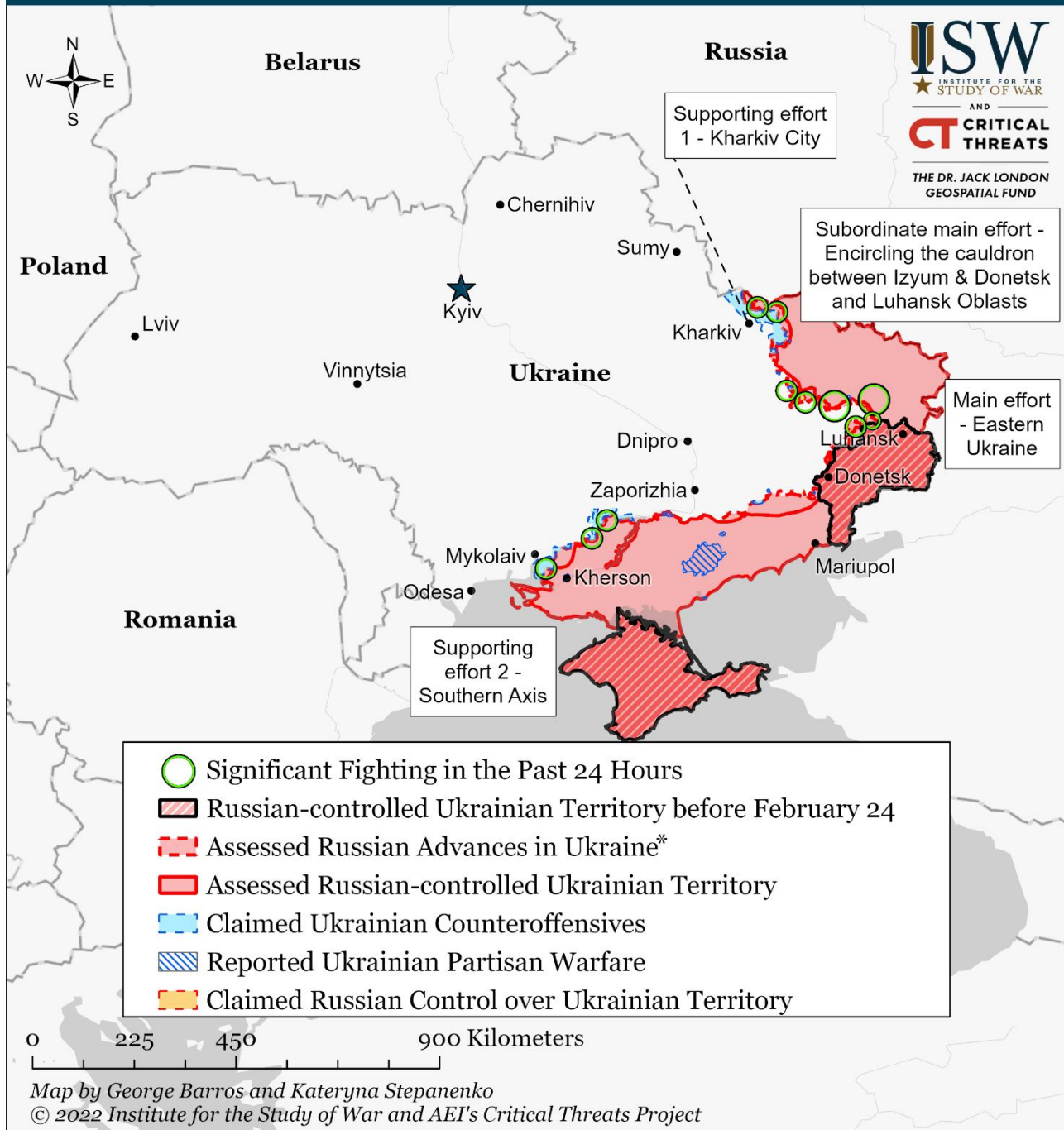
The Russian military leadership continues to expand its pool of eligible recruits by manipulating service requirements. Russian milblogger Yuri Kotyenok suggested that Russian authorities are preparing to increase the age limit for military service from 40 to 49 and to drop the existing requirement for past military service to serve in tank and motorized infantry units.⁵ If true, the shift demonstrates the Kremlin's increasing desperation for recruits to fill frontline units, regardless of their poor skills. Kotyenok echoed calls made by other milbloggers to reduce the health requirements for those serving in rear and support roles.⁶ Kotyenok additionally noted that while Russian recruits must have clean criminal records to serve, private military companies such as the Wagner Group will allow those with “mild misdemeanors” into service and that many of these low-level offenders have been mobilized into combat with Wagner in Donetsk and Luhansk. The Russian military leadership will

likely continue efforts to expand the pool of eligible recruits, even at the cost of high-quality military personnel.

