

Ukraine Crisis Update: April 30, 2015

1 April 23-30: Russian-backed separatists launched indirect fire strikes on Ukrainian forces north and west of the destroyed Donetsk airport, captured by the Donetsk People's Republic (DNR) in January 2015. Ukrainian forces reported coming under fire from separatist "Grad" Multiple Launch Rocket Systems (MLRS) around the city of Avdiivka, north of the airport. Ukrainian forces also reported coming under fire from separatist tanks, heavy artillery, and heavy mortars, which the February ceasefire required both sides to withdraw.

2 April 23-30: Pro-Russian forces clashed and exchanged heavy indirect fire with Ukrainian Anti-Terrorist Operation (ATO) forces around the village of Shyrokyne, an area which has been contested since mid-February despite the ceasefire agreement. The OSCE international monitoring mission reported the "most intense shelling" in the village over the past 10 weeks.

3 April 23-30: Ukrainian Anti-Terrorist Operation (ATO) positions along the T1303 "Bakhmutka" highway were assaulted and shelled with small arms and mortars. On April 29, ATO forces repelled a separatist reconnaissance unit near the village of Trokhizbenka but suffered three wounded in the fighting.

4 April 23-28: Pro-Russian forces shelled Ukrainian Anti-Terrorist Operation (ATO) positions with mortars, heavy artillery, and "Grad" MLRS near the village of Hranitne. The nearby villages of Starohnativka and Novolaspa also reportedly came under "Grad" rocket fire.

5 April 25-29: Pro-Russian forces fired on Ukrainian forces with small arms, automatic grenade launchers, infantry fighting vehicles, and mortars near the Ukrainian-held city Shchastia and the town of Stanytsia Luhanska.

6 April 26-29: Outgoing and incoming artillery and small arms fire were reported in the DNR-held city of Horlivka. According to local residents, the fighting was the most intense since the ceasefire began in February. Separatist shelling in the Ukrainian-held town of Artemove, northwest of Horlivka, damaged several civilian homes. Ukrainian forces engaged a separatist reconnaissance patrol near the village of Zaytseve, north of Horlivka, during the night of April 29.

7 April 27-28: Pro-Russian forces shelled Ukrainian Anti-Terrorist Operation (ATO) positions near the village of Chermalyk, east of the strategic Donetsk-Mariupol leg of the H20 highway. At least one civilian was killed in separatist shelling; in the village ATO forces successfully repelled an assault on its positions in the village of Pavlopil, south of Chermalyk.

8 April 28: Several hundred supporters of Ukrainian ultranationalist political and paramilitary group "Pravyi Sektor" protested outside the Presidential Administration building in Kyiv. The protest was held in response to reports that Ukrainian forces had surrounded the base of Pravyi Sektor's paramilitary wing in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast, southeastern Ukraine. The General Staff of the Armed Forces stated that the soldiers arriving at the base were taking part in planned exercises rather than attempting to disarm the paramilitary group.



- Donetsk People's Republic (DNR)
- Luhansk People's Republic (LNR)
- Cossack
- Combined Separatist
- Ukrainian Anti-Terrorist Operation (ATO)
- ★ Acting Regional Admin Center
- ★ Regional Admin Center
- Separatist Held Territory
- ★ Major Clash
- ★ Indirect Fire



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Russian-backed separatists intensified attacks on Ukrainian forces for the third week in a row, signaling their complete abandonment of the February 12 ceasefire agreement. Separatists continued to shell Ukrainian forces intensively northwest of Donetsk and east of Mariupol, areas where fighting has continued throughout the ceasefire period but has recently escalated. Separatist forces expanded offensive operations across the front line, most notably east of the H20 highway between Donetsk and Mariupol. Ukrainian-held civilian areas along the front line were subjected to shelling from heavy weapons marking a decisive escalation from the pattern of separatist offensive operations during the first two months of the ceasefire. Separatist forces may be expanding their targeting of Ukrainian Anti-Terrorist Operation (ATO) positions and populated areas across the front line in an effort to draw Ukraine's military resources away from the Mariupol and Donetsk areas, the most likely sites for a surprise Russian-backed offensive maneuver.