

Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment, September 14, 2023

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September 14, 2023, 7:20pm 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.

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

Note: The data cut-off for this product was 12:30pm ET on September 14. ISW will cover subsequent reports in the September 15 Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment.

Ukrainian forces continued offensive operations in western Zaporizhia Oblast and around Bakhmut and reportedly advanced south of Bakhmut on September 14. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Ukrainian forces achieved unspecified partial successes near Bakhmut, Klishchiivka (7km southwest of Bakhmut), Andriivka (10km southwest of Bakhmut), and Kurdyumivka (13km southwest of Bakhmut).[1] Ukrainian Deputy Defense Minister Hanna Malyar prematurely announced the Ukrainian liberation of Andriivka but later clarified that heavy fighting for the settlement is still ongoing.[2] Ukrainian Eastern Group of Forces Spokesperson Ilya Yevlash stated on September 13 that Ukrainian forces pushed Russian forces out of positions near Minkivka (15km northwest of Bakhmut) and Dubovo-Vasylivka (6km northwest of Bakhmut).[3] The Ukrainian General Staff and Malyar stated that Ukrainian forces continue to gradually advance in the Melitopol direction (western Zaporizhia Oblast).[4]

Ukrainian forces struck a Russian air defense system near occupied Yevpatoria, Crimea, on September 14, suggesting that there may be systemic tactical failures with Russian air defense systems in occupied Crimea. The Department of Strategic Communications of the Ukrainian Armed Forces stated that Ukrainian forces struck the location of a Russian surface-to-air missile system near Yevpatoria (68km northwest of Sevastopol).[5] Ukrainian news outlet *Ukrainska Pravda* reported that a source affiliated with the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) stated that the SBU and the Ukrainian Navy conducted a “unique special operation” that destroyed a Russian S-400 “Triumpf” system near Yevpatoria.[6] Ukrainian forces reportedly struck the S-400 system's radar and antennas with drones and struck the launch complexes with two Neptune cruise missiles.[7] The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) reported that Russian air defenses intercepted 11 Ukrainian drones over Crimea but did not mention any Ukrainian missile strikes.[8] Geolocated footage published on September 14 shows an explosion near Yevpatoria and subsequent smoke plumes in the area.[9] Additional geolocated footage shows that Russian forces had recently deployed an S-400 battery outside of Yevpatoria and that the explosion occurred in the same location where a Russian S-400 system had been deployed in August 2022.[10] The strike suggests that Russian forces were unprepared to intercept missiles with the system or were unable to do so. Ukrainian forces struck a Russian S-400 air defense system near Olenivka, Crimea (117km

northwest of Sevastopol) on August 23, and the second Ukrainian strike on a significant Russian air defense system in recent weeks indicates that such tactical failures may reflect a wider systemic issue with Russian air defenses in occupied Crimea.[11]

Russian forces conducted another series of Shahed-131/136 drone strikes targeting Ukrainian port infrastructure on September 14. The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Russian forces launched 22 drones in the direction of Mykolaiv, Zaporizhia, Dnipropetrovsk, and Sumy oblasts and that Ukrainian air defenses shot down 17 of the drones.[12] Ukrainian Air Force Spokesperson Colonel Yuriy Ihnat stated that Russian forces primarily targeted port infrastructure in Odesa Oblast.[13] Ukrainian Minister for Communities, Territories, and Infrastructure Development Oleksandr Kubrakov stated that Russian strikes from July 18 to September 12 have damaged or partially destroyed 105 Ukrainian port facilities and that the monthly export of Ukrainian grain has decreased by almost three million tons as a result.[14] The Russian strike campaign against Ukrainian grain and port infrastructure is likely meant to support the Kremlin's effort to leverage international desire for Russia's return to the Black Sea Grain Initiative to exact extensive concessions.[15] The Kremlin may have no intention of returning to the deal, however, and may instead aim to increase the market share and attractiveness of Russian grain by degrading Ukraine's grain export potential.[16] The Kremlin also likely intends for continued strain on Ukrainian grain export routes to intensify divisions between Ukraine and its Central European partners as Ukraine and the West continue to work on re-routing Ukrainian grain exports along land corridors.[17]

The commander of the Russian 247th Guards Air Assault (VDV) Regiment (7th VDV Division) Vasily Popov was reportedly killed in combat in Ukraine.[18] Vasily Popov likely recently replaced Pyotr Popov as commander of the 247th VDV Regiment in August or September 2023, and Vasily Popov is the second commander of the 247th Regiment to be killed in action in Ukraine after Colonel Konstantin Zizevsky died in February 2022.[19] Elements of the 247th Regiment are reportedly operating in the Donetsk-Zaporizhia Oblast border area.[20] ISW has previously assessed that relatively elite VDV forces are conducting limited counterattacks in critical sectors of the front, and Vasily Popov's death supports ISW's assessment that these counterattacks will likely attrit these units further.[21]

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on September 13 recognizing Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko as complicit in Russian crimes committed in Ukraine and called on the International Criminal Court (ICC) to issue an arrest warrant for him. The European Parliament's resolution stated that Belarus is complicit in the war in Ukraine and is involved in the deportation of Ukrainian children to Belarus, Russia, and occupied areas of Ukraine.[22] ISW continues to assess that Belarus is a co-belligerent in the war and is involved in the deportation of Ukrainian children.[23] ISW has also assessed that Belarus may be facilitating sanctions evasion schemes for Russia.[24] Russian President Vladimir Putin and Lukashenko will meet in Sochi, Russia on September 15.[25]

Russian State Duma and Federation Council members proposed blocking WhatsApp likely as part of the Kremlin's broader initiative to establish central control over the Russian information space. Facebook's parent company Meta announced on September 13 that WhatsApp launched a channel feature to over 150 countries, likely including Russia, that will function similarly to Telegram channels.[26] Russia designated Meta as an extremist organization in March 2022 and banned its Facebook and Instagram services in Russia.[27] Federation Council Committee

on Defense and Security Head Viktor Bondarev, State Duma Committee on Information Policy Head Alexander Khinshtein, and State Duma Deputy Anton Gorelkin said that Russia should consider blocking WhatsApp in Russia if WhatsApp launches Russian language channels.[28] Russian state media censor Roskomnadzor reported that Russia could block WhatsApp if it disseminates prohibited information.[29] Russian authorities are likely attempting to funnel the Russian information space onto a limited number of closely monitored or controlled social media platforms.

