

Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment, October 24

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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.

The Kremlin intensified its information operation to accuse Ukraine of preparing to conduct a false-flag attack using a dirty bomb for a second day in a row on October 24.

Russian Chief of the General Staff Valery Gerasimov separately called his counterparts from the United Kingdom and United States about the “situation connected with Ukraine’s possible use of a dirty bomb” (a conventional explosive laced with radioactive material that is not a nuclear weapon) on October 24.[1] Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu made similar calls with his counterparts from the United States, United Kingdom, France, and Turkey on October 23.[2] The Chief of Russia’s Radiation, Chemical, and Biological Protection Forces, Lt. Gen. Igor Kirillov, gave a lengthy briefing accusing Ukraine of planning a dirty bomb false-flag provocation to accuse Russia of detonating a low-yield nuclear weapon in Ukraine on October 24.[3] Russian military bloggers are amplifying this information operation.[4] ISW assesses the Kremlin is unlikely to be preparing an imminent false-flag dirty bomb attack.[5]

Russian forces conducted air, missile, and drone strikes against targets in Ukraine at a markedly slower tempo than in previous days.

The Ukrainian General Staff reported on October 24 that Russian forces conducted 2 missile and 28 air strikes, and Ukrainian forces shot down 16 Shahed-136 drones on October 23.[6] The slower tempo of Russian air, missile, and drone strikes possibly reflects decreasing missile and drone stockpiles and the strikes’ limited effectiveness of accomplishing Russian strategic military goals.

Ukraine’s Military Intelligence Directorate (GUR) Chief, Major General Kyrylo Budanov, stated on October 24 that the impact of Russian terrorist strikes against critical Ukrainian infrastructure is waning as Russian forces further deplete their limited arsenal of cruise missiles.[7] Budanov stated that Russian forces have stopped targeting Ukraine’s military infrastructure, instead aiming for civilian infrastructure to incite panic and fear in Ukrainians. Budanov noted, however, that Russian forces will fail as Ukrainians are better adapted to strategic bombing than at the beginning of the war. Budanov claimed that Russian forces have used most of their cruise missile arsenal and only have 13 percent of their pre-war Iskander, 43 percent of Kaliber, and 45 percent of Kh-101 and Kh-555 pre-war stockpiles left, supporting ISW’s prior reports on dwindling Russian precision-guided munition stockpiles.[8] Budanov noted that Russian cruise missiles lack precision, as a missile likely intended to hit the Ukrainian Security Service (SBU) building in Kyiv missed its target by 800 meters. Budanov stated that Russia’s dwindling supply of cruise missiles is forcing the Russian military to rely on Iranian drones but that Iranian suppliers only send 300 drones per shipment and that the drones take a long time to manufacture. Budanov stated that Ukrainian air defenses shoot down 70 percent of all Shahed-136 drones, including 222 of the 330 Russia has used so far. It is impossible to assess the degree to which ongoing unrest and growing strikes in Iran might interfere with Tehran’s ability to manufacture and ship drones to Russia.

Russian President Vladimir Putin’s annexation of four Ukrainian oblasts on September 30 ignited a schism within the Kremlin, which will likely intensify as Ukraine liberates more territories, according to Budanov.

Budanov stated that Kremlin elites largely did not support Putin’s decision to annex Kherson, Zaporizhia, Donetsk, and Luhansk Oblasts prior to securing those territories, prompting many officials to contact their Western counterparts to express their disinterest in continuing the war in Ukraine.[9] Budanov claimed that some Kremlin officials began advocating for negotiations with Ukraine to their Western counterparts while the Russian military-political command plotted missile strikes to scare Ukrainians into negotiations. Budanov’s statement is consistent with the influx of Western reports about direct criticism of Putin within the Kremlin less than a week after the annexation announcement around October 6.[10] Wagner Group-affiliated Telegram channels also noted the emergence of the pro-war and pro-negotiations factions within the Kremlin within the same

timeframe.[11] Wagner Group financier Yevgeniy Prigozhin has been consistently referencing the factionalization within the Kremlin since, even explicitly stating that he is part of the “war until victory” faction.[12] **These observations raise the possibility that hints from insiders of a Kremlin readiness to engage in serious negotiations may not reflect Putin’s own views or any decisions he has taken but may instead be part of efforts by those who have lost the internal argument with him to persuade the West and Ukraine to offer concessions in hopes of bringing him around to their point of view.**

Prigozhin continues to accrue power and is setting up a military structure parallel to the Russian Armed Forces, which may come to pose a threat to Putin’s rule — at least within the information space. Russian milbloggers reported that Prigozhin is sponsoring the formation of a Wagner-based volunteer battalion recruited by a Russian war criminal and former Federal Security Service (FSB) officer Igor Girkin.[13] Girkin is an avid critic of the Russian higher military command and a prominent figure among the Russian ultra-nationalists who participated in the annexation of Crimea or the illegal Russian seizures of Ukrainian territory in Donbas in 2014. Milbloggers noted that the structure of the Russian Armed Forces has long prevented Girkin from forming his own volunteer battalion due to lack of supplies and other bureaucratic restrictions, while Prigozhin has the luxury to operate Wagner forces without the direct supervision of the Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD). Milbloggers also noted that the Prigozhin-Girkin collaboration is likely making a large nationalist constituency accessible to Prigozhin in support of his maximalist goals for the war in Ukraine.[14]

