### Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment

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Click <u>here</u> 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.

Russian forces have likely decided to attack Avdiivka frontally from occupied Donetsk Oblast territory rather than waiting for Ukrainian forces to withdraw from their prepared defensive positions as a result of Russian envelopment operations northeast of the settlement. The Donetsk People's Republic (DNR) and Kremlin-sponsored sources have published videos suggesting that Russian forces pushed Ukrainian forces out of their positions around the Butivka Coal Mine ventilation shaft southwest of Avdiivka.¹ Ukrainian forces have held positions around the Butivka Coal Mine ventilation shaft since 2015 and have described the location as the closest Ukrainian position to Donetsk City and a key defensive outpost for Avdiivka.² Russian forces have likely captured the Ukrainian position, given the Ukrainian General Staff's vague reports of "partially" successful Russian advances in the area.³ Russian forces are also continuing assaults on Pisky, west of Avdiivka, and will likely attempt to seize the E50 highway connecting the two settlements. Russian forces had previously attempted to break through Avdiivka's northeastern outskirts but have not made significant progress in months.

The Russian Defense Ministry is likely trying to assuage distress that Ukraine's effective use of the US HIMARS is causing Russian military personnel and milbloggers with inaccurate claims of destroying HIMARS launchers. Russian Defense Minister Sergey Shoigu claimed that Russian forces have destroyed six US-provided HIMARS and other Western-supplied military equipment in Ukraine in a conference call with the Russian Armed Forces leadership on August 2.4 The Russian Defense Ministry also released a video claiming to have destroyed a building that housed two HIMARS launchers in Kharkiv Oblast on August 1.5 Ukrainian Southern Command Chief Andriy Kovalchuk said that Russian forces did not destroy any HIMARS, and an unnamed Finnish official called Russian claims "wishful thinking." The Ukrainian Main Military Intelligence Directorate (GUR) also reported that Russian defense authorities are covering up Russian servicemember casualties by transporting wounded Russians in civilian cars and misreporting the number of casualties caused by Ukrainian HIMARS strikes in the media. Ukrainian HIMARS strikes have prompted many milbloggers and military correspondents to express concern over the effectiveness of air defense systems and the threats to Russian logistics, and these strikes are likely demoralizing Russian servicemen on the ground.

A representative of the Ukrainian Main Military Intelligence Directorate (GUR) reported on August 2 that Russia has refused to provide detailed information on which Ukrainian POWs were killed or injured in the July 28 Olenivka prison attack. GUR Representative Andriy Yusov said that Russia has not responded to requests by Ukraine's Coordinating Headquarters for the Treatment of POWs for information about casualties from the likely Russian-perpetrated attack on the Russian-controlled prison that killed at least 53 Ukrainian POWs. Yusov said that of casualties that Russia has posted online some were supposed to be in hospitals or being readied for prisoner exchanges and were not supposed to be at the Olenivka prison. Yusov noted that Ukraine cannot confirm the veracity of online casualty lists at this time, however. Ukraine's Coordinating Headquarters for the Treatment of POWs urged families of POWs to avoid sharing personal details about themselves or their captured loved ones

with individuals or unofficial organizations soliciting those details, warning that sharing information could pose a risk to surviving POWs.<sup>10</sup> Deputy Ukrainian Prime Minister Irina Vereshchuk said that Russia has not responded to requests to return the bodies of killed POWs to Ukraine as of August 2.<sup>11</sup>

Initial and unconfirmed reports from August 2 suggest that Iran may have sent the first batch of UAVs to Russia for field testing. A US-based open-source intelligence (OSINT) Twitter account citing unofficial Iranian sources claimed that Iran sent a batch of UAVs to Russia, along with Iranian pilots and technicians who will train for the use and repair of Russian Su-35 aircraft. While ISW cannot independently confirm this claim, it is consistent with recent reports that Tehran and Moscow are pursuing greater aviation cooperation in order to circumvent international sanctions on Russia and Iran and support Russian operations in Ukraine. If true, this claim suggests that Iran may be receiving Russian Su-35 aircraft in return for the drones, which could have been part of an agreement signed by Moscow and Tehran on July 26. The agreement stipulated that Iran would increase the volume of passenger flights to Russia and additionally repair Russian aircraft. Tehran may seek to use this agreement to facilitate the acquisition of Russian combat aircraft.

