Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment, November 2

Kateryna Stepanenko, Riley Bailey, Karolina Hird, Grace Mappes, Madison Williams, Yekaterina Klepanchuk, and Frederick W. Kagan November 2, 8:30 pm ET

Click <u>here</u> 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 force generation efforts combined with Western sanctions are having long-term damaging effects on the Russian economy, as ISW has previously forecasted. Financial experts told *Reuters* that the Kremlin will face a budget deficit that will "drain Moscow's reserves to their lowest level in years" due to projected decreases in energy revenue, sanctions, and the cost of Russian mobilization.¹ One expert predicted that payouts to mobilized men including social benefits may cost the Kremlin between 900 billion rubles and three trillion rubles (around \$14.6-\$32.4 billion) in the next six months. The number does not account for payouts to other categories of servicemen within the Russian forces such as BARS (Combat Army Reserve), volunteer battalions, and the long-term commitment to veterans' payments to contract servicemen, volunteers, non-military specialists who moved to occupied territories, and proxy fighters.² ISW previously estimated that one volunteer battalion of 400 servicemen costs Russia at least \$1.2 million per month excluding enlistment bonuses and special payments for military achievements.³

The Kremlin is continuing to rely heavily on financially incentivizing Russians to fight in Ukraine, which will likely continue to strain the Russian economy for decades. Russian officials have been promising salaries to volunteers and mobilized men that are more than twice the average Russian civilian salary before and during Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.⁴ The Kremlin has been attempting to deflect part of the cost of the force generation effort onto Russian federal subjects but will likely need to tap into the federal budget more heavily soon. United Russia Party Secretary Andrey Turchak, for example, stated that Russian servicemen from all regions must receive uniform benefits and noted that the federal government must cover the difference if the federal subject is unable to fully compensate all participants of the "special military operation." Donetsk People's Republic (DNR) Head Denis Pushilin even acknowledged that there are insufficient measures in place to support mobilized personnel and their families in occupied Donetsk Oblast during a United Russia meeting.

The Kremlin is already facing challenges in delivering promised compensation, challenges that are increasing social tensions within Russian society. Russian Telegram channels released footage of mobilized men in Ulyanovsk protesting payment issues. 7 Other footage from the Chuvashia Republic shows a presumably Russian local official yelling at protesting mobilized men that she had not promised them a payment of 300,000 rubles (about \$4,860). Families of mobilized men publicly complained to Voronezh Oblast Governor Alexander Guseyev that they have not received promised compensation of 120,000 rubles (about \$1,945). The Kremlin will need to continue to pay what it has promised to maintain societal control and some resemblance of morale among Russia's ad hoc collection of forces. ISW has also reported that the Kremlin is igniting conflict within Russian military formations amalgamated from different sources by offering different payments,

benefits, and treatment.¹⁰ Social media footage from October 31, for example, showed a physical fight between contract servicemen and mobilized men reportedly over personal belongings and military equipment.¹¹

Russian President Vladimir Putin's calls for a competitive Russian military industry are divorced from the reality of Russian supply chain and defense industrial base issues. Putin stressed on November 2 during a meeting of the Coordinating Council for the Russian Armed Forces that it is important that the Russian government ensures active competition between Russian military arms manufacturers. Putin's calls contrast with recent reporting that Russia has purchased weapons systems from Iran and North Korea to support its war effort in Ukraine. US National Security Council spokesman John Kirby announced on November 2 that the American intelligence community believes that North Korea is covertly supplying Russia with artillery shells. USW previously reported that Iranian shipments of drones and possible ballistic missiles to Russia will likely further increase Russian reliance on Iranian-made weapons systems. Russia has likely negotiated the weapon shipments with Iran and North Korea because it has significantly depleted its stock of munitions in air, missile, and artillery strikes over the course of the war in Ukraine and cannot readily restock them. Russia's reliance on isolated and heavily sanctioned states for critical weapons systems does not support Putin's demand that the Russian military industry becomes highly competitive and meet the needs of the Russian Armed Forces in any short period of time.

