Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment

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Note: The data cut-off for this product was 11:40 am ET on April 30. ISW will cover subsequent reports in the May 1 Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment.

The United States and Ukraine signed a bilateral economic partnership agreement on April 30. The US Department of the Treasury announced the agreement, which created the United States-Ukraine Reconstruction Investment Fund that aims to accelerate Ukraine's economic recovery.[1] The precise terms of the agreement are unspecified as of this publication. US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent reiterated that the United States remains committed to peace and prosperity in a free Ukraine and noted that "no state or person who financed or supplied the Russian war machine" will be allowed to benefit from Ukraine's reconstruction.[2] Bessent also stated that the agreement signals to Russia that the Trump administration is "committed to a peace process centered on a free, sovereign, and prosperous Ukraine over the long term." The *BBC Russian Service* reported that the agreement includes language that future US military aid to Ukraine could be labeled as US "investment" in Ukraine, though these details remain unconfirmed as of this report.[3]

Russian officials continue to demand full Ukrainian capitulation as the sole basis on which Russia is willing to accept a future peace agreement. *Bloomberg* reported on April 29, citing three sources in Moscow familiar with the matter, that Russian President Vladimir Putin rejected US Special Envoy for the Middle East Steve Witkoff's proposal to freeze the war on the current frontlines during their April 17 meeting in Moscow and instead insisted that Russia gain all of Luhansk, Donetsk, Zaporizhia, and Kherson oblasts as part of any peace agreement.[4] *Bloomberg's* report is consistent with Kremlin officials' repeated public demands that any future peace deal must satisfy all of Russia's war goals, including the cession of all of Crimea and Luhansk, Donetsk, Zaporizhia, and Kherson oblasts to Russia.[5] Kremlin officials have continued to reiterate their refusal to make any territorial concessions even after recent reports of the US seven-point peace plan that offered Russia "de jure" US recognition of Russian sovereignty over occupied Crimea and "de facto" recognition of Russian control over the rest of occupied Ukraine — the plan that Witkoff reportedly presented to Putin on April 17.[6]

Senior Russian officials continue to demand that any end to Russia's war in Ukraine must also accomplish all of Putin's original war aims. Kremlin Spokesperson Dmitry Peskov reiterated on April 30 that Putin's main goal remains the achievement of the original goals of his full-scale invasion of Ukraine — Ukrainian demilitarization, neutrality, and regime change with the installation of a pro-Kremlin puppet government.[7] Russian Permanent Representative to the United Nations (UN) Vasily Nebenzya similarly stated on April 29 that Russia is committed to finding long-term solutions to eliminate the "root causes" of Russia's war in Ukraine."[8] Russian officials have repeatedly defined

these "root causes" as NATO's alleged violation of commitments not to expand into eastern Europe and along Russia's borders in the 1990s, 2000s, and 2010s Ukraine and the Ukrainian government's alleged discrimination against ethnic Russians and Russian language, media, and culture in Ukraine.[9] Calls for the elimination of these alleged "root causes" are in line with Putin's demands for Ukrainian regime change and neutrality as well as Putin's pre-war demand that would have required NATO to roll back to its pre-1997 borders.[10]

Russian officials continue to set conditions to manipulate any future ceasefires and renege on any future Russian-Ukrainian agreements at a time of Russia's choosing. Peskov claimed that Russia must conclude a peace agreement with Ukraine rather than with the United States, and Nebenzya claimed that Russia is willing to hold direct talks with Ukrainian officials "without preconditions" despite alleged issues with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky's legitimacy.[11] Putin and other Russian officials have similarly claimed that the current Ukrainian government is illegitimate because Ukraine did not hold presidential elections in 2024 (in accordance with its constitution and law).[12] ISW continues to assess that the Kremlin is setting conditions to renege on any future agreement it signs with Ukraine on the grounds that the Ukrainian government was not legitimate.[13] Any long-term peace agreement between Russia and Ukraine must include Russia's explicit recognition of the legitimacy of the Ukrainian government and the Ukrainian Constitution. These intransigent Russian demands run contrary to both the US-proposed seven-point peace plan and US President Donald Trump's stated goal of ensuring a lasting peace in Ukraine.[14]

Peskov overinflated Russia's current military strength and battlefield victories thus far in the war in an attempt to justify Russia's continued unwillingness to make territorial concessions. Peskov claimed that the situation on the ground in Ukraine is different from what it was in March 2022 and that it is "impossible" not to recognize this situation "de facto or de jure."[15] Peskov vaguely referenced the March 2022 Russian-Ukrainian negotiations in Istanbul (that resulted in a draft agreement that would have effectively disarmed Ukraine, banned Ukraine from receiving any foreign weapons, and forced Ukraine to commit never to participate in military blocs) and blamed the West and Ukraine for dismantling these 2022 negotiations.[16] Peskov is attempting to create the impression that Russia is in a stronger position today than it was in March 2022. Peskov is also signaling that Russia will not make any territorial concessions, amid reports that a recent US war termination plan proposal included "de jure" US recognition of Russian control over Crimea and "de facto" recognition of Russian control over occupied Luhansk, Donetsk, Zaporizhia, and Kherson oblasts.[17]