A Russian missile strike reportedly damaged a Ukrainian air defense system in Lviv Oblast on August 2.<sup>16</sup> The Ukrainian Air Force Command reported that Russian forces launched eight Kh-101 (Kh-555) missiles in the direction of central, southern, and western Ukrainian Oblasts from their positions in the Caspian Sea.<sup>17</sup> The Ukrainian Air Force Command reported that Ukrainian air defense forces intercepted seven of the eight missiles.<sup>18</sup>

#### **Key Takeaways**

- Unconfirmed social media reports suggest that Iran may have sent the first batch of drones to Russia and sent pilots and maintenance personnel to train on the Russian Su-35, potentially suggesting that Iran may seek to use recent aviation agreements to facilitate the acquisition of Russian combat aircraft.
- Russian forces conducted unsuccesful offensive operations northeast and northwest of Kharkiv City.
- Russian forces conducted limited ground attacks northwest of Slovyansk and east of Siversk.
- Russian forces made marginal gains southeast of Bakhmut and continued offensive operations to the northeast and southeast of Bakhmut.
- Russian forces made incremental advances around Avdiivka and are continuing attempts to push southwest of Avdiivka.
- Russian forces launched two assaults in northern Kherson Oblast and are continuing to redeploy troops to the Southern Axis.
- Russian federal subjects are forming new volunteer battalions in Novosibirsk, Saratov, Ulyanovsk, and Kurgan Oblasts, and are changing time periods for enlistment compensations.
- Ukrainian civilians are continuing to resist the Russian occupation with acts
  of civil disobedience and partisan sabotage as the Kremlin considers longerterm methods of population control in occupied Ukraine.

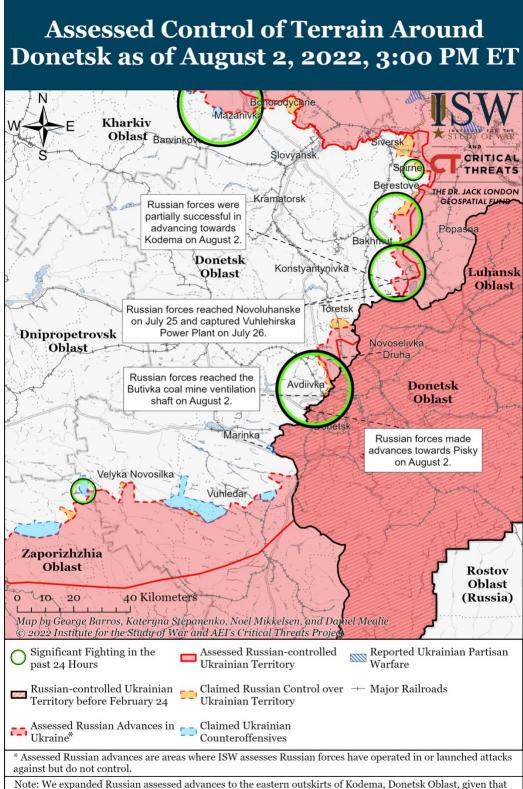
## Assessed Control of Terrain in Ukraine and Main Russian Maneuver Axes as of August 2, 2022, 3:00 PM ET



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 two 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
- Mobilization and Force Generation Efforts
- Activities in Russian-occupied Areas

#### **Main Effort-Eastern Ukraine**



Note: We expanded Russian assessed advances to the eastern outskirts of Rodema, Donetsk Oblast, given that the Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces had a partially successful offensive operation in the direction of Vidrodzhennya-Kodema on August 2. The Ukrainian General Staff has previously reported that Russian forces were partially successful in their advances on Semihirya (just southeast of Kodema) on July 30, and it is likely that Russian forces advanced through the settlement towards Kodema. The Ukrainian Joint Forces Operation reported on July 29 that Ukrainian forces liberated an unnamed village in the Donetsk Oblast direction. ISW will update our maps when open sources name the liberated settlement.

