

Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment

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June 18, 3:30 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.

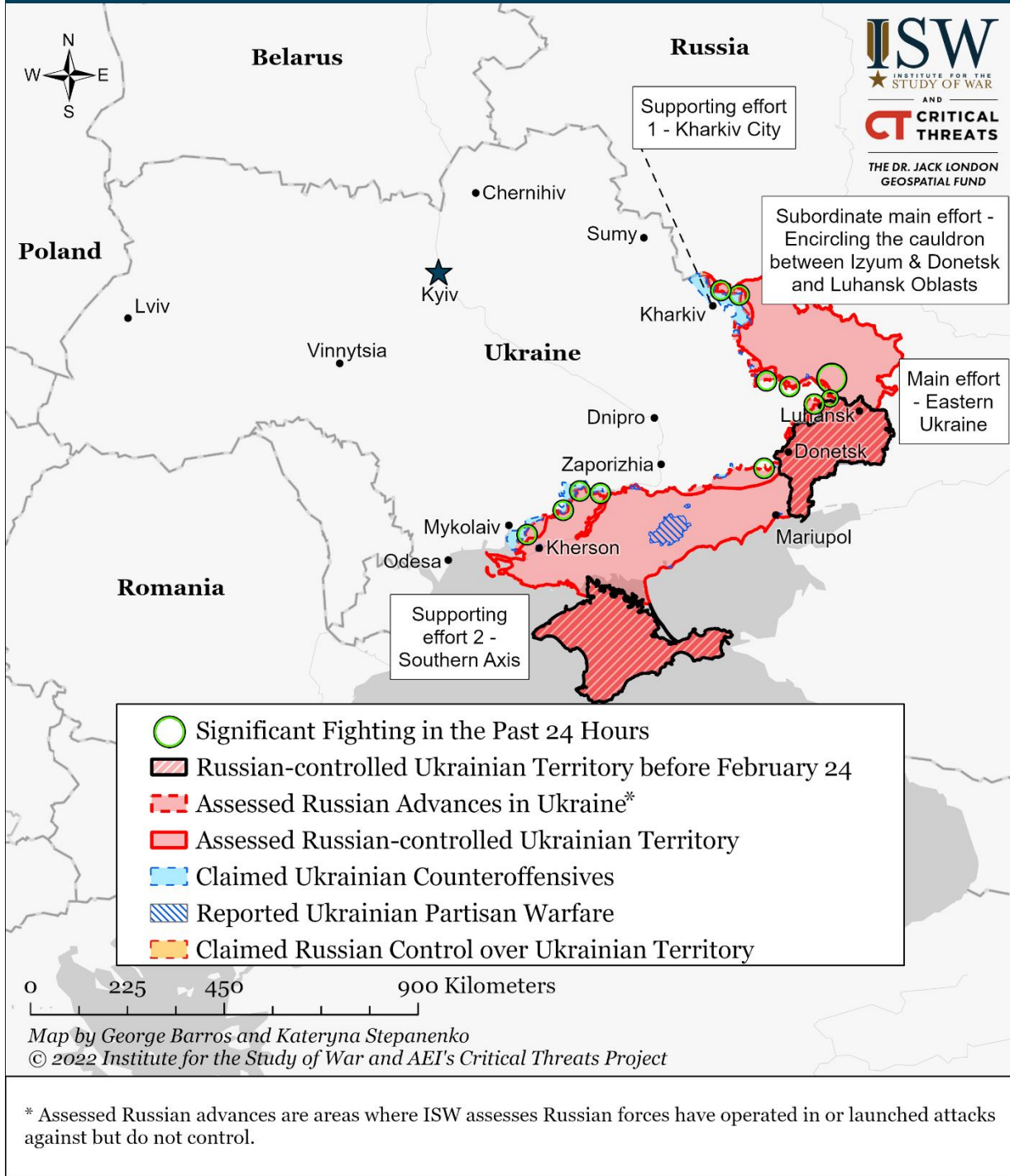
Russian forces made marginal gains on the outskirts of Severodonetsk on June 18 but have largely stalled along other axes of advance. Russian troops are likely facing mounting losses and troop and equipment degradation that will complicate attempts to renew offensive operations on other critical locations as the slow battle for Severodonetsk continues. As ISW previously assessed, Russian forces will likely be able to seize Severodonetsk in the coming weeks, but at the cost of concentrating most of their available forces in this small area. Other Russian operations in eastern Ukraine—such as efforts to capture Slovyansk and advance east of Bakhmut—have made little progress in the past two weeks. Russian forces are continuing to fight to push Ukrainian troops away from occupied frontiers north of Kharkiv City and along the Southern Axis, but have not made significant gains in doing so, thus leaving them vulnerable to Ukrainian counteroffensive and partisan pressure.

