

Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment

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March 14, 2024, 8:15pm ET

Click [here](#) to see ISW’s interactive map of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. This map is updated daily alongside the static maps present in this report.

Click [here](#) to see ISW’s 3D control of terrain topographic map of Ukraine. Use of a computer (not a mobile device) is strongly recommended for using this data-heavy tool.

Click [here](#) to access ISW’s archive of interactive time-lapse maps of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. These maps complement the static control-of-terrain map that ISW produces daily by showing a dynamic frontline. ISW will update this time-lapse map archive monthly.

Note: The data cut-off for this product was 2:00pm ET on March 14. ISW will cover subsequent reports in the March 15 Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment.

Russian Security Council Deputy Chairperson Dmitry Medvedev posted a detailed call for the total elimination of the Ukrainian state and its absorption into the Russian Federation under what he euphemistically called a “peace formula.”[1] **Medvedev’s demands are not novel but rather represent the Kremlin’s actual intentions for Ukraine — intentions that leave no room for negotiations for purposes other than setting the precise terms of Ukraine’s complete capitulation.** Medvedev begins the “peace plan” by rhetorically stripping Ukraine of its sovereignty, referring to it as a “former” country and placing the name Ukraine in quotation marks. Medvedev laid out the seven points of his “peace formula,” which he sardonically described as “calm,” “realistic,” “humane,” and “soft.”[2] The seven points include: Ukraine’s recognition of its military defeat, complete and unconditional Ukrainian surrender, and full “demilitarization”; recognition by the entire international community of Ukraine’s “Nazi character” and the “denazification” of Ukraine’s government; a United Nations (UN) statement stripping Ukraine of its status as a sovereign state under international law, and a declaration that any successor states to Ukraine will be forbidden to join any military alliances without Russian consent; the resignation of all Ukrainian authorities and immediate provisional parliamentary elections; Ukrainian reparations to be paid to Russia; official recognition by the interim parliament to be elected following the resignation of Ukraine’s current government that all Ukrainian territory is part of Russia and the adoption of a “reunification” act bringing Ukrainian territory into the Russian Federation; and finally the dissolution of this provisional parliament and UN acceptance of Ukraine’s “reunification” with Russia.[3]

The tone of Medvedev’s post is deliberately sardonic, and the calls he is making appear extreme, but every one of the seven points in Medvedev’s “peace formula” are real and central pieces of the Kremlin’s ideology and stated war aims and justifications — Medvedev just simplified and synthesized them into a single brutal Telegram post. The first two of the seven points call for the complete military defeat, disarmament, “demilitarization,” and “denazification” of Ukraine. Russian President Vladimir Putin identified the full “demilitarization” (stripping Ukraine of all its military and self-defense capabilities) and “denazification” (complete regime change) as Russia’s main goals in Ukraine when initially announcing the invasion on February 24, 2022. Putin and other Kremlin officials have frequently re-emphasized these goals in the subsequent two years of the war.[4] Medvedev’s calls for the resignation of all Ukrainian authorities and the creation of a new provisional government are calls for regime change simply made with more specificity about the methods. The demand that any successor state to Ukraine be forbidden to join military alliances without Russian permission is a call for Ukraine’s permanent neutrality, a demand that Putin and other Kremlin officials reiterate regularly.[5]

Putin established the principles that align the Kremlin’s objectives in Ukraine with Medvedev’s seven points in Putin’s 2021 essay “On the Historical Unity of Russians and Ukrainians.” Putin claimed in that article that Ukrainians and Russians are historically one united people who were violently and unjustly separated by external nefarious forces.[6] Putin used this essay to undermine Ukraine’s sovereignty and claims over its own political, social, historical, linguistic, and cultural development — all suggestions that underpin Medvedev’s calls to dissolve Ukraine as a legal entity and fully absorb it into the Russian Federation. Putin and other Russian officials have long set informational conditions to define Ukraine as an integral and inseparable part of Russian territory and set Russia’s goal in Ukraine as “reuniting” Ukrainian territories with their supposed historic motherland.[7] **Medvedev’s “peace formula” makes explicit and brutal what Putin and the Kremlin have long demanded in somewhat more euphemistic phrases: that peace for Russia means the end of Ukraine as a sovereign and independent state of any sort with any borders. Those advocating for pressing Ukraine to enter negotiations with Russia would do well to reckon with this constantly reiterated Russian position.**

Ukrainian Commander-in-Chief Colonel General Oleksandr Syrskyi stated on March 14 that unspecified Ukrainian units that have been deployed to the frontline for a long time have started rotations.[8] Syrskyi stated that these unit rotations, during which deployed units will be replaced at the front with fresher units, will help stabilize the operational situation but did not specify where along the frontline Ukrainian forces were conducting the rotations in order to preserve Ukrainian operational security.[9] Ukrainian forces would likely be unable to conduct significant rotations in areas where the Ukrainian command assesses the situation is difficult or at risk of a Russian breakthrough. The reported beginning of Ukrainian rotations suggests that the Ukrainian command believes that the situation on whatever unspecified sector(s) of the frontline where the rotations will occur has stabilized sufficiently for Ukrainian troops to rotate.

Russian forces may be currently committing tactical and operational reserves to fighting in eastern Ukraine in an effort to maintain and potentially intensify the tempo of ongoing Russian offensive operations. Ukrainian military observer Kostyantyn Mashovets stated on March 14 that the Russian military command is committing tactical and operational reserves to Russian offensive efforts in the Lyman direction, near Bakhmut, and west and southwest of Donetsk Oblast to prevent Ukrainian forces from further stabilizing the frontline in these areas.[10] Mashovets stated that many of these reserves were meant to exploit an envisioned Russian breakthrough of Ukrainian defenses, not necessarily to support current Russian offensive operations against stabilizing Ukrainian defensive positions.[11] Mashovets stated that Russian forces recently committed additional elements of the 3rd Army Corps (AC) to fighting southwest of Bakhmut; an unspecified reserve regiment of the 20th Motorized Rifle Division (8th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Southern Military District [SMD]) and the 10th Tank Regiment (1st Donetsk People's Republic [DNR] AC) to fighting southwest of Donetsk City; and elements of the 272nd Motorized Rifle Regiment (47th Tank Division, 1st Guards Tank Army [GTA]) to the Lyman direction.[12] Mashovets added that Russian forces still possess appropriate reserves to further intensify offensive operations but that these reserves would likely be inadequate to permit the Russian military to collapse Ukrainian defenses.[13] Russian forces have previously struggled to achieve more than gradual marginal tactical gains in Ukraine since mid-2022, and the introduction of tactical or even limited operational reserves in itself does not change Russian prospects for operationally significant gains because Russian forces have not yet demonstrated the capability to conduct sound mechanized maneuvers to take large swaths of territory rapidly.[14]