Prigozhin holds a uniquely advantageous position within the Russian state structure and information space that allows him to expand his constituency in Russia more readily than the disgraced Russian higher military command. Prigozhin can freely promote himself and his forces while criticizing Kremlin officials or the Russian Armed Force without fear of pushback.[15] Putin depends on Wagner forces in Bakhmut and is likely attempting to appease Prigozhin despite the fact that Prigozhin is undermining the conventional Russian military. Prigozhin, for example, sarcastically stated in an interview that he is constructing the “Wagner Line” in an effort to make Russian Armed Forces that “hide behind Wagner’s backs” feel safe.[16] Prigozhin also frequently levies his critiques of the Russian military in interviews with Russian online publications and among Wagner-affiliated Telegram channels, which allow him to reach and interact with audiences inaccessible to the Russian MoD, which is restricted in its public statements and means of communication. Prigozhin also benefits from holding no formal position of responsibility. He is not in command of any axis in Ukraine nor in charge of any major bureaucratic effort. He can critique those who are in positions of authority freely without fear that anyone can point to something he was specifically responsible for that he failed to achieve.

Prigozhin has seemingly distanced himself from a fellow strongman, Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov, after their joint critiques of the Russian higher military command on October 1 drew much attention.[17] This rhetorical shift may indicate that Kadyrov is losing influence and standing and may fear losing his control over the Republic of Chechnya amid the Chechen public’s growing disapproval of his demands in support of Putin’s war.[18]

Racism and bigotry continue to plague the Russian Armed Forces, increasing the likelihood of ethnic conflicts. Russian social media footage showed a Russian officer beating a Muslim soldier for attempting to pray at a certain time.[19] While Russian milbloggers denied the authenticity of the footage, previous instances of violence along religious or ethnic lines, such as the shooting on a Belgorod Oblast training ground on October 15, indicate that such problems will intensify throughout time.[20] Racial and religious tensions may also help explain Kadyrov’s relative quieting and Prigozhin’s apparent separation from him.

Russian forces are likely preparing to defend Kherson City and are not fully withdrawing from upper Kherson Oblast despite previous confirmed reports of some Russian elements withdrawing from upper Kherson.[21] Budanov stated on October 24 that Russian forces are not retreating from Kherson City but are instead preparing the city for urban combat.[22] This report is consistent with indicators that ISW has observed in late October.[23] Recent reporting about Russian military operations in Kherson have not always distinguished clearly enough between activities in

Kherson City and those in western Kherson Oblast generally. Russian forces have begun a partial withdrawal from northwestern Kherson Oblast even while preparing to defend Kherson City. They have not launched into a full withdrawal from the city or the oblast as of this report.

The Russian position in upper Kherson Oblast is, nevertheless, likely untenable; and Ukrainian forces will likely capture upper Kherson Oblast by the end of 2022. A Russian milblogger stated that Russia's surrender even of Kherson City is overdue, as an attempt to hold the city will likely result in defeat.[24] This milblogger argued that if Russia's military command decides to wage the war in Ukraine to a successful end, then the surrender of Kherson City is "nothing terrible" in the long run. The Russian military likely has not prepared the information space for a military defeat in Kherson Oblast as of October 24. A Russian milblogger wrote that his Russian military contacts in Kherson Oblast do not want to nor plan to retreat.[25] Russian media has not discussed the possibility of a major military loss in Kherson Oblast besides promoting information operations about a Ukrainian false-flag attack against the Kakhova Hydroelectric Power Plant (HPP) Dam.[26]

Ukrainian intelligence reported that Russian forces have not yet laid enough explosives to fully destroy the HPP Dam as of October 24.[27] Budanov observed that the Russians have prepared parts of the dam for limited explosions that would not unleash the full force of the reservoir's waters. The Russians may seek to damage the top portion of the dam, including the road that runs across it, to prevent the Ukrainians from following after retreating Russian forces if and when the Russians abandon the western bank of the Dnipro River.

Key Takeaways

- **The Kremlin intensified its information operation to accuse Ukraine of preparing to conduct a false-flag attack using a dirty bomb for a second day in a row.**
- **Ukraine's Military Intelligence Directorate (GUR) Chief Major General Kyrylo Budanov stated on October 24 that the impact of Russian terrorist strikes against critical Ukrainian infrastructure is waning.**
- **Russian President Vladimir Putin's annexation of four Ukrainian oblasts on September 30 ignited a schism within the Kremlin, which will likely intensify as Ukraine liberates more territories according to Budanov.**
- **Prigozhin continues to accrue power and is setting up a military structure parallel to the Russian Armed Forces, which may come to pose a threat to Putin's rule – at least within the information space.**
- **Russian forces are likely preparing to defend Kherson City and are not fully withdrawing from upper Kherson Oblast despite previous confirmed reports of some Russian elements withdrawing from upper Kherson Oblast.**
- **The Ukrainian General Staff confirmed that Ukrainian forces captured Karmazynivka, Miasozharivka, and Nevske in Luhansk Oblast and Novosadove in Donetsk Oblast.**
- **Kursk Oblast Governor Roman Starovoi announced the completion of the construction of two reinforced defense lines on the border with Ukraine on October 23 – likely an act of security theater designed to target a domestic Russian audience since there is no danger whatsoever of a Ukrainian mechanized invasion of Russia.**
- **Wagner Group financier Yevgeny Prigozhin acknowledged the slow pace of Wagner Group ground operations around Bakhmut as Russian forces continued to lose ground near the city.**
- **Ukrainian forces continued targeting Russian force concentrations near the Zaporizhia Oblast front line on October 23–24 and struck a Russian force and equipment concentration in the vicinity of Enerhodar on October 22.**
- **Hurried Russian mobilization efforts to fix personnel shortages on the front lines have cannibalized the Russian force-generation staff and diminished**

