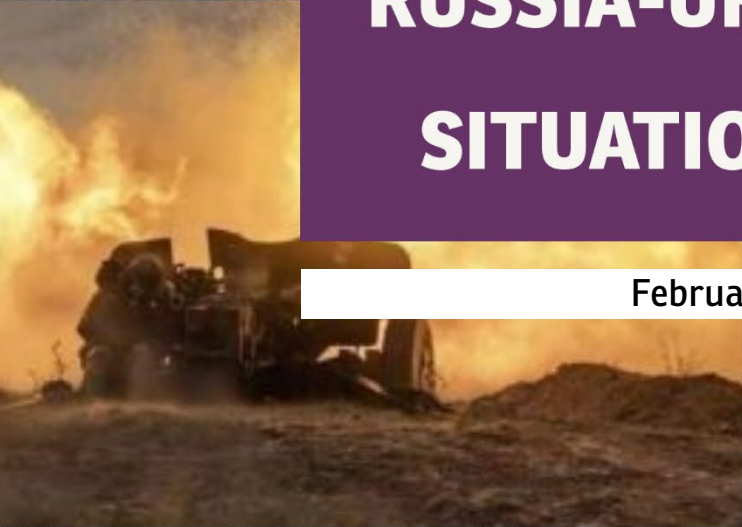
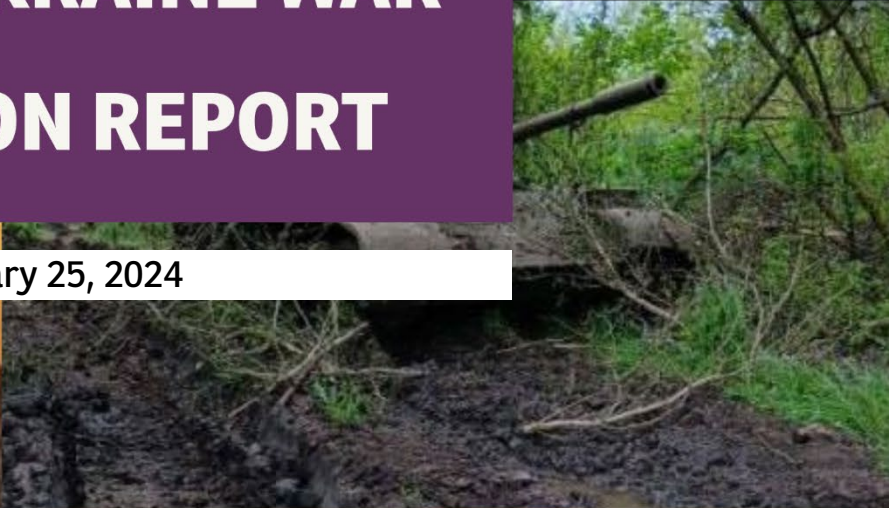


**WBHG NEWS 24**  
**RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR**  
**SITUATION REPORT**



February 25, 2024





# WBHG News 24

## Russia-Ukraine War SITREP

### 02/25/24 23:59\* PST

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## **SUMMARY – DAY 731**

It has been 3,681 days since Russia started clandestine military operations in Crimea, ten years and five days since the start of the Russia-Ukraine War, and two years and two days since Russia expanded its war of aggression against Ukraine.

### **Summary**

- There are map updates
- There are assessment updates
- There are rumor updates
- Due to late publishing – no summary

[Jump to the Action Report.](#)

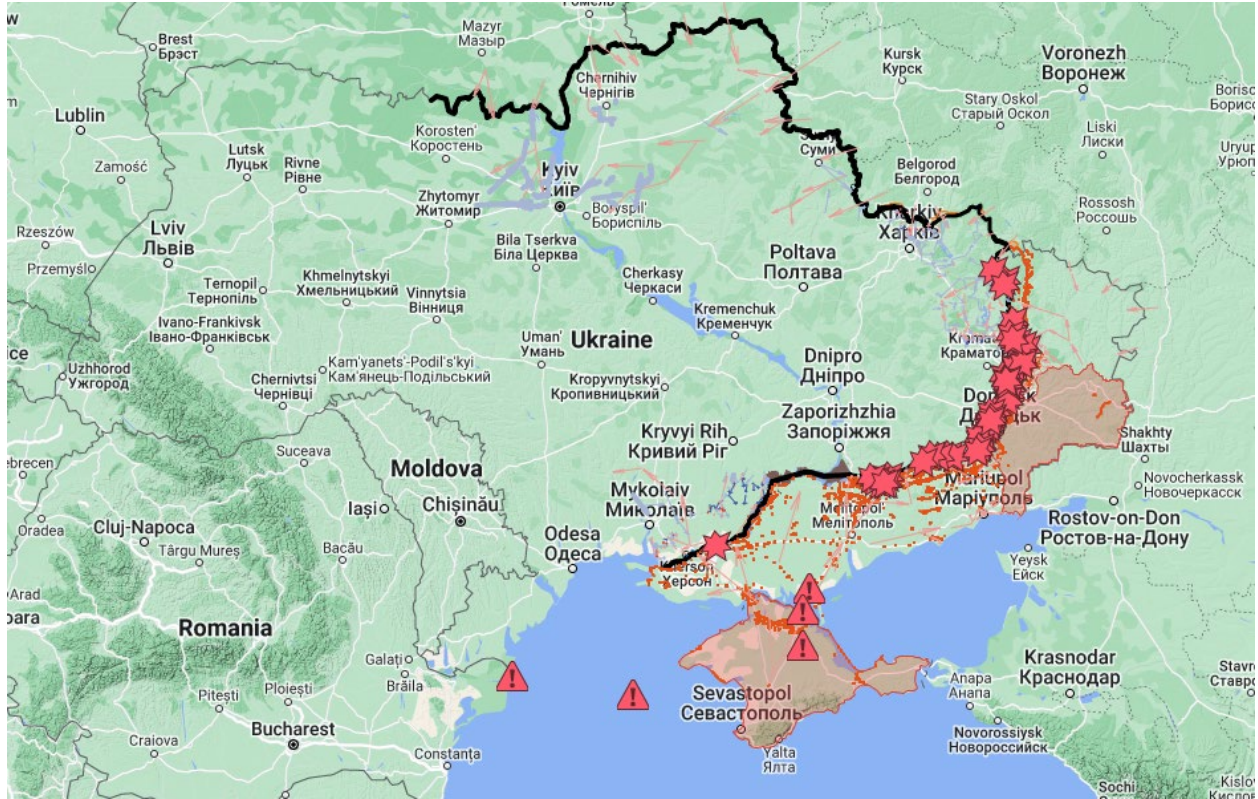
## **DAILY ASSESSMENT**

We assess the following:

1. We maintain there is a high risk of a large-scale missile attack targeting civilians and civilian infrastructure through March 1 due to a Russian A-50U AWACS being shot down on February 23.
2. We maintain the risk that Russia will recognize the breakaway Moldovan Republic of Transnistria or declare it intends to annex the region is low.
3. The United States has ended financial and military aid to Ukraine unless there is an unforeseen event that changes Congressional leadership before the 2024 elections.
4. Ukraine's acute shortage of ammunition and air defense missiles continues to impact the battlefield, with Kyiv and Washington warning that the situation will become catastrophic by April.
5. In our assessment and due to necessity, Ukraine has shifted to a Fabian strategy to wear down Russian combat power while conserving resources.
6. The ending of U.S. aid for Ukraine is motivating at least five European nations to consider expanding, restarting, or starting nuclear weapons programs.

7. It is extremely unlikely that Russia will achieve its main operational goal of capturing the remaining areas of the Luhansk and Donetsk Oblasts and the areas east of the Oskil River in northern Kharkiv by March 13.
8. Our assessment that the lack of media attention and the ending of U.S. military aid has encouraged the Kremlin to be more transparent when committing grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions was, regrettably, accurate.
9. We maintain that while the possibility of an intentional nuclear accident caused by Russian occupiers at the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant remains low, the condition is more serious than what the International Atomic Energy Agency is reporting.

## TODAY'S WAR IN UKRAINE MAP



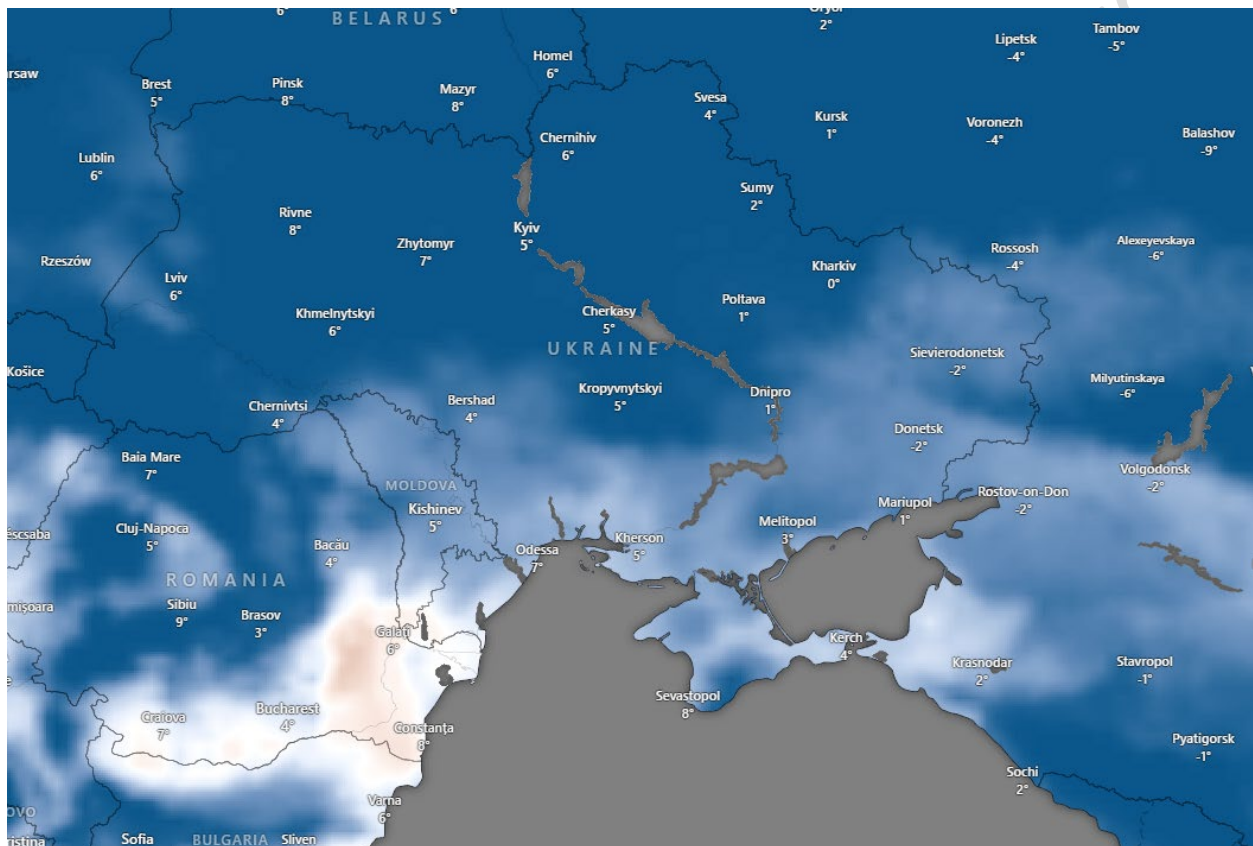
**About the maps:** Red triangles are sites of significant events unrelated to missile attacks, insurgencies, or ground combat, such as the sinking of the Moskva and the explosion at the Saky Naval airbase. Gray circles indicate an area where fighting has ended with no change in the line of conflict. The archived offensive layer is turned off by default, but you can toggle it on/off in the Map Legend. Purple territory is Ukrainian advances into areas that were illegally occupied by Russian forces between 2014 and 2016. 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.

### [Russia-Ukraine War Report Map](#)



# WEATHER

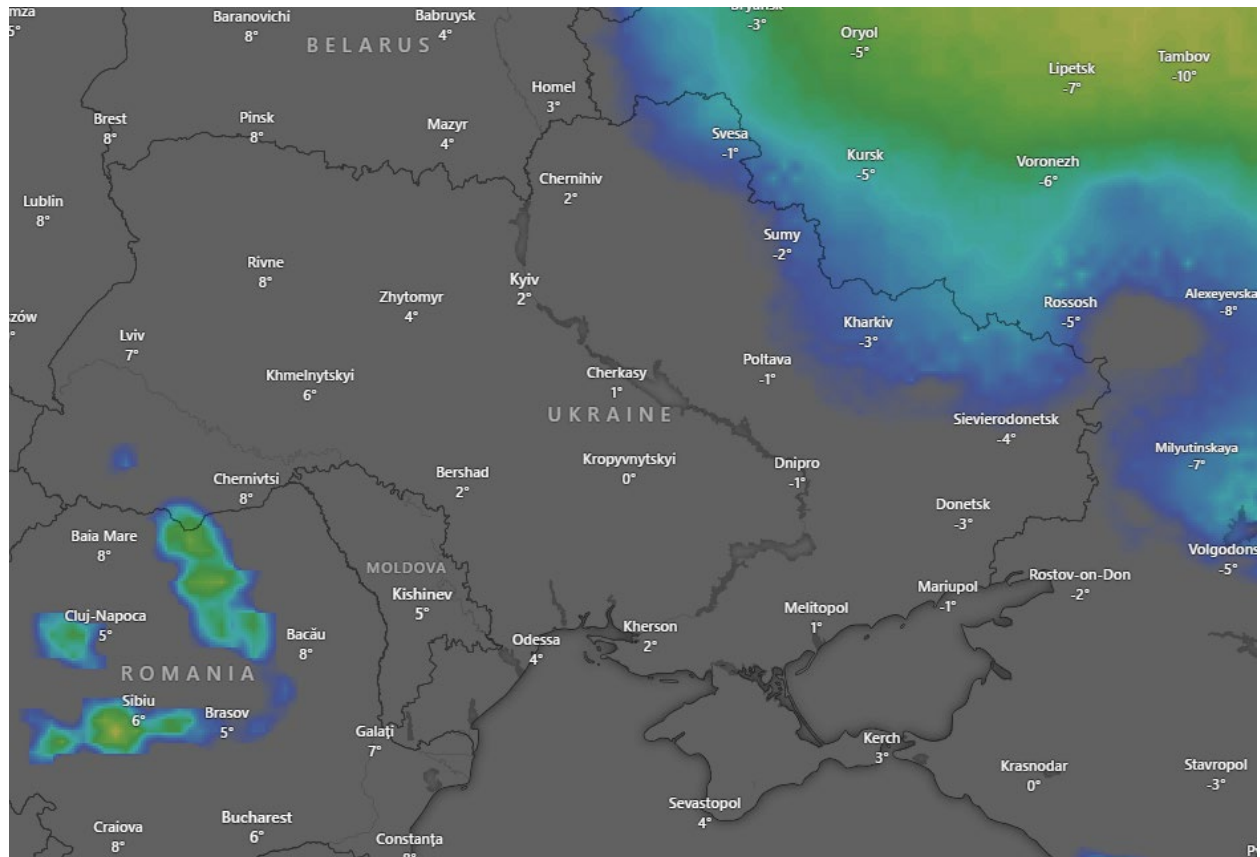
## SOIL SATURATION



Soil saturation is 75% to 95% at the 40-centimeter level and 60% to 100% at 100 centimeters, with the driest regions in the Bessarabia region. Long-range forecasts continue to predict a drying trend through March 4.