The Russian ability to make significant gains is still dependent on the level of Western support for Ukraine, however, and continued delays in Western security assistance will increase the risk of operationally significant Russian gains in the long run. Ukrainian materiel shortages resulting from delays in Western security assistance may be making the current Ukrainian frontline more fragile than the relatively slow Russian advances in various sectors would indicate.[15] Well-provisioned Ukrainian forces have proven that they can prevent Russian forces from making even marginal gains during large-scale Russian offensive efforts, and there is no reason to doubt that Ukrainian forces with sufficient Western security assistance would be able to stabilize the current frontline.[16] Difficult weather and terrain conditions in spring 2024 will likely constrain effective mechanized maneuver on both sides of the line and further limit Russian capabilities to make significant tactical advances while the ground is still muddy.[17] Russian forces are likely committing tactical and operational reserves to sustain the tempo of their offensive operations to press current advantages against ill-provisioned Ukrainian forces before ground conditions slow the overall operational tempo in Ukraine. Russian forces may also seek to maintain the tempo of their offensive operations through spring 2024 regardless of difficult weather and terrain conditions in an effort to exploit Ukrainian materiel shortages before promised Western security assistance arrives in Ukraine. Russian forces are reportedly preparing for a new offensive effort in late May or summer 2024, and Western security assistance to Ukraine will likely play a significant role in determining the prospects of that effort.[18]

Reported Russian transfers of tactical reserves to new areas of the frontline demonstrate Russia's likely ability to dynamically balance and reweight its offensive efforts. Mashovets' reporting about the transfer of elements of the DNR's 10th Tank Regiment to southwest of Donetsk City and elements of the 1st Guards Tank Army's (GTA) 272nd Motorized Rifle Regiment to the Lyman direction are notable as these elements were likely reserves in other directions where Russian forces are conducting offensive operations.[19] Elements of the 10th Tank Regiment participated in the seizure of Avdiivka in mid-February and appear to have rested and likely partially reconstituted in the past month, and the commitment of these elements southwest of Donetsk City instead of west of Avdiivka suggests that the Russian command does not want to intensify the tempo of offensive operations near Avdiivka at the expense of a decreased operational tempo southwest of Donetsk City. Russian forces apparently reconstituting in the Avdiivka area can likely allow Russian forces to intensify efforts to push further west of Avdiivka at a moment of the Russian military's choosing, and the Russian military command may have decided that this potential reserve is sufficient without the elements of the 10th Tank Regiment.[20] Elements of the 1st GTA have been responsible for Russian offensive operations northwest of Svatove since the start of the Russian winter-spring 2024 offensive effort on the Kharkiv-Luhansk axis in January 2024, and the 272nd Motorized Rifle Regiment was likely meant as a reserve to support those offensive operations.[21] The transfer of the elements of the 272nd Motorized Rifle Regiment to the Lyman direction may suggest that Russian forces are currently prioritizing advances in the Lyman direction over advances elsewhere along the Kupyansk-Svatove-Kreminna line. These tactical transfers are relatively minor but are examples of the way in which the Russian military command can choose to

increase or decrease commitment to operations anywhere along the line at will due to the operational flexibility offered by Russia's possession of the theater-wide initiative.[22]

British outlet *The Times* reported on March 14 that the British government believes that Russia deliberately jammed the satellite signal on a plane carrying British Defense Secretary Grant Shapps back to the UK from Poland.[23] *The Times* reported that British officials believed that Russia jammed the satellite signal of a Royal Air Force (RAF) Dassault 900LX Falcon jet transporting Shapps, his staff, and select journalists back to the UK after Shapps observed NATO Steadfast Defender exercises in Poland. The signal jamming reportedly impacted GPS signals for about 30 minutes as the jet flew near Kaliningrad, also preventing passengers from accessing the internet on their mobile phones. Data from the GPSJAM GPS interference tracking site show that much of northern and central Poland and the Baltic Sea region experienced high levels of GPS jamming on March 13.[24] ISW previously reported that widespread GPS disruptions across the Baltic region and much of Poland in late December 2023 and early January 2024 may have been linked to Russian electronic warfare (EW) activity in Kaliningrad.[25] It is unclear if Russian forces deliberately targeted Shapps' plane, but considering the recent rates of GPS interference in this region that have been likely linked to Russian EW activity, Russia could well have targeted the RAF jet for informational and political effects. Russia may have been reacting to Shapps' recent announcement extending the deployment of British Sky Saber air defense systems in Poland through the end of the year, which pro-Kremlin milbloggers amplified likely as part of the information operation to portray the West as threatening Russia.[26]

Continued limited raids from Ukrainian territory into Russian border regions will likely force the Kremlin to choose between paying a reputational or resource cost in responding to the incursions. Russian sources, including the Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD), continued to claim that likely elements of the all-Russian pro-Ukrainian Russian Volunteer Corps (RDK) and Freedom of Russia Legion (LSR) continued attacks on Russian border settlements, primarily Tetkino, Kursk Oblast and Kozinka and Spordaryushino, Belgorod Oblast on March 14, but that Russian border guards repelled the attacks.[27] The milbloggers claimed that these likely RDK and LSR forces conducted a low-altitude helicopter landing near Kozinka in the evening and that Russian forces continued defending against the incursion.[28] A prominent Russian milblogger criticized the Russian military command because Russian border regions cannot "breathe free" in the third year of the war and claimed that "someone" committed a "strategic miscalculation" by deciding to withdraw Russian forces all the way back to the Russian border when withdrawing from northern Ukraine in the first months of the war, making the border the frontline.[29] The milblogger called for the Russian military to implement "corrective measures" that would somehow push the frontline at least 40 kilometers from the Russian border and into Ukraine. Another milblogger criticized Russian forces for not establishing barricades in certain border settlements to prevent attacks from Ukrainian territory.[30] These criticisms highlight the Kremlin's current dilemma in light of such cross-border incursions. The Kremlin must balance between the reputational cost of accepting that pro-Ukrainian forces will sometimes be able to conduct minimally effective cross-border raids into Russia while conserving its military resources for use in Ukraine and the resource cost of allocating additional forces and means to border security to reassure the Russian populace at the expense of its military operations against Ukraine. Russia previously allocated Rosgvardia and some Chechen "Akhmat" Spetsnaz elements to border security following May 2023 cross-border incursions without meaningfully impacting its military operations in Ukraine and could feasibly choose to make the same choice now.[31]

The Kremlin must choose a balance between acceptable reputational and resource costs, but the Kremlin may not suffer as high a reputational cost in 2024 as it did in 2023 due to ongoing censorship efforts. The Russian military command's failure to protect Russian border regions from Ukrainian and pro-Ukrainian attacks has become a point of neuralgia for the Russian information space, and this neuralgia reached a boiling point resulting from RDK and LSR raids into Belgorod Oblast in late May and early June 2023.[32] Russian ultranationalists heavily criticized the Russian Ministry of Defense's (MoD) failure to protect Russians within Russia, including criticizing Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu and Chief of the General Staff Army General Valery Gerasimov by name.[33] This throughline is notably similar to that of Wagner Group financier Yevgeny Prigozhin and his supporters when Prigozhin launched his armed rebellion and march on Moscow soon after these raids on June 24, 2023, intending to unseat Shoigu and Gerasimov for continued military failures that traded Russian lives and military competency for personal gain.[34] The Kremlin has since cracked down on the Russian information space's complaints against the MoD, actively censoring certain fringe and extreme milbloggers through arrests or other measures, encouraging self-censorship and compliance among the remaining milbloggers, and disbanding the Wagner Group following the rebellion.[35] The Russian milblogger response to the March 2024 border raid thus far is relatively neutral compared to its response to previous border raids, indicating that the Kremlin's efforts to directly and indirectly censor the ultranationalist community has tempered milbloggers' willingness to respond publicly to military failures. The milbloggers who criticized the Russian response on March 12–14 did not place blame directly on the MoD, Shoigu, Gerasimov, or other prominent military figures by name, title, or epithet, instead writing in the passive voice or blaming a vague "someone." [36] The majority of the Russian milblogger responses criticized Ukraine and the RDK and LSR rather than the Russian military command and praised the Russian forces defending against the attacks.[37]