Russian officials announced that occupation authorities began integrating the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP) into the jurisdiction of Russian nuclear power plant operator Rosenergoatom on November 2.¹⁶ Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Andrey Rudenko claimed that ZNPP personnel who are "critical for the work of the ZNPP" signed contracts with Rosenergoatom and that Russian authorities are exploring the creation of a security zone around the ZNPP.¹⁷ Ukraine's Energoatom stated on October 28 that only 100 of the 6,700 Ukrainian personnel remaining at the ZNPP plant have signed new contracts with Russian energy agency Rosatom (out of 11,000 personnel before February 24).¹⁸ The Ukrainian State Inspectorate of Nuclear Regulation stated that Russian forces built an unknown structure at one of seven spent nuclear fuel storage sites at the ZNPP in violation of nuclear safety standards.¹⁹ As of this publication, the IAEA has not issued a statement condemning the formally announced illegal Russian takeover of the operation of the ZNPP or addressed the likelihood that Russia will demand formal IAEA recognition of Russian control over the ZNPP and thereby de facto recognition of the Russian annexation of occupied Ukrainian territory.

Russian and Belarusian officials continue to highlight bilateral defense cooperation between Russia and Belarus as a means of perpetuating the long-standing information operation that Belarus will enter the war in Ukraine on behalf of Russia. Belarus' entry into the war remains highly unlikely, as ISW has previously assessed. Belarusian Defense Minister Viktor Khrenin announced on November 2 that Russia and Belarus held the annual meeting of the Joint Board of the Ministries of Defense with the purpose of strengthening the "joint military potential" of the Russia-Belarus Union State to counter "challenges and threats of a military nature" posed by NATO.²⁰ Khrenin's statement is likely meant to signal continued Belarusian loyalty to Russia and present an image of Belarusian-Russian military unity to the West. As ISW has previously assessed, the likelihood of a Belarusian invasion of the war remains highly unlikely due to the array of domestic

ramifications such an action would have on President Alexander Lukashenko's regime, as well as limited Belarusian military capabilities.²¹ The meeting of the Joint Board of the Ministries of Defense is therefore a continuation of a concerted effort on the part of both Belarus and Russia to perpetuate an information operation that presents the threat of the Union State as imminent in order to pin Ukrainian troops against the northern border and pollute the information space.

Key Takeaways

- Russian force generation efforts combined with Western sanctions are having long-term damaging effects on the Russian economy, as ISW has previously forecasted.
- Russian President Vladimir Putin's calls for a competitive Russian military industry are divorced from the reality of Russian supply chain and defense industrial base issues.
- Russian officials announced that occupation authorities began integrating the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP) into Russian jurisdiction.
- Russian and Belarusian officials continue to perpetuate the long-standing information operation that Belarus will enter the war in Ukraine on behalf of Russia, but Belarus' entry into the war remains highly unlikely, as ISW has previously assessed.
- Russian sources claimed that Ukrainian forces continued to conduct counteroffensive operations in the directions of Svatove and Kreminna, and Russian forces conducted offensive operations to constrain Ukrainian forces.
- Russian forces continued defensive operations along the Dnipro River while Ukrainian forces continued their interdiction campaign.
- Russian forces continued to conduct ground assaults near Bakhmut and Donetsk City.
- Russian forces continued mobilization efforts and advertising for volunteer battalions while struggling with low morale.
- Russian occupation authorities continued to forcibly relocate Kherson Oblast residents, nationalize Ukrainian enterprises in occupied territory, and forcibly deport Ukrainian children to Russia.