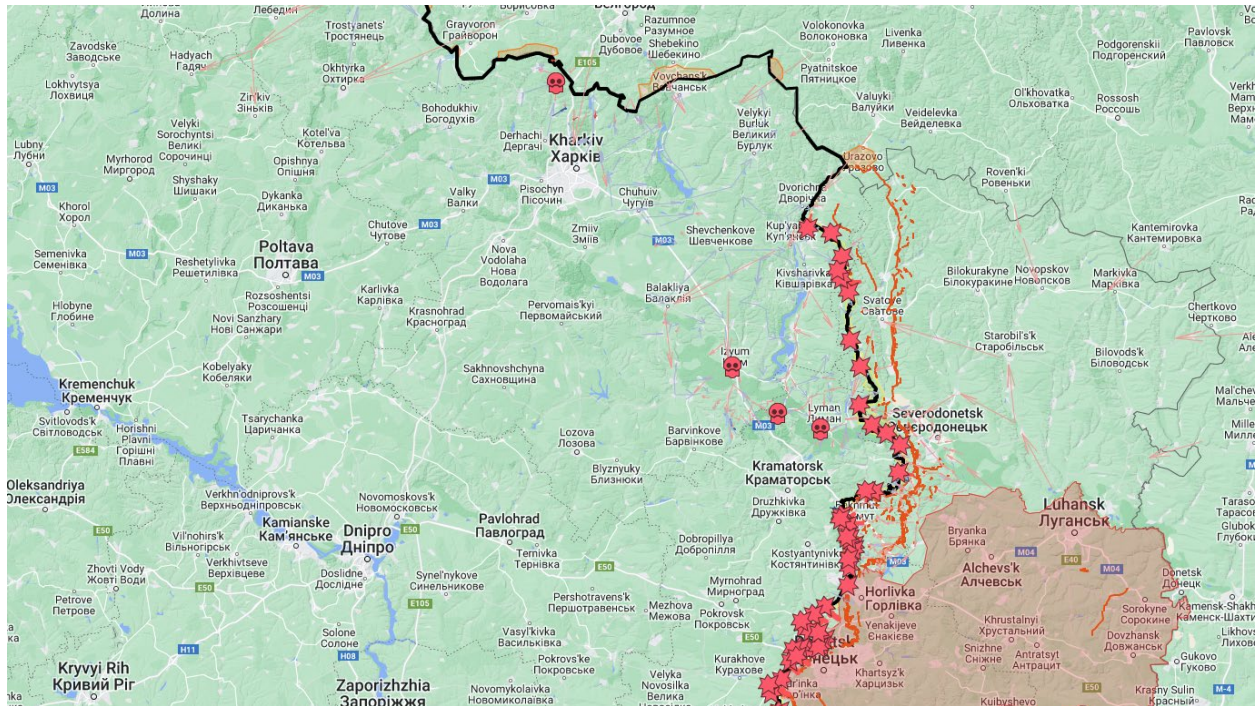


## SNOW DEPTH



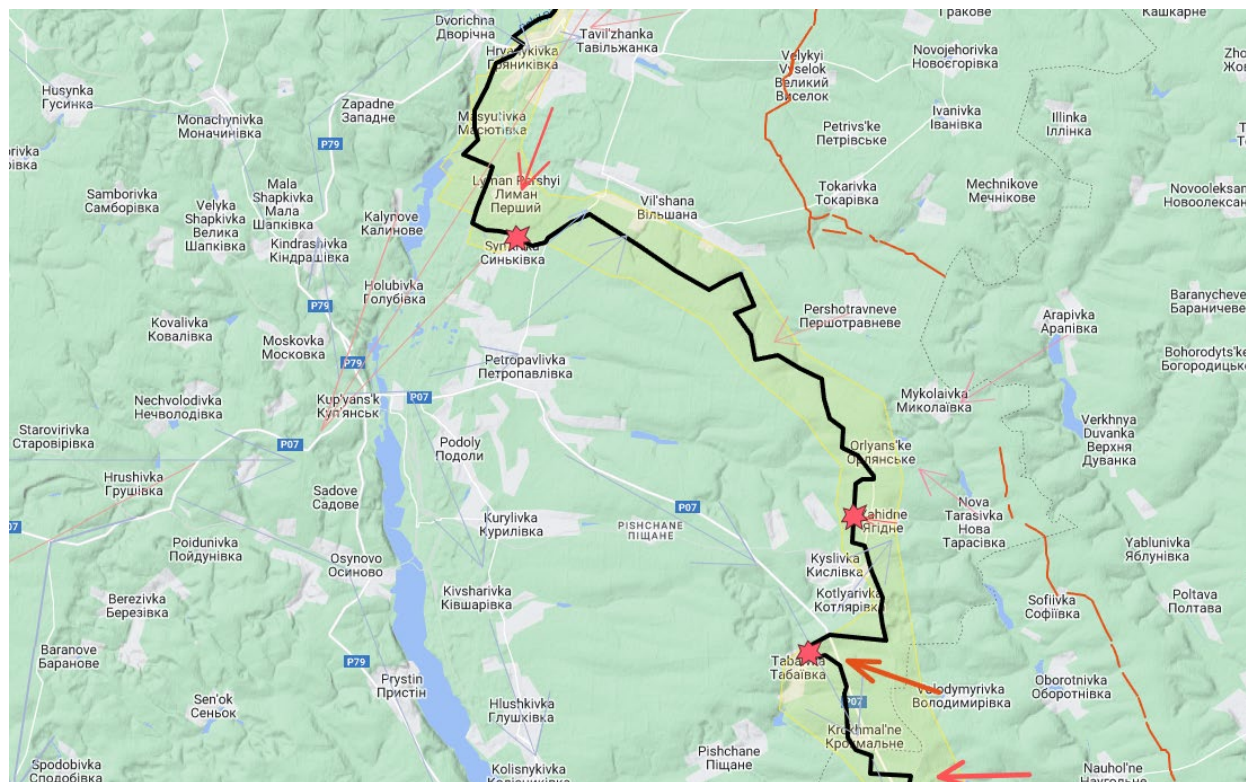
Computer models continue to underestimate the snowpack in eastern Ukraine, but not significantly. Along the northern border of Ukraine, evaporation and melt-off are forecasted through February 29. We will stop tracking snowpack on March 15 unless there is a significant weather event.

## KHARKIV AND LUHANSK



**Russian Objective:** By March 13, 2024, recapture all territory from Kupyansk to Pisky Radkivski, push Ukrainian forces from the right bank of the Oskil River, recapture all of the Luhansk Oblast, maximize casualties, and terrorize Ukrainian civilians near the line of conflict

**Ukrainian Objective:** Hold and harden defensive lines in the Kupyansk, Svatove, Kreminna, and Lysychansk Operational Areas and protect civilians and civilian infrastructure



**The intensity of fighting remains low in the Kupyansk Area of Operation (AO) of Kharkiv.** The Russian Ministry of Defense (RMD) reported positional fighting west of [Synkivka](#), near the railroad tracks [south of Lyman Pershyi](#). This is in an area where we have the line of conflict mapped.<sup>1</sup> The Mayor of Kupyansk, Andriy Besedin, said Russian tactics had changed “thanks to the Defense Forces, which regularly destroy the Russians and prevent them from reaching their goals.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [https://t.me/mod\\_russia/36024](https://t.me/mod_russia/36024) [Russian government controlled social media channel]


<sup>2</sup> <https://t.me/UaNazhyvo/67949>



The Director of the Main Defense Intelligence Directorate of the Ministry of Defense of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (GUR), Kyrylo Budanov, believes the situation is stable, and the predictions about Kupyansk are from “all those experts who, not understanding the situation, talk a lot.”<sup>3</sup>

The General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine (GSAFU) reported renewed fighting in the area of [Tabaivka](#), with Russian forces launching five unsuccessful attacks.<sup>4</sup>

The Kharkiv Oblast Administrative and Military Governor (OVA) Oleh Sinegubov reported that Kharkiv had been hit by multiple S-300 anti-aircraft missiles used for a ground attack, fired from Belgorod.<sup>5</sup> At the time of publication, there wasn't any other information.

People's Deputy Oleksandra Ustinova warned  [that a lack of support from Ukraine's allies](#) and further delays in the delivery of F-16s could lead to Russia capturing the city of Kharkiv. “Insufficient support of the Ukrainian army from the West was one of the reasons why the defenders were forced to retreat from Avdiivka, Donetsk region. Putin's

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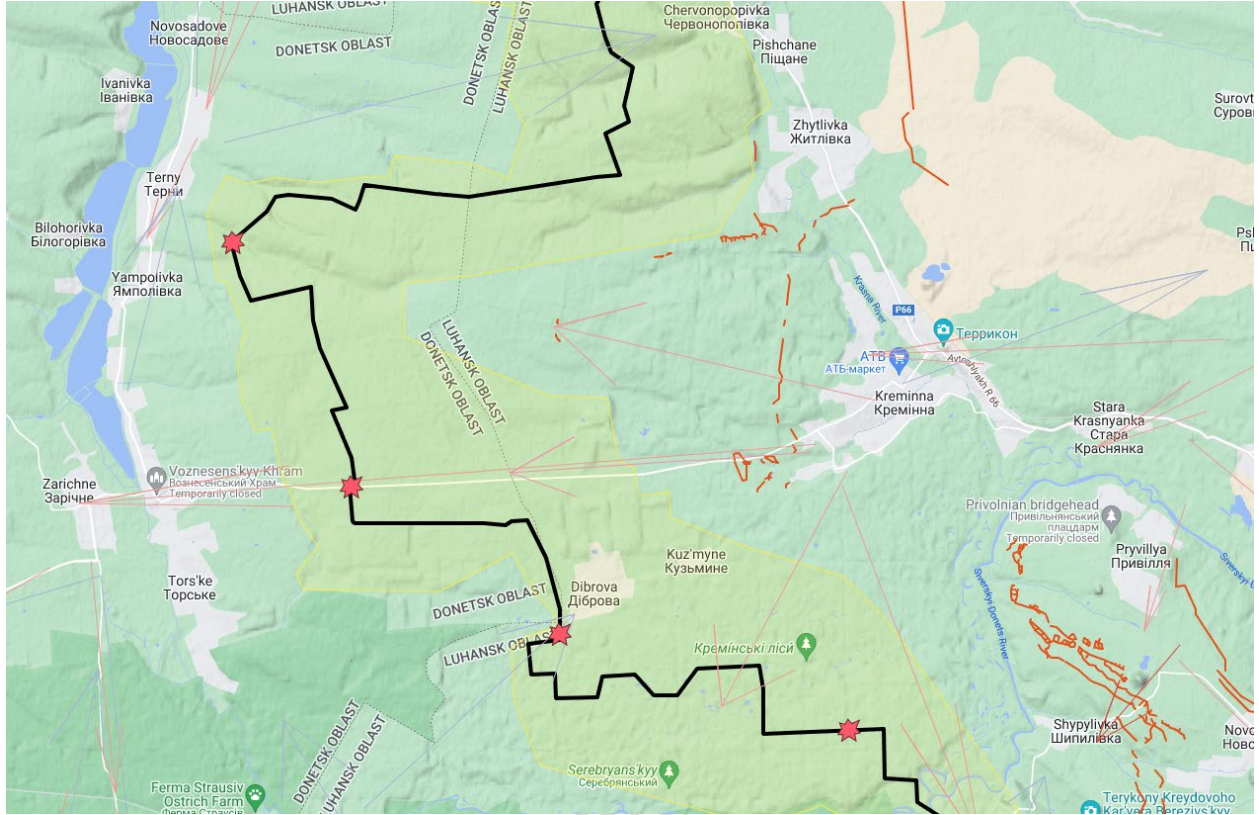
<sup>3</sup> <https://t.me/uniannet/126696>

<sup>4</sup> <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/15914>

<sup>5</sup> <https://t.me/uaobozrevatel/110218>

next target may be Kupyansk and then Kharkiv. If Western partners do not increase aid, if Ukraine does not receive ammunition, long-range missiles, and the promised F-16 fighter jets, the threat of losing Kharkiv moves from impossible to realistic."

**ASSESSMENT:** We had dismissed previous claims that Russia would launch a massive offensive in the Kupyansk AO between January 15 and 20, as well as a predicted large-scale offensive in October 2023. In this respect, we agree with the head of the GUR, Budanov. We also agree with Ustinova that without a dramatic and immediate increase in aid from Europe and Asia or a restoration of United States aid, a future Russian offensive to capture the Kupyansk AO and then advance on Kharkiv is possible.

