The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) announced the commanders of the “central” and “southern” groupings of forces in Ukraine on June 24, confirming previously rumored changes reported on June 21.¹ Spokesperson for the Russian MoD Igor Konashenkov stated on June 24 that Commander of the Central Military District Colonel General Alexander Lapin is in command of the “central” group of forces, which is responsible for operations against Lysychansk (and presumably Severodonetsk).² Konashenkov additionally stated that Army General Sergei Surovikin, commander of the Russian Aerospace Forces, commands the “southern” group of forces and oversaw the encirclement of Hirské and Zolote.³ The Russian MoD’s announcement confirms ISW’s assessment from June 21 that the Russian high command is reshuffling and restructuring military command in order to better organize operations in Ukraine, though the Russian MoD statement does not state when the changes occurred.⁴ The UK MoD confirmed that the Russian command has removed several generals from key operational roles in Ukraine, including Commander of the Airborne Forces (VDV) Colonel General Andrei Serdyukov and Commander of Russia’s Southern Military District Alexander Dvornikov, who was likely was acting as overall theatre commander.⁵ The UK MoD noted that command of the Southern Military District will transfer to Surovikin.⁶ The Russian MoD’s statement notably only discusses the center and south force groupings (not the Southern Military District as a whole), but Dvornikov has likely been removed from his previous role.

Russian forces conducted an abnormally large series of missiles strikes against Ukrainian rear areas on June 25.⁷ The Ukrainian Airforce Command reported that Russian forces fired over 50 ground-, air-, and sea-based missiles at Ukraine and targeted areas in Zhytomyr, Kyiv, Khmelnytskyi, Chernihiv, Lviv, Mykolaiv, Kharkiv, and Dnipropetrovsk oblasts.⁸ The Ukrainian Main Intelligence Directorate (GUR) reported that six Russian Tu-22M3 bombers departed from the Shaykova airbase in Belarus and launched 12 Kh-22 cruise missiles at land targets in Kyiv, Sumy, and Chernihiv Oblasts, which is the first such launch from Belarus.⁹ The Ukrainian Airforce Command noted that Russian forces used sea-based Kalibr missiles against targets in western Ukraine, X-22 and ground-based Iskander and Tochka-U missiles against targets in northern Ukraine, and ONYX missiles and Bastion complexes against targets in southern Ukraine.¹⁰ Ukrainian air defense reportedly shot down many of the missiles, which were likely intended to target critical support infrastructure in areas of Ukraine where there is no direct combat.

Ukrainian intelligence assessed that the Kremlin is continuing covert partial mobilization efforts in support of what it increasingly recognizes as a war of attrition in Eastern Ukraine.¹¹ Representative of the Ukrainian Main Intelligence Directorate (GUR) Vadym Skibitsky stated that the Kremlin recognizes it is waging a war of attrition and is conducting secretive partial mobilization efforts while additionally mobilizing the BARS (Combat Army Reserve of the Country) system and other constant-readiness elements. Skibitsky noted that 105 battalion tactical groups (BTGs) are taking part in the war in Ukraine and that Russian reserve capabilities could increase this number to anywhere between 150 and 160 BTGs but did not specify a timeframe for this mobilization. Skibitsky reiterated that the Kremlin’s main goal is to secure control of the entire Donbas and that its secondary priority is consolidation of its control of Kherson Oblast by September 11, when
the Kremlin seeks to hold referenda to directly annex territories or create quasi-state “People’s Republics.” The Kremlin intends to conduct a protracted conflict in Ukraine and is seeking to advance mobilization efforts to support long-term military and political goals in occupied areas of Ukraine.