- Russia's ability to effectively train and deploy new personnel and to staff domestic industries.**
- **Occupation administration officials have taken down communications systems in Kherson City in an attempt to limit civilian reporting on Russian positions to Ukrainian forces ahead of anticipated Ukrainian advances.**

Assessed Control of Terrain in Ukraine and Main Russian Maneuver Axes as of October 24, 2022, 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.

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.

- Ukrainian Counteroffensives—Southern and Eastern Ukraine
- Russian Main Effort—Eastern Ukraine (comprised of one subordinate and two supporting efforts)
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort—Capture the entirety of Donetsk Oblast
- Russian Supporting Effort—Southern Axis
- Russian Mobilization and Force Generation Efforts
- Activities in Russian-occupied Areas

Ukrainian Counteroffensives (Ukrainian efforts to liberate Russian-occupied territories) Eastern Ukraine: (Oskil River-Kreminna Line)

Russian sources claimed that Ukrainian forces conducted counteroffensive operations in the direction of Kreminna and Svatove on October 23 and 24. The Russian Ministry of Defense and multiple Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces repelled a Ukrainian attack in the direction of Chervonopopivka (6km northwest of Kreminna) on October 24.[28] A Russian milblogger reported that Ukrainian forces attempted an offensive in Bilohorivka, Luhansk Oblast on October 24.[29] One milblogger reported that Russian forces repelled Ukrainian attacks in eastern Kharkiv Oblast near Pershotravneve, Orlyanka, and Berestove (all west of the Svatove) on October 24.[30] A Russian milblogger wrote that Russian forces stopped a similar Ukrainian breakthrough attempt in intensive battles near Kreminna on October 23.[31] A Russian source reported that Ukrainian forces conducted reconnaissance-in-force along the Raihorodka-Kovalivka line on October 23.[32]

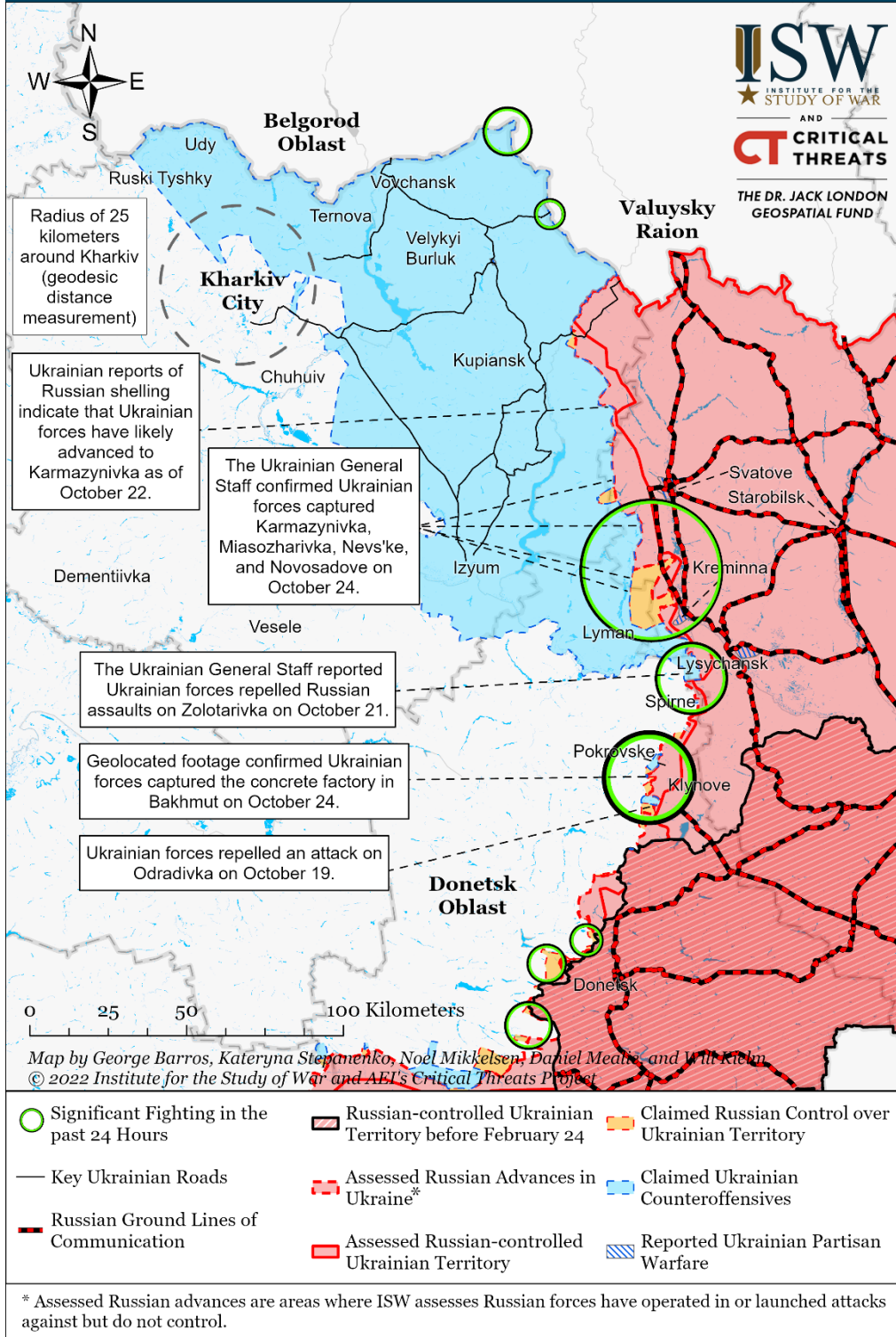
Russian sources reported that Ukrainian forces continued striking objects in Luhansk Oblast with M142 HIMARS rocket artillery on October 23 and 24. Russian proxy officials in Luhansk Oblast reported that Ukrainian forces fired several HIMARS rounds at Novoaidar, Zorynsk, Rubizhne, Popasna, Starobilsk, and Svatove on October 23–24.[33]

