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April 22, 2025, 9:00 pm ET

Note: The data cut-off for this product was 12pm ET on April 22. ISW will cover subsequent reports in the April 23 Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment.

The *Financial Times* (FT) reported that Russian President Vladimir Putin is willing to end the war in Ukraine on the current frontlines. Kremlin officials, including Putin, have repeatedly and explicitly emphasized that Russia maintains its territorial demands over all of Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhia, and Kherson oblasts, however, while also publicly signaling that Russia has greater territorial ambitions in Ukraine beyond these four oblasts. The FT reported on April 22 that sources familiar with the matter stated that Putin told US Special Envoy for the Middle East Steve Witkoff during their April 11 meeting that Russia could relinquish its claims to the Ukrainian-controlled parts of the four oblasts that Russia has formally laid claim to and illegally annexed.[1] European officials briefed on the US efforts to end the war stated that Putin would probably use this to lure US President Donald Trump into accepting Russia's other demands and force these demands onto Ukraine as a *fait accompli*. Russia's "other demands" referenced by FT likely include Russia's public demands for Ukrainian neutrality, regime change, and demilitarization — Putin's pre-war demands that Kremlin officials have consistently reiterated throughout the war and during negotiations about possible ceasefires and a peace deal.[2]

Russian officials have recently repeated Putin's June 2024 demand that Ukraine cede all of Luhansk, Donetsk, Zaporizhia, and Kherson oblasts before Russia can agree to a ceasefire and peace negotiations.[3] Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov explicitly cited Putin's June 2024 speech on April 14, and Russian Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) Head Sergey Naryshkin claimed on April 15 that any future peace agreement must include the recognition of Russia's illegal annexation of the entirety of these four oblasts.[4] Russia passed constitutional amendments in October 2022 that defined the four oblasts as Russian territory, and Russian officials have recently reiterated how the Russian Constitution holds primacy over international law.[5] Russian officials have also repeatedly invoked the term "Novorossiia" when talking about Russian-occupied and Russian-claimed territory in southern Ukraine, with Putin most recently using the term on April 21.[6] Novorossiia is an invented region in Ukraine that Kremlin officials have claimed includes all of southern and eastern Ukraine and is an "integral" part of Russia. A senior Russian occupation official, recently on April 21, called for Russia to control areas of southern Ukraine near the Dnipro River, including territory in oblasts that Russia has not formally claimed or illegally annexed.[7] Russian officials, including Putin, have also labelled Odesa City a "Russian city" that has nothing to do with Ukraine." [8] Kremlin newswire TASS has notably begun, as of April 2025, to characterize any Kremlin statements about Russian-claimed

territory in Ukraine as about "Donbas and Novorossiia," likely as part of Kremlin efforts to set conditions for Russian society to expect Russia to achieve extensive territorial concessions in Ukraine.[9]

The *Moscow Times* reported that the Kremlin is attempting to use economic incentives to sway US-Russian talks about the war in Ukraine, as the Kremlin is not sincerely interested in US President Donald Trump's efforts to end the war. ISW cannot independently verify Kremlin sources' statements, but recent Kremlin behavior is consistent with the *Moscow Times*' insider reporting. Independent Russian outlet the *Moscow Times* reported on April 21 that five current Russian government officials, including two diplomats and three sources close to the Kremlin who are employees of three major state-owned companies, stated that the Kremlin is looking for incentives to "hold...Trump's attention." [10] One current Russian government official stated that Russian authorities are working "in full swing" to prepare proposals for Trump across "key economic sectors." One source who has participated in the Kremlin discussions on the matter stated that Russia "needs to milk Trump as much as possible, dangling the possibility of a ceasefire like a carrot before him." A Russian diplomat stated that the Kremlin's priority is to "recalibrate" relations with the United States while keeping dialogue about the war in Ukraine "alive." The *Moscow Times* reported that the official Russian sources see two main scenarios that could unfold: either Russia agrees to a Trump-brokered ceasefire in exchange for concessions, such as limitations on US weapons supplies to Ukraine, or Russia will blame Ukraine should talks collapse.[11]

Russia has recently offered the United States economic incentives that are unrelated to Russia's war in Ukraine, likely as part of efforts to extract concessions from the United States about Russia's war in Ukraine.[12] Russian Presidential Aide Nikolai Patrushev, for example, called for the United States and Russia to jointly work to solve problems in the Arctic in an April 21 article in Russian business outlet *Kommersant*. [13] This Russian effort goes against the Trump administration's desired timeline of events, as the White House has stated that the United States "needs to see a ceasefire first" before developing US-Russian economic partnerships.[14] Kremlin officials have claimed that Russia is willing to negotiate to end the war in Ukraine while attempting to blame Ukraine for the lack of progress towards ending the war.[15] Putin, however, has rejected multiple full or temporary ceasefire offers that the United States and Ukraine have proposed. Putin rejected the March 18 US-Ukrainian proposed temporary ceasefire along the entire frontline; refused to extend the unilateral Russian Easter truce on April 21, despite both US and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky's support for such an extension; and rejected Zelensky's recent proposal for a temporary moratorium on long-range strikes against civilian infrastructure.[16] Putin has already started to question whether Ukraine would be able to receive military aid from its allies in the event of a temporary full ceasefire — possibly to set conditions to demand the cessation of United States and likely also European weapons supplies to Ukraine as a condition for accepting a full ceasefire.[17]

Any potential future Russian agreement to freeze the front short of Russia's full control of Luhansk, Donetsk, Zaporizhia, and Kherson oblasts does not preclude future Russian aggression to achieve Russia's more extensive territorial demands, especially if the agreement stipulates a moratorium on Ukraine receiving Western military aid. A Russian diplomat reportedly told the *Moscow Times* that "the situation on the ground will dictate the next moves" in US-Russian talks about the war and that "it is all about time, patience, and staying the

course." [18] The current frontlines do not provide the strategic depth that Ukraine will need to reliably defend against renewed Russian aggression, as Russian forces are just across the Dnipro River from Kherson City, roughly 25 kilometers from Zaporizhzhia City, and 20 kilometers from Kharkiv City. [19] Russia has notably intensified its use of armored vehicles across the frontline and appears to have started a likely years' long effort to seize Ukraine's fortress belt in Donetsk Oblast - likely as part of efforts to gain as much territory as possible in eastern and southern Ukraine, particularly in the four oblasts to which Russia has formally laid claim. [20] Russia may tactically and temporarily stop pushing for Putin's demands for the Ukrainian-controlled areas of the four illegally annexed oblasts in southern and eastern Ukraine in order to extract other concessions from the United States under the rubric of negotiations. Such concessions could be Russia's "other demands" of installing a pro-Russian government in Kyiv and drastically shrinking the Ukrainian military in order to decrease resistance against renewed Russian aggression. The Kremlin will likely exploit any ceasefire predicated on limitations on US weapons supplies to Ukraine to prepare for renewed aggression.

Kremlin officials continued efforts on April 22 to blame Ukraine for the lack of progress towards Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky's proposed temporary ceasefire on strikes against civilian infrastructure. Zelensky reiterated on April 21 that Ukraine remains ready and willing to discuss Zelensky's recent proposal for a 30-day ceasefire on long-range strikes against civilian infrastructure. [21] Kremlin Spokesperson Dmitry Peskov claimed on April 22, after Zelensky's April 21 statement, that Ukraine has yet to respond to Russian President Vladimir Putin's repeated statements signaling Russia's willingness to discuss such a ceasefire with Ukraine and that Russia first needs to understand if Ukraine is ready for such discussions. [22] Peskov claimed that there are no plans to discuss the proposed ceasefire and that Ukraine must remove its "obstacles" to contacts with Russia before bilateral discussions can begin, in reference to Zelensky's September 2022 decree banning negotiations with Putin after Putin's illegal annexation of parts of eastern and southern Ukraine. [23] Zelensky has repeatedly signaled his willingness to negotiate with Russia in recent months, however. [24] Peskov reiterated Putin's April 21 claims that Russia needs to "sort out" and study cases where there have been strikes against civilian infrastructure where military personnel were operating before agreeing to Zelensky's proposal. [25] Peskov's April 22 claims are in line with the *Moscow Times'* reporting that the Kremlin will attempt to blame Ukraine should talks to end the war fall apart and that the Kremlin is "dangling the possibility of a ceasefire like a carrot before [Trump]." [26]

