

Assessed Control of Terrain in Ukraine and Main Russian Maneuver Axes as of April 27, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



Map by George Barros, Kateryna Stepanenko, Noel Mikkelsen, Daniel Mealie, Thomas Bergeron, Mitchell Belcher, Shaylei Dauphinais, Tom Thacker, and Kaitlyn Thomas.
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* Assessed Russian advances are areas where ISW assesses Russian forces have operated in or launched attacks against but do not control.



Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment

Karolina Hird, Riley Bailey, Angelica Evans, Nicole Wolkov, and Frederick W. Kagan

April 27, 2024, 8:10pm ET

Click [here](#) 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.

Click [here](#) to see ISW's 3D control of terrain topographic map of Ukraine. Use of a computer (not a mobile device) is strongly recommended for using this data-heavy tool.

Click [here](#) to access ISW's archive of interactive time-lapse maps of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. These maps complement the static control-of-terrain map that ISW produces daily by showing a dynamic frontline. ISW will update this time-lapse map archive monthly.

Note: The data cut-off for this product was 1:30pm ET on April 27. ISW will cover subsequent reports in the April 28 Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment.

Russian forces will likely make significant tactical gains in the coming weeks as Ukraine waits for US security assistance to arrive at the front but remains unlikely to overwhelm Ukrainian defenses. *Politico* reported on April 26 that Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky told US Speaker of the House Mike Johnson in December 2023 that Ukrainian forces would be able to “hold out” until March or April 2024 without additional US security assistance, a period through which Ukrainian forces are now passing without the arrival of US military aid.[1] The arrival of US aid at the front in the coming weeks will allow the Ukrainian forces to address their current materiel constraints and blunt ongoing Russian offensive operations, and Russian forces appear to be intensifying efforts to destabilize Ukrainian defenses and gain ground ahead of the arrival of the American security assistance.[2] Two Ukrainian intelligence officers reportedly told the *Financial Times* that Russian forces aim to use ongoing offensive operations and missile strikes against Ukraine to prepare the battlefield for an expected large-scale Russian offensive operation in late May or in June.[3] The *Financial Times* reported that a Western official stated that Russian forces may make further “tactical breakthroughs” in the coming weeks but will not “overrun” Ukraine.[4] Russian forces have opportunities to make significant tactical gains in the Avdiivka area and pursue an operationally significant objective with the seizure of Chasiv Yar; but, neither of these efforts is likely to develop into an operationally significant penetration in the near term, let alone cause the collapse of the Ukrainian defensive line in Donetsk Oblast.[5]