The Ukrainian General Staff confirmed that Ukrainian forces liberated Karmazynivka, Miasozharivka, and Nevske in Luhansk Oblast and Novosadove in Donetsk Oblast on October 24.[34] Russian and Ukrainian sources reported that Ukrainian forces captured Nevske and its surrounding settlements on October 10.[35]

Kursk Oblast Governor Roman Starovoi announced the completion of the construction of two reinforced defense lines on the border with Ukraine on October 23 — likely an act of security theater designed to target a domestic Russian audience. Starovoi reported that the Russian Ministry of Defense and the regional Kursk Oblast border guard department built two defense lines and plan to complete a third line by November 5.[36] Creating such defensive lines does not serve a practical military purpose and, if confirmed, would be a waste of Russian resources. Ukrainian forces in Sumy Oblast do not pose and never have posed a military threat to Kursk Oblast.

The Ukrainian General Staff reported Ukrainian forces repelled Russian attacks in northern Kharkiv Oblast along the Kharkiv-Belgorod Oblast border near Zemlyanky and Chuhunivka on October 24.[37]

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Kharkiv as of October 24, 2022, 3:00 PM ET



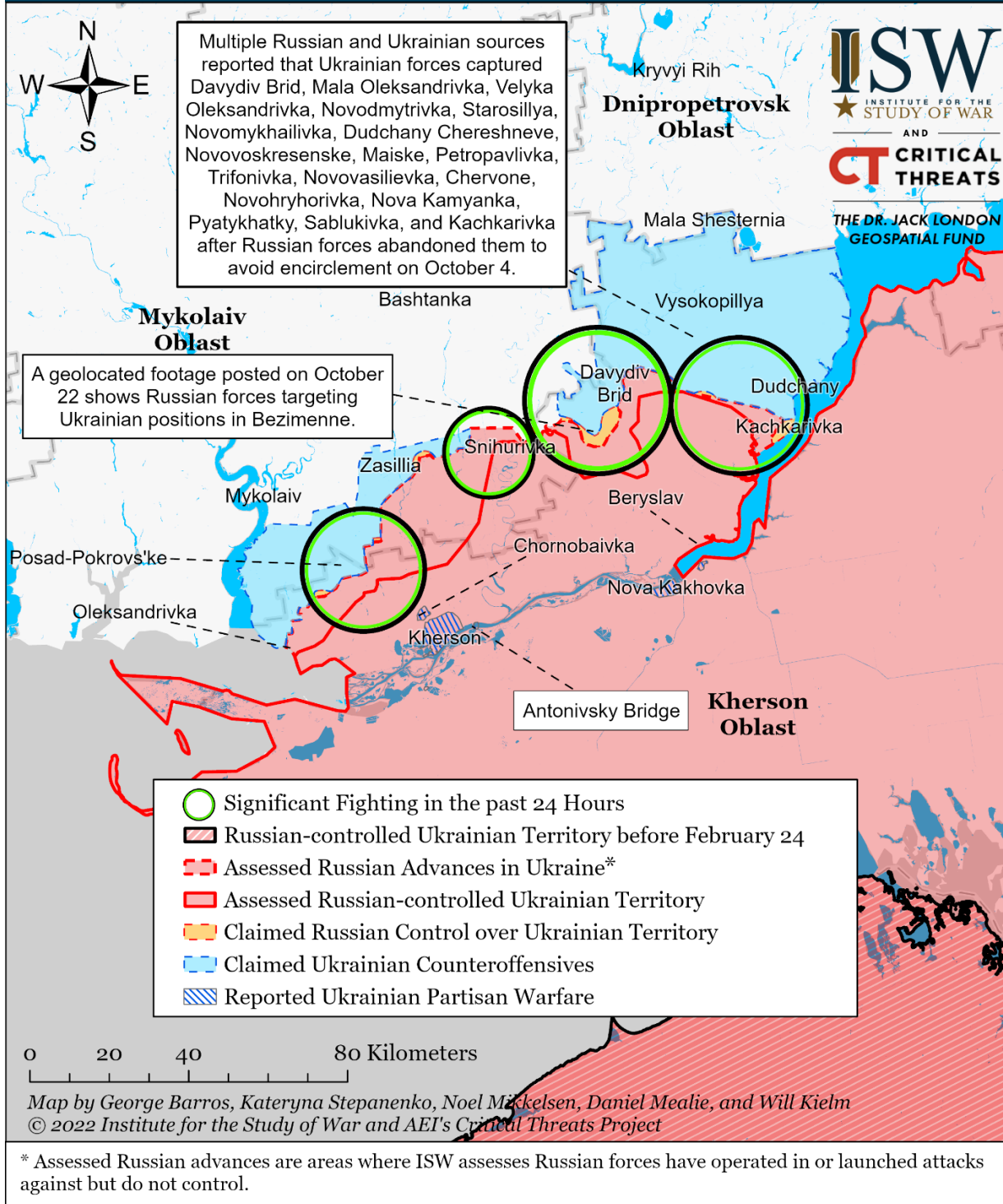
Southern Ukraine: (Kherson Oblast)