<u>Subordinate Main Effort—Southern Kharkiv, Donetsk, Luhansk Oblasts</u> (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)

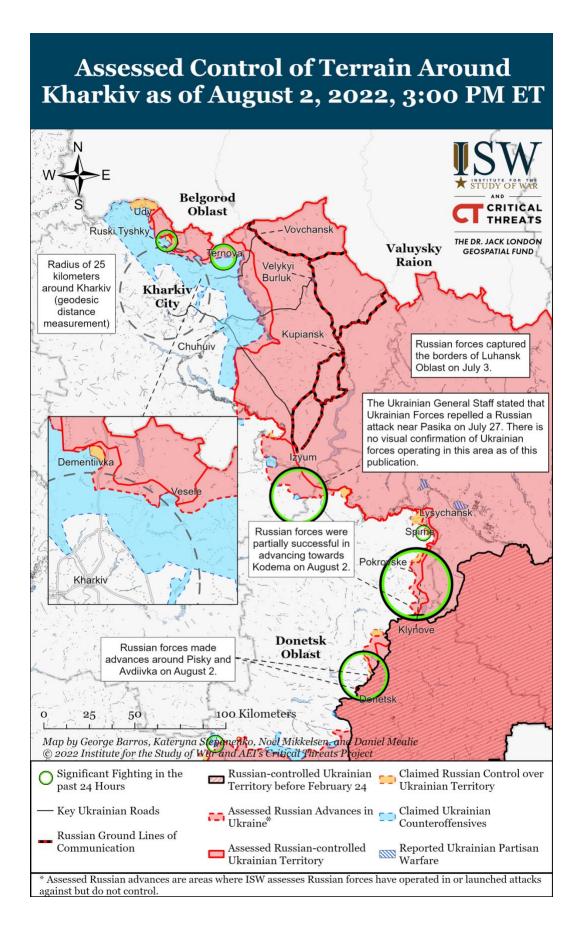
Russian forces conducted limited ground attacks northwest of Slovyansk along the Kharkiv-Donetsk Oblast border on August 2. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian troops attempted reconnaissance-in-force near Dovhenke and Dolyna, 25 and 20km northwest of Slovyansk, respectively. PRussian forces continued to shell settlements near the oblast border and struck Kurulka, Dolyna, Barvinkove, Adamivka, Krasnopillya, and Mazanivka.

Russian forces conducted a ground assault east of Siversk on August 2. The Ukrainian General Staff stated that Russian forces conducted a limited and unsuccessful attack in Ivano-Darivka, about 5km southeast of Siversk.<sup>21</sup> The Ukrainian General Staff also reported that Russian troops failed to advance from Novoluhanske (southeast of Bakhmut) in the direction of Ivano-Darivka, which likely suggests that Russian forces attempted to advance on Ivano-Darivka from a southwestward direction.<sup>22</sup> Russian troops continued to conduct air and artillery strikes in the vicinity of Siversk.<sup>23</sup>

Russian forces made incremental advances southeast of Bakhmut and continued ground attacks to the northeast and southeast of Bakhmut on August 2. The Ukrainian General Staff stated that Russian forces had "partial success" along the Vidrozhennya-Kodema line, about 20km southeast of Bakhmut. <sup>24</sup> Russian forces conducted a series of unsuccessful offensive operations southeast of Bakhmut, namely around Roty, Vershyna, Klynove, and Travneve, and northeast of Bakhmut around Volodymyrivka and Yakovlivka. <sup>25</sup> The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian aviation reportedly increased the intensity of air strikes in the general area of Bakhmut. <sup>26</sup> Russian forces continued to shell Bakhmut City and surrounding settlements. <sup>27</sup>

Russian forces made advances around Avdiivka and will likely continue to prioritize assaults southwest of the settlement. The Donetsk People's Republic (DNR) Militia claimed that Russian forces have pushed Ukrainian forces out of their defensive positions around the Butivka Coal Mine ventilation shaft, southwest of Avdiivka, on August 2.28 Ukrainian forces have held defensive positions near Butivka Coal Mine ventilation shaft since 2015, and the area has been subjected to continuous shelling throughout the years.29 Ukrainian forces have also previously defined Butivka as a strategic defensive location and the closest Ukrainian position to Donetsk City.30 Kremlinsponsored outlet *Izvestia* published footage reportedly from the Butivka mine ventilation area, which indicates that Ukrainian forces likely withdrew from the area.31 Russian Telegram channel Svarschiki previously claimed that Russian forces have been pushing Ukrainian forces from their positions in the area on July 31, and the Ukrainian General Staff noted that Russian forces had partial success when advancing in the Avdiivka area on the same day.32 The Ukrainian General Staff also reported on August 2 that Russian forces had partially advanced in the direction of Donetsk City-Pisky and continued launching unsucessful frontal assaults on Avdiivka.33