Key Takeaways:

- Russian Security Council Deputy Chairperson Dmitry Medvedev posted a detailed call for the total elimination of the Ukrainian state and its absorption into the Russian Federation under what he euphemistically called a “peace formula.” Medvedev’s demands are not novel but rather represent the Kremlin’s actual intentions for Ukraine—intentions that leave no room for negotiations for purposes other than setting the precise terms of Ukraine’s complete capitulation.
- Ukrainian Commander-in-Chief Colonel General Oleksandr Syrskyi stated on March 14 that unspecified Ukrainian units that have been deployed to frontline for a long time have started rotations.
- Russian forces may be currently committing tactical and operational reserves to fighting in eastern Ukraine in an effort to maintain and potentially intensify the tempo of ongoing Russian offensive operations.
- The Russian ability to make significant gains is still dependent on the level of Western support for Ukraine, however, and continued delays in Western security assistance will increase the risk of operationally significant Russian gains in the long run.
- Reported Russian transfers of tactical reserves to new areas of the frontline demonstrate Russia’s likely ability to dynamically balance and reweight their offensive efforts.
- British outlet *The Times* reported on March 14 that the British government believes that Russia deliberately jammed the satellite signal on a plane carrying British Defense Secretary Grant Shapps back to the UK from Poland.
- Continued limited raids from Ukrainian territory into Russian border regions will likely force the Kremlin to choose between paying a reputational or resource cost in responding to the incursions.
- The Kremlin must choose a balance between acceptable reputational and resource costs, but the Kremlin may not suffer as high a reputational cost in 2024 as it did in 2023 due to ongoing censorship efforts.
- Russian forces advanced west of Avdiivka and in western Zaporizhia Oblast amid continued positional engagements across the theater on March 14.
- Russian regional governments have reportedly increased economic incentives for Russian volunteers to sign contracts for military service.

Assessed Control of Terrain in Ukraine and Main Russian Maneuver Axes as of March 14, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



Map by George Barros, Kateryna Stepanenko, Noel Mikkelsen, Daniel Mealie, Thomas Bergeron, Mitchell Belcher, Shaylei Dauphinais, Tom Thacker, and Kaitlyn Thomas.

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* Assessed Russian advances are areas where ISW assesses Russian forces have operated in or launched attacks against but do not control.

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.

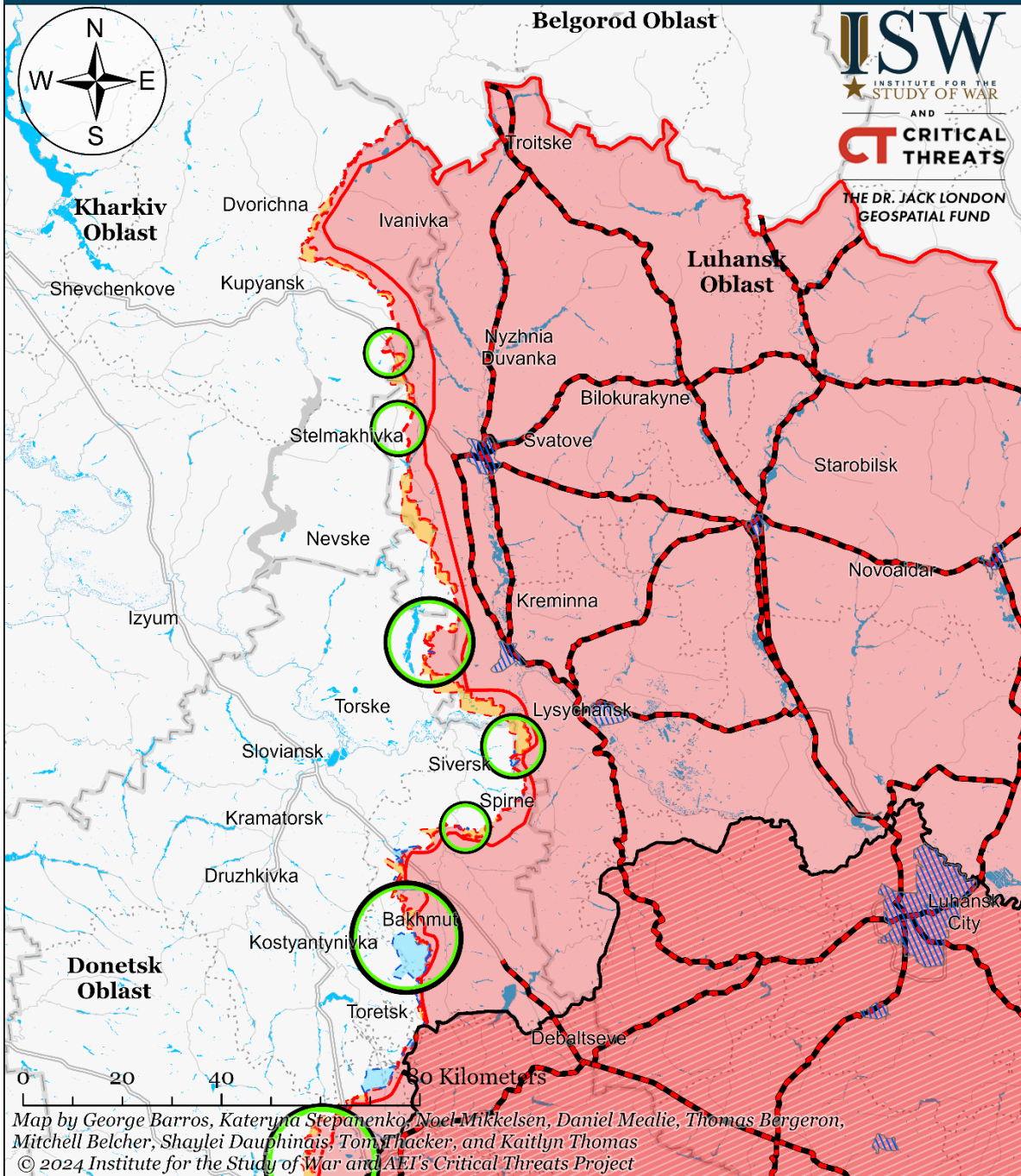
- Russian Main Effort – Eastern Ukraine (comprised of two subordinate main efforts)
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #1 – Capture the remainder of Luhansk Oblast and push westward into eastern Kharkiv Oblast and encircle northern Donetsk Oblast
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #2 – Capture the entirety 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
- Ukrainian Defense Industrial Base Efforts
- Russian Information Operations and Narratives
- Significant Activity in Belarus