The Russian military continues to face challenges with the morale and discipline of its troops in Ukraine. The Ukrainian Main Intelligence Directorate released what it reported were intercepted phone calls on June 17 and 18 in which Russian soldiers complained about frontline conditions, poor equipment, and overall lack of personnel.¹ One soldier claimed that units have been largely drained of personnel and that certain battalion tactical groups (BTGs) have only 10 to 15 troops remaining in service.²

Key Takeaways

- **Russian forces secured minor gains on the outskirts of Severodonetsk and likely advanced into Metolkine, but Russian operations remain slow.**
- **Russian forces continued efforts to interdict Ukrainian lines of communication along the T1302 Bakhmut-Lysychansk highway and conducted ground and artillery strikes along the highway.**
- **Russian forces seek to push Ukrainian forces out of artillery range of railway lines around Kharkiv City used to supply Russian offensive operations toward Slovyansk.**
- **Russian forces did not take any confirmed actions along the Southern Axis and continue to face partisan pressure in occupied areas of southern Ukraine.**

Assessed Control of Terrain in Ukraine and Main Russian Maneuver Axes as of June 18, 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.

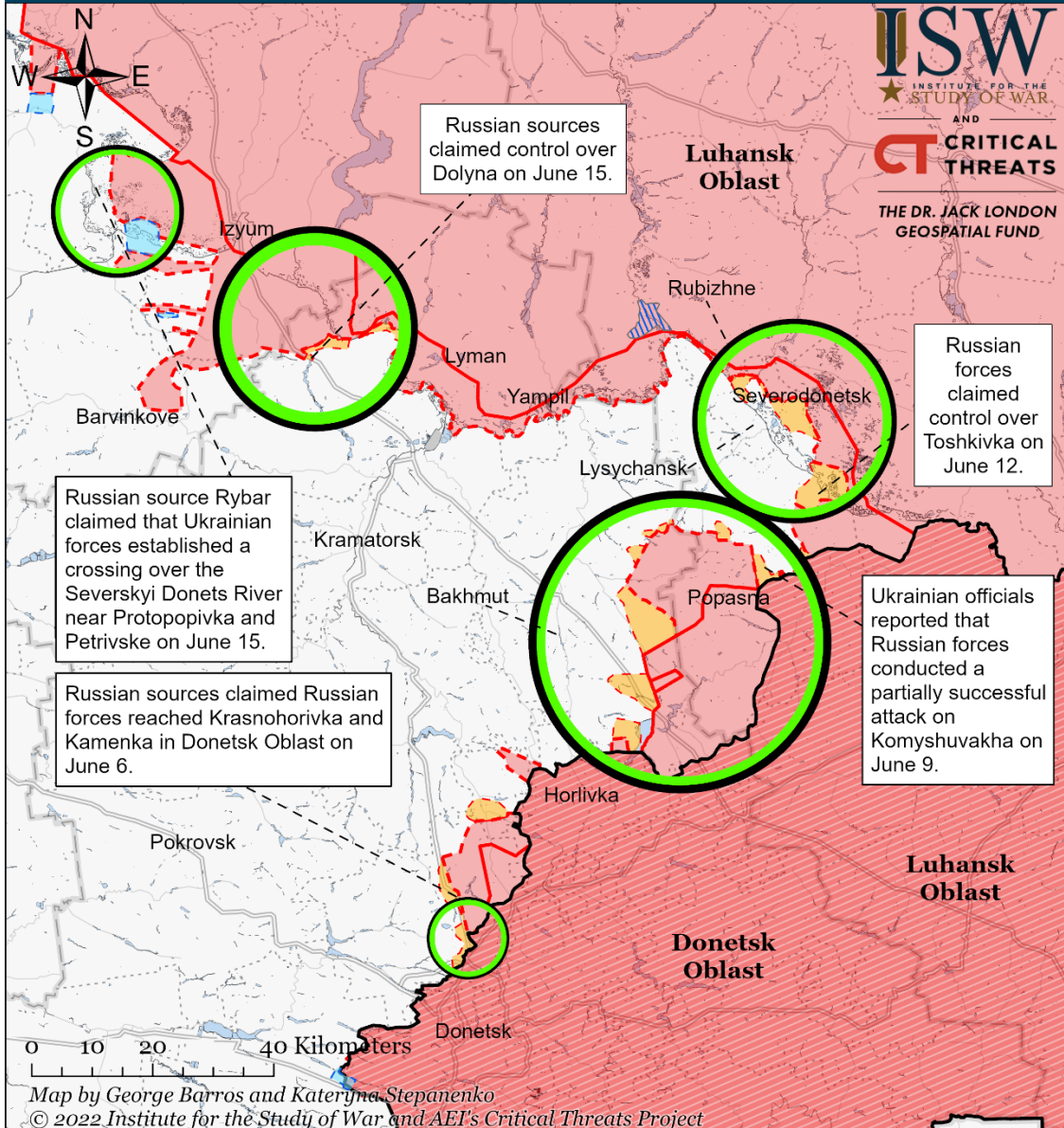
- Main Effort—Eastern Ukraine (comprised of one subordinate and three supporting efforts);
- Subordinate Main Effort—Encirclement of Ukrainian troops in the cauldron between Izyum and Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts
- Supporting Effort 1—Kharkiv City;
- Supporting Effort 2—Southern Axis;
- Activities in 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 against Severodonetsk and its outskirts and secured minor gains in the southeastern suburbs of the city on June 18.³ The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian troops had partial success while attacking Metolkine, (just south of Severodonetsk) where they have been fighting for the last few days, though ISW cannot independently confirm what areas of the town Russian forces seized.⁴ Russian forces likely intend to capture the southern suburbs of Severodonetsk and advance to the bank of the Severskiy Donets river before assaulting the center of Ukrainian resistance in the Azot chemical plant. Russian forces are additionally fighting for control of Syrotnye, another nearby suburb of Severodonetsk.⁵ Russian forces continued to fire on Severodonetsk and Lysychansk.⁶

