Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment, July 11 Karolina Hird, Kateryna Stepanenko, Grace Mappes, and Frederick W. Kagan July 11, 7:10 pm ET

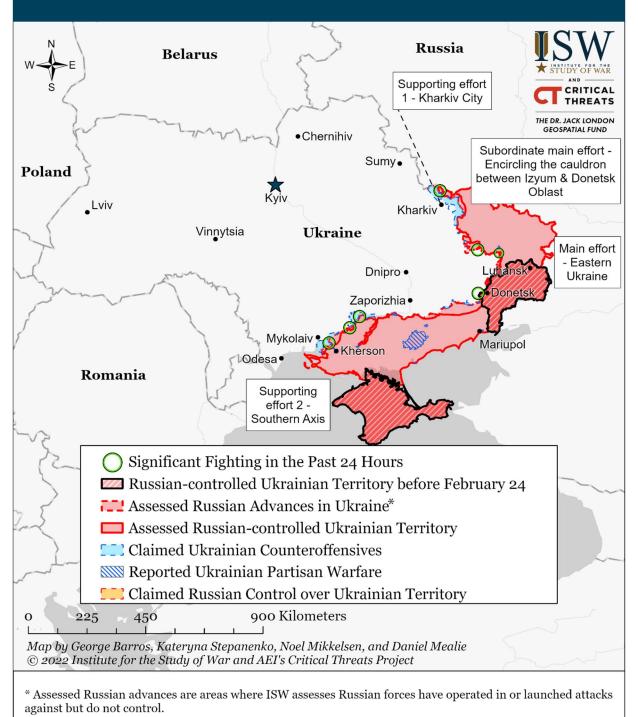
Click <u>here</u> to see ISW's interactive map of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. This map is updated daily alongside the static maps present in this report.

Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko is likely continuing to grant Russian forces access to Belarusian airspace to demonstrate at least nominal support to Russian President Vladimir Putin without risking direct military involvement of Belarusian Armed Forces in operations in Ukraine. Deputy Chief of the Main Operational Department of the Ukrainian General Staff Oleksiy Gromov previously reported on July 7 that the Belarusian government transferred use of the Pribytki airfield in Gomel Oblast to Russia. Independent Belarusian monitoring organization The Hajun Project similarly reported on July 11 that a Russian Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) aircraft flew into Belarusian airspace for the first time since April 4. The Hajun Project noted that the Belarusian government introduced new airspace restrictions along the border with Ukraine where the AWACS aircraft patrolled between July 10 and 11. Taken together, these data points likely indicate that Lukashenko is attempting to provide support to Putin's war in Ukraine short of direct Belarusian military intervention in an effort to respond to the pressure Putin is likely putting on him. As ISW has previously assessed, the likelihood of direct Belarusian involvement in the war in Ukraine remains low due to the effect that might have on the stability and even survival of Lukashenko's regime.

Key Takeaways

- Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko is likely continuing to allow Russia access to Belarusian airspace to indicate support to Russian President Vladimir Putin without risking the consequences of direct Belarusian military involvement in Ukraine.
- Russian forces conducted limited and unsuccessful ground assaults northwest of Slovyansk and west of Donetsk City.
- Russian forces continued air and artillery strikes around Siversk and Bakhmut.
- Russian forces conducted localized ground assaults northwest of Kharkiv City.
- Russian forces continued to focus on defensive operations along the entire Southern Axis.

