



Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment

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November 17, 2023, 7:15pm 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 1:30pm ET on November 17. ISW will cover subsequent reports in the November 18 Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment.

Ukrainian officials stated that Ukrainian forces have established bridgeheads on the east (left) bank of Kherson Oblast and are conducting ground operations aimed at pushing Russian forces out of artillery range of the west (right) bank of the Dnipro River. The Ukrainian Marine Corps Command and the Ukrainian General Staff stated on November 17 that Ukrainian marines have secured several “bridgeheads” on the east bank following successful actions and are conducting actions to expand these positions.¹ US military doctrine defines a bridgehead as “an area on the enemy’s side of the water obstacle that is large enough to accommodate the majority of the crossing force, has adequate terrain to permit defense of the crossing sites, provides security to crossing forces from enemy direct fire, and provides a base for continuing the attack.”² The doctrinal definition of a bridgehead does not stipulate a certain size for the crossing force, the extent of the secured positions, or the ability to transfer and operate heavy military equipment from those positions. The necessary size of a bridgehead depends on the operations it is meant to support, and the official Ukrainian acknowledgment of these positions as bridgeheads indicates that the Ukrainian command assesses that these positions are sufficient for continuing ground operations on the east bank.

The Ukrainian General Staff stated that one of the main operational objectives for Ukrainian ground operations on the east bank is to prevent Russian shelling of Ukrainian civilians on the west bank of Kherson Oblast, particularly near Kherson City. The 152mm tube artillery systems that Russian forces widely operate in Ukraine have an approximate range of 25km, although Russian forces are unlikely to deploy these systems to immediate frontline areas due to the threat of Ukrainian counterbattery fire. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Ukrainian forces on the east bank are conducting diversionary actions, raids, and reconnaissance and are particularly surveilling Russian positions for intelligence on Russian logistics and ammunition concentrations.³

Russian forces appear to be applying lessons learned from attempts to man Russian multilayered defenses in western Zaporizhia Oblast during the Ukrainian counteroffensive to current Russian defensive operations in Kherson Oblast. The Ukrainian General Staff acknowledged that Russian forces have a “fairly serious” line of fortifications in Kherson Oblast.⁴ A Ukrainian soldier operating on the left (east) bank of Kherson Oblast characterized Russian defensive positions as “elaborate dugouts that [Russian forces] constructed over months” in an interview with the *Wall Street Journal (WSJ)* published on November 15.⁵ The



WSJ also reported that Russian forces heavily mined the area around Krynky (30km northeast of Kherson City and 2km from the Dnipro River), where Ukrainian forces currently maintain positions.⁶ Ukrainian military observer Kostyantyn Mashovets noted that Russian forces are not deploying their forces in a “pillar formation” at the immediate frontline on the east bank, likely in an effort to protect concentrations of Russian forces from Ukrainian artillery fire and drone strikes.⁷ Mashovets claimed on November 12 that the Russian command in the Kherson direction has refused to commit additional forces of the 70th Motorized Rifle Division (of the newly formed 18th Combined Arms Army) and 7th Air Assault (VDV) Division beyond elements of single regiments and battalions to the frontline, opting instead to maintain the remainder of these formations in near rear areas and secondary echelons of defense.⁸

This tactical deployment of forces in Kherson is reminiscent of changes that Russian forces made to Russian tactical defensive deployments in western Zaporizhia Oblast. ISW observed Russian forces concentrating personnel along the defensive layer closest to Ukrainian offensive operations at the start of the Ukrainian counteroffensive in western Zaporizhia Oblast.⁹ ISW observed a shift in Russian defensive operations as Ukrainian forces began penetrating Russian defensive layers in mid-September, wherein Russian forces shifted personnel away from manning immediate frontline defensive positions in order to man defensive layers further from the frontline from which more combat effective forces would counterattack.¹⁰ Russian forces have not constructed extensive visible defensive fortifications similar to those that Russian forces established in western Zaporizhia Oblast prior to the start of the Ukrainian counteroffensive and appear to have opted for more discrete fortifications set further from the frontline. The discrete fortifications located away from the frontline in Kherson Oblast will likely only be fully effective if they remain concealed, however. Fall and winter weather conditions may reveal some concealed positions as foliage and natural ground cover die.