Assessed Control of Terrain in Ukraine and Main Russian Maneuver Axes as of November 2, 2022, 3:00 PM ET



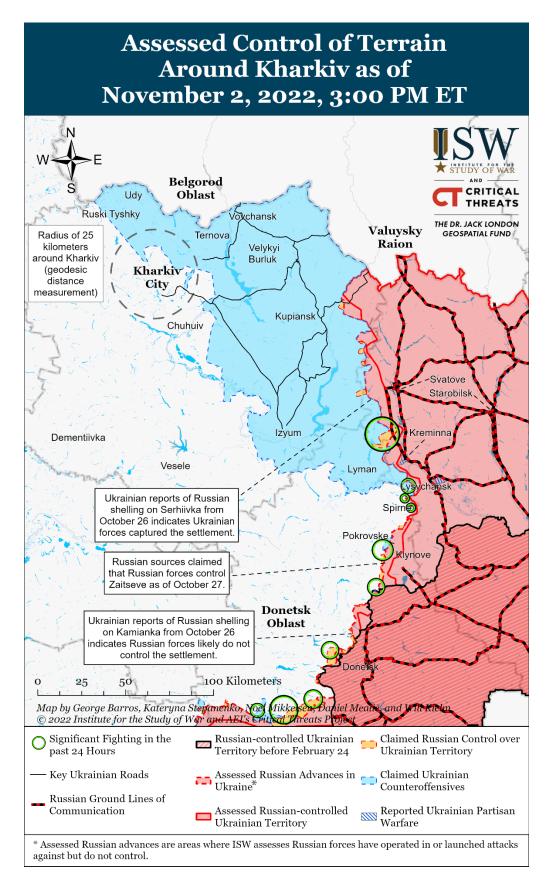
We do not report in detail on Russian war crimes because those activities are well-covered in Western media and do not directly affect the military operations we are assessing and forecasting. We will continue to evaluate and report on the effects of these criminal activities on the Ukrainian military 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—Southern and Eastern Ukraine
- Russian Main Effort—Eastern Ukraine (comprised of one subordinate and two supporting efforts);
- 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

<u>Ukrainian Counteroffensives</u> (Ukrainian efforts to liberate Russian-occupied territories)

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

Russian sources claimed that Ukrainian forces continued to conduct counteroffensive operations in the direction of Svatove and Kreminna on November 2. The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) claimed that Russian forces repelled Ukrainian assaults northwest of Svatove near Yahidne (27km northwest of Svatove), Mykolaivka (31km northwest of Svatove), and Orlyanka (30km northwest of Svatove) in Kharkiv Oblast and near Kuzemivka, Luhansk Oblast (13km northwest of Svatove).²² The Russian MoD also reported that Russian forces repelled an attempted Ukrainian attack northwest of Kreminna in the directions of Makiivka (22km northwest of Kreminna), Ploshchanka (17km northwest of Kreminna), and Chervonopopivka (6km northwest of Kreminna).²³ A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces are attempting to reach Chervonopopivka to cut the highway between Kreminna and Svatove.²⁴ The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Ukrainian forces repelled Russian assaults in the direction of Kreminna near Makiivka, Nevske (18km west of Kreminna), and Bilohorivka (12km south of Kreminna).²⁵ Russian forces are likely conducting assaults west and south of Kreminna to constrain Ukrainian counteroffensive actions towards Kreminna and Svatove. The Ukrainian General Saff reported that Russian forces continued routine indirect fire along the line of contact in eastern Ukraine.²⁶



