

Ukraine Crisis Update: June 10, 2015

1 June 7: A floating improvised explosive device detonated when taken aboard a Ukrainian coastal patrol in the Azov Sea near the strategic port city of Mariupol, sinking the Ukrainian vessel, killing two crewmen, and wounding another five.



2 June 6-10: Ukrainian forces continued to exchange indirect fire with separatists near the contested village of Shyrokyne, the site of persistent clashes since February. The Ukrainian military reported coming under intense indirect fire in the area on the night of June 8.



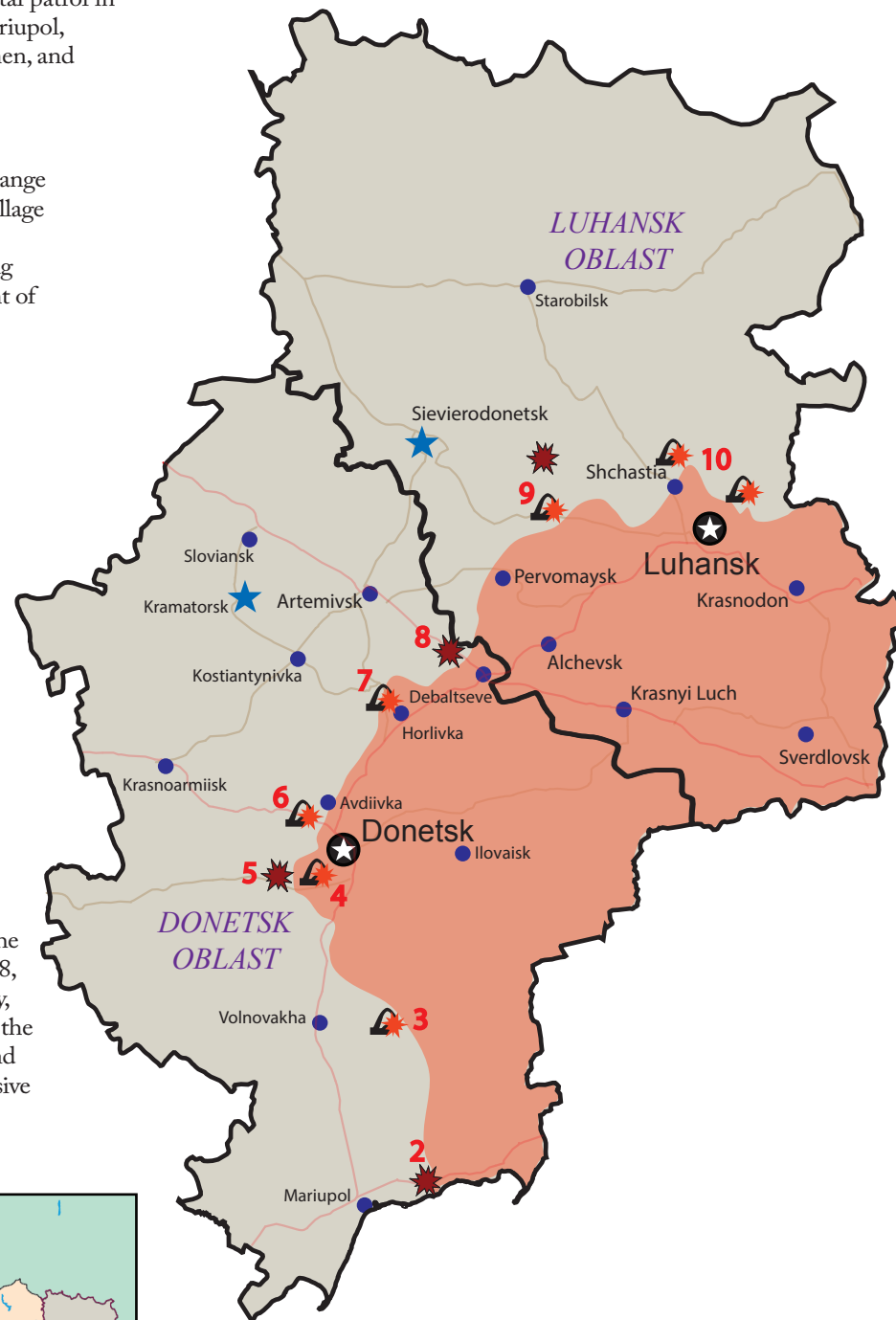
3 June 6-8: Russian-backed separatists fired “Grad” multiple launch rocket systems (MLRS) and other heavy weapons at Ukrainian positions east of the strategic Donetsk-Mariupol highway. International OSCE monitors reported a buildup of separatist tanks and armored vehicles east of the city of Volnovakha on June 7 and 8.