The Kremlin continues to reject Trump's stated goal of achieving a ceasefire in Ukraine before a full peace settlement to end the war — in contrast to Ukraine's continued support for a general ceasefire. US President Donald Trump expressed hope on April 20 that Russia and Ukraine would make a deal this week, possibly referring to a general ceasefire agreement that would precede future peace negotiations. [27] Zelensky stated on April 21 that a ceasefire "should be the first step towards a reliable and lasting peace" and that only after Ukraine and Russia demonstrate adherence to an agreed upon ceasefire can the parties establish the trust necessary to resolve "fundamental issues." [28] Peskov claimed on April 22 that Russia and the United States maintain communication via several channels but that "it is probably not worth setting any strict time frames" or "trying to fit a viable settlement [to the war] into short time frame" as "the topic is so complex." [29] Zelensky's and Peskov's statements continue to demonstrate Ukraine's willingness to adhere to Trump's desired plans to end the war and Russia's rejection of these desired plans. [30]

Russian forces continue to innovate their long-range drone strike tactics in order to offset the effectiveness of Ukrainian mobile defense units. Russian milbloggers claimed on April 22 that Russian forces conducted a strike against Odesa City on April 21 with Geran-3 jet kamikaze drones (Russia's analogue to the Iranian Shahed-238), which reportedly has a maximum speed of 500 to 600 kilometers per hour.[31] One milblogger claimed that the Geran-3 drone may have a new compact turbojet engine or may have a slightly modified version of the previous engine.[32] Other milbloggers claimed that the Geran-3 drones flew at higher altitudes than previous drone models during the Odesa City strike, allowing them to avoid Ukrainian mobile defense units. The milbloggers claimed that Russian forces directed multiple Geran drones from different directions toward a single target in Odesa City and that the drones waited in a designated area near the target while other drones conducted additional reconnaissance for target adjustment. The drones then reportedly conducted a concentrated strike against the target, hitting simultaneously and from different directions. Ukrainian sources and German outlet *BILD* similarly reported in late March and early April 2025 that Russian forces are loitering long-range drones at high altitudes several kilometers from large Ukrainian cities and other targets before conducting synchronized strikes with multiple drones in order to overwhelm Ukrainian air defenses.[33] It is unclear if the Geran-3 that Russian forces used in the April 21 Odesa City strike is a new modified version, if Russian forces have only changed their tactics for employing the drone, or both. Ukrainian Center for Countering Disinformation Head Lieutenant Andriy Kovalenko stated on April 22 that Russia recently increased its production of Geran-type drones and has begun using swarm tactics during drone strikes.[34] ISW previously reported that Russians started producing and using their own Shahed-131 and Shahed-136 analogues (which Russia calls Geran-1 and Geran-2, respectively) with imported Iranian components and using Iranian production licenses as early as summer 2023 and began producing the Geran-3 drone in early 2024.[35] ISW also recently collected reports that Russian forces have begun to equip Shahed drones with concentrated chlorobenzylidenemalononitrile (CS) gas (a type of riot control agent [RCA] banned under the Chemical Weapons Convention [CWC], to which Russia is a signatory), likely to inflict damage on Ukrainian forces or civilians even after Ukrainian troops shoot down the drones.[36] Ukrainian forces have proven highly effective at shooting down Russia's long-range drones using mobile air defense units, and Russia is likely looking for different ways to overcome these effective Ukrainian air defenders.[37] Russian forces will likely seek to overwhelm Ukrainian air defense systems by increasing the number of Shahed and Geran drones used in Russian strike packages, continuing to implement swarm strikes, and further adapting drones to penetrate Ukraine's air defenses to inflict maximum damage.

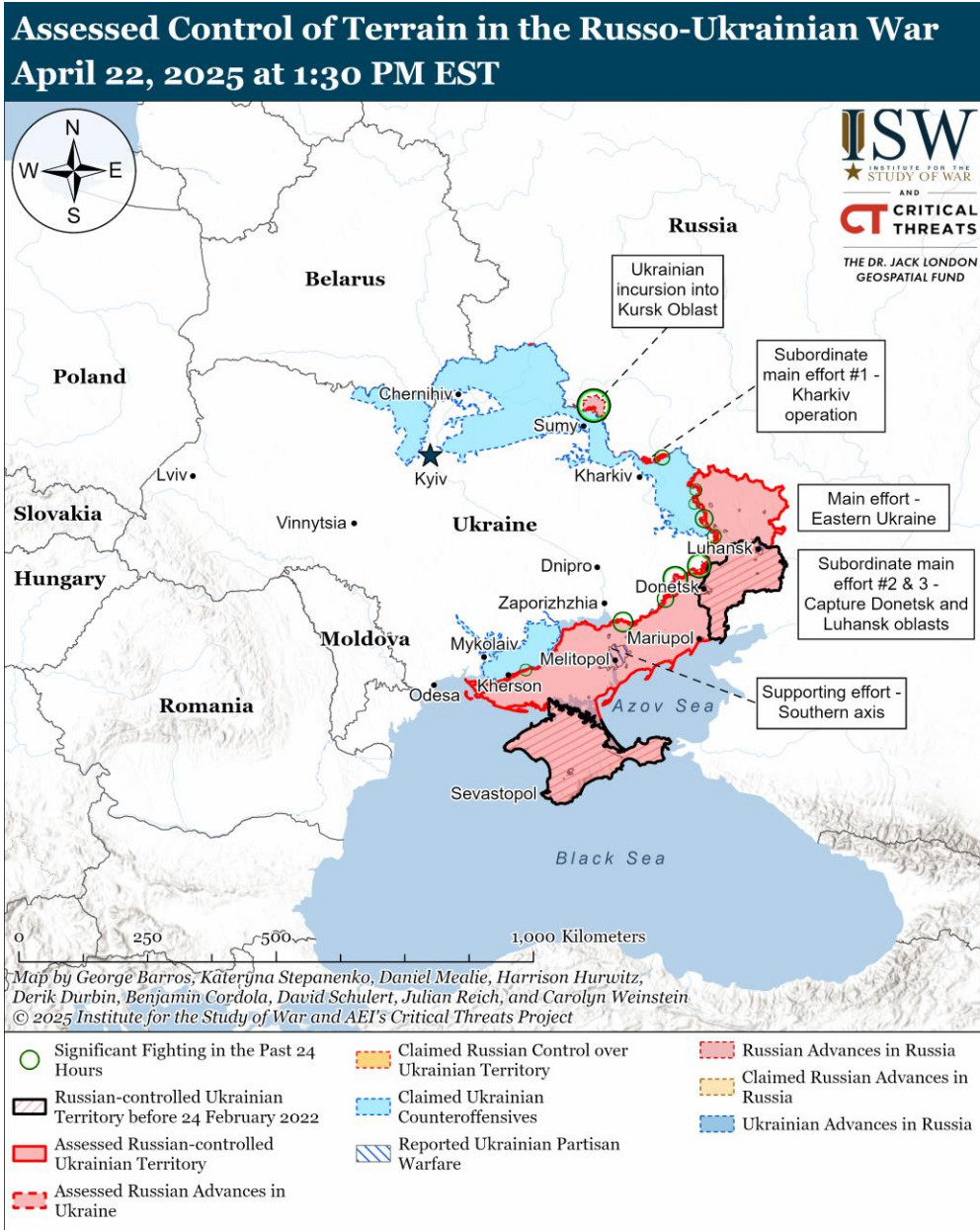
Russia is reportedly recruiting North Korean citizens to compensate for labor shortages in Russia, indicating that Russian-North Korean cooperation continues to deepen. Ryazan Oblast news outlet *Ya62* reported on February 15 that Ryazan Oblast Telegram channels reported that over 100 North Korean women signed three-year contracts to work at one of the Ryazan Oblast warehouses of Russian retail giant Wildberries (the Russian equivalent of Amazon), but *Ya62* noted that this information is unconfirmed.[38] Russian opposition student journal *DOXA* reported that there is a video circulated among Wildberries employees reportedly showing North Korean women at a Wildberries warehouse in Elektrostal, Moscow Oblast, and a local Telegram channel claimed on April 15 that former Wildberries employees reported there are "hundreds" of North Koreans working at the Elektrostal warehouse.[39] *DOXA* reported that a Wildberries representative did not confirm whether the workers in the Elektrostal video were North Korean but stated that Wildberries is working

with a recruiting agency to attract workers from unspecified countries.[40] Russian milbloggers amplified much of this reporting on April 21 and 22 and praised Russia's and Wildberries' efforts to recruit North Korean workers for jobs in Russia to offset ongoing labor shortages.[41] The milbloggers praised North Korean migrants as better than migrants from Central Asian countries, claiming that North Korean migrants only work in Russia on short-term contracts instead of migrating permanently, are more "disciplined" and work harder for less pay and longer hours, are less biased against Russia, and "behave decently" — a reference to frequent Russian ultranationalist and xenophobic complaints that Central Asian migrant communities in Russia fail to assimilate into Russian cultural and legal norms. ISW has observed indicators that Russia is preparing for an influx of North Korean citizens to arrive in Russia, likely to either join the Russian workforce or join the Russian military, and ease some economic constraints of Russia's war effort.[42] Russian official data shows that 13,221 North Koreans entered Russia in 2024 — up to 12 times the number that entered Russia in 2023 — and that 7,887 of these North Koreans entered Russia on student visas, with the largest number entering Russia in the months immediately before the deployment of North Korean troops to Russia.[43] A significant increase in the number of North Koreans working in the Russian civilian sectors could free up Russia's civilian sector employees to work in the Russian defense industry or fight against Ukraine.