Key Takeaways

- **Russian military authorities are pursuing options to increase the available pool of eligible recruits to account for continued personnel losses in Ukraine.**
- **Russian forces are continuing to fight for control of the Azot industrial plant and have destroyed all bridges between Severodonetsk and Lysychansk, likely to isolate the remaining Ukrainian defenders within the city from critical lines of communication.**
- **Russian forces continue to prepare for offensive operations southeast of Izyum and west of Lyman toward Slovyansk.**
- **Russian forces are continuing offensive operations to the east of Bakhmut near the T1302 highway to cut Ukrainian lines of communication to Severodonetsk-Lysychansk.**
- **Russian forces continued offensive operations to push Ukrainian troops away from frontlines northeast of Kharkiv City.**
- **Ukrainian counterattacks have forced Russian troops on the Southern Axis to take up and strengthen defensive positions.**

Assessed Control of Terrain in Ukraine and Main Russian Maneuver Axes as of June 14, 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.

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.

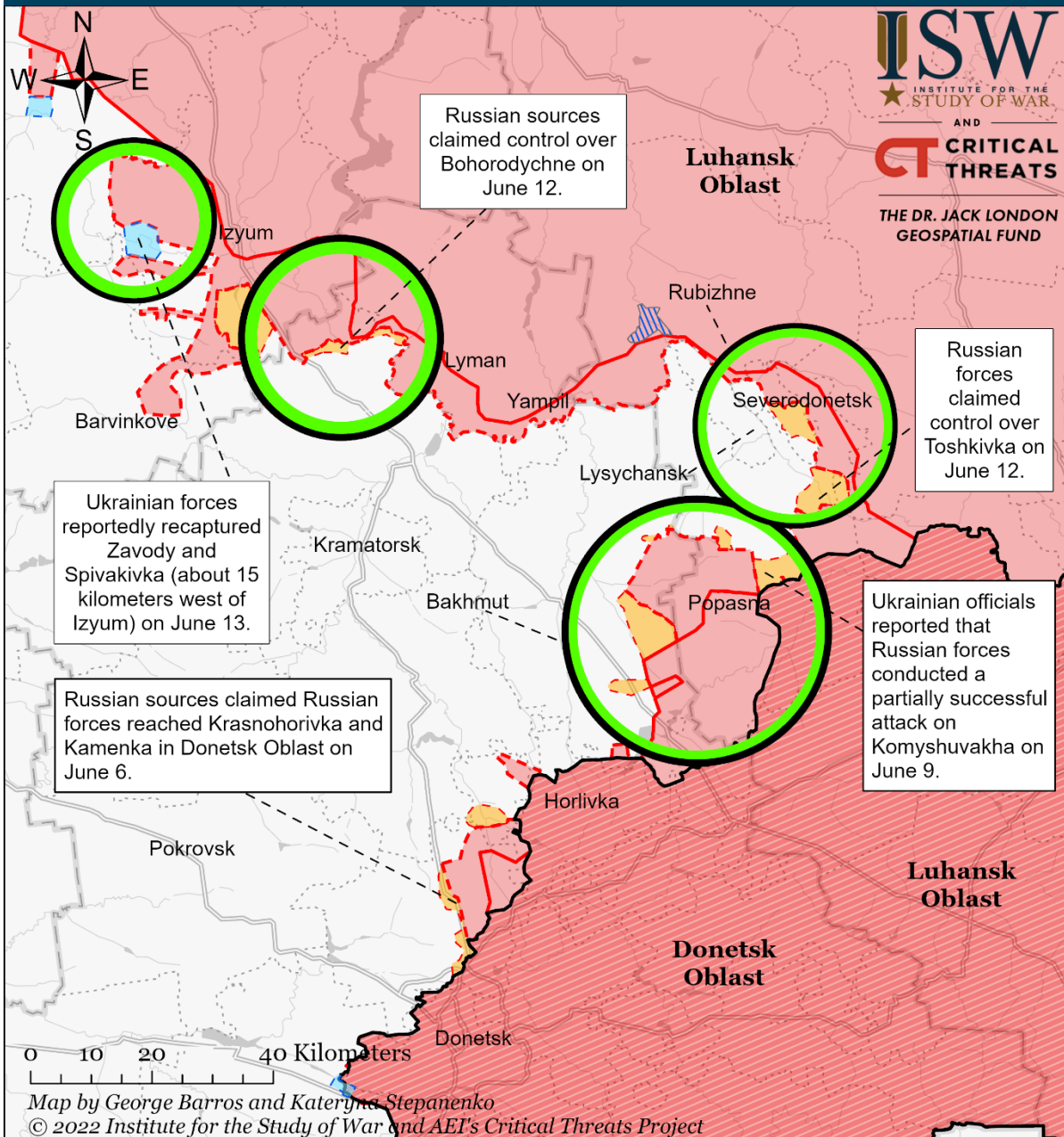
- Main Effort—Eastern Ukraine (comprised of one subordinate and three supporting efforts)
- Subordinate Main Effort—Encirclement of Ukrainian troops in the cauldron between Izyum and Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts
- Supporting Effort 1—Kharkiv City
- Supporting Effort 2—Southern Axis
- Activities in Russian-occupied Areas