Russian forces are likely attempting to establish fallback positions closer to the Dnipro River and are reportedly setting conditions to defend Kherson City. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces are continuing to mine bridges and crossings on retreat routes in unspecified locations in Mykolaiv and Kherson Oblast.[38] Ukraine's Southern Operational Command added that Russian forces are maintaining their defensive positions amid the evacuation of civilian-occupation institutions and management staff.[39] Russian milbloggers also claimed that Russian forces are creating territorial defense units with Kherson City residents, but these units are unlikely to be an effective defensive force.[40] The Ukrainian General Staff added that Russian security forces released most inmates from Kherson City's prison and that Russian forces may use these men for the defense of Kherson City.[41]

Russian sources claimed that Ukrainian forces continued to conduct counteroffensive operations in northwestern Kherson Oblast between October 23 and 24. The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) claimed that Russian forces suppressed Ukrainian counterattacks on Bruskinske, Pyatikhatky, and Tryfonivka in northern Kherson Oblast on October 24.[42] Proxy officials and Russian milbloggers also claimed that Russian forces captured a Ukrainian sabotage group during the attack.[43] Deputy Head of Kherson Oblast Occupation Administration Kirill Stremousov claimed that Russian forces have repelled a Ukrainian attack in the Andriivka area east of the Inhulets River.[44] A Russian source also claimed that Ukrainian forces attempted to gain a foothold north of Ishchenka, a settlement just east of Davydiv Brid.[45] Ukrainian military officials stated that Russian forces continued to shell and launch airstrikes in northwestern Kherson Oblast along the line of contact.[46]

Ukrainian forces continued their interdiction campaign in central and northern Kherson Oblast on October 23 and 24. Geolocated footage showed the aftermath of Ukrainian strikes on an electric machine-building plant in Nova Kakhovka — a strike Russian sources used to accuse Ukrainian forces of hitting the Kakhovka Hydroelectric Power Plant 4km northwest of the electric machine-building plant.[47] Other geolocated footage reportedly showed the aftermath of a Ukrainian strike on an area of Russian manpower concentration in Kairy, about 27km northeast of Nova Kakhovka.[48] The Ukrainian General Staff also reported that a Ukrainian strike on a Russian manpower concentration point in Nova Kakhovka on an unspecified date wounded about 150 Russian servicemen and destroyed six unspecified pieces of military equipment.[49] Ukraine's Southern Operational Command added that Ukrainian forces destroyed four ammunition depots in Pervomaisk and Beryslav raions.[50]

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Kherson and Mykolaiv as of October 24, 2022, 3:00 PM ET



