



## Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment

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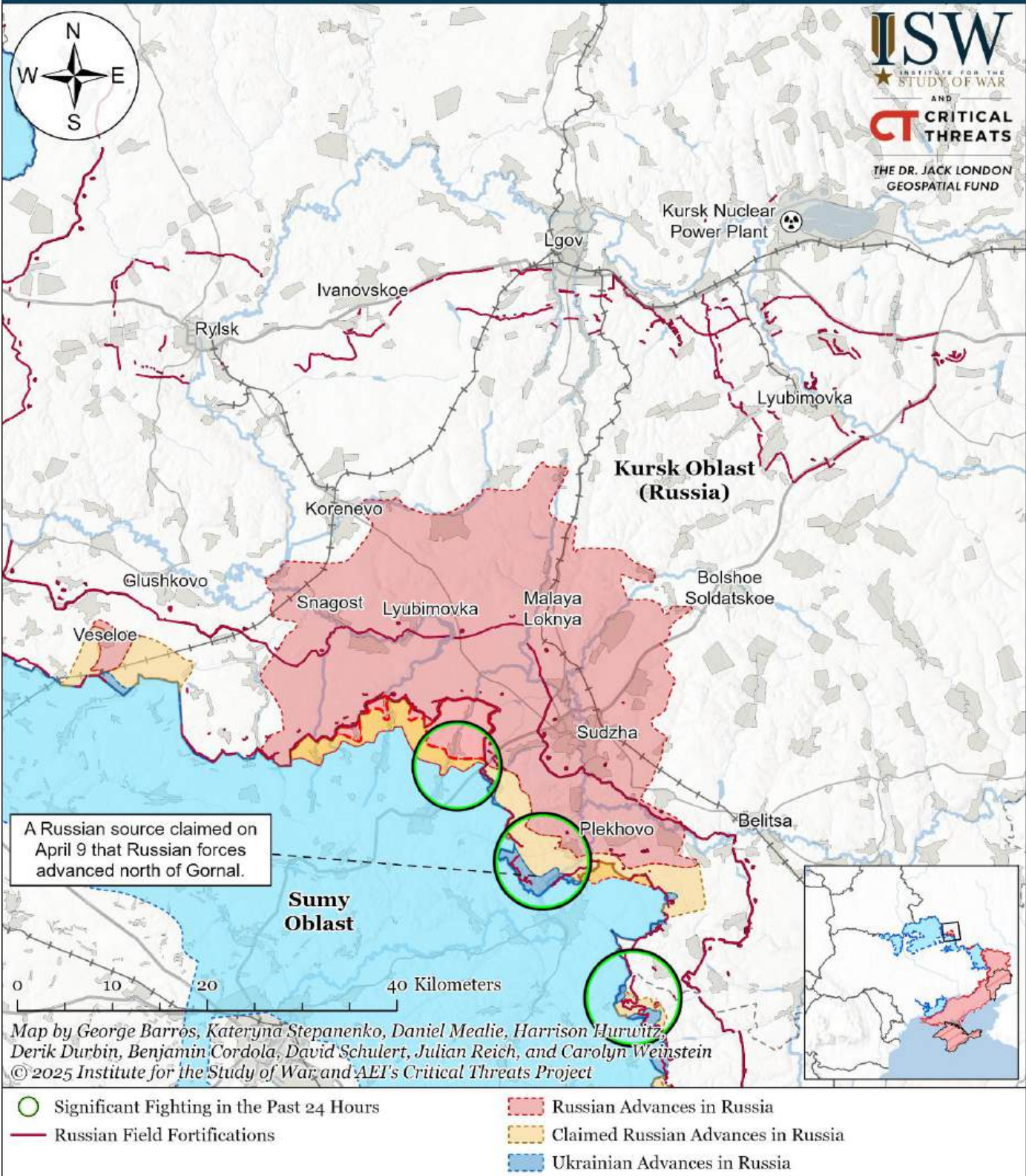
**April 9, 2025, 7:00pm ET**

**Note: The data cut-off for this product was 11:45 am ET on April 9. ISW will cover subsequent reports in the April 10 Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment.**

**Russian forces continue to marginally advance in the Sumy-Kursk Oblast border area, but the Russian force grouping in the area will likely be unable to launch a major offensive operation against Sumy City in the near term without receiving significant reinforcements.** Ukrainian Commander-in-Chief General Oleksandr Syrskyi stated during an interview with Ukrainian outlet *LB UA* published on April 9 that Russian forces have intensified assaults in "all main directions" and begun offensive operations in Sumy and Kharkiv oblasts.[1] ISW has observed gradual but consistent Russian gains and attacks along the Volodymyrivka-Zhuravka-Novyenke line (north to northeast of Sumy City) in northern Sumy Oblast and ongoing Russian efforts to push Ukrainian forces from remaining positions south of Sudzha in southern Kursk Oblast since early March 2025.[2] Russian forces made rapid advances in Kursk Oblast in early March 2025 as the United States temporarily paused intelligence sharing with Ukraine, but Russian gains slowed as Ukrainian forces retreated into Sudzha and later resumed use of HIMARS long-range strike systems.[3] Russian forces pushed Ukrainian forces from Sudzha in mid-March 2025 but have continued to attack the remaining Ukrainian positions in Kursk Oblast while starting attacks into northern Sumy Oblast over the past month.[4]

# Assessed Control of Terrain in the Kursk Direction

## April 9, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



Ukrainian military observer Kostyantyn Mashovets stated on April 9 that elements of the Russian 76th Airborne (VDV) Division and 83rd VDV Brigade recently seized Basivka (south of Novenke) and are attempting to advance towards Loknya (further south of Novenke) and interdict the H-07 Yunkivka-Sudzha highway.[5] Mashovets stated that unspecified Russian units are also attacking in the Volodymyrivka-Veselivka area (north of Sumy City) and are trying to advance toward and merge at the Russian salient near Basivka. Mashovets stated that elements of the Russian 106th VDV Division and 11th VDV Brigade are attacking from Gogolevka and near Oleshnya (both west of Sudzha) in Kursk Oblast and the Sudzha checkpoint along the international border, and that elements of the Russian 155th Naval Infantry Brigade (Pacific Fleet) and 810th Naval Infantry Brigade (Black Sea Fleet) with support from North Korean troops are pushing Ukrainian forces from any remaining positions near Guyevo and Gornal (both south of Sudzha). Russian milbloggers claimed on April 8 and 9 that Russian forces have marginally advanced in eastern Oleshnya and southeast of Guyevo in Kursk Oblast.[6]

Mashovets estimated that there are roughly 62,000 to 65,000 Russian troops and border guards currently operating in Kursk Oblast, and Syrskiy estimated in January 2025 that Russian forces had concentrated roughly 67,000 Russian troops and 11,000 North Korean troops in Kursk Oblast.[7] Russian forces have likely sustained some losses during intensified attacks in March and early April 2025, and ISW has observed several claims that elements of the 155th Naval Infantry Brigade redeployed from Kursk Oblast to Belgorod Oblast in order to respond to ongoing Ukrainian attacks in northwesternmost Belgorod Oblast.[8] The Russian military command does not appear to be significantly bolstering its force grouping in Kursk Oblast — which would be a leading indicator for a larger offensive operation against Sumy Oblast — and in fact appears willing to redeploy small numbers of troops away from the Sumy effort — suggesting that the command believes that it can achieve its operational goals with the forces it has already gathered in Kursk Oblast.

**The Russian military command is likely attempting to form a buffer zone along the international border in Sumy Oblast, although Russian commanders may intend to press further into Sumy Oblast and towards Sumy City in the future.** ISW previously assessed that Russian forces would not attempt to advance further into northern Sumy Oblast or attack Sumy City so long as Ukrainian forces maintained their salient in Kursk Oblast.[9] Recent Russian attacks into northern Sumy Oblast indicate that the Russian military command may attempt to capitalize on the collapse of the Ukrainian Kursk Oblast salient in order to create a buffer zone in Sumy Oblast or launch an offensive on Sumy City. Russian President Vladimir Putin asked Russian Chief of the General Staff Army General Valery Gerasimov during a visit to a Russian command post in Kursk Oblast on March 12 to "think in the future about creating a security zone" along the Ukrainian-Russian international border.[10] Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov suggested that Russia form a similar buffer zone in Kharkiv Oblast in order to justify the Russian offensive into northern Kharkiv Oblast in March 2024, and Putin's statement indicates that the Russian military command is either considering or actively working towards creating a buffer zone in northern Sumy Oblast.[11]

Putin likely intends to use a buffer zone in northern Sumy Oblast and an offensive towards Sumy City to justify expanding his claims over Ukrainian territory. Russian officials are currently demanding that Ukraine cede unoccupied territory in Donetsk, Zaporizhia, and Kherson oblasts as part of a future peace agreement to end the war, and Russian officials have previously claimed that Mykolaiv Oblast (which Russia occupies a miniscule part of on the Kinburn Spit) and Kharkiv Oblast (which Russian occupies

limited areas of) are "historically Russian lands." [12] Putin may intend to leverage further advances in Sumy Oblast and pressure on Sumy City to demand that Ukraine cede part of Sumy Oblast to Russia during future peace negotiations. The Russian force grouping in Kursk Oblast is unlikely to be sufficiently combat capable to seize a major Ukrainian city after eight months of combat operations unless it receives significant reinforcements from another frontline area — which would require Russia to abandon a major operational effort in another area of Ukraine and possibly leave that area vulnerable to Ukrainian forces — and is therefore unlikely. Russian forces likely intend to establish a limited and defensible "buffer zone" in northern Sumy Oblast and advance within artillery range of Sumy City in order to pressure the city and make it uninhabitable for civilians. The Russian military command may also intend to establish limited, defensible positions in northern Sumy Oblast and then transfer these forces to reinforce other operational efforts in Ukraine, although the informational and political pressure that a push on Sumy City could generate may be more enticing for Putin than advances in other frontline areas.