Key Takeaways:

- **The *Financial Times* (FT) reported that Russian President Vladimir Putin is willing to end the war in Ukraine on the current frontlines. Kremlin officials, including Putin, have repeatedly and explicitly emphasized that Russia maintains its territorial demands over all of Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhia, and Kherson oblasts, however, while also publicly signaling that Russia has greater territorial ambitions in Ukraine beyond these four oblasts.**
- **The *Moscow Times* reported that the Kremlin is attempting to use economic incentives to sway US-Russian talks about the war in Ukraine as the Kremlin is not sincerely interested in US President Donald Trump's efforts to end the war. ISW cannot independently verify Kremlin sources' statements, but recent Kremlin behavior is consistent with the *Moscow Times*' insider reporting.**
- **Any potential future Russian agreement to freeze the front short of Russia's full control of Luhansk, Donetsk, Zaporizhia, and Kherson oblasts does not preclude future Russian aggression to achieve Russia's more extensive territorial demands, especially if the agreement stipulates a moratorium on Ukraine receiving Western military aid.**
- **Kremlin officials continued efforts on April 22 to blame Ukraine for the lack of progress towards Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky's proposed temporary ceasefire on strikes against civilian infrastructure.**
- **The Kremlin continues to reject Trump's stated goal of achieving a ceasefire in Ukraine before a full peace settlement to end the war — in contrast to Ukraine's continued support for a general ceasefire.**

- Russian forces continue to innovate their long-range drone strike tactics in order to offset the effectiveness of Ukrainian mobile defense units.
- Russia is reportedly recruiting North Korean citizens to compensate for labor shortages in Russia, indicating that Russian-North Korean cooperation continues to deepen.
- Russian forces recently advanced in Kursk Oblast and near Toretsk.



We do not report in detail on Russian war crimes because these activities are well-covered in Western media and do not directly affect the military operations we are assessing and forecasting. We will continue to evaluate and report on the effects of these criminal activities on the Ukrainian military and the Ukrainian population and

specifically on combat in Ukrainian urban areas. We utterly condemn Russian violations of the laws of armed conflict and the Geneva Conventions and crimes against humanity even though we do not describe them in these reports.

- Alleged Ceasefire Violation
- Ukrainian Operations in the Russian Federation
- Russian Supporting Effort – Northern Axis
- Russian Main Effort – Eastern Ukraine (comprised of three subordinate main efforts)
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #1 – Push Ukrainian forces back from the international border with Belgorod Oblast and approach to within tube artillery range of Kharkiv City
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #2 – Capture the remainder of Luhansk Oblast and push westward into eastern Kharkiv Oblast and encircle northern Donetsk Oblast
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #3 – Capture the entirety of Donetsk Oblast, the claimed territory of Russia’s proxies in Donbas, and possibly advance into Dnipropetrovsk Oblast
- Russian Supporting Effort – Southern Axis
- Russian Air, Missile, and Drone Campaign
- Significant Activity in Belarus

Alleged Ceasefire Violations

There are no active ceasefires in place in Ukraine.

Ukrainian Operations in the Russian Federation

Russian forces recently advanced in Kursk Oblast.

Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on April 22 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced along the 38H-609 Sudzha-Guyevo highway south of Oleshnya (southwest of Sudzha).[44]

Unconfirmed claims: Russian sources claimed that Russian forces seized the St. Nicholas Monastery southwest of Guyevo (south of Sudzha near the international border) after Ukrainian forces allegedly used the April 19 to 20 Easter truce to regain positions in the monastery.[45]

Fighting continued near Gornal.[46]

A Kremlin-affiliated Russian milblogger claimed that Mount Frigor (just southwest of the St. Nicholas Monastery) is a contested "gray zone." [47] Russian security forces claimed to Kremlin newswire TASS on April 22 that Ukrainian forces blew up buildings in the monastery, but Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces conducted a FAB-1500 or FAB-3000 glide bomb strike against Ukrainian positions in the monastery.[48]

Order of Battle: Drone operators of the Russian 106th Airborne (VDV) Division are reportedly operating drones with fiber optic cables in Kursk Oblast.[49] Elements of the 177th Naval Infantry Regiment (Caspian Flotilla) and 40th Naval Infantry Brigade (Pacific Fleet) are reportedly operating near the St. Nicholas Monastery.[50]

Fighting continued in northwestern Belgorod Oblast on April 22.

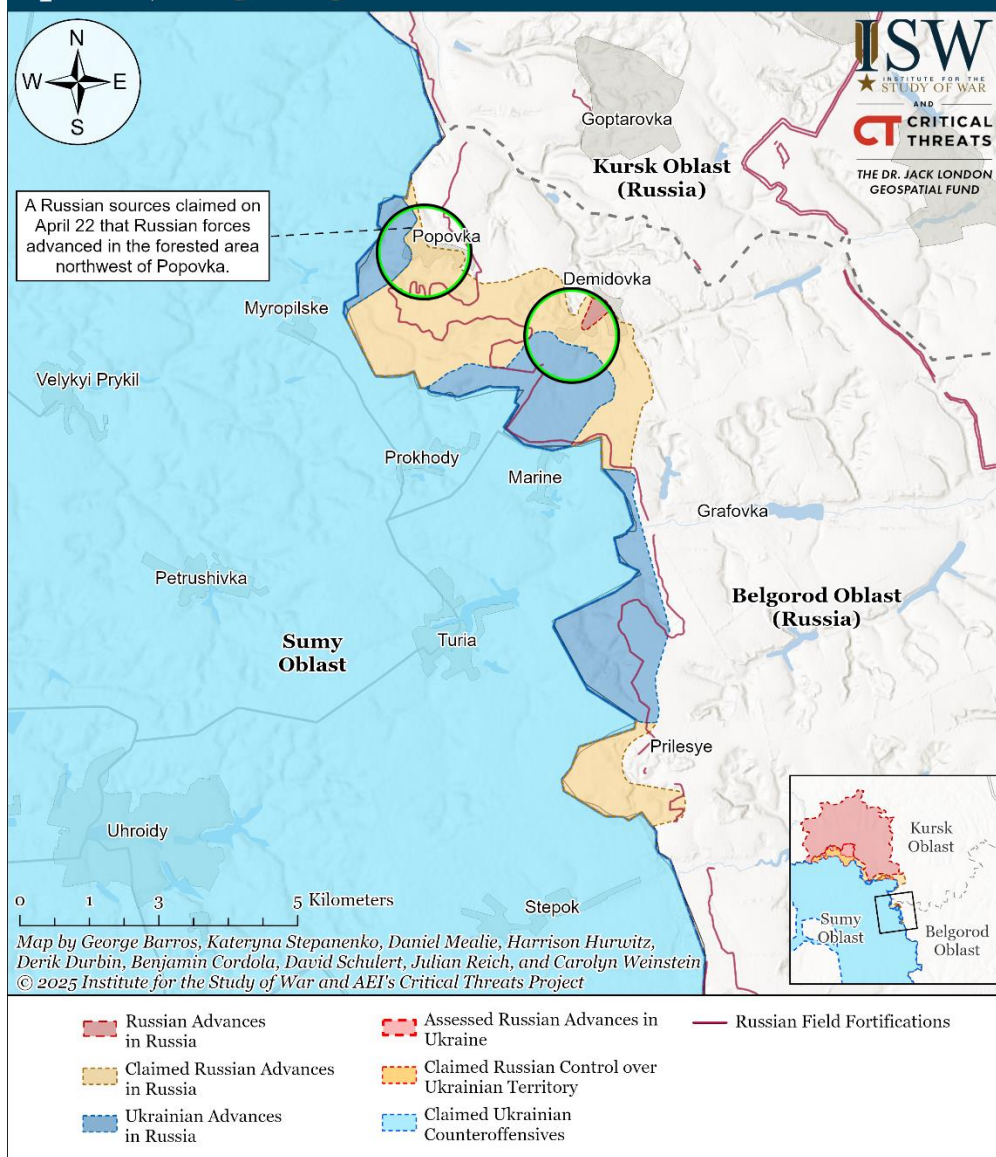
Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced northwest of Popovka (northwest of Belgorod City).[51]