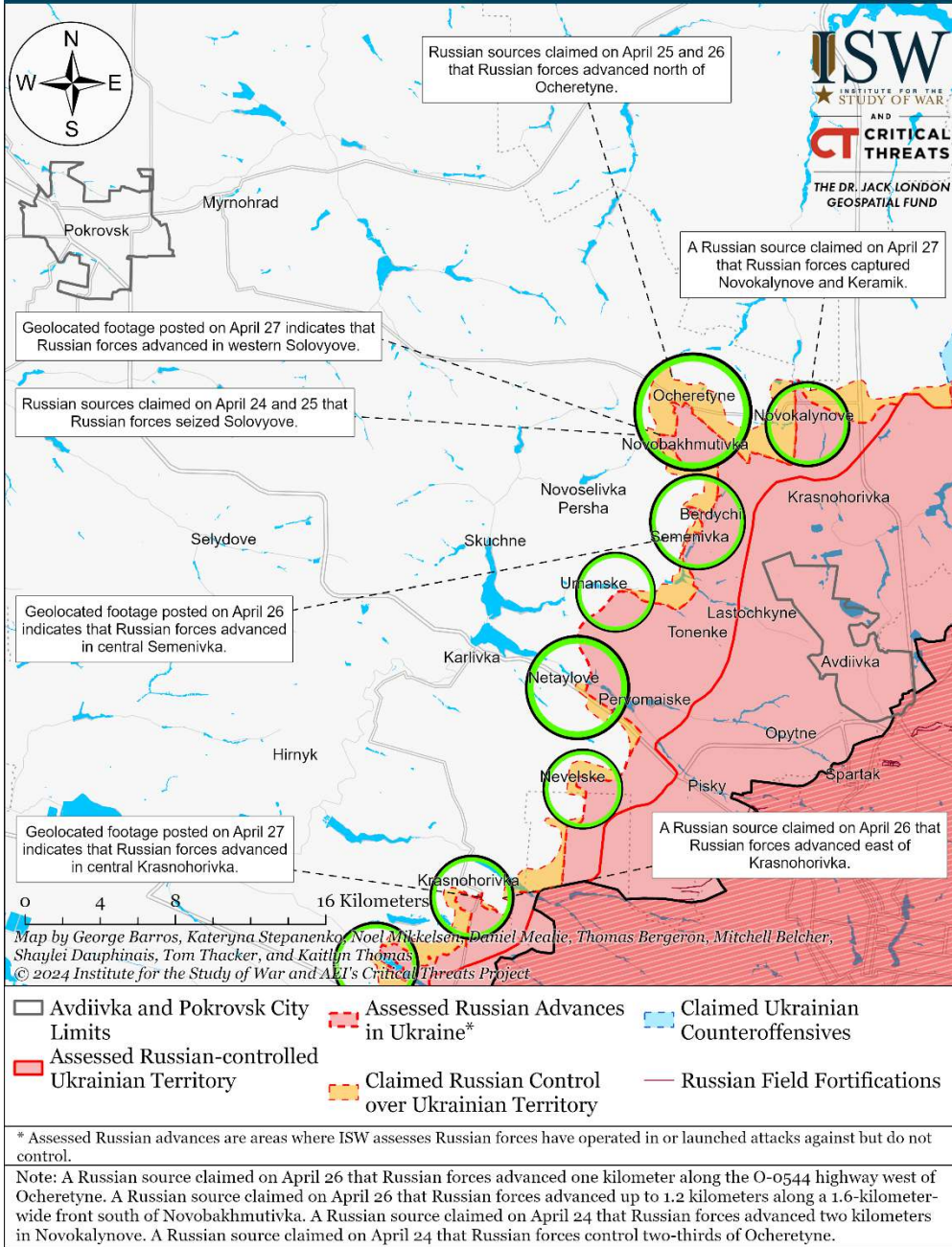
Well-provisioned Ukrainian forces will likely be able to prevent operationally significant Russian advances during Russia’s expected summer offensive effort, although Russian forces will nevertheless leverage select advantages and adaptations to pose a significant threat to Ukraine this summer. Well-provisioned Ukrainian forces have previously prevented Russian forces from making even tactical gains during previous large-scale offensive efforts in Ukraine, and it is unlikely that Russian forces will conduct an offensive operation this summer that is significantly larger and more intense than their previous offensive efforts.[6] The *Financial Times* reported that a Western official stated that the Russian military is still an ineffective army characterized by old equipment and poorly trained soldiers and asserted that Russian forces have not improved since starting the invasion in February 2022.[7] Judging Russian military effectiveness on the absolute quality of Russian forces ignores how Russian forces are leveraging their temporary relative advantages over Ukraine to place Ukrainian forces under increasing stress. The Russian military is facing constraints on the amount of modern and effective equipment that it can and will be able to deploy in Ukraine, and the overall combat effectiveness of Russian formations and units continues to decline as they suffer degradation in Ukraine.[8] Russian forces are in part relying on their quantitative advantages in equipment and manpower to place consistent and increasing pressure on Ukrainian forces, however, and the Russian military is accepting losses that Ukrainian forces could not sustain.[9] The Russian focus on mass, regardless of quality, has supported tactical Russian gains, especially as delays in Western security assistance have degraded Ukraine’s qualitative advantages over Russian forces, and Russian forces will likely use mass to achieve tactical advances against even well-provisioned Ukrainian forces this summer.[10]

