



MALCONTENT NEWS RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR SITUATION REPORT



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SUMMARY – DAY 53

Fighting for control of Mariupol is now in its 46th day. Ukrainian forces refused to surrender, and shortly after Moscow's deadline passed, a Tu-22M3 bomber attacked the Azovstal Metallurgical Plant, and shelling continued.

Ukrainian forces are concentrated at the steel factory, with three small pockets scattered across the city.

Fighting in the Donbas continued with Ukrainian forces making small territorial gains in the Donetsk Oblast. The Russian armored convoy advancing on Popasnya yesterday came under attack and suffered heavy losses. Additionally, Chechen troops on the east side of the city were attacked by Ukrainian forces.

Attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure continued in Kharkiv, Brovary – east of Kyiv, Mykolaiv, and across the Donbas. In Mykolaiv, Russian attacks have disabled the city's water supply.

East of Kharkiv. The Ukrainian General Staff reported that several settlements east and southeast of the city were liberated.

Ukrainian forces mounted a small counteroffensive on Easter, advancing east from Chuhiv and liberating the settlement of Bazaliivka, 20 kilometers to the east. Ukrainian forces also liberated Husarivka, 23 kilometers northwest of Izyum. There are reports that the Russian troops committed numerous war crimes during a two-week occupation. Capturing the village puts Ukrainian forces within artillery and rocket range of Izyum.

Along the eastern shore of the Oskil River, Russian forces advanced south from Borova, fighting for control of Lozove.

ASSESSMENT: Ukrainian forces appear to be attempting to cut off supply and communication lines north of Izyum, while Russian forces are trying to establish a new line of communication east of the Oskil River.

The insurgency in the Kherson Oblast appears to be growing, with Russian forces distributing flyers blaming the West and Kyiv, claiming that the West wants to kill all

Russians and Ukrainians, and there are only tens of insurgents in the oblast.

ASSESSMENT: Ukrainian forces appear to have successfully pushed the line of contact back along the eastern edge of Kharkiv, but not enough to prevent the continued attacks.

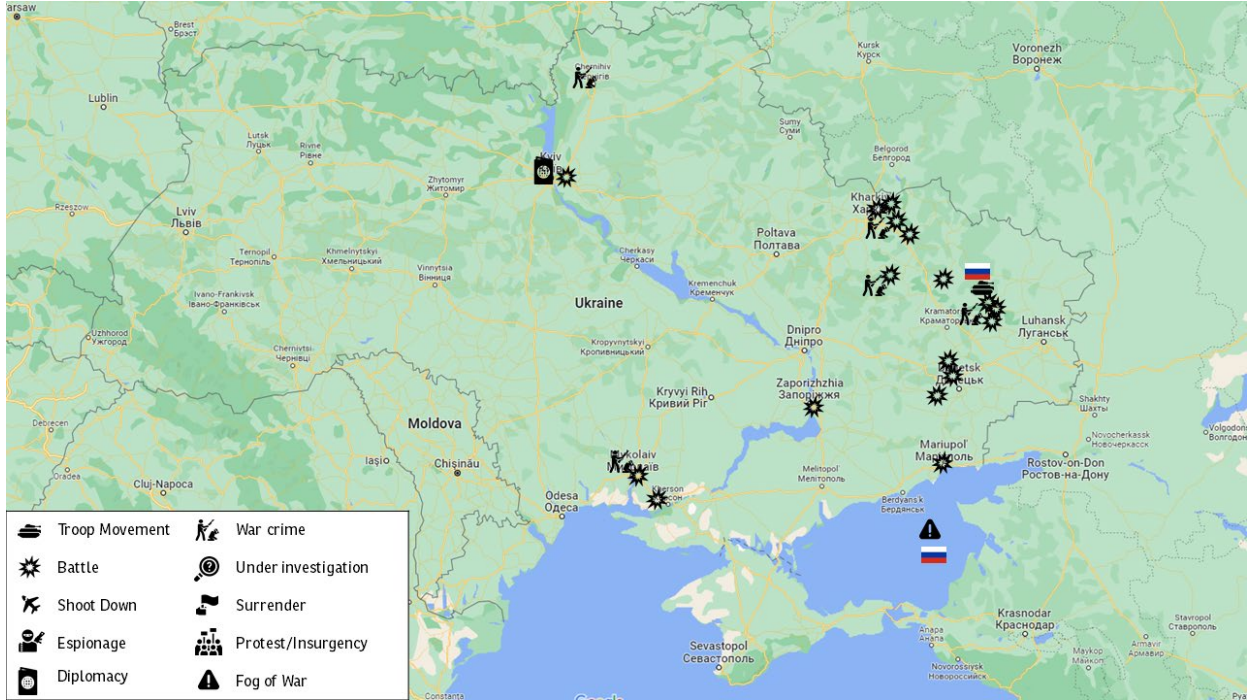
We had assessed almost two weeks ago that Russia would be incapable of launching a multi-axes offensive in eastern Ukraine by non-orthodox Easter, and we were correct.

