

Ukraine Crisis Update: July 15, 2015

1 July 10, 11, 14-15: Separatists shelled Ukrainian positions at Talakivka, a previously untargeted village near the northeastern outskirts of Mariupol, with indirect fire on July 10 and 15. East of Mariupol, separatist sniper fire was reported in the village of Shyrokyne, from which the separatists withdrew in early July.



2 July 10-15: Separatists targeted Ukrainian positions east of the strategic Donetsk-Mariupol highway with heavy weapons including with “Grad” multiple launch rocket systems (MLRS).



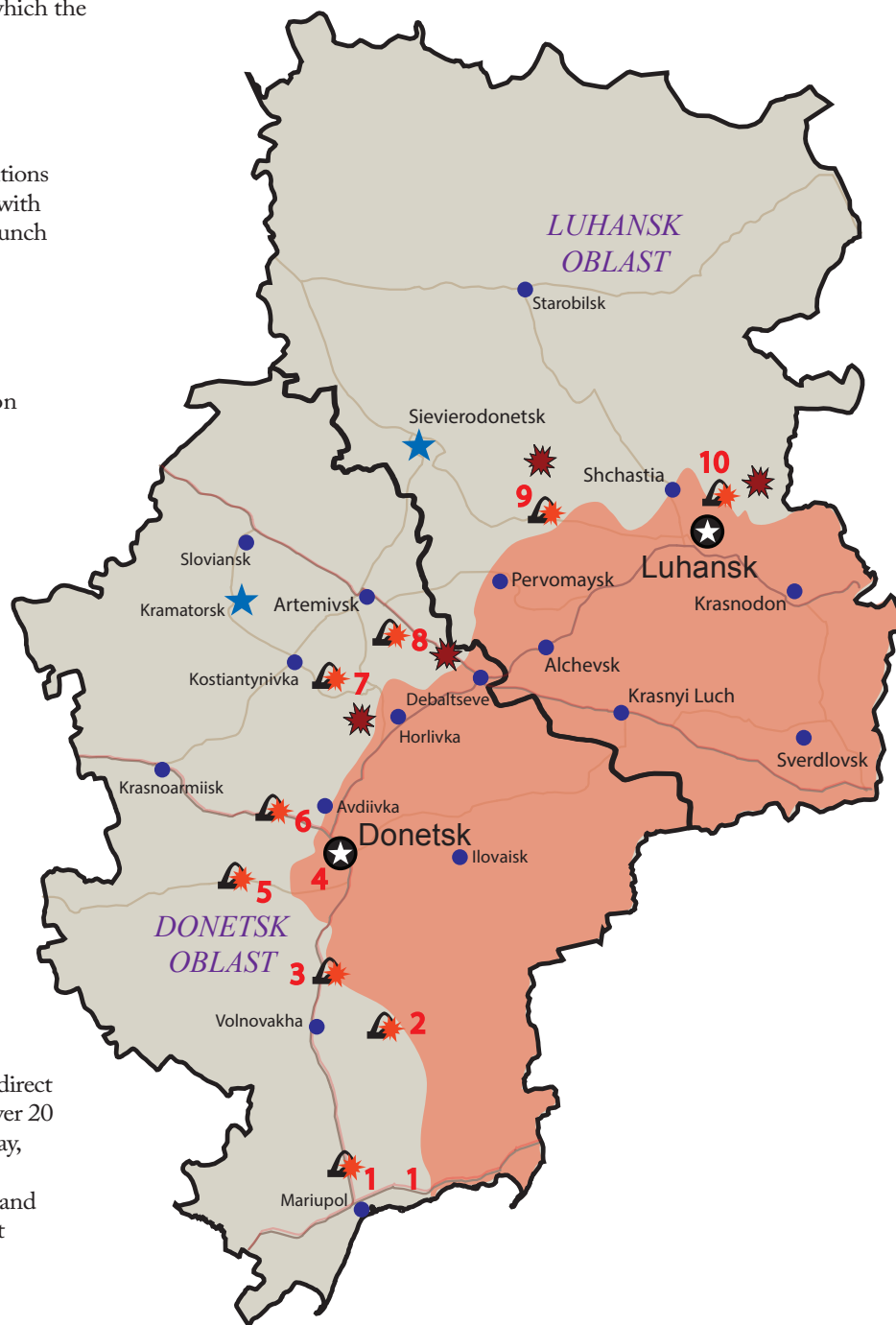
3 July 10: Separatists launched indirect fire on Ukrainian positions on both sides of the strategic H20 Donetsk-Mariupol highway.