**Ukraine’s Main Intelligence Directorate (GUR) firmly stated that Belarusian involvement in the war in Ukraine on behalf of Russia remains highly unlikely.** Ukraine’s Main Intelligence Directorate (GUR) firmly stated that Belarusian involvement in the war in Ukraine on behalf of Russia remains highly unlikely. GUR representative Vadym Skibitsky stated that Belarusian forces will not attack Ukraine without the support of Russian troops, of which there are approximately 1,500 in Belarus. Skibitsky noted that Belarus has seven BTGs on a rotating basis near the border with Ukraine and that the formation of a Russian-Belarusian joint shock group would take three to four weeks, with two to three weeks needed to simply deploy sufficient Russian forces into Belarus. The GUR’s statement reaffirms ISW’s previous assessments that, while recent Belarusian actions along the Ukrainian border are threatening and likely intended to fix Ukrainian forces in place with the threat of Belarusian action, they are highly unlikely to preempt actual involvement in the war.

**Key Takeaways**

- The Russian Ministry of Defense stated that the leadership of its central and southern groups of forces fighting Ukraine has changed, confirming ISW’s previous assessment that the Russian high command is restructuring the leadership of operations in Ukraine.
- Ukrainian intelligence officials emphasized that Belarus remains highly unlikely to join the war in Ukraine.
- Ukrainian sources confirmed that Russian forces have taken full control of Severodonetsk and are fighting within Lysychansk.
- Russian forces made measured gains to the north and southeast of Bakhmut.
- Russian forces continued unsuccessful attempts to advance southeast of Izyum toward Slovyansk.
- Russian forces continued positional battles north of Kharkiv City.
- Russian forces attempted to strengthen their defensive lines and recapture lost positions on the Southern Axis.
Assessed Control of Terrain in Ukraine and Main Russian Maneuver Axes as of June 25, 2022, 3:00 PM ET

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

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

Map by George Barros, Kateryna Stepanenko, Noel Mikkelsen, and Daniel Mealie
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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.

- Main Effort—Eastern Ukraine (comprised of one subordinate and three supporting efforts);
- Subordinate Main Effort—Encirclement of Ukrainian troops in the cauldron between Izyum and Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts
- Supporting Effort 1—Kharkiv City;
- Supporting Effort 2—Southern Axis;
- Activities in Russian-occupied Areas

**Main Effort—Eastern Ukraine**

**Subordinate Main Effort—Southern Kharkiv, Donetsk, Luhansk Oblasts (Russian objective: Encircle Ukrainian forces in Eastern Ukraine and capture the entirety of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, the claimed territory of Russia’s proxies in Donbas)**

Ukrainian sources confirmed on June 25 that Russian forces took full control of the entirety of Severodonetsk and are making advances on the southern outskirts of Lysychansk. The Ukrainian General Staff stated that Russian forces are “consolidating” and “fortifying” positions in Severodonetsk, Syrotyne, Voronove, and Borivske following the completion of the Ukrainian withdrawal from Severodonetsk on June 24. Mayor of Severodonetsk Oleksandr Stryuk confirmed that Russian forces have fully occupied Severodonetsk and are now trying to establish order within the city. Several Russian sources additionally posted footage from within Severodonetsk to corroborate claims of control of the entire city, including the Azot industrial zone. Russian forces are fighting within Lysychansk itself and reportedly have reached a mine and a gelatin factory on the outskirts of the city, confirmed by NASA FIRMS data of heat anomalies in the Lysychansk area (see image in-line with text). The Rapid Response Brigade of the Ukrainian National Guard stated that Ukrainian positions in Lysychansk are more strategically valuable than previously held positions in Severodonetsk and suggested that Ukrainian forces may seek to launch counterattacks from within Lysychansk, though their ability to do so successfully is likely limited by continued Russian encroachment.
Russian forces made incremental gains to the east of Bakhmut on June 25. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that unspecified elements of the Russian 5th Combined Arms Army are fighting around Pokrovsk and Pylypchatyne, both within 15 km northeast of Bakhmut.\textsuperscript{19} Russian forces reportedly advanced one kilometer in the area of Roty and Vershyna, both within 10 kilometers southeast of Bakhmut.\textsuperscript{20} Deputy Information Minister of the Donetsk People’s Republic (DNR) Daniil Bezsonov claimed that DNR troops took control of Kodema, a village 15 km southeast of Bakhmut.\textsuperscript{21} Russian forces additionally conducted a series of unsuccessful assault operations north of Donetsk City on June 25.\textsuperscript{22} Russian forces fought around Yasynuvata, Kostiantynivka, Vasylivka, Niu York, Marinka, and Kamyanka but did not make any confirmed advances in these areas.\textsuperscript{23}
Assessed Control of Terrain Around Luhansk as of June 25, 2022, 3:00 PM ET

Ukrainian officials confirmed Russian military control over Severodonetsk and its satellite towns on the left bank of the Siverskyi Donets River on June 25.