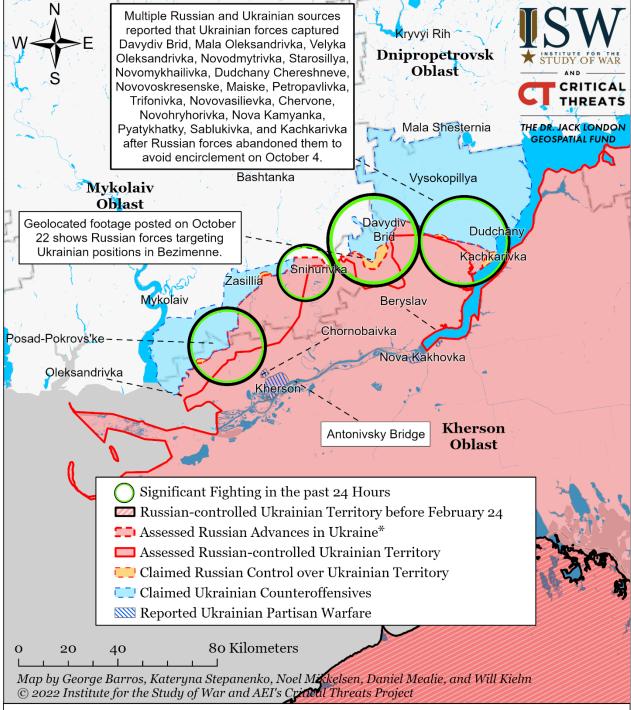
Southern Ukraine: (Kherson Oblast)

Russian forces continued to prepare for defensive operations along the Dnipro River in Kherson Oblast on November 2. Ukraine's Southern Operational Command reiterated that Russian troops are trying to hold occupied positions and are conducting defensive actions.²⁷ The Ukrainian General Staff and other Ukrainian sources also noted that Russian forces are overseeing the evacuation of civilian populations from certain settlements on the east bank of the Dnipro River.²⁸ Social media users reported that Russian troops are placing prefabricated concrete "pillboxes" (a concrete defensive structure with firing holes for small arms and artillery systems) in Hola Prystan (10km south of Kherson City on the east bank of the Dnipro River).²⁹ Advisor to the Ukrainian Kherson Oblast Head, Serhiy Khlan, also reported that Russian troops in Kakhovka are setting up DZOTs (long-term camouflaged firing points) and other fortifications within urban areas of Kakhovka.³⁰ A Russian milblogger reported on the state of Russian defense on the Kinburn Spit, about 80km west of Kherson City, and claimed that this isolated area is the southern flank of Russian defenses on the east bank of the Dnipro River.³¹

Ukrainian and Russian sources both reported ground maneuvers in Kherson Oblast on November 2. Ukraine's Southern Operational Command stated that Russian reconnaissance groups clashed with Ukrainian troops near Dudchany (40km northeast of Beryslav).³² Russian sources claimed that Ukrainian troops again launched an unsuccessful attempt to break through Russian defensive lines in Kherson Oblast, with one milblogger baselessly claiming that Ukrainian counteroffensives have ceased entirely due to a shortage of 155mm artillery guns.³³ The Russian MoD claimed that Russian troops repelled Ukrainian attacks in the direction of Ishchenka, Bruskynske, Sukhanove, and Pyatykhatky, all along the current frontline in northern Kherson Oblast.³⁴ ISW has not observed any independent confirmation of these Russian claims.

Ukrainian troops continued their interdiction campaign against Russian concentration areas, logistics nodes, and transportation assets in Kherson Oblast. The Ukrainian General Staff confirmed that Ukrainian troops destroyed a Russian Pantsir-1 anti-aircraft missile system and other military equipment in Muzykivka (3km north of Kherson City) on October 29 and that Ukrainian forces struck Russian positions near Snihurivka on October 30 (45km northeast of Kherson City).³⁵ Ukraine's Southern Operational Command noted that Ukrainian strikes destroyed Russian equipment and personnel in the Beryslav Raion and as far south as the Henichesk Raion, which borders Russian-occupied Crimea.³⁶ Kherson City residents posted footage and imagery of the reported aftermath of a Ukrainian strike near the Antonivsky Bridge, which Russian milbloggers claimed was conducted with HIMARS.³⁷

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Kherson and Mykolaiv as of November 2, 2022, 3:00 PM ET Multiple Russian and Ukrainian sources reported that Ukrainian forces captured Dayydiy Brid, Mala Oleksandriyka, Velyka