Ukrainian officials reported that Russian forces have suffered roughly a brigade’s worth of casualties since Ukrainian forces started ground operations on the east bank of Kherson Oblast on October 17, reportedly forcing Russian forces to transfer combat power from elsewhere in Ukraine to Kherson Oblast. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Ukrainian forces have killed 1,216 Russian personnel and wounded 2,217 since starting “measures” on the east bank.¹¹ These manpower losses are roughly equivalent to a brigade’s worth of personnel, although these losses are likely spread out across the Russian formations and units operating in the Kherson direction. The Ukrainian General Staff also reported that Ukrainian forces have destroyed 24 Russian tanks, 48 armored combat vehicles, 89 artillery systems, 29 ammunition warehouses, and 14 aircraft since starting “measures” on the east bank.¹² The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces have transferred unspecified units from other unspecified sectors of the front to Kherson Oblast due to these losses.¹³ ISW previously assessed that the Russian military command will likely struggle to redeploy combat-effective reinforcements at scale to respond to ongoing Ukrainian operations in Kherson Oblast while conducting defensive operations in western Zaporizhia Oblast and sustaining other offensive efforts in eastern Ukraine.¹⁴ The scale of Russian reinforcements required, however, depends heavily on how much effort Ukrainian forces put into the Kherson direction and how much progress they make.

Russian forces conducted a series of drone and missile strikes against Ukraine on the night of November 16 to 17. Ukrainian military sources reported on November 17 that Russian forces launched 10 Shahed-131/136 drones primarily targeting Khmelnytskyi Oblast and several S-300 missiles in the Donetsk direction.¹⁵ Ukrainian military sources reported that Ukrainian air defenses downed nine Shahed drones over Mykolaiv, Odesa, Zhytomyr, and Khmelnytskyi oblasts.¹⁶ Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces struck targets in Khmelnytskyi, Dnipropetrovsk, Odesa, and Kharkiv oblasts.¹⁷

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky stated that the Israel-Hamas war has negatively affected Ukraine’s shell supplies. Zelensky stated during an interview with *Bloomberg* on November 16 that



Israel has sought large quantities of the global supply of 155mm artillery shells and that this has slowed deliveries of artillery shells to Ukraine at a critical moment.¹⁸

Russian President Vladimir Putin and Kremlin Spokesperson Dmitri Peskov attempted to dismiss criticisms of the Russian government and the war in Ukraine as inevitable yet unfounded and urged Russian citizens to self-censor. Putin stated at the International Cultural Forum in St. Petersburg on November 17 that people who are critical of the war have the right to their own point of view.¹⁹ Putin added that “the head is not only a tool for speaking but is also for thinking before you say something.”²⁰ Putin commented that many educated, knowledgeable, and talented adults do not follow or understand what is happening, presumably in Ukraine, but acknowledged that “the mood in society and the opinion of a country’s people...is an objective factor that no one can escape.”²¹ Peskov similarly stated in a video interview published on November 17 that there should be a level of censorship during wartime that would be unacceptable during peacetime.²² Peskov stated that the line between criticizing the Russian military and discrediting the Russian forces is very thin and advised those who want to “indiscriminately” speculate about and criticize the Russian military to “think ten times” before doing so.²³

Peskov also stated that he believes Putin will announce his presidential campaign and that he “does not doubt” that Putin will win the 2024 presidential elections.²⁴ Peskov also responded to a question about Russian leadership after Putin and the characteristics that Putin’s eventual successor should have, stating that Putin’s successor should be someone exactly like Putin.²⁵