Russian Main Effort – Eastern Ukraine

Russian Subordinate Main Effort #1 – Luhansk Oblast (Russian objective: Capture the remainder of Luhansk Oblast and push westward into eastern Kharkiv Oblast and northern Donetsk Oblast)

Positional engagements continued along the Kupyansk-Svatove-Kreminna line on March 14, but there were no confirmed changes to the frontline in this area. Ukrainian and Russian sources reported fighting northeast of Kupyansk near Synkivka; northwest of Svatove near Stelmakhivka and Tabaivka; west of Svatove near Pershotravneve; west of Kreminna near Terny and Yampolivka; and south of Kreminna near Bilohorivka.[38] Russian sources claimed that “pro-Russian partisans” conducted arson attacks against Ukrainian positions near Petropavlivka, Podoly, and Kurylivka (all northeast of Kupyansk), and near Kivsharivka and Novoosynove (southeast of Kupyansk) and forced Ukrainian troops to withdraw from some limited positions.[39] ISW has not seen any visual evidence of such purported arson attacks, nor of any Ukrainian withdrawals from these areas. Ukrainian military observer Kostyantyn Mashovets stated that Russian forces resumed offensive efforts on the left (north) bank of the Siversky Donets River, in the Serebryanske forest area, and towards Hryhorivka (all southwest of Kreminna).[40] Mashovets also noted that elements of the 272nd Motorized Rifle Regiment (47th Tank Division, 1st Guards Tank Army, Western Military District) are operating in this area, meaning that the Russian military command laterally redeployed them away from the Kupyansk direction.[41]

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Luhansk Oblast as of March 14, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



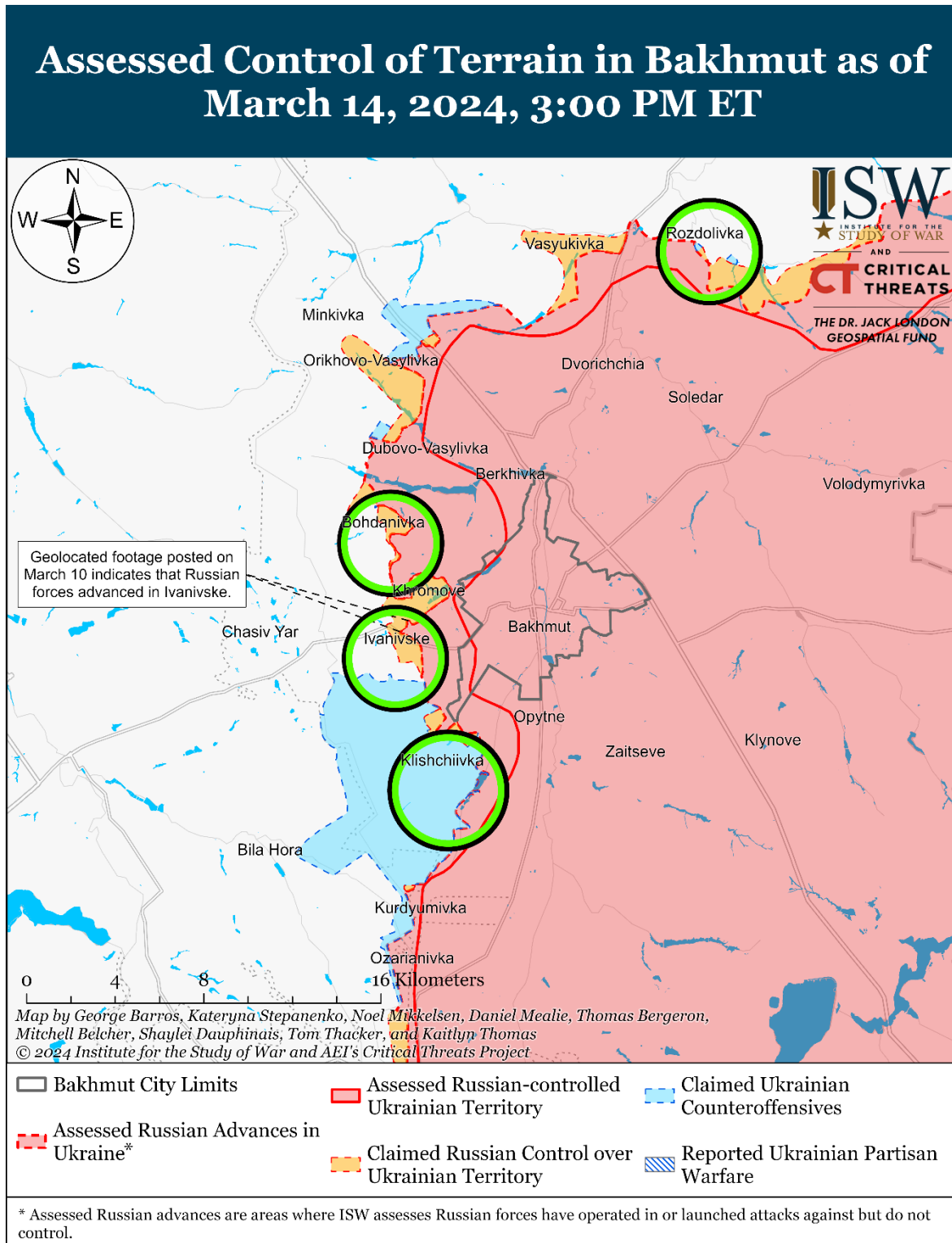
Map by George Barros, Kateryna Stepanenko, Noel Mikkelsen, Daniel Mealie, Thomas Bergeron, Mitchell Belcher, Shaylei Dauphinais, Tom Thacker, and Kaitlyn Thomas
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|---|--|-------------------------------------|
| Significant Fighting in the past 24 Hours | Assessed Russian Advances in Ukraine* | Claimed Ukrainian Counteroffensives |
| Russian Ground Lines of Communication | Assessed Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory | Reported Ukrainian Partisan Warfare |
| Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory before February 24 | Claimed Russian Control over Ukrainian Territory | |