Russian milbloggers claimed that Ukrainian forces unsuccessfully attacked near Popovka and Demidovka (southeast of Popovka).[52]

A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces maintain positions on the outskirts of Popovka.[53]

Order of Battle: Drone operators of the Russian 34th Motorized Rifle Brigade (49th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Southern Military District [SMD]) are reportedly near Demidovka and Popovka.[54] Elements of the "Aida" group of the 204th Chechen "Akhmat" Spetsnaz Regiment are reportedly operating near Demidovka.[55]

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Belgorod Direction April 22, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



Ukrainian forces may have conducted a drone strike against a Russian missile and artillery arsenal in Vladimir Oblast on April 22, but ISW cannot independently verify the cause of the explosion at the arsenal. Ukrainian Center for Countering Disinformation Head Lieutenant Andriy Kovalenko, who typically reports on successful Ukrainian strikes against Russian territory, stated on April 22 that there was an explosion at the 51st Arsenal of the Main Missile and Artillery Directorate (GRAU) near Kirzhach, Vladimir Oblast.[56] Kovalenko stated that the arsenal stored roughly 105,000 tons of weapons, including significant stocks of artillery shells, missiles, and ammunition for air defense systems and multiple launch rocket systems (MLRS). Kovalenko did not state the cause of the explosion. Geolocated footage published on April 22 shows a smoke plume southwest of Kirzhach near the 51st Arsenal.[57] Vladimir Oblast Governor Aleksander Avdeeva claimed on April 22 that there was an explosion in Kirzhachsky Raion.[58] The Russian Ministry of

Defense (MoD) claimed on April 22 that a fire at an unspecified military unit in Vladimir Oblast caused an ammunition warehouse to detonate and that safety regulation violations regarding handling explosive materials caused the fire.[59] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian drones may have caused the explosion if Ukrainian drones hit open or poorly protected areas of the arsenal.[60] A Kremlin-affiliated Russian milblogger claimed that human error or sabotage may be the reason for the explosion.[61]

Russian Supporting Effort – Northern Axis (Russian objective: Create defensible buffer zones in northern Ukraine along the international border and approach to within tube artillery range of Sumy City)

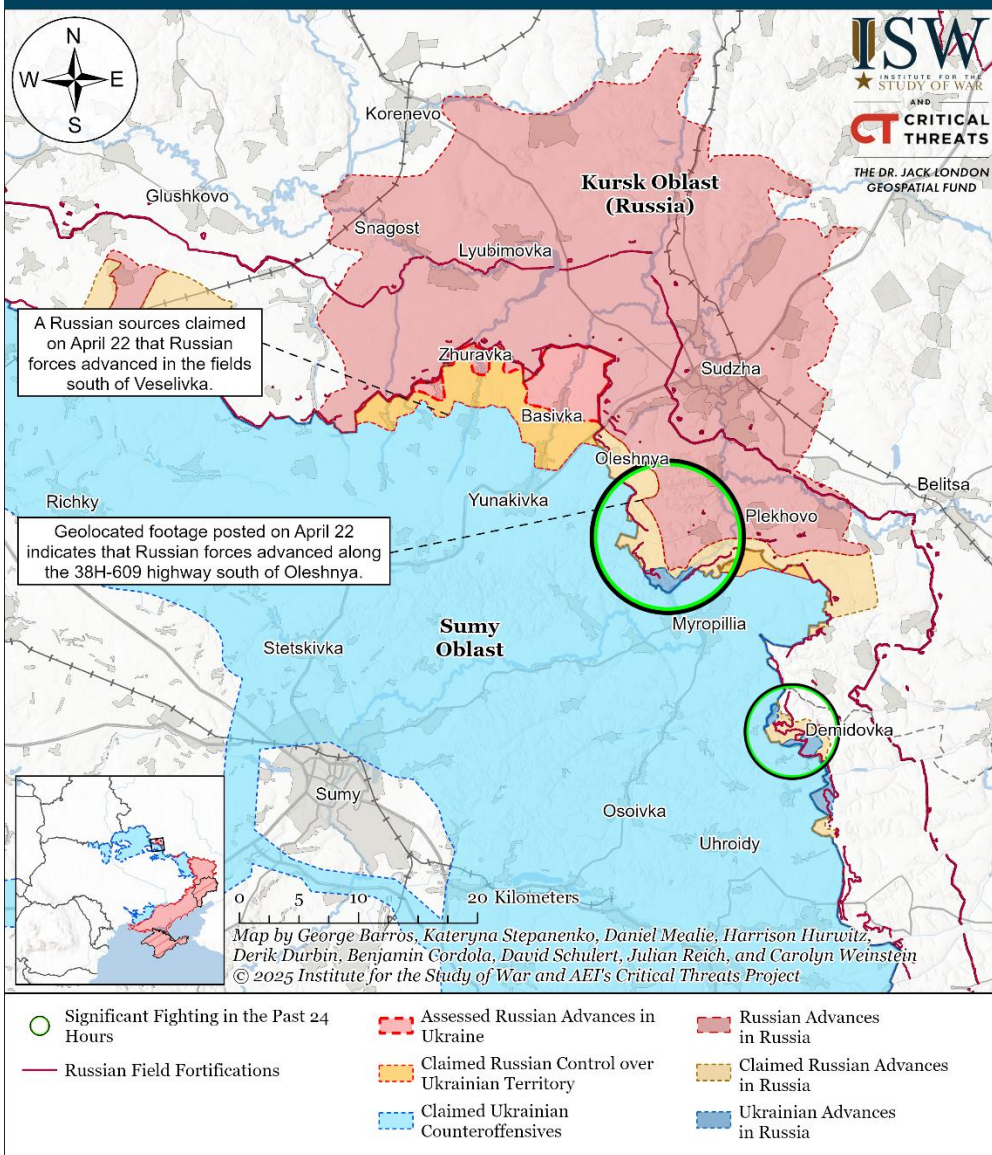
Russian forces continued offensive operations in northern Sumy Oblast on April 22 but did not make confirmed advances.

Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced south of Veselivka (northeast of Sumy City).[62]

Russian forces conducted offensive operations north of Yunakivka (northeast of Sumy City) and along the Volodymyrivka-Bilovody-Basivka line (north and northeast of Sumy City).[63] A Kremlin-affiliated Russian milblogger claimed that there is contradictory information about the Volodymyrivka-Bilovody-Basivka line and that the situation is unclear.[64]

Order of Battle: Drone operators of the "Anvar Spetsnaz" detachment (possibly referring to the BARS-25 "Anvar" volunteer detachment) and "Aida" Akhmat Spetsnaz Detachment are reportedly operating in Sumy Oblast.[65]

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Sumy Direction April 22, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



Russian Main Effort – Eastern Ukraine

Russian Subordinate Main Effort #1 – Kharkiv Oblast (Russian objective: Push Ukrainian forces back from the international border with Belgorod Oblast and approach to within tube artillery range of Kharkiv City)

Russian forces continued limited offensive operations in northern Kharkiv Oblast on April 22 but did not advance.

Russian forces attacked north of Kharkiv City near Lyptsi and northeast of Kharkiv City near Vovchansk on April 21 and 22.[66]

The spokesperson of a Ukrainian brigade operating in the Vovchansk area reported on April 22 that Russian forces used Russia's unilateral 30-hour Easter truce to conduct rotations and supply frontline positions in this direction.[67] The spokesperson noted that Russian forces use small sabotage and reconnaissance groups to probe and attack Ukrainian positions in the area.