Assessed Control of Terrain in Ukraine and Main Russian Maneuver Axes as of July 11, 2022, 3:00 PM ET



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

- Main Effort—Eastern Ukraine (comprised of one subordinate and three supporting efforts);
- Subordinate Main Effort—Encirclement of Ukrainian Troops in the Cauldron between Izyum and Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts
- Supporting Effort 1—Kharkiv City
- Supporting Effort 2—Southern Axis
- Mobilization and Force Generation Efforts
- Activities in Russian-occupied Areas

Main Effort-Eastern Ukraine

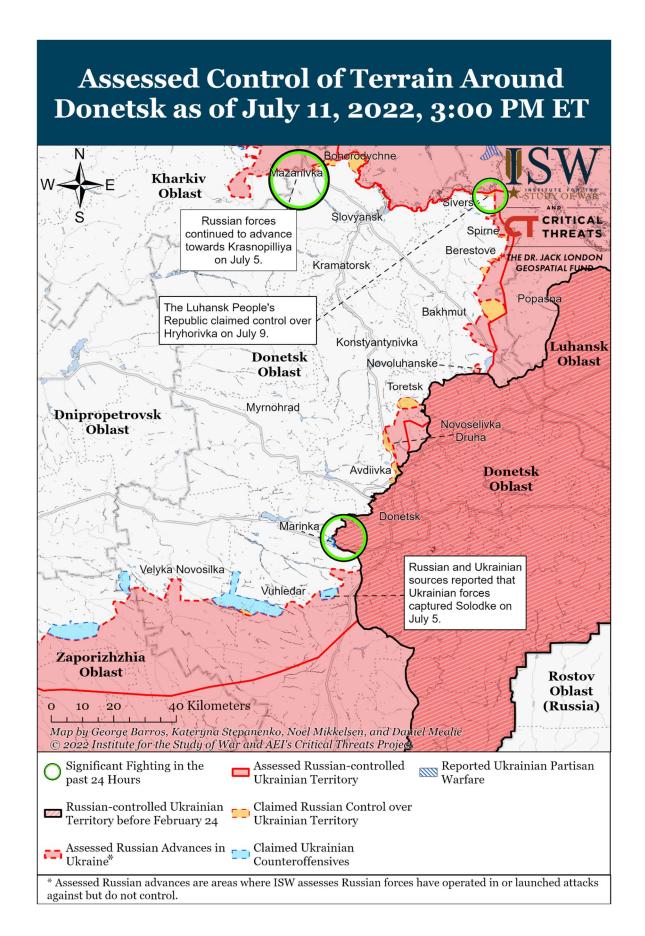
<u>Subordinate Main Effort—Southern Kharkiv, Donetsk, Luhansk Oblasts</u> (Russian objective: Encircle Ukrainian forces in Eastern Ukraine and capture the entirety of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, the claimed territory of Russia's proxies in Donbas)

Russian forces conducted a limited ground assault northwest of Slovyansk and otherwise fired heavily on Ukrainian positions in the vicinity of the E40 Izyum-Slovyansk highway on July 11.5 Russian forces reportedly conducted an unsuccessful attack on Krasnopillya, a settlement directly along the E40 highway within 20km northwest of Slovyansk.6 Luhansk People's Republic (LNR) Deputy Internal Minister Vitaly Kiselyov claimed that Russian troops took control of Bohorodychne, but Ukrainian sources continued to indicate that the settlement is under heavy artillery fire and that Russian forces have yet to fully capture the village.7 Russian forces conducted air and artillery strikes on areas northwest of Slovyansk including Dolyna, Dibrovne, Mazanivka, Adamivka, and Kurulka, and struck Cherkaske to the northwest of Kramatorsk.8 Russian forces will likely continue to strike the Slovyansk-Kramatorsk area from positions to the northwest along the Kharkiv-Donetsk Oblast border to prepare for eventual assaults on both Slovyansk and Kramatorsk.9

Russian forces continued offensive operations west of the Luhansk Oblast border around Siversk on July 11. The Ukrainian General Staff noted that Russian forces did not conduct any active ground assaults around Siversk, but Russian Telegram channels reported that Russian forces are fighting around Ivano-Darivka (less than 10km southeast of Siversk) in order to advance to Vyimka and gain access to the To513 highway that runs northward into Siversk. While ISW cannot independently confirm Russian claims of ground attacks to the south of Siversk, Russian troops are likely continuing various offensive operations, including intensive shelling, in the area in order to prepare to advance on the city. Russian forces additionally shelled Zakitne, Serebryanka, Hryhorivka, Bilohorivka, Verkhmokamyanske, and Zvanivka.