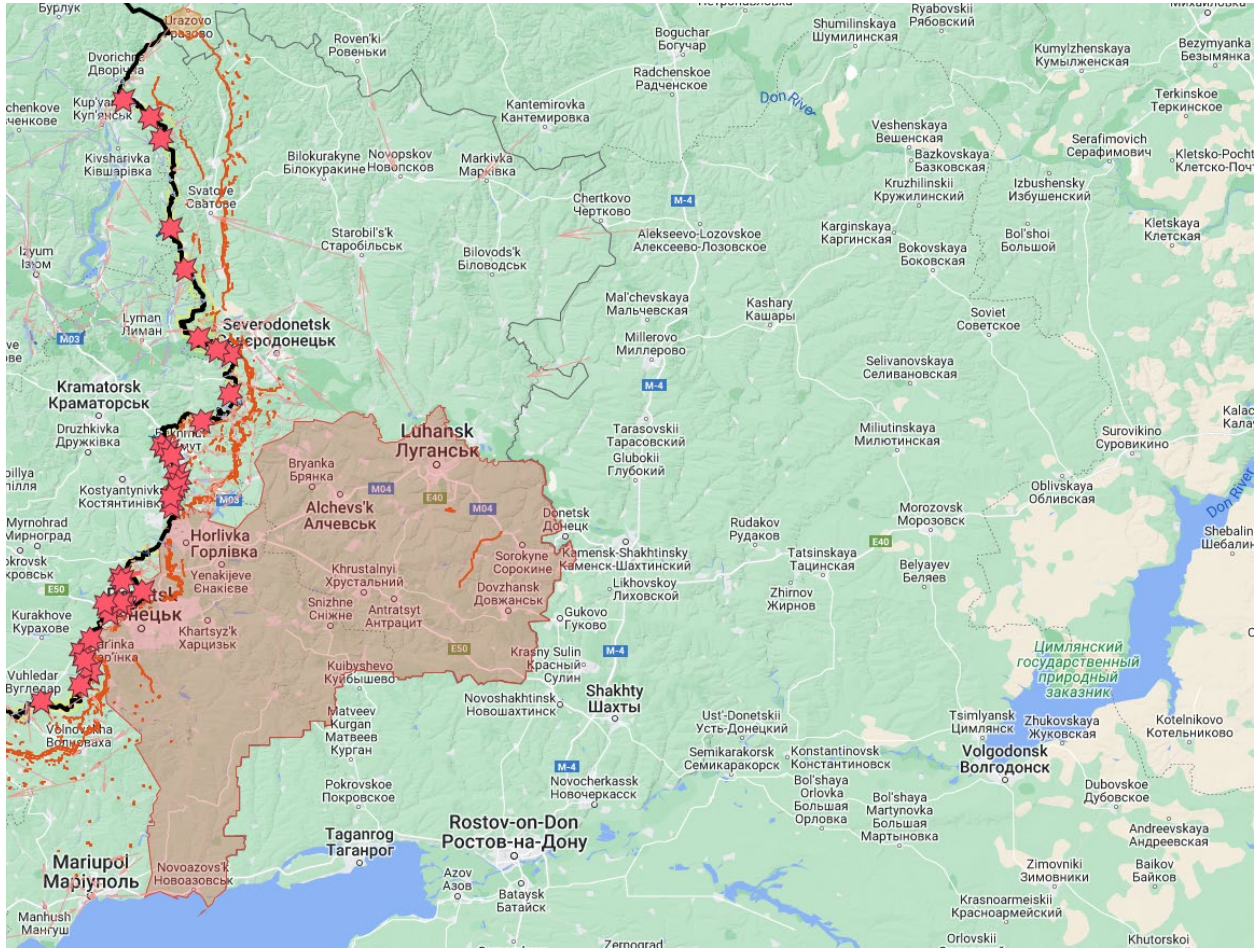


**In the Kreminna AO of Luhansk, Russian forces continued their attacks east and northeast of [Terny](#) [Donetsk] without success.<sup>6</sup>**

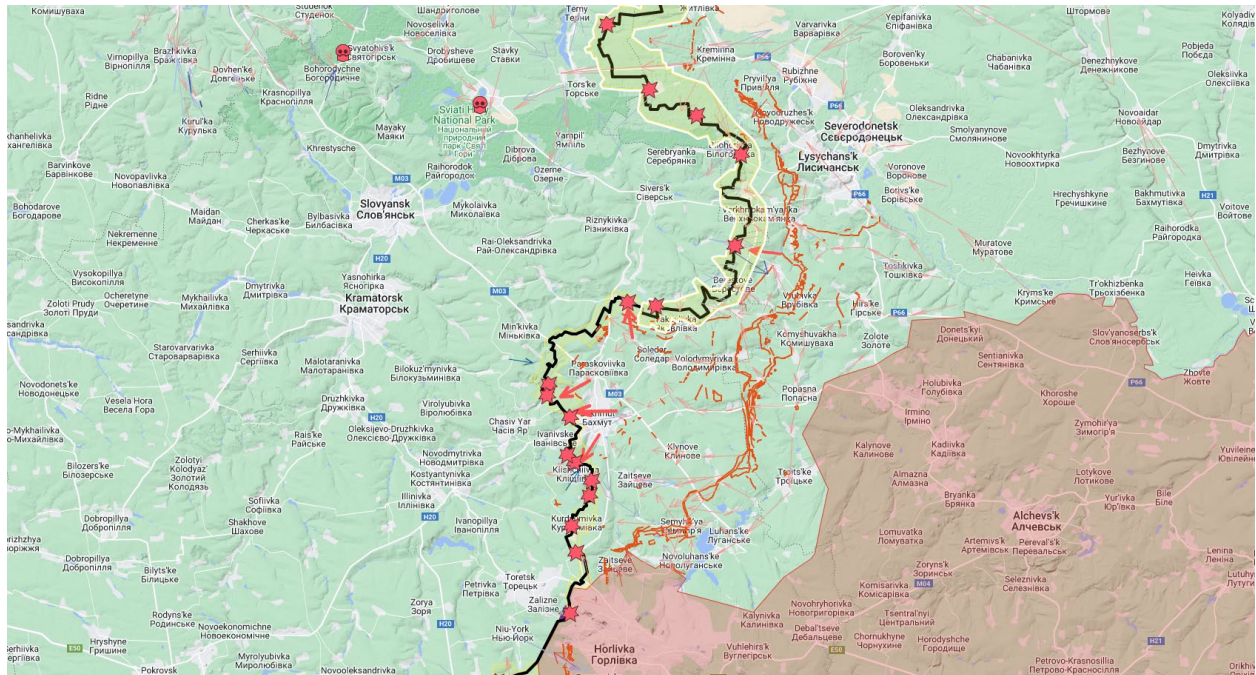
<sup>6</sup> <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/15914>



# DONBAS REGION



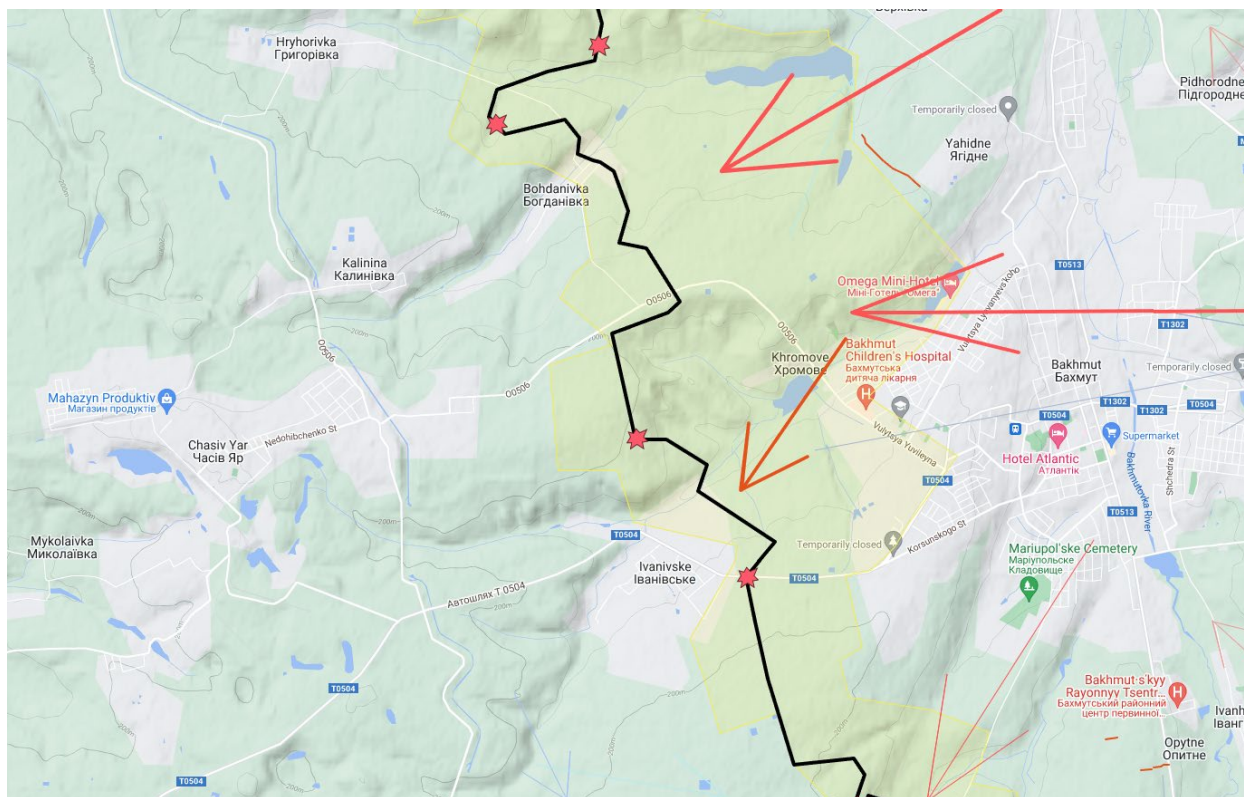
# NORTHEAST DONETSK



**Russian Objective:** By March 13, capture Chasiv Yar and Kostyantynivka, set conditions to attack Kramatorsk, Slovyansk, and Siversk, and terrorize Ukrainian civilians

**Ukrainian Objective NEW:** Defend Siversk, Chasiv Yar, and Kostyantynivka, stabilize more advantageous defensive lines on the north flank of Bakhmut, harden existing defensive lines, and minimize civilian casualties

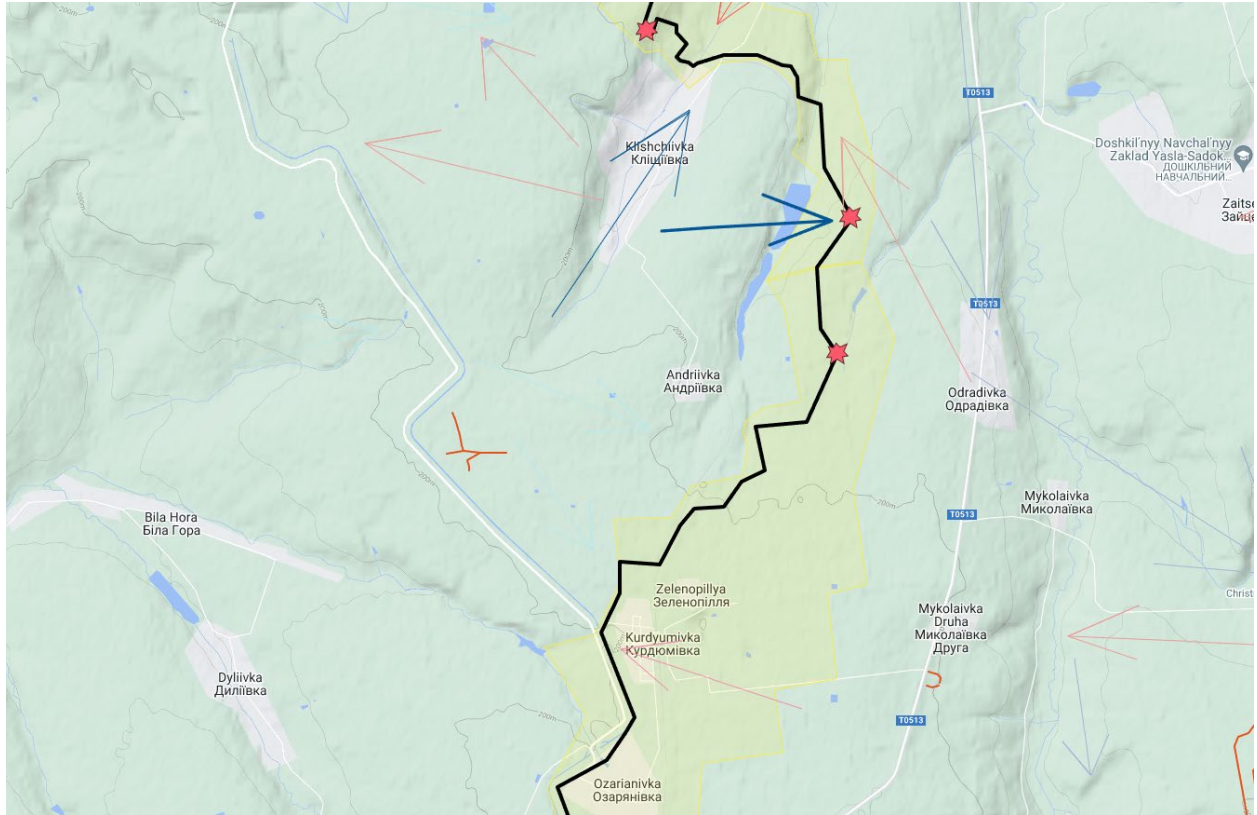




## Russian forces advanced in the Bakhmut AO while committing grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions.

Northeast of Ivanivske from Khromove and Bakhmut, Russian forces made significant advances, almost reaching the top of the first ridge north of [Ivanivske](#). Nine Ukrainian soldiers were captured, and Russian forces executed at least seven. There is more information in the **War Crimes and Human Rights** section.