Peskov's assessment that the battlefield situation has changed between March 2022 and now is correct, but because Russia's battlefield situation has deteriorated since the initial days of the invasion, rather than improved as Peskov falsely suggested. Russian forces were on Kyiv's outskirts and seized Kherson City in March 2022. Since then, Ukrainian counteroffensives pushed Russian forces away from Kyiv City and other areas in northern Ukraine in March-April 2022; liberated a significant portion of Kharkiv Oblast and pushed Russian forces away from Kharkiv City in September-October 2022; and completely pushed Russian forces from west (right) bank Kherson Oblast and liberated Kherson City in November 2022.[18] Russian forces advanced more than 1,000 square kilometers per day on average in March 2022 — significantly faster and deeper than the Russian rate of advance in Winter 2024, when Russian forces were advancing at a relatively faster tempo than the months of positional warfare that characterized most of 2023 and early 2024.[19] Ukrainian forces have been able to use Western military

aid and increased Ukrainian defense industrial production capabilities to limit Russian forces to incremental, gradual advances at the cost of high personnel and equipment losses.[20]

Russian officials continue to call for the cessation of Western aid to Ukraine as part of efforts to reintensify offensive operations when Ukraine's defense capabilities are weakened. Nebenzya claimed that Europe is issuing "empty declarations and calls for a truce" in Ukraine but that Russia expects the West to give "clear and specific signals" that it "really want[s] to help find a long-term solution" to the war in Ukraine.[21] Nebenzya claimed that one of the main "signals" the West could give is to stop arms supplies to Ukraine. Putin made similar demands about Western military aid when he rejected the US- and Ukrainian-proposed 30-day ceasefire on March 13, questioning whether Ukrainian forces would be able to continue to receive military aid from their partners and allies during such a ceasefire.[22] Nebenzya's April 30 renewal of Putin's demand is part of the Kremlin's wider reflexive control campaign that aims to push the West to make decisions that are in Russia's favor. The cessation of Western military aid to Ukraine would not only further the longstanding Russian demand for Ukraine's demilitarization, such that Ukraine can no longer defend itself, but would also encourage Russia to continue and even expand offensive operations to take advantage of Ukrainian weaknesses - as Russia has done before. Russia most notably used the months' long US delay to approve additional security assistance to Ukraine in late 2023 and early 2024, and subsequent Ukrainian material constraints to intensify offensive operations and expand their goals to attempt operationally significant breakthroughs.[23] Russian forces are still engaged in some of the offensive efforts that gained momentum in late 2023 and early 2024 due to lapses in US security assistance to Ukraine.

Senior Russian officials continue to claim that Russia is open to diplomacy to end the war while rejecting US and Ukrainian ceasefire proposals that would allow for formal peace negotiations to begin. US Department of State Spokesperson Tammy Bruce stated on April 29 that the United States wants to see a "complete, full, durable" 30-day ceasefire in Ukraine and not just a "three-day moment" to "celebrate something."[24] US Special Envoy to Ukraine Keith Kellogg similarly stated on April 29 that Trump wants to see a comprehensive 30-day land, sea, and air ceasefire that can be extended and described Russia's May 8-11 proposed ceasefire as "absurd."[25]

Nebenzya and Peskov claimed on April 29 and 30 that Russia prefers "diplomatic" and "peaceful" methods to achieve all of its goals in the war.[26] Peskov, however, reiterated Putin's rejection of recent US- and Ukrainian-proposed ceasefires that would pave the way for diplomatic talks on how to end the war. Peskov claimed that Putin supports a longer-term ceasefire but "questions" the "nuances" that the parties must resolve before Russia can agree to this ceasefire.[27] Peskov claimed that the United States wants a "quick success" in Ukraine but that the process is "too complicated."[28] Peskov referenced Putin's March 13 rejection of the first US- and Ukrainian-proposed full 30-day ceasefire, about which Putin claimed there are questions that "require painstaking research from both sides."[29] ISW continues to assess that the Kremlin is attempting to prolong negotiations to extract additional concessions from the United States and Ukraine and make additional battlefield gains.[30]

Russian state-owned and pro-Kremlin media appear to be attempting to portray Russia as willing to negotiate. Russian state media broadly reported on April 30 that the state nuclear energy corporation Rosatom CEO Alexei Likhachev stated that Russia is "ready to discuss" a possible US presence at the

Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP), which Russian forces currently occupy.[31] Likhachev's statement is in reference to the reported US seven-point peace proposal that stipulates that Ukraine would reacquire the ZNPP and that the plant would function under US operation.[32] A Russian official agreeing to negotiate on this point would represent a major inflection, as Russia has rejected Ukrainian or US operation of the ZNPP previously. Rosatom's press service issued a correction on April 30, however, reporting that Likhachev stated that Rosatom is ready to discuss cooperation with the United States regarding the operation of the ZNPP "on the condition that a political decision is made by the Russian leadership."[33] Rosatom noted that some unspecified Russian news agencies initially incorrectly quoted Likhachev.[34] Many of the Russian state media outlets are still showing the earlier headlines mischaracterizing Likhachev's quote as of this publication, despite Rosatom's clarification.[35] Russia is currently very unlikely to cede the ZNPP to Ukraine, given the Kremlin's continued insistence on achieving all its war goals and continued demonstration of its unwillingness to offer territorial concessions.