Russian authorities detained several Federal Security Service (FSB) employees on November 16 for accepting a five-billion-ruble (\$55.6 million) bribe in connection with the dismissal of a corruption case. Russian outlet *RBC* reported that the FSB employees were involved in the dismissed investigation into the Merlion Group of Companies, a Russian IT company and technology distributor that the FSB previously investigated for corruption.²⁶ Russian authorities also arrested former head of the Russian Investigative Committee for the North-Western District of Moscow Sergei Romodanovsky, current head of the Russian Investigative Committee’s Khoroshevsky Investigative Department Rustam Yusupov, and former investigator Andrei Zhiryutin in connection to the case’s dismissal on November 10.²⁷ *RBC* reported that Russian authorities suspect that additional FSB employees, Romodanovsky, Yusupov, and Zhiryutin accepted a five-billion-ruble bribe to dismiss the case against the Merlion Group. A Russian insider source claimed on November 17 that Russian authorities are also investigating former Director of Russia’s Federal Migration Service Konstantin Romodanovsky (father of Sergei Romodanovsky), who has connections to Russian President Vladimir Putin, and suggested that Russian authorities may intend to blame Konstantin Romodanovsky for Russia’s migration issues to appease Putin’s ultranationalist base.²⁸

Key Takeaways:

- **Ukrainian officials stated that Ukrainian forces have established bridgeheads on the east (left) bank of Kherson Oblast and are conducting ground operations aimed at pushing Russian forces out of artillery range of the west (right) bank of the Dnipro River.**
- **Russian forces appear to be applying lessons learned from attempts to man Russian multilayered defenses in western Zaporizhia Oblast during the Ukrainian counteroffensive to current Russian defensive operations in Kherson Oblast.**
- **Ukrainian officials reported that Russian forces have suffered roughly a brigade’s worth of casualties since Ukrainian forces started ground operations on the east bank of Kherson Oblast on October 17, reportedly forcing Russian forces to transfer combat power from elsewhere in Ukraine to Kherson Oblast.**



- Russian forces conducted a series of drone and missile strikes against Ukraine on the night of November 16 to 17.
- Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky stated that the Israel-Hamas war has negatively affected Ukraine's shell supplies.
- Russian President Vladimir Putin and Kremlin Spokesperson Dmitri Peskov attempted to dismiss criticisms of the Russian government and the war in Ukraine as inevitable yet unfounded and urged Russian citizens to self-censor.
- Russian authorities detained several Federal Security Service (FSB) employees on November 16 for accepting a five-billion-ruble (\$55.6 million) bribe in connection with the dismissal of a corruption case.
- Russian forces continued offensive operations along the Kupyansk-Svatove-Kreminna line, near Bakhmut, near Avdiivka, west and southwest of Donetsk City, in the Donetsk-Zaporizhia Oblast border area, and in western Zaporizhia Oblast and advanced in several sectors of the front.
- The United Kingdom Ministry of Defense (UK MoD) reported on November 17 that the Russian military is likely using updated surveillance aircraft due to concerns over Ukraine deploying Western-provided combat aircraft.
- Yale School of Public Health's *Humanitarian Research Lab* (Yale HRL) reported on November 16 that Russian and Belarusian authorities have forcibly deported at least 2,442 Ukrainian children between the ages of six and 17 to Belarus via Russia since February 24, 2022.

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 Mobilization and Force Generation Efforts
- Russian Technological Adaptations
- Activities in Russian-occupied areas
- Russian Information Operations and Narratives

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)

Russian forces continued offensive operations along the Kupyansk-Svatove-Kreminna line on November 17 but did not make any confirmed advances. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces conducted



unsuccessful assault operations near Synkivka (8km northeast of Kupyansk), Petropavlivka (7km east of Kupyansk), and Ivanivka (20km southeast of Kupyansk) in Kharkiv Oblast and Bilohorivka (13km south of Kreminna) in Luhansk Oblast.²⁹ A prominent Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces recently advanced towards Tymkivka (19km east of Kupyansk) and consolidated control over positions near the outskirts of the settlement.³⁰ Russian sources claimed that Russian forces also advanced near Ivanivka and Torske (15km west of Kreminna).³¹ Ukrainian Ground Forces Command Spokesperson Lieutenant Colonel Volodymyr Fityo stated that Russian forces are still regrouping in the Kupyansk-Lyman direction and have not advanced.³² Chechen Republic Head Ramzan Kadyrov posted footage claiming to show the “Amur” group of the “Okhotnik” detachment of Chechen “Akhmat” Spetsnaz operating in the Serebryanske forest area (10km south of Kreminna).³³