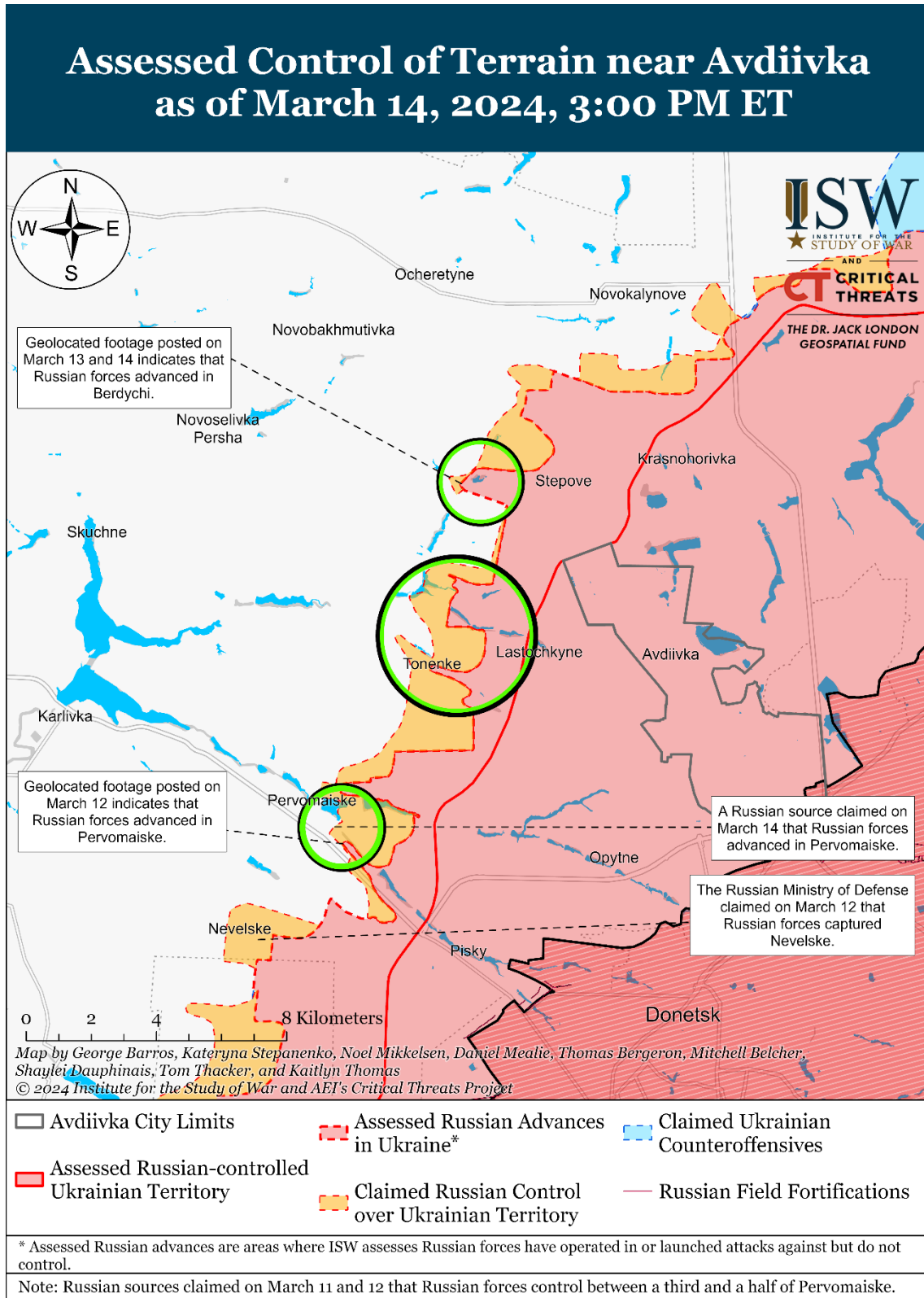
* Assessed Russian advances are areas where ISW assesses Russian forces have operated in or launched attacks against but do not control.

Russian Subordinate Main Effort #2 – Donetsk Oblast (Russian objective: Capture the entirety of Donetsk Oblast, the claimed territory of Russia’s proxies in Donbas)

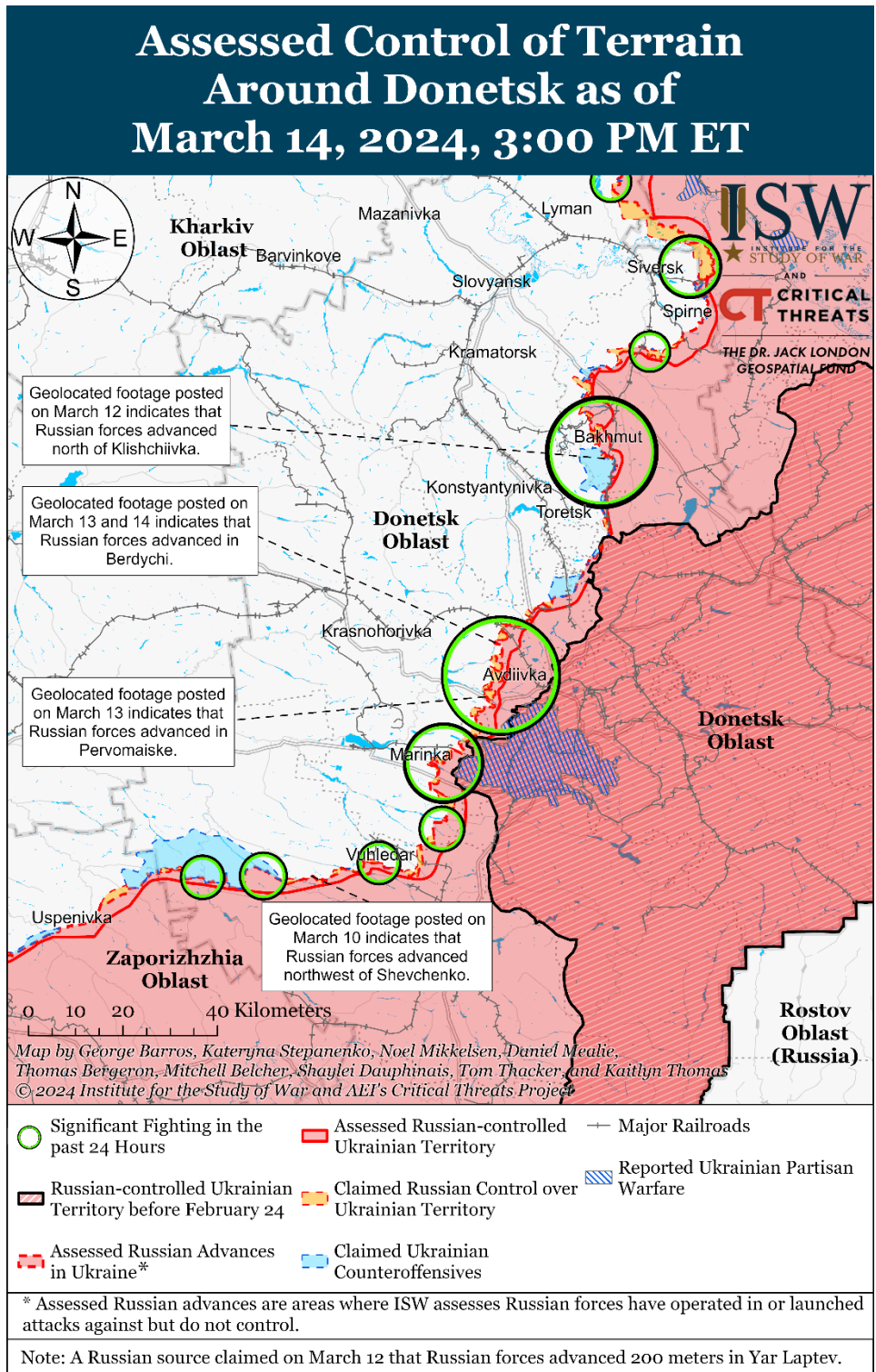
Positional fighting continued near Bakhmut on March 14, but there were no confirmed changes to the frontline. Positional fighting continued northwest of Bakhmut near Bohdanivka; west of Bakhmut near Ivanivske and east of Chasiv Yar; southwest of Bakhmut near Klishchiivka; and south of Bakhmut near Niu York.[42] Positional fighting also continued northeast of Bakhmut near Verkhokamyanske.[43] Elements of the Russian 6th Motorized Rifle Division (3rd Army Corps), including its 1008th, 1194th, and 1442nd motorized rifle regiments and its 72nd Motorized Rifle Brigade, are reportedly operating near Klishchiivka and Andriivka (both southwest of Bakhmut).[44] Elements of the Russian 200th Naval Infantry Brigade (14th Army Corps, Northern Fleet) are reportedly operating near Bohdanivka.[45]