4 July 14: On July 14, an improvised explosive device (IED) detonated in the car of the secretary to Aleksandr Zakharchenko, the head of the “Donetsk People’s Republic” (DNR), injuring her. Unknown attackers with automatic weapons also assaulted Yuriy Sivokononko, a former candidate to lead the DNR, injuring the separatist official and his assistant. The suspected assassination attempts came amid rumors circulated in Ukrainian media that the Kremlin plans to replace the leadership of the DNR.



5 July 13-15: On July 13, separatists launched indirect fire strikes the Ukrainian-held town of Hirnyk over 20 kilometers beyond the front line. The following day, separatists resumed daily shelling of Ukrainian positions to the west of Donetsk city at Marinka and Krasnohorivka, the targets of the June 3 separatist assault.



6 July 10-15: Separatists maintained daily indirect fire on Ukrainian positions north and northwest of Donetsk city in the area surrounding the separatist-held Donetsk airport. Separatist forces used “Grad” MLRS to target the Ukrainian frontline city of Avdiivka on July 10.



7 July 10-15: Separatists continued to launch indirect fire and small probing attacks on Ukrainian positions north and west of the occupied city of Horlivka. On July 10, Ukrainian media reported a large explosion at a separatist ammunitions depot in Horlivka allegedly related to a confrontation between local separatists and Russian volunteers.



8 July 10-15: Separatists forces clashed with Ukrainian forces and targeted their positions along the strategic highway linking separatist-held Debaltseve with government-controlled Artemivsk.



9 July 11-15: Separatists continued to engage Ukrainian forces around the contested “Bakhmutka” highway between separatist-held Luhansk city and government-controlled northern Luhansk Oblast. A Ukrainian military analyst reported the use of “Grad” MLRS by the separatists in the area on July 14.



10 July 10-15: Separatists launched indirect and direct fire attacks on Ukrainian forces north and northwest of Luhansk city. On July 14, five Ukrainian soldiers were killed when an IED detonated near the town of Stanysia Luhanska.



11 July 11: Members of the paramilitary wing of the Ukrainian nationalist group “Right Sector” engaged in a shootout involving grenade launchers with the entourage of a Ukrainian member of parliament in a suspected smuggling turf dispute in the southwestern city of Mukacheve. At least 13 people including police and civilians were injured in the fighting, and two “Right Sector” members were killed. The incident sparked small “Right Sector” rallies across the country condemning corruption within the Ukrainian government and demanding the removal of the interior minister.



12 July 14: Two IEDs detonated near police stations in the western Ukrainian city of Lviv, wounding two policemen. Ukraine’s interior ministry linked the attacks to the July 11 shootout in the city of Mukacheve, around 200 kilometers to the southwest.

● Donetsk People’s Republic (DNR)



Indirect Fire

■ Separatist-held Territory

● Luhansk People’s Republic (LNR)



Clash

★ Regional Admin Center

● Ukrainian Anti-Terrorist Operation (ATO)



Battle

★ Acting Regional Admin Center



Content: Hugo Spaulding, Walter Keady, and Franklin Holcomb
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Separatists continued to target Ukrainian forces with heavy weapons and small reconnaissance units across the front line in Donbas as both Ukrainian and separatist leaders combatted new internal security threats. On July 11, members of the Ukrainian ultranationalist group “Right Sector” engaged in a shootout with the entourage of a Ukrainian parliamentarian suspected of ties to smuggling in the western Ukrainian city of Mukacheve. Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko described the incident as a smuggling turf war and called for the disarmament of all unofficial armed groups, including the “bandits and terrorists” involved in the shootout. The shootout triggered a wave of small anti-government rallies across the country led by “Right Sector,” whose paramilitary wing has played an active but unofficial role in the Ukrainian military operation in Donbas. On July 14, an improvised explosive device (IED) blew up the car of the secretary to Aleksandr Zakharchenko, the head of the “Donetsk People’s Republic” (DNR), amid rumors that the Kremlin intends to replace the separatist leader. This incident and a separate assassination attempt against a top DNR official took place amid new reports that the separatist group is dissolving its “Ministry of Defense.” While the details remain unconfirmed, these developments point to significant upheaval within the separatist leadership. These incidents of violence against the authorities inside both government and separatist-held Ukraine suggest added dimensions of insecurity in the conflict.