Russian sources claimed that Ukrainian forces conducted unsuccessful assaults along the Kupyansk-Svatove-Kreminna line on November 17. Russian Western Grouping of Forces Spokesperson Sergei Zybinsky claimed that Russian forces repelled three Ukrainian attacks near Synkivka and the former settlement of Zahoruykivka (a settlement 16km east of Kupyansk that was disincorporated in the 1980s).³⁴ A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces unsuccessfully counterattacked near Synkivka.³⁵ A Russian news aggregator claimed that Ukrainian forces conducted an unsuccessful armored assault near Bilohorivka, Luhansk Oblast, on November 16.³⁶ The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) claimed that Russian forces repelled 23 Ukrainian attacks in the Lyman direction between November 11 and 17.³⁷

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

Ukrainian forces conducted offensive operations near Bakhmut and made confirmed advances on November 17. Geolocated footage published on November 17 indicates that Ukrainian forces advanced southeast of Pivdenne (24km southwest of Bakhmut).³⁸ Russian Southern Grouping of Forces Spokesperson Vadim Astafyev claimed that Ukrainian forces unsuccessfully attacked near Klishchiivka (7km southwest of Bakhmut) and Zalizne (25km southwest of Bakhmut).³⁹ The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) claimed that Ukrainian forces unsuccessfully attacked near Rozdolivka (17km northeast of Bakhmut), Klishchiivka, Andriivka (10km southwest of Bakhmut), and Kurdyumivka (13km southwest of Bakhmut) in the past week.⁴⁰

Russian forces conducted offensive operations near Bakhmut but did not make any confirmed advances on November 17. Russian milbloggers claimed on November 16 and 17 that Russian forces advanced near the Berkhivka reservoir (about 2km northwest of Bakhmut) towards Bohdanivka (6km northwest of Bakhmut).⁴¹ Russian milbloggers also claimed on November 16 and 17 that Russian forces advanced near Klishchiivka and are trying to capture Ukrainian-controlled tactical heights west of the settlement.⁴² Other Russian sources claimed on November 17 that fighting continues near Andriivka and that Klishchiivka and Andriivka are contested “gray zones.”⁴³ The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces unsuccessfully attacked near Vasyukivka (15km north of Bakhmut), Ivanivske (6km west of Bakhmut), Klishchiivka, and Andriivka.⁴⁴ Ukrainian Ground Forces Spokesperson Lieutenant Colonel Volodymyr Fityo stated on November 17 that Russian forces conducted three times as many ground assaults in the Bakhmut direction as in the Lyman-Kupyansk direction.⁴⁵ The Russian MoD reported that elements of the Russian 106th Guards Airborne (VDV) Division are operating near Soledar (11km northeast of Bakhmut), and Chechen Republic Head Ramzan Kadyrov claimed that elements of the Chechen “Akhmat” Spetsnaz forces are operating near Klishchiivka.⁴⁶ A Russian milblogger claimed that elements of the Russian 200th Separate Motorized Rifle Brigade (14th Army Corps, Northern Fleet) are operating on the northern flank of Bakhmut.⁴⁷



Russian forces conducted offensive operations near Avdiivka on November 17 and made confirmed advances. Footage published on November 16, which ISW geolocated, indicates that Russian forces marginally advanced in the industrial zone southeast of Avdiivka.⁴⁸ Russian sources claimed on November 16 and 17 that Russian forces advanced near Stepove (3km northwest of Avdiivka), and one Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces control a significant portion of the settlement.⁴⁹ Russian sources also claimed on November 16 and 17 that Russian forces advanced west of Krasnohorivka (5km northwest of Avdiivka); in the direction of Novokalynove (13km northeast of Avdiivka) and Ocheretyne (15km northwest of Avdiivka); and near the waste heap (6km northwest of Avdiivka), the Avdiivka Coke Plant northwest of Avdiivka, and the industrial zone.⁵⁰ A Russian milblogger claimed on November 17 that Russian forces control at least 60 percent of the industrial zone.⁵¹ ISW has not observed visual confirmation of any of these claimed Russian advances. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces unsuccessfully attacked near Keramik (14km northeast of Avdiivka), Stepove, and Avdiivka, east of Novobakhmutivka (7km northwest of Avdiivka), and south of Tonenke (6km west of Avdiivka).⁵² A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces unsuccessfully attacked near Pervomaiske (10km southwest of Avdiivka).⁵³ Russian sources claimed on November 16 and 17 that fighting is ongoing south of Sieverne (6km west of Avdiivka); north of Krasnohorivka in the direction of Novokalynove; and near Stepove, Sieverne, the industrial zone, and the Avdiivka Coke Plant.⁵⁴ A Russian milblogger acknowledged that Russian forces still have to capture large amounts of territory, some of which is heavily fortified and requires Russian forces to attack uphill, in order to encircle and capture Avdiivka.⁵⁵