Russian forces recently advanced further into Berdychi (northwest of Avdiivka) amid continued positional fighting west of Avdiivka on March 14. Geolocated footage published on March 13 and 14 shows that Russian forces advanced along Myr and Kazberov streets in central Berdychi.[46] A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces also advanced further into Pervomaiske (southwest of Avdiivka), though ISW has not observed visual confirmation of this claim.[47] Russian and Ukrainian sources reported that fighting continued northwest of Avdiivka near Berdychi and Novobakhmutivka; west of Avdiivka near Orlivka, Tonenke, and Semenivka; and southwest of Avdiivka near Pervomaiske, Vodyane, and Nevelske.[48] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces maintain positions in Nevelske despite the Russian Ministry of Defense's (MoD) claim of capturing the whole settlement on March 12.[49]

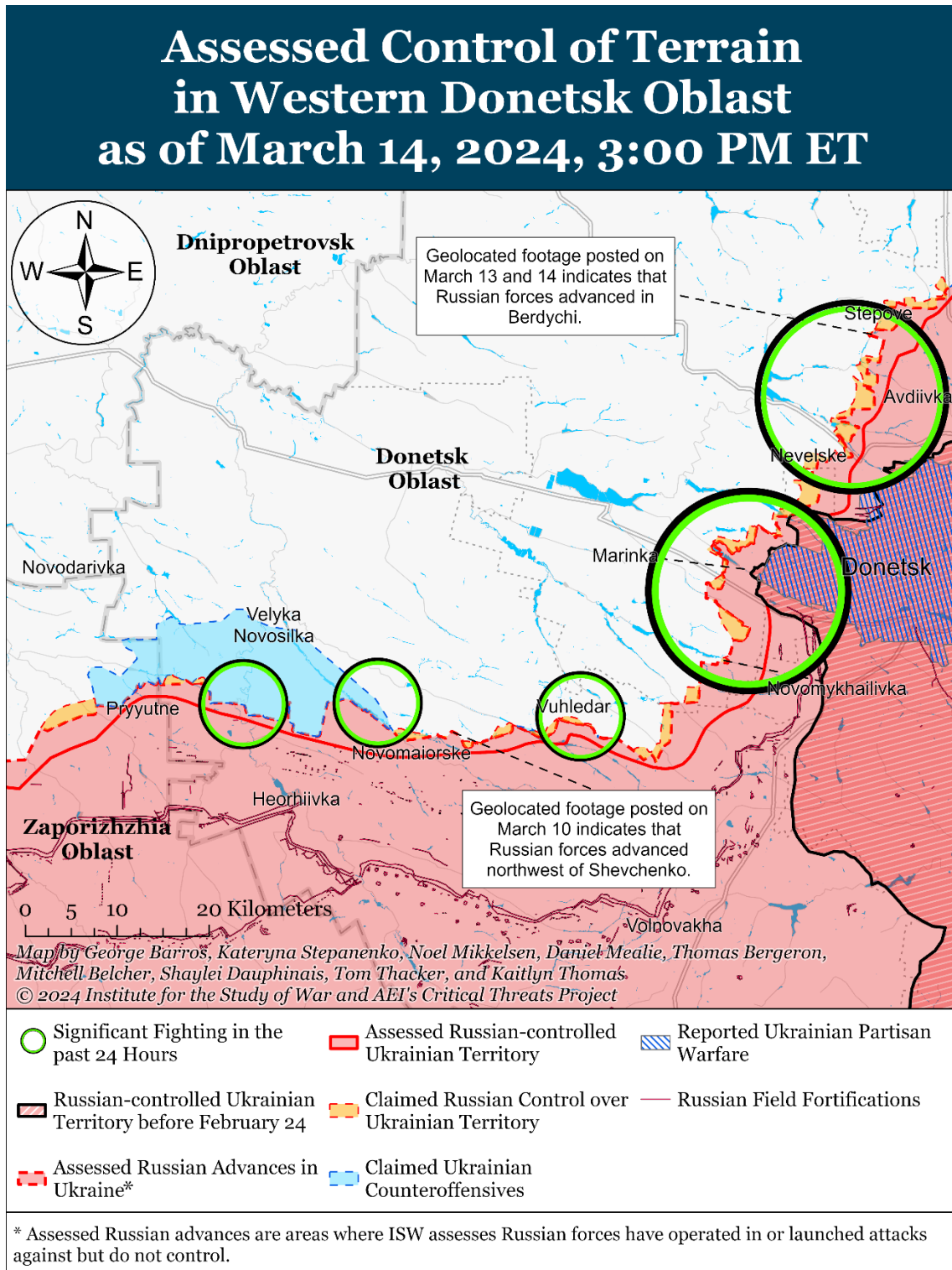


Positional fighting continued west and southwest of Donetsk City on March 14, but there were no confirmed changes to the frontline. A Russian milblogger claimed on March 13 that Russian forces marginally advanced north of Heorhiivka (west of Donetsk City), but ISW has observed no visual confirmation of this claim.[51] Positional fighting continued west of Donetsk City near Krasnohorivka and Heorhiivka and southwest of Donetsk City near Novomykhailivka, Pobieda, and Volodymyrivka (southeast of Vuhledar on the TO509 Vuhledar-Volnovakha-Mariupol highway).[52] A Ukrainian officer operating in the area stated that Russian forces have concentrated roughly 50,000 personnel in the Novopavlivka direction (west of Donetsk City through the Donetsk-Zaporizhzhia Oblast border area) and transferred tactical reserves to the area after capturing Avdiivka, though the precise geographical span that the Ukrainian officer referred to is unclear.[53] Elements of the Russian 238th Artillery Brigade (8th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Southern Military District [SMD]) continue to operate near Krasnohorivka, and elements of the 11th Air Force and Air Defense Army (Russian Aerospace Forces [VKS] and Eastern Military District [EMD] operate near Vuhledar.[54]



