



**MALCONTENT NEWS  
RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR  
SITUATION REPORT**



January 30, 2023



# Malcontent News

## Russia-Ukraine War SITREP

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## **SUMMARY – DAY 341**

It has been 3,259 days since Russia occupied the Crimea Peninsula on February 27, 2014.

The situation north and south of Bakhmut has deteriorated significantly in the last 48 hours, with PMC Wagner supported by Russian forces pushing through Ukrainian defensive lines.

## **DAILY ASSESSMENT**

We assess the following:

1. We assess that the battle for the control of Bakhmut has reached a critical phase with the addition of Russian forces to the axis and the ongoing attempt to create a technical encirclement.
2. We concur with recent assessments by other analysts that it is highly likely the Russian Federation will launch a new offensive before February 24 to try and deliver a tactical victory before the anniversary of the widescale invasion of Ukraine.
3. We maintain that the significant increase in disinformation and misinformation from Russian

- sources is being directed by Chief of the General Staff of the Russian Federation Armed Forces, Valery Gerasimov, as part of his hybrid warfare doctrine.
4. The RAND Corporation agreed with our assessment that Ukraine holds the battlefield initiative – while we maintain the exception for the Soledar-Bakhmut axis.<sup>1</sup>
  5. We maintain that the Russian military within Ukraine remains combat ineffective and is relying on World War II tactics that Field Marshal Georgy Zhukov would recognize to move the line of conflict.
  6. We maintain that the power struggle between military leaders aligned with Russian Minister of Defense Sergey Shoigu versus those aligned to Private Military Company (PMC) Wagner Group head Yevgeny Prigozhin is continuing, and Russian President Vladimir Putin is the largest benefactor.
  7. We maintain that punitive missile and drone strikes targeting civilians and civilian infrastructure will continue.
  8. We maintain that Russian forces will continue to target electrical, heating, and potable water infrastructure.
  9. We maintain that the Russian Federation's inventory of Kalibr cruise missiles is critically low based on the

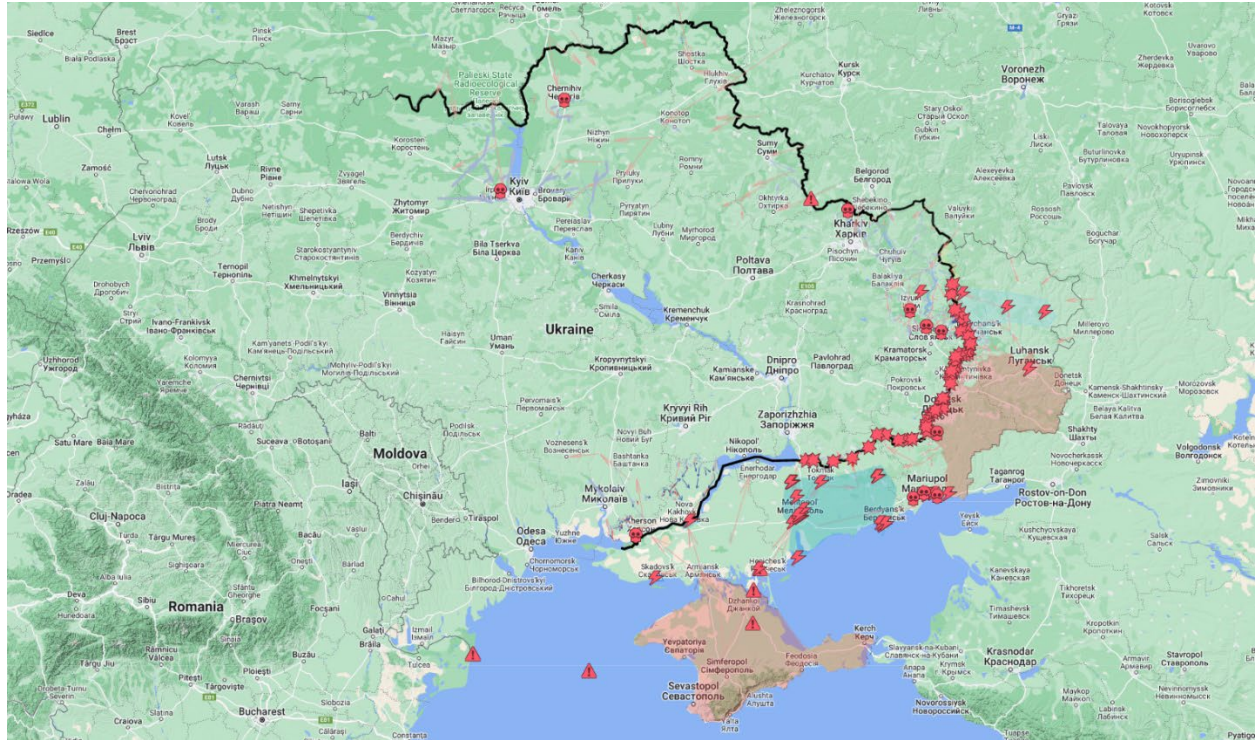
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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/01/28/7386922/>

continued decline of launches from the Black Sea Fleet.

10. We maintain that the risk of a nuclear accident caused by the deenergization of Ukrainian nuclear power plants caused by Russian electrical infrastructure destruction is possible.
11. We maintain there will be a second wave of partial mobilization in the Russian Federation in February 2023 under the guise of the existing mobilization decree from September 21, 2022, which was never suspended.
12. We assess that the threat of Russian forces in Belarus crossing into Ukraine as part of an offensive operation is negligible.

# TODAY'S WAR IN UKRAINE MAP

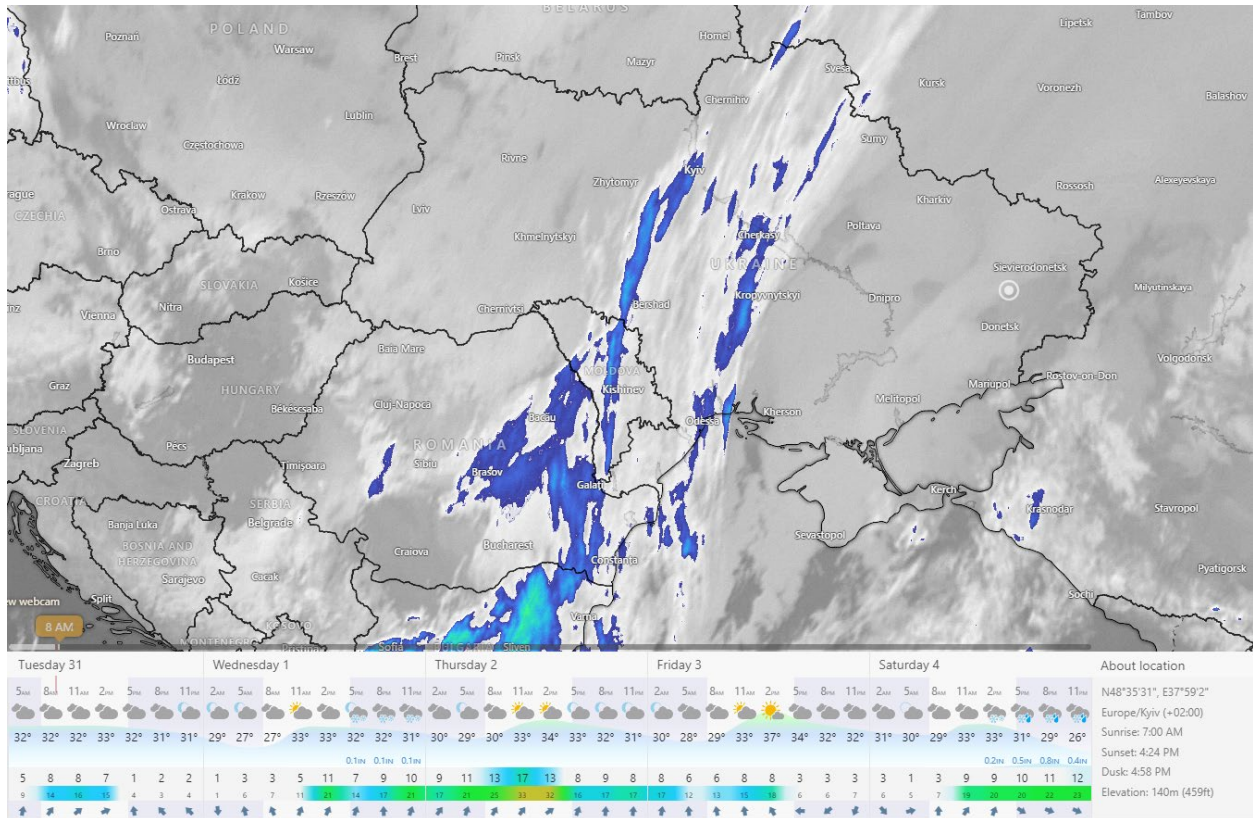


**About the maps:** Red triangles are sites of significant events unrelated to missile attacks, insurgencies, or ground combat, such as the sinking of the Moskva and the explosion at the Saky Naval airbase. Gray circles indicate an area where fighting has ended with no change in the line of conflict. The archived offensive layer is turned off by default, but you can toggle it on/off in the Map Legend. If you see a settlement name highlighted [like this](#), it is a link to our war map that will take you to the location explained in the Situation Report.