Russian Main Effort—Eastern Ukraine

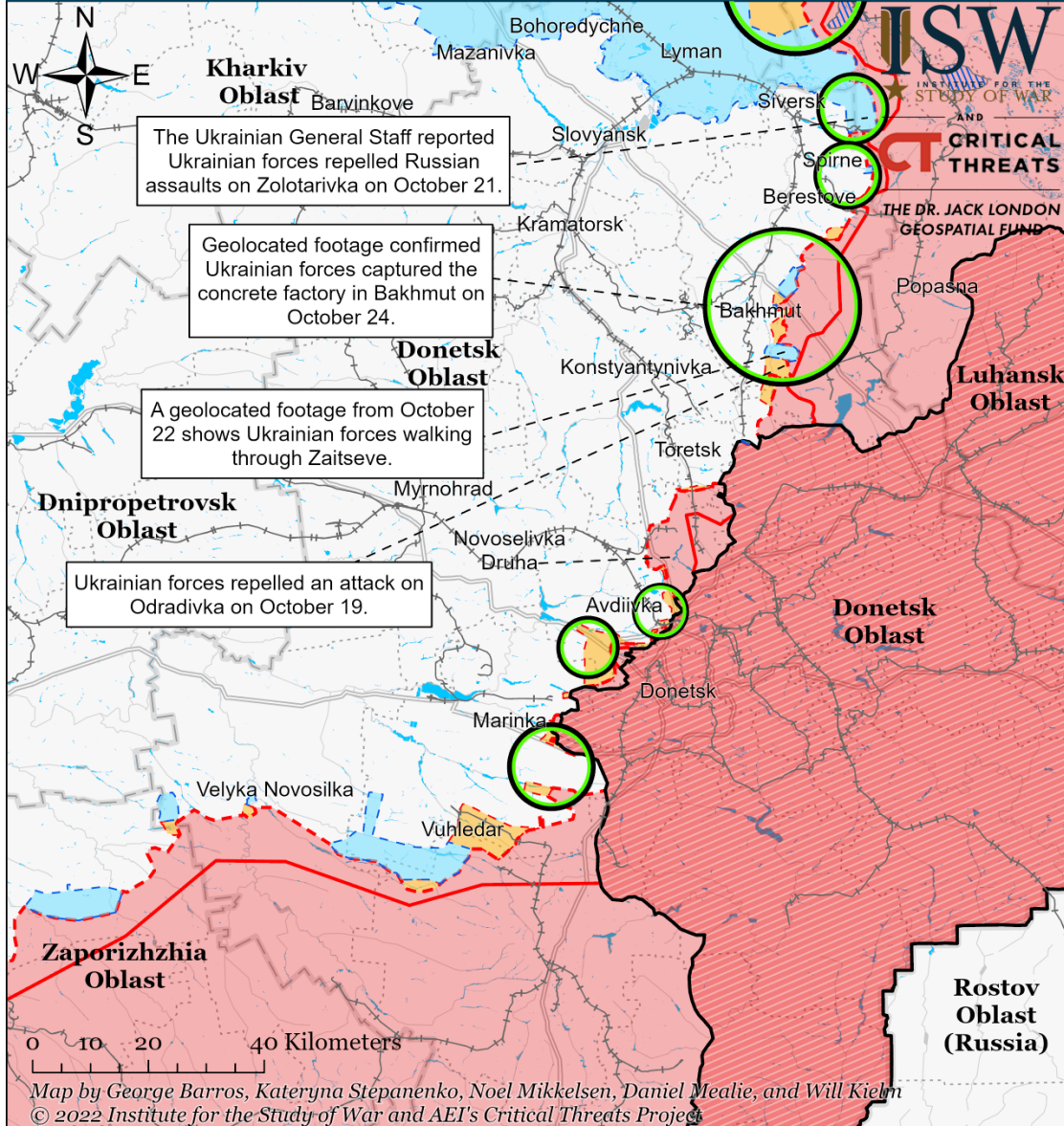
Russian Subordinate Main Effort—Donetsk Oblast (Russian objective: Capture the entirety of Donetsk Oblast, the claimed territory of Russia’s proxies in Donbas)

Wagner Group financier Yevgeny Prigozhin acknowledged the slow pace of Wagner Group ground operations around Bakhmut on October 23 as Russian forces continued to lose ground near the city. Prigozhin stated that Wagner forces advance only 100-200m per day and made the absurd claim that this slow pace is normal for modern warfare.[51] The pace of recent Ukrainian counteroffensives, particularly in Kharkiv Oblast in the days after Ukrainian forces recaptured Balakliya, contradicts Prigozhin’s excuses. Russian forces lost territory near Bakhmut on October 24. Geolocated footage posted on October 24 indicates that Ukrainian forces recaptured a concrete factory on the eastern outskirts of Bakhmut, 2.5km east of Bakhmut’s city center.[52]

Russian forces continued ground attacks in Donetsk Oblast on October 23 and 24. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Ukrainian forces repelled Russian ground attacks on Bakhmut, northeast of Bakhmut near Spirne, Soledar, Bakhmut, and south of Bakhmut near Klyshchiivka, Ivanhrad, Ozaryanivka, and Odradivka on October 23 and 24.[53] Russian sources claimed that Russian and Wagner Group forces made unspecified advances near Ivanhrad, Ozaryanivka, Odradivka, and Optyne on October 23 and 24.[54] A Russian source reported ongoing fighting in the southeastern outskirts of Soledar on October 23.[55] The Ukrainian General Staff also reported that Ukrainian forces repelled Russian ground attacks on Avdiivka, west of Avdiivka near Pervomaiske, southwest of Avdiivka near Marinka, and Nevelske on October 23 and 24. [56] Geolocated footage shows that Russian forces have made marginal advances southwest of Avdiivka towards Pisky and Mariinka.[57] The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces conducted an unsuccessful counterattack near Novomykhailivka in western Donetsk Oblast on October 23.[58] The Russian Ministry of Defense claimed that Russian forces repelled Ukrainian ground attacks in western Donetsk Oblast towards Novomykhailivka, Nikolske, and Slavne on October 23 and Solodke and Volodymyrivka on October 24.[59]