Russian reliance on mass is not the only adaptation that Russian forces have made in Ukraine, however, as the Russian military has demonstrated an uneven propensity for operational, tactical, and technological innovation and learning.[11] The Russian military command appears to be learning from past operational planning mistakes in Ukraine and will likely conduct a summer offensive operation that aims to stretch and overwhelm Ukrainian forces across a larger frontline in eastern Ukraine.[12] Russian forces have also significantly changed tactical aviation operations in Ukraine with their mass use of glide bombs, allowing fixed-wing aircraft to more safely conduct strikes from further in the rear.[13] These glide bomb strikes will continue to play a critically important role in supporting Russian ground operations this summer despite the likely improved air defense capabilities that Ukrainian forces will be able to leverage against Russian aircraft as additional Western air defense materiel arrives.[14] Russian forces continue to deploy technological innovations throughout the front at scale to support offensive pushes and appear to be timing the deployment of these innovations to exploit Ukrainian vulnerabilities and make gains before Ukrainian forces subsequently adapt to the Russian innovations.[15] Russian forces may intend to leverage new technological or tactical innovations precisely at the beginning of their summer offensive effort to offset the stronger capabilities that Ukrainian forces will possess following the arrival of US security assistance. Russian forces still suffer from widespread tactical failures, however, and Ukrainian forces will still be able to exploit those failures as long as the Russian military command continues to struggle with internalizing and disseminating adaptations at the tactical level.[16] Ukraine will be able to neutralize many of the materiel constraints it currently faces in the coming weeks and is taking steps to alleviate its manpower challenges in the coming months, but Russia will continue to pursue its own advantages as Ukrainian capabilities improve. **Ukraine is very likely to stabilize the frontlines in the coming months and may be able to begin limited counteroffensive operations in late 2024 or early 2025.**

Russian forces are continuing to exploit a tactical penetration north and northwest of Avdiivka and recently made additional confirmed advances in the area. Geolocated footage published on April 27 shows that Russian forces advanced to northern Novokalynove (north of Avdiivka), and Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces completely seized the settlement on April 27.[17] Some milbloggers also claimed that Russian forces advanced into Keramik (directly northwest of Novokalynove), although ISW has not yet observed visual evidence of Russian forces in Keramik.[18] Geolocated footage published on April 27 also shows that Russian forces advanced in western Ocheretyne, in southwestern Solovyove, and to a treeline south of Novobakhmutivka (all northwest of Avdiivka).[19] Milbloggers claimed that Russian forces captured the entirety of Solovyove, which is consistent with available geolocated footage of Russian forces in the southwestern part of the settlement.[20] Several Russian sources also claimed that fierce fighting continued in western Berdychi (northwest of Avdiivka) and that Russian forces were pushing Ukrainian forces further west of the settlement.[21]

Ukrainian Khortytsia Group of Forces Spokesperson Lieutenant Colonel Nazar Voloshyn reiterated reports on April 27 that Russian forces introduced additional reserves from the 55th Motorized Rifle Brigade (41st Combined Arms Army [CAA], Central Military District [CMD]) to the Novobakhmutivka-Ocheretyne line to break through Ukrainian defenses, and that Ukrainian forces are responding by committing additional reserve forces and resources to the area.[22] The Ukrainian Center for Defense Strategies similarly noted on April 26 that Russian forces have committed two motorized rifle brigades and one motorized rifle regiment directly to the tactical penetration in the Ocheretyne area, which has created a threefold advantage in Russian forces and assets over Ukrainian forces and assets.[23] The Ukrainian General Staff reported continued fighting north of Avdiivka near Arkhanhelske and Keramik; northwest of Avdiivka near Semenivka and Ocheretyne; west of Avdiivka near Umanske; and southwest of Avdiivka near Netaylove.[24] Elements of the 132nd Motorized Rifle Brigade (1st Donetsk People's Republic Army Corps [DNR AC]) reportedly seized Novokalynove and are now operating near Keramik; elements of the 35th Motorized Rifle Brigade (41st CAA, CMD) are operating near Arkhanhelske; elements of the 74th Motorized Rifle Brigade (41st CAA, CMD) are operating in and near Berdychi; elements of the 114th Motorized Rifle Brigade (1st DNR AC) are operating near Semenivka; and elements of the 9th Motorized Rifle Brigade (1st DNR AC) are operating in the Pervomaiske-Netyalove area southwest of Avdiivka.[25]