Russian source Rybar claimed that Ukrainian forces established a crossing over the Siverskyi Donets River near Protopopivka and Petrivske on June 15.

Russian forces reached the Lysychansk Gelatin Factory on June 25.

Russia forces likely encircled Ukrainian forces in Hirsko and Zolote on June 23-24. Russian reports from June 23 and 24 contradict each other about the status of a Ukrainian pocket.

The Donetsk People’s Republic claimed control over Kodema on June 24.

Significant Fighting in the past 24 Hours
Assessed Russian-controlled Ukrainian Territory
Reported Russian 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.
Russian forces continued offensive operations to the southeast of Izyum towards Slovyansk but did not make any confirmed advances on June 25. The Ukrainian General Staff noted that Russian troops fought around Bohorodychne, Mazanivka, Dovhenke, and Dolyna, all to the northwest of Slovyansk near the Kharkiv-Donetsk Oblast border. Russian forces continued to set conditions to resume offensive operations toward Slovyansk from the west of Lyman and fired on Mayaki, Psykunivka, Raihorodok, and Starodubivka, as well as reconnoitering Ukrainian positions in the area.
Assessed Control of Terrain Around Severodonetsk as of June 25, 2022, 3:00 PM ET

Ukrainian officials announced the withdrawal of Ukrainian troops from Severodonetsk on June 24.

Russian sources claimed Russian control over Vovchoyarka on June 24.

Donetsk Oblast

Luhansk Oblast

Russian forces reached the Lysychansk Gelatin Factory on June 25.

Ukrainian officials confirmed Russian military control over Severodonetsk and its satellite towns on the left bank of the Siverskyi Donets River on June 25.

Russian forces likely encircled Ukrainian forces in Hirse and Zolote on June 23-24. Russian reports from June 23 and 24 contradict each other about the status of a Ukrainian pocket.

The Donets People’s Republic claimed control over Kodema on June 24.

Note: We expanded Russian military control to Severodonetsk and its satellite towns one the left bank of the Siverskyi Donets River on June 25 after Ukrainian officials confirmed this development. The Ukrainian General Staff stated on June 25 that Russian forces are “consolidating” or “fortifying themselves” in Severodonetsk, Sirotyne, Voronove, and Borsivake after the withdrawal of Ukrainian forces from Severodonetsk. Severodonetsk Mayor Oleksandr Stryuk stated on June 25 that Russian forces fully occupy Severodonetsk. Russian news outlet Izvestia posted claimed video from the Azot bomb shelter on June 25. We expanded Russian advances to the Lysychansk gelatin factory in southern Lysychansk after reconciling several sources. Russian news outlet TASS reported on June 25 that Russian forces entered the gelatin factory. Luhansk Governor Serhiy Haidai stated on June 25 that Russian forces are attacking Lysychansk from the south. The gelatin factory is located in southern Lysychansk. NASA FIRMS data also shows heat anomalies at the gelatin factory.

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

Map by George Barros, Katerina Stepanska, Noel Mikkelsen, and Daniel Meele
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Supporting Effort #1—Kharkiv City (Russian objective: Withdraw forces to the north and defend ground lines of communication (GLOCs) to Izyum)

Russian forces continued to fight positional battles for control of their occupied frontiers north of Kharkiv City and shelled Ukrainian positions around northern Kharkiv Oblast on June 25. Russian and Ukrainian sources reported that Russian forces are fighting for control of contested territory around Udy, Tsupivka, Velyki Prokhody, Kozacha Lopan, Vekhnii Saltiv, and Pytomnyk. The Ukrainian General Staff noted that Russian forces north of Kharkiv City are taking measures to replenish losses, which indicates that Russian forces continue to suffer casualties in attempts to prevent further Ukrainian advances toward the international border. Russian forces continued to conduct air, missile, and artillery strikes on and around Kharkiv City.
Ukrainian sources reported that Ukrainian Forces repelled Russian forces from Rubizhne on June 17.