**In the Klishchiivka AO, positional fighting was ongoing northwest and east of [Klishchiivka](#) with no change in the situation.<sup>7 8 9</sup> Russian sources reported there was fighting in the area of [Andriivka](#).<sup>10</sup> In our assessment, this is southeast of the village due to significant chatter of activity near [Kurdyumivka](#).**

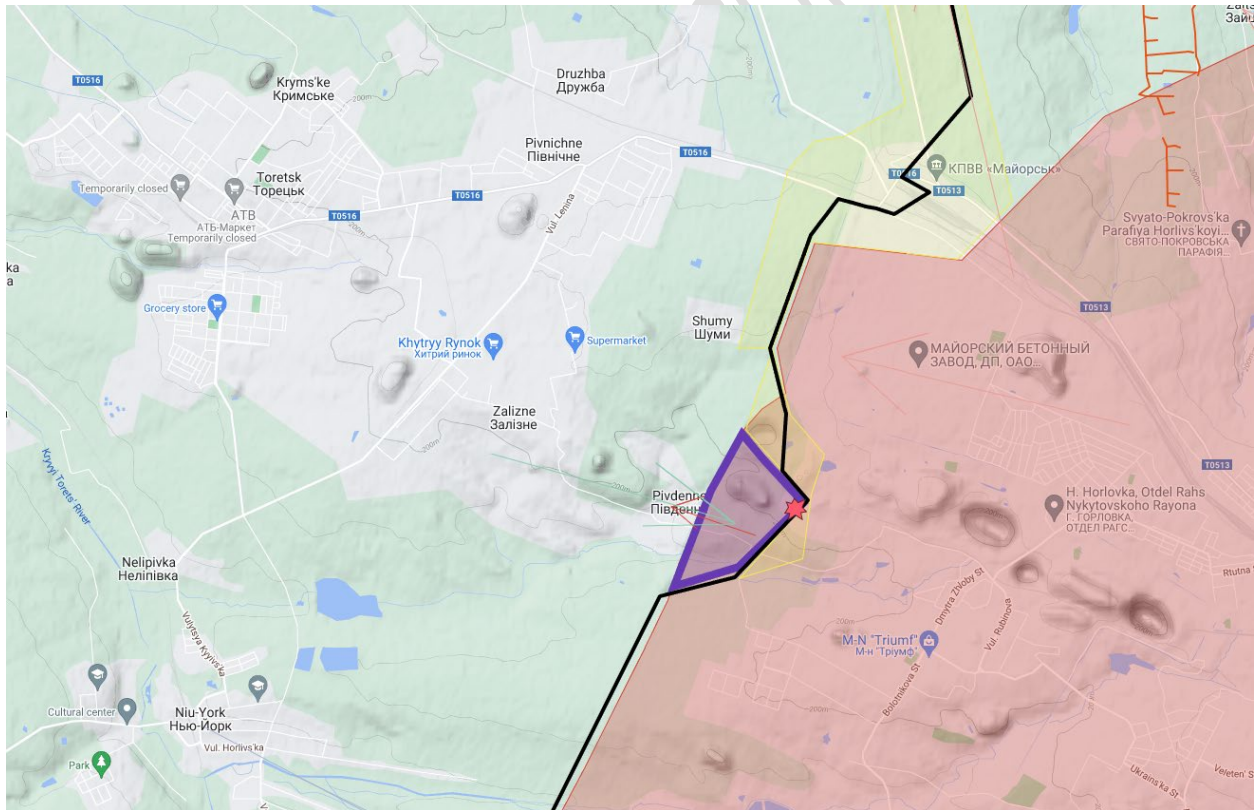
<sup>7</sup> <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/15914>

<sup>8</sup> [https://t.me/mod\\_russia/36024](https://t.me/mod_russia/36024) [Russian government controlled social media channel]

<sup>9</sup> <https://t.me/wargonzo/18417> (2/26/24 published early)

<sup>10</sup> 10

Russia attacked Kostyanktynivka using S-300 anti-aircraft missiles for a ground attack and FAB-250 UMPK glide bombs.<sup>11</sup> The railroad station was destroyed, and  [15 apartment buildings](#), three homes, 23 retail shops east of the train station, three schools, two city administrative buildings, two pharmacies, and the  [Feast of Igor Russian Orthodox Church](#) were damaged.<sup>12</sup> <sup>13</sup> One pensioner was wounded.



<sup>11</sup> <https://t.me/uaobozrevatel/110134>

<sup>12</sup> <https://t.me/uaobozrevatel/110138?single>

<sup>13</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/138057?single>

In the Toretsk-Niu York AO, RMOD reported fighting in the area of [Pivnichne and Shumy](#) on the edge of occupied Horlivka.<sup>14</sup> GSAFU reported that Ukrainian forces were shelled in the area of Mayorsk and Shumy, suggesting that fighting is still ongoing in the area of terrikons along the former Minsk II boundary.<sup>15</sup>

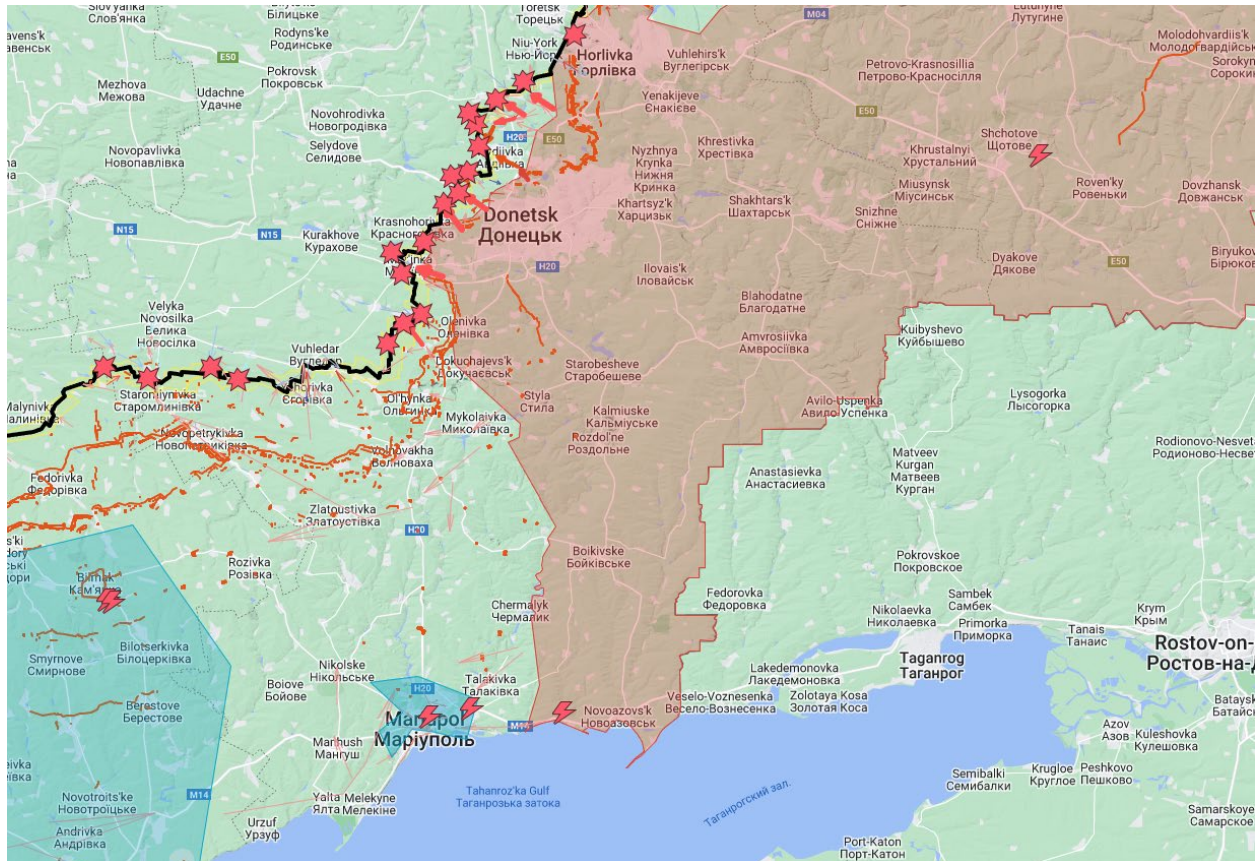
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<sup>14</sup> [https://t.me/mod\\_russia/36024](https://t.me/mod_russia/36024) [Russian government controlled social media channel]

<sup>15</sup> <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/15914>

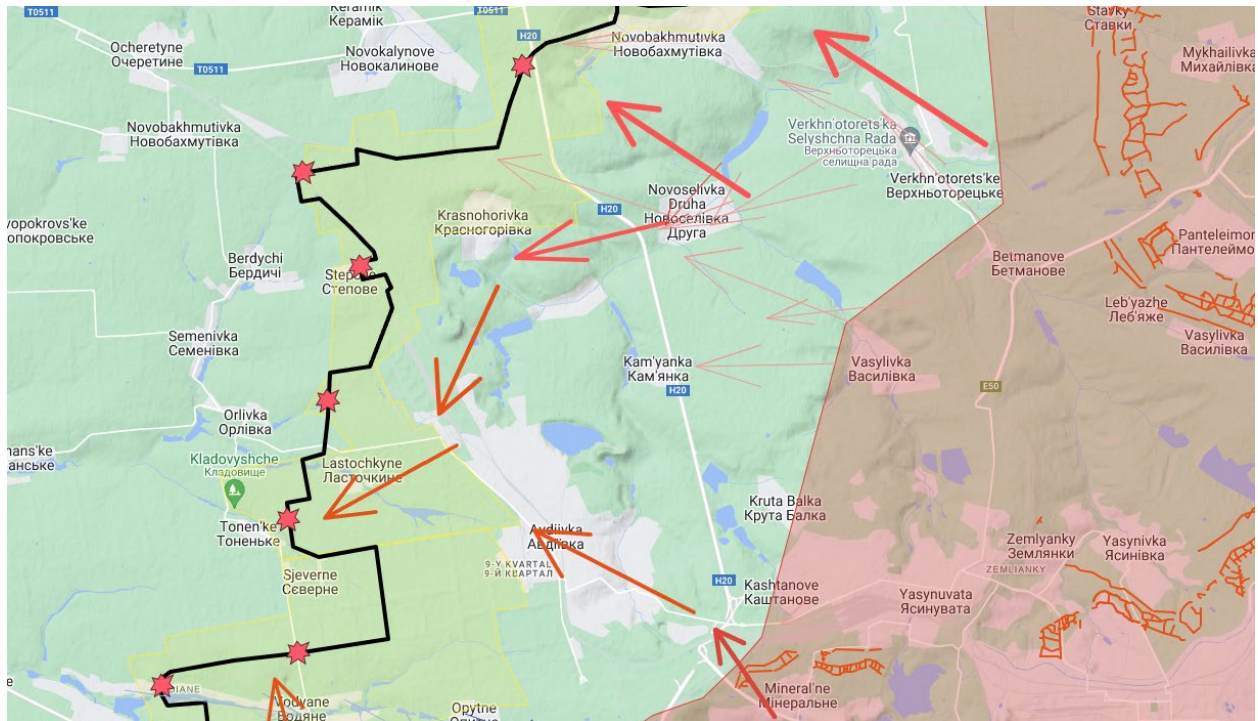


# SOUTHWESTERN DONETSK



**Russian Objective:** By March 13, capture the remainder of the Donetsk Oblast and terrorize Ukrainian civilians

**Ukrainian Objective:** Establish new defensive lines west of Avdiivka, hold and harden existing defensive lines on the north and south flank, maximize Russian casualties and preserve personnel, and protect civilian lives



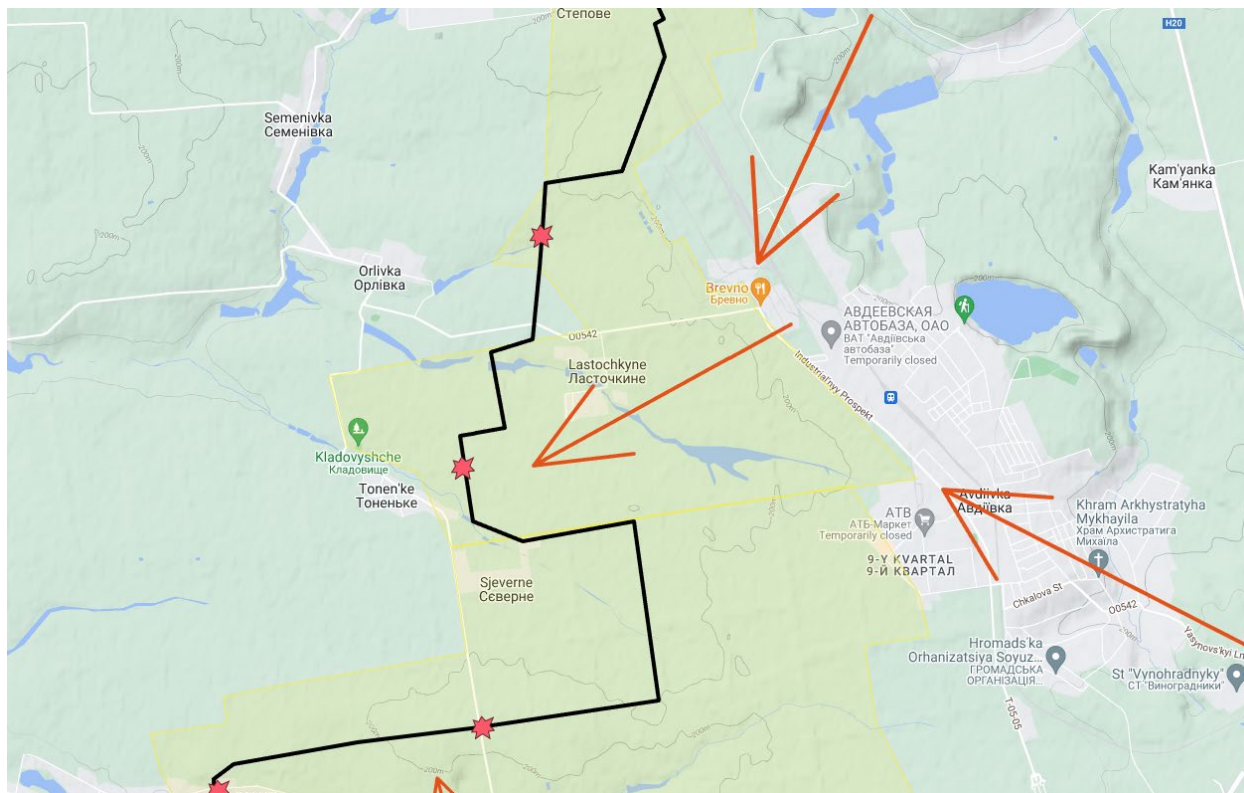
**The situation for Ukrainian forces remains challenging in the Avdiivka AO. To the north of occupied Avdiivka, RMOD reported fighting near [Novobakhmutivka](#).<sup>16</sup> Ukrainian sources reported that Russian troops briefly broke through Ukrainian defenses east of [Berdychi](#) but were repulsed, and heavy fighting continued near the railroad grade east of [Stepove](#).<sup>17 18</sup>**