Some Russian sources suggested that ongoing tensions between the Russian MoD and the Wagner Group are diminishing Wagner’s ability to operate across the African theater. A Russian insider source claimed on September 12 that “difficult logistics” are forcing Wagner forces in Africa to “make do with local reserves” to continue operations after the rebel coalition Coordination of the Movement of Azawad (CMA) claimed to have captured Bourem, Gao Region, Mali.[30] Russian sources, including a prominent Kremlin-affiliated milblogger, claimed that the Russian MoD and Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) deliberately disrupted Wagner’s logistics by preventing Wagner from using Russian airbases in Syria to reinforce the Wagner contingent in the Central African Republic (CAR) — reports consistent with ISW’s recent observations.[31] The milblogger claimed that the CMA took advantage of destabilization fueled in part by tensions resulting from the MoD’s ongoing effort to subsume Wagner.[32] The milblogger warned that other armed groups may also take advantage of the destabilization and that the MoD will have to invest resources in the region to avoid reputational fallout.[33] Wagner forces in Africa notably conduct counterterrorism operations, but these operations are often ineffective, and the current Wagner group contingent in MENA is likely insufficient to conduct counterterrorism operations at a scale that could meaningfully contain new or escalating conflicts.[34]

The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) declared two US diplomats *persona non grata* and expelled them from Russia on September 14.[35] The Russian MFA accused the US Embassy’s first and second secretaries of illegally maintaining contact with an arrested former US Consulate employee and ordered the diplomats to leave Russia within the next seven days.

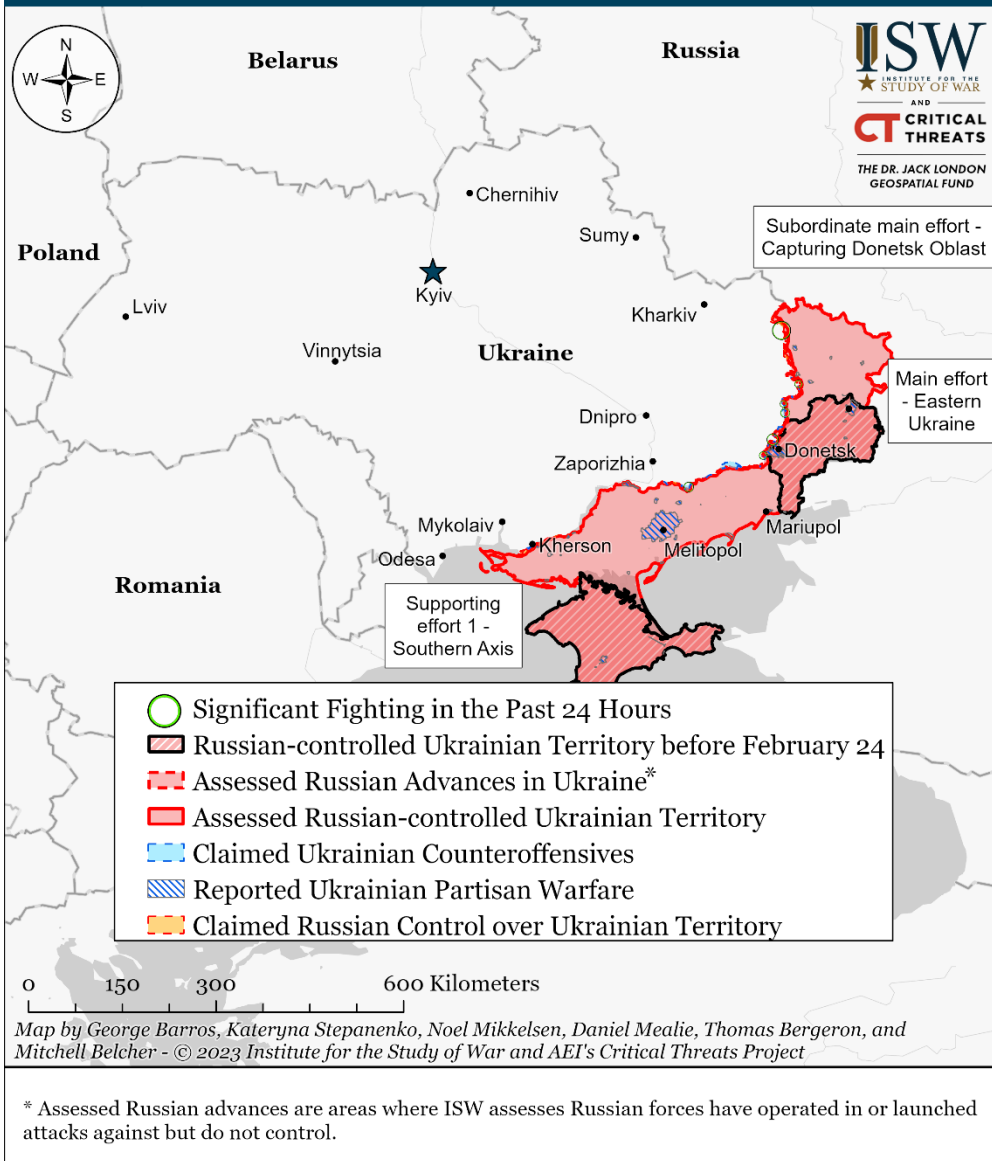
Western defense sources reportedly stated that a Russian fighter jet intentionally fired at a British surveillance plane in September 2022 due to ambiguous commands rather than because of a missile malfunction as the Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) claimed at the time. The *BBC* reported that three senior Western defense sources stated that a Russian Su-27 fighter jet pilot intentionally fired a missile at a British Royal Air Force (RAF) plane but missed on September 29, 2022.[36] The Western defense sources reportedly stated that the Russian pilot believed he had permission to fire after receiving an ambiguous command from a Russian ground station and fired a second missile, which reportedly either malfunctioned or was aborted.[37] A second Russian pilot flying another Su-27 reportedly interpreted the order differently and did not fire at the British aircraft.[38] The Russian MoD claimed in October 2022 that the Su-27 jet fired the missile due to a “technical malfunction.”[39]

Key Takeaways:

- **Ukrainian forces continued offensive operations in western Zaporizhia Oblast and around Bakhmut and reportedly advanced south of Bakhmut on September 14.**

- **Ukrainian forces struck a Russian air defense system near occupied Yevpatoria, Crimea, on September 14, suggesting that there may be systemic tactical failures with Russian air defense systems in occupied Crimea.**
- **Russian forces conducted another series of Shahed-131/136 drone strikes targeting Ukrainian port infrastructure on September 14.**
- **The commander of the Russian 247th Guards Air Assault (VDV) Regiment (7th VDV Division) Vasily Popov was reportedly killed in combat in Ukraine.**
- **Some Russian sources suggested that ongoing tensions between the Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) and the Wagner Group are diminishing Wagner's ability to operate across the African theater.**
- **Russian forces conducted offensive operations along the Kupyansk-Svatove-Kreminna line, near Bakhmut, along the Avdiivka-Donetsk City line, and in western Zaporizhia Oblast and advanced in some areas on September 14.**
- **Ukrainian forces also advanced along the Avdiivka-Donetsk City line.**
- **The Kremlin is reportedly trying to censor Russian media coverage of a possible second wave of reserve mobilization in order to prevent protests and voter discontent ahead of the 2024 Russian presidential elections.**