You can visit our war map at <http://www.rusvukrmap.com>



# UKRAINE WEATHER

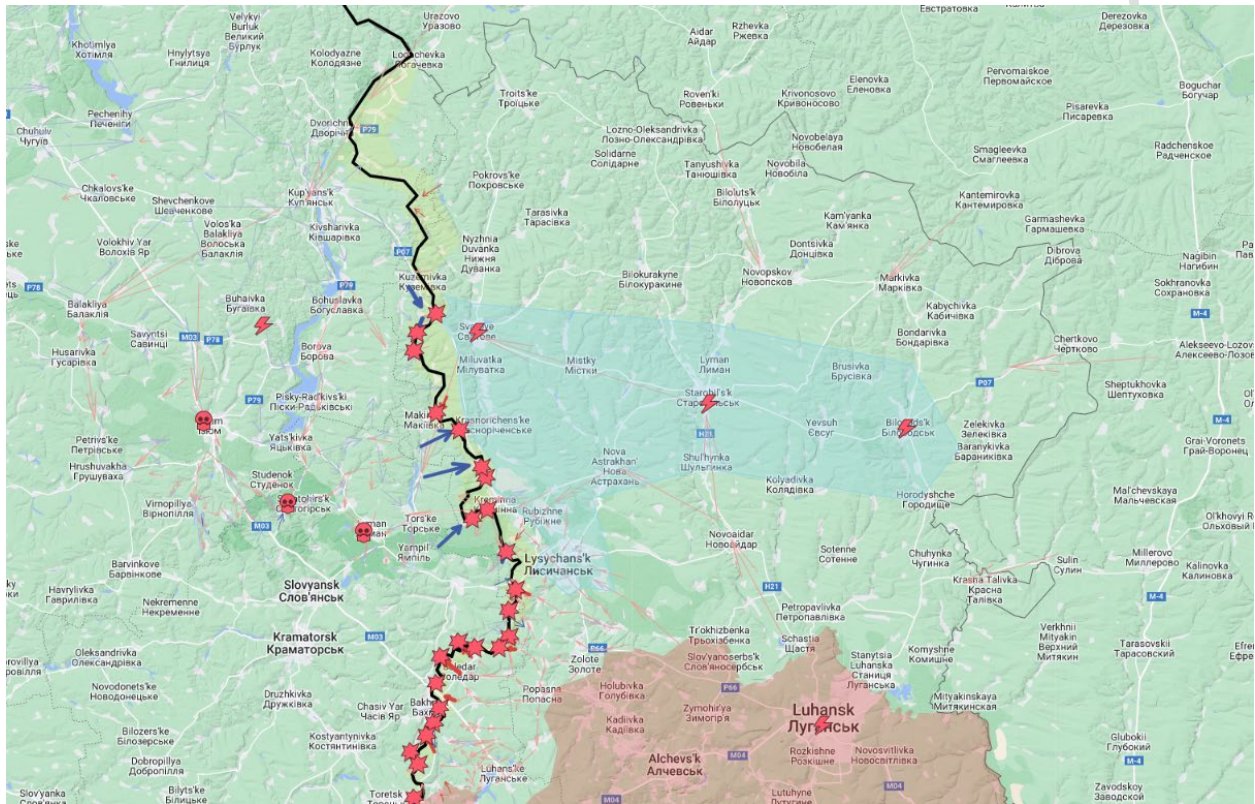


Ukraine is cloud-covered at the time of publication, with bands of snow moving through the nation's center. Mostly cloudy to cloudy weather with light snow is expected for most of the week, with significantly colder weather arriving on Friday.



# DONBAS REGION

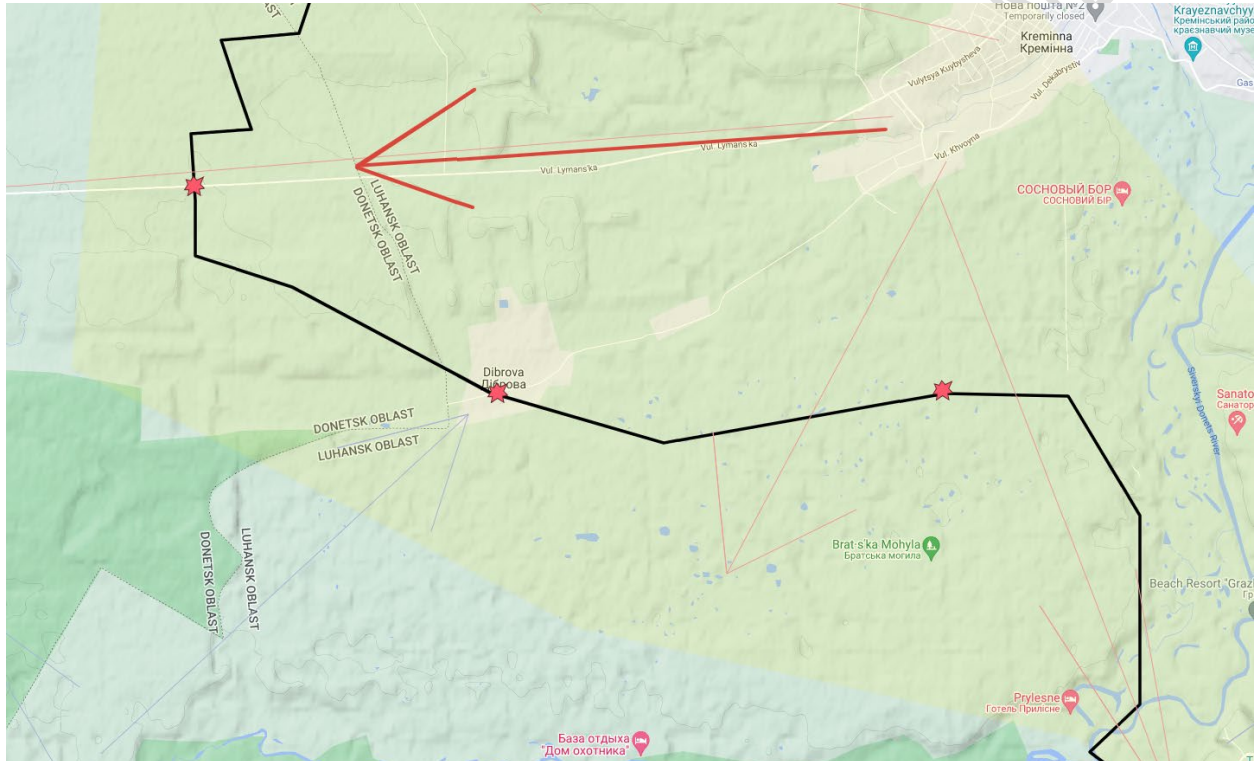
## LUHANSK



**Russian Objective:** Integrate oblast into Russian Federation, hold current defensive lines, and control insurgency

**Ukrainian Objective:** Break Russian defensive lines, advance on Svatove, Kreminna, and Lysychansk, and support insurgents

There continued to be few reports of fighting in Luhansk by any reliable source, with artillery exchanges and squad-size units fighting positional battles.

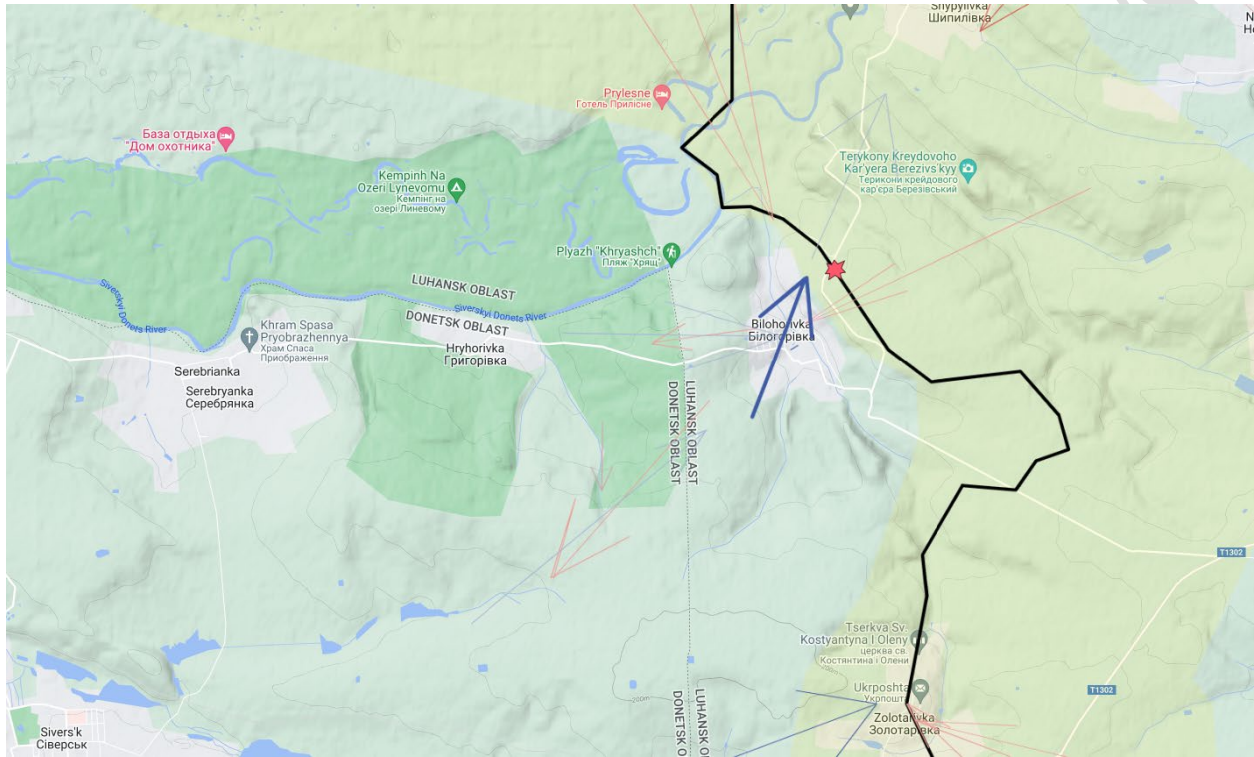


Russian and Ukrainian forces traded artillery fire on the Svatove and Kremienna axes.<sup>2 3</sup> A geolocated video showed a Ukrainian BTR-80 armored personnel carrier (APC) [being](#)

<sup>2</sup> [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

<sup>3</sup> <https://t.me/wargonzo/10588>

[hit by Russian artillery](#) near Dibrova.<sup>4</sup> Based on the video, we moved the line of conflict northeast, closer to Kreminna.



On the Siversk axis, Russian forces continued attacks on [Bilohorivka](#) with no change in the situation.<sup>5 6</sup>

Luhansk People's Republic (LNR) Joint Center for Control and Coordination (JCCC) released pictures allegedly showing the damage from the HIMARS strike in Alchevsk.

<sup>4</sup> <https://twitter.com/i/status/1620084424330342400>

<sup>5</sup> [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

<sup>6</sup> <https://t.me/wargonzo/10588>

In our assessment, the claim of a HIMARS strike is suspect.<sup>7</sup> The crater indicates the rocket did not hit any target, which is highly unusual for the Guided Multiple Launch Rocket Systems (GMLRS) and is not the size of a typical HIMARS strike on a soil surface.

