

Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment, March 18, 2023

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March 18, 7:15 pm 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 access ISW's archive of interactive time-lapse maps of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. These maps complement the static control-of-terrain maps that ISW produces daily by showing a dynamic frontline. ISW will update this time-lapse map archive monthly.

Russian forces targeted Ukraine with 16 Shahed-136 drones overnight on March 17-18. Ukrainian Air Force Spokesperson Yuriy Ihnat stated that Ukrainian forces shot down 11 of the 16 drones and noted that it is difficult for Ukrainian mobile fire groups to shoot down drones at night due to the lack of visibility.¹ The drones targeted facilities in Kyiv, Zaporizhia, Dnipropetrovsk, and Lviv oblasts, reportedly including a Ukrainian fuel warehouse in Novomoskovsk, Dnipropetrovsk Oblast.² Russian sources claimed that Russian drone strikes also targeted Kyiv Thermal Power Plant 5, which Russian forces reportedly targeted in a strike campaign on March 9.³

Russian President Vladimir Putin continued his campaign against anti-war dissent and the misappropriation of military assets within Russia. Putin signed two bills into law on March 18 that significantly increase the fines and jail time for discrediting Russian forces in Ukraine and for selling Russian arms to foreign actors.⁴ Russian sources reported that Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) personnel detained over 40 people in raids against two Moscow bars for suspicion of financing Ukrainian forces and made patrons participate in pro-war activities on March 17.⁵ Russian sources have increasingly reported on FSB detaining Russian civilians under suspicion of financially assisting Ukrainian forces since February 28 after Putin instructed the FSB to intensify counterintelligence measures and crackdown against the spread of pro-Ukrainian ideology.⁶

Wagner financier Yevgeny Prigozhin is likely attempting to set informational conditions to explain the Wagner Group's culmination around Bakhmut. Prigozhin-affiliated outlet *RIA FAN* published an interview with Prigozhin on March 17 in which he asserted that Ukrainian forces are preparing to launch counteroffensives in five separate directions: into Belgorod Oblast, in the Kreminna area, in the Bakhmut area, towards Donetsk City, and in Zaporizhia Oblast.⁷ Prigozhin stated that Ukrainian forces will launch these operations starting in mid-April and urged Russian forces to prepare for these counteroffensives by preserving ammunition and equipment.⁸ Prigozhin likely depicted Ukrainian forces as having enough combat power to launch a massive theater-wide counteroffensive to justify the Wagner Group's inability to complete an envelopment or encirclement of Bakhmut. Prigozhin stated that Ukrainian forces are preparing to counterattack Wagner's flanks in the Bakhmut area and that Wagner fighters are preparing for these counterattacks.⁹ ISW previously assessed that Wagner fighters are likely conducting opportunistic attacks on easier-to-seize settlements further north and northwest of Bakhmut as their ability to make tactical gains in Bakhmut itself diminishes, and Prigozhin likely seeks to frame these activities as securing flanks in preparation for Ukrainian counteroffensives.¹⁰ A prominent Wagner-affiliated milblogger similarly argued that Wagner fighters

are conducting offensive operations northwest of Bakhmut to spoil Ukrainian counterattacks and asserted that Wagner fighters are focused on advancing towards the Siverskyi Donets Canal west of Bakhmut to complete the envelopment of the city.¹¹ The milblogger likely tried to rationalize the Wagner Group's failure to envelop Bakhmut by setting the necessary conditions for the envelopment further away and farther out of the Wagner Group's current operational capabilities. Prigozhin also claimed that Ukrainian forces have at least 19,000 personnel deployed within Bakhmut, likely an attempt to justify Wagner's lack of progress within the city.¹²

Prigozhin may be implying that the overall Russian offensive in Ukraine is nearing culmination by calling for Russian forces to preserve resources for Ukrainian counteroffensives. Prigozhin's forecast about five separate Ukrainian counteroffensives is mirror-imaging—Russian forces have specialized in conducting multiple simultaneous advances along diverging axes that are not mutually supporting, which is one of the reasons for Russian failures in the war so far. Prigozhin may have forecasted a Ukrainian counteroffensive in five directions to amplify the relevance of his calls for Russian forces to preserve ammunition and equipment and out of concerns that widespread ammunition and equipment shortages are constraining the Wagner Group's and the Russian military's ability to maintain offensive operations in Ukraine. Prigozhin's depiction of imminent Ukrainian counteroffensives also implies that he believes that Russian forces will lose the initiative to Ukraine soon and be forced onto the defensive rather than continuing stalled or unsuccessful offensives in the Kreminna, Bakhmut, Avdiivka, or Vuhledar areas.

Russian regional authorities may be severing their connections with Prigozhin. Prigozhin claimed that the Goryachiy Klyuch, Krasnodar Krai authorities reneged on a prior agreement to bury Wagner Group deceased mercenaries in the town.¹³ Goryachiy Klyuch Head Sergey Belopolskyi claimed that locals do not think that the resort town Goryachiy Klyuch is an appropriate place to bury Wagner fighters.¹⁴ Prigozhin also released a phone call in which a Goryachiy Klyuch official told a Wagner representative that Krasnodar Krai Governor Veniamin Kondratyev stripped him of authority to cooperate with Wagner.¹⁵ Wagner servicemen also released a threatening video appeal to the local administration claiming that they will “personally solve the issue” with the administration if they do not respond to the appeals.¹⁶ The Wagner Group has used training and burial grounds in Krasnodar Krai in the past, indicating that Prigozhin likely has extensive, long-term connections to regional authorities that may now be weakening.¹⁷ Prigozhin previously fought with St. Petersburg officials over their refusal to bury deceased Wagner mercenaries in the same burial ground as conventional Russian soldiers, as ISW has previously reported.¹⁸