A Lepestok anti-personnel mine lightly wounded prominent Russian war correspondent and WarGonzo frontman Semyon Pegov near the front line in Vodyane, Donetsk Oblast after Pegov met Donetsk People’s Republic (DNR) Head Denis Pushilin on October 23.[60] Pegov claimed on October 24 that he stepped on the mine while seeking shelter from a Ukrainian tank.[61] Footage shows DNR “Somalia” battalion personnel evacuating Pegov from the front line with a visible injury to his foot.[62]

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Donetsk as of October 24, 2022, 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
- Major Railroads
- 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.

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

Russian forces continued routine indirect fire west of Hulyaipole and in Mykolaiv and Dnipropetrovsk oblasts on October 23 and 24. Ukrainian sources reported that Russian forces fired on Zaporizhzhia City, Mykolaiv City, Nikopol, and Marhanets on October 23 and 24 with S-300 missiles and MLRS.[63] Ukraine's Operational Command South reported that Russian forces struck civilian infrastructure in the Inhulka and Shevchenko hromadas of Bashtanka Raion, Mykolaiv Oblast with S-300 missiles.[64]

Ukrainian forces continued targeting Russian force concentrations near the Zaporizhzhia Oblast front line. The Ukrainian General Staff reported on October 23 that that Ukrainian strikes against Russian force positions in unspecified areas of Zaporizhzhia Oblast destroyed five unspecified pieces of military equipment and weapons and injured approximately 100 personnel.[65] Ukrainian Melitopol Mayor Ivan Fedorov stated on October 24 that the hospital in Russian-controlled Tokmak is filled with wounded Russian military personnel and stated the strikes killed an unspecified large number of Russian forces.[66]

Ukrainian forces struck a Russian force and equipment concentration in the vicinity of Enerhodar on October 22. The Ukrainian General Staff confirmed the strike on October 23, reporting that Ukrainian forces destroyed four D-30 howitzers and three trucks with ammunition, killed up to 50 Russian military personnel, and wounded up to 40 personnel.[67] Geolocated footage confirmed that the strikes hit the Alisa hotel roughly 6km southeast of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP) nuclear reactor area.[68] Ukrainian Enerhodar Mayor Dmytro Orlov stated that Ukrainian forces struck the hotel on October 23 and that Russian occupiers and collaborators used the hotel.[69] Zaporizhzhia Oblast occupation official Vladimir Rogov claimed that Russian state nuclear energy agency Rosatom personnel use the hotel.[70] The Ukrainian General Staff stated on October 24 that occupation authorities are pressuring ZNPP personnel to sign contracts with Rosatom and are rotating out Russian personnel.[71]

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

The hurried mobilization and deployment of Russian men to fill personnel shortages on the front lines in Ukraine appears to have cannibalized the Russian force-generation system and created a further impediment to effective training and deployment efforts. The Ukrainian General Staff stated on October 24 that Russian commanders have deployed such a quantity of officers and non-commissioned officers that there is a shortage of instructor-teaching staff at training centers.[72] Rank-and-file soldiers reportedly fill in for professionals in many instances.[73] These trainer replacements likely lack the experience and background to provide a level of training sufficient to prepare inexperienced newly mobilized Russian soldiers. ISW previously assessed Russia's net training capacity has likely decreased since February 24, since the Kremlin deployed training elements to participate in combat in Ukraine and these training elements reportedly took casualties.[74] Several Russian sources further report ineffectively short durations of training prior to the deployment of mobilized Russians.[75] One Russian source reported on October 23 that a soldier from Lipetsk trained for one day prior to deployment to the front lines in Kreminna.[76] Another Russian source reported on October 23 that a soldier from Yekaterinburg with no combat experience deployed without preparation less than two weeks after his mobilization.[77] Such recruits are extremely unlikely to contribute significantly to Russian combat power. The Ukrainian General Staff reported on October 23 that there are Russian friendly-fire instances due to poor training.[78] Any attempts to deploy more experienced recruits would require either greater training time or additional strain on the Russian domestic military personnel system.

The effort to fill personnel shortages on the front continues to cause personnel shortages in domestic Russian industries, as ISW has previously reported.[79] A Russian Telegram channel posted on October 21 that Moscow authorities may significantly decrease metro train service due to the mass mobilization of machinists.[80] *Meduza* reported on October 24 that the mobilization of bus drivers in Voronezh has exacerbated public transportation issues in the city. The Office of the Mayor of Voronezh claimed

mobilization called up only 3% of the city's bus drivers but conceded that the drivers' absence resulted in the removal of some buses from their lines.[81]