**Russia continues to utilize North Korean troops in Kursk Oblast, but ISW has not yet observed indications that North Korean troops are operating as combat forces in Ukraine.** Syrskyi stated that Ukraine has observed at least two waves of North Korean forces training and replenishing their forces, presumably on the frontline or in near-rear areas, and that North Korean forces continue to operate against Ukrainian forces in Kursk Oblast. [13] Syrskyi noted that North Korean forces are improving their training, weapons, and equipment after suffering significant losses in battle and that North Korean forces have "effectively switched to the standards of the Russian military." Ukrainian military observer Kostyantyn Mashovets reported that up to four "brigades" of North Korean forces — which Mashovets reported as roughly equivalent to two motorized rifle brigades — are operating in Kursk Oblast. [14] Mashovets reported that Russian forces either use North Korean forces to reinforce Russian assault units or allocate North Korean forces to separate areas for operations in their regular units, usually at the company to battalion levels. The presence of North Korean forces in occupied Ukraine or on the frontline within Ukraine would be a notable inflection in the degree of North Korean participation in the war. North Korean forces fighting in Ukraine itself would likely mark a decision point for Western and Pacific countries concerned about North Korean escalation in the war in Ukraine and the continued combat experience North Korean forces gain fighting alongside Russian forces. [15]

**Syrskyi stated that there are currently 623,000 Russian military personnel fighting against Ukraine.** [16] Syrskyi stated that Russian forces are "increasing the number" of personnel in Ukraine by 8,000 to 9,000 new personnel per month through contract recruitment and that the Russian force grouping fighting against Ukraine increased from about 603,000 on January 1, 2025 to 623,000 just over three months later. Syrskyi attributed these recruitment numbers to the financial incentives that the Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) and Russian federal subjects have offered to Russians who sign contracts with the Russian MoD. Ukrainian Main Military Intelligence Directorate (GUR) Deputy Head Major General Vadym Skibitskyi stated on March 3 that there were 620,000 Russian soldiers operating against Ukraine and that there were about 580,000 Russian soldiers operating against Ukraine in November 2024. [17]

**Syrskyi also spoke about Ukraine's efforts to further develop its tactical and long-range drone capabilities.** Syrskyi stated that Ukraine has developed long-range strike drones with ranges



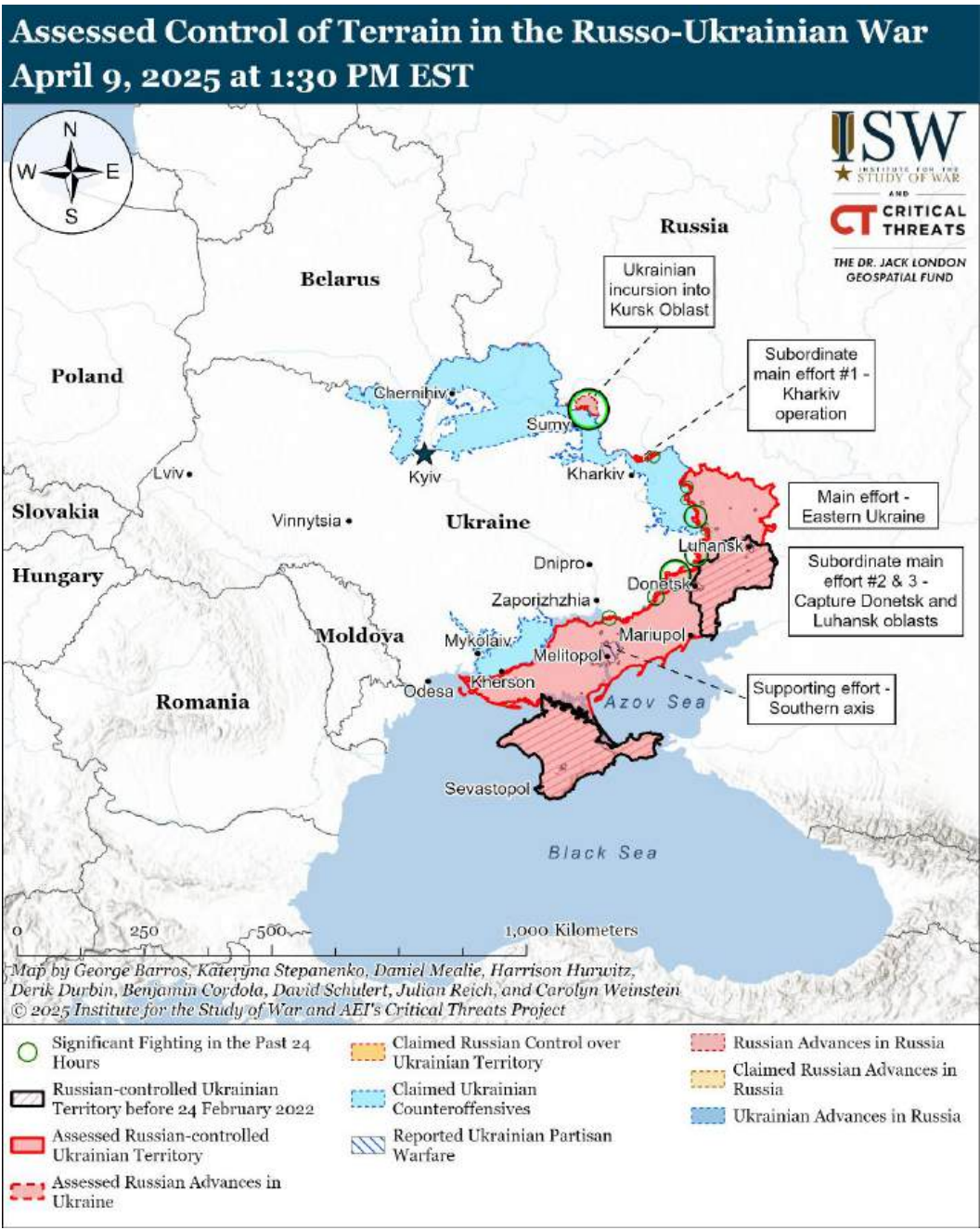
of over 1,700 kilometers and noted that a Ukrainian drone recently struck a Russian Tu-22M3 long range bomber worth \$100 million as it landed at a Russian airbase after a combat operation. Syrskyi reported that Ukrainian forces have also developed tactical fiber-optic strike drones with a range of up to 20 kilometers and that Ukraine plans to scale up production of these drones over the next one to three months (until about July 2025). Syrskyi noted that Ukraine continues to develop its Unmanned Systems Forces and that Ukrainian brigades are integrating drone units. Ukrainian frontline and long-range drones are crucial parts of Ukraine's defensive capabilities, and Ukrainian forces have leveraged these drones to defend against Russian offensive operations and inflict significant economic cost on Russia's war effort.[18] Syrskyi noted that long-range Ukrainian strikes against Russian ammunition arsenals forced Russian forces to roughly halve the number of artillery shells fired in Ukraine daily to around 20,000 and that Russian forces currently fire 27,000 to 28,000 artillery rounds per day. ISW has also observed Russian milblogger complaints that frontline Ukrainian drone operations have blunted recent Russian offensive operations south of Pokrovsk, and Ukrainian drone reconnaissance and strikes have inflicted heavy Russian vehicle losses throughout 2024.[19]

**The People's Republic of China (PRC) denied sending military personnel to fight in Ukraine following Ukrainian reports of Chinese nationals fighting alongside Russian forces.** PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) Spokesperson Lin Jian stated on April 9 that the PRC did not deploy military personnel to fight alongside Russian forces in Ukraine, emphasizing that the PRC consistently urges its citizens to avoid involvement in armed conflicts.[20] Lin noted that the PRC is currently verifying the situation with Ukrainian authorities. Lin's statement comes amid official Ukrainian reports on April 8 that Ukrainian forces captured several Chinese "fighters" who were fighting for Russia near Bilohorivka (east of Siversk) and Tarasivka (northeast of Pokrovsk) in recent attacks and that there are likely more PRC citizens in the Russian military.[21] A Ukrainian brigade confirmed on April 9 that its soldiers were responsible for capturing the PRC citizens fighting in Ukraine.[22]

#### **Key Takeaways:**

- **Russian forces continue to marginally advance in the Sumy-Kursk Oblast border area, but the Russian force grouping in the area will likely be unable to launch a major offensive operation against Sumy City in the near term without receiving significant reinforcements.**
- **The Russian military command is likely attempting to form a buffer zone along the international border in Sumy Oblast, although Russian commanders may intend to press further into Sumy Oblast and towards Sumy City in the future.**
- **Russia continues to utilize North Korean troops in Kursk Oblast, but ISW has not yet observed indications that North Korean troops are operating as combat forces in Ukraine.**
- **Syrskyi stated that there are currently 623,000 Russian military personnel fighting against Ukraine.**
- **Syrskyi also spoke about Ukraine's efforts to further develop its tactical and long-range drone capabilities.**

- The People's Republic of China (PRC) denied sending military personnel to fight in Ukraine following Ukrainian reports of Chinese nationals fighting alongside Russian forces.
- Ukrainian forces advanced near Toretsk and Pokrovsk.
- Russian forces advanced near Kupyansk, Lyman, Toretsk, Pokrovsk, and in western Zaporizhzhia Oblast.
- The Russian federal government and Russian federal subjects are increasingly focused on veteran rehabilitation and reintegration.