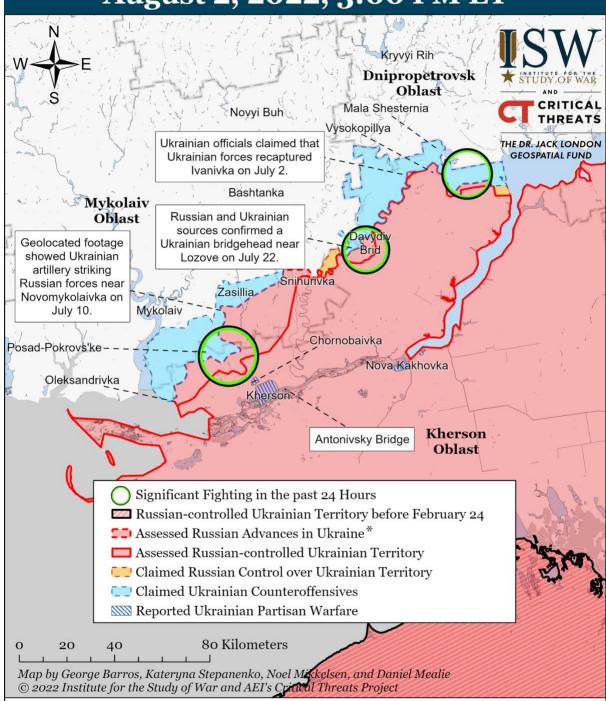
Russian forces conducted an unsuccessful reconnaissance-in-force operation on the Donetsk-Zaporizhia Oblast border in Novopil.<sup>34</sup>



# <u>Supporting Effort #1—Kharkiv City</u> (Russian objective: Defend ground lines of communication (GLOCs) to Izyum and prevent Ukrainian forces from reaching the Russian border)

Russian forces conducted multiple unsuccessful offensive operations along the Kharkiv City Axis on August 2. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces withdrew after attempting to advance from Ternova to Bayrak, approximately 48km northeast of Kharkiv City, and Dementiivka, approximately 67km north of Kharkiv City. 35 Russian forces launched an airstrike on Verkhnii Saltiv and continued conducting tank, tube, and rocket artillery strikes on Kharkiv City and settlements to the north, northeast, and southeast. 36

## Assessed Control of Terrain Around Kherson and Mykolaiv as of August 2, 2022, 3:00 PM ET



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

Note: Kherson Oblast Administration Head Dmytro Butriy reported on August 2 that Ukrainian forces liberated an additional seven unnamed villages in Kherson Oblast. ISW will continue to monitor the situation and will update our maps when open sources name the liberated settlements.

## <u>Supporting Effort #2—Southern Axis</u> (Russian objective: Defend Kherson and Zaporizhia Oblasts against Ukrainian counterattacks)

Russian forces launched unsuccessful assaults in northern Kherson Oblast on August 1 and August 2, likely in an effort to prevent Ukrainian forces from advancing into Russian occupied positions. Ukrainian military officials reported that Russian forces launched an unsuccessful attack on Trydolyubivka (just south of the Kherson-Dnipropetrovsk Oblast border) and conducted a failed reconnaissance-in-force operation in Bilohirka, situated on the western bank of the Inhulets River.<sup>37</sup> Russian forces continued to launch airstrikes and shell Ukrainian positions near the Ukrainian bridgehead over the Inhulets River and on the Kherson-Dnipropetrovsk Oblast border.<sup>38</sup> Kherson Oblast Administration Head Dmytro Burtiy reported that Ukrainian forces liberated seven more unnamed settlements in Kherson Oblast on August 2.<sup>39</sup>