<sup>16</sup> [https://t.me/mod\\_russia/36024](https://t.me/mod_russia/36024) [Russian government controlled social media channel]

<sup>17</sup> <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/15914>

<sup>18</sup> <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/18942>





Russian forces continue to advance from the Avdiivka Coke Plant. Ukrainian forces are under heavy pressure in Orlivka, with Russian forces trying to advance along the road from Avdiivka.<sup>19</sup> On February 24, Russian forces  captured the eastern part of the village of Lastochkyne.<sup>20</sup> Ukrainian forces were forced to fall back to Tonenke due to a lack of effective defensive positions.<sup>21</sup> There are conflicting reports on the status of Lastochkyne. Russian mercenary milblogger WarGonzo reported that Ukrainian forces were on the offensive on the western edge of

<sup>19</sup> <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/18942>

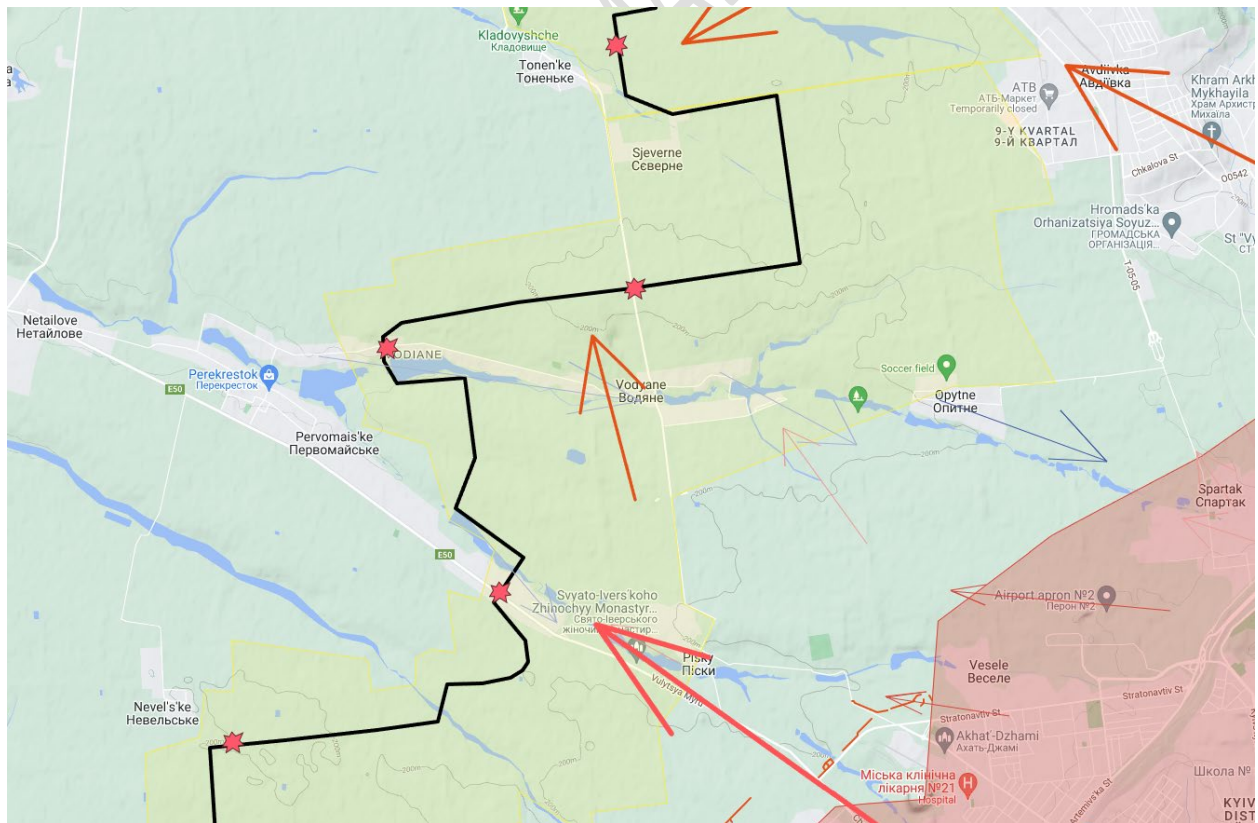
<sup>20</sup> <https://twitter.com/EjShahid/status/1761395365650092057>

<sup>21</sup> <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/18942>



Lastochkyne.<sup>22</sup> In contrast, the Ukrainian source DeepState wrote, "We once again heard, 'withdrew to prepared positions.' And then we will hear more and more because the situation in the neighboring villages is absolutely the same, and the enemy has to be restrained by the forces of the Ukrainian military, on whose shoulders the entire burden falls."

Using terrain analysis, we adjusted the map, moving the line of conflict west of the village.



<sup>22</sup> <https://t.me/wargonzo/18417> (2/26/24 published early)

Southwest of occupied Avdiivka, Fighting continued in the eastern part of [Pervomaiske](#) and near [Nevelske](#) with no change in the situation.<sup>23 24</sup>

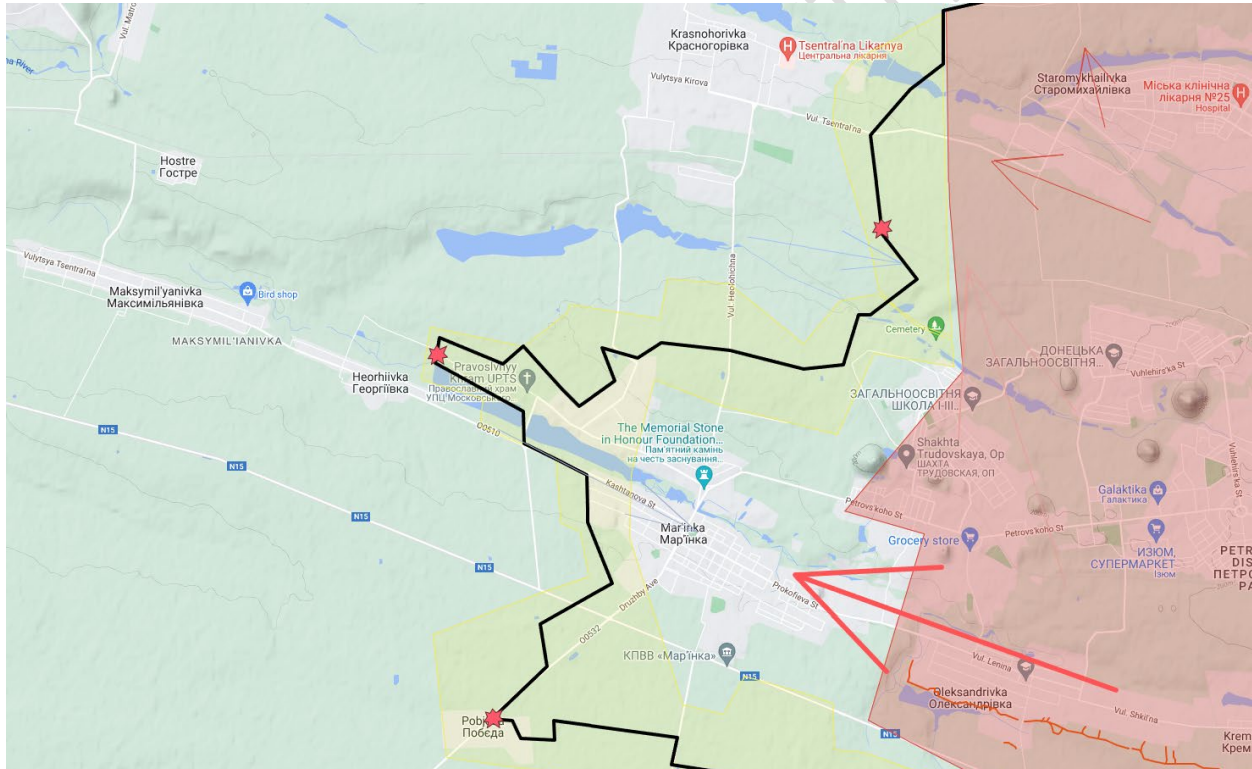


**ASSESSMENT:** Considering the terrain and uncooperative weather that is benefiting Russia, if Russian forces can take Tonenke and Orlivka, the next advance would either be north toward Semenivka or continue west toward Umanske. If Russian commanders continue a strategy of advancing

<sup>23</sup> <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/15914>

<sup>24</sup> <https://t.me/wargonzo/18417> (2/26/24 published early)

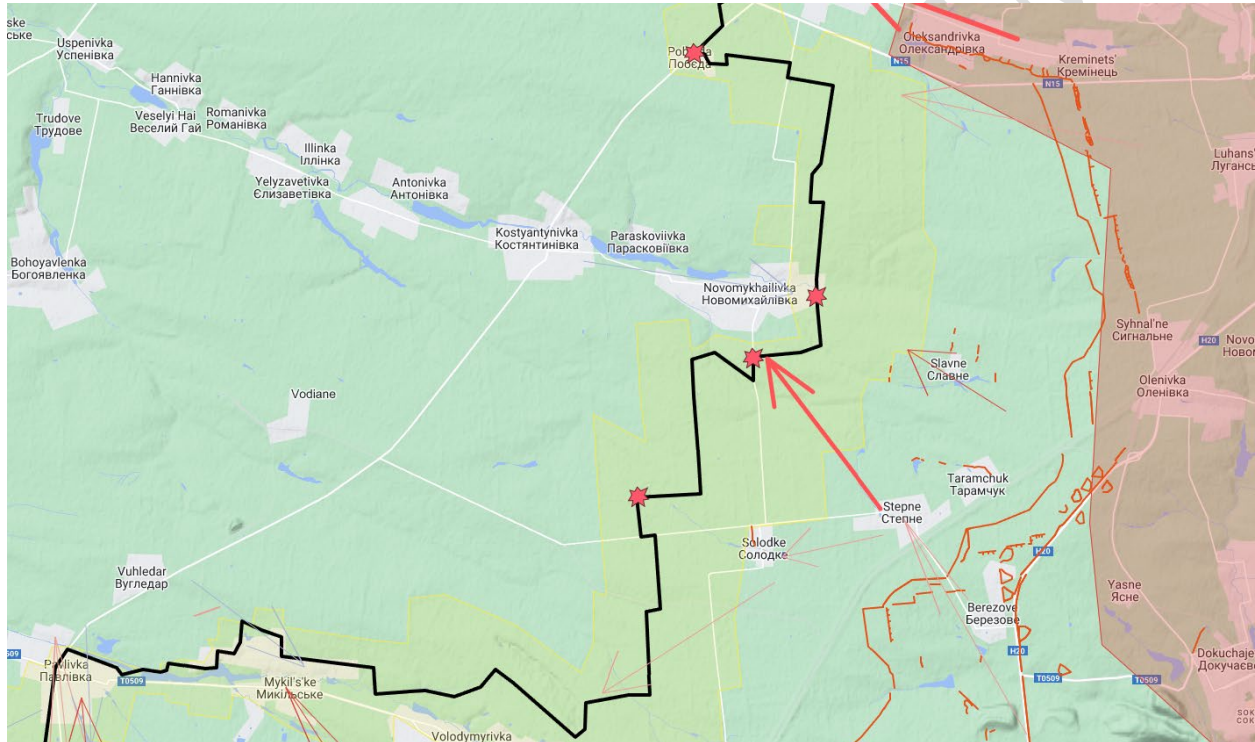
regardless of losses, a direct attack toward western Vodyane and Netailove can't be ruled out. If Ukraine continues a Fabian strategy, that is, refusing to engage in frontal battles and fighting an attritional war that preserves resources, the next effective defensive line runs from Mezhove to Yanobrodivka to Karlivka. Elevation, water obstacles, and urbanized areas will assist the defense.