Russian forces conducted offensive operations west and southwest of Donetsk City but did not make any claimed or confirmed advances on November 17. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces conducted unsuccessful attacks near Marinka (on the western outskirts of Donetsk City), Pobieda (5km southwest of Donetsk City), Novomykhailivka (10km southwest of Donetsk City), and Vodyane (25km southwest of Donetsk City).⁵⁶ A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces unsuccessfully attacked near Marinka and Novomykhailivka.⁵⁷ A Russian source claimed that elements of the Russian 36th Motorized Rifle Brigade (29th Combined Arms Army, Eastern Military District) are operating near Vuhledar.⁵⁸

Russian sources claimed that Ukrainian forces conducted offensive operations west and southwest of Donetsk City but did not make any claimed or confirmed advances on November 17. The Russian MoD claimed that Ukrainian forces unsuccessfully attacked near Heorhiivka (7km west of Donetsk City) and Novomykhailivka.⁵⁹ The Russian MoD claimed that Ukrainian forces conducted two unsuccessful attacks near Novomykhailivka and Mykilske (27km southwest of Donetsk City) in the past week.⁶⁰

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

Russian forces continued limited offensive operations in the Donetsk-Zaporizhia Oblast border area on November 17 and made confirmed advances. Geolocated footage published on November 16 indicates that Russian forces advanced east of Urozhaine (9km south of Velyka Novosilka).⁶¹ The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces conducted unsuccessful assaults near Staromayorske (9km south of Velyka Novosilka).⁶² Geolocated footage published on November 16 shows Ukrainian forces repelling a Russian assault west of Novodonetske (12km southwest of Velyka Novosilka).⁶³

Ukrainian forces did not conduct any claimed or confirmed assaults in the Donetsk-Zaporizhia Oblast border area on November 17.

Ukrainian forces continued counteroffensive operations in western Zaporizhia Oblast on November 17 and made a marginal confirmed advance. Geolocated footage published on November 16 indicates that Ukrainian forces



marginally advanced southwest of Robotyne.⁶⁴ Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces repelled small Ukrainian infantry assaults near Robotyne and Verbove (9km east of Robotyne).⁶⁵ Russian sources claimed that Ukrainian forces unsuccessfully attacked Russian positions between Robotyne and Kopani (6km northwest of Robotyne) and tried to advance towards Novoprokopivka (3km south of Robotyne) and Rivne (8km west of Robotyne) on November 16.⁶⁶ The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) claimed that Russian forces repelled three Ukrainian assaults near Robotyne between November 11 and 17.⁶⁷

Russian forces counterattacked in western Zaporizhia Oblast on November 17 but did not make any confirmed gains. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Ukrainian forces repelled over six Russian assaults near Robotyne and west of Verbove.⁶⁸ A Kremlin-affiliated milblogger also claimed that Russian counterattacks near Robotyne and Verbove were unsuccessful.⁶⁹ Russian sources claimed that Russian forces conducted counterattacks along the Robotyne-Novoprokopivka-Verbove line on November 16 and occupied unspecified positions near Novoprokopivka.⁷⁰ A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces operating near Verbove are experiencing ammunition and optics equipment shortages and have poor counterbattery capabilities as a result.⁷¹