Assessed Control of Terrain in Ukraine and Main Russian Maneuver Axes as of September 14, 2023, 3:00 PM ET



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

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

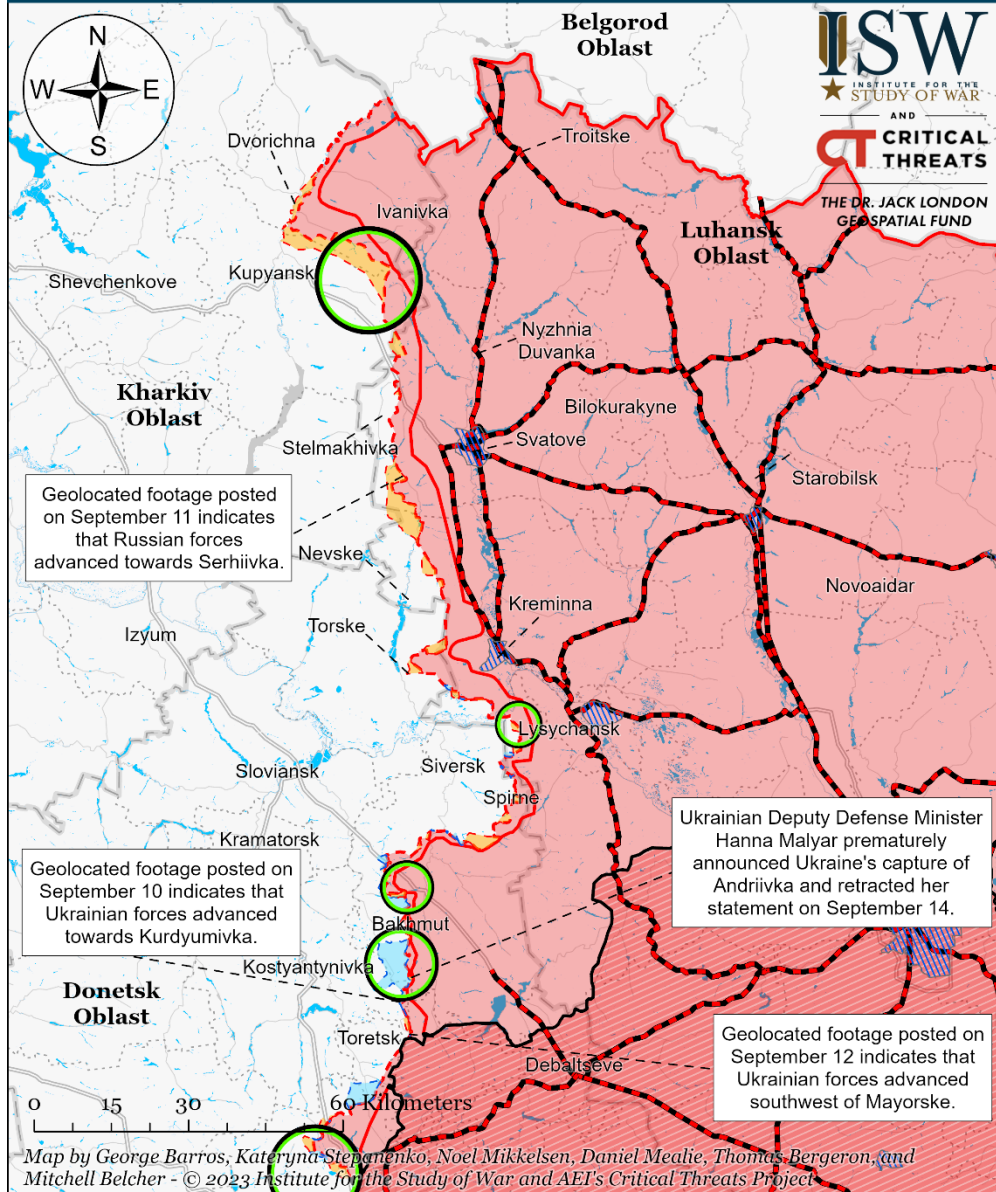
Russian Main Effort – Eastern Ukraine

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

Russian forces continued offensive operations on the Kupyansk-Svatove-Kreminna line on September 14 and recently advanced. Geolocated footage published on September 13 shows that Russian forces advanced west of Lyman Pershyi (12km northeast of Kupyansk) as of September 12.[40] Russian sources claimed that Russian forces made unspecified advances between Petropavlivka (7km east of Kupyansk) and Synkivka (9km northeast of Kupyansk) on September 13 and continued assaults near Synkyvka, Novoyehorivka (16km southwest of Svatove), and the Serebryanske forest area (11km south of Kreminna) on September 14.[41] The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces continued offensive operations northeast of Berestove (20km northwest of Svatove) and near Bilohorivka (10km south of Kreminna).[42] Ukrainian Deputy Defense Minister Hanna Malyar stated that the intensity of fighting and the number of recent combat engagements in the Kupyansk and Lyman directions has decreased because Russian forces are gathering forces presumably for further operations.[43]

Russian military officials claimed that Russian forces repelled Ukrainian attacks near Synkivka, Torske (15km west of Kreminna), and Dibrova (7km southwest of Kreminna) on the Kupyansk-Svatove-Kreminna line on September 14.[44]

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Luhansk Oblast as of September 14, 2023, 3:00 PM ET