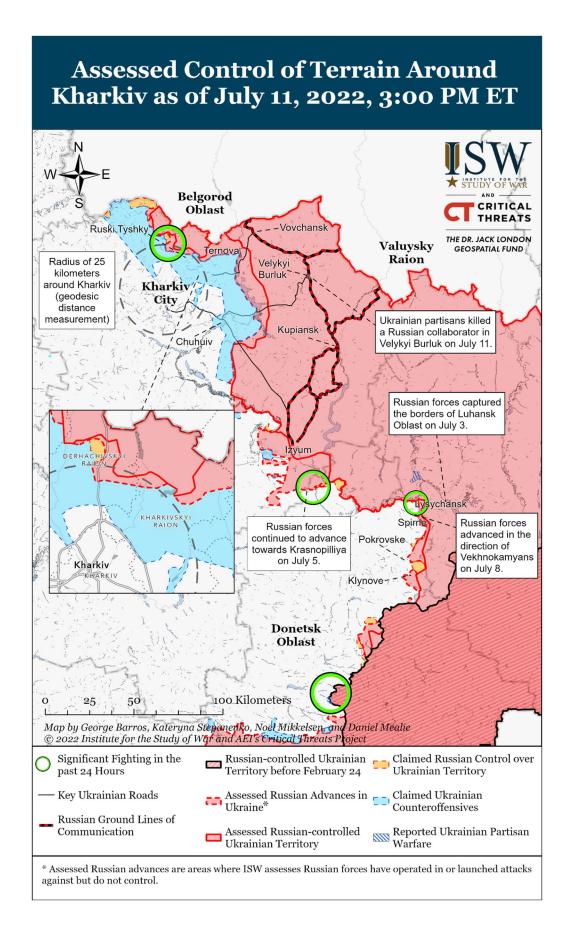
Russian forces conducted artillery and airstrikes to the west, south, and east of Bakhmut on July 11.¹³ The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Russian forces shelled Chasiv Yar (10km directly west of Bakhmut), Klishchiivka (10km southwest of Bakhmut), and Zaitseve (20km south of Bakhmut).¹⁴ Russian forces also shelled areas to the northeast of Bakhmut, including Spirne, Berestove and Pokrovske.¹⁵

Russian forces conducted a limited and unsuccessful ground attack west of Donetsk City on July 11. ¹⁶ The Ukrainian General Staff stated that Russian forces retreated after a failed attack on Mariinka, about 20km west of Donetsk City. ¹⁷ Russian forces also continued artillery strikes along the Avdiivka-Donetsk City frontline and seemingly intensified air and artillery operations in the direction of the Donetsk-Zaporizhia Oblast border. ¹⁸



<u>Supporting Effort #1—Kharkiv City</u> (Russian objective: Defend ground lines of communication (GLOCs) to Izyum and prevent Ukrainian forces from reaching the Russian border)