***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 Russian violations of the laws of armed conflict and the Geneva Conventions and crimes against humanity even though we do not describe them in these reports.***

- Ukrainian Operations in the Russian Federation
- Russian Main Effort — Eastern Ukraine (comprised of three subordinate main efforts)
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #1 — Push Ukrainian forces back from the international border with Belgorod Oblast and approach to within tube artillery range of Kharkiv City
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #2 — Capture the remainder of Luhansk Oblast and push westward into eastern Kharkiv Oblast and encircle northern Donetsk Oblast
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #3 — Capture the entirety of Donetsk Oblast
- Russian Supporting Effort — Southern Axis
- Russian Air, Missile, and Drone Campaign
- Russian Mobilization and Force Generation Efforts
- Russian Technological Adaptations
- Activities in Russian-occupied areas
- Significant Activity in Belarus

### **Alleged Ceasefire Violations**

*Ukraine and Russia have not yet concluded a maritime ceasefire agreement due to ongoing Russian demands for Western sanctions relief. Negotiations regarding the conditions of the ceasefire on strikes against energy infrastructure are ongoing, and the resolution of these negotiations remains unclear.*

The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) claimed without evidence on April 9 that Ukrainian forces struck six Russian energy infrastructure facilities in Rostov and Kursk oblasts, Krasnodar Krai, and occupied Zaporizhia Oblast.[23]

### **Ukrainian Operations in the Russian Federation**

*See topline text for reporting on Russian activity in the Kursk-Sumy Oblast border area.*

**Russian forces continued efforts to push Ukrainian forces from positions in northwestern Belgorod Oblast on April 9.**

Russian milbloggers claimed that fighting continues near Demidovka and Popovka (both northwest of Belgorod City along the international border) on April 9.[24]

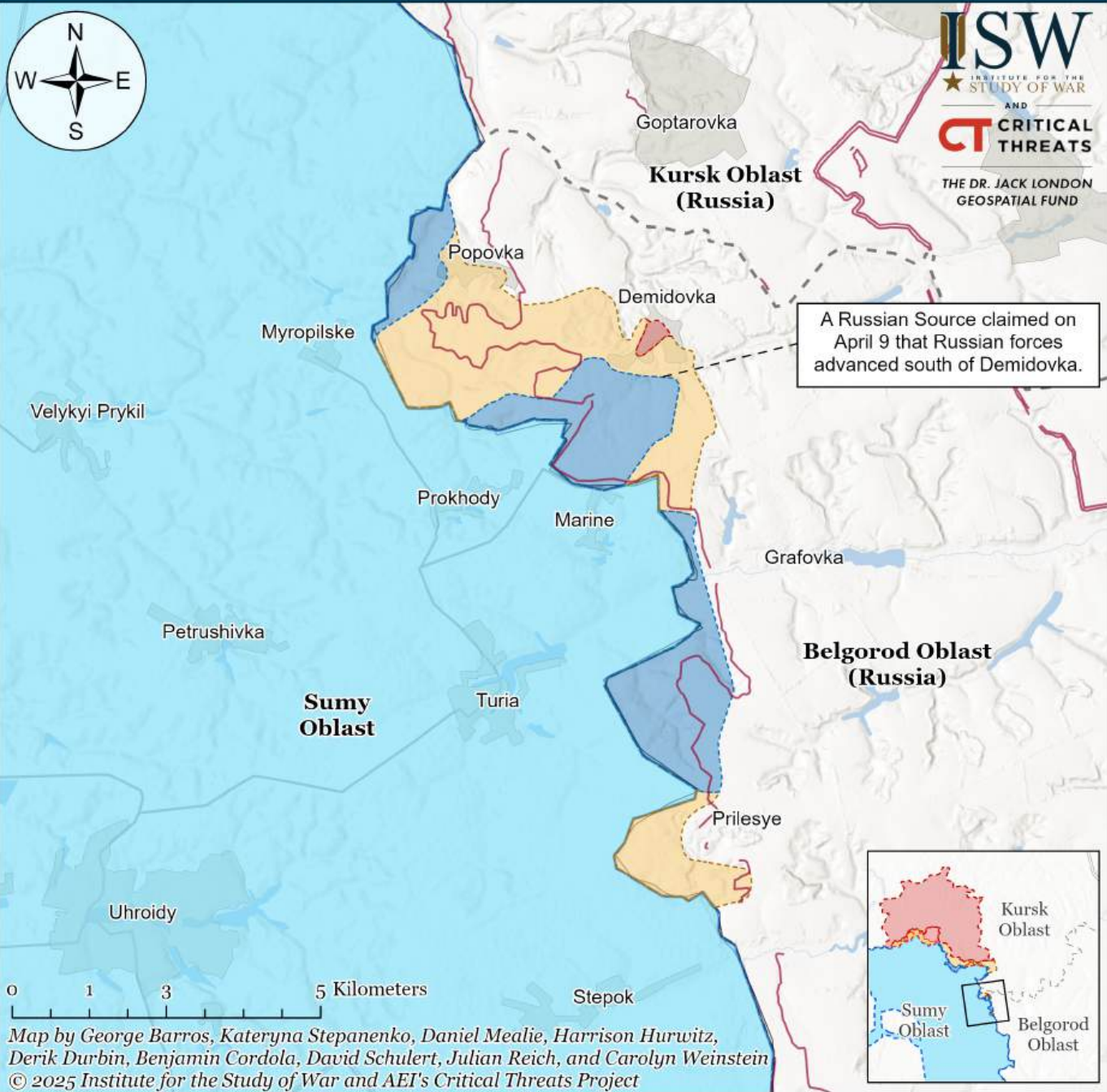
A Ukrainian regiment operating in the Belgorod direction noted on April 9 that Ukrainian forces broke through a series of fortifications several weeks ago that Russia constructed along the Belgorod-Sumy Oblast border in response to the Ukrainian incursion into Kursk Oblast.[25] The regiment estimated that the Russian government allocated over 10 billion rubles (\$116,000) to constructing the fortifications along the Belgorod-Sumy Oblast border. A Russian milblogger claimed that half of Demidovka is a contested "gray zone." [26]

Order of Battle: Ukrainian military observer Kostyantyn Mashovets stated that up to two battalions of Russian 155th Naval Infantry Brigade (Pacific Fleet) redeployed to the Kursk-Belgorod Oblast border area and are attacking near Goptaryovka-Romanovka (north of Demidovka) and Grafovka-Prilesye (south of Demidovka) to prevent Ukrainian forces from advancing near Demidovka and Prilesye.[27] Drone operators of the Russian "Anvar" Spetsnaz detachment (possibly referring to the BARS-25 "Anvar" volunteer detachment) and elements of the Russian 34th Motorized Rifle Brigade (49th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Southern Military District [SMD]) are reportedly operating near Popovka and Demidovka.[28]



# Assessed Control of Terrain in the Belgorod Direction

## April 9, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



- |                                    |  |                              |
|------------------------------------|--|------------------------------|
| Russian Advances in Russia         | Assessed Russian Advances in Ukraine             | Russian Field Fortifications |
| Claimed Russian Advances in Russia | Claimed Russian Control over Ukrainian Territory |                              |
| Ukrainian Advances in Russia       | Claimed Ukrainian Counteroffensives              |                              |

**The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) reported on April 9 that Russian forces downed 158 Ukrainian drones over Russia and occupied Ukraine on the night of April 8 to 9.[29]** Russian sources claimed that Ukrainian drone debris fell in Krasnodar Krai and crashed into an apartment building in Rostov Oblast and that Russian forces prevented a Ukrainian drone strike on a military airfield in Orenburg Oblast.[30] Ukrainian military-focused outlet *Militarnyi* reported that this was the first time that Ukrainian forces targeted the Orenburg-2 military airfield.[31]

### **Russian Main Effort — Eastern Ukraine**

**Russian Subordinate Main Effort #1 — Kharkiv Oblast (Russian objective: Push Ukrainian forces back from the international border with Belgorod Oblast and approach to within tube artillery range of Kharkiv City)**

**Russian forces continued ground attacks northeast of Kharkiv City near Vovchansk on April 8 and 9.[32]**

The deputy commander of a Ukrainian battalion operating in the Vovchansk direction reported on April 8 that Russian forces are operating in small groups of two-to-three personnel on the front line in Vovchansk.[33] The Ukrainian deputy commander added that Russian personnel leverage poor weather conditions to obscure their movements and use thermal raincoats to avoid detection at night.