Russian Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Maria Zakharova reiterated on March 18 that the Kremlin has not abandoned its maximalist goals in Ukraine. Zakharova stated that Russia is ready to hear Western and Ukrainian proposals for the diplomatic settlement of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, but noted that the West will need to remove all sanctions and lawsuits from Russia.¹⁹ Zakharova continued to reject Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky's conditions for peace talks by noting that the removal of Russian forces from occupied Ukrainian territories, reparation obligations, and attendance at international tribunals are “unrelated” to the establishment of peace in Ukraine. Zakharova instead claimed that peace in Ukraine depends on the West ceasing its weapon deliveries to Ukraine, the international recognition “of new territorial realities,” and the demilitarization and “denazification” of Ukraine. Zakharova's demands mirror Russian President Vladimir Putin's maximalist objectives announced on February 24, 2022, and are a continuation of the

Kremlin's ongoing information operation to prompt the West to offer preemptive concessions and coerce Ukraine into negotiations on conditions more favorable to Russia.²⁰

BBC and Russian opposition news outlet *Mediazona* reported on March 17 that Russian forces (excluding Donetsk People's Republic [DNR] and Luhansk People's Republic [LNR] militiamen) have suffered a confirmed 17,375 deaths, a conservative estimate of 35,000 total deaths, and 157,000 casualties. *BBC* claimed that total pro-Russia forces' casualties may exceed 211,500 people. *BBC* noted that 1,304 of the dead it has confirmed perished within the past two weeks, indicating that recent casualties are significantly higher than the 2022 average. The majority of Russian soldiers killed in Ukraine reportedly come from outside of Russia's major urban centers. Moscow—which comprises 9% of the entire Russian population—has suffered only 107 confirmed deaths while Krasnodar Krai has suffered 714, Sverdlovsk Oblast has suffered 664, and Buryatia has suffered 567.²¹

Key Takeaways

- **Russian forces targeted Ukraine with 16 Shahed-136 drones overnight on March 17-18.**
- **Russian President Vladimir Putin continued his crackdown against anti-war dissent and misappropriation of military assets within Russia.**
- **Wagner financier Yevgeny Prigozhin is likely attempting to set informational conditions for the Wagner Group's culmination around Bakhmut.**
- **Russian regional authorities may be severing their connections with Prigozhin.**
- **Russian Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Maria Zakharova reiterated that the Kremlin has not abandoned its maximalist goals in Ukraine.**
- ***BBC* and Russian opposition news outlet *Mediazona* estimated that Russian forces have suffered at least 35,000 total deaths and 157,000 total casualties.**
- **Russian forces conducted limited ground attacks along the Kupyansk-Svatove-Kreminna line.**
- **Russian forces continued offensive operations in and around Bakhmut and on the outskirts of Donetsk City.**
- **Russian forces continue to erect defensive fortifications along ground lines of communication (GLOCs) in and near occupied Crimea.**
- **Conventional Russian authorities and the Wagner Group continue to invest significant resources in efforts to involve youth in the war effort and ready them mentally and physically for military service.**
- **Russian occupation authorities continue efforts russify Ukrainians in occupied territories.**

Assessed Control of Terrain in Ukraine and Main Russian Maneuver Axes as of March 18, 2023, 3:00 PM ET



Map by George Barros, Kateryna Stepanenko, Noel Mikkelsen, Daniel Mealie, Thomas Bergeron, Will Kielm, and Mitchell Belcher - © 2023 Institute for the Study of War and AEI's Critical Threats Project

* 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 those 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 population and specifically on combat in Ukrainian urban areas. We utterly condemn these Russian violations of the laws of armed conflict, Geneva Conventions, and humanity even though we do not describe them in these reports.