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Luhansk as of June 18, 2022, 3:00 PM ET



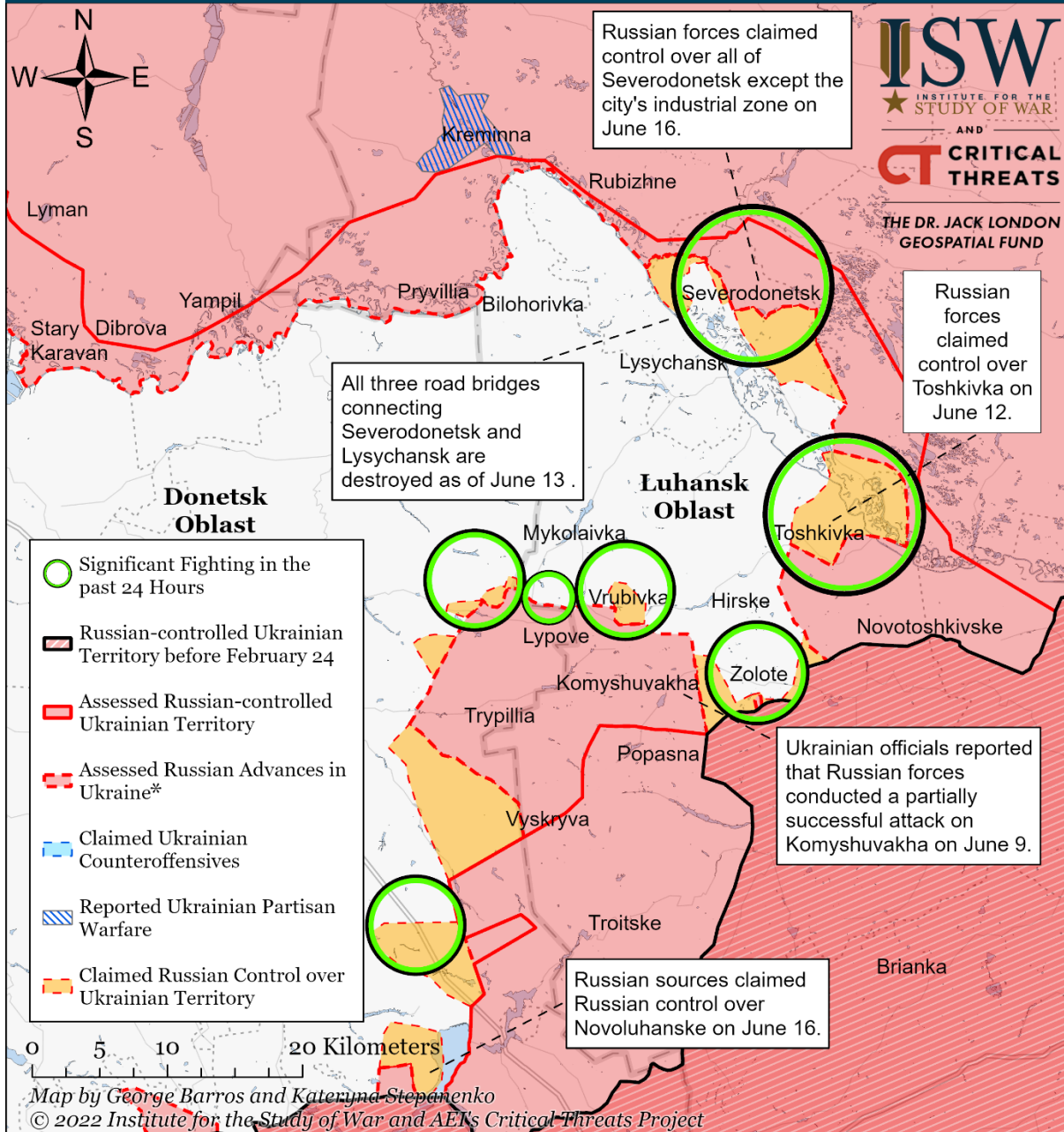
- Significant Fighting in the past 24 Hours
- Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory before February 24
- Assessed Russian Advances in Ukraine*
- Claimed Russian Control over Ukrainian Territory
- Claimed Ukrainian Counteroffensives
- Reported Ukrainian Partisan Warfare