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

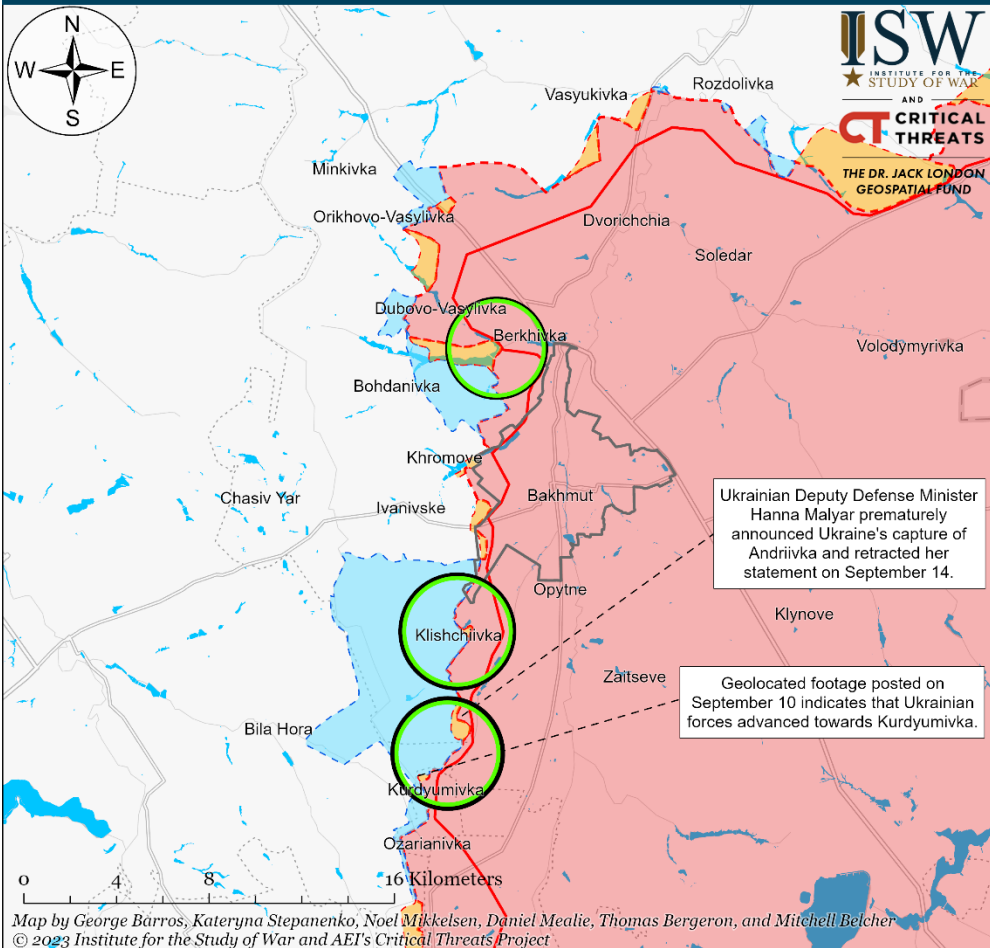
* Assessed Russian advances are areas where ISW assesses Russian forces have operated in or launched attacks against but do not control.

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

Ukrainian forces conducted offensive operations near Bakhmut on September 14 and recently advanced. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Ukrainian forces achieved unspecified partial successes near Bakhmut, Klishchiivka (7km southwest of Bakhmut), Andriivka (10km southwest of Bakhmut), and Kurdyumivka (13km southwest of Bakhmut).[45] Several Russian milbloggers claimed that Ukrainian forces are advancing near Klishchiivka and occupying areas on the southwestern outskirts of the settlement.[46] Ukrainian Deputy Defense Minister Hanna Malyar prematurely announced Ukraine’s liberation of Andriivka and swiftly retracted her statement on September 14.[47] Malyar clarified that Ukrainian forces achieved some unspecified success in Andriivka but that heavy fighting is ongoing in the settlement.[48] Several Russian milbloggers claimed that Klishchiivka and Andriivka are contested.[49] Ukrainian Eastern Group of Forces Spokesperson Ilya Yevlash reported on September 13 that Ukrainian forces are forcing Russian forces to withdraw from positions near Minkivka (15km northwest of Bakhmut) and Dubovo-Vasylivka (6km northwest of Bakhmut).[50] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces attacked elements of the 200th Separate Motorized Rifle Brigade (14th Army Corps, Northern Fleet) in the Bakhmut area.[51]

Russian forces conducted offensive operations near Bakhmut on September 14 but did not make confirmed gains. Donetsk People's Republic (DNR) Head Denis Pushilin denied reports that Ukrainian forces liberated Andriivka and claimed that Russian forces “improved” unspecified positions near Andriivka.[52] The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces conducted unsuccessful attacks near Bohdanivka (7km northwest of Bakhmut).[53] Another milblogger claimed that Russian forces defending south of Bakhmut do not have enough personnel to conduct rotations.[54]

Assessed Control of Terrain in Bakhmut as of September 14, 2023, 3:00 PM ET



Map by George Barros, Kateryna Stepanenko, Noel Mikkelsen, Daniel Mealie, Thomas Bergeron, and Mitchell Belcher
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Bakhmut City Limits	Assessed Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory	Claimed Ukrainian Counteroffensives
Assessed Russian Advances in Ukraine*	Claimed Russian Control over Ukrainian Territory	Reported Ukrainian Partisan Warfare

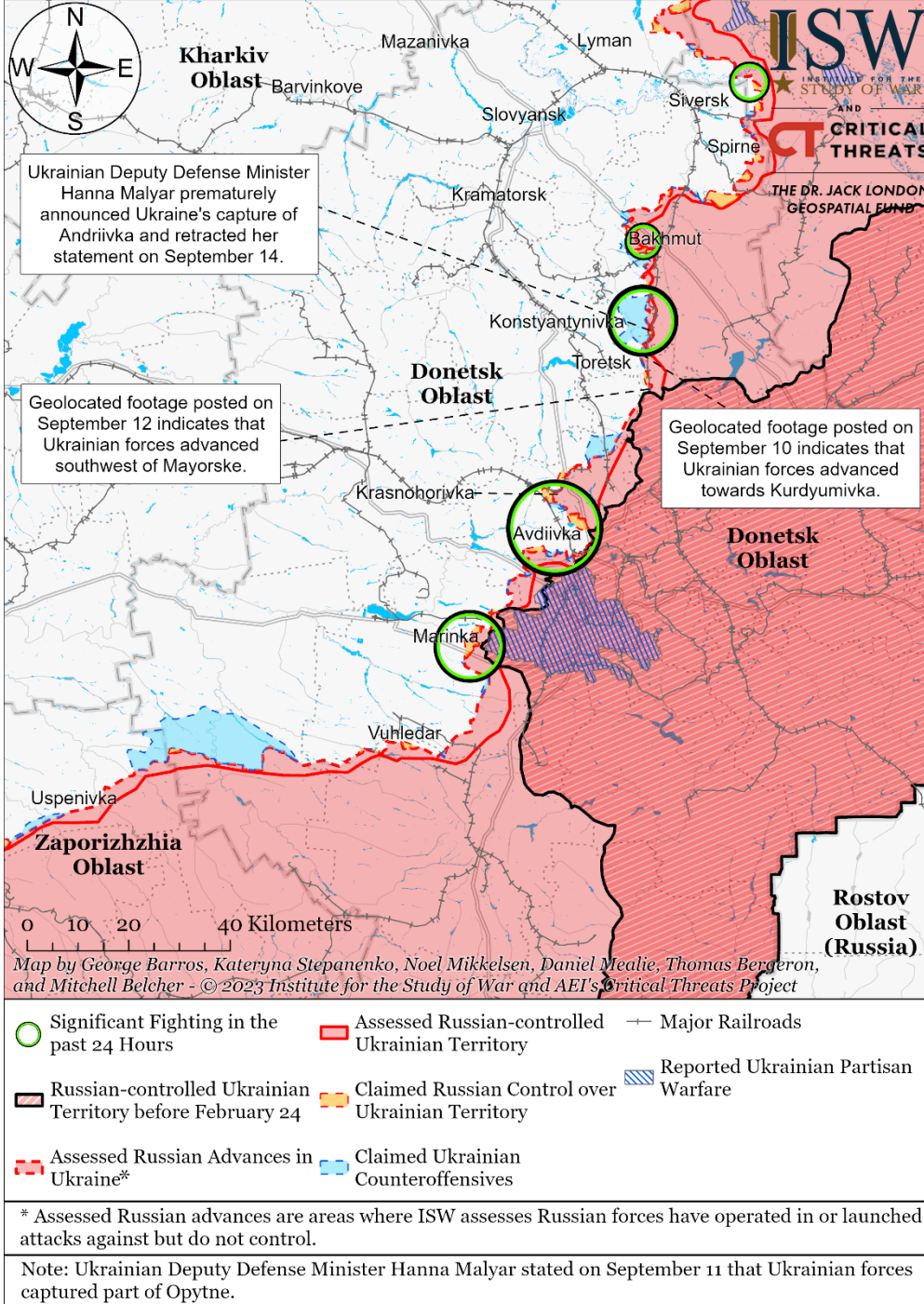
* Assessed Russian advances are areas where ISW assesses Russian forces have operated in or launched attacks against but do not control.