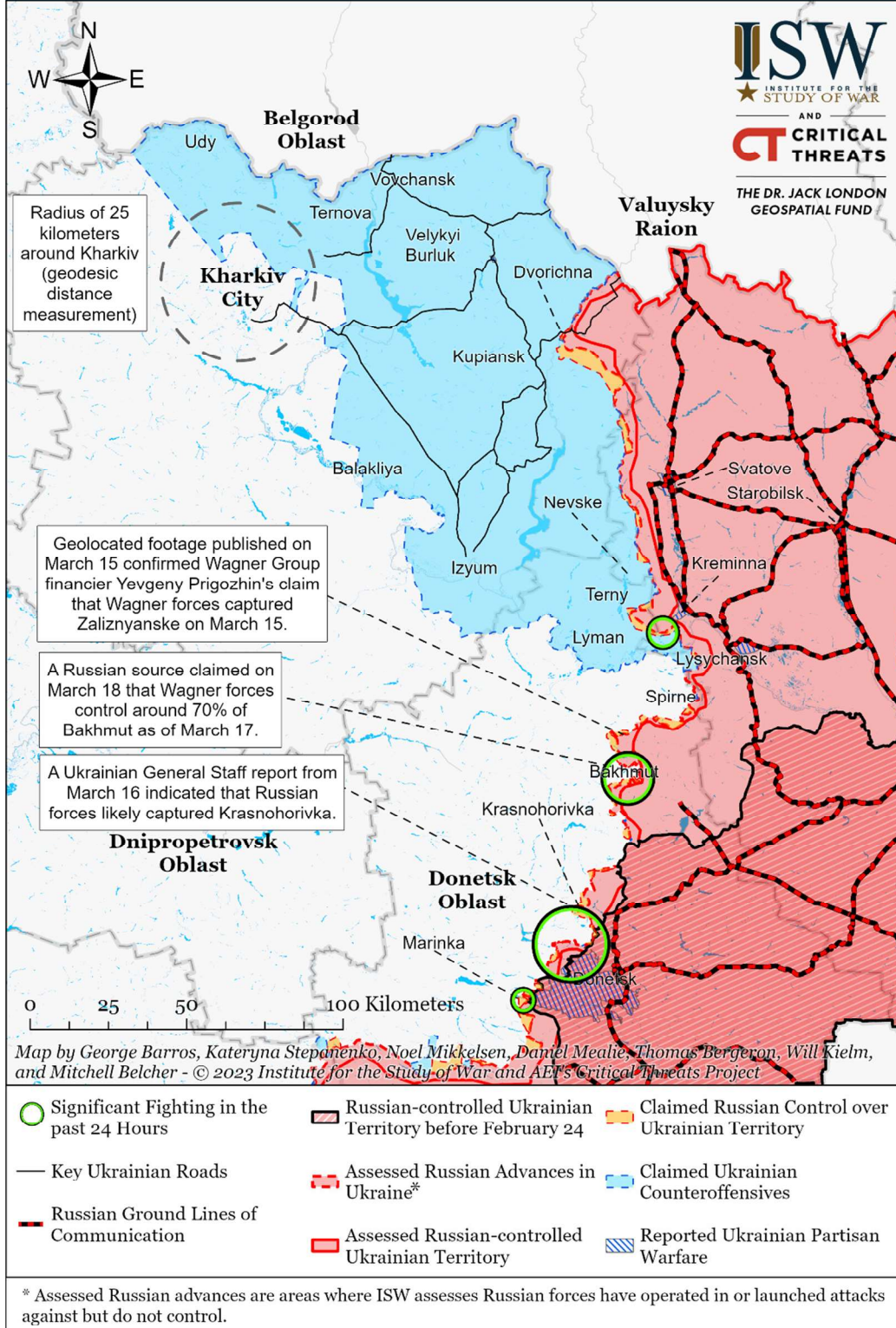
- Russian Main Effort—Eastern Ukraine (comprised of two subordinate main efforts)
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #1—Capture the remainder of Luhansk Oblast and push westward into eastern Kharkiv Oblast and encircle northern Donetsk Oblast
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #2—Capture the entirety of Donetsk Oblast
- Russian Supporting Effort—Southern Axis
- Russian Mobilization and Force Generation Efforts
- Activities in Russian-occupied Areas

Russian Main Effort—Eastern Ukraine

Russian Subordinate Main Effort #1— Luhansk Oblast (Russian objective: Capture the remainder of Luhansk Oblast and continue offensive operations into eastern Kharkiv Oblast and northern Donetsk Oblast)

Russian forces conducted limited ground attacks along the Kupyansk-Svatove-Kreminna line on March 18. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces conducted unsuccessful ground attacks near Dibrova (6km southwest of Kreminna) and Hryhorivka (9km south of Kreminna).²² Russian sources continued to claim on March 18 that Russian forces advanced west of Hryanykivka (17km northeast of Kupyansk) and that Ukrainian forces withdrew to the west bank of the Oskil River, but ISW is unable to verify these claims.²³ Commander of the Ukrainian Ground Forces Colonel General Oleksandr Syrsky reported on March 17 that Russian forces are attempting to advance along the entire eastern front and that the fiercest battles are occurring near Torske (14km west of Kreminna), Kreminna, Bilohorivka (12km south of Kreminna), and Spirne (25km south of Kreminna).²⁴ Russian sources claimed that Russian forces made marginal territorial gains near Ploshchanka (16km northwest of Kreminna) and in the Serebrianska forest area (roughly 11km south of Kreminna).²⁵ A Russian source also claimed that Russian forces conducted ground attacks near Makiivka (22km northwest of Kreminna) and Terny (17km west of Kreminna).²⁶