We don't know the scope of the counteroffensive north of Izyum. We cannot discern if this is a harassment campaign to lock some Russian Battalion Tactical Groups in place or a genuine attempt to sever supply lines. Russian advances east of the Oskil River appear to be a genuine attempt to set up a more stable line of supply and communications.

The Russian military is accelerating forced conscription of Ukrainians in Izyum and the Donbas to fill in as replacements. The troops are poorly equipped, ill-trained, and have low morale. Russian troop movements toward Izyum show no change in tactics, with convoys in tight formations traveling in the open, on paved roadways.

Our assessment is unchanged from a week ago. We maintain that Russia can overwhelm Ukrainian forces in the Donbas in a coordinated attack along all axes. We do not believe that Russia can hold the territorial gains, and unlike the siege of Kyiv and Chernihiv, defeat will be a crushing blow for Russian ground forces.

KEY EVENTS MAP



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DONBAS REGION

In Mariupol, Ukrainian forces rejected the Russian ultimatum to surrender by 13:00 Moscow time on April 17. The siege continues, now on its 46th day.

Ukrainian forces continue to fight in four pockets based on available information. Fighting continues north of the main port, almost entirely under Russian control, in small areas in the city center and eastern districts. The bulk of the defending force remains in the Azovstal Metallurgical Plant.

Urban combat within the steel mill would be highly costly for Russia, Chechen, and Russia-backed militias. Several hours after the time to surrender expired, a Russian Tu-22M3 strategic bomber attacked the plant.¹

Continued bombing of the facility with FAB-500 or FAB-1500 non-precision munitions, which the Tu-22M3 is designed to carry, will have more of a psychological effect on defenders versus creating large-scale casualties.

¹ https://twitter.com/Defense_Talks/status/1515683478947442691

Ukrainian military and Azov Battalion members appear committed to fighting to the last.

Drone video from the Mariupol City Council showed the Avoztal Plant on fire from the continuous bombing and airstrikes.²

There are unconfirmed reports that Russia will attempt an amphibious landing in or near Mariupol. We cannot confirm the veracity of these reports.

ASSESSMENT: Ukrainian resistance has been split into four groups, three small pockets, and the main contingent at the Azovstal Metallurgical Plant. With the rejection of the surrender ultimatum, the final battle for control of Mariupol has begun. Large-scale fighting within Mariupol will likely end in the next one to nine days.

We believe the threat of an amphibious assault in Mariupol as the main port is nearer to secured is possible but unlikely at this time.

² <https://twitter.com/Osinttechnical/status/1515841191107080196>

In Luhansk, artillery shelling and rocket attacks continued around the Severodonetsk salient, including Rubizhne and Lysychansk.

A video from Rubizhne showed Ukrainian artillery destroying a Russian-backed military T-64 tank with an ammunition cook-off.³ Russia backed-militias have obliterated the settlement.⁴

Russian forces continued to target civilians and civilian infrastructure in Severodonetsk.⁵

Russian forces bombed the Rosneft, Russia-owned, abandoned oil refinery in Lysychansk for the third time.⁶ The remaining fossil fuel products at the facility were unusable due to contamination and oxidation. Local officials reported that the continued attacks on the facility are meant to misdirect and exhaust civilian rescue services.

In the April 16 SITREP, we reported on a column of Russian armored vehicles advancing on Popasnya. The column came under fire east of the town and suffered heavy

³ <https://twitter.com/AggregateOsint/status/1515720866193149956>

⁴ <https://twitter.com/GeromanAT/status/1515270732036677633>

⁵ https://twitter.com/u24_news/status/1515568749075701767

⁶ <https://twitter.com/leonidragozin/status/1515777293041512454>

losses.⁷ Pro-Russian social media accounts are misattributing the losses to Ukrainian forces, which aren't operating armored vehicles in this Russian-controlled area.⁸ Ukrainian forces released a video of a Stugna strike against Chechen troops operating in the eastern part of Popasnya.⁹

In Donetsk, fighting continues in the settlement of Avdiivka. Russian forces shelled a steel plant in the city, causing significant damage.¹⁰

The Ukrainian General Staff reported that the settlement of Lebiazhe, between Horlivka and Makiivka, was liberated on April 17.¹¹

ASSESSMENT: Russian, DNR, and LNR strategy in the Donbas has remained unchanged and will likely not change. Poor weather is forecasted through April 24, and Russian mechanized infantry heavily depends on wheeled vehicles. This forces supply lines and fighting vehicles to stay on paved roads, where they can't apply effective tactics.