Note: Ukrainian Deputy Defense Minister Hanna Malyar stated on September 11 that Ukrainian forces captured two square kilometers in the Bakhmut direction.

Ukrainian forces recently conducted offensive operations along the Avdiivka-Donetsk City front and advanced. Geolocated footage published on September 13 shows that Ukrainian forces recently advanced east of the rail line north of Krasnohorivka (9km north of Avdiivka).[55] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces conducted attacks near Opytne (3km southwest of Avdiivka) on September 13.[56]

Russian forces conducted offensive operations along the Avdiivka-Donetsk City line on September 14 but did not advance. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces conducted unsuccessful attacks near Avdiivka, Lastochkyne (4km northwest of Avdiivka), and Marinka (on the southwestern outskirts of Donetsk City).[57] The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces conducted 14 unsuccessful attempts to push Ukrainian forces out of positions near Marinka.[58] Malyar reported on September 13 that Russian forces have significantly increased the number of attacks around Avdiivka and Marinka.[59]

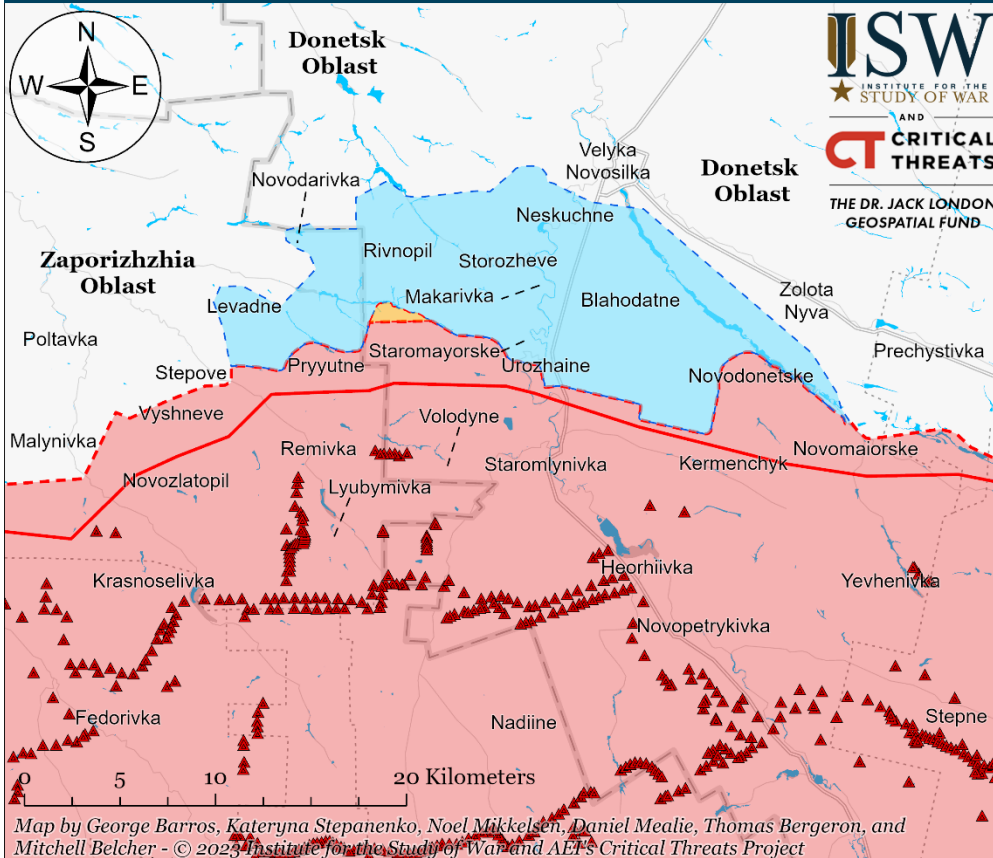
Assessed Control of Terrain Around Donetsk as of September 14, 2023, 3:00 PM ET



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

Ukrainian forces conducted assaults along the administrative border between Donetsk and Zaporizhia oblasts on September 14 but did not make any confirmed advances. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Ukrainian forces continued assaults in the Shakhtarske direction in the Donetsk-Zaporizhia Oblast border area.[60] The Russian MoD claimed that naval infantry elements of the Russian Pacific Fleet repelled Ukrainian assaults near Novomayorske (18km southeast of Velyka Novosilka) and Novodonetske (12km southeast of Velyka Novosilka) and that elements of the Russian Eastern Grouping of Forces repelled a Ukrainian attack near Pryyutne (15km southwest of Velyka Novosilka).[61] Russia milbloggers claimed that elements of the 40th Naval Infantry Brigade (Pacific Fleet) repelled a Ukrainian assault near Urozhaine (9km south of Velyka Novosilka).[62] Another Russian milblogger claimed that the arrival of unspecified Russian "reserves" in the Donetsk-Zaporizhia Oblast border area has stabilized the tactical situation in the area, although ISW has not yet observed the recent arrival of elements of new Russian units on this sector of the front.[63]