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

Russian forces continued to launch attacks toward Slovyansk from the southeast of Izyum on June 18 but did not make any confirmed advances.⁷ Fighting continued around Krasnopillya, a village along the E40 highway less than 20 km northwest of Slovyansk.⁸ Russian troops exerted continual artillery fire on settlements southeast of Izyum and west of Lyman in order to set conditions for further attempts to advance on Slovyansk.⁹ Russian forces seek to capture Slovyansk to sever one of Ukraine's lines of communications to Severodonetsk and Lysychansk but are making only incremental progress towards the city.

Russian forces continued ground and artillery attacks east of Bakhmut in order to interdict Ukrainian lines of communication along the T1302 Bakhmut-Lysychansk highway on June 18.¹⁰ Head of the Luhansk Regional State Administration Serhiy Haidai stated that Ukrainian forces repelled a Russian attack in Nyrkove, a settlement along the Luhansk-Donetsk Oblast border within 5 km of the T1302 highway.¹¹ Russian forces additionally conducted unsuccessful attacks against Hirske and Berestove, likely with the intent of interdicting Ukrainian lines of communication along the T1302 highway and complicating Ukrainian operations to support the Severodonetsk-Lysychansk area.¹²

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Severodonetsk as of June 18, 2022, 3:00 PM ET