Russian officials continue to falsely portray European efforts to increase their own defense capabilities — in line with US President Donald Trump's objective to have Europe shoulder more of the burden for collective security — as a threat to Russian national security, likely to support Russian efforts to justify future Russian aggression against NATO. Russian authorities organized the third Anti-Fascist Conference on April 30, which included military representatives from Belarus, North Korea, and Vietnam.[36] Russian Deputy Defense Minister Colonel General Viktor Goremykin claimed that Western states have supported the Ukrainian government in implementing Ukraine's alleged "Russophobic" policies, claiming that these policies are direct threats to Russia's security. Goremykin also claimed that the European Union's (EU) five-year rearmament defense plan is unacceptable to Russia, and that Russia will take "all necessary" measures to protect its security. Belarusian Defense Minister General Viktor Khrenin also warned that European rearmament efforts threaten global peace and claimed that some European countries, particularly the Baltic States, promote Russophobia in their state policies.[37] Kremlin officials, including Russian President Vladimir Putin, have recently intensified their threats against Europe — particularly the Baltic States — due to Europe's alleged "Russophobia" and aggressive military buildup.[38]

North Korea and Russia continue to enhance bilateral cooperation, particularly in the military and labor spheres. *Reuters* reported on April 30, citing South Korean intelligence, that roughly 600 North Korean troops have died in Russia out of a total deployment of 15,000 since November 2024 and that North Korean forces have suffered approximately 4,700 casualties in Russia's war against Ukraine to date.[39] *Reuters* also noted that North Korean battlefield experience in Russia's Kursk Oblast over the past six months has improved North Koreans' combat capabilities, particularly in drone usage, and that Russia has provided North Korea with technical assistance on spy satellites, drones, and anti-air missiles in return for its military support. *Reuters* also reported that South Korean intelligence suggests that North Korea has sent approximately 15,000 workers to Russia, in violation of United Nations (UN) sanctions that prohibit the export of North Korean labor to third countries. US State Department Spokesperson Tammy Bruce stated on April 29 that North Korea is derailing efforts to achieve peace between Russia and Ukraine and that Russia's military assistance and training of North Korean troops directly violates the UN Security Council Resolutions 1718, 1874, and 2270, all of which broadly prohibit North Korea from receiving or providing military training or assistance to other countries.[40] Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin stated on April 30 that Russia and North

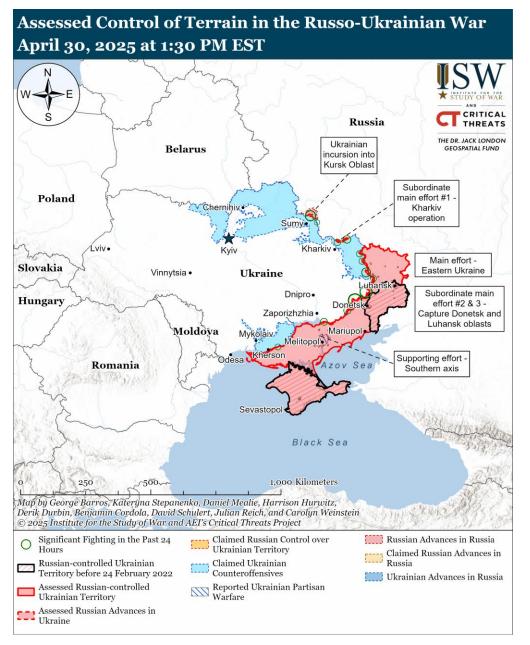
Korea are constructing a bridge to enhance bilateral relations.[41] Russian opposition outlet *Meduza* added that Russia and North Korea will complete its construction in 1.5 years (approximately in late 2026) and that the bridge will support vehicle traffic between the two countries.[42] Russia and North Korea will likely use the bridge for materiel transportation as the two states strengthen their cooperation.

Ukrainian sources continue to report on cases of Russian commanders ordering their subordinates to execute Ukrainian prisoners of war (POWs) in violation of international law. Ukraine's Security Service (SBU) reported on April 30 that the deputy commander of the Russian 1st Motorized Rifle Battalion of the 394th Motorized Rifle Regiment (127th Motorized Rifle Division, 5th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Eastern Military District [EMD]) and company commander of the "Storm" Detachment in the 394th Motorized Rifle Regiment (127th Motorized Rifle Division) ordered their subordinates to execute a Ukrainian POW and then desecrate his body near Staromayorske (south of Velyka Novosilka) in June 2024.[43] ISW has observed and reported on numerous instances of Russian servicemembers executing Ukrainian POWs along the frontline in Ukraine and Kursk Oblast and continues to assess that this is a systemic trend in the Russian military and that Russian commanders are either complicit in or directly enabling their subordinates to conduct such atrocities.[44]

Key Takeaways:

- The United States and Ukraine signed a bilateral economic partnership agreement on April 30.
- Russian officials continue to demand full Ukrainian capitulation as the sole basis on which Russia is willing to accept a future peace agreement.
- Peskov overinflated Russia's current military strength and battlefield victories thus far in the war in an attempt to justify Russia's continued unwillingness to make territorial concessions.
- Russian officials continue to call for the cessation of Western aid to Ukraine as part of efforts to reintensify offensive operations when Ukraine's defense capabilities are weakened.
- Senior Russian officials continue claim that Russia is open to diplomacy to end the war while rejecting US and Ukrainian ceasefire proposals that would allow for formal peace negotiations to begin.
- Russian officials continue to falsely portray European efforts to increase their own defense capabilities in line with US President Donald Trump's objective to have Europe shoulder more of the burden for collective security as a threat to Russian national security, likely to support Russian efforts to justify future Russian aggression against NATO.
- North Korea and Russia continue to enhance bilateral cooperation, particularly in the military and labor spheres.