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

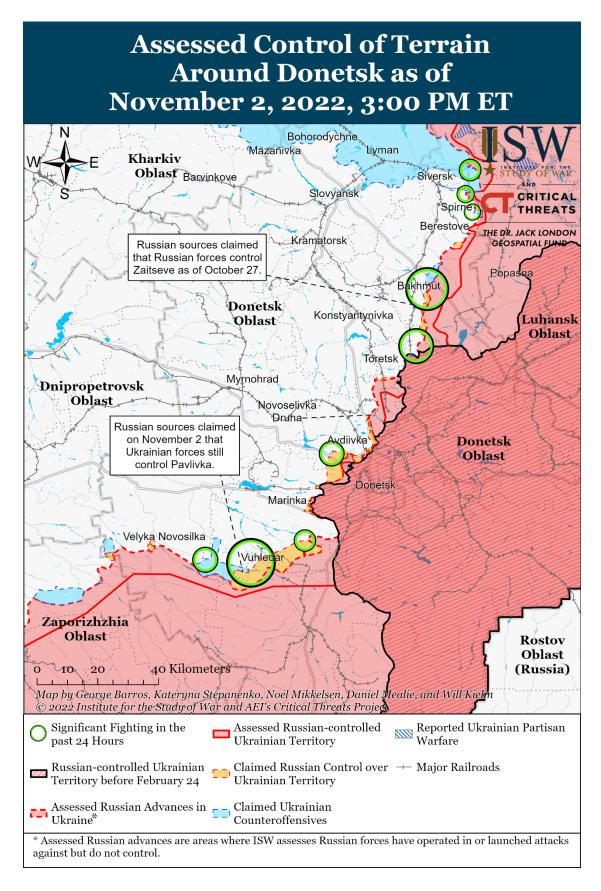
Russian Main Effort-Eastern Ukraine

<u>Russian Subordinate Main Effort—Donetsk Oblast</u> (Russian objective: Capture the entirety of Donetsk Oblast, the claimed territory of Russia's proxies in Donbas)

Russian forces continued offensive operations around Bakhmut on November 2. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Ukrainian forces repelled Russian assaults on Bakhmut itself and near Verkhnokamianske (28km northeast of Bakhmut), Spirne (25km northeast of Bakhmut), and Mayorsk (20km south of Bakhmut).³⁸ Ukrainian Deputy Minister of Defense Hanna Malyar stated that the epicenter of fighting in Ukraine is currently around Bakhmut, Soledar, and Donetsk City, where Ukrainian forces repel dozens of attacks per day.³⁹ Luhansk People's Republic (LNR) Deputy Internal Minister Vitaly Kiselyov reported that Wagner forces are rapidly trying to break through Ukrainian defenses in Soledar and Bakhmut and stated that fierce fighting is ongoing on the outskirts of both cities.⁴⁰ Russian forces continued routine artillery fire along the line of contact in the Bakhmut area.

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Avdiivka-Donetsk City area on November 2. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Ukrainian forces repelled Russian assaults near Pervomaiske (20km northwest of Donetsk City) and Novomykhailivka (25km southwest of Donetsk City).⁴¹A Russian milblogger posted video footage purporting to show artillery units of the Donetsk People's Republic's (DNR) 100th Brigade shooting at Ukrainian positions near Nevelske (about 25km northwest of Donetsk City).⁴² Geolocated footage posted on November 1 shows a Russian tank from the Southern Military District firing at Ukrainian forces in Mariinka (on the southwestern outskirts of Donetsk City. ⁴³ Additional video footage posted on November 2 showed Russian Su-25s striking Ukrainian targets on the western outskirts of Mariinka.⁴⁴