The Ukrainian National Resistance Center claimed that the Russian company Strokykom, hired to work on the Wagner Line in Luhansk, refuses to send their employees to Ukraine. The company claims that the LNR and Russian Ministry of Defense (RMOD) will not assure the safety of their employees and a lack of adequate housing.<sup>8</sup>

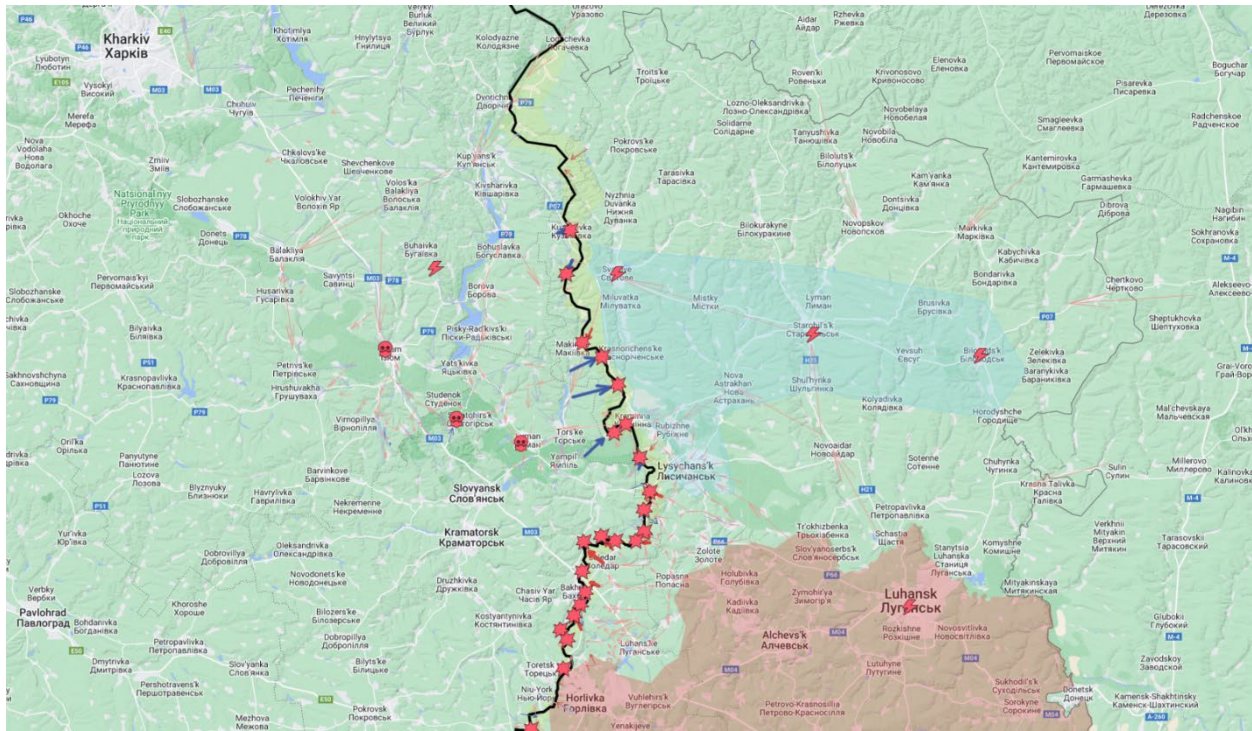
Russian forces continue to build up in Kreminna and Rubizhne, although there have been no indications that conditions are being set for an imminent offensive. We are monitoring artillery activity in the region.

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<sup>7</sup> [https://t.me/LPR\\_JCCC/8018](https://t.me/LPR_JCCC/8018)

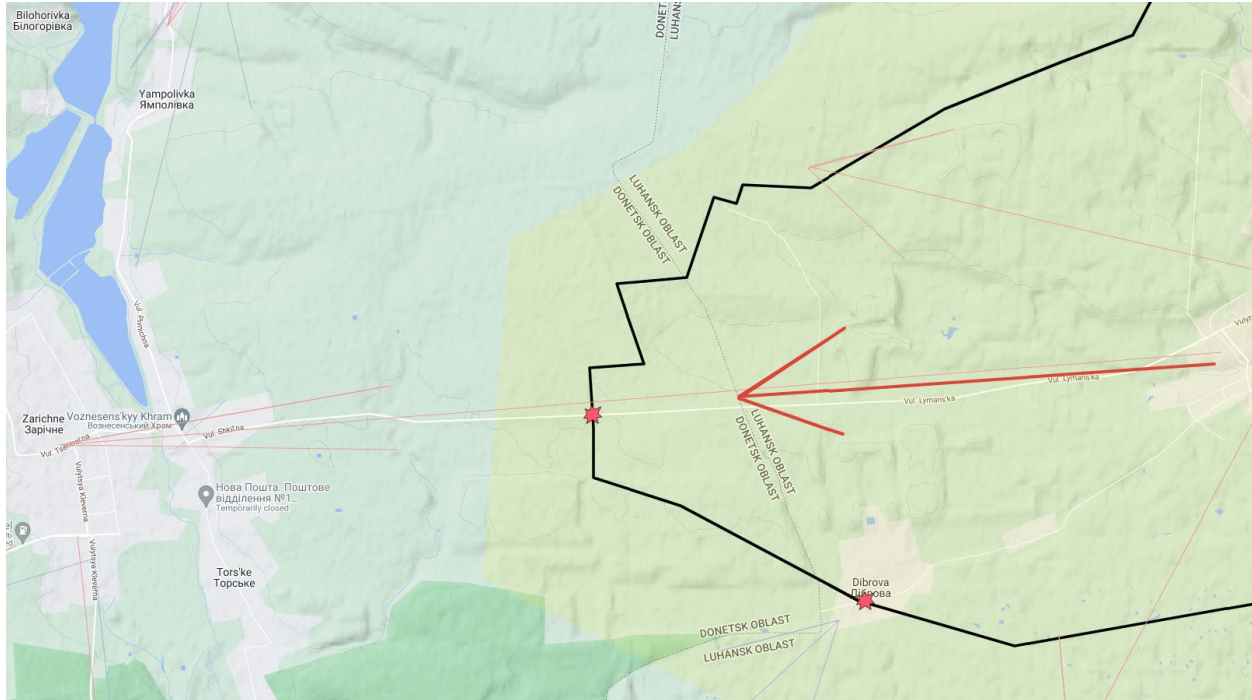
<sup>8</sup> <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/01/30/7387152/>

# NORTHEAST DONETSK



**Russian Objective:** Integrate oblast into Russian Federation, defend against Ukrainian advances toward Luhansk, capture Bakhmut

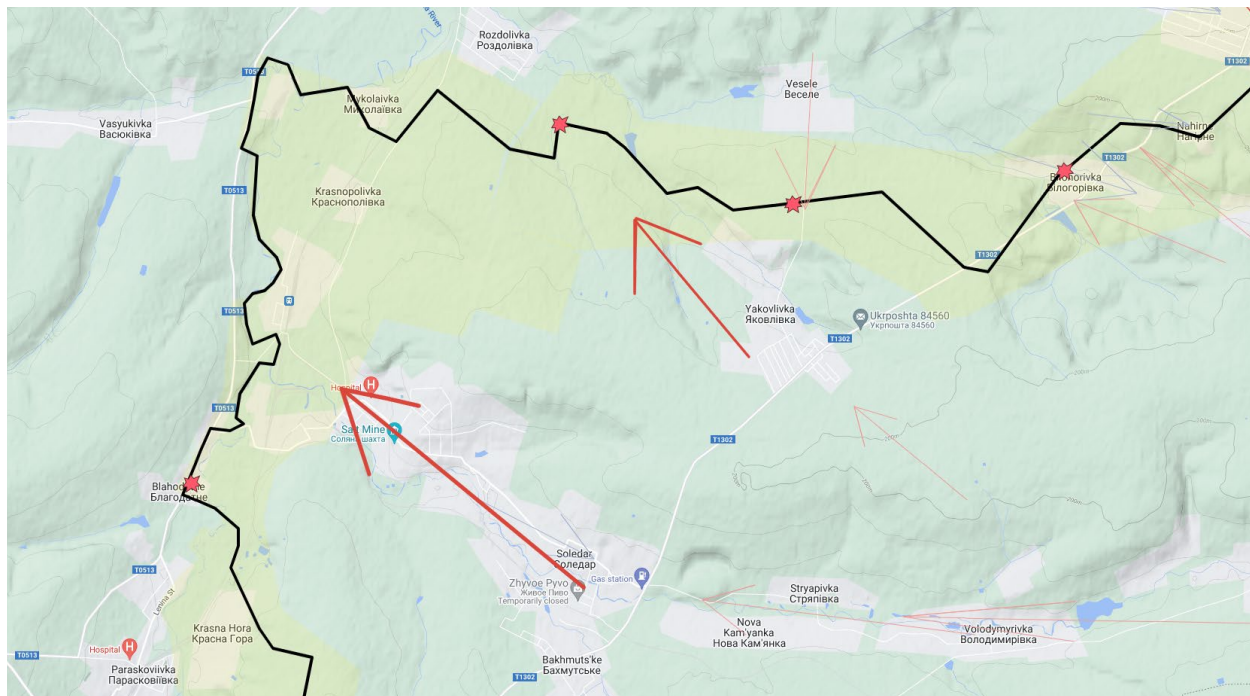
**Ukrainian Objective UPDATED:** Defend Siversk and Bakhmut, push into the Luhansk oblast, and minimize civilian casualties



On the Kremynna axis, Russian forces led by the 2nd Army Corps of the Luhansk People's Republic (LNR) continued attempts to advance in the direction of [Yampolivka](#), according to the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (GSAFU).<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)



The situation is deteriorating on the Soledar axis as Russian mobs and VDV forces take more of a leading role from PMC Wagner. Russian troops reached [Sakko I Vantsetti](#) and crossed the Bakhmutovka River.<sup>10</sup> GSAFU reported Russian troops advancing on [Vasyukivka](#), with Ukrainian forces holding defensive lines. The T-513 Highway Ground Line of Communication (GLOC – supply line) from Siversk is severed.<sup>11</sup> Fighting continued near [Rozdolivka](#), and based on terrain analysis, we assess that Russian forces likely advanced 500 to 750 meters and are on the outskirts of [Mykolaivka](#).<sup>12</sup> <sup>13</sup> Fighting continued in