Russian sources claimed that Ukrainian forces continued ground operations on the east (left) bank of Kherson Oblast on November 17. Russian milbloggers claimed that there are ongoing battles near Poyma (12km east of Kherson City and 4km from the Dnipro River), Pishchanivka (13km east of Kherson City and 3km from the Dnipro River), and Krynky (30km northeast of Kherson City and 2km from the Dnipro River).⁷² Russian sources claimed that Ukrainian forces maintain positions in central Krynky.⁷³ A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces control 10 square kilometers of territory near Krynky as of November 16.⁷⁴ Another Russian milblogger claimed on November 16 that Russian forces were engaged in attritional fighting near Krynky.⁷⁵ Russian milbloggers claimed on November 17 that Russian forces repelled several small Ukrainian river crossing attempts along the Poyma-Krynky line and that Ukrainian forces are struggling to transfer equipment and personnel to Ukrainian positions on the east bank.⁷⁶ Russian sources have widely claimed that Ukrainian forces can resupply their positions on the east bank, however, and the reported increase in the size of the Ukrainian grouping on the east bank in recent weeks suggests that Russian interdiction efforts along the Dnipro River have not prevented Ukrainian forces from transferring additional personnel and materiel to these positions.⁷⁷ A Russian insider source claimed that elements of the 35th Motorized Rifle Brigade (41st Combined Arms Army, Central Military District) suffered heavy losses from Ukrainian artillery fire on November 10 in Hola Prystan Raion, Kherson Oblast.⁷⁸

The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Ukrainian forces repelled six Russian assaults in unspecified locations on the east (left) bank of Kherson Oblast on November 17.⁷⁹

Russian sources claimed that Ukrainian forces targeted rear Russian areas in southern Ukraine and occupied Crimea on November 17. The Russian MoD claimed that Russian air defenses downed two Ukrainian Neptune missiles off the coast of occupied Crimea and destroyed seven Ukrainian naval drones and a Ukrainian landing group *en route* to Crimea.⁸⁰ Zaporizhia Oblast occupation deputy Vladimir Rogov claimed that Russian air defenses shot down the missiles above the northern pier in Sevastopol, and a prominent Russian milblogger claimed that Russian air defenses intercepted a third Ukrainian Neptune missile near the Cape of Tarkhankut (115km northwest of Sevastopol).⁸¹ Russian sources claimed that Ukrainian forces also struck Russian positions near Chaplynka (76km southeast of Kherson City) and Askania-Nova (97km southeast of Kherson City) in Kherson Oblast with HIMARS rockets.⁸²

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

Nothing significant to report.

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

The United Kingdom Ministry of Defense (UK MoD) reported on November 17 that the Russian military is likely using updated surveillance aircraft due to concerns about Ukraine deploying Western-provided combat aircraft. The UK MoD reported that Russian forces have likely started using A-50 Mainstay D (Russian reporting name: Beriev A-50) airborne early warning and control aircraft to identify targets for its SA-21 long-range ground-based air defense missile system for the first time. The UK MoD stated that the Mainstay's radar can detect targets at longer ranges than the SA-21's ground-based radar.⁸³ The UK MoD assessed that Russian forces may risk flying the Mainstay closer to the frontline.⁸⁴

Russian state-owned defense conglomerate Rostec announced on November 17 that its subsidiary, Radioelectronic Technologies Concern, developed a new remote-control platform for the PTK machine gun. Rostec claimed that the remote-control platform will allow the operator to control the platform from a distance of up to one kilometer.⁸⁵ Rostec claimed that elements of the 247th Guards Air Assault (VDV) Regiment (7th Guards VDV Division) are already using the new systems in Ukraine.⁸⁶ ISW has observed reports that elements of the 247th VDV Regiment are operating near Verbove.⁸⁷

Rostec announced on November 15 that a Russian drone development company is launching a training program for drone designers and operators in 2024. Rostec stated that the Russian drone producer Izhevsk Unmanned Systems Company developed a joint program with Izhevsk State Technical University aimed at training university students in drone design and operation.⁸⁸ The program will include training in “artificial intelligence and control of unmanned systems” and students will complete “educational and industrial” practice at the company.⁸⁹