Russian forces continued offensive operations southwest of Donetsk City on November 2. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian troops conducted ground attacks near Pavlivka (45km southwest of Donetsk City), Vodyane (35km southwest of Donetsk City), and Prechystivka (55km southwest of Donetsk).⁴⁵ The Ukrainian General Staff also notably reported that Russian troops attacked Ukrainian infrastructure facilities with missiles and Iranian Shahed-136s in Vuhledar (56km southwest of Donetsk City) and Vodyane at night on November 2.⁴⁶ This is the first confirmation of Iranian Shahed-136 use in the Vuhledar area. Various Russian sources reported that Russian troops took losses near Vuhledar.⁴⁷ These Russian sources also reported that fighting around Pavlivka has slowed, but not stopped, as Russian troops unsuccessfully attempt to eliminate the Ukrainian presence in Pavlivka and Novomykhailivka (25km southwest of Donetsk City).⁴⁸ A Russian source additionally reported that Russian troops are digging into their positions near Novomykhailivka with the intention of attacking Vuhledar from the east and cutting off the road in Novomykhailivka.⁴⁹ Russian and Ukranian sources reported that Russian forces continued to conduct routine shelling along the contact line in southwest Donetsk Oblast.⁵⁰



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

Russian forces continued routine fire west of Hulyaipole and in Dnipropetrovsk and Mykolaiv Oblasts on November 2.51 Ukrainian and Russian sources stated that Russian forces struck areas in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast and an infrastructure facility in Cherkassy Oblast with kamikaze drones.52 Ukraine's Southern Operational Command reported that Ukrainian forces shot down three Kh-59 missiles over Odesa Oblast.53 Russian forces shelled Nikopol, Marhanets, and Chervonohryhorivka, and areas in Mykolaiv Oblast.54 The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Ukrainian offensive actions in Zaporizhia Oblast, likely referring to indirect fire and forced Russian forces to transfer over 100 seriously wounded personnel to hospitals in Tokmak and Melitopol in the previous days.55

Ukrainian and Russian officials announced on November 2 that ZNPP personnel transferred reactors 5 and 6 of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP) to a hot shutdown state to generate steam to restore heat and hot water to Enerhodar.⁵⁶ Ukrainian state nuclear agency Energoatom noted that these measures are not enough to completely restore heat to the city; Ukrainian Enerhodar Mayor Dmytro Orlov stated that at least one ZNPP reactor would have to operate at full capacity to ensure full operation of Enerhodar's heating systems.⁵⁷

Crimean occupation head Sergey Aksyonov claimed that the Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) prevented a Ukrainian "terrorist" attack on a Crimean energy facility on November 2.⁵⁸ Russian outlet *Komsomolskaya Pravda* claimed that the Ukrainian individual was affiliated with the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU).⁵⁹

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

Russian authorities are continuing to conduct covert mobilization throughout Russia. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian enlistment officials are continuing to send mobilization summonses to men of military age despite the official end of the partial mobilization drive. ⁶⁰ Member of the Russian State Duma Defense Committee Viktor Sobolev also stated Russia may resort to full mobilization if the political-military situation worsens in the future. ⁶¹

Russian forces are continuing to face challenges with low morale among mobilized men and from the consequences of mobilizing men unfit for military service. Russian opposition outlet *Novaya Gazeta* reported that a confirmed total of 23 men died during training due to physical altercations, alcohol, drugs, suicide, and accidents since Russian President Vladimir Putin's declaration of partial mobilization on September 21.62 *Novaya Gazeta* confirmed the names of 89 deceased mobilized men in total since the start of partial mobilization, but the number is likely higher given that the Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) has only notified families of 24 of the deceased servicemen. Pro-war Russian milbloggers also reported receiving complaints from relatives of the mobilized men, stating that the Russian MoD has not addressed its communication issues with families.63 Another Russian opposition outlet, *Mediazona*, reported that Russian forces are reopening camps with poor living conditions in Perevalsk, Luhansk Oblast to detain contract servicemen and newly mobilized men who refuse to fight.64 *Mediazona* noted that Russian forces previously had camps in Perevalsk until closing them in August following an outcry from servicemen's families. The report notes that Russian forces are forcing mobilized men to serve on the frontlines or join Wagner Group units.