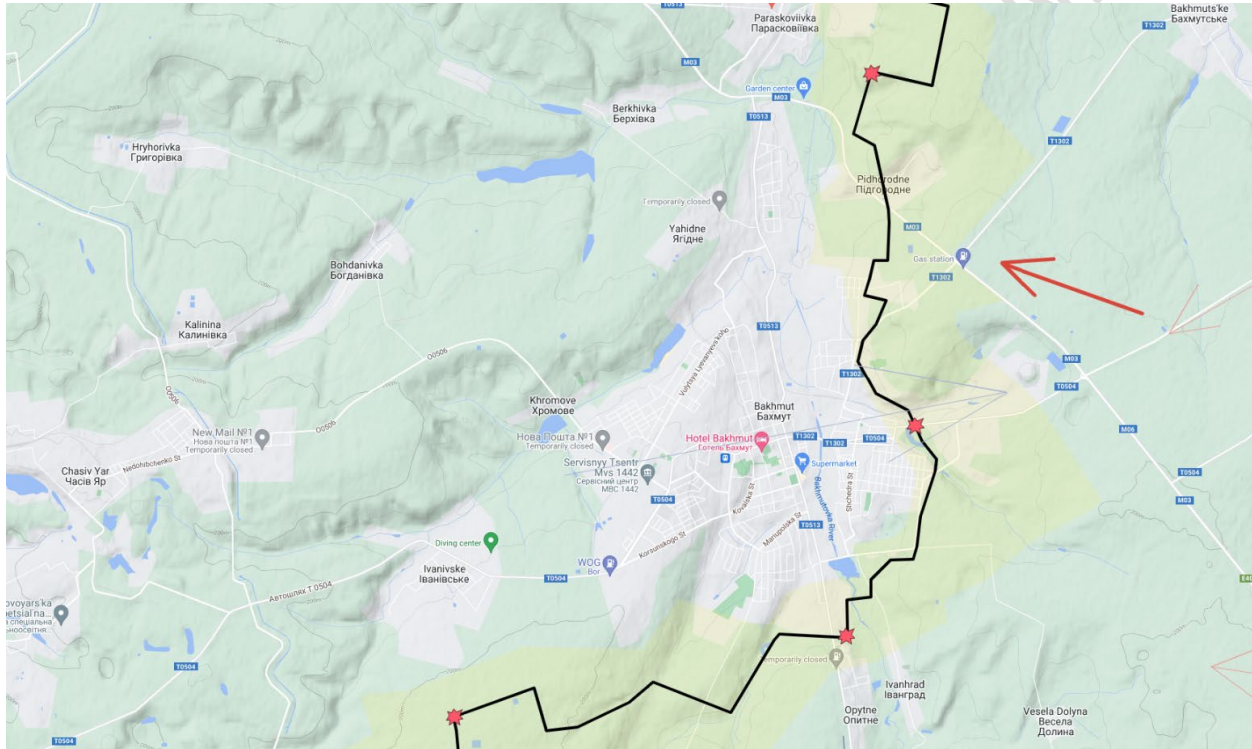
<sup>10</sup> <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/15384>

<sup>11</sup> [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

<sup>12</sup> [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

<sup>13</sup> <https://t.me/wargonzo/10588>

[Krasna Hora](#), with Ukrainian forces surrounded on three sides. There was an unconfirmed report that reinforcements were brought in to hold the defensive positions.<sup>14 15</sup>



On the [Bakhmut](#) axis, fighting continued on the city's northern, northeastern, and eastern edges.<sup>16 17</sup>

<sup>14</sup> <https://t.me/rybar/43136>

<sup>15</sup> <https://t.me/wargonzo/10588>

<sup>16</sup> [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

<sup>17</sup> <https://t.me/rybar/43136>



The composite forces of Russian troops and PMC Wagner continued attempts to advance on [Paraskoviivka](#), with Ukrainian forces maintaining defensive lines.<sup>18 19</sup>

Fighting at the meat packing plant and near the sparking wine factory continued. A geolocated video showed Ukrainian artillery firing on a squad of Russian troops moving at night into a home on [the western edge of the forest plantation](#).<sup>20</sup> Based on the new intelligence, we moved the line of conflict further west, with Russian forces now in the first two blocks of residential homes in the northeast part of the city.

A geolocated video at the Mig-23 static display at the western edge of Bakhmut [48.5749 N, 37.9624 E], recorded 3 kilometers from Ivanivske, [had the sound of intense artillery fire](#) in it.<sup>21</sup>

**ASSESSMENT:** PMC Wagner, supported by Russian artillery units, has made substantial gains in the last 48 hours and has likely broken through the Ukrainian main defensive lines south of the city. The H-514 Highway GLOC to

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<sup>18</sup> [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

<sup>19</sup> <https://t.me/rybar/43136>

<sup>20</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/74643>

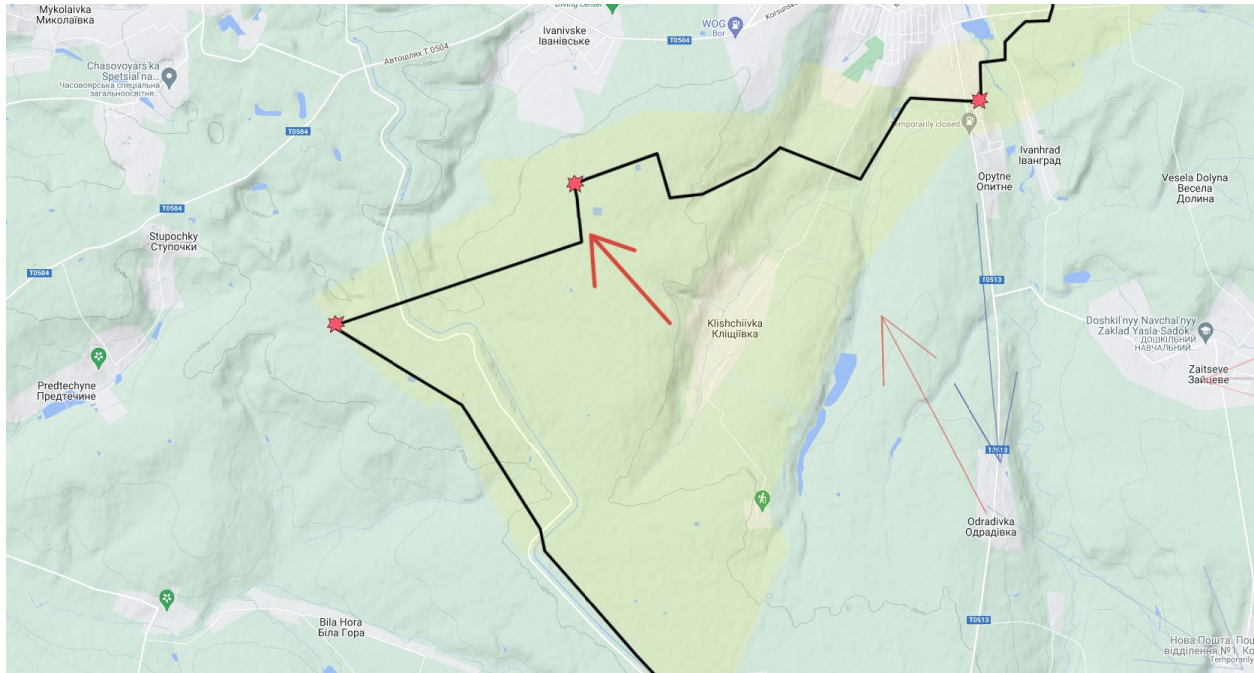
<sup>21</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/74549>

Kostyantynivka is almost certainly compromised and is close to falling under Russian fire control. The situation is probably worse on the M-03 Highway GLOC to Slovyansk. After an offensive that started on May 8 from Popasna and on May 17 at Svitlodarsk, a shift in tactics starting on January 6 to force a technical encirclement versus attack Bakhmut head-on is creating the first meaningful progress Russian forces have had on any axis since July 3.

With Russian forces also advancing in a northwest direction, pressure will be added to Siversk. In our assessment, we believe there is a higher probability of Russian forces building in Kreminna and Rubizhne advancing south if winter conditions favor a frozen crossing of the Siverskyi Donets to establish a bridgehead. From that position, we believe Russian forces could advance on Siversk while flanking Ukrainian troops west of Kreminna. In this scenario, the Ukrainian defensive lines would collapse, and a pullback to Kramatorsk and Slovyansk would be required.



The situation for Ukrainian forces in Bakhmut has not reached a critical point where a withdrawal is needed, but without stopping the Russian advances to the north and south, there is a significant possibility that the General Staff will be forced to order a retreat from the city. Due to


the depth of defensive structures built as far back as the Cold War, recapturing the city will be problematic.



***Editor's Note:*** Due to the continued advance of PMC Wagner and Russian forces south of Bakhmut, we are now calling this region the *Kostyantynivka axis*.

On the Kostyantynivka axis, we made more changes to the map based on new intelligence.

Russian state media reported from the edge of [Klishchiivka](#)  [near the cemetery](#), while  [geolocated pictures](#) showed PMC Wagner in the village center for the first

time.<sup>22</sup> Russian and Ukrainian sources reported fighting “in the area” of the settlement.<sup>23</sup> <sup>24</sup> Another geolocated video showed a Russian sniper  [attacked by a drone-dropped IED](#) west of Klishchiivka near the canal.<sup>25</sup> We were prepared to consider this a positive development, as snipers typically are on the forefront or past the line of conflict, but intelligence coming in from the early morning of January 31 indicated that Russian forces were advancing toward [Stupochky](#) and may have crossed the Siverskyi Donetsk-Donbas Canal. PMC Wagner forces have advanced to within 2.5 kilometers of [Ivanivske](#) from Klishchiivka.<sup>26</sup> <sup>27</sup>

Based on this information, we moved the line of conflict back to the location in our January 28 report and moved Russian forces further north toward Ivanivske.

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<sup>22</sup> [https://t.me/grey\\_zone/16929](https://t.me/grey_zone/16929)

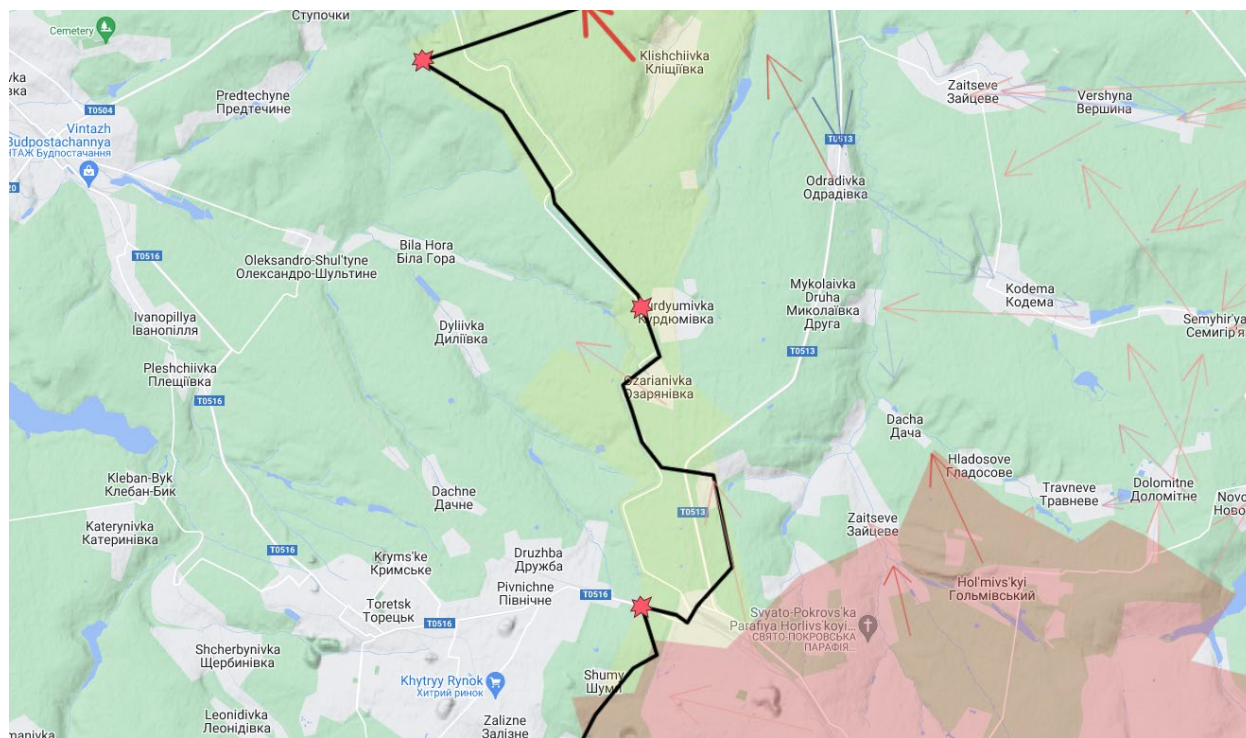
<sup>23</sup> [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