- Ukrainian sources continue to report on cases of Russian commanders ordering their subordinates to execute Ukrainian prisoners of war (POWs) in violation of international law.
- Ukrainian forces recently advanced in Kursk Oblast and near Toretsk. Russian forces recently advanced near Lyman and Toretsk.



We do not report in detail on Russian war crimes because these activities are wellcovered 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 Ukraine.

Ukrainian Operations in the Russian Federation

Ukrainian forces recently advanced in Kursk Oblast as Russian forces continue efforts to push Ukrainian forces from their limited remaining positions in the area.

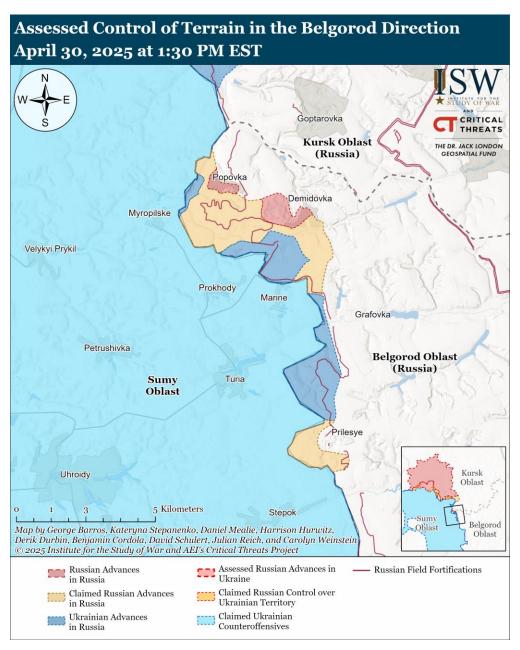
Assessed Ukrainian advances: Geolocated published on April 26 indicates that Ukrainian forces recently advanced southwest of Kucherov (south of Sudzha).[45]

Russian sources claimed that Russian forces continue to clear Ukrainian forces from Kursk Oblast.[46] A Russian milblogger claimed on April 30 that elements of the Russian 11th Airborne (VDV) Brigade completely pushed Ukrainian forces out of the brigade's area of responsibility in Kursk Oblast.[47]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 56th VDV Regiment (7th VDV Division) and 810th Naval Infantry Brigade (Black Sea Fleet) are reportedly operating in Kursk Oblast.[48]

A Russian milblogger claimed on April 30 that Ukrainian forces unsuccessfully attacked toward Demidovka (northwest of Belgorod City) in northwesternmost Belgorod Oblast.[49]

Ukrainian forces reportedly struck a Russian defense industrial enterprise in Vladimir Oblast on the night of April 29 to 30. Ukrainian outlets *RBK-Ukraine* and *Suspilne* reported on April 30 that sources in the Ukrainian special services stated that Ukraine's Security Service (SBU) conducted a successful drone strike against the Murom Instrument Making Plant in Vladimir Oblast on the night of April 29 to 30.[50] *Suspilne* reported that the plant specializes in making ammunition ignition devices, components, and products for the Russian navy and military aviation. *Suspilne* reported that the drone strike damaged two buildings at the plant and started a fire. Russian opposition outlet *Astra* reported that locals reported fires at the plant after a drone strike.[51] A Russian source claimed that Ukrainian forces launched eight drones against the plant, four of which fell on the plant and two of which struck an explosives workshop.[52] The source claimed that the strike destroyed a warehouse and an administrative building. Vladimir Oblast Governor Alexander Avdeev claimed on April 30 that Russian electronic warfare (EW) system suppressed several drones but that a falling drone caused a fire at an unspecified warehouse in Murom and inflicted minor damage on another building.[53] The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) claimed that Russian forces destroyed three drones over Vladimir Oblast overnight.[54]



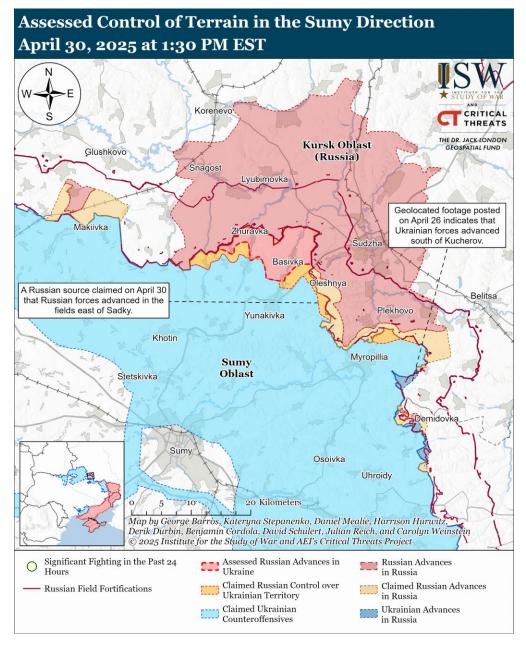
<u>Russian Supporting Effort – Northern Axis</u> (Russian objective: Create defensible buffer zones in northern Ukraine along the international border and approach to within tube artillery range of Sumy City)

Russian forces continued offensive operations in northern Sumy Oblast on April 30 but did not make confirmed advances.

Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced east of Sadky (northeast of Sumy City).[55]

Russian forces conducted offensive operations north of Sumy City near Bilovody and Zhuravka and northeast of Sumy City near Basivka and Loknya. [56] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces counterattacked in Basivka.[57]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 177th Naval Infantry Regiment (Caspian Flotilla) and "Anvar Spetsnaz" detachment (possibly referring to the BARS-25 "Anvar" volunteer detachment) are reportedly operating in Sumy Oblast.[58]



<u> Russian Main Effort – Eastern Ukraine</u>

<u>Russian Subordinate Main Effort #1 – Kharkiv Oblast</u> (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 ground attacks in the Kharkiv direction on April 30 but did not advance.

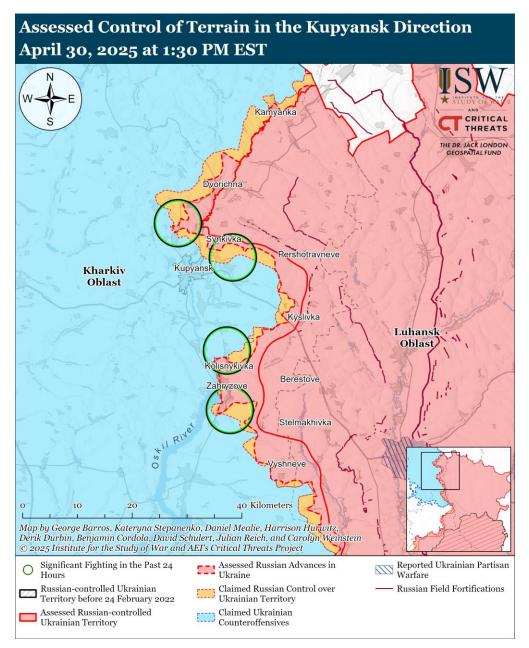
Russian forces conducted offensive operations north of Kharkiv City near Vovchansk on April 30.[59]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian "Anvar Spetsnaz" detachment (possibly referring to the BARS-25 "Anvar" volunteer detachment) are reportedly operating in Kharkiv Oblast.[60]

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

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Kupyansk direction on April 30 but did not advance.

Russian forces continued ground attacks northeast of Kupyansk near the international border near Kamyanka, east of Kupyansk near Petropavlivka, and southeast of Kupyansk near Stepova Novoselivka and Novoosynove on April 29 and 30.[61] A Ukrainian brigade operating in the Kupyansk direction published footage on April 29 showing Russian forces conducting a reinforced platoon-sized mechanized assault in the Kupyansk direction.[62] The Ukrainian brigade reported that it destroyed four Russian infantry fighting vehicles (IFV), one buggy, one civilian car, and one motorcycle.



Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Borova direction on April 30 but did not make confirmed advances.

Unconfirmed claims: A Russian source claimed on April 30 that Russian forces advanced toward Hrekivka (southeast of Borova).[63]

Russian forces continued ground assaults northeast of Borova near Zahryzove and Nova Kruhlyakivka; east of Borova near Nadiya; and southeast of Borova near Novoserhiivka, Tverdokhlibove, and Hrekivka on April 29 and 30.[64]

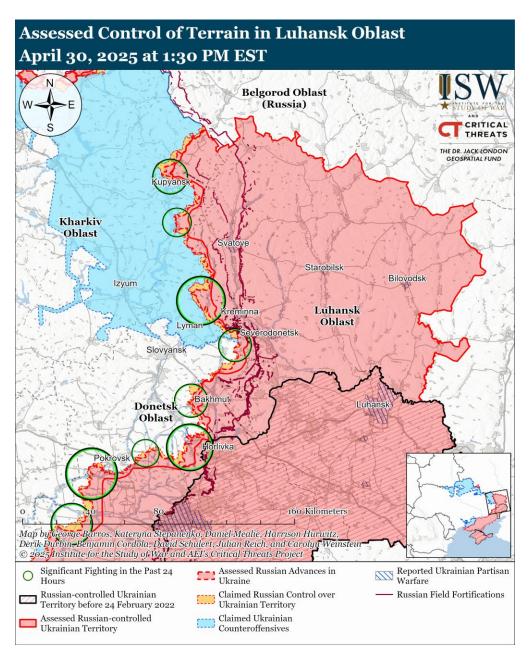
Russian forces recently advanced in the Lyman direction.

Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on April 30 shows Russian forces waving a flag in western and central Nove (northeast of Lyman), indicating that Russian forces recently seized the settlement.[65] The Russian MoD claimed on April 30 that Russian forces seized Nove.[66] Additional geolocated footage published on April 30 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced in eastern Lypove (just west of Nove) and east of Katerynivka (northeast of Nove).[67]

Unconfirmed claims: Russian milbloggers claimed on April 30 that Russian forces advanced southwest of Nove and northeast of Zelena Dolyna (southwest of Nove).[68]

Russian forces continued ground attacks north of Lyman near Nove and Lypove and toward Ridkodub and Zelena Dolyna and northeast of Lyman near Novomykhailivka, Myrne, and Kolodyazi and toward Novyi Mir on April 29 and 30.[69]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 144th Motorized Rifle Division (20th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Moscow Military District [MMD]) are reportedly operating near Katerynivka.[70] Elements of the Russian 283rd and 488th motorized rifle regiments (both of the 144th Motorized Rifle Division) are reportedly operating near Ridkodub, and elements of the 488th Motorized Rifle Regiment are reportedly also operating near Zelena Dolnya and Nove.[71]