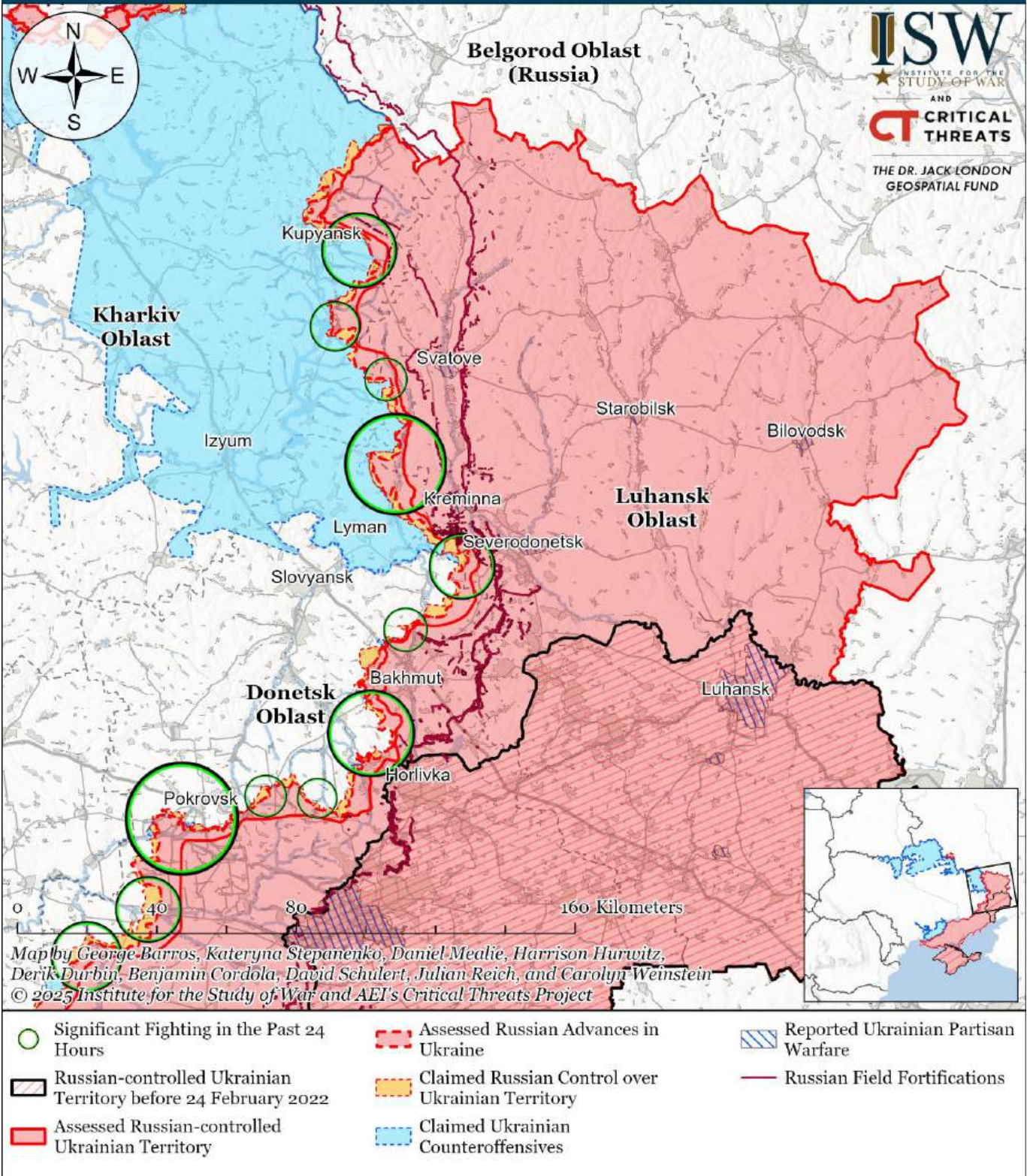
Order of Battle: Drone elements of the Russian 41st Motorized Rifle Regiment (72nd Motorized Rifle Division, 44th Army Corps [AC], Leningrad Military District [LMD]) and multiple launch rocket system (MLRS) crews of the 79th Rocket Artillery Brigade (Moscow Military District [MMD]) are reportedly operating in the Kharkiv direction.[34] Drone operators of the "Enot" drone detachment, reportedly of the 136th Motorized Rifle Brigade (58th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Southern Military District [SMD]), are reportedly operating in the Vovchansk direction.[35]

**Russian Subordinate Main Effort #2 — Luhansk Oblast (Russian objective: Capture the remainder of Luhansk Oblast and push westward into eastern Kharkiv Oblast and northern Donetsk Oblast)**



# Assessed Control of Terrain in Luhansk Oblast

## April 9, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



### **Russian forces recently advanced northeast of Kupyansk.**

Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on April 8 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced in eastern Kamyanka (northeast of Kupyansk near the international border).[36]

Russian forces continued assaults northwest of Kupyansk near Mala Shapktivka and Kindrashivka, north of Kupyansk near Zapadne, and east of Kupyansk near Petropavlivka and Stepova Novoselivka on April 8 and 9.[37] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces counterattacked near Fyholivka (north of Kupyansk).[38]

Ukraine's Khortytsia Group of Forces reported on April 9 that Russian forces are attempting to establish crossings over the Oskil River in the Kupyansk and Borova directions.[39]

### **Russian forces continued assaults in the Borova direction on April 9 but did not advance.**

Unconfirmed claims: Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced in an area 200 meters wide and 300 meters deep towards Nova Kruhlyakivka (northeast of Borova) and southwest of Makiivka (southeast of Borova) and that elements of the Russian 3rd Motorized Rifle Division (20th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Moscow Military District [MMD]) advanced near Nadiya (east of Borova).[40] A Ukrainian brigade operating in the Borova direction stated that the brigade recently repelled a Russian attack near Nadiya, however.[41]

Russian forces continued assaults northeast of Borova near Zahryzove, east of Borova near Serhiivka, and southeast of Borova near Hrekvika on April 8 and 9.[42]

### **Russian forces recently advanced in the Lyman direction.**

Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on April 9 indicates that Russian forces marginally advanced in a forest east of Zelena Dolyna (north of Lyman).[43]

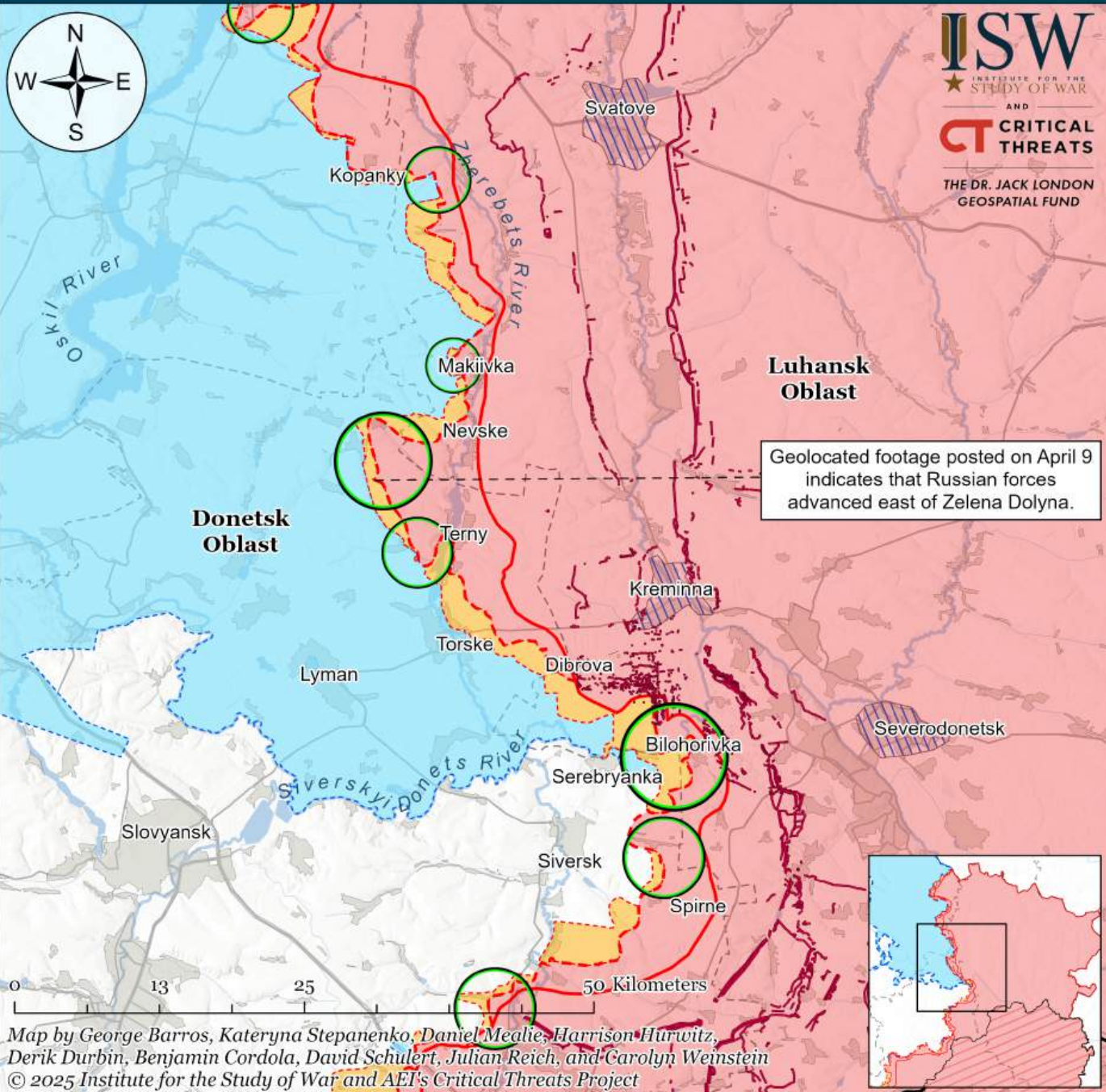
Unconfirmed claims: Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces operating northeast of Lyman advanced north of Novolyubivka, west of Katerynivka, southeast of Nove, and east of Zelena Dolnya.[44] A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced 2.5 kilometers near Yampolivka (northeast of Lyman).[45]

Russian forces continued assaults northeast of Lyman near Nove, Katerynivka, and Kolodyazi and toward Novomykhailivka and Zelena Dolnya on April 8 and 9.[46]