Assessed Control of Terrain Around the Vremivka Salient as of September 14, 2023, 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
- ▲ Russian Field Fortifications
- Assessed Russian Advances in Ukraine*
- Claimed Ukrainian Counteroffensives

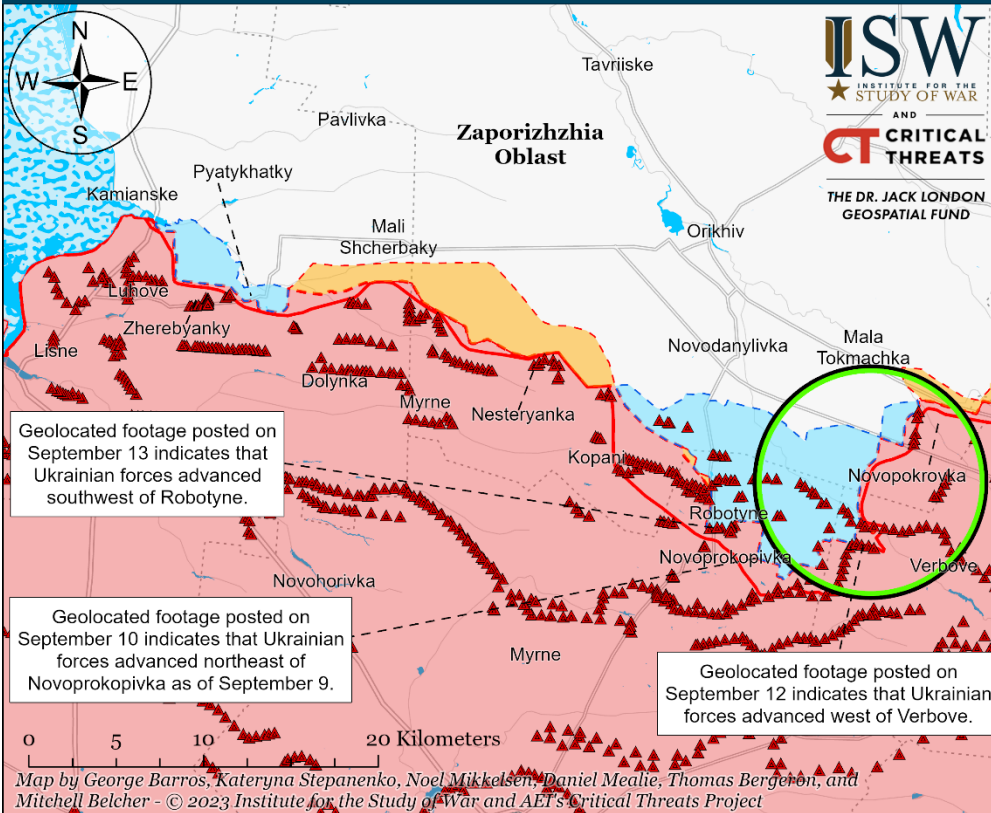
* Assessed Russian advances are areas where ISW assesses Russian forces have operated in or launched attacks against but do not control.

Note: A Russian source claimed on September 10 that Russian forces pushed Ukrainian forces north of the Hryusheva Gully north of Pryyutne. Ukrainian Tavriisk Group of Forces Commander Oleksandr Tarnavskiy stated on September 10 that Ukrainian forces advanced more than one kilometer in the Tavriisk direction.

Ukrainian forces continued offensive operations in western Zaporizhzhia Oblast on September 14 but did not make any confirmed gains. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Ukrainian forces continued offensive operations in the Melitopol direction (western Zaporizhzhia Oblast).[64] Russian sources claimed that Ukrainian forces continued assaults near Robotyne (10km south of Orikhiv), Novoprokopivka (13km south of Orikhiv), and Verbove (18km southeast of Orikhiv).[65] A Russian milblogger claimed that elements of the 7th Guards Mountain Airborne (VDV) Division repelled a Ukrainian attack towards Novoprokopivka.[66]

Russian forces counterattacked in western Zaporizhia Oblast but did not make confirmed advances on September 14. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces conducted unsuccessful offensive actions near Mala Tokmachka (7km southeast of Orikhiv) and Verbove.[67] A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces conducted a series of successful counterattacks near Verbove and Robotyne in the past three days, although ISW has not observed visual confirmation of these claims.[68]

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Pyatykhatky and Robotyne as of September 14, 2023, 3:00 PM ET