<sup>24</sup> <https://t.me/rybar/43136>


<sup>25</sup> <https://twitter.com/i/status/1619962290178256896>

<sup>26</sup> [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

<sup>27</sup> <https://t.me/rybar/43136>




Further south on the Kostyantynivka axis, GSAFU reported that Russian attacks in the area of [Kurdyumivka](#) and [Ozaryanivka](#) were repulsed.<sup>28</sup> Mercenaries with War Gonzo reported that Russian forces in Kurdyumivka continued to be pounded by Ukrainian artillery.<sup>29</sup>

On the Toretzsk axis, a geolocated video confirmed that Ukrainian and Russian forces  [had traded the defensive positions](#) in northern Mayorsk again.<sup>30</sup> Based on the new intelligence, we made a small change to the line of conflict.

<sup>28</sup> [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

<sup>29</sup> <https://t.me/wargonzo/10588>

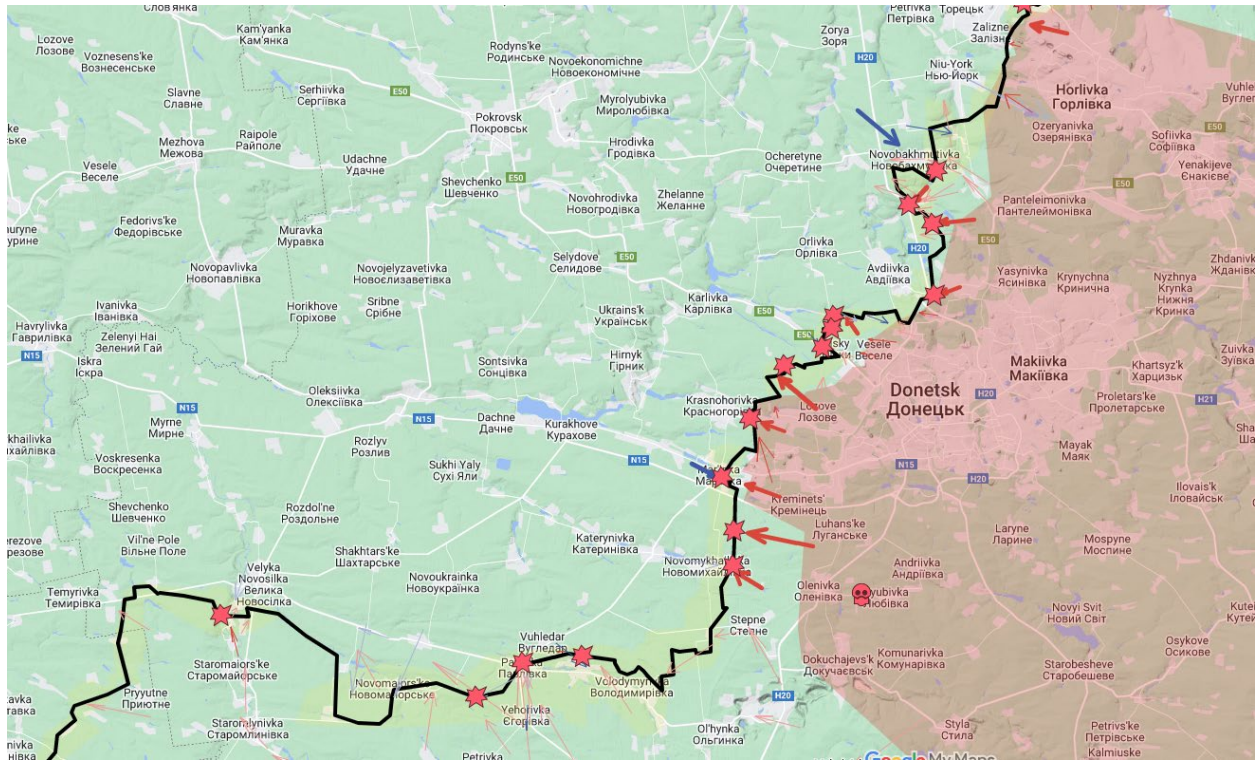
<sup>30</sup> <https://twitter.com/i/status/1619737141357203457>

GSAFU confirmed a Ukrainian Su-25 was shot down near Kramatorsk on January 27.  [Major Danylo Gennadiyovych Murashko](#), 24 years old, was flying his 142nd combat mission since February 24 when his plane was hit, killing him.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/74667>

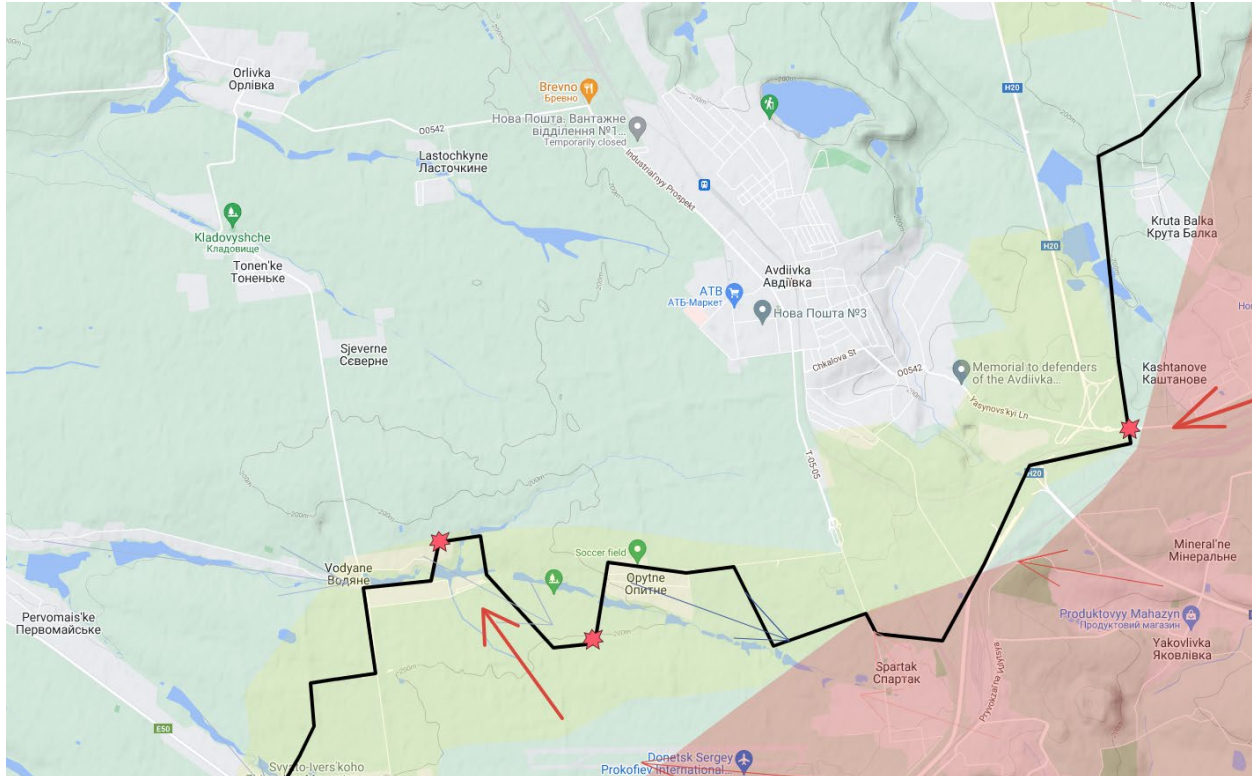
## SOUTHWESTERN DONETSK



**Russian Objective:** Integrate the oblast into Russian Federation, capture the rest of the oblast, and bring the insurrection across southwestern Donetsk under control

**Ukrainian Objective:** Lock Russian military assets in place, defend the existing line of conflict while finding and exploiting weaknesses, destroy troop concentrations and command and control sites, interdict supplies and disrupt logistics