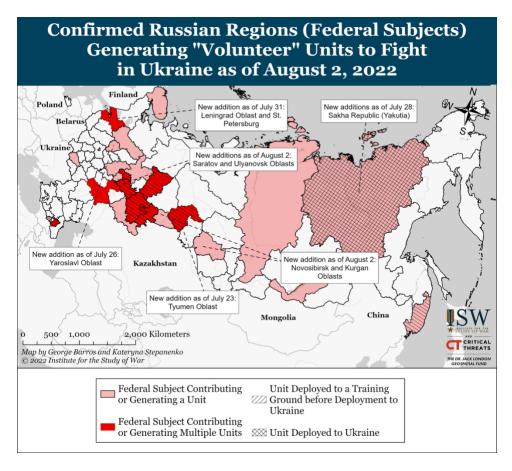
Russian forces continued to accumulate and transfer forces to southern Ukraine from other axes. The Ukrainian Main Military Intelligence Directorate (GUR) Representative Vadym Skibitsky reported that a battalion tactical group (BTG) of Russian airborne troops arrived in Crimea and will deploy to the frontlines in the near future.<sup>40</sup> Skibitsky had previously reported that Russian forces started redeploying airborne troops from Donetsk Oblast to occupied Kherson Oblast territories, and the BTG will likely support Russian efforts to suppress Ukrainian counteroffensives in the region.<sup>41</sup> Skibitsky added that Russian forces are expanding air defense systems in Crimea and are regrouping forces in the Zaporizhia and Kherson Oblast directions, which likely indicates that Russian forces are intending to defend their positions from Ukrainian counteroffensives throughout the Southern Axis. The Ukrainian Southern Operational Command noted that there have not been any changes to the Russian force composition in Kherson Oblast as of August 2, however.<sup>42</sup> Ukrainian Advisor to the Mayor of Mariupol Petro Andryushenko also published footage of a convoy of Russian engineering equipment and personnel carriers moving through Mariupol in the Zaporizhia Oblast direction.<sup>43</sup>

Russian forces continued to fire at Mykolaiv and Dnipropetrovsk Oblasts with MLRS and air defense systems. Ukrainian officials reported that Russian forces fired S-300 air defense missiles and Uragan MLRS systems at Mykolaiv City and launched 16 rockets from Smerch MLRS at the Kryvorizka Power Station.<sup>44</sup> Russian forces also shelled other settlements in Mykolaiv and Dnipropetrovsk Oblasts with MLRS and tube artillery.<sup>45</sup> Russian forces did not fire on Nikopol on August 2, however they are likely to resume attacks on the settlement. US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken also noted that Russian forces are continuing to use the occupied Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant (NPP) just south of Nikopol, as a "human shield" for their military base, as Ukrainian forces will not fire at the NPP in self-defense.<sup>46</sup>

Ukrainian forces continued to target Russian ground lines of communication (GLOCs) and positions in Kherson Oblast, setting conditions for a counteroffensive in the region. Geolocated footage showed that Ukrainian forces struck Russian ammunition depots in Arkhanhel's'ke and Starosillya, both situated on the T2207 GLOC in northwestern Kherson Oblast and the eastern Inhulets River bank.<sup>47</sup> Geolocated footage showed Ukrainian forces hitting Russian mortar positions in Soldatske (approximately 30km northwest of Kherson City) with a likely US-provided Phoenix Ghost loitering munition.<sup>48</sup> The Ukrainian Southern Operational Command reported that Ukrainian aviation also hit three Russian strongholds in Oleksandrivka and Maksymivka, indicating that Ukrainian aviation continues to operate northwest and north of Kherson City.<sup>49</sup> Social media footage also showed a series of explosions in Chornobaivka, a settlement just northwest of Kherson City that Ukrainian forces have struck on numerous previous occasions.<sup>50</sup>

## <u>Mobilization and Force Generation Efforts</u> (Russian objective: Expand combat power without conducting general mobilization)

Russian federal subjects (regions) are likely changing conditions for volunteer battalion recruits to receive one-time enlistment payments. The Republic of Bashkortostan specified that recruits will receive their one-time enlistment payment of 200,000 rubles (approximately \$3,300) but the funds will be frozen until 90 days after their enlistment.<sup>51</sup> The Republic of Bashkortostan also noted that recruits will receive their daily payments of 2,000 rubles (approximately \$32) for service after their training at the end of each month. ISW has previously reported that 40 servicemen from the Chuvash "Atal" volunteer battalion complained that they have not received their promised enlistment bonuses and post-training period payments. Federal subjects are likely beginning to adjust their payment schedules.<sup>52</sup> New battalions such as Saratov Oblast's two unnamed units advertised that the recruits will receive enlistment bonuses of 150,000 rubles (approximately \$2,400) after three months of service.<sup>53</sup> The federal subjects are likely trying to prevent Russian recruits from obtaining the enlistment payments and deserting prior to deploying to Ukraine. The federal subjects may also be unable to generate funds to immediately pay recruits, however.