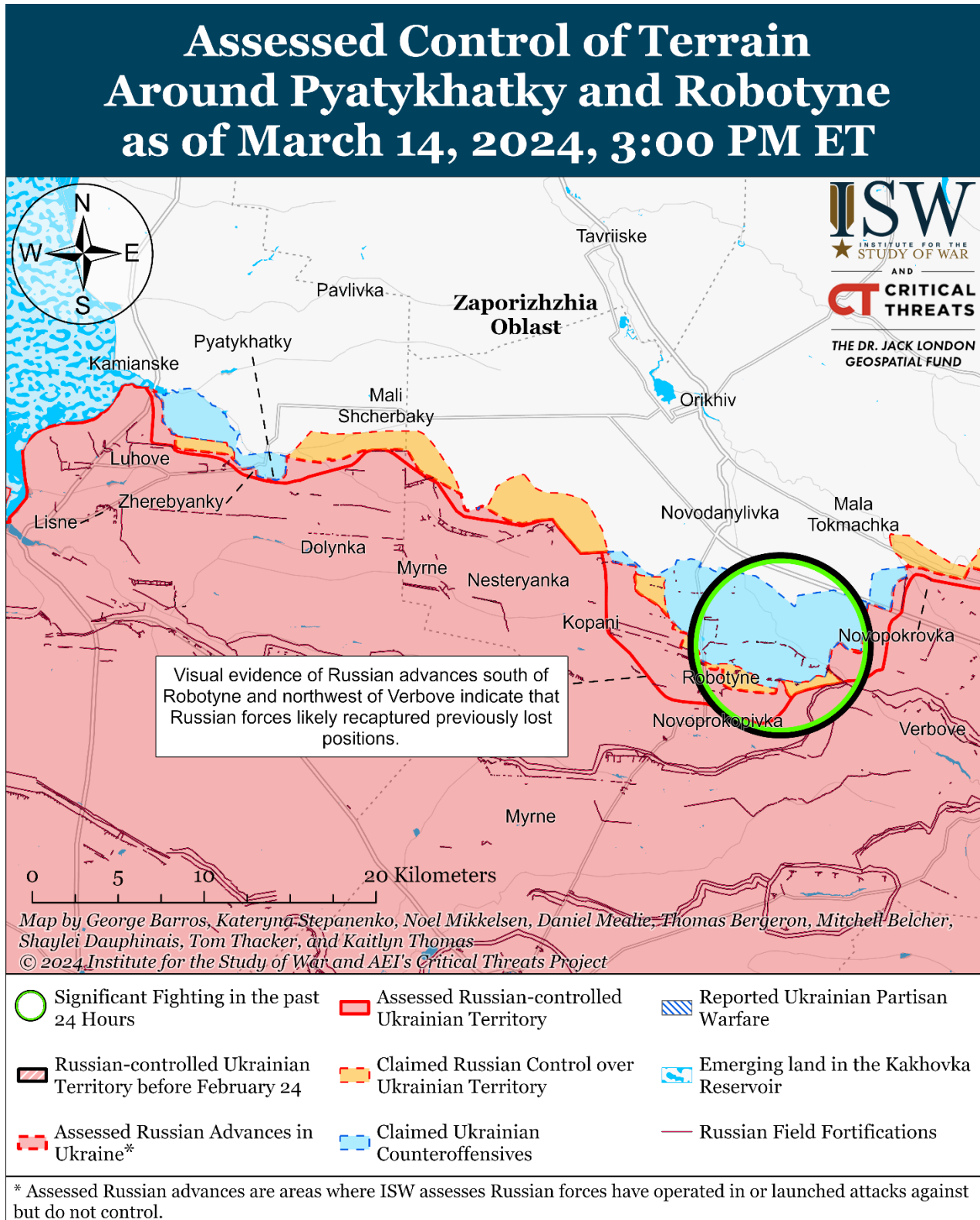
Positional fighting continued in the Donetsk-Zaporizhia Oblast border area on March 14. Russian and Ukrainian sources reported positional fighting south of Velyka Novosilka near Staromayorske; southeast of Velyka Novosilka near Novodonetske and south of Zolota Nyva; and southeast of Hulyaipole north of Novoselivka.[55] Elements of the Russian 305th Artillery Brigade (5th CAA, EMD) continue to operate near Velyka Novosilka.[56]

Ukrainian Tavriisk Group of Forces Spokesperson Captain Dmytro Lykhovyi stated that Russian forces intensified offensive operations in Donetsk and Zaporizhia oblasts (parts of which comprise the Tavriisk direction from Avdiivka to western Zaporizhia Oblast) on the morning of March 14.[50] Lykhovyi stated that Russian and Ukrainian forces participated in 13 simultaneous combat engagements as of 0800 local time on March 14, including 12 that were still ongoing in Donetsk Oblast and one in Zaporizhia Oblast.