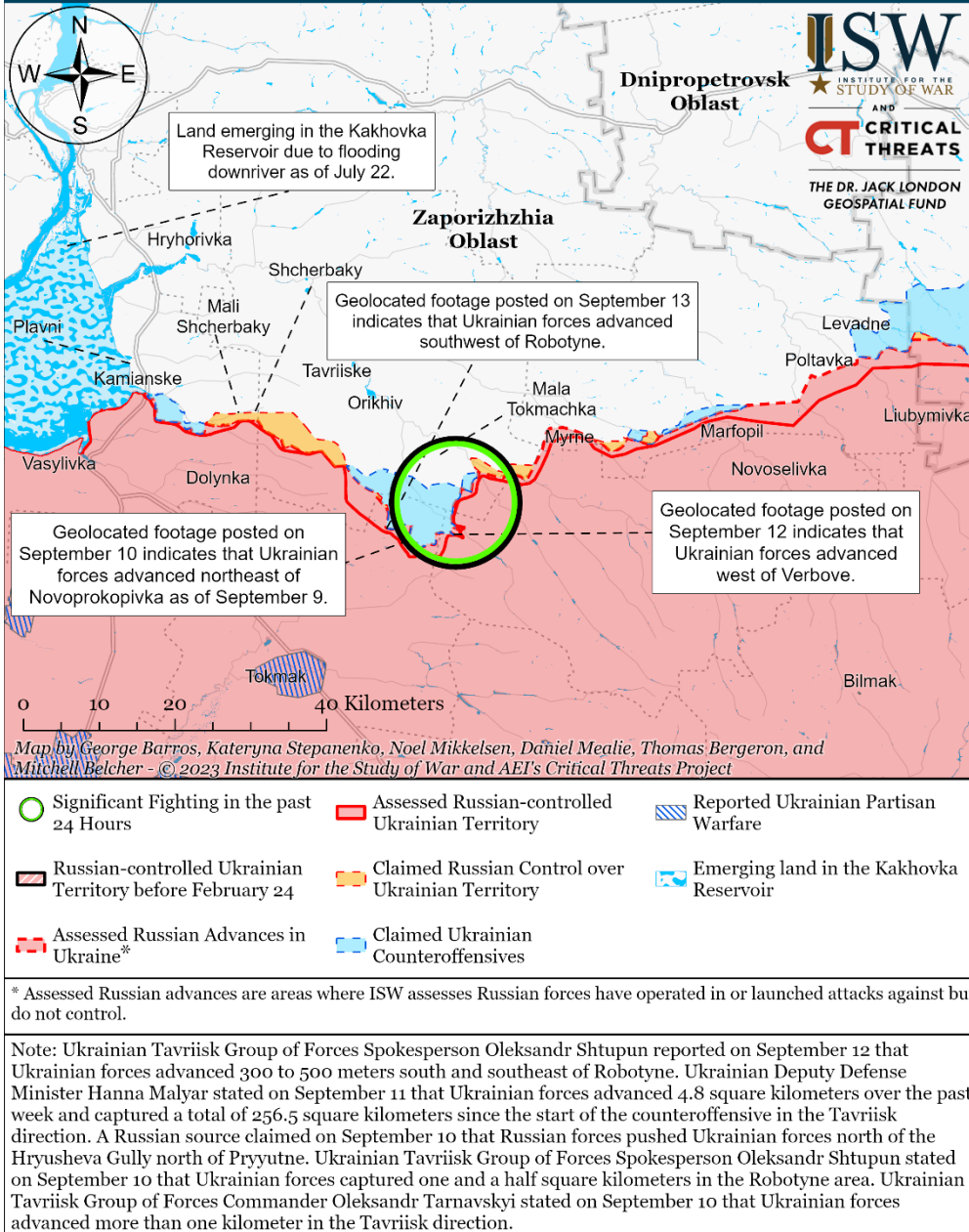


- Significant Fighting in the past 24 Hours
- Assessed Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory
- Reported Ukrainian Partisan Warfare
- Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory before February 24
- Claimed Russian Control over Ukrainian Territory
- Emerging land in the Kakhovka Reservoir
- Assessed Russian Advances in Ukraine*
- Claimed Ukrainian Counteroffensives
- ▲ Russian Field Fortifications

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

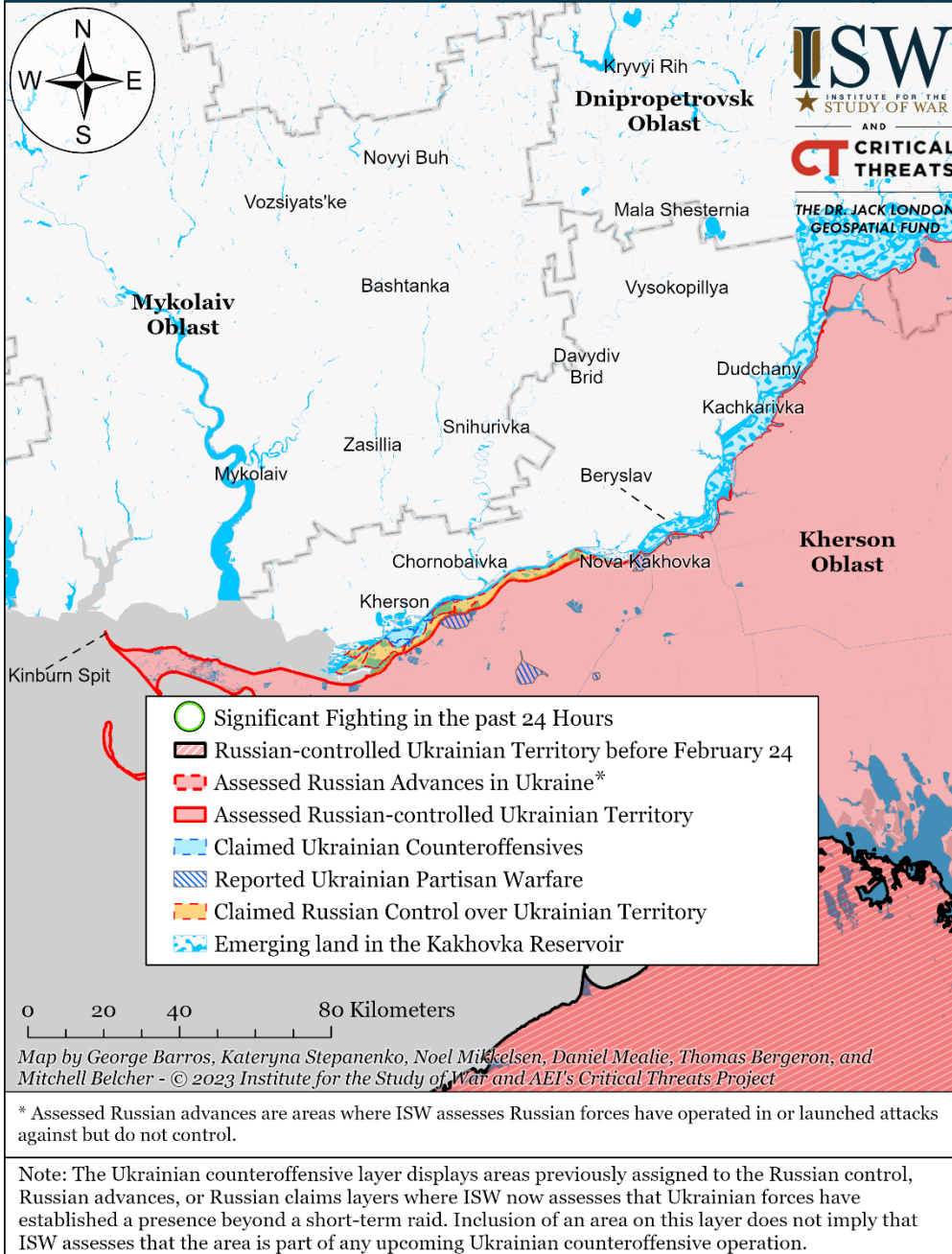
Note: Ukrainian Tavriisk Group of Forces Spokesperson Oleksandr Shtupun reported on September 12 that Ukrainian forces advanced 300 to 500 meters south and southeast of Robotyne. Ukrainian Deputy Defense Minister Hanna Malyar stated on September 11 that Ukrainian forces advanced 4.8 square kilometers over the past week and captured a total of 256.5 square kilometers since the start of the counteroffensive in the Tavriisk direction. Ukrainian Tavriisk Group of Forces Spokesperson Oleksandr Shtupun stated on September 10 that Ukrainian forces captured one and a half square kilometers in the Robotyne area. Ukrainian Tavriisk Group of Forces Commander Oleksandr Tarnavskiy stated on September 10 that Ukrainian forces advanced more than one kilometer in the Tavriisk direction.