Ukraine's Khortytsia Group of Forces reported on April 9 that Ukrainian forces struck a Russian mechanized bridge over the Zherebets River in the Lyman direction.[47]



# Assessed Control of Terrain in the Svatove-Kreminna Direction April 9, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST

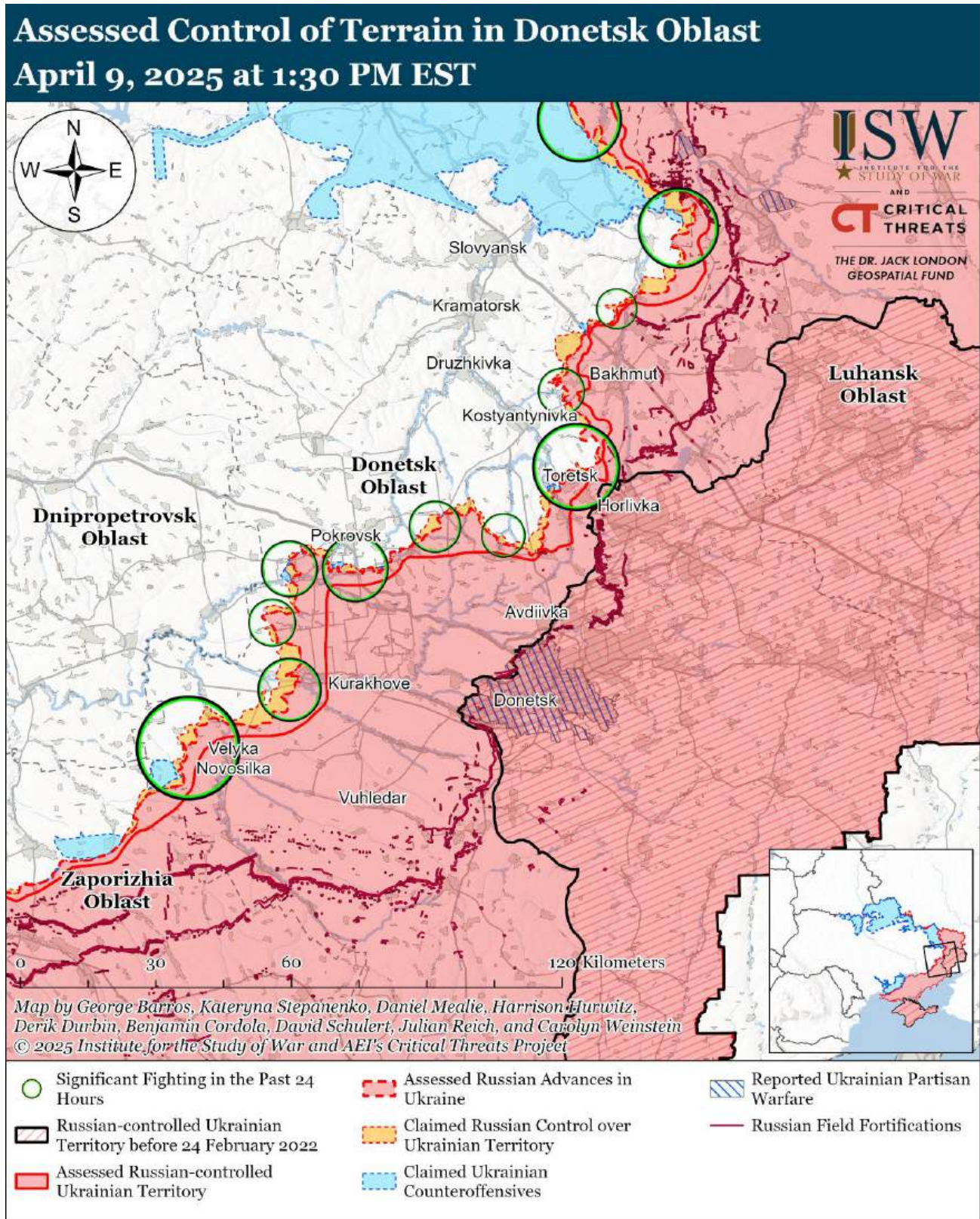


Map by George Barros, Kateryna Stepanenko, Daniel Mealie, Harrison Hurwitz, Derik Durbin, Benjamin Cordola, David Schulert, Julian Reich, and Carolyn Weinstein  
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- |  |  |                                     |
|--|--|-------------------------------------|
| Significant Fighting in the Past 24 Hours                      | Assessed Russian Advances in Ukraine             | Reported Ukrainian Partisan Warfare |
| Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory before 24 February 2022 | Claimed Russian Control over Ukrainian Territory | Russian Field Fortifications        |
| Assessed Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory                | Claimed Ukrainian Counteroffensives              |                                     |



**Russian Subordinate Main Effort #3 – Donetsk Oblast (Russian objective: Capture the entirety of Donetsk Oblast, the claimed territory of Russia’s proxies in Donbas)**



**Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Siversk direction on April 9 but did not make confirmed advances.**

Unconfirmed claims: Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced south of Bilohorivka (northeast of Siversk), east of Hryhorivka (northeast of Siversk), and 3.5 kilometers north of Verkhokamyanske (east of Siversk).[48]

Russian forces continued ground attacks northeast of Siversk near Serebryanka, Hryhorivka, and Bilohorivka; east of Siversk near Verkhokamyanske; and southwest of Siversk near Vasyukivka on April 8 and 9.[49]

**Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Chasiv Yar direction on April 9 but did not make confirmed advances.**

Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces marginally advanced in a forest southwest of Chasiv Yar.[50]

Russian forces continued ground attacks near Chasiv Yar itself, south of Chasiv Yar near Bila Hora and Predtechyne, and southeast of Chasiv Yar near Kurdyumivka and Ozaryanivka on April 8 and 9.[51] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces counterattacked from Mykolaivka (west of Chasiv Yar) toward Stupochky (south of Mykolaivka).[52]

Order of Battle: Artillery elements of the Russian 6th Motorized Rifle Division (3rd Army Corps [AC]) reportedly struck Ukrainian forces in Stupochky, and elements of the BARS-31 Detachment (Russian Army Combat Reserve) and 215th Reconnaissance Battalion (98th Airborne [VDV] Division) are reportedly operating in the Chasiv Yar direction.[53]

**Ukrainian and Russian forces recently advanced in the Toretsk direction.**

Assessed Ukrainian advances: Geolocated footage published on April 8 indicates that Ukrainian forces recently advanced northeast of Druzhba.[54]

Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on April 9 shows that Russian forces recently advanced in northwestern Toretsk and in Zabalka Microraiion in southern Toretsk.[55]

Unconfirmed claims: Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced northwest of Toretsk towards Ivanopillya, northeast of Leonidivka (southwest of Toretsk), and northeast of Shcherbynivka (west of Toretsk).[56]

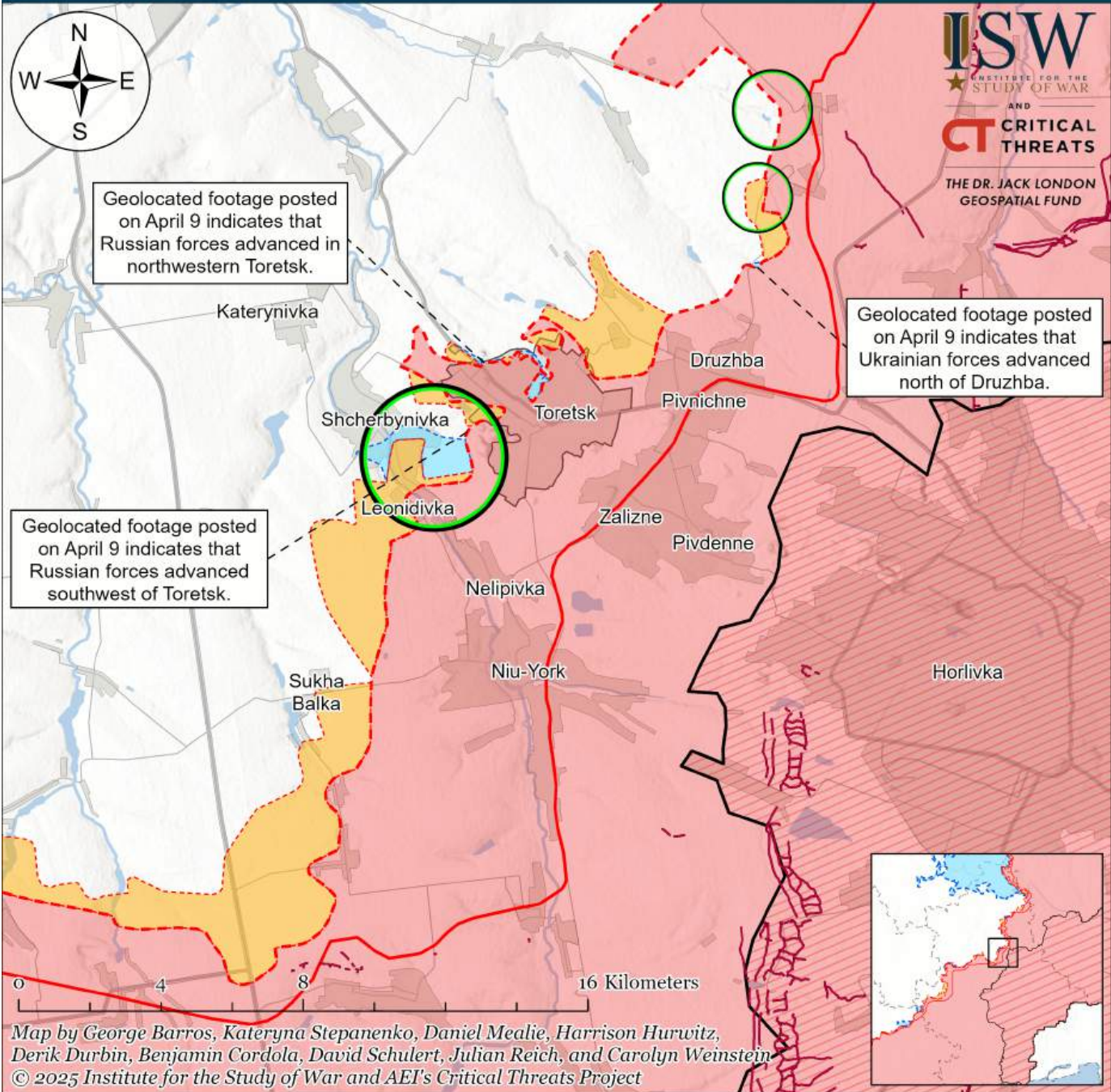
Russian forces continued ground attacks near Toretsk itself; north of Toretsk near Dyllivka; west of Toretsk near Petrivka and Shcherbynivka; and southwest of Toretsk near Leonidivka, Valentynivka, and Sukha Balka on April 8 and 9.[57]