**In the Marinka AO, Russian forces continued to attack [Krasnohorivka](#) from the south, with support from the**



Aerospace Forces (VKS).<sup>25</sup> GSAFU reported fighting near [Heorhiivka](#), suggesting that Russian troops did have a brief operational pause.<sup>26</sup> Russian and Ukrainian forces also continue to fight for control of the village of [Pobieda](#).<sup>27</sup>



In the Vuhledar AO, heavy fighting continued, with Russian forces trying to advance on [Novomykhailivka](#) from the northeast without success.<sup>28</sup> <sup>29</sup>

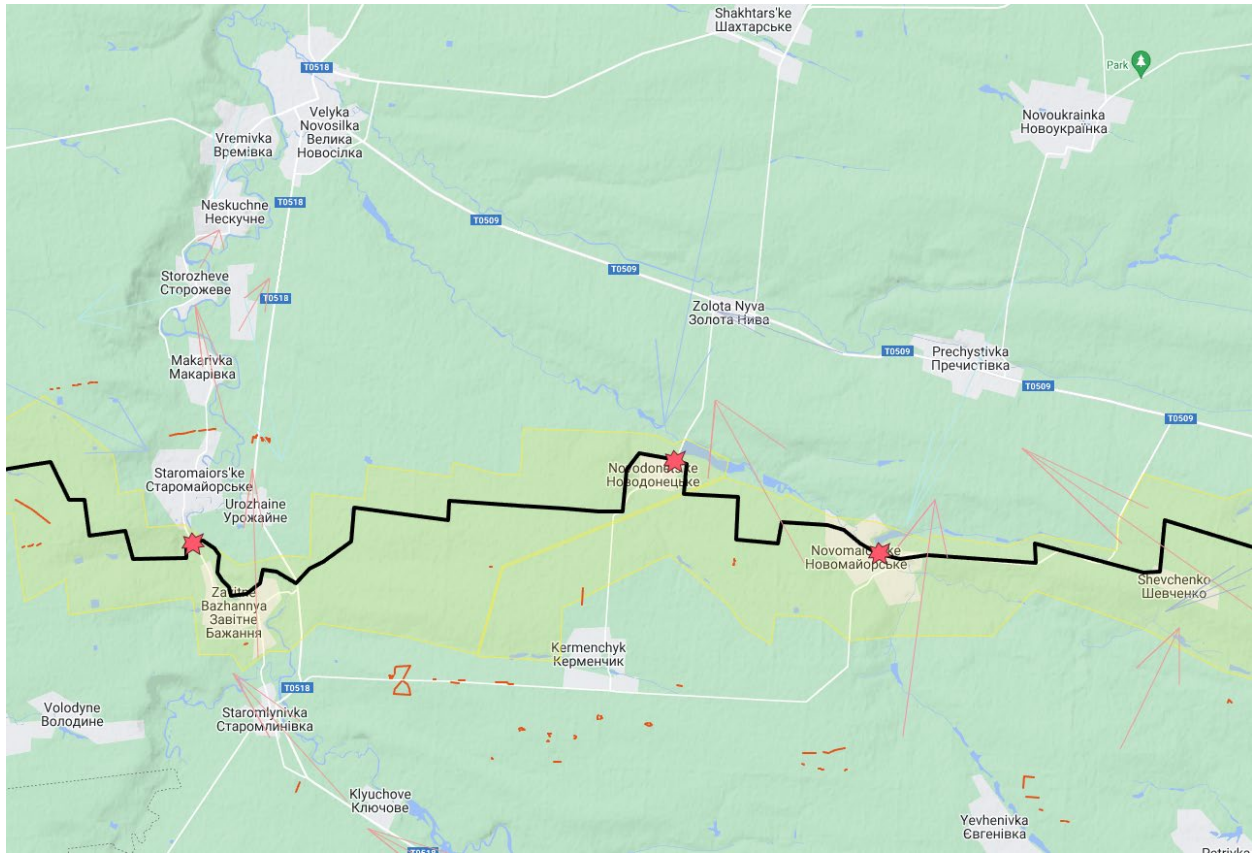
<sup>25</sup> <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/15914>

<sup>26</sup> <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/15914>

<sup>27</sup> <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/15914>

<sup>28</sup> <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/15914>

<sup>29</sup> <https://t.me/wargonzo/18417> (2/26/24 published early)

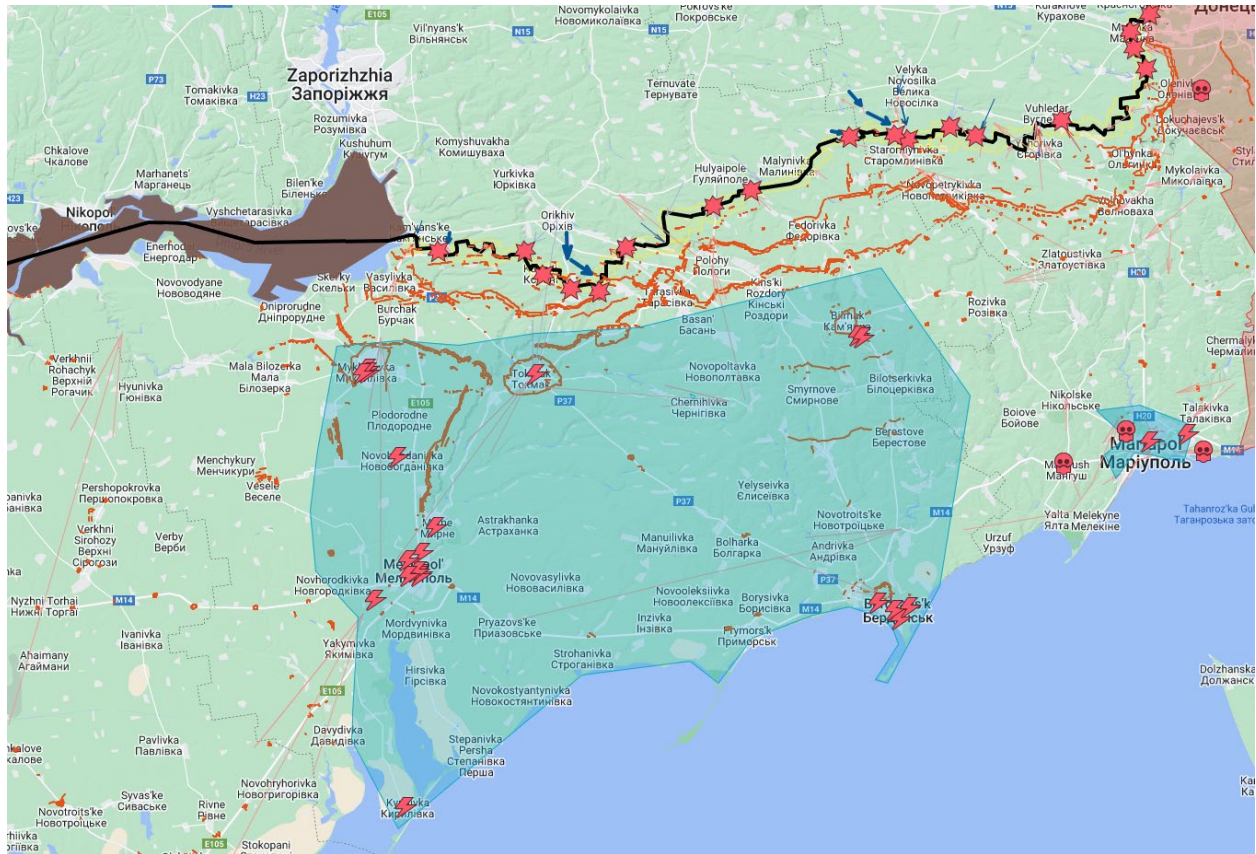


**To the west, in the Staromlynivka AO, Russian forces continued to try to advance in the direction of Zolota Nyva from [Novodonetske](#), with no change in the situation.**<sup>30 31</sup>

<sup>30</sup> [https://t.me/mod\\_russia/36025](https://t.me/mod_russia/36025) [Russian government controlled social media channel]

<sup>31</sup> <https://t.me/wargonzo/18417> (2/26/24 published early)

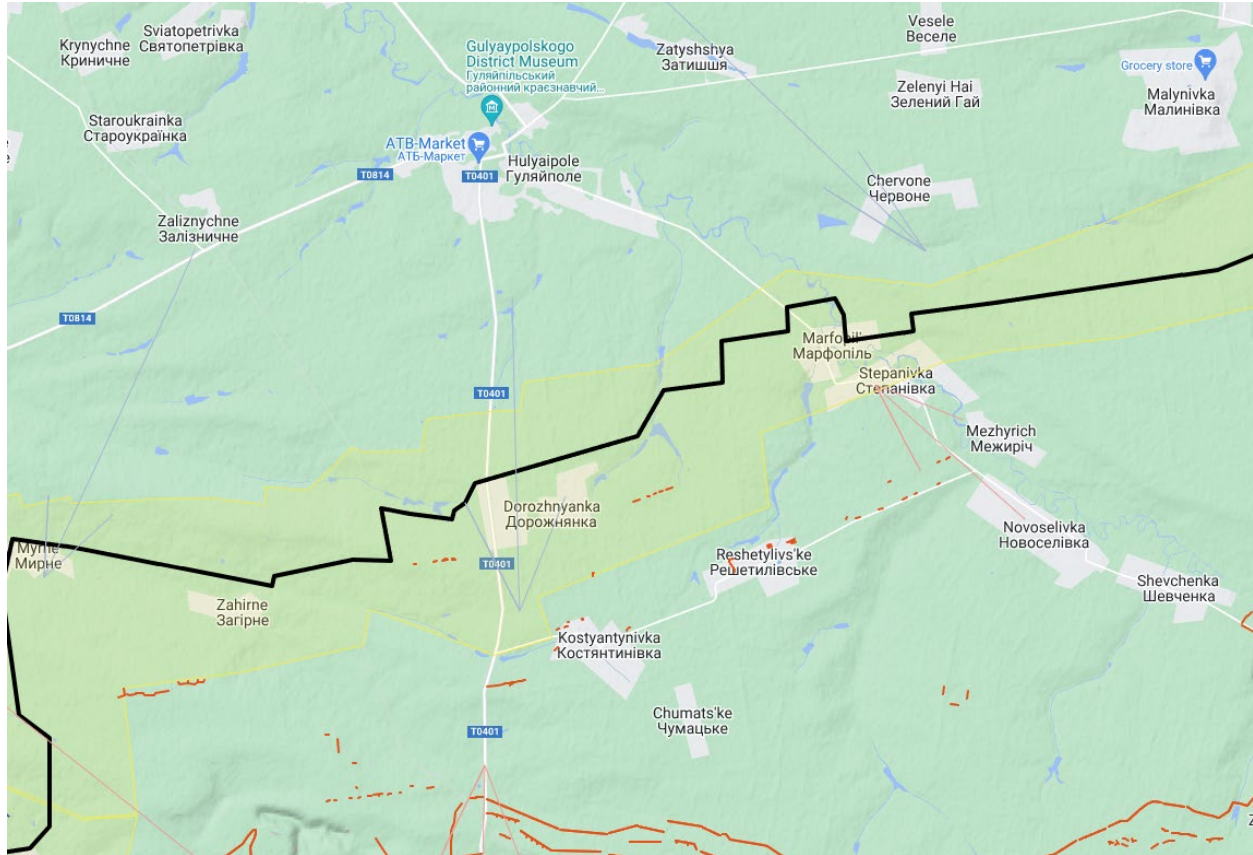
# ZAPORIZHZHIA



**Russian Objective:** Retake positions lost over the summer and terrorize Ukrainian civilians

**Ukrainian Objective:** Hold existing defensive positions, build an echelon defense of static fortifications, minimize civilian casualties

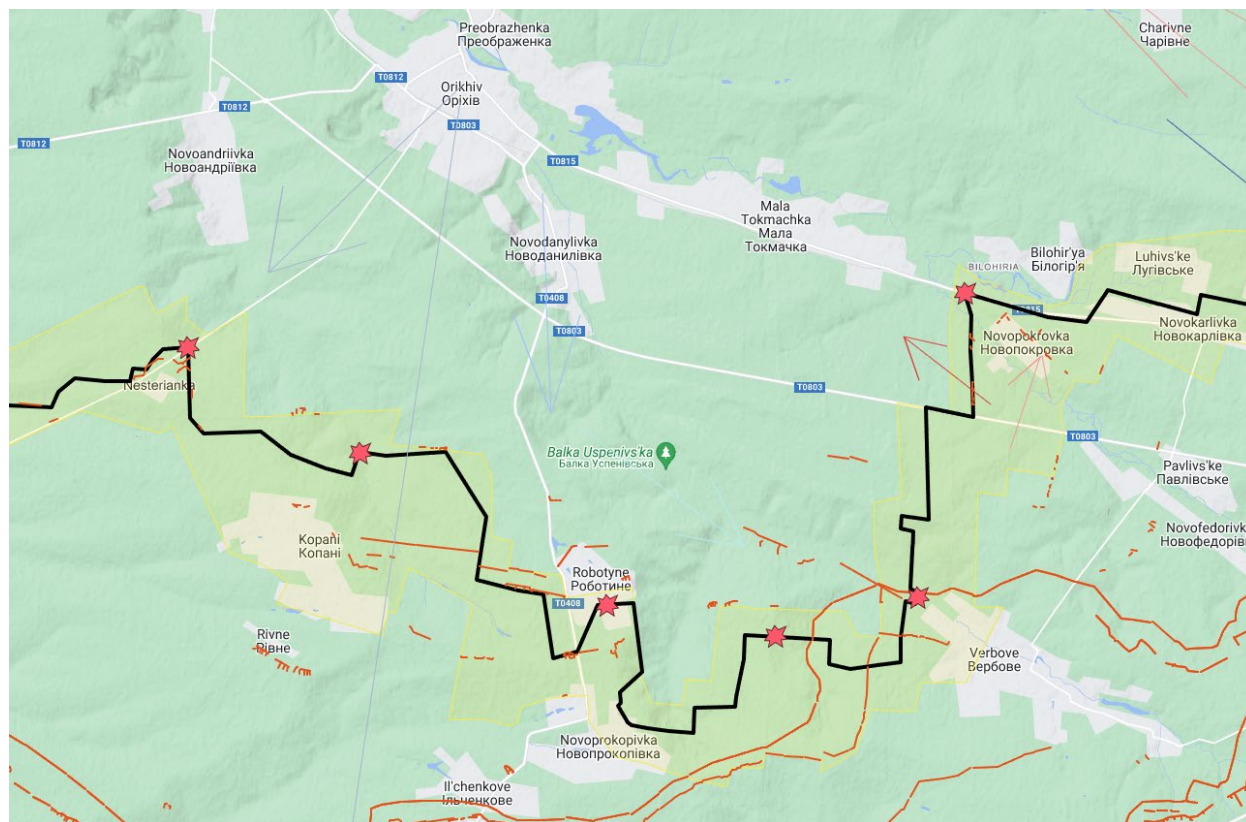






**In Zaporizhzhia, sporadic fighting continued in the Hulyaipole AO. GSAFU reported fighting within “the region,” which could be anywhere from [Myrne](#) to [Marfopil](#).**<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/15915>



**In the Orikhiv AO, intense fighting erupted south of [Robotyne](#), with Russian forces breaking through Ukrainian defenses and temporarily advancing into the settlement. Three Russian armored personnel carriers (APC) attempted to enter the village, with two destroyed and the third releasing their dismounts. Defended by only four Ukrainian soldiers,  [the assault was stopped](#).<sup>33</sup> The third APC  [was destroyed](#) as the surviving Russian forces retreated.<sup>34</sup>**