Russian Subordinate Main Effort #2 – Luhansk Oblast (Russian objective: Capture the remainder of Luhansk Oblast and push westward into eastern Kharkiv Oblast and northern Donetsk Oblast)

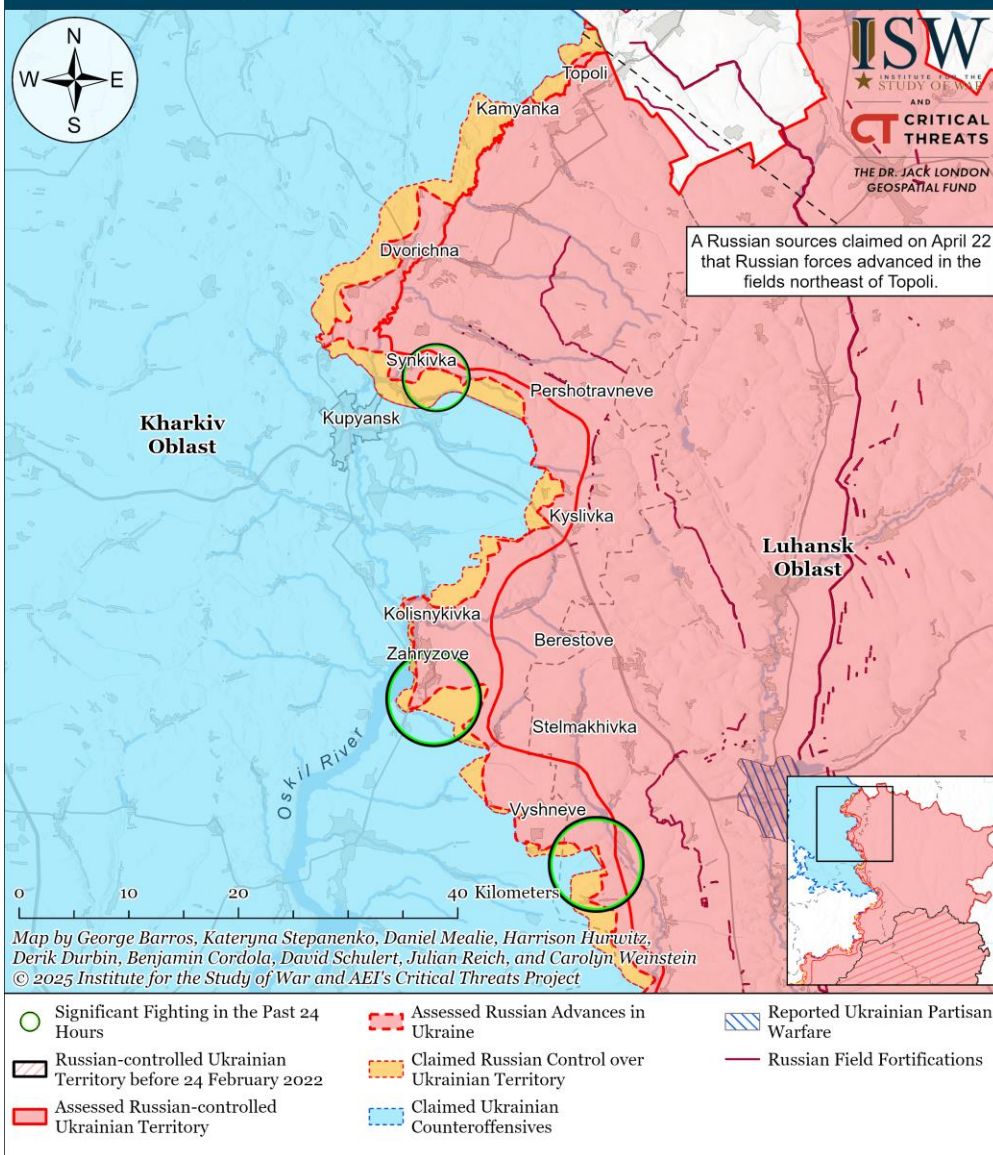
Russian forces continued ground attacks in the Kupyansk direction on April 22 but did not make confirmed advances.

Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced northeast of Topoli and southwest of Kamyanka (both northeast of Kupyansk along the international border), northwest and southwest of Zapadne (northeast of Kupyansk), and northwest and northeast of Petropavlivka (east of Kupyansk).[68]

Russian forces continued ground attacks near Kamyanka, northwest of Kupyansk near Mala Shaplivka, north of Kupyansk near Kindrashivka, and east of Kupyansk near Petropavlivka on April 21 and 22.[69]

Order of Battle: Drone operators of the Russian "Kontory" Group (1st Guards Tank Army [GTA], Moscow Military District [MMD]) reportedly continue to operate in the Kupyansk direction.[70]

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Kupyansk Direction April 22, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Borova direction on April 22 but did not advance.

Russian forces continued ground attacks northeast of Borova near Zahryzove and Nova Kruhlyakivka, east of Borova near Nadiya, and southeast of Borova near Novoserhiivka, Olhivka, and Hrekivka on April 21 and 22.[71] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces counterattacked near Nadiya.[72]

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Lyman direction on April 22 but did not make confirmed advances.

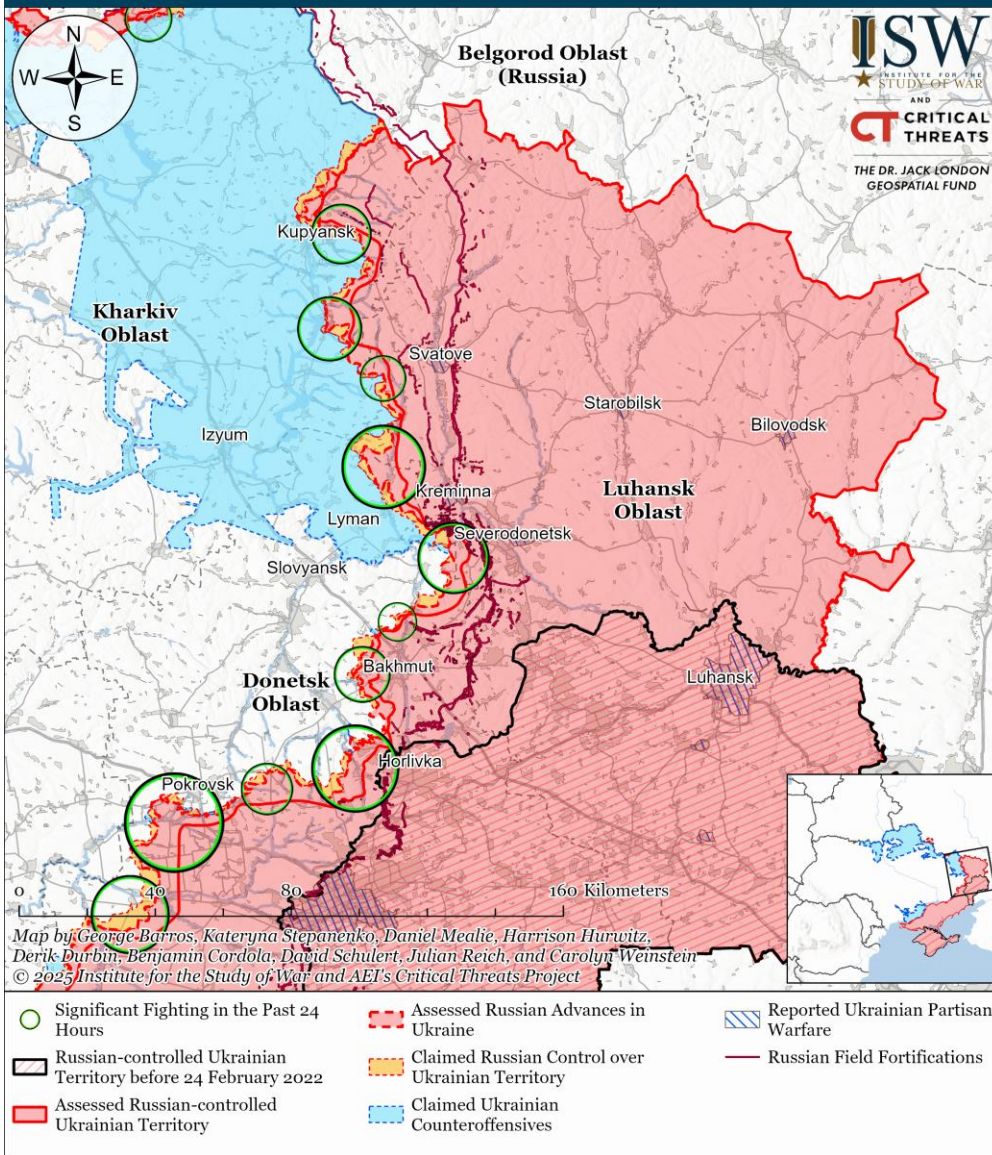
Unconfirmed claims: Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced northeast of Lyman along the Novomykhailivka-Katerynivka-Nove line, near Myrne, north of Novomykhailivka, and in central Ridkodub.[73]

Russian forces continued ground attacks northeast of Lyman near Novomykhailivka, Ridkodub, Myrne, and Kolodyazi, and toward Zelena Dolyna and Novyi Myr; and east of Lyman near Torske on April 21 and 22.[74]

The spokesperson of a Ukrainian brigade operating in the Lyman direction reported that Russian forces heavily shelled Ukrainian positions and conducted at least one infantry assault during Russia's unilateral Easter truce on April 19 to 20.[75] The spokesperson reported that Russian forces used the truce to pull infantry equipped with machine guns and rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs) closer to the frontline and launched a large infantry assault after the truce expired.