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Zaporizhzhia as of September 14, 2023, 3:00 PM ET



A prominent Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces continued limited activity in the left (east) bank of Kherson Oblast on September 14. The milblogger claimed that small Ukrainian landing groups unsuccessfully tried to land north of Oleshky (7km southeast of Kherson City), near Kozachi Laheri (23km east of Kherson City), and on Kozatskyi Island (west of Nova Kakhovka).[69] The milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces continue to operate on Kozatskyi Island but are not trying to advance further inland due to heavy Russian artillery fire in the area.[70]

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Kherson and Mykolaiv as of September 14, 2023, 3:00 PM ET



The Russian MoD claimed on September 14 that the Russian Black Sea Fleet patrol ship *Sergey Kotov* destroyed five Ukrainian naval drones targeting the ship in the Black Sea.[71]

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

The Kremlin is reportedly trying to censor Russian media coverage of a possible second reserve mobilization wave in order to prevent discontent ahead of the 2024 Russian presidential elections.[72] Russian opposition outlet *Meduza* reported that the Russian Presidential Administration issued “urgent requests” to pro-government Russian media outlets to not amplify rumors about a possible second wave of reserve mobilization or official government denials of these rumors.[73] The Kremlin reportedly told the media outlets to instead focus on the alleged success of the Russian contract recruitment campaign.[74]

Russian authorities are reportedly creating new drone production facilities across Russia. A Russian enterprise is reportedly repurposing a shopping center in Izhevsk, Udmurt Republic, into a drone research and production facility.[75] Russian enterprises also reportedly plan to open new drone development centers in Tomsk, Samara, and St. Petersburg oblasts.[76] ISW has previously assessed that Russia likely aims to develop a long-term capability to produce and use drones in the war in Ukraine.[77]

The US government imposed new sanctions on September 14 against over 150 entities for helping Russia circumvent sanctions, including five Turkish companies and one Turkish citizen.[78] *Reuters* reported that the newly-sanctioned Turkish entities helped Russia circumvent Western sanctions by helping repair sanctioned naval vessels and helping transfer dual-use goods to Russia.[79]

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

The Ukrainian Crimean-based “Atesh” partisan group claimed that it provided Ukrainian forces with information that aided the Ukrainian strike on the Russian Ropucha class landing ship and the Kilo class submarine in Sevastopol, Crimea on September 13.[80] “Atesh” claimed that its partisans from multiple different operations, including Sevastopol civilians, Russian Black Sea Fleet personnel, and employees of a maritime repair facility, gathered and delivered information on important Russian military targets in the past week.[81]

Russian authorities continue to deport Ukrainian children from occupied areas of Ukraine. Ukrainian Mariupol Mayor Advisor Petro Andryushenko stated that Russian occupation authorities removed children from frontline areas in occupied Donetsk Oblast under an evacuation scheme.[82] ISW has previously reported on Russian and occupation authorities’ usage of evacuation schemes to forcibly deport Ukrainian children to occupied Crimea and Russia.[83] The Kherson Oblast occupation administration stated that Russian authorities took 37 children from Skadovsk Raion to the Kabardino-Balkaria Republic under the guise of “health retreats.”[84]

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

Wagner Group forces reportedly continue to train Belarusian forces as of September 13. Some Russian sources amplified footage of Wagner forces training Belarusian forces and claimed that Wagner forces continue training Belarusian Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD) forces.[85]

The Belarusian Ministry of Defense (MoD) held the “Voenkor-2023” military exercises to train Belarusian military correspondents to cover military operations. The Belarusian MoD announced the conclusion of the “Voenkor-2023” exercises on September 14 and stated that military correspondents practiced skills relating to military topography, basic field survival skills, and filming Belarusian soldiers conducting operations.[86]

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

Note: ISW does not receive any classified material from any source, uses only publicly available information, and draws extensively on Russian, Ukrainian, and Western reporting and social media as well as commercially available satellite imagery and other geospatial data as the basis for these reports. References to all sources used are provided in the endnotes of each update.

[1] <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbid0Wh2WVyfndB5V73zijo0Rvs3o8TRsNYkUkoWgUtPQ2HYXoNBiEdNDH3d4zY4y3ofSl>

[2] <https://t.me/annamaliar/1069> ; <https://t.me/annamaliar/1068> ; <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/news-maliar-zvlnennia-andriivky/32592915.html>

[3] <https://suspilne dot media/572667-rosijski-vijskovi-ponad-1000-raziv-obstrilali-bahmutskij-talimano-kupanskij-napramki-de-sili-oboroni-maut-uspih/>

[4] <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbid0Wh2WVyfndB5V73zijo0Rvs3o8TRsNYkUkoWgUtPQ2HYXoNBiEdNDH3d4zY4y3ofSl> ; <https://armyinform.com dot ua/2023/09/14/ganna-malyar-pro-obstanovku-na-fronti/>

[5] [https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=707292761439374&mp%3B__cft__\[o\]=AZXuLHuMy7gK8dVFkxR4AF-Yqo1K9X2yHlu3F03pPwTpan4--BIH-B_-OhhtAmF2TYoCvqJVQpsMrEnIT4LDwFQWMnWYE-99LZ19PeVSIF3CeYhQ2WyIvs02Tgdl4IxHvGrGDSHUVrG-xyPQRIf5Jj&mp%3B__tn__=EH-R](https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=707292761439374&mp%3B__cft__[o]=AZXuLHuMy7gK8dVFkxR4AF-Yqo1K9X2yHlu3F03pPwTpan4--BIH-B_-OhhtAmF2TYoCvqJVQpsMrEnIT4LDwFQWMnWYE-99LZ19PeVSIF3CeYhQ2WyIvs02Tgdl4IxHvGrGDSHUVrG-xyPQRIf5Jj&mp%3B__tn__=EH-R)

[6] <https://www.pravda.com dot ua/rus/news/2023/09/14/7419745/>

[7] <https://www.pravda.com dot ua/rus/news/2023/09/14/7419745/>

[8] https://t.me/mod_russia/30451

[9] <https://x.com/neonhandrail/status/1702214946422165659?s=20>;
<https://x.com/neonhandrail/status/1702215120330584073?s=20>;

<https://t.me/Crimeanwind/42289>; <https://t.me/Crimeanwind/42266> ;
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[10] <https://twitter.com/Osinttechnical/status/1702217513050779876>;
<https://twitter.com/Osinttechnical/status/1702217515512758694>;
<https://twitter.com/Osinttechnical/status/1702217518138413464>; <https://twitter.com/Osinttechnical/status/1702217520596296055> ; <https://x.com/kromark/status/1702306508178907578?s=20>

[11] <https://isw.pub/UkrWar082323>

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