Main Effort—Eastern Ukraine

Subordinate Main Effort—Southern Kharkiv, Donetsk, Luhansk oblasts (Russian objective: Encircle Ukrainian forces in eastern Ukraine and capture the entirety of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, the claimed territory of Russia’s proxies in Donbas)

Russian forces continued ground assaults within Severodonetsk and fought for control of the Azot industrial plant on June 14.⁷ The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces moved two battalion tactical groups (BTGs) to the north of Severodonetsk around Kremmina and Rubizhne (in Luhansk Oblast), but as ISW has previously assessed, these BTGs are unlikely to be functioning at full combat capacity.⁸ A Russian Telegram channel additionally claimed that Russian forces have encircled Ukrainian troops within the Azot industrial plant, rendering evacuation or withdrawal from the plant impossible, though ISW cannot independently confirm this claim.⁹ Russian forces have reportedly destroyed all three bridges spanning the Siverskyi Donets River from Severodonetsk to Lysychansk, indicating that Russian forces likely seek to isolate Ukrainian defenders in Severodonetsk from their critical lines of communication to complete the encirclement of the city, at the cost of preventing Russian forces from easily crossing the river themselves once they capture Severodonetsk.¹⁰ Russian forces conducted continual artillery strikes against Severodonetsk-Lysychansk and the surrounding settlements of Privillya and Borivske.¹¹

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Luhansk as of June 14, 2022, 3:00 PM ET