Order of Battle: Drone operators of the Russian 72nd Motorized Rifle Brigade (3rd AC) are reportedly striking Ukrainian positions near Oleksandro-Shulytne (north of Toretsk).[58]



# Assessed Control of Terrain in the Toretsk Direction

## April 9, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



- Significant Fighting in the Past 24 Hours
- Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory before 24 February 2022
- Assessed Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory
- Assessed Russian Advances in Ukraine
- Claimed Russian Control over Ukrainian Territory
- Claimed Ukrainian Counteroffensives
- Reported Ukrainian Partisan Warfare
- Russian Field Fortifications

## **Ukrainian and Russian forces recently advanced in the Pokrovsk direction.**

Assessed Ukrainian advances: Geolocated footage published on April 9 indicates that Ukrainian forces recently advanced in northeastern Kotlyne (southwest of Pokrovsk).[59]

Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on April 8 and 9 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced in southern Tarasivka (northeast of Pokrovsk), and south of Bohdanivka (southwest of Pokrovsk).[60]

Unconfirmed claims: Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced into Kalynove (east of Pokrovsk) and west and east of the settlement, and that Russian forces almost completely cleared Uspenivka (southwest of Pokrovsk).[61] Some milbloggers claimed that that Russian forces control eastern Lysivka (southeast of Pokrovsk) while Ukrainian forces control the northern and western parts of Lysivka, and that central Lysivka remains a contested "gray zone." [62] Milbloggers also claimed that Russian forces advanced south of Kalynove and Sukhyi Yar (southeast of Pokrovsk), to eastern Kotlyarivka (southwest of Pokrovsk), and to western Troitske (southwest of Pokrovsk)[63]

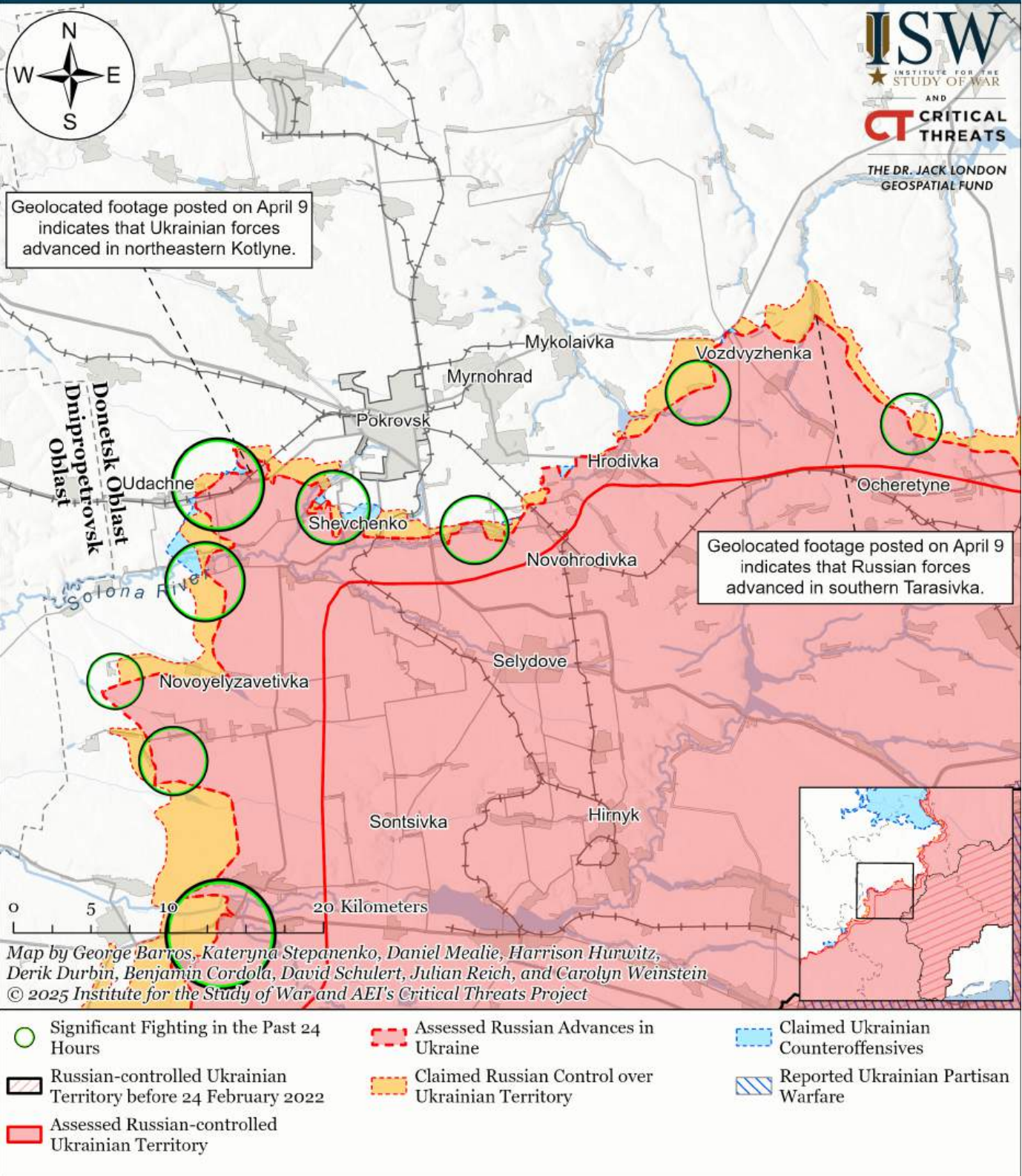
Russian forces attacked east of Pokrovsk near Yelyzavetivka, Kalynove, and Zelene Pole; southeast of Pokrovsk near Lysivka; south of Pokrovsk near Shevchenko; and southwest of Pokrovsk near Udachne, Kotlyarivka, Kotlyne, Uspenivka, Zvirove, Bohdanivka, and Kotlyne and toward Serhiivka and Novooleksandrivka on April 8 and 9.[64] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces counterattacked on the northeastern outskirts of Zelene (south of Pokrovsk) and north of Dachenske (southeast of Pokrovsk).[65]

A communications officer of a Ukrainian brigade operating in the Pokrovsk direction reported on April 9 that Russian forces leverage decreased visibility caused by poor weather conditions in the Pokrovsk direction to conduct additional attacks.[66] A Ukrainian reconnaissance officer operating in the Pokrovsk direction reported on April 9 that Russian forces have become more active in the Pokrovsk direction over the past 10 days (since about March 30) and are deploying more personnel and equipment for future assaults.[67]