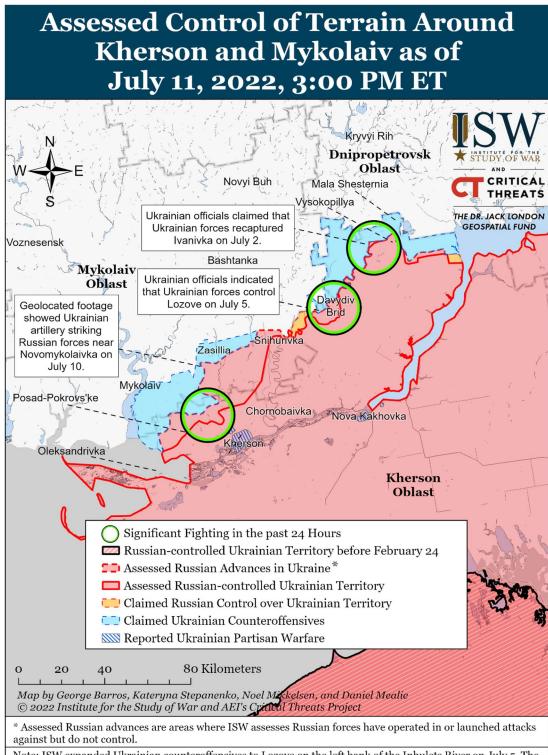
Russian forces continued to conduct localized ground assaults northwest of Kharkiv City on July 11. The Derhachi City Council reported that Ukrainian forces repelled Russian assaults towards Tsupivka, Dementiivka, Velyki Prokhody, and the Zolochiv-Kozacha Lopan direction. 19 Russian forces continued air, artillery, and missile strikes on Kharkiv City and settlements to the north, northeast, and east of Kharkiv City. 20



<u>Supporting Effort #2—Southern Axis</u> (Russian objective: Defend Kherson and Zaporizhia Oblasts against Ukrainian counterattacks)

Russian forces did not launch offensive operations on the Southern Axis on July 11 and focused on maintaining defensive positions. ²¹ Russian forces continued air, artillery, and missile strikes along the entire Southern Axis line of contact. ²² Ukrainian sources reported that Russian fighter jets launched four Kh-31 missiles at an unspecified coastal settlement and three Kh-31 missiles at an unspecified agricultural area in Odesa Oblast from positions over Crimea, likely aiming at production and other critical infrastructure. ²³

Ukrainian forces continued to strike Russian ammunition depots and command points in Kherson and Zaporizhia Oblast on July 11. Advisor to Kherson Oblast Military Administration Head Serhiy Khlan reported that Ukrainian forces struck a Russian command center and equipment concentration in Tavriisk (approximately 62km east of Kherson City). Hhlan stated that Russian forces moved a military equipment unloading site from Oleskhy (5km southeast of Kherson City) to Radensk (25km southeast of Kherson City), likely in response to increased Ukrainian strikes on Russian military infrastructure in and around Kherson City. Khlan also stated that Russian forces are preparing for urban warfare in case a Ukrainian counteroffensive does reach Kherson City and have strengthened security and filtration measures around the city. Ukrainian Strategic Communications Center noted that Ukrainian forces also struck a Russian ammunition depot in Tokmak, approximately 50km northeast of Melitopol on July 11.27



Note: ISW expanded Ukrainian counteroffensives to Lozove on the left bank of the Inhulets River on July 5. The Ukrainian General Staff reported on July 6 that Ukrainian forces repelled a Russian offensive in the direction of Lozove in Kherson Oblast, indicating that Ukrainian forces still maintain a position there. Russian Telegram Channel Rybar claimed that Ukrainian forces launched unsuccessful attacks on the Snihurivka-Lozove-Bila Krynytsya line on July 4. Ukraine's Southern Operational Command stated on July 5 that Ukrainian forces repelled a Russian platoon counterattack in the Lozove area, indicating that Ukrainian forces are in Lozove. Ukrainian combat footage posted in mid-June showed Ukrainian forces shelling Russian positions near Lozove. NASA FIRMS data for July 5 shows heat anomaly concentrations south of Lozove consistent with the Ukraine's Southern Operational Command report. We will update our maps as we collect and confirm more information.