⁷ <https://goo.gl/maps/ssSvCfjCsUHqqUBF7>

⁸ <https://twitter.com/Danspiun/status/1515724185670234115>

⁹ <https://twitter.com/Osinttechnical/status/1515803256496271367>

¹⁰ <https://twitter.com/Flash43191300/status/1515766212625670145>

¹¹ <https://twitter.com/ArmedForcesUkr/status/1515767744813219853>

We maintain our assessment that Russia will be incapable of mounting a coordinated offensive across the entire line of conflict in the Donbas without a total operational pause.

Additionally, Russian forces will remain bogged down in Mariupol. Several vessels, including Large Landing Ship (LLS) transports, left Sevastopol three days ago. Russia has used these ships to threaten an amphibious assault on Odesa to bog down troops in Western Ukraine.

KHARKIV REGION

Shelling of civilians and civilian infrastructure continued in Kharkiv.^{12 13 14} Ukrainian forces are reported to have made small counteroffensives east of Kharkiv, taking the settlement of Kutuzivka and pushing east of Mala Rohan.¹⁵

¹⁶

¹² <https://twitter.com/JonWinger2/status/1515851021834231810>

¹³ https://twitter.com/spook_info/status/1515850278452576261

¹⁴ <https://twitter.com/aprilsparkles1/status/1515853248573366274>

¹⁵ https://twitter.com/suspilne_news/status/1515745224710148098

¹⁶ <https://twitter.com/ArmedForcesUkr/status/1515767744813219853>

Three explosive ordnance disposal engineers were killed in Vil'khivka while attempting to neutralize a Russian explosive.¹⁷

It was also reported that the settlement of Bazaliivka was liberated. The village is 60 kilometers east of Kharkiv and 20 kilometers east of Chuhuiv. We cannot independently verify these reports, but they are multiple sources stating the settlement was liberated. Chuhuiv was liberated in early March and was shelled by Russian forces on April 14.¹⁸

Ukrainian forces liberated the settlement of Husarivka 14 days after Russian troops occupied the village.¹⁹

¹⁷ <https://liveuamap.com/en/2022/17-april-battle-ongoing-for-lozove-village-on-the-border>

¹⁸ <https://twitter.com/GeoConfirmed/status/1514729792872013824>

¹⁹ <https://www.facebook.com/373736899489773/posts/1822123531317762/>



Pro-Russian social media accounts released a video of a Russian convoy with 17 vehicles, including MLRS BM-21 Grad launchers moving south on the Izyum-Kupyansk Highway.²⁰ The footage was likely recorded north of Borova, and we are working on geolocation. Russian convoys continue to ignore basic tactics, with vehicles tightly grouped despite known air operations by Ukrainian forces in this region. The BM-21 can fire a range of ordnance, including antitank and antipersonnel mines.

²⁰ <https://twitter.com/warmonitor2/status/1515793202917355528>



Russian and Ukrainian forces are fighting for control of the settlement of Lozove, along the eastern side of the Oskil River, east of Izyum.²¹

ASSESSMENT: Russia appears to be trying to create a second line of communication and supply along the eastern shore of the Oskil River. Ukrainian forces have launched a counteroffensive further north, attempting to cut the main supply line, and put pressure on assembled forces. These are similar tactics applied by both belligerents east and northwest of Kyiv.

²¹ <https://liveuamap.com/en/2022/17-april-battle-ongoing-for-lozove-village-on-the-border>

Although Russia has assembled up to 22 Battalion Tactical Groups in the Izyum region, many are not fully manned or equipped, and low morale. There are reports of forced conscription of Ukrainian men in Izyum to fill depleted Russian ranks.²²

We assessed that Russia would not mount a major offensive in the Donbas and from Izyum before non-orthodox Easter. Our assessment was accurate.

DNIPRO, KHERSON & MYKOLAIV REGION

Russian forces continue to target civilians and civilian infrastructure in Mykolaiv.²³ Russian forces have destroyed public water service, creating a shortage and forcing people to take water from the Buh River.²⁴

Ukrainian forces ambushed a Russian SOF or reconnaissance force and collected an ERA secure phone and an Orion satellite navigation system.²⁵

²² <https://twitter.com/sumlenny/status/1515843731416563713>

²³ <https://twitter.com/MaximEristavi/status/1515270661790474242>

²⁴ <https://twitter.com/HannaLiubakova/status/1515613795313410053>

²⁵ <https://twitter.com/Osinttechnical/status/1515868834665795587>

Russian occupation forces are distributing flyers in Kherson, blaming the “Kyiv regime” for the suffering within the oblast. The letter says there are “tens of provocateurs” in Kherson, acknowledging a growing and more violent insurrection within the city and oblast.²⁶

Ukrainian forces captured a significant number of Russian BMP-3 and BTR-82 armored personnel carriers in the Kherson Oblast. The location was not disclosed.²⁷

Ukrainian anti-aircraft systems shot down two Russian missiles over Zaporizhzhia on April 16.²⁸ The debris landed on several homes, injuring one civilian.