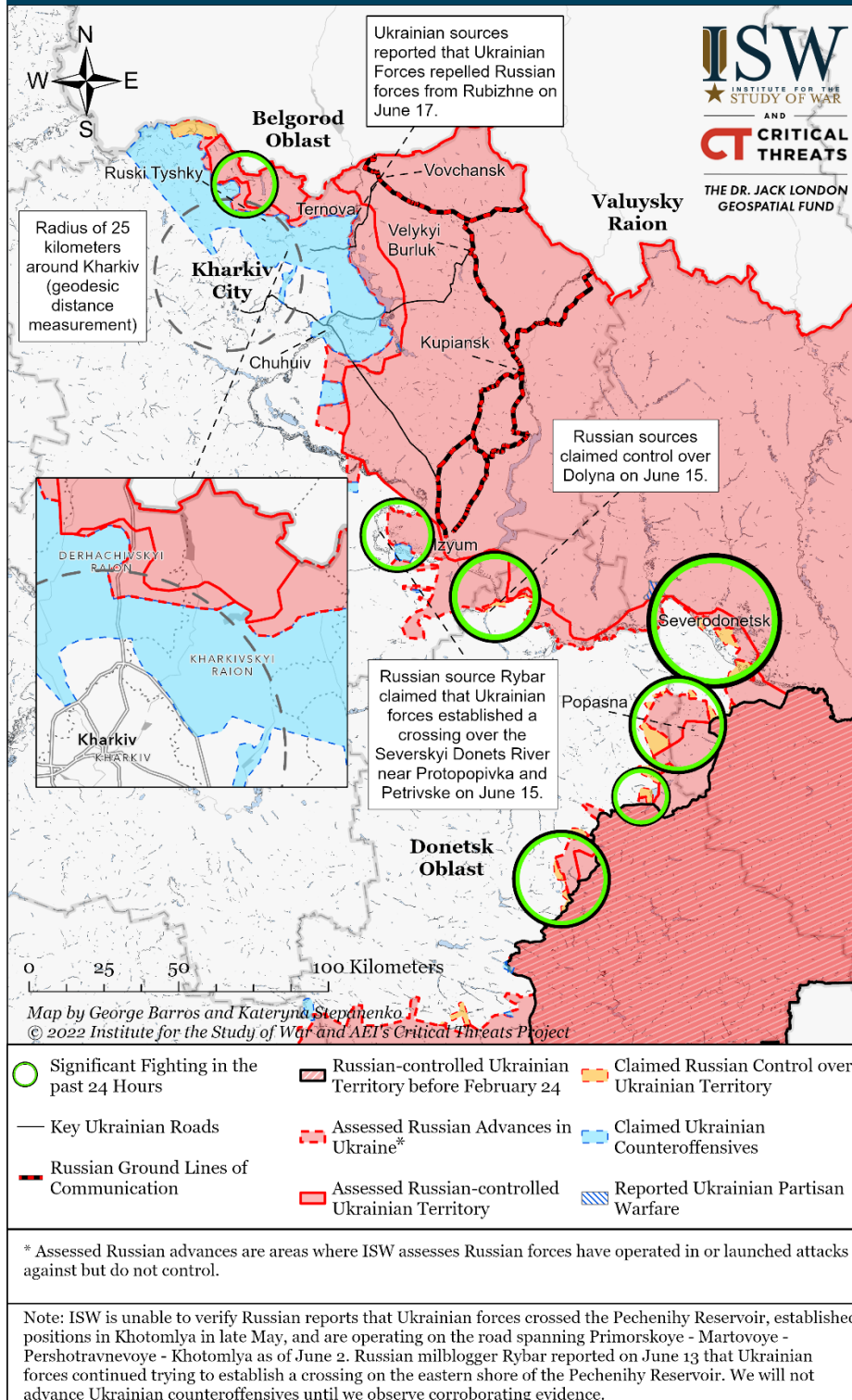
* Assessed Russian advances are areas where ISW assesses Russian forces have operated in or launched attacks against but do not control.

Note: We reassessed old Russian claims about the capture of Zolote that Russian sources stopped reporting to enhance the clarity of the map.

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 prevent Ukrainian troops from advancing further toward the international border on June 18.¹³ The Ukrainian General Staff noted that Russian forces are taking measures to prevent Ukrainian troops from reaching Russian rear areas that are supporting operations toward Slovyansk and are laying additional railways to restore supply lines to Slovyansk.¹⁴ Russian-controlled rail lines in northern Kharkiv Oblast are likely the primary means Russian forces are employing to supply ongoing operations to capture Slovyansk, and Russian forces have prioritized securing and repairing railways in this area throughout the war. While Ukrainian forces are unlikely to be able to quickly advance the dozens of kilometers into Russian-held territory in Kharkiv Oblast that would be required to directly sever these rail lines, Russian forces likely seek to push back Ukrainian forces to prevent their artillery from interdicting Russian supply routes. Russian forces additionally continued to fight for control of Dementiivka and Pitomnyk, both north of Kharkiv City, and conducted artillery strikes around northeastern Kharkiv Oblast.¹⁵