<u>Mobilization and Force Generation Efforts</u> (Russian objective: Expand combat power without conducting general mobilization)

Russian forces continue to face desertion and personnel shortages. Pro-Russian Telegram channel Moscow Calling published an image of a billboard listing 300 servicemen of the 205th Separate Motorized Rifle Brigade of the 49th Combined Arms Army who refused to participate in the Russian invasion of Ukraine.²⁸ The Ukrainian General Staff had previously reported that the 205th Separate Motorized Rifle Brigade (based in Budyonnovsk, Stavrolpol Krai) was deployed to Mariupol and Zaporizhia Oblast efforts on March 3.²⁹ The billboard further supports the Ukrainian General Staff's report that Russian forces are seeing increasing cases of disobedience and desertion within Russian forces.³⁰

<u>Activity in Russian-occupied Areas</u> (Russian objective: consolidate administrative control of occupied areas; set conditions for potential annexation into the Russian Federation or some other future political arrangement of Moscow's choosing)

Ukrainian partisans continued to target Russian collaborators and Russian occupation authorities on July 10 and July 11. The Ukrainian Resistance Center and Russian Telegram channels confirmed that unknown assailants killed Russian-appointed Head of Velyky Burluk (northeastern Kharkiv Oblast) Yevgeniy Yunakov by planting an explosive device on his car.³¹ The attack happened only four days after Russian occupation authorities announced the creation of the Russian occupation administration in occupied settlements of Kharkiv Oblast.³² Russian milblogger Yuri Kotyenok also reported that unknown assailants (presumably Ukrainian partisans) attempted to assassinate Russian-appointed Kherson Oblast Military-Civil Administration Head Vladimir Saldo by planting an improvised explosive device along his drive.³³ Russian media also reported that "Ukrainian regime militants" attempted to kill Melitopol District Head Andrey Sigutu on July 11.³⁴

The Kremlin continues to set annexation conditions for Ukrainian territories outside of Donbas. Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a decree that simplifies the process for all Ukrainians to obtain Russian citizenship.³⁵ The law had previously simplified passport distribution in the Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics (DNR and LNR), Kherson, and Zaporizhia Oblasts, and may indicate the Kremlin's intention to annex other occupied territories like Kharkiv Oblast. LNR Ambassador to Russia Rodion Miroshnik also claimed that 20 occupied Luhansk Oblast settlements paired with separate administrative districts and oblasts in Russia.³⁶

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https://understandingwar.org/backgrounder/ukraine-conflict-update-3

⁵ https://twitter.com/DefenceHQ/status/1546361867320365058/photo/1;

https://t.me/rybar/35302?single;

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7 https://t.me/voenkorKotenok/38278; https://t.me/readovkanews/38438;

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¹ <u>https://armyinform dot com</u> dot ua/2022/07/07/u-bilorusi-shukayut-najmancziv-dlya-mozhlyvogo-vih-zaluchennya-do-vovennyh-dij-v-ukrayini/;

² https://twitter.com/MotolkoHelp/status/1546434535465910273

³ https://twitter.com/MotolkoHelp/status/1546475844926951424

⁴ https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/russian-offensive-campaign-assessment-june-

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¹⁴https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbido23NWBUd1hKEwFRhKnYJLSTmBPFuvgcE1wurttEep81p8KNVNVCWFiLZA6kCdq6nPl;

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¹⁵https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbido23NWBUd1hKEwFRhKnYJLSTmBPFuvgcE1wurttEep81p8KNVNVCWFiLZA6kCdq6nPl;

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¹⁶https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbido23NWBUd1hKEwFRhKnYJLSTmBPFuvgcE1wurttEep81p8KNVNVCWFiLZA6kCdq6nPl;

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¹⁷https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbido23NWBUd1hKEwFRhKnYJLSTmBPFuvgcE1wurttEep81p8KNVNVCWFiLZA6kCdq6nPl;

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²⁰ https://t.me/synegubov/3611; https://t.me/synegubov/3611; https://t.me/stranaua/51712;

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²³ https://t.me/Bratchuk_Sergey/15314; https://t.me/Bratchuk_Sergey/15310;

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- ²⁵ https://youtu.be/VpZMM-CXCUs?t=331
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- ²⁷https://www.facebook.com/100003342535443/posts/pfbidoqjE76F3DazM4hMgPavneKw3UQUrc HftssS4SsjgAGikdoKuaH6DaVcemhuXJ3HMwl/?d=n; https://t.me/Bratchuk Sergey/15312;
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