Chechen Republic Head Ramzan Kadyrov announced on November 16 that the Chechen Ministry of Industry and Energy plans to construct a technology park that will produce drone components.⁹⁰ Kadyrov did not specify when construction will start or is projected to finish.⁹¹

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)

Yale School of Public Health's *Humanitarian Research Lab* (Yale HRL) reported on November 16 that Russian and Belarusian authorities have forcibly deported at least 2,442 Ukrainian children between the ages of six and 17 to Belarus via Russia since February 24, 2022.⁹² Yale HRL stated that Russia's Investigative Committee plays a significant role in identifying children for deportation and targets highly vulnerable populations including orphans, children with disabilities, children from low-income and military families, and previously adopted children. Yale HRL reported that Russian and Belarusian authorities, particularly Belarus' “Internal Troops,” subjected Ukrainian children to cultural and historical “re-education” and military training. Yale HRL has not observed any evidence that children are permanently placed in Belarus via adoption or foster placements but added that it is unclear how many Ukrainian children remain in Belarus.

Russian authorities continue efforts to change the demographic composition of occupied Ukraine by resettling migrants from Central Asia and the North Caucasus in occupied Donetsk Oblast. The Ukrainian Resistance Center reported on November 17 that Russian authorities have resettled more than 30,000 Central Asian and



North Caucasus migrants in occupied southern Donetsk Oblast, particularly in Mariupol.⁹³ ISW has previously observed Russian authorities resettling ethnic Russians in occupied Ukraine; however, it appears that Russian authorities are now heavily resettling ethnic minorities and migrants, likely to more quickly eradicate ethnic Ukrainian majority areas in occupied Ukraine.⁹⁴ Russia’s new emphasis on resettling migrants may be an effort to quell Russia’s increasingly prominent anti-migrant sentiments and cater to Russian ultranationalists ahead of the 2024 presidential election.

Russian Information Operations and Narratives

The Russian government reamplified a longstanding Russian information operation falsely portraying Ukraine as oppressing religious liberties in an attempt to discredit Ukraine. The Russian Permanent Mission to the UN held a meeting with UN Security Council members on November 17 and claimed that Ukraine is “persecuting” the Kremlin-affiliated Ukrainian Orthodox Church Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP).⁹⁵ ISW has long assessed that the UOC MP is not an independent organization and is subordinated to the Kremlin-controlled Russian Orthodox Church (ROC), which has supported Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in 2014 and the full-scale invasion in 2022.⁹⁶

Chechen Republic Head Ramzan Kadyrov continues to praise his younger son Adam Kadyrov. A Russian milblogger published footage on November 17 of Adam Kadyrov receiving the “Labor Valor of Russia” Insignia and a medal “for contribution to the development of Russian Spetsnaz University” first degree.⁹⁷ The milblogger claimed that Adam Kadyrov has received six other awards since the beginning of October and expressed irritation toward Russian government officials for not stopping Ramzan Kadyrov from heaping honors on his younger son.⁹⁸

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)

The Belarusian Ministry of Defense (MoD) announced on November 17 that the Assistant to the Belarusian Defense Minister for International Military Cooperation, Colonel Valery Revenko, met with the Saudi Arabian military attaché to Russia and Belarus, Major General Saad Mohammed Hossein Alkatiri, to discuss bilateral military cooperation.⁹⁹ Alkatiri is the first accredited Saudi military diplomat to visit Belarus since the two countries began formal diplomatic relations twenty-six years ago.

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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https://www.facebook.com/uafmarines/posts/pfbid0328ZXjDnNmxVce22iVQ3PZWaEjcvJLgkVCCd3MH7bnqaWCsR1y48pTSBEscWxxugl?ref=embed_post ;
<https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbid02iDY5j3EaGHGY97swTwunrSMbm4SHGnayd5pxn5NLV9UrBpKxasQv9pd93z9bGY4l>

² <https://army.rotc.umich.edu/public/resources/FM1-02OperationalTerms.pdf>

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<https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbid022mFrPJdiJNnSrd1fWS6uZbTddD25ea6hczINdhQwRgTqz8EgxdXW6wbMYsBg6Pw7kl>

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