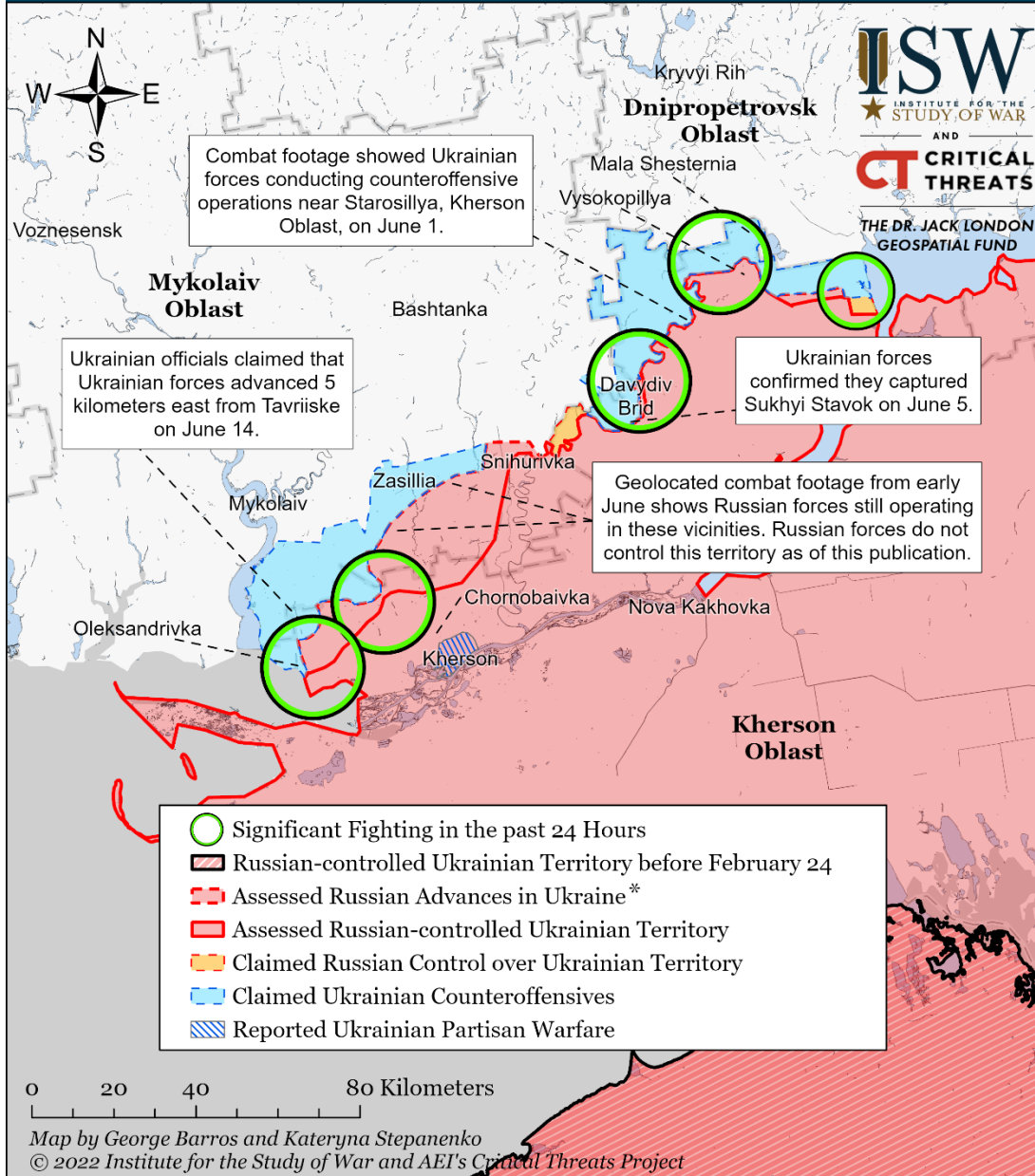
Assessed Control of Terrain Around Kharkiv as of June 18, 2022, 3:00 PM ET



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

Russian forces fired on Ukrainian positions along the Southern Axis but did not make any confirmed attacks on June 18, a pause from the steady localized attacks of the past several weeks.¹⁶ Russian forces continued efforts to improve engineering equipment along the Inhulets River.¹⁷ A Russian Telegram channel noted that Russian forces launched massive, unspecified strikes along the Mykolaiv-Kherson Oblast border, likely in response to recent limited Ukrainian counterattacks in the area.¹⁸

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Kherson and Mykolaiv as of June 18, 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 18. Geolocated combat footage observed on June 15 showed Ukrainian forces striking Russian positions in Davydiv Brid, indicating that Russian units remain in the settlement. 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. Combat footage of Ukrainian forces shelling Russian positions near Lozove and Andriivka released on June 17 was likely recorded on an earlier date. 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 face partisan activity in occupied areas on June 18. The Ukrainian Resistance Center reported that unidentified Ukrainian partisans conducted an IED attack against Yevhen Sobolev, a Russian collaborator, in Kherson City on June 18.¹⁹ Such partisan actions will likely continue to complicate the implementation of occupational agendas and pro-Russian sentiment in occupied areas.