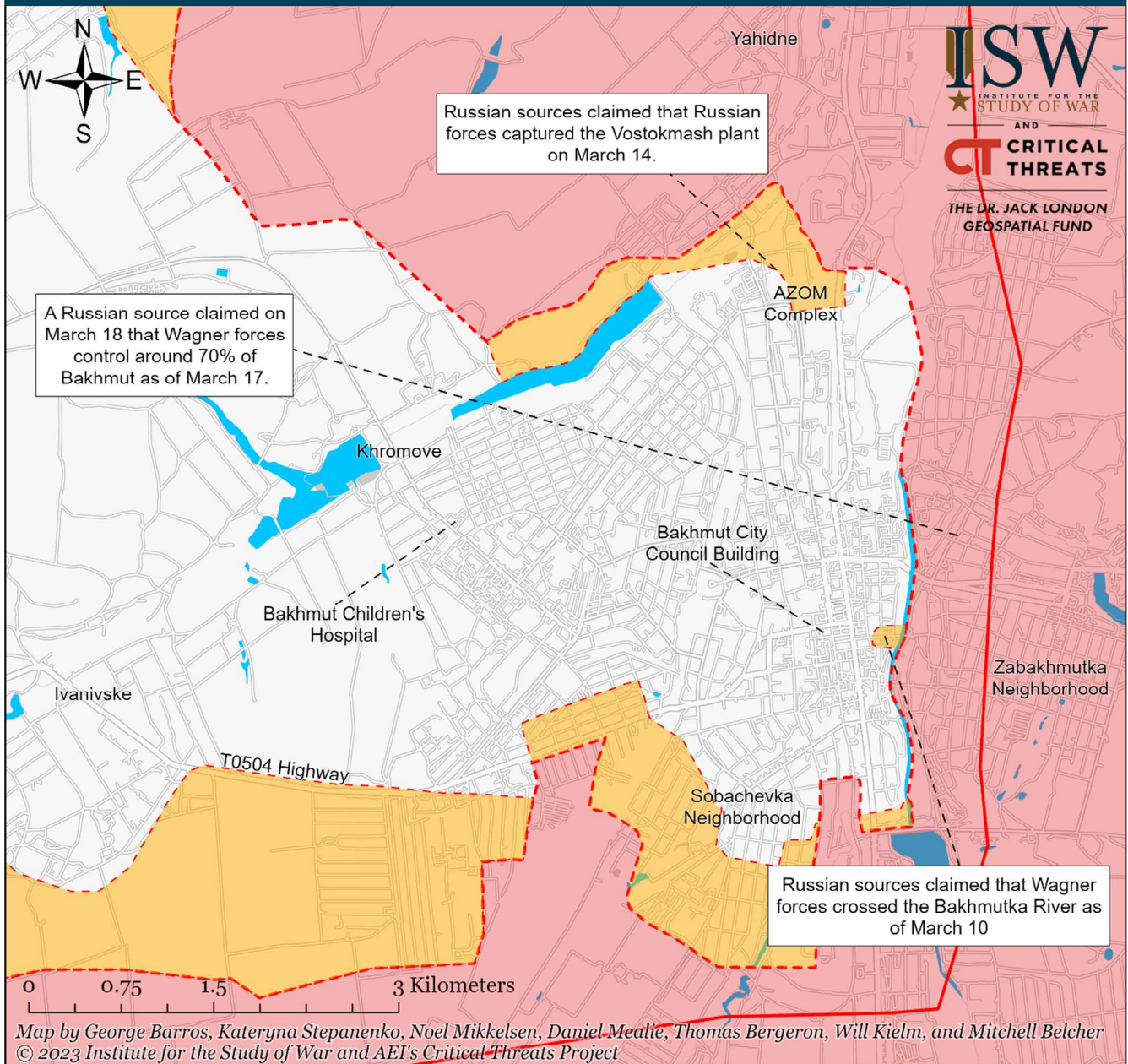
Assessed Control of Terrain Around Kharkiv as of March 18, 2023, 3:00 PM ET



Russian Subordinate Main Effort #2—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 and around Bakhmut on March 18. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Ukrainian forces repelled Russian offensive operations near Bakhmut, within 11km northwest of Bakhmut near Orikhovo-Vasylikva and Hryhorivka, and within 6km southwest of Bakhmut near Ivanivske and Klishchiivka.²⁷ Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces also conducted assaults near Khromove (2km west of Bakhmut) and Bohdanivka (6km northwest of Bakhmut).²⁸ The Ukrainian General Staff specified that Ukrainian forces repelled Russian assaults in the northern part of Bakhmut, likely suggesting that Russian forces are concentrating offensive operations on the northern part of the city.²⁹ Russian milbloggers claimed that Wagner Group fighters captured unspecified industrial facilities in the AZOM complex in northern Bakhmut and have cleared most of the complex of Ukrainian forces.³⁰ ISW has not observed any visual confirmation that Russian forces have advanced into the territory of the AZOM complex. Russian milbloggers claimed that Wagner fighters continued assaults in the southern and southwestern parts of Bakhmut, and Wagner financier Yevgeny Prigozhin claimed that Wagner fighters hold positions within 600 to 700 meters of the Bakhmut Administrative Center.³¹ A Russian milblogger claimed that Wagner fighters secured positions on the west (left) bank of the Bakhmutka River near Bakhmut’s central market area, although ISW has not observed visual confirmation of these claims.³² A Russian source claimed that Wagner fighters control 70 percent of Bakhmut as of March 18.³³ ISW assessed that Russian forces occupied roughly 50 percent of Bakhmut as of March 8, and ISW has not observed a pace of advance since then that corresponds with this significantly higher claim about Wagner’s control over Bakhmut.³⁴ Russian milbloggers claimed that Wagner fighters also advanced near Kurdyumivka (13km southwest of Bakhmut).³⁵