Russian and proxy officials are resuming advertisements for volunteer contract service within Russian joint forces. Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov published an advertisement video announcing the continuation of recruitment of volunteers from Chechnya to fight in Ukraine. Kadyrov stated that volunteers will undergo training in Grozny before having the opportunity to sign a contract with the Russian MoD. Luhansk and Donetsk People's Republics' (LNR and DNR) official sources also advertised contract service with the 2nd Army Corps and the "Nevsky" volunteer detachment, respectively. A Rostov Oblast outlet reported that a Russian man who had received a mobilization notice a day prior to Russian Defense Minister Sergey Shoigu's announcement of the completion of the mobilization order on October 28 had been involuntarily enlisted as a volunteer.

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

Russian occupation officials continued measures to forcibly evacuate residents of Kherson Oblast on November 2. Russian sources reported that Russian occupation officials plan to begin the forced movement of residents from Kakhovka Raion in Kherson Oblast on November 6.69 The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian occupation officials are forcibly evacuating residents from the settlement of Velyka Lepetykha on the east bank of the Dnipro by bus and are prohibiting departures by private transport.70 The Ukrainian General Staff also reported that occupation authorities gave residents in Nova Zburyivka (17km southwest of Kherson City) a three-day notice for mandatory evacuations.71 The Ukrainian Resistance Center reported on November 2 that Russian occupation officials have begun to forcibly relocate residents in Beryslav Raion.72 A Russian source claimed that the Kherson Oblast occupation administration stated that they have completed evacuation measures on the west bank of the Dnipro River in Kherson oblast, although ISW cannot independently verify that evacuations from the west bank have stopped.73 Russian occupation officials will likely continue to intensify evacuation measures as the Ukrainian counteroffensive in Kherson Oblast progresses.

Russian forces exploited recent evacuation and "nationalization" measures to engage in widespread looting in Russian-occupied territories on November 2. The Ukrainian Resistance Center reported on November 2 that Russian forces in Zaporizhia Oblast are looting Ukrainian firms on an industrial scale.⁷⁴ The Resistance Center reported that Russian occupation officials in Melitopol embezzled money from firms in the city and looted equipment from local banks under the guise of nationalization measures.⁷⁵ The Resistance Center also reported that Russian forces are looting equipment and appliances from recreation centers in Kyryllivka, Zaporizhia Oblast under the guise of nationalizing Ukrainian-owned businesses.⁷⁶ Ukrainian Kherson Oblast Head Yaroslav Yanushevych reported that Russian occupation officials looted equipment from a garment company in Kherson Oblast.⁷⁷ Ukrainian sources reported on November 2 that Russian forces are engaging in widespread looting of property left by forcibly evacuated residents from Kherson Oblast.⁷⁸ The Ukrainian Resistance Center reported that Russian forces are also using the homes of forcibly evacuated residents in Kherson Oblast to house military personnel.⁷⁹ Russian forces will likely increasingly engage in looting and other violations of property rights as evacuation and nationalization measures continue in Russian-occupied territories.

Russian and occupation officials continue to illegally deport Ukrainian children with the intent to commit crimes that may constitute an act of genocide as of November 2. The Ukrainian government portal *Children of War* reported that as of November 2 Russian officials have deported almost 10,000

Ukrainian Children to the Russian Federation. ⁸⁰ The Ukrainian Resistance Center reported that the forced deportation and adoption of Ukrainian children is a concerted Russian effort to destroy a whole stratum of the Ukrainian population and thus the Ukrainian people as an ethnic unit. This reporting from the Ukrainian Resistance Center matches previous ISW assessments that the forced deportation of Ukrainian children to the Russian Federation likely amounts to a deliberate ethnic cleansing campaign as well as apparent violations of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. ⁸¹

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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