# Assessed Control of Terrain in the Pokrovsk Direction

## April 9, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST

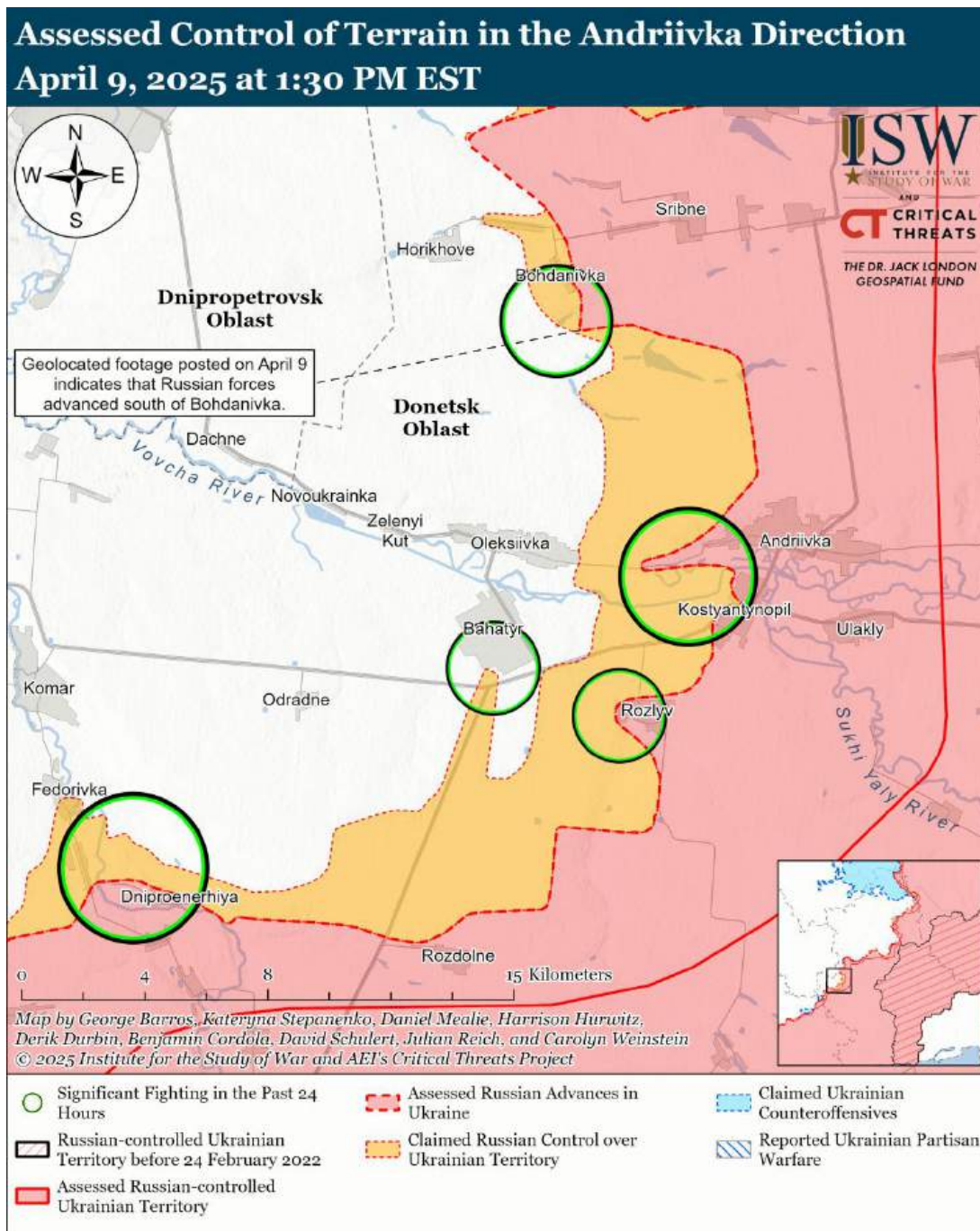




**Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Kurakhove direction on April 9 but did not make confirmed advances.**

Unconfirmed claims: Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced near Bahatyr (southwest of Kurakhove) and north of Rozlyv (southwest of Kurakhove).[68]

Russian forces conducted offensive operations west of Kurakhove near Andriivka, Kostyantynopil, and Oleksiivka and southwest of Kurakhove near Rozlyv, Bahatyr, and Burlatske on April 8 and 9.[69] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces counterattacked from Bahatyr toward Rozlyv.[70]



**Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Velyka Novosilka direction on April 9 but did not make confirmed advances.**

Unconfirmed claims: Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced northwest of Velyka Novosilka near Dniproenerhiya, Vilne Pole, and in southern Fedorivka .[71]

Russian forces conducted ground attacks north of Velyka Novosilka near Dniproenerhiya, west of Velyka Novosilka near Novosilka, and northwest of Velyka Novosilka near Vesele, Vilne Pole, Burlatske, and toward Shevchenko on April 8 and 9.[72] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces counterattacked northwest of Velyka Novosilka near Fedorivka.[73]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 691st Howitzer Battalion (reportedly of the 36th CAA, Eastern Military District [EMD]) are reportedly striking Ukrainian positions near Fedorivka.[74]

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

**Russian forces recently advanced in western Zaporizhia Oblast.**

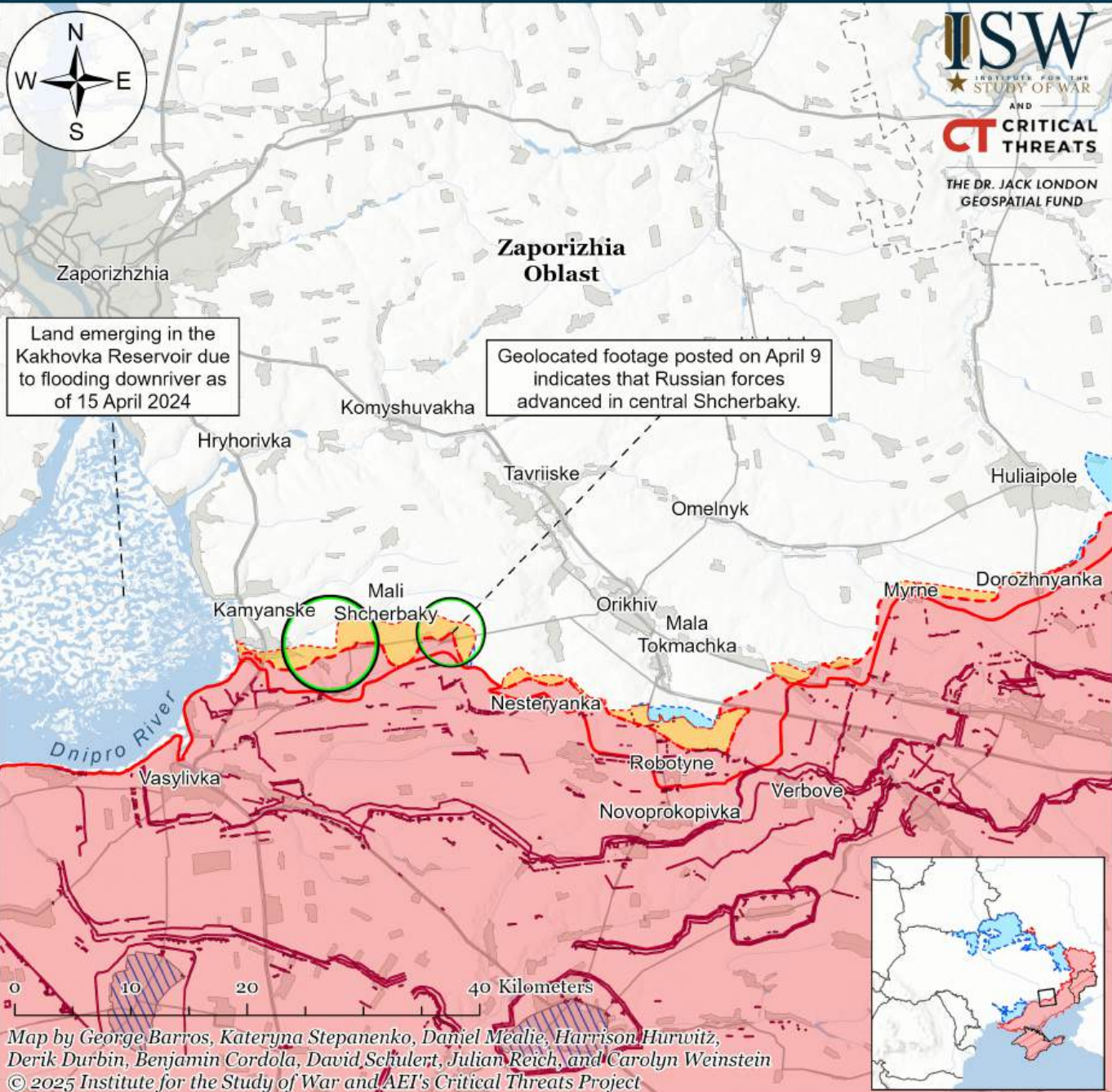
Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on April 9 indicates that Russian forces advanced in central Shcherbaky (northwest of Robotyne).[75]

Russian forces conducted ground attacks northwest of Robotyne near Stepove, Lobkove, and Shcherbaky on April 8 and 9.[76] Russian milbloggers claimed on April 9 that Ukrainian forces counterattacked near Stepove, Shcherbaky, and Lobkove.[77]

The commander of a Ukrainian drone squad operating near Lobkove told *CNN* on April 9 that Russian forces are accumulating manpower 10 to 15 kilometers behind the frontline and operating in small tactical groups of five to 10 soldiers.[78] The Ukrainian drone squad commander stated that Russian forces advance under the cover of bad weather conditions to avoid Ukrainian drones but cannot use heavy vehicles due to wet ground conditions.

# Assessed Control of Terrain in the Zaporizhia Direction

## April 9, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



- Significant Fighting in the Past 24 Hours
- Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory before 24 February 2022
- Assessed Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory
- Assessed Russian Advances in Ukraine
- Claimed Russian Control over Ukrainian Territory
- Claimed Ukrainian Counteroffensives
- Reported Ukrainian Partisan Warfare
- Russian Field Fortifications