Assessed Control of Terrain in Bakhmut as of March 18, 2023, 3:00 PM ET



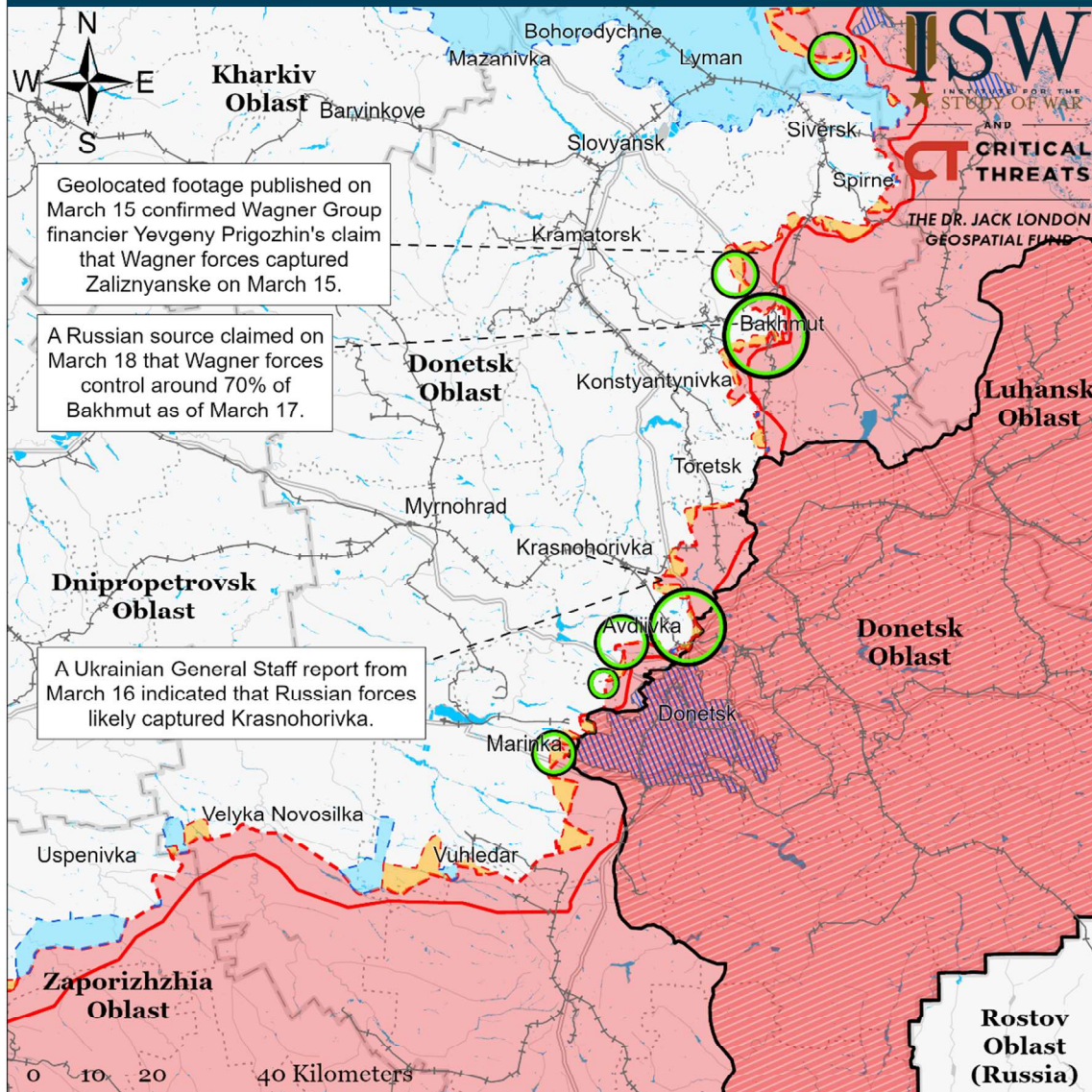
Map by George Barros, Kateryna Stepanenko, Noel Mikkelsen, Daniel Mealie, Thomas Bergeron, Will Kielm, and Mitchell Belcher © 2023 Institute for the Study of War and AEI's Critical Threats Project

Significant Fighting in the past 24 Hours	Assessed Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory	Claimed Ukrainian Counteroffensives
Assessed Russian Advances in Ukraine *	Claimed Russian Control over Ukrainian Territory	Reported Ukrainian Partisan Warfare

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

Russian forces continued offensive operations along the outskirts of Donetsk City on March 18. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces conducted unsuccessful offensive operations near Avdiivka, Kamianka (5km northeast of Avdiivka), and within 27km southwest of Avdiivka near Nevelske, Sieverne, Pervomaiske, and Marinka.³⁶ Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces also conducted assaults on Vodyane (8km southwest of Avdiivka).³⁷

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Donetsk as of March 18, 2023, 3:00 PM ET



Map by George Barros, Kateryna Stepanenko, Noel Mikkelsen, Daniel Mealie, Thomas Bergeron, Will Kiern, and Mitchell Belcher - © 2023 Institute for the Study of War and AEI's Critical Threats Project

- Significant Fighting in the past 24 Hours
- Assessed Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory
- Claimed Russian Control over Ukrainian Territory
- Assessed Russian Advances in Ukraine*
- Claimed Ukrainian Counteroffensives
- Major Railroads
- Reported Ukrainian Partisan Warfare

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

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

Russian forces continued to conduct routine fire west of Hulyaipole and in Kherson and Mykolaiv oblasts on March 18.³⁸ Head of the Ukrainian Joint Coordination Press Center of the Southern Forces Nataliya Humenyuk reported that Russian forces decreased their rate of artillery fire across the Dnipro River. Humenyuk also stated that Russian forces must constantly change positions in east (left) bank Kherson Oblast due to Ukrainian artillery fire.³⁹