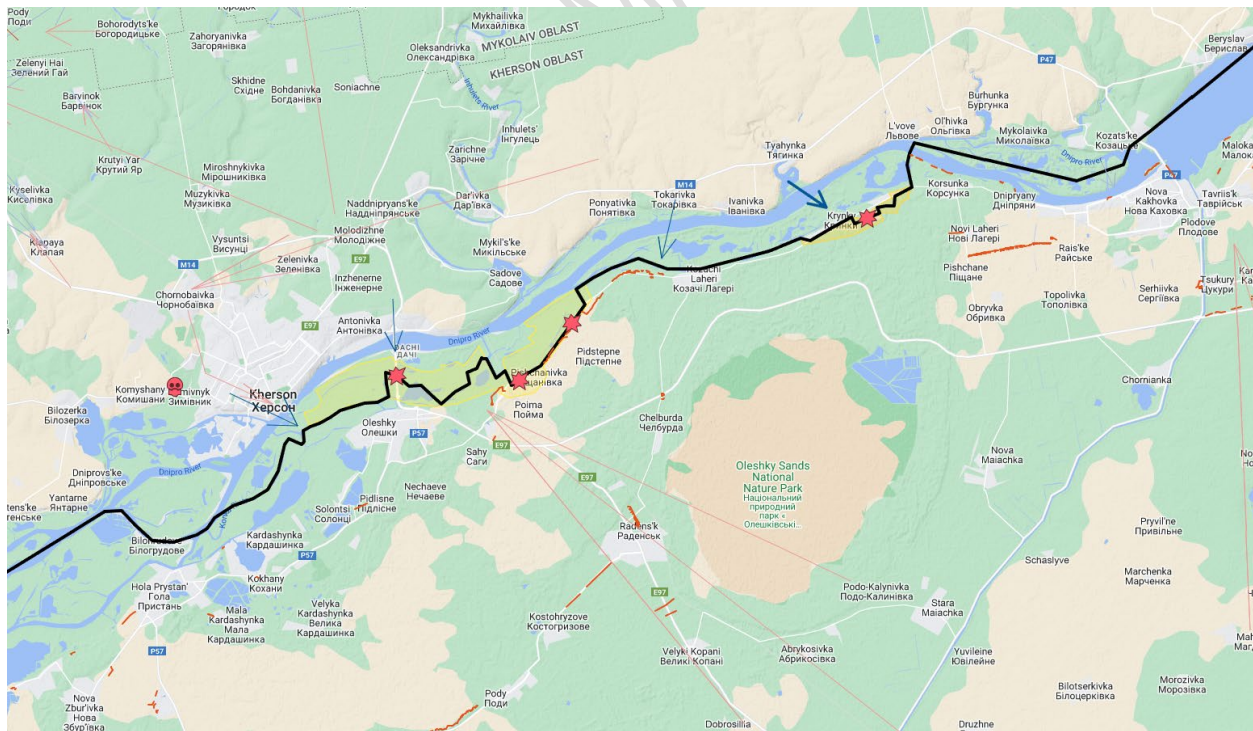
<sup>33</sup> <https://twitter.com/NOELreports/status/1761820977783087317>

<sup>34</sup> <https://twitter.com/Osinttechnical/status/1761751264222716273>

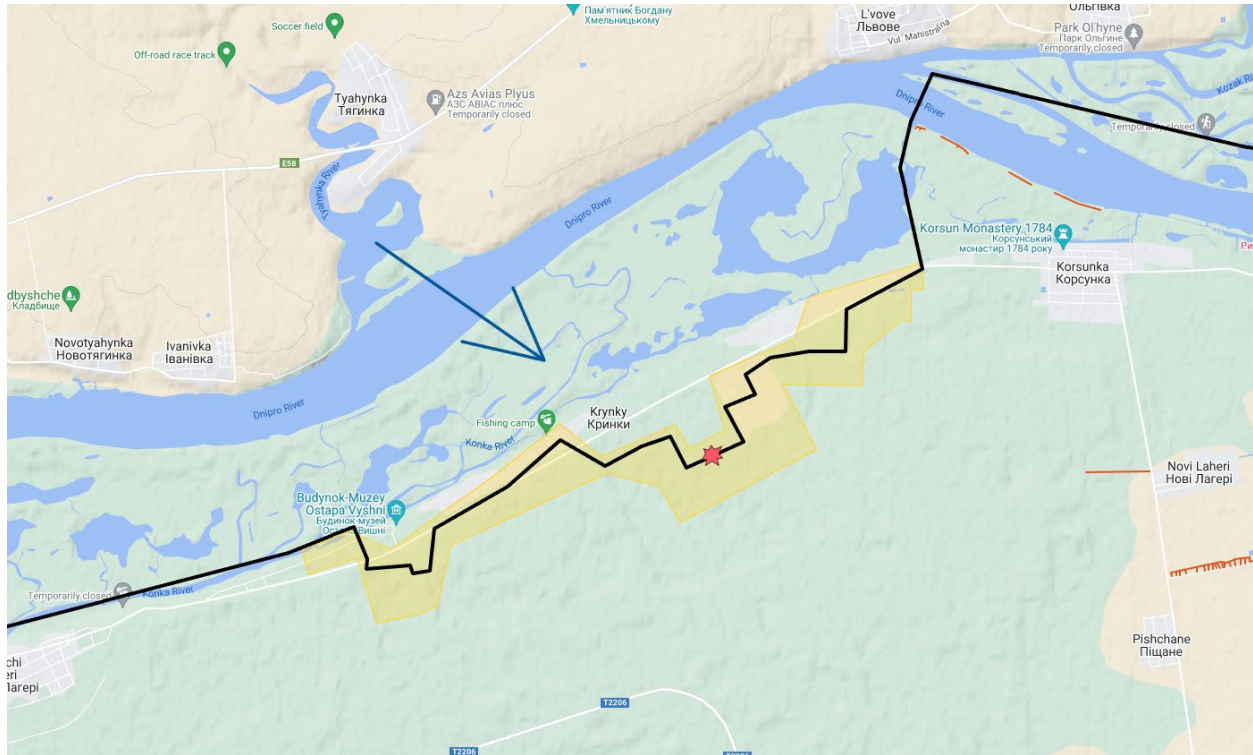
# KHERSON


**Russian Objective:** Prevent Ukrainian forces from reaching the T-2206 Highway south of the Konka River, terrorize the civilian population in free Kherson, and maintain GLOCs to Zaporizhzhia


**Ukrainian Objective:** Maintain the existing bridgeheads on the left bank of the Dnipro and Konka Rivers, lock Russian troops and reserves in place, and minimize civilian casualties







**In the Kherson AO, fighting continued in [Krynyky](#), with Ukrainian forces repelling four attacks.<sup>35</sup> In defiance of last week's claims by Russian Minister of Defense Sergei Shoigu that the village was captured, Ukrainian forces  [captured Russian naval infantry soldiers](#).<sup>36</sup>**



**In free Kherson, Russian forces  [shelled civilian areas with thermite](#) in violation of international humanitarian law.<sup>37</sup>**

<sup>35</sup> <https://t.me/landforcesofukraine/15915>

<sup>36</sup> <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/18932>

<sup>37</sup> <https://t.me/itsdonetsk/138921>

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

Russia attacked Odesa with at least five Shahed-136 one-way drones, with debris striking a residential building.<sup>38</sup> An  [apartment was destroyed](#), killing the owner. Three more people were injured  [in adjacent buildings](#), including a woman with burns on 70 percent of her body.<sup>39</sup>

40

The Director of the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU), Vasyl Maliuk, confirmed our assessment from last year that Russia is not using the Crimean (Kerch) Bridge for military logistics. "You must understand that the Crimean Bridge has not been fully rebuilt by the Russians and is not being used for logistics at the moment."<sup>41</sup> He went on to say that Russia was using ferries to move weapons and other equipment.

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<sup>38</sup> <https://t.me/suspilnenews/29529>

<sup>39</sup> <https://t.me/uaobozrevatel/109968>

<sup>40</sup> <https://t.me/suspilnenews/29529>

<sup>41</sup> <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2024/02/25/7443646/>

## WESTERN AND CENTRAL UKRAINE

**Russian Objective:** Lock Ukrainian military resources into place and launch terror attacks on civilians in an attempt to break morale

**Ukrainian Objective:** Maintain the integrity of the international border, deter attacks, and protect civilian lives

In Dnipropetrovsk, Russia struck the residential area of Dnipro,  [damaging ten homes](#). Several people were moderately wounded.<sup>42 43</sup>

In the Khmelnytskyi region, at least one Shahed-136 one-way drone hit civilian infrastructure.<sup>44</sup> Khmelnytskyi Oblast Deputy OVA Serhii Tiurin only said that the attack happened in the morning.

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<sup>42</sup> <https://t.me/uaobozrevatel/110214>

<sup>43</sup> <https://t.me/itsdonetsk/138929>

<sup>44</sup> <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2024/02/25/7443587/>



## **NORTHERN AND NORTHEASTERN UKRAINE**

**Russian Objective:** Lock Ukrainian military resources into place and launch terror attacks on civilians in an attempt to break morale

**Ukrainian Objective:** Maintain the integrity of the international border, deter attacks, and protect civilian lives

There wasn't any significant activity in this area.

## RUSSIAN FRONT

**Russian Objective:** Tighten government control and civil order, prevent renewed insurrections, repel Russian partisan attacks, secure the state border

**Ukrainian-Backed Russian Partisan Objective:** Motivate other Russians to fight against the Putin regime, accelerate the downfall of the Russian government, foment civil unrest

There wasn't any significant activity in this area.

## MOLDOVA


The GUR does not believe the illegitimate breakaway Republic of Transnistria will request annexation from Russia. "The Main Intelligence Directorate of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine informs - according to available information, on February 28, 2024, the deputies of unrecognized Transnistria at their congress do not plan to

address the Russian dictator Putin with a request to become a part of the Russian Federation."<sup>45</sup>

**ASSESSMENT:** We concur with the GUR and maintain our assessment that the possibility of this happening is low.

## POLAND

The situation on the Polish-Ukrainian border continued to deteriorate as Russian-backed protests entered their fifth day. Polish farmers reblocked the Ustylug-Zosyn checkpoint after Prime Minister Donald Tusk vowed it would be kept open for civilians and humanitarian and military aid.<sup>46</sup>

In the village of Kotomierz,  [160 metric tons of corn in ten railcars were dumped](#) by unknown parties.<sup>47</sup> Members of the pro-Russian Confederate Party shared the video of the vandalism, which quickly spread on Russian social media.<sup>48</sup> The Minister of Infrastructure of Ukraine, Oleksandr Kubrakov, condemned the damage. "The

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<sup>45</sup> <https://t.me/uaobozrevatel/110126>

<sup>46</sup> <https://t.me/suspilnenews/29566>

<sup>47</sup> <https://t.me/uaobozrevatel/110161>

<sup>48</sup> <https://t.me/informnapalm/20644>



Ukrainian side conscientiously fulfills its obligations and, according to the agreements with the Polish government, does not export some types of agricultural products to the territory of Poland. This is confirmed at the official level - neither grain, nor corn, nor rapeseed - does not remain there. This is the fourth case of vandalism at Polish railway stations. The fourth case of impunity and irresponsibility."<sup>49</sup>

At the Rava-Ruska – Hrebenne checkpoint, Russian-backed protesters covered the roadway with nails and screws, flattening the tires of vehicles trying to move through the checkpoint.<sup>50</sup>

The secretary of the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine, Oleksiy Danilov, accused Russia of being behind a massive disinformation campaign. "If the world community does not solve these challenges and does not provide answers, we can expect an extremely difficult situation."<sup>51</sup>

Speaking at the Ukraine: Year 2024 Forum, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy was asked about the ongoing

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<sup>49</sup> <https://t.me/UaNazhyvo/67985>

<sup>50</sup> <https://twitter.com/MalcontentmentT/status/1761959846629237204>

<sup>51</sup> <https://t.me/UaNazhyvo/68053>

protests. "I believe that this situation should be resolved very quickly. To spill Ukrainian grain for the 4th time... There are enough opportunities to stop it; there would be a desire."<sup>52</sup> The Ukrainian leader added that the relationship with Poland was important, but "If steps are not taken to solve the problem with Poland, we will protect our business."<sup>53</sup>

President of Poland, Andrzej Duda, was conspicuously absent from Ukrainian diplomatic ceremonies acknowledging the second anniversary of Russia expanding its war of aggression. Neither nation would provide a clear answer on why Duda did not attend.

## THEATERWIDE

On February 24 – 25, Ukraine shot down 25 of 32 Iranian-sourced Shahed-136 one-way drones and three Kh-59 guided air-to-surface missiles, launched in two waves. An additional Iskander-M short-range ballistic missile (SRBM) fired from occupied Crimea reached its unspecified target.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> <https://t.me/uaobozrevatel/110183>

<sup>53</sup> <https://t.me/uaobozrevatel/110170>

<sup>54</sup> <https://t.me/kpszsus/11079>

<sup>55</sup> <https://t.me/UaNazhyvo/68057>

We have not covered Russian five o'clock follies in a long time, but this is a good one.<sup>56</sup> <sup>57</sup> After two years of its expanded war of aggression, RMOD claimed that it had destroyed 841 Ukrainian aircraft – 474 planes and 267 helicopters. On February 24, 2022, Ukraine's entire operational fleet was less than 250 aircraft, and the nation has received less than 100 additional planes and helicopters combined in the last year. Russia also claims that over the last two years, it has destroyed 15,207 tank and armored combat vehicles. As a benchmark, including reserves in storage, the United States has 19,190 tanks, infantry fighting vehicles, and armored personnel carriers.

Russian claims are distorted because soldiers and commanders are paid bounties for destroyed equipment, motivating units to abuse the system.

The Director of the GUR, Budanov, said that Russia had planned but could not implement its most ambitious hybrid warfare operation in history, codenamed Maidan-3.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> [https://t.me/mod\\_russia/36000](https://t.me/mod_russia/36000)

<sup>57</sup> <https://t.me/Crimeanwind/54442>

<sup>58</sup> <https://t.me/Crimeanwind/54489>



The operation was supposed to question the legitimacy of the Kyiv and Ukrainian military leaders in the spring of 2023 and then launch a new offensive in eastern Ukraine. The Russian offensive operations met stiff resistance and failed, causing the information warfare plan that started in May to fall apart.