CHERNIHIV & SUMY REGION

There wasn't any significant military action in the region.

Ukrainian engineers with the National Guard are building defenses and roadblocks in the Sumy Oblast to channel Russian forces along preferred routes.²⁹

²⁶ <https://twitter.com/EuromaidanPress/status/1515342769119805444/photo/1>

²⁷ <https://twitter.com/Osinttechnical/status/1515737754054840328>

²⁸ <https://liveuamap.com/en/2022/16-april-2-missiles-shot-down-over-zaporizhzhia-today-debris>

²⁹ <https://www.facebook.com/100064814856597/posts/365244145646078/>



KYIV REGION

Russian missiles targeted civilians and civilian infrastructure in Brovary, a suburb seat of Kyiv.³⁰ There was no information on casualties.

³⁰ <https://twitter.com/EuromaidanPR/status/1515633970402283521>

BLACK SEA & ODESA REGION

There wasn't any significant military action in the region.

ASSESSMENT: We believe the threat of an amphibious assault on Odesa is negligible.

WEST REGION

There wasn't any significant military action in the region.

ASSESSMENT: We believe there is no longer a threat of a Belarusian invasion into Western Ukraine.

THEATERWIDE & EXTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS

India is expected to cancel an order for 48 Russian-built Mi-17 helicopters.³¹ Indian leaders insist this has nothing to do with the ongoing war in Ukraine, and the decision was made as part of a "made in India" push.

³¹ [India Today](#)

"The tender for 48 Mi-17V5 helicopters has been withdrawn in view of the push for indigenization. The IAF [Indian Armed Forces] would now be supporting an indigenous program for helicopters," the sources said.

WAR CRIMES AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Russian forces shelled a grocery store on April 16 in Lysychansk.³² The attack and photos of the burning store were geolocated.³³ The intentional targeting of civilians and civilian infrastructure is a war crime.³⁴ The store was located in a civilian area with no military value.

Russian forces shelled a church in Severodonetsk on Palm Sunday – Orthodox Christianity is the prevalent religion, with Easter falling on April 24.³⁵ The destruction of culturally significant sites is considered a war crime. On the edge of the city of 130,000, a makeshift gravesite has been created for more than 400 civilian casualties.³⁶

³² <https://twitter.com/Flash43191300/status/1515356096231317511>

³³ <https://twitter.com/GeoConfirmed/status/1515738361708879885>

³⁴ <https://twitter.com/rollowastaken/status/1515329201137721345>

³⁵ <https://twitter.com/EuromaidanPress/status/1515738188337369096>

³⁶ <https://twitter.com/nabihbulos/status/1515230403459756035>



Russian forces targeting civilians and civilian infrastructure in Kharkiv killed five and wounded 20.^{37 38}
(viewer discretion is advised)

Editor's Note: We usually wouldn't use NewsMax as a source, but they have been providing balanced coverage specific to the Russian-Ukraine War.

Reports of extra-judicial executions and torture are coming out of recently liberated Husarivka.^{39 40} Located 80

³⁷ <https://www.newsmax.com/headline/kharkiv-shelling-kills-five/2022/04/17/id/1066049/>

³⁸ <https://twitter.com/AlexKhrebet/status/1515682281381412864>

³⁹ <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/17/world/europe/ukraine-russia-atrocities.html>

⁴⁰ <https://twitter.com/Majid52333133/status/1515826538889027592>

kilometers southeast of Kharkiv and 40 kilometers northwest of Izyum, the settlement is a strategic location for both Russian and Ukrainian forces.

Russian forces fire missiles or artillery into a primary school in Mykolaiv.⁴¹ It was unoccupied at the time of the attack. The intentional targeting of civilians and civilian infrastructure is a war crime.

GEOPOLITICAL

Ukraine has reportedly completed and submitted its questionnaire for European Membership.⁴² "Today, I can say that the document has been completed by the Ukrainian side," Ihor Zhovkva told the Ukrainian public broadcaster Sunday evening.

A group of four United States senators and one Congressperson are leaving on a nine-day trip to visit Poland, India, Germany, and the United Arab Emirates to rally additional support for Ukraine.⁴³

⁴¹ <https://twitter.com/MargoGontar/status/1515454232438185995>

⁴² <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/ukraine-completes-questionnaire-eu-membership-official-2022-04-18>

⁴³ [The Hill](#)



ECONOMIC

There wasn't any economic news today.

DISINFORMATION EVALUATION

Kseniia took the day off.

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