Novosibirsk, Kurgan, Saratov, and Ulyanovsk Oblasts are forming new volunteer battalions. Novosibirsk Oblast is recruiting men between 18 and 50 years of age for an unnamed volunteer battalion and is offering 300,000 rubles (about \$4,900) for enlisting.<sup>54</sup> Kurgan Oblast Youth Cossack Organization Head Vladimir Yarushnikov reported that local officials are discussing the formation and recruitment process for an unnamed battalion.<sup>55</sup> The Ulyanovsk City Administration also announced the formation of two reserve-volunteer battalions "Sviyaga" and

"Simbirsk" that would have 200 recruits each.<sup>56</sup> Saratov local outlet *Versiya Saratov* reported that Saratov City Administration announced recruitment for two unnamed volunteer battalions based on the "order from Russian Defense Ministry."<sup>57</sup>

## <u>Activity in Russian-occupied Areas</u> (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)

Ukrainian civilians are continuing to resist the Russian occupation with acts of civil disobedience and partisan sabotage. The Ukrainian Resistance Center reported on August 2 that Ukrainian civilians chased 40 Russian doctors out of abandoned homes in which they tried to settle in Berislav, Kherson Oblast.<sup>58</sup> Russian occupation authorities have been forced to import Russian civilian doctors on temporary military tours to treat injured Russian servicemembers because many Ukrainian medical staff members either evacuated occupied areas or refuse to collaborate with Russian occupation forces. Russian officials have offered doctors increased salaries and veteran status to move to occupied Ukrainian territories. The Ukrainian Resistance Center also reported on August 2 that many schools in occupied areas will be unable to open by September 1, the ordinary start of the school year, because Ukrainian children and their families have either evacuated or are unwilling to attend Russian-run schools.<sup>59</sup> The Center reported that many Ukrainian teachers are also refusing to participate in the Russian curriculum, forcing Russian occupation authorities to import teachers from Russia and occupied Crimea.

The fire set by Ukrainian partisans on July 30 in a field near Russian-occupied Bezimenne, about 20km east of Mariupol, successfully damaged Russian military equipment at a nearby military base, according to an August 1 update by exiled Mariupol mayoral advisor Petro Andryushenko. 60 Ukrainian sources had reported the effort to damage Russian equipment and fortifications and to prevent Russian occupation authorities from looting Ukrainian grain on July 30.61

The Kremlin is likely considering longer-term methods to subdue the occupied Ukrainian population beyond the increased securitization on which ISW has previously reported. State Duma Defense Committee Head Andrey Kartapolov said on Russian state-controlled television on August 1 that "the biggest problem [Russia faces in Ukraine] today is people ... If we want these territories to be with us, to have a future as part of the Russian Federation ... we need to deal with the children." Kartapolov advocated for taking Ukrainian children from their homes to Russian military boardings schools and universities. He argued that the Kremlin "has to do this because then people will believe we are serious and that Russia is here for a long time—forever."

Russian officials like Kartapolov are increasingly blatant in demonstrating their intention to annex occupied Ukrainian territories. Russian Kherson Occupation Administration Deputy Head Kirill Stremousov said on August 2 that authorities will continue to allow Kherson residents to use the Ukrainian language, but that "Kherson Oblast will become a worthy part of Russia by forming a people's government."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> https://t.me/nm dnr/8660

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> https://ukurier dot gov.ua/uk/articles/nulova-poziciya-na-fronti/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> https://understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-july-31

<sup>4</sup> https://t.me/mod russia/18200; https://t.me/mod russia/18201; https://t.me/TRO DPR/5605

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> https://t.me/mod russia/18171

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<sup>6</sup> HYPERLINK "https://www.newsweek.com/russia-destroying-us-himars-likely-wishful-thinking-finnish-official-
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