## There was only positional fighting across southwest Donetsk.



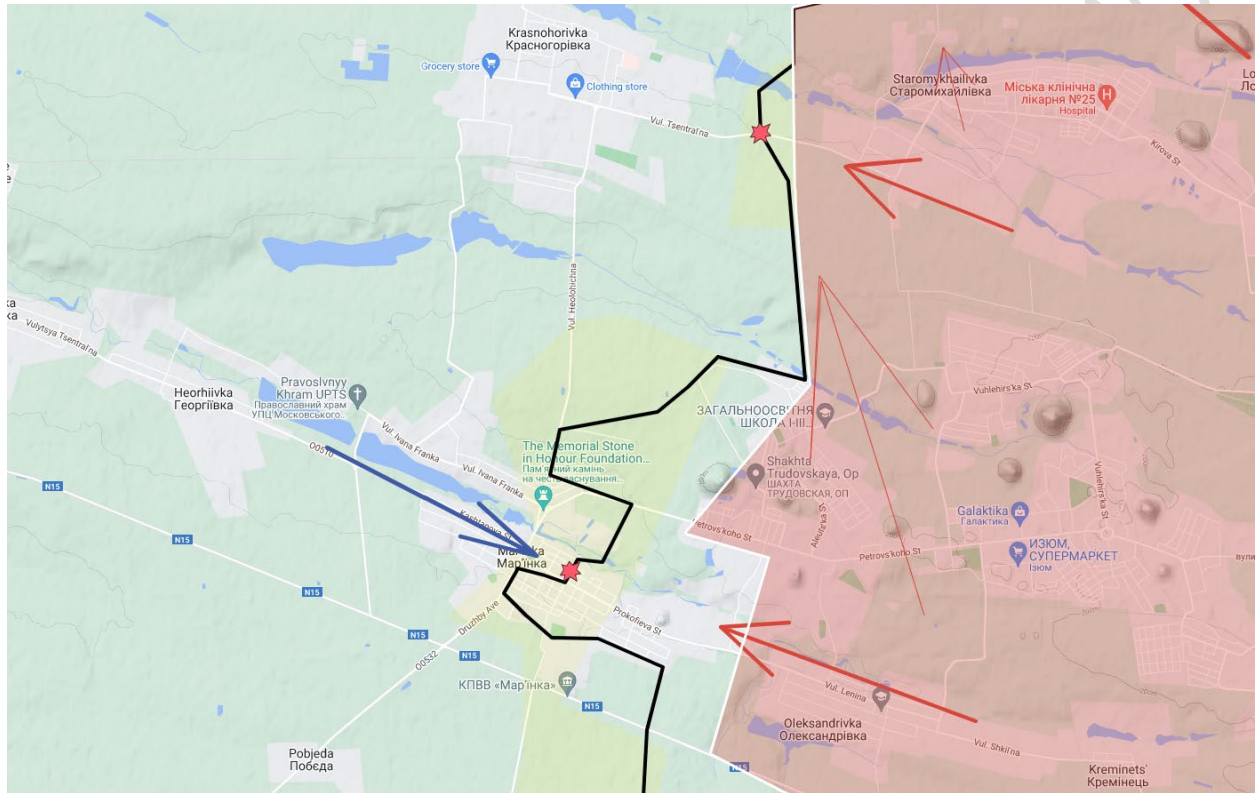
On the Avdiivka axis, mercenaries with War Gonzo reported continued fighting for control of [Vodyane](#) while our favorite FSB Colonel, convicted war criminal, Kremlin pariah, PMC Wagner target, and failed mobik Igor "Girkin" Strelkov lamented there had been "no decisive success" to gain control of the village.<sup>32 33</sup> War Gonzo reported continued fighting on the edges of [Pervomaiske](#) while mercenaries

<sup>32</sup> <https://t.me/wargonzo/10588>

<sup>33</sup> <https://t.me/strelkovii/3829>



with Rybar wrote fan fiction of a Russian advance toward [Nevelske](#).<sup>34 35</sup>



On the Marinka axis, limited fighting in the center of [Marinka](#) continued, with Rybar writing, "The difficulty in liberating the city is complicated by the continuous supply and transfer of reinforcements of the Ukrainian army in this area."<sup>36 37</sup> We can't assess why War Gonzo continues to cling to the disproven claims of intense fighting and

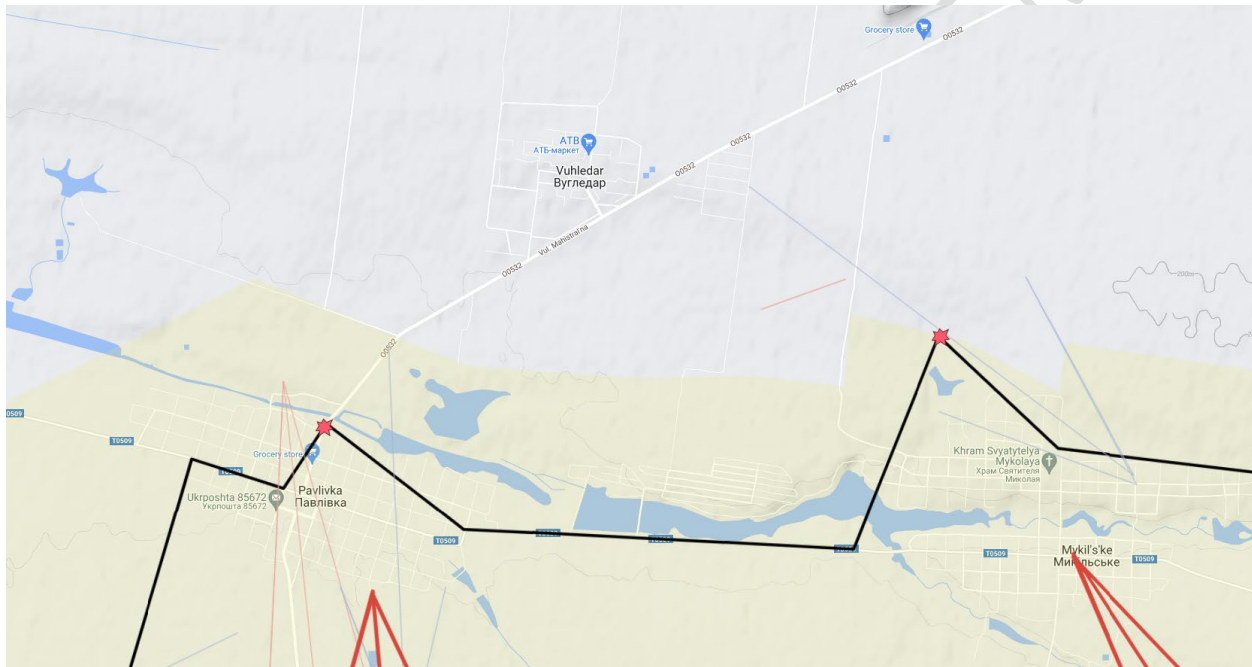
<sup>34</sup> <https://t.me/rybar/43136>

<sup>35</sup> <https://t.me/wargonzo/10588>

<sup>36</sup> <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/15384>

<sup>37</sup> <https://t.me/rybar/43136>

Russian control of 85% of the 📷 [rubble that was once Marinka](#). Strelkov assessed the offensive had “stopped for now...despite all the loud statements that [Russia is] just about to completely liberate the village,” adding, “it is not possible.”<sup>38</sup>




On the [Vuhledar](#) axis, the Russian offensive toward the city and the northwest corner of [Pavlivka](#) has entered a pause or possibly ended. Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Khodakovsky of the 11th Motor Infantry Brigade of the Russian 1st Army Corps wrote, “local skirmishes, artillery exchanges. Non-flying weather – aerial reconnaissance is

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<sup>38</sup> <https://t.me/strelkovii/3829>

practically blind. The enemy [Ukraine] remotely threw many petal mines in all directions, even the village of Mykilske."<sup>39</sup> Strelkov was the first Russian milblogger to write an obituary about the offensive declaring, "bravado statements about a breakthrough directly in the urban-type settlement turned out to be a lie."<sup>40</sup>

Fighting continued with RMOD saying there was activity "in the areas of" and making a vague statement about improving tactical positions.<sup>41</sup> We assess that War Gonzo's claim of Russian troops in the northeastern part of Vuhledar was a typographical error (we have crossed north vs. south before).<sup>42</sup> At the same time, Rybar wrote fan fiction claiming fighting was ongoing in the settlement.<sup>43</sup>

Rybar disingenuously made its claim likely based on a Readovka video, which has been intentionally misattributed. Propagandists with Readovka falsely claimed it was recorded in Vuhledar when geolocation indicated it was recorded in Pavlivka and that the video is from the first day of the assault, possibly earlier,  [based](#)

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<sup>39</sup> [https://t.me/Khodakovsky\\_m/301](https://t.me/Khodakovsky_m/301)

<sup>40</sup> <https://t.me/strelkovii/3829>

<sup>41</sup> [https://t.me/mod\\_russia/23832](https://t.me/mod_russia/23832) [Russian Government Controlled Social Media Channel]

<sup>42</sup> <https://t.me/wargonzo/10588>

<sup>43</sup> <https://t.me/rybar/43136>

[on weather conditions](#).<sup>44</sup> Video from within Vuhledar recorded  [the sound of significant artillery exchanges](#) to the south despite the poor weather conditions reported by Khodakovsky.<sup>45</sup>

Researchers with InformNapalm, who broke the story about the disastrous Bilohorivka [Luhansk] river crossing in May 2022, confirmed GSAFU reports that the reconnaissance company attached to the 155th separate brigade of the Russian Naval Infantry was combat destroyed on the first day of attacks on Vuhledar.<sup>46</sup> The 155th, one of the last intact elite Russian units, suffered crippling losses in the fall during the Pavlivka offensive. The unit was reconstituted using mobiks.

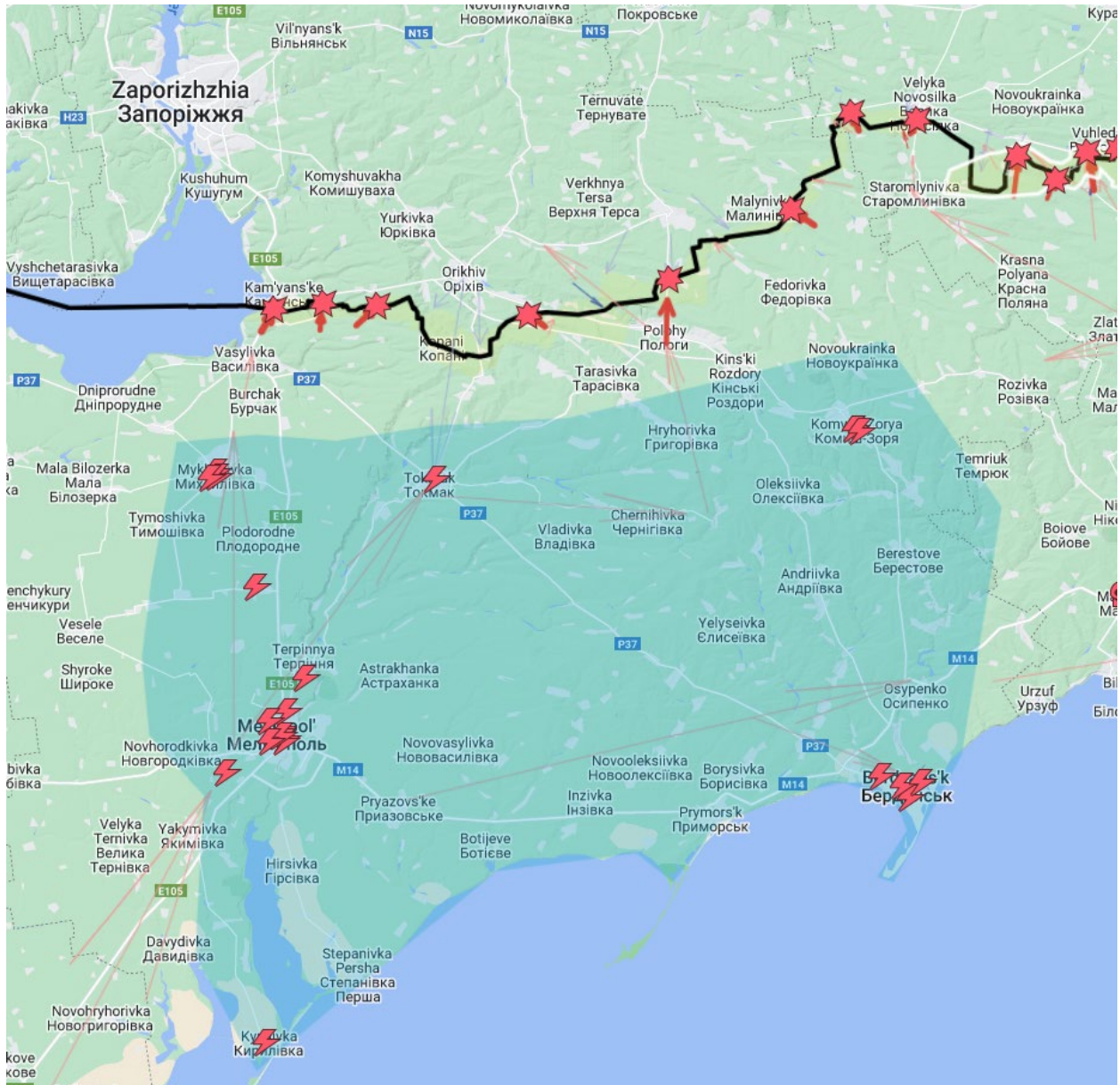
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<sup>44</sup> [https://t.me/grey\\_zone/16914](https://t.me/grey_zone/16914)