4 June 5-10: Ukrainian forces continued to shell the separatist stronghold of Donetsk. International OSCE monitors recorded several indirect fire attacks in civilian areas of the city.



5 June 7-8: An anti-tank mine detonated near the government-held city of Krasnohorivka on June 8, killing seven Ukrainian soldiers. On the same day, separatists clashed with Ukrainian forces around the nearby town of Marinka. Both Krasnohorivka and Marinka had been the focus of a separatist offensive maneuver on June 3.



6 June 6-10: Russian-backed separatist forces shelled Ukrainian positions north of the city of Donetsk using heavy artillery, mortars and tanks.



7 June 8-9: Ukrainian and separatist forces exchanged indirect artillery fire near the Donetsk People’s Republic (DNR)-controlled city of Horlivka. Residential areas of Horlivka and Ukrainian checkpoints north of the city both reportedly came under heavy fire on June 8.



8 June 9: Ukrainian forces reported coming under attack from separatist tanks, infantry fighting vehicles and artillery near the town of Myronivskiy along the strategic Debaltseve-Artemivsk highway.



9 June 6-10: Separatist and Ukrainian forces exchanged direct and indirect fire around the contested T1303 “Bakhmutka” highway. On June 8, clashes were reported near the villages of Hrechyshkyne and Krymske, both located north of the highway within government-held territory. On June 9, three Ukrainian soldiers were wounded by a grenade booby trap near Krymske. The Ukrainian military reported coming under fire from separatist “Grad” multiple launch rocket systems (MLRS) and 152 mm artillery along the highway, an area that had typically been contested with lighter weapons during the “Minsk II” ceasefire period.



10 June 6-9: Separatists continue to launch indirect fire strikes on Ukrainian positions north and northeast of Luhansk People’s Republic (LNR)-controlled city of Luhansk. The separatists concentrated attacks around the government-held city of Shchastia and town of Stanytsia Luhanska.



- Donetsk People’s Republic (DNR)
- Luhansk People’s Republic (LNR)
- Ukrainian Anti-Terrorist Operation (ATO)
- Indirect Fire
- Clash
- Battle
- Separatist-held Territory
- Regional Admin Center
- Acting Regional Admin Center



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Russian-backed separatists maintained heightened offensive operations along the front line in the week following the June 3 assault on Ukrainian forces west of Donetsk. Attacks intensified near the H20 and T1303 highways which respectively link the separatist-held capitals of Donetsk and Luhansk to the government-controlled cities of Mariupol and Sievierodonetsk. Separatists may launch offensive maneuvers around these key highways in order to capture additional terrain and improve their capacity to coordinate eventual encirclement maneuvers around the strategic port city of Mariupol and Artemivsk, a gateway to northern Donetsk Oblast that lies southwest of Sievierodonetsk. On June 8, the separatists released a document outlining their proposed amendments to the Ukrainian constitution regarding the issue of autonomy in the Donbas. One proposal included the creation of local election commissions under the control of the separatist leadership, reinforcing a key point of disagreement with Kyiv and its desire to administer internationally-monitored local elections. The timing of this release following the re-ignition of separatist maneuver operations offers further evidence that Russia and Russian-backed separatists are leveraging the application of military force as a negotiating tactic.