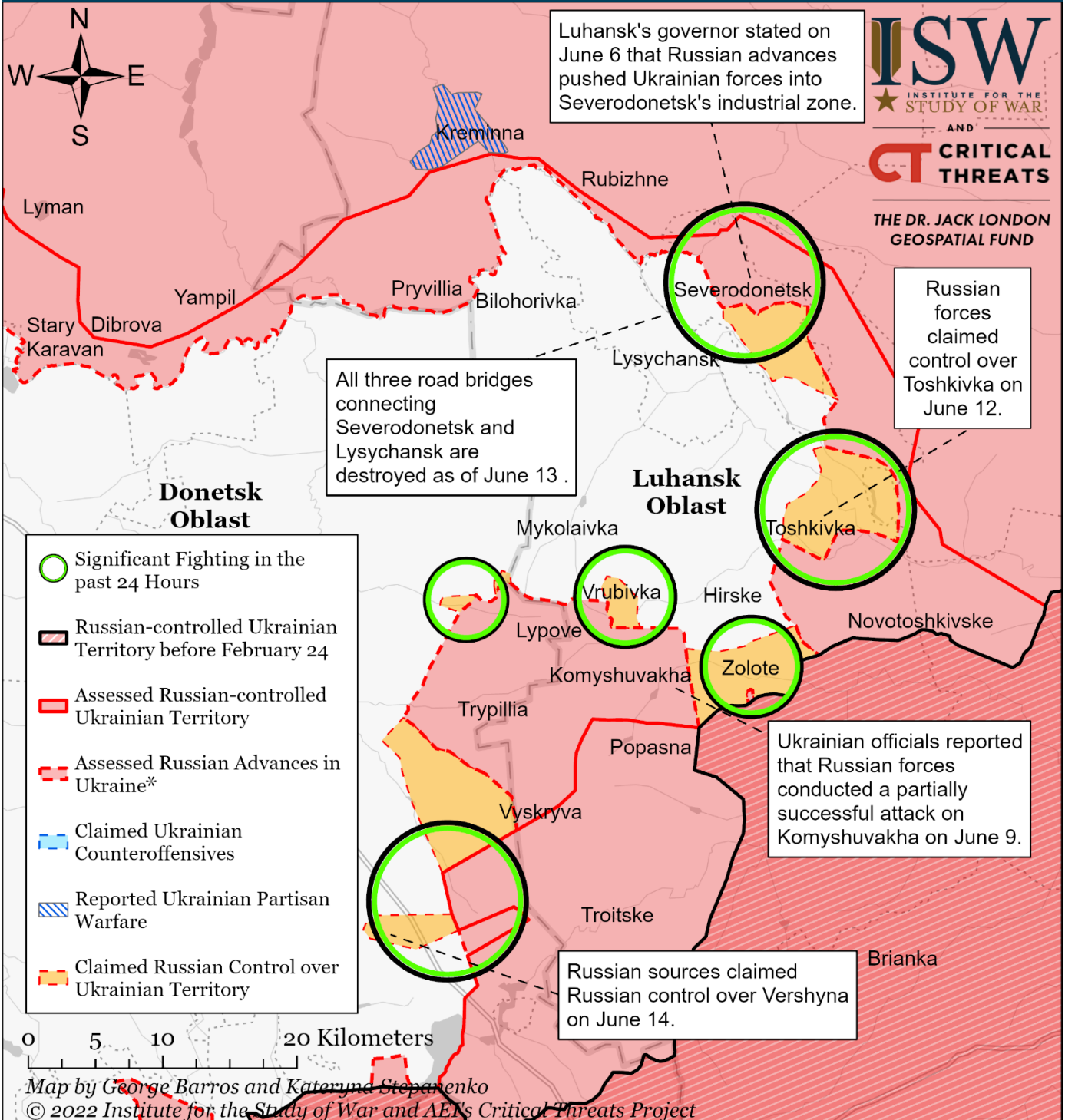
- Significant Fighting in the past 24 Hours
- Assessed Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory
- Reported Ukrainian Partisan Warfare
- Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory before February 24
- Claimed Russian Control over Ukrainian Territory
- Assessed Russian Advances in Ukraine*
- Claimed Ukrainian Counteroffensives

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

Russian forces continued to prepare for offensive operations toward Slovyansk from the southeast of Izyum and west of Lyman on June 14.¹² The Ukrainian General Staff noted that Russian forces are focusing on consolidating control of Bohorodychne, a settlement near the Kharkiv-Donetsk Oblast border about 20 km northwest of Slovyansk.¹³ Russian forces are conducting artillery and ground attacks in other settlements to the northwest of Slovyansk, and will likely use incremental gains in this area to gain road access to the M03 highway and drive southeast on Slovyansk.¹⁴ The Ukrainian General Staff stated that Russian forces are additionally preparing for an offensive southwest of Lyman toward Raihorodok, indicating that Russian forces intend to push toward Slovyansk along the T0514 highway that runs from Lyman through Raihorodok and Slovyansk.¹⁵

Russian forces continued ground, air, and artillery strikes to the east of Bakhmut on June 14.¹⁶ Russian forces conducted attacks around Zolote, east of Bakhmut, and attacks to drive northward toward Bakhmut from Vidrozhennya and Vershyna.¹⁷ A Russian Telegram channel claimed that detachments of the Wagner Private Military Company took control of Vidrozhennya and Roty, both to the southeast of Bakhmut.¹⁸ Russian forces continued attempts to cut the T1302 Bakhmut-Lysychansk highway and are likely in position to interdict Ukrainian movements along sections of the highway via shelling as they continue assaults on Vrubivka and Berestove.¹⁹

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Severodonetsk as of June 14, 2022, 3:00 PM ET