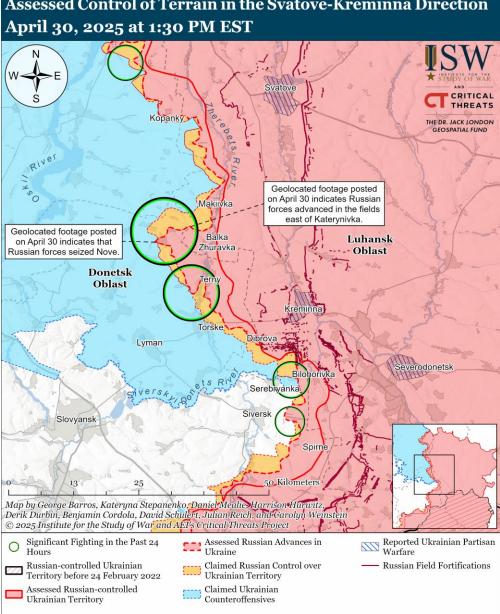


<u>Russian Subordinate Main Effort #3 – Donetsk Oblast</u> (Russian objective: Capture the entirety of Donetsk Oblast, the claimed territory of Russia's proxies in Donbas, and possibly advance into Dnipropetrovsk Oblast)

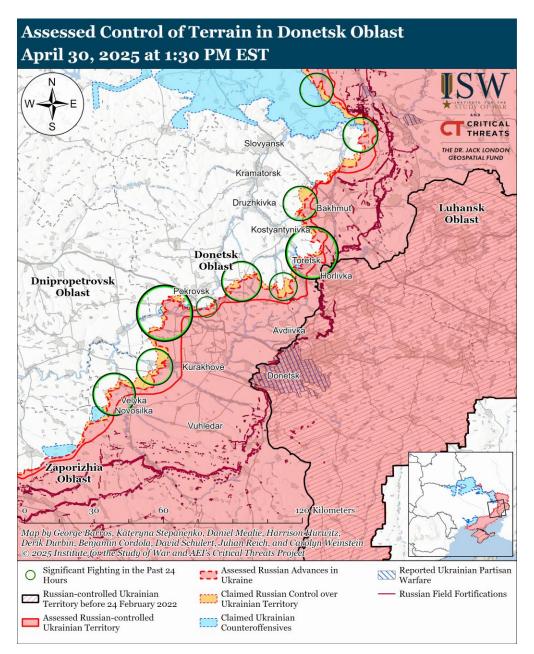
Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Siversk direction on April 30 but did not advance.

Russian forces attacked northeast of Siversk near Bilohorivka and east of Siversk near Verkhnokamyanske on April 29 and 30.[72]

Order of Battle: Ukrainian military observer Yuriy Butusov reported on April 29 that elements of the Russian 3rd Battalion of the 7th Motorized Rifle Brigade (3rd Combined Arms Army [CAA], formerly 2nd Luhansk People's Republic Army Corps [LNR AC]) are operating near Bilohorivka.[73]



Assessed Control of Terrain in the Svatove-Kreminna Direction



Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Chasiv Yar direction on April 30 but did not advance.

Russian forces attacked near Chasiv Yar itself, northwest of Chasiv Yar near Mayske, south of Chasiv Yar near Predtechyne and Bila Hora, and southeast of Chasiv Yar near Kurdyumivka on April 29 and 30.[74]

The spokesperson for a Ukrainian brigade operating in the Chasiv Yar direction reported on April 30 that Russian forces are pulling up reserves and occasionally use heavy vehicles to dismount infantry, but often attack on foot — sometimes from as far as 10 kilometers away — due to Ukrainian drone strikes against vehicles.[75] The spokesperson stated that Russian forces are shifting between small group infantry assaults and occasional attacks with a large number of armored vehicles. The

commander of a Ukrainian regiment operating in the Chasiv Yar direction reported that spring foliage cover is allowing Russian infantry to move more easily.[76]

Order of Battle: Drone operators of the Russian "Burevestnik" detachment (Russian Volunteer Corps), the "Patriot" detachment, the Russian 10th Separate Spetsnaz Brigade (Russian General Staff Main Directorate [GRU]), and the 98th Airborne (VDV) Division are reportedly operating in the Chasiv Yar direction.[77] Drone operators of the Russian 200th Motorized Rifle Brigade (14th AC, Leningrad Military District [LMD]) are reportedly striking Ukrainian positions near Virolyubivka (west of Chasiv Yar).[78]

Ukrainian and Russian forces recently advanced in the Toretsk direction.