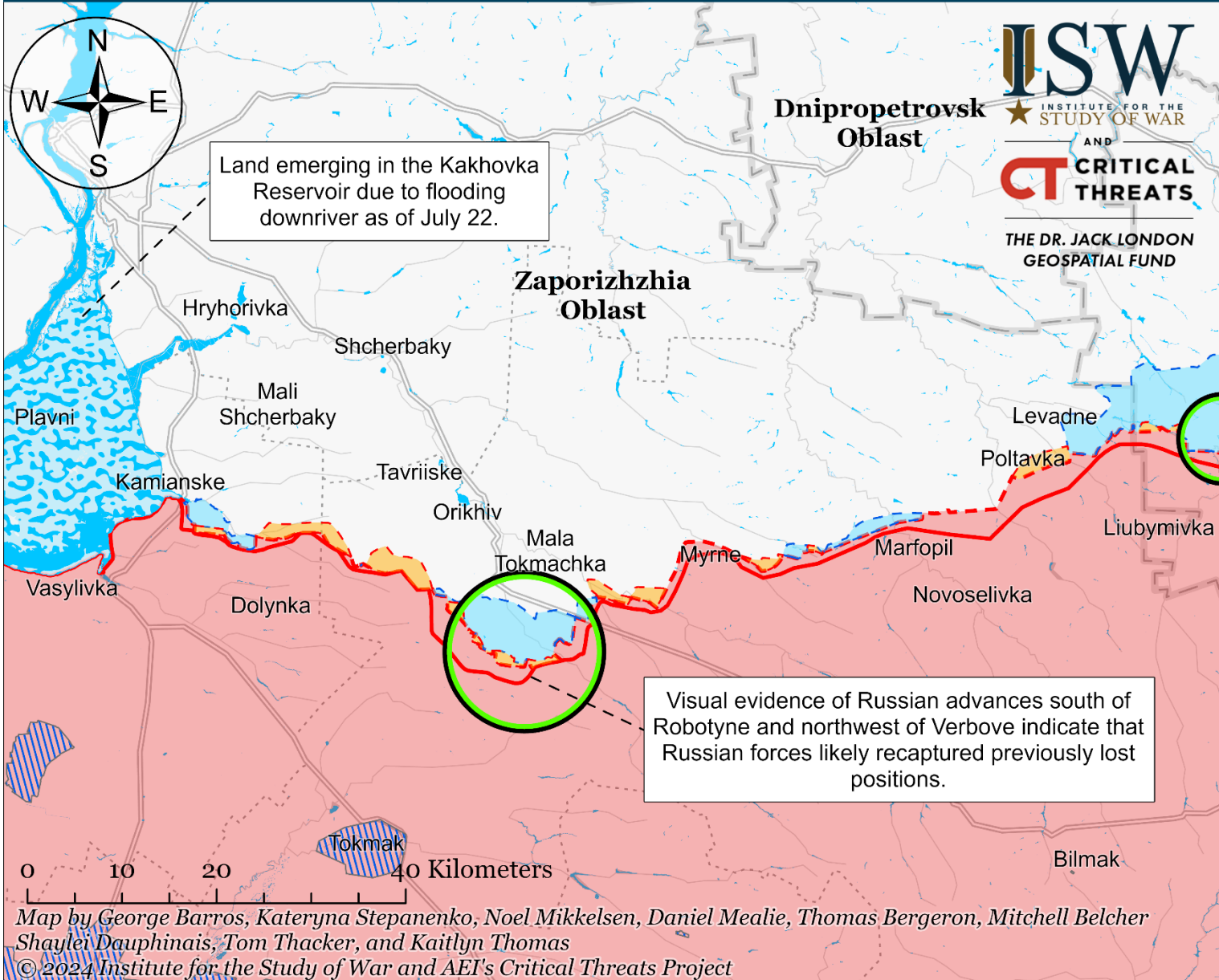


Russian Supporting Effort – Southern Axis (Russian objective: Maintain frontline positions and secure rear areas against Ukrainian strikes)

Geolocated footage posted on March 14 shows that Russian forces recently advanced west of Verbove (east of Robotyne) in western Zaporizhzhia Oblast.[57] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces attempted to counterattack northwest of Verbove but were unsuccessful.[58] Positional engagements continued near Robotyne and Verbove.[59] Elements of the 429th Motorized Rifle Regiment (19th Motorized Rifle Division, 58th Combined Arms Army, Southern Military District) are continuing to operate in the Zaporizhzhia direction.[60]



Assessed Control of Terrain Around Zaporizhia as of March 14, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



-  Significant Fighting in the past 24 Hours
-  Assessed Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory
-  Reported Ukrainian Partisan Warfare
-  Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory before February 24
-  Claimed Russian Control over Ukrainian Territory
-  Emerging land in the Kakhovka Reservoir
-  Assessed Russian Advances in Ukraine*
-  Claimed Ukrainian Counteroffensives

* Assessed Russian advances are areas where ISW assesses Russian forces have operated in or launched attacks against but do not control.

Russian sources accused Ukrainian forces of targeting the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP) with drones on March 14.[61] Kremlin newswire *TASS* posted pictures that allegedly show a crater in the ground by the ZNPP following the purported attack.[62] Russian-appointed ZNPP head Yuri Chernichuk stated that the alleged attack did not cause any physical harm to the ZNPP or its employees.[63] Russian sources frequently accuse Ukrainian forces or acting irresponsibly around the ZNPP in an attempt to paint the Russian occupation of the plant as legitimate and safe and undermine Ukraine's legitimate concerns and legal claims to the ZNPP.[64]

Ukrainian military officials confirmed that Russian forces conducted a limited and unsuccessful raid across the Dnipro River on March 13.[65] Ukraine's Southern Operational Command stated that Ukrainian forces repelled a Russian reconnaissance group that attempted to land on the west (right) bank of Kherson Oblast near the Antonivsky Bridge, forcing the group to retreat to their original east (left) bank positions.[66] Ukrainian Southern Operational Command Spokesperson Colonel Nataliya Humenyuk stated that Russian forces conduct frequent raids along the Dnipro River using small boats but suffer heavy losses when trying to maneuver between islands on the river.[67] Limited positional engagements continued in east bank Kherson Oblast.[68] A Russian milblogger complained that heavy Ukrainian cluster munition and drone use are inhibiting Russian forces' ability to take new positions in Krynky.[69]



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

The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces launched 36 Shahed-136/131 drones at Ukraine overnight on March 13 to 14, 22 of which Ukrainian air defenses destroyed.[70] Russian sources claimed that the Shahed strike targeted radio towers and communications equipment in Sumy and Kharkiv oblasts and a metallurgical plant in Dnipropetrovsk Oblast.[71]

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

Russian regional governments have reportedly increased economic incentives for Russian volunteers to sign contracts for military service. Russian opposition outlet *Vazhnye Istorii* reported on March 14 that Russian regional governments have increased one-time payments for signing a contract by a factor one and a half, or 225,000 rubles (\$2,460), on average.[72] *Vazhnye Istorii* noted that Astrakhan and Nizhny Novgorod oblasts offer 500,000 rubles (\$5,465) for signing a contract whereas Moscow Oblast offers 800,000 rubles (\$8,744), suggesting that there is wide variance of economic incentives by Russian federal subject.[73]

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

Nothing significant to report.

Ukrainian Defense Industrial Efforts (Ukrainian objective: Develop its defense industrial base to become more self-sufficient in cooperation with US, European, and international partners)

Note: ISW will be publishing its coverage of Ukrainian defense industrial efforts on a weekly basis in the Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment. ISW will continue to track developments in Ukrainian defense industrial efforts daily and will refer to these efforts in assessments within the daily Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment and other ISW products when necessary.

ISW is not publishing coverage of Ukrainian defense industrial efforts today.

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)

Note: ISW will be publishing coverage of activities in Russian-occupied areas twice a week in the Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment. ISW will continue to track activities in Russian-occupied areas daily and will refer to these activities in assessments within the daily Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment and other ISW products when necessary.

ISW is not publishing coverage of activities in Russian-occupied areas today.

Russian Information Operations and Narratives

Russian officials continue to seize on foreign volunteers fighting with Ukrainian forces to falsely cast the war in Ukraine as an international confrontation with the West and neighboring countries. The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) released an infographic on March 14 claiming to detail the number of foreign “mercenaries” who have served with Ukrainian forces and the number who have died in Ukraine since the start of the of the full-scale invasion.[74] The MoD claimed that Polish, Georgian, American, British, Romanian, German, and French citizens represent the majority of foreign volunteers fighting with Ukrainian forces.[75] The Russian military has increasingly coerced migrants living in Russia and other foreigners from abroad to fight with Russian forces in Ukraine.[76]

Russian President Vladimir Putin and Kremlin officials continue efforts to portray Russia’s March 17 presidential election as free and fair to legitimize Putin’s assured next term as president.[77] Russian Central Election Committee (CEC) Chairperson Ella Pamfilova claimed that unspecified actors are attempting to prevent Russians living abroad from voting, and this claim is likely a part of an information operation alleging that the West is trying to discredit Russia’s presidential election.[78]

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

Belarusian Security Council Deputy Secretary Major General Alexander Neverovsky reiterated on March 14 that Belarus does not intend to fight in Russia’s war in Ukraine. Neverovsky stated to Belarusian border guards that Belarus does not “need” the war in Ukraine despite attempts to “drag” Belarus into the war.[79] ISW continues to assess that Belarus is highly unlikely to enter the war in Ukraine and will likely continue to support Russia’s war effort through military production, training, and sanctions evasion schemes.[80]

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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