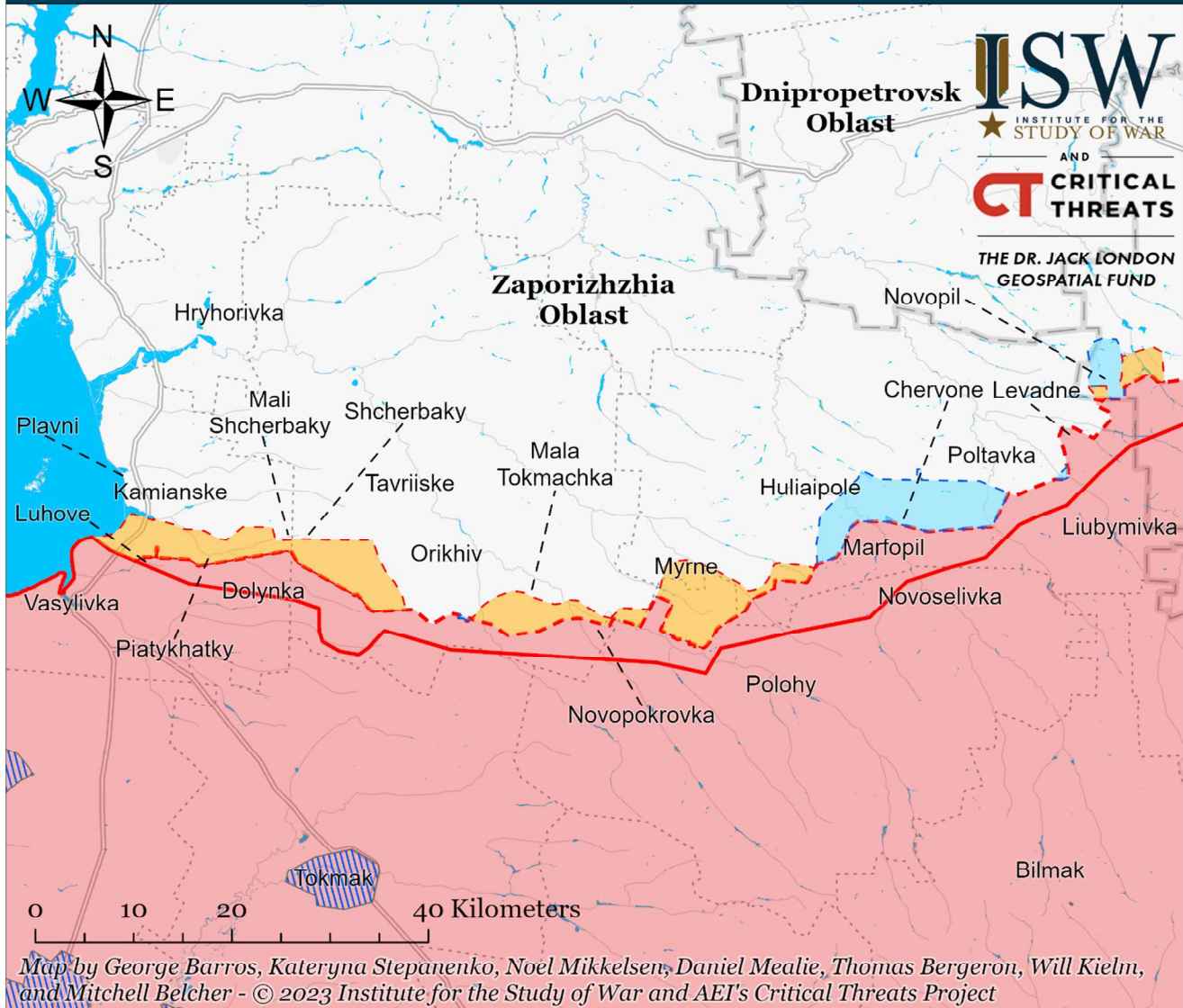
Russian forces continue to erect defensive fortifications along ground lines of communication (GLOCs) in and near occupied Crimea.⁴⁰ The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces are building fortifications between Ishun and Voinka in northern Crimea, and social media footage shows large piles of wooden pallets reportedly near the Chatarluk River bridge between Ishun and Vorontsivka on the N05 Armiansk-Dzhankoy-Simferopol highway.⁴¹ A Ukrainian source posted images of piles of timber and stated that Russian forces are using the timber to construct trenches and other fortifications in Chonhar, Kherson Oblast (4km from the Kherson Oblast-Crimean administrative border on the M-18 Melitopol-Dzhankoy highway).⁴²

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Kherson and Mykolaiv as of March 18, 2023, 3:00 PM ET



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

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Zaporizhia as of March 18, 2023, 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
- 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.

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

Conventional Russian authorities and the Wagner Group continue to invest significant resources to involve youth in the war effort and mentally and physically prepare them for military service. Wagner financier Yevgeny Prigozhin on March 18 responded to a question about Wagner recruitment centers in youth sports clubs, stating that he plans to recruit 30,000 new mercenaries by mid-May of 2023. Prigozhin claimed the Wagner Group currently recruits about 500-800 mercenaries each day, though Prigozhin did not specify what share of that comes from sports club recruitment centers.⁴³

Independent Russian news outlet *Verstka* assessed on March 17 that authorities of at least 16 Russian federal subjects have spent close to 200 million rubles (about \$2.598 million) on tenders for youth military, patriotic, and historical training camps. *Verstka's* identified list of camps aims to teach over 19,770 students of various ages skills including shooting, throwing hand grenades, and marching. They also appear to feature a strong ideological indoctrination component.⁴⁴

A Russian milblogger claimed on March 18 that Russian soldiers and volunteers who order electronics for drone assembly from China regularly encounter delays or losses of certain components while the shipments pass through Russian customs.⁴⁵ Such delays and component disappearances may result either from major inefficiencies and corruption in the Russian customs system or from intentional government confiscation of valuable electronic components.

Russian authorities continue efforts to increase force generation capacity without resorting to a formal expansion of mobilization. A major Russian news portal claimed on March 18 that Ufa, Republic of Bashkortostan created the “Vatan” volunteer battalion and has already recruited 80 members.⁴⁶ Russian authorities ceased major recruitment calls for existing volunteer battalions in September 2022 with the start of involuntary mobilization after forming volunteer battalions in summer 2022.⁴⁷ The creation of the Vatan battalion may indicate a Russian effort to resuscitate volunteer battalions as an alternative to intensifying mobilization efforts. Russian authorities also continue to launch nationwide recruitment drives to attract contract soldiers.⁴⁸ Some Russian sources report that Russian authorities are pressuring or tricking men (especially reservists) to sign military contracts, including by calling them into military commissariats to verify their information.⁴⁹