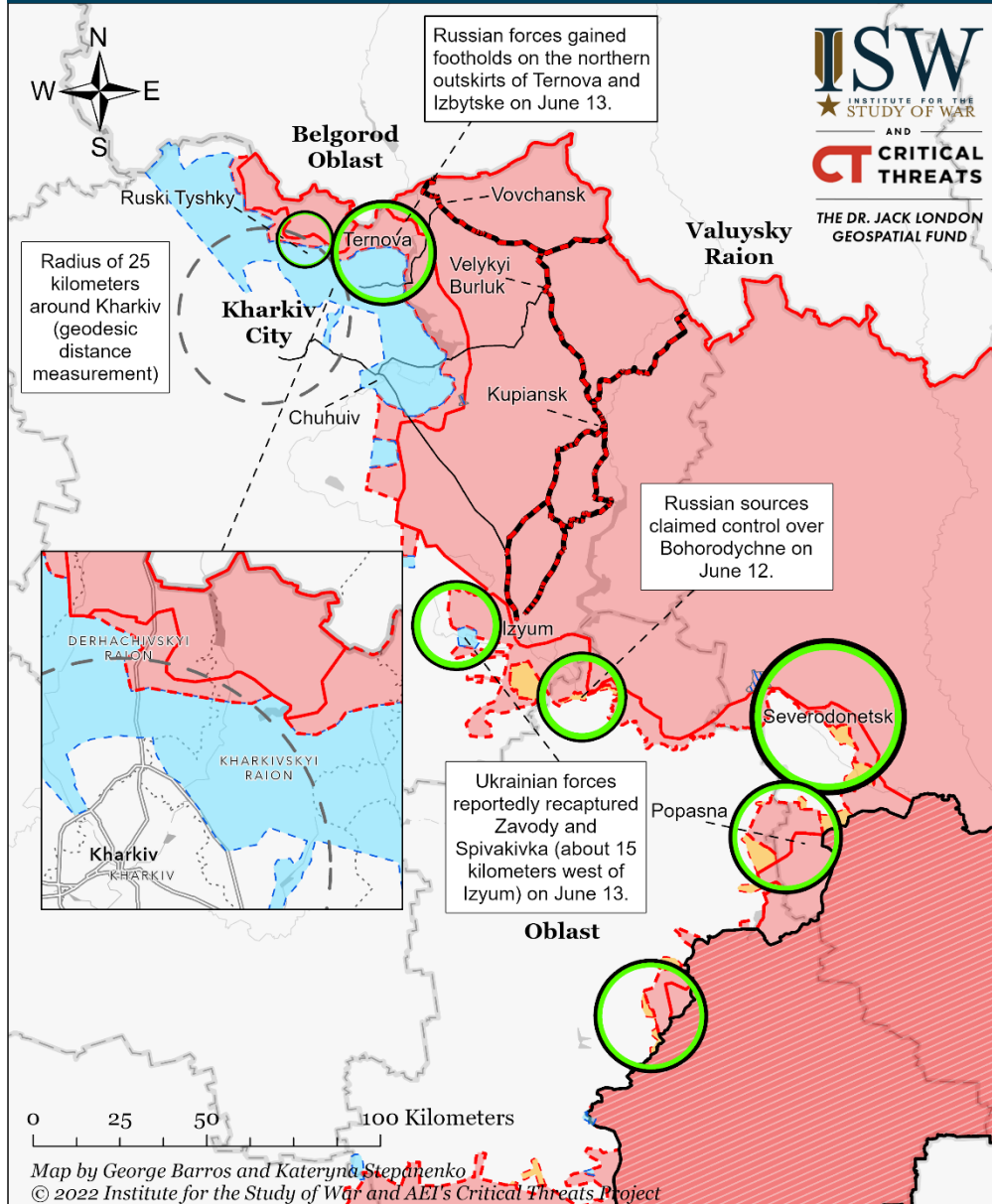


* Assessed Russian advances are areas where ISW assesses Russian forces have operated in or launched attacks against but do not control.

Supporting Effort #1—Kharkiv City (Russian objective: Withdraw forces to the north and defend ground lines of communication (GLOCs) to Izyum)

Russian forces continued offensive operations to push Ukrainian forces away from occupied frontlines northeast of Kharkiv City on June 14.²⁰ Russian forces are conducting ground assaults south of Rubizhne (in Kharkiv, not Luhansk Oblast) toward Staryi Saltiv and Verkhni Saltiv in order to re-establish control of these points.²¹ A Russian Telegram channel additionally claimed that Russian forces repelled a Ukrainian counterattack in Starytsya and Izbytske, both settlements far north of Kharkiv City near the international border.²² Russian forces continued to fire on and around Kharkiv City.²³ Russian forces will likely continue attempts to push Ukrainian troops south of contested frontiers in this area as Ukrainian forces continue simultaneous limited and localized counterattacks.