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian "Smuglyanka" detachment are reportedly operating in the Lyman direction.[76]

Assessed Control of Terrain in Luhansk Oblast April 22, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



Russian Subordinate Main Effort #3 – Donetsk Oblast (Russian objective: Capture the entirety of Donetsk Oblast, the claimed territory of Russia's proxies in Donbas, and possibly advance into Dnipropetrovsk Oblast)

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Siversk direction on April 22 but did not make confirmed advances.

Unconfirmed claims: Russian milbloggers claimed on April 22 that Russian forces advanced southeast of Hryhorivka (northeast of Siversk), into central Fedorivka (south of Siversk), and in fields northeast and south of Vasyukivka (southwest of Siversk).[77]

Russian forces attacked northeast of Siversk near Hryhorivka, east of Siversk near Verkhokamyanske, and south of Siversk near Pereizne on April 21 and 22.[78]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 7th Motorized Rifle Brigade (3rd Combined Arms Army [CAA], formerly 2nd Luhansk People's Republic Army Corps [AC], Southern Military District [SMD]) are reportedly operating south of Bilohorivka (northeast of Siversk).[79]

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Chasiv Yar direction on April 22 but did not make confirmed advances.

Unconfirmed claims: Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced in fields northwest of Chasiv Yar and along Vysokovoltna Street in southwestern Chasiv Yar itself.[80]

Russian forces attacked near Chasiv Yar itself, north of Chasiv Yar near Markove, northeast of Chasiv Yar near Vasyukivka, and south of Chasiv Yar near Bila Hora and Stupochky on April 21 and 22.[81]

Ukrainian Luhansk Group of Forces Spokesperson Lieutenant Colonel Dmytro Zaporozhets stated on April 21 that Russian forces only slightly decreased the rate of artillery fire during the Russian-declared Easter truce on April 19 to 20, but did not conduct air strikes.[82] Zaporozhets reported that Russian forces struck Kostyantynivka (southwest of Chasiv Yar) with multiple launch rocket systems (MLRS) and struck Ukrainian positions with guided bombs upon the expiration of the truce at midnight local time on April 21. Zaporozhets noted that Russian forces in the Chasiv Yar direction continue to attack in small infantry groups and are not conducting mechanized attacks.

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 98th Airborne (VDV) Division, including sapper units and the division's 331st and 299th VDV regiments, are reportedly operating in Chasiv Yar.[83] Elements of the Russian 5th Anti-Aircraft Missile Regiment (98th VDV Division) are reportedly operating in the Chasiv Yar direction.[84] Drone operators of the Russian 200th Motorized Rifle Brigade (14th Army Corps [AC], Leningrad Military District [LMD]) are reportedly striking Ukrainian positions near Oleksiyev-Druzhkivka (about 15km west of Chasiv Yar), likely from positions in or near Chasiv Yar.[85]

Russian forces recently advanced in the Toretsk direction.

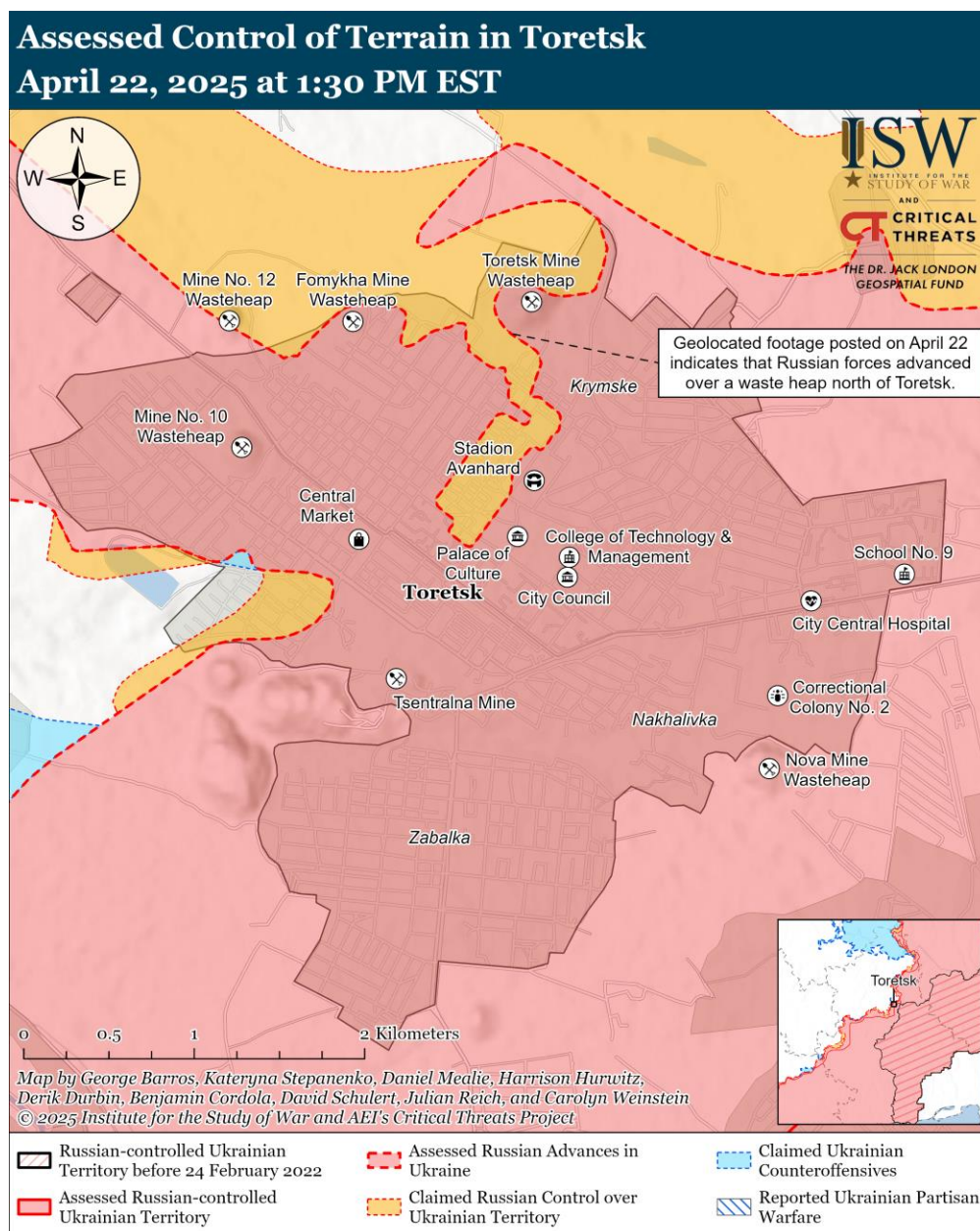
Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage posted on April 22 indicates that Russian forces recently marginally in the waste heap area immediately north of Toretsk.[86]

Unconfirmed claims: The Russian MoD and other Russian sources claimed on April 22 that Russian forces seized Sukha Balka (southwest of Toretsk).[87] Russian sources claimed that Russian forces advanced in fields northeast of Dachne (north of Toretsk), east of Shcherbynivka, and southwest of Petrivka (both west of Toretsk).[88]

Russian forces attacked near Toretsk itself, north of Toretsk near Dachne and Dyliivka, east of Toretsk near Druzhba, west of Toretsk near Shcherbynivka and Petrivka, and southwest of Toretsk toward Romanivka and north of Sukha Balka on April 21 and 22.[89]

A Ukrainian brigade posted footage on April 21 indicating that Russian infantry continues using motorcycles to advance in the Toretsk direction.[90] The brigade stated that Russian forces are constantly experimenting with new tactics, including conducting assaults with armored columns followed by small infantry groups and conducting assaults on motorcycles.

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 68th Tank Regiment (150th Motorized Rifle Division, 8th CAA, SMD) are reportedly operating near Sukha Balka.[91] Elements of the 4th Motorized Rifle Brigade (3rd CAA, SMD) are reportedly operating in Dachne.[92]



Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Pokrovsk direction on April 22 but did not make any confirmed advances.

Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced south of Stara Mykolaivka (east of Pokrovsk).[93]

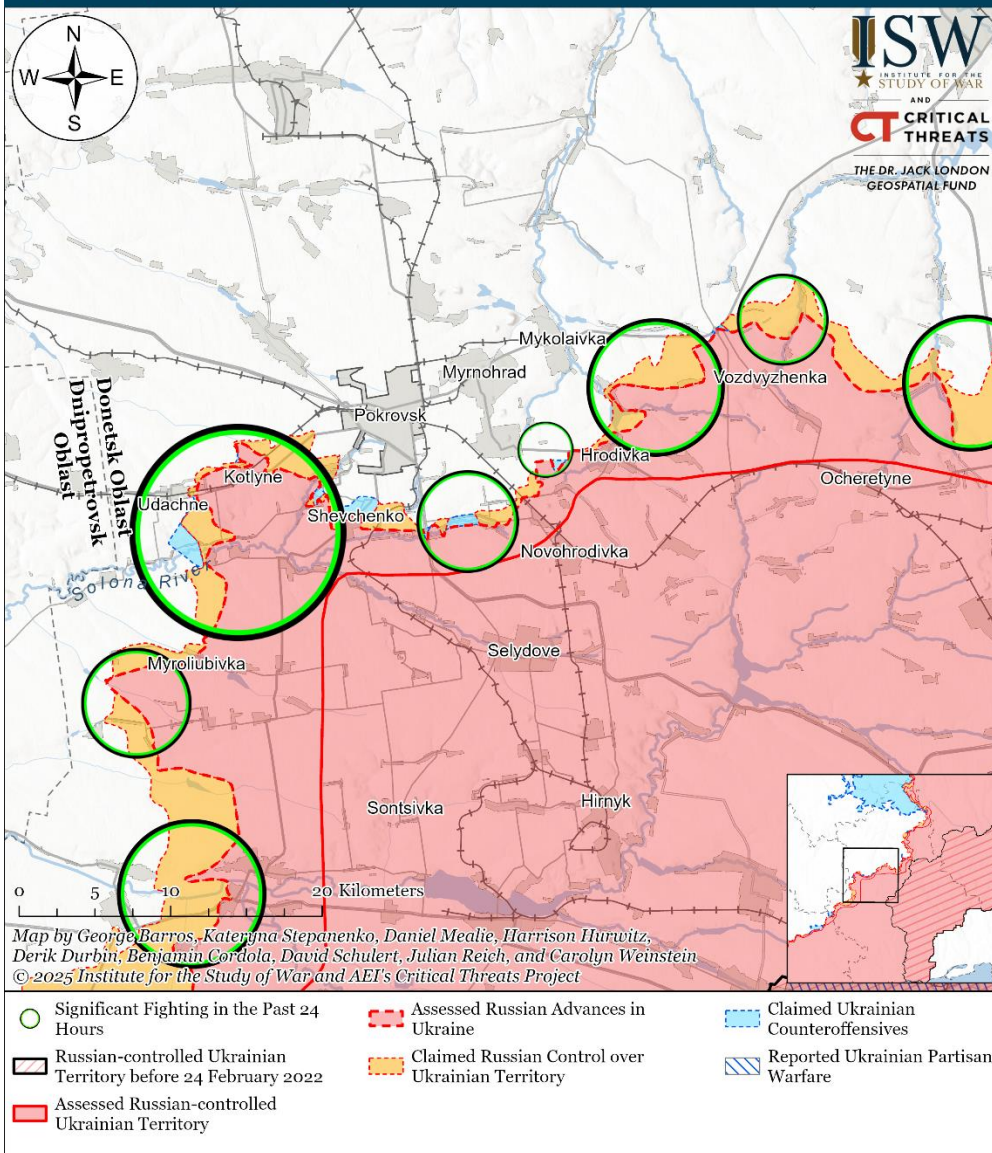
Russian forces attacked northeast of Pokrovsk toward Malynivka and near Tarasivka, Berezivka, Vodyane Druhe, and Stara Mykolaivka; east of Pokrovsk near Promin, Yelyzavetivka, Novotoretske, Oleksandropil, and Myrolyubivka and toward Stara Mykolaivka; southeast of Pokrovsk near Sukhyi Yar

and Lysivka; and southwest of Pokrovsk near Zvirove, Udachne, Leontovychi (formerly Pershe Travnaya), and Kotlyne on April 21 and 22.[94] Russian milbloggers claimed that Ukrainian forces counterattacked near Shevchenko (south of Pokrovsk), Udachne, Zvirove, and Pishchane.[95]

The spokesperson of a Ukrainian brigade operating in the Pokrovsk direction reported on April 22 that Russian forces continue assaulting in small infantry groups.[96] The spokesperson reported that Russian forces conducted a mechanized assault with an unspecified number of infantry fighting vehicles (IFVs) and cars carrying infantry on April 19.

Order of Battle: Drone operators of the Russian "Smuglyanka" Detachment reportedly continue to operate in the Pokrovsk direction.[97] Elements of the Russian 10th Tank Regiment (20th Motorized Rifle Division, 8th CAA, SMD) are reportedly operating near Shevchenko, and elements of the Russian 15th Motorized Rifle Brigade (2nd CAA, Central Military District [CMD]) are reportedly operating near Udachne.[98]

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Pokrovsk Direction April 22, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Novopavlivka direction on April 22 but did not make any confirmed advances.

Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces advanced near Troitske (southeast of Novopavlivka) and that Ukrainian forces seized half of Uspenivka (northeast of Novopavlivka).[99] Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced west of Kotlyarivka (east of Novopavlivka) and near Bohdanivka (southeast of Novopavlivka).[100]

Russian forces attacked northeast of Novopavlivka near Uspenivka and Novooleksandrivka; east of Novopavlivka near Preobrazhenka, Kotlyarivka, and Nadiivka; and southeast of Novopavlivka near Troitske and toward Horikhove on April 21 and 22.[101] Russian milbloggers claimed on April 21 that Ukrainian forces counterattacked near Troitske and Bohdanivka.[102]

The Russian MoD claimed on April 22 that Russian forces fighting in the Novopavlivka direction began using unspecified sound reception systems to coordinate combat operations rather than using radio communications, likely to evade electronic warfare (EW) detection and jamming.[103]

Order of Battle: The Russian MoD credited elements of the Russian 90th Tank Division (41st CAA, CMD) with seizing Preobrazhenka, which ISW assesses Russian forces seized as of March 29.[104] Elements of the Russian 2nd Motorized Rifle Battalion of the 428th Motorized Rifle Regiment (90th Tank Division) reportedly continue operating near Preobrazhenka.[105]

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Kurakhove direction on April 22 but did not advance.

Russian forces attacked west of Kurakhove near Andriivka, Oleksiivka, and Kostyantynopil; and southwest of Kurakhove near Bahatyr, Novosilka, Rozlyv, and Odradne on April 21 and 22.[106] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces counterattacked east of Bahatyr.[107]

Order of Battle: Drone operators of the Russian 14th Spetsnaz Brigade (Russian General Staff's Main Directorate [GRU]) and artillery elements of the Russian 200th Motorized Rifle Brigade (29th CAA, Eastern Military District [EMD]) are reportedly striking Ukrainian forces near Bahatyr.[108] Elements of the Russian 656th Motorized Rifle Regiment (29th CAA) are reportedly operating near Kostyantynopil.[109]

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Velyka Novosilka direction on April 22 but did not advance.

Russian forces attacked northwest of Velyka Novosilka near Pryvilne and Vilne Pole and southwest of Velyka Novosilka toward Novopil on April 21 and 22.[110]

Russian Supporting Effort – Southern Axis (Russian objective: Maintain frontline positions, secure rear areas against Ukrainian strikes, and advance within tube artillery range of Zaporizhzhia City)