The United Kingdom Ministry of Defense (UK MoD) reported on March 18 that the Russian State Duma introduced a bill to change the age bracket for conscription of men to ages 21-30 from the present bracket of ages 18-27. The raised age maximum for conscription will likely allow Russian authorities to conscript a broader pool of Russians due to the split of Russian demographics. The reasoning for raising the minimum conscription age is unclear. The UK MoD assessed that this change would allow Russian authorities to ensure that Russian students (who usually claim exemptions while studying from ages 18-21) will serve in the Russian Armed Forces.⁵⁰ This change in the conscription ages is unlikely to have any impact on Russian force generation capacity in the near future, however. The UK MoD stated that this bill will likely pass and come into force in January 2024.⁵¹

The Ukrainian General Staff claimed on March 18 that Russian occupation authorities in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts announced the start of large-scale military exercises involving the entire male conscript population in several cities to obscure mobilization within those cities.⁵²

Russian officials continue to respond inconsistently to complaint videos from units of mobilized soldiers. Russian news source *Ostorozhno Novosti* reported on March 17 that Russian authorities punished a platoon of mobilized soldiers from Kaliningrad within Russia's 1004th regiment—which gained notoriety when a video of its soldiers arguing with their commander about their subordination to the Donetsk People's Republic's (DNR) forces went viral—by disbanding the platoon.⁵³ A local Tyumen Oblast news source reported on March 17 that Tyumen Oblast authorities responded to a video complaint from the “Wolverine” battalion of mobilized soldiers from Tyumen Oblast by deflecting responsibility for the soldiers' concerns onto the Russian MoD.⁵⁴ A prominent Russian news aggregator claimed on March 18 that Irkutsk Oblast Governor Igor Kobzev personally met with soldiers of the 1439th regiment—mobilized soldiers from Irkutsk Oblast who have recorded several video complaints, on which ISW has previously reported—to prove that the unit has not been destroyed, despite such rumors.⁵⁵ Kobzev reportedly stated that he would ensure that unspecified authorities would assign representatives to address the soldiers' concerns.⁵⁶

Russian officials continue to crack down on all potential domestic signs of resistance to the war in Ukraine. Two Russian news sources reported on March 18 that the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia replaced its vice-rector for student affairs after he defended the extension of the university's mission to unite people of different nationalities to include Ukrainians and claimed that the university needs to support Ukrainian students in Russia.⁵⁷ A Russian opposition news source reported on March 17 that Russian authorities arrested a 16-year-old student from Saint Petersburg for a failed arson attack on a military recruitment center in Kirovsk, Murmansk Oblast.⁵⁸

Activity in Russian-occupied Areas (Russian objective: consolidate administrative control of and annexed areas; forcibly integrate Ukrainian civilians into Russian sociocultural, economic, military, and governance systems)

Russian occupation authorities continue efforts russify Ukrainians in occupied territories. Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a law on March 18 that supports the immediate formal revocation of Ukrainian citizenship when a Russian/Ukrainian dual citizen submits an application to renounce their Ukrainian citizenship.⁵⁹ The Ukrainian General Staff stated on March 18 that Russian authorities in occupied Rubizhne, Luhansk Oblast are forcing residents to obtain Russian citizenship and passports in order to gain employment. Occupation authorities in Rubizhne reportedly have not confiscated residents' Ukrainian passports.⁶⁰

Russian President Vladimir Putin visited Crimea on March 18 to celebrate the 9th anniversary of the Russian occupation of Crimea. Putin met with schoolchildren and visited a Crimean children's camp on March 18, one day after the International Criminal Court (ICC) issued a warrant for Putin's arrest for committing alleged war crimes involving the deportation of Ukrainian children to Russia.⁶¹

Russian occupation authorities continue to confiscate grain from occupied Ukrainian territories. Ukrainian Mariupol, Donetsk Oblast Mayoral Advisor Petro Andryushchenko stated on March 18 that Russian civilians and Russian trucks carrying Ukrainian wheat are leaving for Russia from occupied territories.⁶² Andryushchenko also posted a video showing an alleged 20 tons of Ukrainian wheat dumped on the road from Mariupol to Sopyne (less than 15km east of Mariupol).⁶³ The reason for the waste of this wheat is unclear.

Significant activity in Belarus (ISW assesses that a Russian or Belarusian attack into northern Ukraine in early 2023 is extraordinarily unlikely and has thus restructured this section of the update. It will no longer include counter-indicators for such an offensive.

ISW will continue to report daily observed Russian and Belarusian military activity in Belarus, but these are not indicators that Russian and Belarusian forces are preparing for an imminent attack on Ukraine from Belarus. ISW will revise this text and its assessment if it observes any unambiguous indicators that Russia or Belarus is preparing to attack northern Ukraine.

Russian President Vladimir Putin held a phone discussion with Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko on March 17.⁶⁴ The Kremlin stated that Putin and Lukashenko discussed bilateral trade and economic cooperation, preparations for the meeting of the Supreme State Council of the Union State scheduled on an unspecified date in April, and the creation of international transport corridors.⁶⁵ ISW assesses that Belarus is likely aiding Russia in sanctions evasion schemes and it is likely that Putin and Lukashenko discussed these efforts.⁶⁶

Belarusian open-source investigative group the *Hajun Project* reported on March 17 that satellite images suggest that 1,000 Russian mobilized personnel have likely left the Obuz-Liasnouski training ground in Brest Oblast.⁶⁷ Satellite imagery shows a tent camp of Russian mobilized personnel at the training ground decreasing roughly in half between February and March, and the *Hajun Project* assessed that the decrease in tents represented roughly 1,000 Russian military personnel.⁶⁸ The Russian military likely deployed the trained mobilized personnel to Ukraine and will likely rotate in new Russian personnel for training at the Belarusian training ground.