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Kharkiv as of June 14, 2022, 3:00 PM ET



Map by George Barros and Kateryna Stepanenko
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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

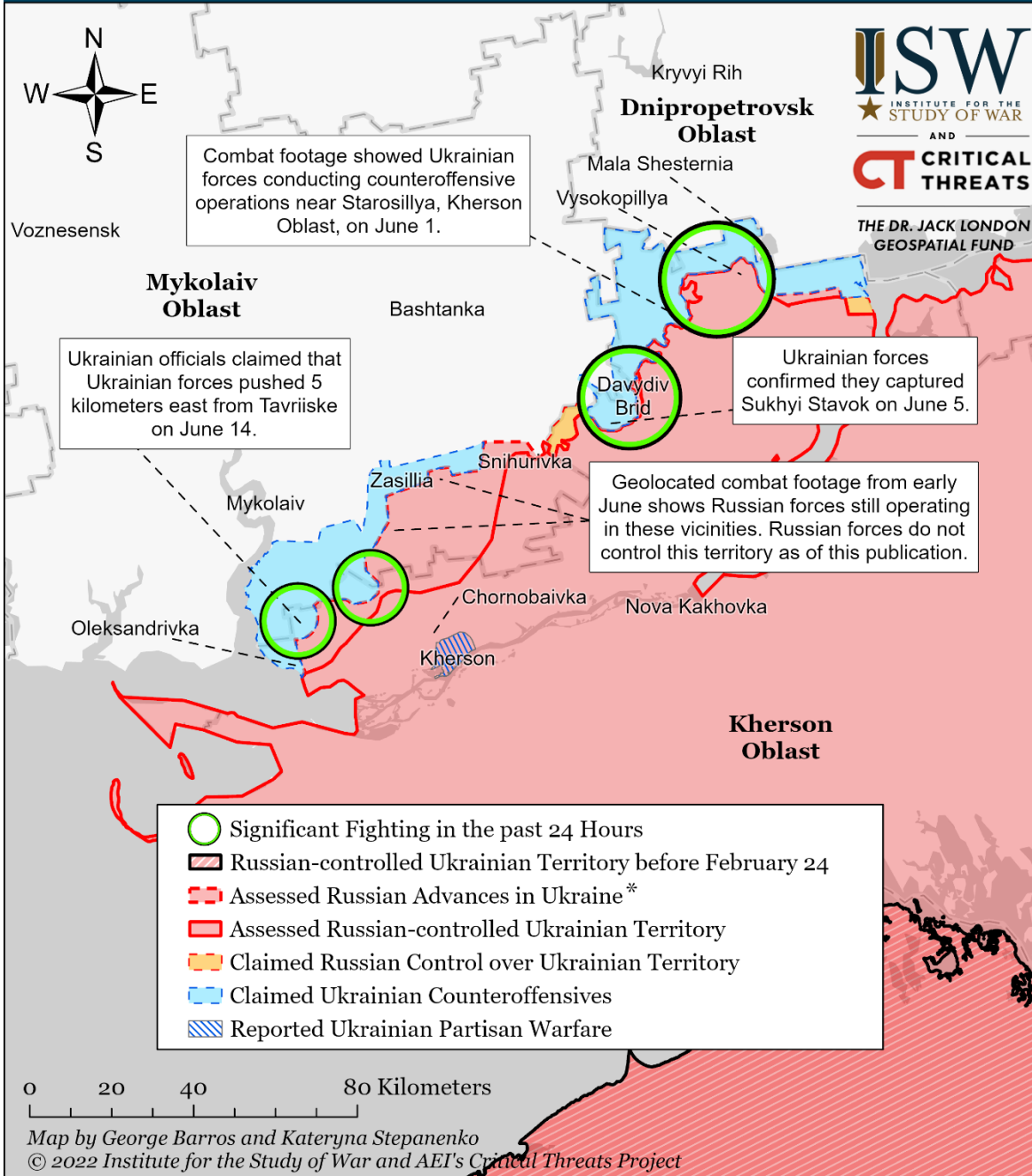
* Assessed Russian advances are areas where ISW assesses Russian forces have operated in or launched attacks against but do not control.

