On July 2-8, separatists began withdrawing from the contested village of Shyrokyne, a major flashpoint since February, amid continued reports of heavy weapons fire against Ukrainian positions in and around the village. The head of the “Donetsk People’s Republic” (DNR) revealed on July 8 that the separatists had withdrawn to a hillside in the eastern outskirts of the village and could “trap” Ukrainian forces in Shyrokyne if they decided to advance. The OSCE international monitoring mission reported that the situation in the village remains mostly calm, while Ukrainian military reports suggest that separatist forces increased their targeting of Ukrainian positions near the Pavlopilske reservoir north of Shyrokyne beginning on July 5.

On July 2-9, separatist forces continued to launch indirect fire attacks on Ukrainian positions east of the key Donetsk-Mariupol highway. Ukrainian forces repelled a small probing attack near the village Bohdanivka (north) on July 6. “Grad” multiple rocket system fire was reported in the village of Hranitne, a frequent target of separatist attacks south of Bohdanivka.

On July 4-9, separatist forces shelled Ukrainian positions along the key Donetsk-Mariupol highway, focusing on the village of Novotroitske, 30 kilometers south of Donetsk.

On July 5, 8: Separatist sources reported that Ukrainian troops shelled the northern districts of Donetsk city on July 5 and a southwestern district on July 8.

On July 2-9: Separatists forces continued to launch artillery strikes against Ukrainian positions west of Donetsk, the targets of a June 3 separatist assault.

On July 2-9: Separatists forces continued daily shelling of Ukrainian positions north and northwest of Donetsk that surround the separatist-held Donetsk Airport.

On July 2-9: Separatists forces continued to target Ukrainian positions north of the DNR stronghold of Horlivka.

On July 4-9: Separatist forces shelled Ukrainian positions located near the highway between the city of Debaltseve, captured by separatists in February, and Artemivsk, the strategic gateway to government-held northern Donetsk Oblast.

On July 4-9: Separatist forces continued to shell Ukrainian positions with artillery and small arms fire along the contested Bakhmutka highway in western Luhansk Oblast. One Ukrainian soldier was killed and three were injured when their vehicle came under separatist fire near the village of Lopaskyne north of the Bakhmutka highway on July 7.

On July 2-9: Separatists shelled Ukrainian controlled towns in eastern Luhansk Oblast, concentrating their fire on the town of Stanytsia Luhanska and the city of Shchastia and targeting a power plant that controls the distribution of electricity to local Ukrainian-held areas.

On July 4: An improvised explosive device (IED) detonated in the office of the “Fatherland” party in Sumy, northern Ukraine, inflicting no casualties. Former Ukrainian Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko, who leads the party, suggested that attack may have been staged in response to the party’s anti-corruption campaign in the region.