<sup>45</sup> <https://t.me/andriyshTime/6293>

<sup>46</sup> <https://t.me/informnapalm/15384>

# ZAPORIZHIA



**Russian Objective NEW:** Prevent a Ukrainian offensive into Zaporizhzhia, integrate captured territory into the Russian Federation, capture the remainder of the oblast

**Ukrainian Objective NEW:** Liberate Russian-occupied areas, prevent further Russian advances, exploit weaknesses on the line of conflict, and protect civilians

Naturally, nothing happened on the first day of reporting activity in Zaporizhia as an axis.

Heavy shelling was reported in Orikhiv, with Russian forces firing ten salvos of Grad rockets from Multiple Launch Rocket Systems (MLRS), while Russian collaborator and propagandist Vladimir Rogov claimed that Ukrainian forces heavily shelled Polohy.<sup>47 48</sup>

The situation at the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant is unchanged.

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<sup>47</sup> <https://t.me/vrogov/7409>

<sup>48</sup> [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

## BLACK SEA, CRIMEA, MYKOLAIV, AND ODESA REGION

Operational Command South (OCS) reported the Black Sea Fleet had 11 ships on patrol, including three missile carriers capable of launching up to 20 Kalibr cruise missiles.<sup>49</sup> We do not see Russian forces setting conditions for another missile attack, and poor weather through the upcoming week will likely hamper reconnaissance efforts to plan the next assault.

As we had previously assessed on January 26, after Russian missile strikes disabled two transformer farms serving Odesa, the city has almost no power, with spotty electrical service for four hours a day and officials struggling to maintain critical infrastructure.

## WESTERN AND CENTRAL UKRAINE

**Russian Objective:** Launch terror attacks on civilians in an attempt to maximize casualties by deprivation of heat, water, and medical services and break morale

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<sup>49</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/74570>

## **Ukrainian Objective:** Deter attacks, and protect civilian lives

In Kherson, Russian and Ukrainian forces continued mutual shelling across the Dnipro River.<sup>50 51</sup>

Local media reports in Russian-occupied Crimea claimed the Russian 126th Coastal Defense Brigade of the Black Sea Fleet suffered “dozens” of casualties during a mortar attack near Kherson. There weren’t additional details on the location of their deployment.<sup>52</sup>

## **NORTH AND NORTHEAST UKRAINE**

**Russian Objective:** Lock Ukrainian military resources into place and launch terror attacks on civilians in an attempt to break morale and maximize casualties by deprivation of heat, water, and medical services

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<sup>50</sup> [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report AM EEST](#)

<sup>51</sup> [General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine – Facebook Report PM EEST](#)

<sup>52</sup> <https://t.me/Crimeanwind/21399>



**Ukrainian Objective:** Complete the liberation of the Kharkiv oblast, maintain the integrity of the international border, deter attacks, and protect civilian lives

Operational Command North reported the villages of Mostka, Sopych, and Leonivka were shelled with more than 30 120 mm mortars fired from across the international border. There were no injuries reported.<sup>53</sup>

## RUSSIAN FRONT

Local reports from the Belgorod federal district claimed that  [Bezlyudovka was shelled](#), injuring two people.<sup>54</sup>

The FSB arrested three teenagers in Moscow after sabotaging railroad tracks. There was no other information about the incident at the time of publication.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/74638>

<sup>54</sup> <https://t.me/belgorod01/31025>

<sup>55</sup> <https://t.me/kommunist/15325>

## THEATERWIDE & EXTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS

Fortune.com released a story with the shocking headline *The WHO is urging countries to start stockpiling medicines for 'nuclear emergencies' after the EU's latest warning on Putin*, written by London-based reporter Orianna Rosa Royle.<sup>56</sup> The World Health Organization did release updated guidelines for mitigating and treating radiation exposure on January 27.<sup>57</sup> The last time these guidelines were updated was in 2007, before the Fukushima meltdown in Japan. Since 2011, new therapies and procedures have been developed to prevent excessive radiological exposure and, more importantly, how to treat radiation poisoning, particularly Acute Radiation Syndrome (ARS).

An international team of health experts and scientists, including from the Russian Federation, was assembled in 2021 and worked for almost two years on the new recommendations. The final review started in May 2022 and was completed at the beginning of 2023. You can read the completely unscary and rather boring document yourself if you [click here](#).<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> <https://fortune.com/2023/01/27/how-to-survive-nuclear-catastrophe-who-medicine-stockpile-warning/>

<sup>57</sup> [World Health Organization](#)

<sup>58</sup> <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240067875>

***Editor's Note: The truth matters. While scary SEO-optimized click-bait headlines are great for views, ad revenue, and a series of terrifying TikTok videos and tweets on social media, the misrepresentation of the work done by the World Health Organization was utterly irresponsible.***

Someone change the sign because it's been zero days since a Kremlin nuclear threat. The Russian Federation is threatening not to renegotiate the START treaty, which was extended from 2021 to February 4, 2026, and was already on life support.<sup>59</sup> The original treaty was signed in 2011 and called for the United States and Russia to cap the combined deployment of intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM), submarine-launched based missiles (SLBM), and heavy bombers at 700 and cut active nuclear warheads to 1,550 by 2018. The total strategic assets to support a nuclear triad of ICBMs, SLBM-capable submarines, and heavy bombers capable of delivering nuclear weapons were to be capped at 800.

Ukraine is forming five new armored and mechanized brigades, which will be equipped with western equipment. The 21st, 116th, and 118th will be new mechanized brigades and are currently forming.<sup>60</sup> The 33rd Mechanized Brigade,

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<sup>59</sup> <https://www.state.gov/new-start/> [United States Government Website]

<sup>60</sup> <https://militaryland.net/news/ukraine-is-forming-new-brigades/>

formed in 2016 but demobilized before February 24, 2022, is being reactivated. The 47th Artillery Brigade recently completed training and has been deployed to Kharkiv. The five brigades are equal to two divisions – equivalent to one army.

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said that NATO does not see any signs that Russian President Vladimir Putin has reset his goals regarding the war against Ukraine. Stoltenberg believes Russia is preparing for a new offensive and that up to 200,000 soldiers have been mobilized. NATO believes the Russian military is also actively building weapons and ammunition to support a new offensive in the coming weeks or months.<sup>61</sup>

The Wall Street Journal and New York Times reported that Israel was behind the drone strike on an Iranian weapons factory in Isfahan over the weekend.<sup>62</sup> A Pentagon spokesperson would not confirm Israel's responsibility to the United States news organization CNN but would confirm that the United States was not involved. Neither Iran nor Israel have released formal statements about the

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<sup>61</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/74653>

<sup>62</sup> <https://www.cnn.com/2023/01/30/middleeast/drone-strikes-iran-isfahan-intl/index.html>

matter at the time of publication, with Iranian officials denying the factory was seriously damaged.

German weapons maker Rheinmetall will increase production of 155-mm artillery shells to 450,000 to 500,000 per year, up from an estimated 65,000 produced in 2022. The company currently makes 250,000 120-mm smooth bore tank rounds annually - one of the world's largest producers of tank ammunition. Rheinmetall is also in talks with the United States to start producing rockets for the M142, M270, MARS II, and LRU GMLRS systems, more commonly known as HIMARS.<sup>63</sup>

Germany has ordered Wisent 1 MC mine clearing armored vehicles for Ukraine to be delivered by the end of 2023. German officials did not disclose how many vehicles were being purchased.<sup>64</sup> Ukraine has become one of the most heavily mined nations on the planet, with up to 40% of the country saturated.

United States President Joe Biden said "no" to providing Ukraine with F-16s when a reporter in the Rose Garden

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<sup>63</sup> [Reuters](#)

<sup>64</sup> [https://twitter.com/bayraktar\\_1love/status/1619856885699706881](https://twitter.com/bayraktar_1love/status/1619856885699706881)

asked.<sup>65</sup> <sup>66</sup> It was a rare moment of brutal honesty from Biden, who, in the past, when asked by reporters about weapon systems under consideration, has repeatedly quipped, "you think I am going to tell you?"

On the same day, French President Emmanuel Macron would not rule out supplying Ukraine with fighter planes, saying, "in principle, nothing is prohibited."<sup>67</sup>

The Netherlands says it is ready to consider sending fighter airplanes to Ukraine, but no formal decision has been made.<sup>68</sup>

British Minister of Defense Ben Wallace said that Challenger 2 main battle tanks would enter service in Ukraine by May. The United Kingdom is providing 14 tanks, enough to arm a company.<sup>69</sup>

Mette Frederiksen, the Prime Minister of Denmark, has said that at the meeting with Ukraine's President Volodymyr

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<sup>65</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/74723>

<sup>66</sup> <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/ukraine-f16s-biden-says-today-us-wont-provide/>

<sup>67</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/74717>

<sup>68</sup> <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/01/30/7387215/>

<sup>69</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/74697>

Zelenskyy, the pair discussed providing tanks for Ukraine.<sup>70</sup> She did not indicate if Denmark would support the request. While the nation at the entrance of the Baltic Sea has 44 Leopard 2 tanks, some are committed in the Baltic states as part of a NATO defense force.

United States auditors with the Agency for International Development, Department of Defense, and State Department were in Kyiv reviewing how Ukraine is using U.S. aid.<sup>71</sup> The \$1.7 trillion Omnibus bill passed in 2022 included \$42M to fund oversight of US aid in Ukraine and moving through the U.S. and Europe.