¹ <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/342446391401779>; <https://gur.gov.ua/content/abo-ide-i-ne-striliaie-abo-striliaie-i-ne-ide-rashysty-skarzhatsia-na-obstrily-z-boku-zsu-ta-nepratsiuiuchu-tehniku.html>; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NYwoM2xrzik&feature=youtu.be&ab_channel=%D0%93%D0%BE%D0%BB%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%BD%D0%B5%D1%83%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%B2%D0%BB%D1%96%D0%BD%D0%BD%D1%8F%D1%80%D0%BE%D0%B7%D0%B2%D1%96%D0%B4%D0%BA%D0%B8%D0%9C%D0%9E%D0%A3%D0%BA%D1%80%D0%B0%D1%97%D0%BD%D0%B8; <https://gur.gov.ua/content/v-rotakh-zalyshylos-po-10-15-liudei-bezvykhidna-sytuatsiia-rashysty-vyslovliiut-nebazzhannia-voiuvaty-v-ukraini-ta-vymahaiut-povernuty-ikh-dodomu.html>; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0KBnITxmvpQ&ab_channel=%D0%93%D0%BE%D0%BB%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%BD%D0%B5%D1%83%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%B2%D0%BB%D1%96%D0%BD%D0%BD%D1%8F%D1%80%D0%BE%D0%B7%D0%B2%D1%96%D0%B4%D0%BA%D0%B8%D0%9C%D0%9E%D0%A3%D0%BA%D1%80%D0%B0%D1%97%D0%BD%D0%B8

² <https://gur.gov.ua/content/v-rotakh-zalyshylos-po-10-15-liudei-bezvykhidna-sytuatsiia-rashysty-vyslovliiut-nebazzhannia-voiuvaty-v-ukraini-ta-vymahaiut-povernuty-ikh-dodomu.html>; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0KBnITxmvpQ&ab_channel=%D0%93%D0%BE%D0%BB%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%BD%D0%B5%D1%83%D0%BF%D1%80%D0%B0%D0%B2%D0%BB%D1%96%D0%BD%D0%BD%D1%8F%D1%80%D0%BE%D0%B7%D0%B2%D1%96%D0%B4%D0%BA%D0%B8%D0%9C%D0%9E%D0%A3%D0%BA%D1%80%D0%B0%D1%97%D0%BD%D0%B8

³ <https://t.me/luhanskaVTSA/3556>; <https://t.me/luhanskaVTSA/3557>; <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/342446391401779>; <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbid02pAgGDxGsMEbDdaeNfYqA9sB9bMzMQ9fU4i6nHDXcNGVRLWBxKGVGPSwKEEzJ5UUoI>

⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbid02pAgGDxGsMEbDdaeNfYqA9sB9bMzMQ9fU4i6nHDXcNGVRLWBxKGVGPSwKEEzJ5UUoI>; <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/342446391401779>

⁵ <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbid02pAgGDxGsMEbDdaeNfYqA9sB9bMzMQ9fU4i6nHDXcNGVRLWBxKGVGPSwKEEzJ5UUoI>

⁶ <https://t.me/luhanskaVTSA/3557>

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⁸ <https://t.me/rybar/34061>; <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/342446391401779>;
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¹¹ <https://t.me/luhanskaVTSA/3556>; <https://twitter.com/GirkinGirkin/status/1537832000446398464>

¹² <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/342446391401779>;
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¹⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/342446391401779>

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<https://t.me/dnipropetrovskaODA/1166>; <https://t.me/dnipropetrovskaODA/1167>; <https://t.me/milinfolive/85332>

¹⁷ <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/342446391401779>

¹⁸ <https://t.me/rybar/34064>

¹⁹ <https://sprotyv.mod.gov.ua/2022/06/18/u-hersoni-pidirvaly-kolaboranta/>