Russian resistance to mobilization continues. A Russian source reported on October 22 that Russian authorities detained a woman in Krasnoyarsk Krai who picketed with a placard bearing "no to a country without men." [82] A Russian channel reported on October 21 that authorities brought criminal cases against two Bashkiria residents for committing arson attacks on military registration and enlistment offices on September 26 and October 8. [83] An independent Russian news source reported on October 23 that Russian authorities returned many striking mobilized soldiers from Bryansk Oblast to the oblast and moved 30 to military units in Klintsky, Bryansk Oblast. [84] ISW reported on October 12 that over 100 conscripts from Bryansk Oblast refused to deploy to Ukraine from their base at the Belgorod Soloti training ground. [85] Several Russian and Ukrainian sources reported on October 22, 23, and 24 that mobilized Russian soldiers continue to flee their posts or refuse to fight following deployment to Ukraine. [86] The Russian military continues to mobilize Russian men in violation of Russian recruitment policies. An Orenburg man legally entitled to mobilization deferment due to being the parent of three children was mobilized anyway and died, reportedly at a training ground on October 16. [87]

Russian authorities maintain efforts to downplay continuing mobilization efforts in contradiction with Moscow Mayor Sobyenin's public statements about the completion of "partial mobilization." The Main Directorate of Intelligence of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine reported on October 24 that Russian authorities forbade Russian mass media to cover mobilization roundups. [88] A Russian Telegram channel reported on October 21 that the Avito advertising service blocked advertisements for legal assistance for mobilized soldiers. [89]

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

Russian and occupation administration officials continued preparations of occupied areas for anticipated Ukrainian offensives on October 23 and 24. The Ukraine Resistance Center and video footage posted to social media depicting Russian forces blocking telecommunications signals and dismantling relevant equipment in Kherson City in an effort to prevent residents from sharing information about Russian troops with Ukrainian forces. [90] Social media reports indicate that Kherson City lost internet connection on or prior to October 23. [91]

Occupation authorities also continued the removal of civilians from western Kherson Oblast. Kherson Occupation Administration Deputy Head Kirill Stremousov claimed on October 24 that civilians forced to leave Kherson City and other areas of Kherson Oblast west of the Dnipro are eligible to receive a one-time payment of 100,000 rubles (1,632 USD) and a certificate to support the purchase of housing elsewhere. [92] The Kherson Oblast occupation administration stated on October 24 that men who do not evacuate to the east bank of the Dnipro will have the "opportunity" to join Kherson City militias in preventing Ukrainian advances. [93] A Russian occupation official announced the closure of the entrances to Kherson City and western Kherson Oblast until further notice. [94] Enerhodar Mayor Dmitry Orlov reported on October 23 that Russian officials have begun notifying Ukrainian parents of unspecified regions whose children are on forced "vacations" in Krasnodar Krai to send clothing and other supplies for their children as the vacation extends indefinitely. [95]

Ukrainian resistance to Russian occupation continues in Kherson and Zaporizhia Oblast. Geolocated footage posted to social media on October 23 shows a car bomb exploding in Kherson City and injuring two civilians. [96] Several sources further reported that an explosive device in an infrastructure pole outside of a pre-trial detention center exploded in Kherson City and killed one civilian on October 23. [97] A DNR official labeled the attack a failed attempt by Ukrainian special services to assassinate the head of the pre-trial detention center. [98] Russian and Ukrainian news sources have reported that Ukrainian citizens in Kherson and Zaporizhia Oblast are refusing to accept rubles as currency, potentially contributing to the disruption of Russian evacuation procedures in western Kherson Oblast. [99] The Ukraine Resistance Center reported on October 24 that even Russian soldiers are exchanging their rubles

for hryvnia, likely obligated to do so in order to make purchases.[100] Melitopol Mayor Ivan Fedorov stated on October 23 that that actual exchange rate between rubles and hryvnia is 5:1 in Kherson Oblast.[101]

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://t.me/mod_russia/21157; <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/statement-on-the-chief-of-the-defence-staffs-call-with-the-russian-chief-of-the-general-staff>

[2] <https://understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-october-23>

[3] <https://telegra.ph/Brifing-po-ugrozam-radiacionnoj-bezopasnosti-nachalnika-vojsk-radiacionnoj-himicheskoy-i-biologicheskoy-zashchity-VS-RF-general--10-24>; https://t.me/mod_russia/21147; https://t.me/mod_russia/21148; https://t.me/mod_russia/21149; https://t.me/mod_russia/21150; https://t.me/mod_russia/21151; https://t.me/mod_russia/21152; <https://t.me/sashakots/36807>

[4] <https://t.me/kommunist/12112>; <https://t.me/kommunist/12116>; https://t.me/miroshnik_r/9353; <https://t.me/SolovievLive/136023>; https://t.me/miroshnik_r/9350; https://t.me/miroshnik_r/9357; <https://t.me/NeoficialniyBeZsonoV/19222>; <https://t.me/swodki/181461>; https://t.me/boris_rozhin/68300; <https://t.me/kommunist/12135>

[5] <https://understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-october-23>

[6] <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbid02rH4gdYG2XnmihjBC3mKQvKKAer8wVvzPwaYfq5vsBvWKkWLvU32rm67WeSG7YZdl>; <https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbid02cvsfN4aoAK1QUmA8xGbLVEXgWXtHnuArtbBazYzsyzzKZg5mHp7fXJyW8xFyBpml>

[7] <https://www.dotpravda.com.ua/articles/2022/10/24/7373160/>

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