**Neither Russian nor Ukrainian sources reported Russian ground activity in the Dnipro direction on April 9.**

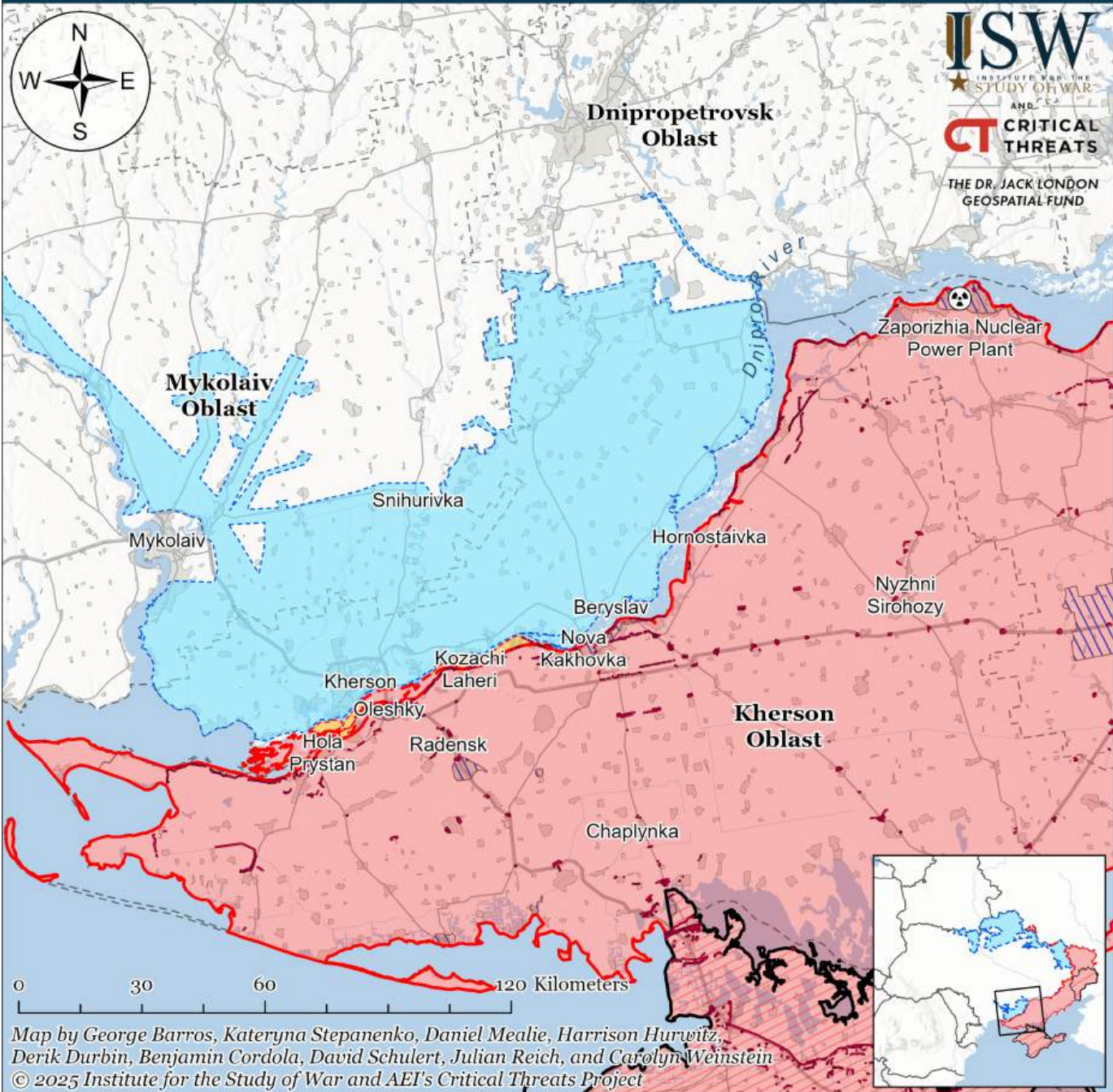
A Russian milblogger claimed on April 9 that Ukrainian forces are attempting to cross the Dnipro River near the Antonivka Road Bridge (east of Kherson City) in order to land on the east (left) bank of the Dnipro River.[79]

Ukrainian Southern Defense Forces Spokesperson Colonel Vladyslav Voloshyn stated on April 8 that Russian forces recently decreased the intensity of assaults in the Dnipro direction compared to previous weeks but that Russian forces are regrouping and rotating troops to possibly intensify assaults in the near future. [80] Voloshyn noted that Russian forces have not reduced the number of kamikaze drone, artillery, multiple launch rocket system (MLRS), and air strikes in the Dnipro direction.

The Ukrainian General Staff reported on April 9 that Ukrainian forces destroyed a command post of the Russian 81st Artillery Regiment (70th Motorized Rifle Division, 18th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Southern Military District [SMD]) in occupied Kherson Oblast on April 7 and killed up to 30 Russian soldiers in the strike.[81] Geolocated footage published on April 1 and 9 shows a Ukrainian strike in occupied Nechayeve (south of Oleshnya).[82]

# Assessed Control of Terrain in the Kherson Direction

## April 9, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



Map by George Barros, Kateryna Stepanenko, Daniel Mealie, Harrison Hurwitz, Derik Durbin, Benjamin Cordola, David Schulert, Julian Reich, and Cofolyn Weinstein  
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- |  |  |  |  |  |                                     |
|--|--|--|--|--|-------------------------------------|
|  | Significant Fighting in the Past 24 Hours                      |  | Assessed Russian Advances in Ukraine             |  | Reported Ukrainian Partisan Warfare |
|  | Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory before 24 February 2022 |  | Claimed Russian Control over Ukrainian Territory |  | Russian Field Fortifications        |
|  | Assessed Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory                |  | Claimed Ukrainian Counteroffensives              |  |                                     |



### **Russian Air, Missile, and Drone Campaign (Russian Objective: Target Ukrainian military and civilian infrastructure in the rear and on the frontline)**

Russian forces conducted a series of drone strikes against Ukraine on the night of April 8 to 9. The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Russian forces launched 55 Shahed and decoy drones from the directions of Kursk City; Millerovo, Rostov Oblast; Primorsko-Aktarsk, Krasnodar Krai; and occupied Cape Chauda, Crimea.[83] The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Ukrainian forces shot down 32 drones over northern and eastern Ukraine and that eight decoy drones were "lost," likely due to Ukrainian electronic warfare (EW) interference.

Official Ukrainian sources reported on April 8 and 9 that Russian forces damaged civilian enterprises, residential buildings, a service station, medical clinic, and a gas pipeline in drone strikes targeting Kharkiv, Sumy, Dnipropetrovsk, and Donetsk oblasts.[84] Kharkiv City Mayor Ihor Terekhov stated that Russian forces conducted 20 Shahed strikes on Kharkiv City within one hour on the night of April 8 to 9 and that this is part of Russia's new strike tactics aimed at intimidating Ukrainian civilians.[85]

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

The Russian federal government and Russian federal subjects (regions) are increasingly focused on veteran rehabilitation and reintegration through the introduction of new social support services for veterans and their families, improved medical and rehabilitation services, and career services for veterans with disabilities. Moscow Oblast Governor Andrei Vorobyov claimed on April 1 that the Moscow Oblast government has 32 active support services in place to assist veterans of the war in Ukraine, including allocating 500,000 rubles (about \$5,800) per veteran for the purchase of property and providing medical and psychological support, financial assistance for energy costs, and educational and other assistance for the children of veterans.[86] Vorobyov stated that the "Defenders of the Fatherland" state fund is administering the support. Russian milbloggers claimed on April 8 that the national "Defenders of the Fatherland" fund has processed support requests from 505,000 veterans since 2023, while the Moscow regional branch has processed 18,000 veteran requests since 2023.[87] Vorobyov also claimed that the Moscow Oblast government provides parents and spouses of veterans with social services, including financial support for living expenses and the cost of medicine. Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin advocated on April 9 for Russia to improve the quality of veterans' rehabilitation through the acceleration and implementation of uniform standards of medical and social assistance to veterans.[88] Mishustin claimed that the Russian government is committed to providing veterans with access to technical rehabilitation equipment through "simple, convenient, and understandable" processes. Mishustin also stated that the January 2025 national project "Personnel" is providing free retraining for veterans and hiring subsidies programs for companies to promote the hiring of people with disabilities.[89] ISW has reported at length on Russian efforts to provide social benefits and services to veterans of the war in Ukraine in order to incentivize recruitment and to appease the veteran community and avoid social strife.[90]

### **Russian Technological Adaptations (Russian objective: Introduce technological innovations to optimize systems for use in Ukraine)**

The Russian military signaled its intent to continue to focus on the development of ground systems in 2025. Russian Defense Minister Andrei Belousov stated on April 8 that Russian forces will focus on developing more unmanned air, maritime, and ground systems and integrating them into a "single network."<sup>[91]</sup> Belousov stated that Russian defense industries and volunteer organizations delivered several hundred unmanned ground systems to Russian forces in 2024 and that Russian forces will receive significantly more systems in 2025.

The Russian defense industrial base (DIB) continues efforts to innovate protections against Ukrainian drones. Russian state-owned defense conglomerate Rostec's "High Precision Systems" holding company announced on April 9 that it delivered new BMP-3 infantry fighting vehicles to Russian forces for the first time since October 2024.<sup>[92]</sup> Rostec designed the new BMP-3s to better survive the contemporary battlefield and equipped them with armor reinforcement kits, anti-drone grills, lattice screens, and tarps that reduce thermal and radar detection. Russian defense technology company HiderX has designed cloaks that reduce thermal and radar detection, allowing Russian forces to use the cloaks to shield themselves from drones.<sup>[93]</sup> Kremlin newswire *TASS* claimed on March 29 that the Russian Design Bureau has developed a high-speed first-person view (FPV) interceptor "VVZ drone" capable of downing Ukrainian strike and "Baba Yaga" drones.<sup>[94]</sup> A Russian milblogger claimed on April 8 that the interceptor drone can be launched with a hand-held launcher or a stationary launch platform.<sup>[95]</sup>

**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)**

*ISW is suspending occupation coverage in its daily Russian Offensive Campaign Assessments. ISW is introducing a new product line tracking activities in Russian-occupied areas of Ukraine. The occupation updates will examine Russian efforts to consolidate administrative control of annexed areas and forcibly integrate Ukrainian citizens into Russian sociocultural, economic, military, and governance systems. Click here to read the April 8 Russian Occupation Update.*

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

Nothing significant to report.

**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.**

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