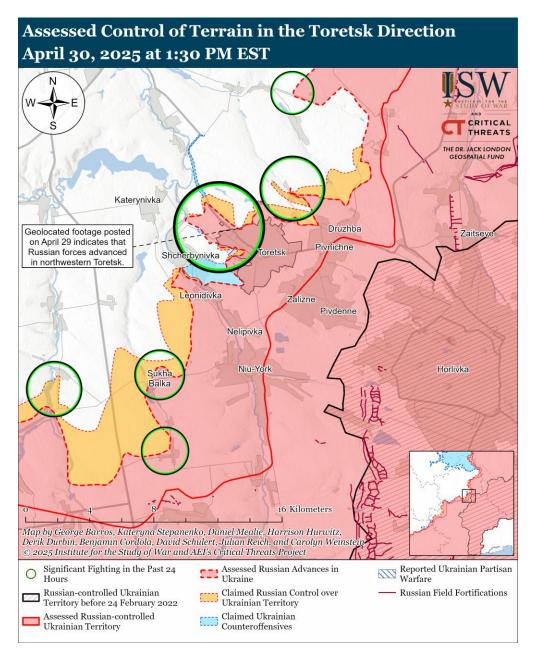
Assessed Ukrainian advances: Geolocated footage published on April 29 indicates that Ukrainian forces recently advanced southeast of Dachne (northeast of Toretsk).[79]

Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on April 29 indicates that Russian forces recently marginally advanced to Odeska Street in northwestern Toretsk.[80]

Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced south of Petrivka (northeast of Toretsk) and northwest of Toretsk.[81]

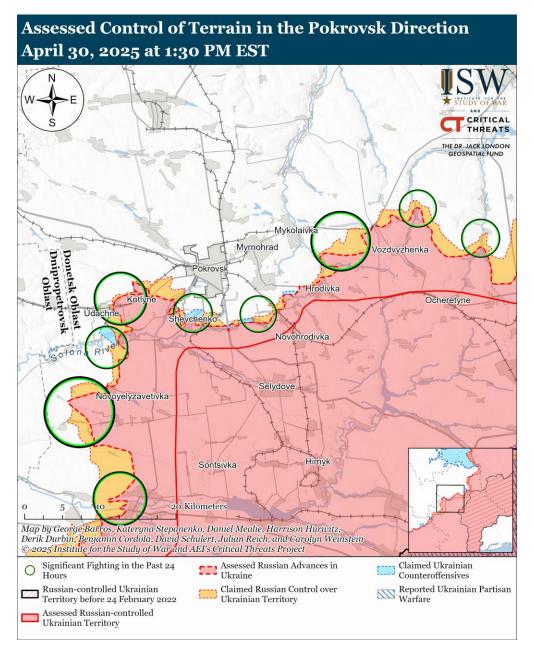
Russian forces attacked near Toretsk itself; northeast of Toretsk near Dachne, Krymske, Dyliivka, and Druzhba; and southwest of Toretsk near Stara Mykolaivka, Yelyzavetivka, Kalynove, and Tarasivka on April 29 and 30.[82] A Ukrainian brigade operating in the Toretsk direction reported that Russian forces attempted to conduct a mechanized assault using armored vehicles and motorcycles against Toretsk from various flanks, but Ukrainian forces repelled the attack with artillery and drone strikes.[83]

Ukrainian Luhansk Group of Forces Spokesperson Lieutenant Colonel Dmytro Zaporozhets stated on April 30 that Russian forces conducted assaults using a combination of armored vehicles and motorcycles toward Dyliivka for two days during the past week (roughly April 22 to 29).[84] Zaporozhets noted that Russian forces deployed armored vehicles first, followed by a wave of motorcyclists attempting to follow the armored vehicles' tracks. The spokesperson of a Ukrainian brigade operating in the Toretsk direction reported that Russian forces are conducting mechanized and motorcycle assaults, but are mostly conducting infantry assaults with groups of two to three.[85] The spokesperson noted that Russian motorcyclists regularly use the T-0616 Horlivka-Toretsk highway.



Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Pokrovsk direction on April 30 but did not advance.

Russian forces continued ground assaults southeast of Pokrovsk near Lysivka, south of Pokrovsk near Shevchenko, and southwest of Pokrovsk near Kotlyne on April 29 and 30.[86]



Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Novopavlivka direction on April 30 but did not advance.

Russian forces continued offensive operations northeast of Novopavlivka near Novooleksandrivka and Uspenivka and toward Novoserhiivka; east of Novopavlivka near Nadiivka, Kotlyarivka, and Troitske; and southeast of Novopavlivka near Bohdanivka on April 29 and 30.[87]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 6th and 80th tank regiments (both of the 90th Tank Division, 41st CAA, Central Military District [CMD] are reportedly operating near Troitske.[88] Elements of the 90th Tank Division are reportedly operating within Nadiivka, and elements of the 35th Motorized Rifle Brigade (41st CAA) are reportedly operating near Kotlyarivka.[89]

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Kurakhove direction on April 30 but did not advance.

Russian forces attacked west of Kurakhove near Kostyantynopil, Bahatyr, and Andriivka, and southwest of Kurakhove near Odradne on April 29 and 30.[90] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces counterattacked near Odradne and Bahatyr.[91]

Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Velyka Novosilka direction on April 30 but did not advance.