The SBU detained two groups of teens in Chernihiv and Kyiv, who were preparing to launch drones at Ukraine's Patriot batteries in an apparent act of treason.<sup>59</sup> SBU Director Major General Vasyl Malyuk said the attack was being carried out on behalf of the Federal Security Service of Russia (FSB), and the teens had gone through four months of training in drone operation.

At The Ukraine: Year 2024 Forum in Kyiv, President Zelenskyy and other government officials answered questions over a wide range of topics.<sup>60</sup>

Zelenskyy said that the ratio of forces was now one to seven, and to restore the 1991 borders, it must be much closer to one-to-one.<sup>61</sup> He claimed that 31,000 Ukrainian

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<sup>59</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/138079>

<sup>60</sup> <https://t.me/uaobozrevatel/110118>

<sup>61</sup> <https://t.me/uaobozrevatel/110171>

soldiers had died in the last two years and that the number of Russians killed reported by GSAFU was 180,000 – less than half of earlier reports. Zelenskyy said up to 500,000 Russian soldiers had been wounded but would not discuss the Ukrainian number.<sup>62 63</sup> He did clarify that the Ukrainian killed-in-action number did not include those missing in action and acknowledged that most of them are likely dead.

As for the year ahead, President Zelenskyy said that it depends on Western partners and if there will be more weapons. "This whole war is about the courage of people. All the years of courage. The first year was survival. It was a terrible year. The second was a year of stability in all directions. The boys are on the battlefield, and the West is united. The third year is a turning point... And that's why we need both courage and stability to survive. The format of the war will depend on this year."<sup>64 65 66</sup>

While praising the armed forces, he acknowledged the months ahead will be tough. "We will go through different waves. Both political and economic. The turning point will be the elections in the USA. After that, we will understand

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<sup>62</sup> <https://t.me/DeepStateUA/18936>

<sup>63</sup> [https://t.me/ukrarmed\\_forces/8302](https://t.me/ukrarmed_forces/8302)

<sup>64</sup> <https://t.me/uaobozrevatel/110167>

<sup>65</sup> <https://t.me/uaobozrevatel/110181>

<sup>66</sup> <https://t.me/operativnoZSU/138038>

what to do next. Russia will prepare counteroffensive actions at the end of May. Maybe at the beginning of summer. If they can. We will prepare," adding that March and April will be particularly difficult.<sup>67</sup>

Zelenskyy was also forthcoming in admitting mistakes made in 2023, stating, "The reserves were not prepared properly; we have to admit our weak points."<sup>68</sup>

He also said there were breaches in operational security. "Our plans for a counteroffensive last fall were on the Kremlin's table before the counteroffensive began." And while discussing the strategic plan for 2024, "There is a clear plan for the counterattack. I can't say the details. I have no right. This plan is also connected with the change of leadership. There will be several plans due to the leak of information."

He also called out the delays in support for Ukraine's allies.<sup>69</sup> "We had a fist for a counterattack. Four brigades are still 'naked' [*Do not have their proper equipment – Ed.*] from that fist. The West did not deliver the equipment it

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<sup>67</sup> <https://t.me/uaobozrevatel/110212>

<sup>68</sup> <https://t.me/UaNazhyvo/68051>

<sup>69</sup> <https://t.me/uaobozrevatel/110180>

promised." Zelenskyy said that only 50 percent of military aid promised to arrive in 2023 had been supplied. For ammunition, the situation was worse, with only 30 percent of commitments from the European Union delivered.<sup>70</sup>

When asked about the situation with U.S. military aid, Zelenskyy said, "We are relying on Congress. I hope the decision will be positive. If not, I don't really understand what the world we live in is turning into... They know we need their support within a month. That's what we've asked for. Very specific decisions are being made concerning the funding. We've insisted on this specificity because we are aware of the challenges the U.S. faces. But I am counting on the U.S. remaining the democratic leader of the world."<sup>71</sup>

Finally, the Ukrainian leader confirmed that Russia had purchased SRBMs from North Korea, but "nothing can be done about it." Director of the GUR Budanov added that the number of missiles provided was limited and dismissed claims that Russia had bought SRBMs from Iran.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> <https://t.me/uniannet/126716>

<sup>71</sup> <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2024/02/25/7443641/>

<sup>72</sup> <https://t.me/uniannet/126716>



Military analyst Alexander Kovalenko reported that if Ukraine receives another 170,000 artillery rounds from the E.U. in March, it will be enough to support four weeks of warfare.<sup>73</sup>

The table for equipment losses was **updated on February 23, 2024**, and includes the losses suffered during the Prigozhin Insurrection of June 23 – 24 and the A-50U shot down on February 23, 2024.

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<sup>73</sup> <https://t.me/zloyodessit/21121>



## RUSSIA VS. UKRAINE HEAVY EQUIPMENT LOSSES

Russian and Ukrainian visually confirmed heavy equipment losses sourced from the [Oryx Database](#) from February 24, 2022, to February 23, 2024.

14,524 Russian (including [Chef's Rebellion](#)) vs. 5,213 Ukrainian

Equipment	Russian Losses	Ukrainian Losses	Ratio	Change
<b>Main Battle Tanks</b>	2556	353	7.24:1	↓
<b>Medium Duty Tanks</b>	198	395	0.50:1	↑
<b>Armored fighting Vehicles</b>	1214	356	3.41:1	↑
<b>Infantry Fighting Vehicles</b>	3474	862	4.03:1	—
<b>Armored Personnel Carriers</b>	399	407	0.98:1	—
<b>MRAPs</b>	53	200	0.27:1	—
<b>Infantry Mobility Vehicles</b>	236	413	0.57:1	—
<b>Command and Communications Vehicles</b>	273	18	15.17:1	↑
<b>Engineering Vehicles</b>	439	139	3.16:1	—
<b>Towed Artillery</b>	346	186	1.86:1	—
<b>Self-Propelled Howitzers/Mortars</b>	679	289	2.35:1	—
<b>MLRS</b>	350	55	6.36:1	↓
<b>SAMs</b>	225	137	1.64:1	—
<b>Mobile Radars</b>	62	91	0.68:1	—
<b>EW/ECW</b>	72	5	14.40:1	↑
<b>Winged Aircraft</b>	106**	80	1.33:1	↑
<b>Helicopters</b>	142	38	3.73:1	↓
<b>Naval Vessels and Submarines</b>	20*	28	0.71:1	—

## WAR CRIMES AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Video recorded by a drone showed Russian forces taking nine Ukrainian soldiers prisoner northeast of Ivanivske, including some who were wounded. On February 24, the Ukrainians complied with commands and were unarmed. As they lay on the ground face down, they were covered with machine gunfire. We've linked to the graphic video that many will find disturbing. You can watch it by   [clicking here](#).<sup>74 75</sup>

At least one Ukrainian source has told us that Russian forces have been ordered not to take any more prisoners and are being paid a bounty for each soldier executed.

The Verkhovna Rada Commissioner for Human Rights, Dmytro Lubinets, reported the incident was under investigation and that at least seven Ukrainian soldiers were known to have been killed.<sup>76</sup> This is the fourth documented incident since February 15, and our analyst team is aware of more.


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<sup>74</sup> <https://twitter.com/IAPonomarenko/status/1761811706173440022>

<sup>75</sup> <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2024/02/25/7443672/>

<sup>76</sup> <https://t.me/uniannet/126725>

The head of the Office of the President of Ukraine, Andrii Yermak, said that not a single representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross has been able to contact any remaining prisoners of war, saying, "I think this is the verdict of this organization."

In occupied Crimea, members of Private Military Company Bear stormed a café in Chornomors'ke, beating Russian tourists and local residents,  [threatening to kill people, and firing gunshots](#).<sup>77</sup> One person was hospitalized.<sup>78</sup> Only two members of the PMC are under investigation for hooliganism.<sup>79</sup>

## RUMORS

Many messages and e-mails we receive ask why we didn't cover a certain story or whether we are aware of a report and what we think. The rumor section is a list of claims or stories we are aware of but not reporting on because there isn't enough information to support or discover the truth.

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<sup>77</sup> <https://t.me/uaobozrevatel/110159>

<sup>78</sup> <https://t.me/vchkogpu/46086>

<sup>79</sup> <https://t.me/astrapress/49291>





- Did Russia get up to 400 SRBMs from Iran? Unlikely, but worth watching.
- Is Ukraine getting ATACMS? Right now? Impossible.
- Will the first 12 F-16s arrive in Ukraine in June. We'll see.
- Will France donate 20 Mirage 2000 fighter planes to Ukraine? Probably not.


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## Notes on Sourcing Information


**Malcontent News** uses a wide range of sources to create our daily Situation Report, the foundation for the Russian-Ukraine War Report Podcast. There are some notable sources that we frequently use and others that we don't. The most common sources currently, or in the past, we have used for the Theater of War section of the Situation Report include the following.


 **Russian Ministry of Defense Morning Report:** We use the RMOD Morning Report to identify combat reports, shelling locations, and territorial control change claims. We do not consider claims of Ukrainian troops killed, equipment destroyed, or military resources destroyed valid without videos and pictures that can be confirmed by date, time, weather, and geolocation, or third-party confirmation from recognized Western news outlets or trusted Ukrainian sources.

 **Rybar:** We consider Rybar a mercenary organization because they are staffed by former Russian Ministry of Defense public relations officers who actively provide target information to the Russian military. Their operational budget is \$20,000 a month, while they claim they receive no government funding. We only use their reports to identify combat locations. We no longer consider their territorial control changes due to a three-month pattern from June to August 2023 of repeated publication of blatant disinformation and a years-long pattern of denying all Russian war crimes.


 **War Gonzo:** We consider War Gonzo a mercenary organization because their employees have recorded themselves actively engaging in direct combat, specifically in Marinka. Recently, War Gonzo admitted in their daily report to leveraging the information from the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. They intermix combat reports with their own on a 24-hour delay. We use their reports for **unique claims** about combat, territorial control change claims, and troop movement reports. Although the War Gonzo daily reports are moderately accurate, they occasionally engage in blatant disinformation and misinformation.


 **Readovka:** We consider Readovka to be a Kremlin-aligned propagandist organization. Their daily reports are a word-for-word repeat of the RMOD Morning Report and provide no value to our analysis. They occasionally provide credible information through videos and pictures that can be confirmed by date, time, weather, and geolocation. This is by no means a complete list of the sources we monitor.

 **Igor "Strelkov" Girkin:** We consider Strelkov to be a convicted war criminal who is highly informed, specifically about the situation in the Donbas. Girkin was sentenced to four years in prison by a Moscow court and no longer providing information.

 **Andrei Morozov:** Morozov was a pro-Russian milblogger and a radio communications and logistics specialist with the Russian 2nd Army Corps. We considered him a provider of high-quality information, especially within his fields of specialty. In the fall of 2022, Morozov was detained by OMON for up to three weeks due to his content and has had his online material censored by the Kremlin several times over the last year. On February 20, 2024, facing arrest, Morozov committed suicide.

 **Private Military Company Wagner Group Social Media:** PMC Wagner has been dissolved, and most of their social media channels are now inactive.

 **Luhansk People's Republic Joint Center for Control and Coordination:** The organization has not posted any update since June 9, 2023, and we have ceased monitoring.

 **Leonid Pasechnik:** We do not use any combat, territorial control changes, troop movements, casualty claims, or equipment destroyed claims from the illegitimate leader of the so-called Luhansk People's Republic.

 **Donetsk People's Republic People's Militia:** We only use their reports for videos and pictures that can be confirmed by date, time, weather, and geolocation.

 **Donetsk People's Republic Territorial Defense:** We do not use combat, territorial control changes, troop movements, casualty claims, or equipment

destroyed claims from their public relations and social media channels. They have repeatedly engaged in misinformation and disinformation.

🚫 **Denis Pushilin:** We do not use any combat, territorial control changes, troop movements, casualty claims, or equipment destroyed claims from the illegitimate leader of the so-called Donetsk People's Republic.

⚠️ **Ramzan Kadyrov:** The contribution and impact of Chechen forces in Ukraine have become minimal, and Akhmat no longer produces large volumes of video content that can be geolocated. We continue to monitor his channels.

✅ **General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine:** We consider the morning and evening reports, specifically combat reports, territorial control changes, and troop movements, from GSAFU to be high quality. The Ukrainian General Staff uses clever wording to create plausible deniability of battlefield failures. Combat reports start with "repelled attacks of the occupant forces in the vicinities of," which negates reporting fighting in areas where territory was lost. Instead of misinformation or disinformation, GSAFU engages in omission. Reports about problems within the Russian military are given more weight if the SBU or GUR reinforces them or if there is added confirmation in the Russian milblogger information space.

✅ **DeepState:** We use the Daily Report from DeepState for combat reports and territorial control changes. They frequently support their claims with geolocated, time, date, and weather-confirmed pictures and videos, making them a high-quality Ukrainian-based source. They occasionally overstate Russian territorial control claims but never present disinformation or misinformation. Combined with the reports from GSAFU, gaps in combat reports are filled. We support DeepState through their Patreon at \$10 a month.

✅ **Institute for the Study of War:** We occasionally leverage the map and territorial control change information produced by the ISW when there is conflicting data. Their presentation of Russian-assessed, Ukrainian-assessed, and Russian-claimed information is helpful when our analysts have to make a judgment call due to the absence of verifiable information.



We do not copy from their map but take their territorial control information as an additional data point when assessing our own changes.

⚠️ **Ivan Fedorov:** We use information about insurgent activity and HIMARS strikes in Zaporizhia provided by Fedorov, the exiled mayor of Melitiopol.

✅ **Vitaly Kim:** When there are reports of potential air raids in Ukraine, we monitor Kim, the Mykolaiv Oblast Administrative and Military Governor, for realtime reports. Kim is consistently one of the first, if not the first, Ukrainian government officials to confirm kamikaze drones or missiles have been launched toward Ukraine.

⊖ **Oleksiy Arestovych:** We no longer use the information provided by Arestovych after being fired from his role as the Chief Advisor to the President of Ukraine. Before being terminated, Arestovych had developed a reputation for providing exaggerated, unverified, and false claims for Ukrainian successes and failures.