Note: ISW is unable to verify Russian reports that Ukrainian forces crossed the Pechenihy Reservoir, established positions in Khotomlya in late May, and are operating on the road spanning Primorskoye - Martovoye - Pershotravnevoye - Khotomlya as of June 2. Russian milblogger Rybar reported on June 13 that Ukrainian forces continued trying to establish a crossing on the eastern shore of the Pechenihy Reservoir. We will not advance Ukrainian counteroffensives until we observe corroborating evidence.

Supporting Effort #2—Southern Axis (Objective: Defend Kherson and Zaporizhia Oblasts against Ukrainian counterattacks)

Recent Ukrainian counterattacks forced Russian troops to prioritize defensive operations along the Southern Axis on June 14.²⁴ Ukrainian forces have reportedly advanced to within 18 km of occupied parts of Kherson (though we cannot confirm their exact positions), which is likely placing considerable pressure on Russian forces to strengthen their defensive lines in the south.²⁵ Russian troops are reportedly mining unspecified locations on the bank of the Inhulets River in a likely response to Ukrainian counterattacks around Davydiv Brid in northwestern Kherson and toward Mykolaiv and Kryvyi Rih from occupied frontiers in Kherson.²⁶ Russian forces deployed one tube artillery battery and two rocket artillery batteries to areas near the Kherson-Mykolaiv Oblast border.²⁷ Russian forces continued to fire on Kherson, Dnipropetrovsk, and Zaporizhia Oblasts.²⁸

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Kherson and Mykolaiv as of June 14, 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.

Note: ISW is unable to independently verify conflicting reports about the status of the Ukrainian bridgehead near Davydiv Brid as of June 13. The UK Ministry of Defense claimed on June 8 that Ukrainian forces have “recently achieved some success” in counterattacks in southwest Kherson Oblast, including gaining a foothold on the eastern bank of the Inhulets River as of June 8. Combat footage observed on June 10 and 11 indicates that Ukrainian forces established positions near Lozove and likely maintain positions in Bila Krynytsia. The Ukrainian General Staff reported on June 13 that Russian forces conducted UAV reconnaissance in the area of Davydiv Brid to clarify Ukrainian positions, indicating a continued Ukrainian presence near Davydiv Brid. We will update our maps as we collect and confirm more information.

Activity in Russian-occupied Areas (Russian objective: consolidate administrative control of occupied areas; set conditions for potential annexation into the Russian Federation or some other future political arrangement of Moscow's choosing)

Russian occupation authorities continued to struggle to provide basic social services in Mariupol on June 14.²⁹ Advisor to the Mayor of Mariupol Petro Andryushchenko claimed that the reconstruction of Mariupol is allegedly taking place under the patronage of the Russian city of St. Petersburg, but that occupation authorities have no clear legal framework under which to institute reconstruction projects.³⁰ Russian occupation authorities will likely continue the ad-hoc implementation of occupational agendas in the continued absence of a concrete Kremlin-backed occupation framework.



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¹ <https://t.me/modmilby/15244>

² <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-may-10>

³ <https://t.me/sashakots/33677>

⁴ <https://t.me/andriyshTime/1430>

⁵ <https://t.me/voenkorKotenok/37389>

⁶ <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-june-5>

⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/339884778324607>;

<https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/339504035029348>; <https://t.me/luhanskaVTSA/3443>;

<https://t.me/luhanskaVTSA/3435>

⁸ <https://understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-june-12>

⁹ <https://t.me/rybar/33891>

¹⁰ <https://t.me/luhanskaVTSA/3443>; <https://t.me/luhanskaVTSA/3435>

¹¹ <https://t.me/luhanskaVTSA/3434>; <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/339884778324607>

¹² <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/339504035029348>; https://t.me/ok_spn/19604;

<https://twitter.com/RALee85/status/1536586907324502016>;

<https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/339504035029348>

¹³ <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/339504035029348>

¹⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/339504035029348>;

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P1LkGF1mcbI>
- ²⁶ <https://t.me/voenkorkotenok/37384>; <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/339884778324607>;
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- ²⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/339504035029348>
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<https://t.me/dnipropetrovskaODA/1136>; https://t.me/mykola_lukashuk/585; <https://t.me/dnipropetrovskaODA/1135>
- ²⁹ <https://t.me/andriyshTime/1442>; <https://t.me/andriyshTime/1440>; <https://t.me/andriyshTime/1430>
- ³⁰ <https://t.me/andriyshTime/1440>