Russian forces attacked northwest of Velyka Novosilka near Vilne Pole, Burlatske, and Pryvilne and southwest of Velyka Novosilka near Rivnopil on April 29 and 30.[92] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces counterattacked near Vilne Pole.[93]

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 14th Spetsnaz Brigade (GRU) are reportedly operating near Komar (northwest of Velyka Novosilka), drone operators of the 5th Tank Brigade (36th CAA, Eastern Military District [EMD]) are reportedly operating near Vesele (northwest of Velyka Novosilka), and drone operators of the 305th Artillery Brigade (5th CAA, EMD) are reportedly operating near Vilne Pole.[94]

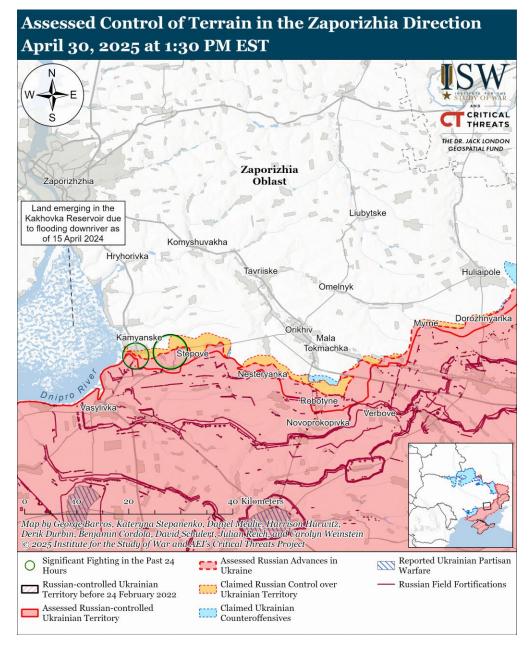
<u>Russian Supporting Effort – Southern Axis</u> (Russian objective: Maintain frontline positions, secure rear areas against Ukrainian strikes, and advance within tube artillery range of Zaporizhzhia City)

Russian forces continued offensive operations in western Zaporizhia Oblast on April 30 but did not make confirmed advances.

Russian forces conducted ground attacks southwest of Orikhiv near Stepove and Lobkove and west of Orikhiv near Kamyanske on April 30.[95]

A Ukrainian drone unit reported on April 30 that Ukrainian forces struck a Russian Buk-M2 air defense system in the Russian forces' rear in the Zaporizhia direction.[96]

Order of Battle: Drone operators of the Russian "Viking" drone detachment and the 392nd Motorized Rifle Regiment (likely a reformed Soviet-era unit) are reportedly operating near Stepove, and elements of the Russian 247th Airborne (VDV) Division (7th VDV Division) are reportedly operating near Lobkove and Stepove.[97] Artillery elements of the 42nd Motorized Rifle Division (58th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Southern Military District [SMD]) are reportedly operating in the Orikhiv direction.[98]

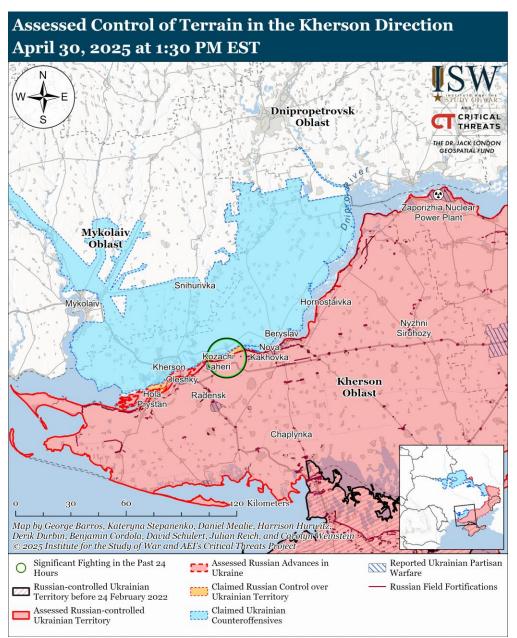


Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Kherson direction on April 30 but did not advance.

Russian forces attacked in the Kherson direction on April 29 and 30.[99]

Ukrainian Southern Defense Forces spokesperson Colonel Vladyslav Voloshyn reported on April 29 that Russian forces are conducting more reconnaissance and search missions in the Dnipro Basin and are landing on islands in the Dnipro River.[100] Voloshyn stated that one to two Russian service members usually remain on the island following Ukrainian strikes against the boats. Voloshyn stated that Russian forces cannot evacuate the soldiers from the islands and must use drones to deliver supplies to them.

A Russian insider source claimed on April 30 that three Ukrainian drones damaged a Russian S-400 air defense missile system radar station on April 25 near occupied Saky, Crimea.[101]



<u>Russian Air, Missile, and Drone Campaign</u> (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 on the night of April 29 to 30. The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Russian forces launched 108 strike and decoy drones from the direction of Kursk City; Primorsko-Akhtarsk, Krasnodar Krai; and occupied Cape Chauda, Crimea.[102] The Ukrainian Air Force reported that the Russian strikes primarily targeted Dnipro and Kharkiv cities. The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Ukrainian forces downed 50 Shahed and other drones over eastern, northern, southern, and central Ukraine; that 22 Russian decoy drones were "lost,"

likely due to Ukrainian electronic warfare (EW) interference; and that two Russian drones remained in Ukrainian air space as of 1130 local time. Ukrainian officials reported that Russian drones struck Kharkiv and Dnipropetrovsk oblasts.[103]

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky reported on April 30 that Russian forces launched 375 strike drones, including over 190 Shahed drones, against Ukraine since the start of the week (April 27).[104]

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

Russian drone instructors are training Belarusian forces on combat drone usage in Belarus. The "Vladimir Zhoga" Republican Center for Unmanned Systems (a drone training center based in occupied Donetsk Oblast) stated on April 29 that it conducted training exercises with Belarusian special forces that focused on drones, firing training, and tactical medicine in Belarus.[105]

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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