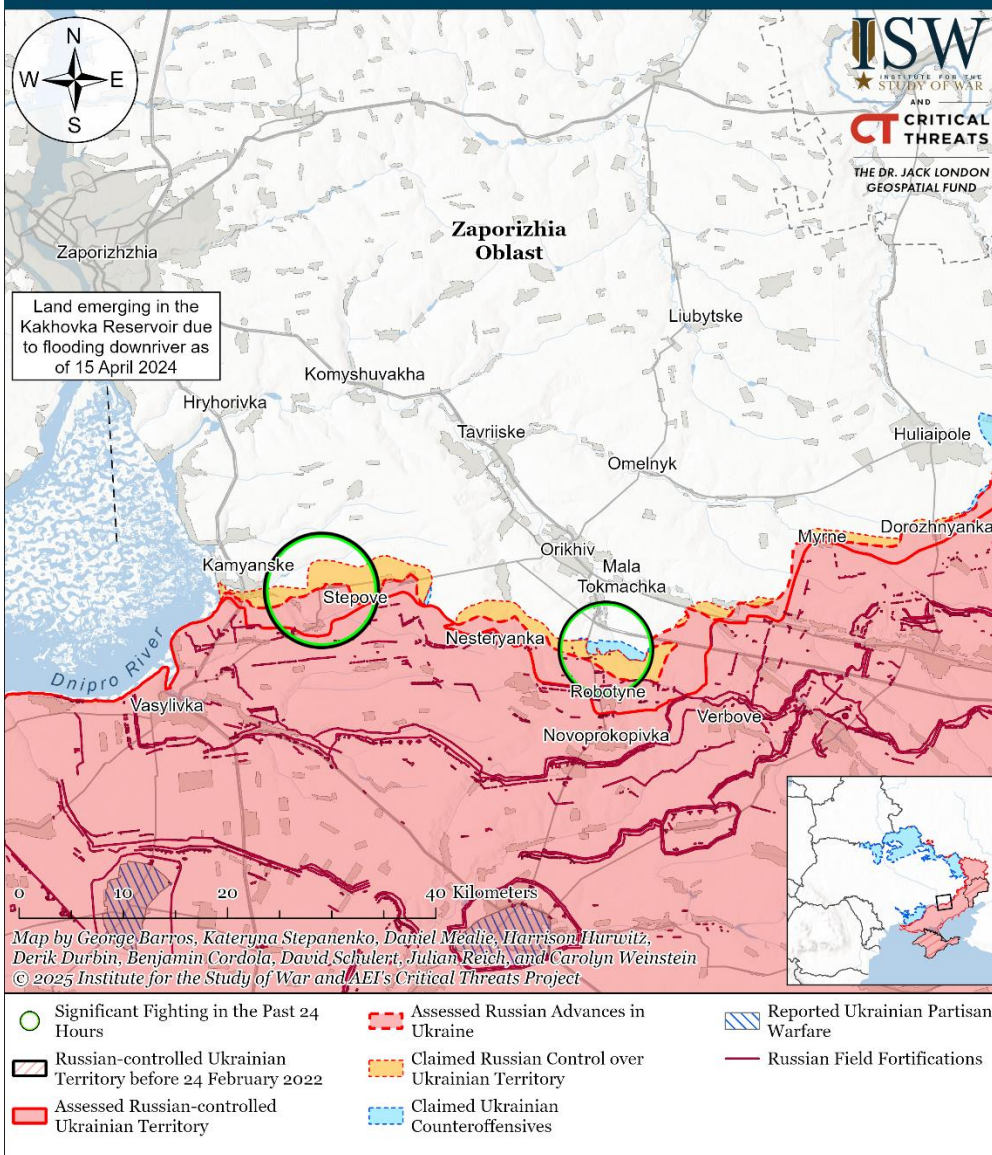
Russian forces continued offensive operations in western Zaporizhia Oblast on April 22 but did not advance.

Russian forces attacked southeast of Orikhiv near Mala Tokmachka; south of Orikhiv toward Novodanylivka; southwest of Orikhiv near Stepove, Pyatykhatky, and Lobkove; and west of Orikhiv near Mali Shcherbaky on April 21 and 22.[111]

The commander of a Ukrainian platoon operating in the Orikhiv direction stated on April 22 that Russian forces still have a large amount of equipment concentrated in western Zaporizhia Oblast despite taking heavy equipment losses during the unsuccessful battalion-sized assault in western Zaporizhia Oblast on April 16.[112] The Ukrainian platoon commander noted that Russian forces are using armored vehicle convoys to transport infantry.

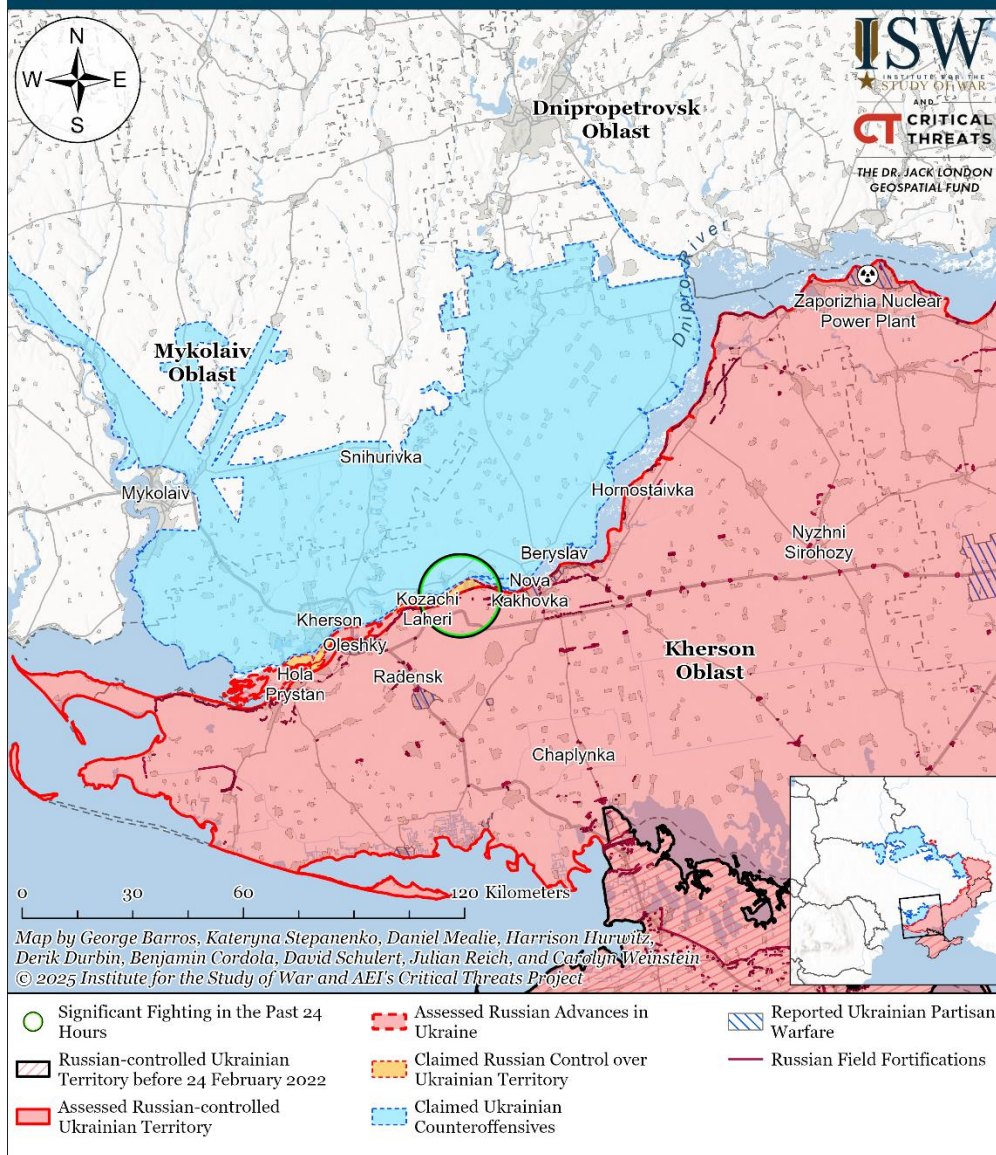
Order of Battle: Drone operators of the Russian 42nd Motorized Rifle Division (58th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Southern Military District [SMD]) are reportedly striking Ukrainian forces near Orikhiv, and elements of the 71st Motorized Rifle Regiment (42nd Motorized Rifle Division) are reportedly operating in the Orikhiv direction.[113]

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Zaporizhia Direction April 22, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



Russian forces conducted limited ground assaults in the Dniro direction on April 21 and 22 but did not advance.[114]

Assessed Control of Terrain in the Kherson Direction April 22, 2025 at 1:30 PM EST



Russian Air, Missile, and Drone Campaign (Russian Objective: Target Ukrainian military and civilian infrastructure in the rear and on the frontline)

Russian forces conducted a series of drone strikes against Ukraine overnight on April 21 to 22 and during the day on April 22. The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Russian forces launched 54 strike drones and decoy drones overnight from Millerovo, Rostov Oblast; Kursk and Bryansk cities; Primorsko-Akhtarsk, Krasnodar Krai; and occupied Cape Chauda, Crimea.[115] The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Ukrainian forces downed 38 drones and that 16 decoy drones were "lost," likely due to Ukrainian electronic warfare (EW) interference. Ukrainian officials reported that Russian drones struck Kyiv and Odesa oblasts overnight.[116] The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Russian forces launched 77 strike and decoy drones from Kursk and Bryansk cities and Primorsko-Akhtarsk, Krasnodar Krai during the day on April 22.[117] The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Ukrainian forces

downed 38 drones and that another 31 drones were "lost." Ukrainian officials reported that Russian drones struck Kharkiv, Cherkasy, and Zaporizhia oblasts during the day.[118]

Ukrainian officials reported that a Russian guided glide bomb struck a high-rise building in Zaporizhzhia City during the day, killing at least one civilian and injuring at least 26.[119]

Significant activity in Belarus (Russian efforts to increase its military presence in Belarus and further integrate Belarus into Russian-favorable frameworks)

Nothing significant to report.

Note: ISW does not receive any classified material from any source, uses only publicly available information, and draws extensively on Russian, Ukrainian, and Western reporting and social media as well as commercially available satellite imagery and other geospatial data as the basis for these reports. References to all sources used are provided in the endnotes of each update.

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