Ukrainian officials confirmed Russian military control over Severodonetsk and its satellite towns on the left bank of the Siverskyi Donets River on June 25.

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

Note: Ukrainian Deputy Defense Minister Hanna Mal'ar stated on June 20 that Ukrainian forces have nearly reached the Ukrainian-Russian border. ISW will map Ukrainian counteroffensives when we observe corroborating evidence. We expanded Ukrainian counteroffensives in Rysychivka, just southwest of Chuhuiv, based on the Ukrainian General Staff report that Ukrainian forces repulsed a Russian reconnaissance-in-force attempt on the settlement on June 20.
Supporting Effort #2—Southern Axis (Objective: Defend Kherson and Zaporizhia Oblasts against Ukrainian counterattacks)

Russian forces along the Southern Axis focused on defending their occupied frontiers and conducting local attacks to regain lost positions on June 25.31 The Ukrainian General Staff reported that an unspecified Russian company tactical group unsuccessfully attempted to regain a lost position in Potomkyne from Vysokopillya in northern Kherson Oblast.32 Ukraine’s Southern Operational Command stated that this was the second attempted Russian effort at regaining Potomkyne.33 Russian forces continued defensive operations in Zaporizhia Oblast and reportedly attempted to attack Ukrainian positions in Huliapole.34 The Head of the Dnipropetrovsk Oblast Council reported that Russian forces have intensified artillery strikes along the frontline towards Kryvyi Rih in response to Ukrainian advances deep into Kherson Oblast, and Russian forces continued to fire on areas of Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporizhia, Mykolaiv, and Kherson oblasts.35
Assessed Control of Terrain Around Kherson and Mykolaiv as of June 25, 2022, 3:00 PM ET

Note: ISW recessed Ukrainian counteroffensives around Kyselivka on June 23. Ukrainian Presidential Advisor Oleksiy Arestovich previously reported that Ukrainian forces liberated the settlement on June 23, prompting some Ukrainian social media users to respond that Kyselivka remains contested as of June 23. It is unclear if the settlement is currently contested. The Ukrainian General Staff also vaguely noted on June 23 that Russian forces may launch offensive operations in the direction of Kyselivka to Posad-Pokrovskoye but did not confirm whether Ukrainian forces have liberated Kyselivka. Russian Telegram channel Rybar claimed that Russian forces still control Kyselivka as of June 23, but ISW cannot independently verify this claim. We will update our maps as we collect and confirm more information.

Map by George Barros, Kateryna Stepanenko, Noel Mickelsen, and Daniel Medal
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* Assessed Russian advances are areas where ISW assesses Russian forces have operated in or launched attacks against but do not control.
Activity in Russian-occupied Areas (Russian objective: consolidate administrative control of occupied areas; set conditions for potential annexation into the Russian Federation or some other future political arrangement of Moscow’s choosing)

The Ukrainian military leadership is taking measures to centralize guidance for partisan groups to better leverage partisan pressure against Russian occupation efforts. The Ukrainian Resistance Center reported that the Ukrainian Center for National Resistance is urging Ukrainian citizens in occupied areas to exercise cyber “hygiene” to avoid having mobile communication and internet data collected by Russian intelligence operatives and additionally to effectively organize partisan actions.\(^1\) The Center for National Resistance called for citizens to destroy digital evidence of participation in partisan activities but cautioned against making their digital presence “too sterile” to avoid raising suspicion. Ukrainian Major General Dmitry Marchenko additionally told RFE/RL that Ukrainian residents of Kherson are hiding weapons and waiting for a centralized instructions to take up arms on behalf of the Ukrainian military.\(^2\) The Ukrainian military leadership likely seeks to galvanize and centrally coordinate Ukrainian partisan actions, both to disrupt Russian control and possibly prepare for coordinated operations with conventional Ukrainian forces.\(^3\)

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