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.

¹ <https://armyinform dot com.ua/2023/03/18/11-z-16-vorozhyh-droniv-kamikadze-shahed-znyshheno-cziyeyi-nochi-yurij-ignat/>

² <https://t.me/kommunist/16434> ; <https://t.me/readovkanews/54939> ; <https://t.me/readovkanews/54942> ; <https://t.me/rybar/44776> ; <https://t.me/rybar/44766> ; <https://t.me/voenkorKotenok/46175> ; <https://t.me/m0sc0wcalling/21423> ; https://t.me/miroshnik_r/10798 ; <https://t.me/readovkanews/54948> ; <https://t.me/rybar/44770> ; https://t.me/z_arhiv/19683 ; https://t.me/z_arhiv/19681 ; <https://t.me/dnipropetrovskaODA/3665> ; <https://twitter.com/Cosmonaut19/status/1637025326047068161> ; https://twitter.com/hochu_dodomu/status/1636996929212096512 ; https://t.me/kozytskyy_maksym_official/7352 ; https://t.me/notes_veterans/8541 ; https://t.me/boris_rozhin/80694 ; https://t.me/z_arhiv/19676 ; https://t.me/z_arhiv/19670 ; <https://t.me/readovkanews/54936> ; <https://t.me/readovkanews/54946>

³ <https://t.me/readovkanews/54936> ; <https://t.me/readovkanews/54946> ; https://t.me/z_arhiv/19668 ; <https://t.me/rybar/44413> ; <https://t.me/rybar/44552> ; <https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-march-9-2023> ; https://t.me/boris_rozhin/80012 ; <https://t.me/rybar/44413> ; <https://t.me/voenkorKotenok/45934> ; <https://t.me/readovkanews/54306> ; <https://twitter.com/MaxRTucker/status/1633689731753017345> ; <https://t.me/sashakots/38785>

⁴ <https://ria dot ru/20233018/spetsoperatsiya-1858772656.html> ; <https://t.me/readovkanews/54963>;
https://t.me/tass_agency/184773 ; <https://novayagazeta dot eu/articles/2023/03/18/putin-podpisal-zakonoproekt-o-lishenii-svobody-do-15-let-za-feiki-pro-dobrovoltsev-news>; <https://t.me/readovkanews/54970>

⁵ <https://t.me/sotaproject/55566>; <https://meduza dot io/news/2023/03/17/v-moskve-politsiya-prishla-s-proverkoy-v-bary-underdog-i-la-virgen-posetitelyam-ugrozhali-shokerami-i-zastavlyali-podpevat-lyube>; <https://meduza dot io/news/2023/03/17/v-moskve-politsiya-prishla-s-proverkoy-v-bary-underdog-i-la-virgen-posetitelyam-ugrozhali-shokerami-i-zastavlyali-podpevat-lyube>

⁶ <http://en.kremlin dot ru/events/president/news/70597>; <https://t.me/readovkanews/54569>; <https://meduza dot io/news/2023/03/13/fsb-obvinila-aktivistku-dvizheniya-yamyfurgal-v-finansirovanii-vsu>; <https://t.me/rybar/44561>;
<https://t.me/kommunist/16365>; <https://t.me/rybar/44562>; <https://meduza dot io/news/2023/03/04/fsb-otchitalas-cto-zaderzhala-moskvichku-za-finansovuyu-pomosch-vsu-na-nee-zaveli-delo-o-gosizmene>; <https://iz dot ru/1478719/2023-03-04/moskvichku-zaderzhali-po-podozreniiu-v-gosizmene-iz-za-pomoshchi-vsu>; <https://tass dot ru/proisshestiya/17195433>;
https://t.me/boris_rozhin/79468; <https://t.me/rybar/44142>; https://t.me/boris_rozhin/79468; <https://t.me/readovkanews/54021>;
<https://meduza dot io/feature/2023/02/27/shkolnitsa-iz-tulskoy-oblasti-narisovala-antivoennyi-risunok-teper-otets-kotoryi-vospityvaet-ee-odin-figurant-ugolovnogo-dela-o-diskreditatsii-armii>

⁷ <https://t.me/riafan/128629>

⁸ <https://t.me/riafan/128629>

⁹ <https://t.me/riafan/128629>

¹⁰ <https://isw.pub/UkrWar031523>

¹¹ https://t.me/grey_zone/17805

¹² <https://t.me/riafan/128629>

¹³ https://t.me/Prigozhin_hat/2887; https://t.me/Prigozhin_hat/2888 ; https://t.me/concordgroup_official/612;

¹⁴ https://t.me/sergey_belopolskyi/2717; https://t.me/Prigozhin_hat/2887; https://t.me/Prigozhin_hat/2888 ;
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²³ https://t.me/basurin_e/238; <https://t.me/readovkanews/54949>

²⁴ <https://t.me/militarymediacenter/1467>

²⁵ https://t.me/basurin_e/238; <https://t.me/wargonzo/11457>

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²⁸ <https://t.me/wargonzo/11457> ; https://t.me/boris_rozhin/80661; <https://t.me/voenkorKotenok/46165>

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³⁰ https://t.me/boris_rozhin/80754 ; https://t.me/basurin_e/238 ; https://t.me/z_arhiv/19708

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https://t.me/z_arhiv/19708

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⁴³ https://t.me/concordgroup_official/611

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⁴⁵ https://t.me/notes_veterans/8551

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<https://t.me/rotondamedia/4415>; <https://t.me/pchikov/5464>; https://t.me/news_sirena/12525;

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