Over 60 Bradley infantry fighting vehicles (IFV) left North Charleston, South Carolina, bound for Ukraine. The Bradley's Ukraine is receiving are M2A2-(ODS)-SA variants, with extensive upgrades from lessons learned in Iraq and Afghanistan.

A video shared by the Operational Armed Forces of Ukraine has raised some – questions – about what other type of military aid is being considered. The short clip showed Ukrainian troops training in the U.K., deploying from CH-47

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<sup>70</sup> <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/01/30/7387189/>

<sup>71</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/74363>

Chinook transport helicopters.<sup>72</sup> There have been no public discussions about providing Ukraine with the Chinook, but the video raised eyebrows in the analyst community.

## **RUSSIAN MOBILIZATION AND MILITARY STATUS**

Russian Telegram Channel and milblogger *Empire Smoker* outlined why Russian military units don't have enough trucks and why Russian production can't be increased.<sup>73</sup> Factories were already running at maximum output in the three years before the "special military operation." While Russia now has shuttered automotive factories, you can't flip a switch and turn a Lada factory into a Ural or Kamaz truck factory. If Russia were to invest in building new production lines, it would be a minimum lead time of two years without sanctions. By the time production was ramped up, the war in Ukraine would likely be over, leaving the economy stuck with empty truck factories.

NATO Secretary Jens Stoltenberg said that North Korea is helping Russia with rockets. "We also know North Korea provides military assistance to Russia in the war - with [rockets] and shells, and this only emphasizes how

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<sup>72</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/74652>

<sup>73</sup> [https://t.me/georgy\\_ma/534](https://t.me/georgy_ma/534)



everything is interconnected," Stoltenberg said during a press briefing.<sup>74</sup>

Russian soldiers who are hitting the end of their contracts are not being released. In the U.S. military, this is called "stop loss" and is done to hold critical personnel in times of extreme need. There has been a flood of complaints among Russian troops who aren't being released, with RMOD responding, "On the basis of the Decree of the President of the Russian Federation of September 21, 2022 No. 647 "On the announcement of partial mobilization in the Russian Federation," all dismissals were suspended except for the grounds provided for in [certain] subparagraphs."

The indefinite extension of contracts is equivalent to stealth mobilization, leaving tens of thousands of troops stuck in Ukraine. The only way home is hitting the retirement age of 56 to 66, depending on rank and specialty, permanent disability, criminal incarceration, or a zinc coffin.<sup>75</sup>

Near Svatove, Vologzhanin Golubev, the son of former OMON Vologda riot police commander Sergei Golubev was killed when the MT-LB armored personnel carrier (APC) he

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<sup>74</sup> <https://t.me/The3rdForceUA/14798>

<sup>75</sup> <https://t.me/sashakots/38309>

was commanding was hit by Ukrainian artillery fire. The closest equivalent in the United States to OMON would be an FBI or CPB SWAT team. His father reported Golubev "enlisted" on September 21 when partial mobilization was announced. He worked in the FSB as a deputy commander of a special forces team and retired at 38 after 20 years of service. It is unclear why the internal security forces of the Russian Federation are conducting front-line combat missions in Ukraine.

As a sign that PMC Wagner is suffering from recruiting woes, the company has again placed generic recruiting ads on its social media channels.<sup>76</sup> They no longer offer a signing bonus; the base salary is 240,000 roubles for a six-month deployment with performance bonuses. Health and life insurance are provided with a "guaranteed" payout. In an additional sign of potential problems, equipment is provided "for those in need," and prior military service and being rigorously fit is no longer a requirement.

Wagner Group also launched a video in English targeting far-right and far-left conspiracy theories embracing Americans. "You are a man. You are an American who dreams of reviving the greatness of your Motherland, ready

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<sup>76</sup> [https://t.me/grey\\_zone/16919](https://t.me/grey_zone/16919)

to fight the Deep State. You are welcome!"<sup>77</sup> While Wagner has recruited globally for years, this is the first time they've created stylized material targeting election deniers and individuals who flirt with QAnon beliefs.

All is going to plan.

## **WAR CRIMES AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

Video is being shared on Russian channels of a PMC Wagner unit capturing Ukrainian soldiers near Bakhmut. The POWs were tortured, executed, and mutilated. The video originated on private Wagner Group Russian Telegram channels, and while we have a copy, we cannot share it due to the terms and conditions of Patreon - it is that bad.<sup>78</sup>

In a resolution statement passed by the European Union, the EU Parliament "Condemns the forced resettlement and deportation of Ukrainian children, including from health care institutions, to the Russian Federation and the Russian-occupied territories of Ukraine and their forced

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<sup>77</sup> <https://t.me/vrogov/7405>

<sup>78</sup> <https://t.me/voenkorKotenok/44867>

adoption by Russian families” and it calls on the EU and EU countries to provide support to find these children and reunite them with their families or legal guardians.”<sup>79</sup>

Russian journalist Olga Zenkova from Russian state media NTV was raped in occupied Melitopol by Chechen soldiers. Zenkova and her cameraman were accosted in a restaurant with the Chechens beating her camera operator before gang raping her. NTV management has complained to the Kremlin because local military authorities in Melitopol refused to investigate the incident. NTV is prevented from sharing the story due to Russia’s so-called “don’t say war” laws by “discrediting the Russian military.” Further, under established martial law, Russian forces in Ukraine are given broad latitude in conduct. The camera operator is reportedly hospitalized with no information about the condition of Zenkova.<sup>80</sup>

## **GEOPOLITICAL**

Ukrainian President Zelenskyy and Danish Prime Minister Frederikse toured Mykolaiv before Frederikse traveled to Moldova to meet with President Maia Sandu. During her

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<sup>79</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/74716>

<sup>80</sup> <https://twitter.com/AnonOpsSE/status/1620269292414435329>

visit, Frederikse visited wounded Ukrainian soldiers, and toured the destroyed sunflower seed oil tanks at the Port of Mykolaiv and the water purification plant.<sup>81</sup>

Serhei Haidai may soon be dismissed from his role as the Luhansk Oblast Administrative and Military Administrative Governor and named the new Ukrainian ambassador to Kazakhstan. Haidai became the governor on 25 October 2019 and was the only oblast leader to see his region fall fully under Russian control.<sup>82</sup>

New U.S. Ambassador to the Russian Federation, Lynne Tracy, met with Russian Deputy Foreign Ministry Sergey Ryabkov at the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs before heading to the U.S. embassy in Moscow.<sup>83</sup> Tracy was heckled and jeered when she arrived at the embassy, with people accusing her of being a terrorist.<sup>84</sup>

Switzerland and Sweden have legendary neutrality statuses, but no one talks about Costa Rica, which doesn't even have a military. Costa Rica joined the Crimea Platform, a more than 60-nation group from the habitable

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<sup>81</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/74626>

<sup>82</sup> <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/01/30/7387088/>

<sup>83</sup> [United States Department of State](#) – United States Government Website

<sup>84</sup> <https://t.me/andriyshTime/6292>

continents calling for Russia to de-occupy the Crimean Peninsula.<sup>85</sup>

The source code for the Yandex search engine was leaked on the Internet, and it revealed that the Kremlin directed the search engine not to show images of President Putin for images searches of "bunker grandfather," "bald," "chief thief," among others. It also blocked displaying the Z symbol and iconography from searches for "Nazi symbols."<sup>86</sup>

## ECONOMIC

Russia and Iran have integrated their banking systems, enabling the two nations to bypass SWIFT, which will aid in hiding money transfers. "Iranian banks no longer need to use SWIFT with Russian banks, which can be used to make letters of credit, transfers or guarantees," Deputy Governor of the Central Bank of Iran Mohsen Karimi told reporters.

Businesses in the occupied territories are under increasing pressure to re-register as Russian entities, creating a

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<sup>85</sup> <https://t.me/Crimeanwind/21422>

<sup>86</sup> <https://t.me/The3rdForceUA/14803>

revenue problem for the Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics. When the businesses receive Russian registration, the taxes they are charged go to Russia. That's the old school, pre-2014 Russia, not we annexed you, and you're part of Russia now, Russia. The changes are already starting to bleed the coffers of the LNR and DNR.<sup>87</sup>

Russian crude oil shipments to Northern Europe and the Mediterranean have dropped to almost zero after the price cap, and insurance requirements sanctions kicked in on December 5. A market Russia started in earnest developing in the early 90s has been destroyed in less than a year. Predictions of an energy crisis in Europe, the Pacific Rim, and North America caused by undersupply and spiraling prices never materialized as other producers stepped up production and demand retreated in China.<sup>88</sup>

The EU Council announced over the weekend that sanctions against Russia would be extended to July 31, 2023.<sup>89</sup>

While Russia continues to insist that sanctions are not impacting life, buyers of new Ladas are facing further

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<sup>87</sup> <https://t.me/luhanskaVTSA/8260>

<sup>88</sup> <https://t.me/The3rdForceUA/14793>

<sup>89</sup> <https://t.me/Crimeanwind/21177>

constrictions. The Lada Granta will no longer come with power locks in any trim due to a lack of parts. If you want to buy a new 2023 Lada, we hope you like dark green, black, or white because those are the only colors available due to a lack of pigments.<sup>90</sup>

There are calls for Turkey to ban Boeing passenger aircraft operated by Russian airlines from landing in the nation. Russian airlines are accused of bypassing sanctions by making basic repairs and maintenance on Boeing aircraft in Turkey before flying back to Russia.

Russia continues a stealth blockade of Odesa, dragging its feet on inspecting bulk grain and food-grade oil carriers waiting to transit the Bosphorus. Over 115 vessels await inspection, including 25 already loaded – 84 inspections were not completed last week, allowing only 664,000 tonnes of food to leave Odesa, one-third of the amount moved two weeks ago.<sup>91</sup>

The rouble declined, with an exchange rate of 71 for 1 US dollar.

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<sup>90</sup> <https://t.me/Crimeanwind/21248>

<sup>91</sup> <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/01/30/7387112/>



Western oil prices declined after Saudi Arabia announced it was investing \$270 billion in clean energy, inventory reports, and fears the global economy is cooling. WTI crude fell to \$77 a barrel, and Brent dropped to \$84. Russian Urals crude also fell, with an "official" price of \$57 a barrel. United States wholesale RBOB gasoline on the spot market dropped to \$2.47 a gallon (65 cents a liter) as investors dumped delivery contracts with January deliveries before the month ends.

Dutch TTF Natural Gas Futures were up, with March 2023 hitting 59 euros per megawatt hour and April 2023 futures trading at 60 euros.

Chicago SRW Wheat Futures brushed off the news about power outages and partial blockade of Odesa, falling to \$7.49 a bushel for March 2023 delivery.