Assessed Control of Terrain Northwest of Avdiivka as of April 27, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



The tempo of Russian offensive operations is currently higher in the Avdiivka direction than near Chasiv Yar, as Russian forces focus on exploiting a tactical situation that is unfavorable to Ukrainian troops northwest of Avdiivka. Russian forces are likely to intensify offensive operations near Chasiv Yar in the coming weeks, however, as Chasiv Yar provides Russian forces with the opportunity for more operationally significant advances. Russian forces have recently committed roughly a division's worth of combat power northwest of Avdiivka, which has lent them a roughly threefold advantage over Ukraine's available

combat power in the same area, by unofficial Ukrainian estimates.[26] Russian forces have committed roughly doctrinal end strength and relatively doctrinally-consistent formations to an area where Ukrainian forces have struggled with under-resourcing, which has allowed Russian forces to achieve tactical gains in areas north and northwest of Avdiivka over the course of recent weeks. Russian offensives in the Chasiv Yar direction, by contrast, have significantly slowed over the past week — a Russian milblogger noted on April 27 that the frontline has remained without significant changes and that the tempo of Russian operations has decreased.[27] ISW has frequently assessed that Russian forces have struggled to conduct simultaneous large-scale offensive operations throughout the war but have more recently been able to conduct shorter alternating offensive operations in offensive “pulses,” as has been the case in the Lyman, Chasiv Yar, and Avdiivka directions for most of 2024 thus far.[28] Russian forces are likely leaning into attacks northwest of Avdiivka in order to build on the recent tactical success they have achieved, while Russian forces committed in the Chasiv Yar direction are likely temporarily pulling back from offensives to rest and reconstitute. Russian forces will likely soon increase the pace of offensives near Chasiv Yar once again, and this offensive pressure has the potential to become significant.[29] If Russian forces are able to intensify attacks and seize Chasiv Yar, they would be able to use Chasiv Yar as a staging point for subsequent offensive operations against Ukraine’s critical fortress belt cities of Kostyantynivka, and Druzhkivka.[30] Russian forces will need to replenish and reinforce the units that are currently attacking around Avdiivka, and the process of replenishment and reinforcement is likely to blunt the overall intensity of their attacks and inhibit their ability to reach their wider operational objective — Pokrovsk and the Donetsk Oblast administrative border — rapidly as long as Ukrainian forces receive necessary reinforcements and supplies.

Russian forces conducted large-scale cruise and ballistic missile strikes against Ukraine on the night of April 26 to 27 and have likely resumed sea based Kalibr cruise missile strikes after a long pause. Ukrainian Air Force Commander Lieutenant General Mykola Oleshchuk reported on April 27 that Russian forces launched 34 missiles: nine Kh-101/555 cruise missiles from Saratov Oblast; nine Kh-59/69 cruise missiles from Belgorod Oblast and the Sea of Azov; two S-300 missiles from Belgorod Oblast; two Iskander-K ballistic missiles, four Kh-47 Kinzhal ballistic missiles from Ryazan and Tambov oblasts; and eight Kalibr cruise missiles from the Black Sea.[31] Oleshchuk stated that Ukrainian forces destroyed 21 total missiles: six Kh-101/555s, eight Kh59/69s, one Iskander-K, and six Kalibrs. Ukrainian Energy Minister Herman Halushchenko and Ukraine’s largest private energy operator DTEK reported that unspecified Russian missiles struck Ukrainian energy infrastructure facilities in Ivano-Frankivsk, Lviv, and Dnipropetrovsk oblasts and “seriously” damaged four unspecified thermal power plants (TPPs).[32]

This is notably the first large-scale Russian strike package since late December 2023 that did not include Shahed drones. Russian forces also notably launched Kalibr missiles as part of the strike package after conducting only a handful of individual Kalibr strikes in recent months. Ukrainian Southern Operational Command Spokesperson Captain Third Rank Dmytro Pletenchuk stated that this strike series was only the third confirmed use of Kalibr missiles in over six months and that Russian forces launched them from two Kilo-class submarines for fear of losing surface ships to Ukrainian strikes.[33] Pletenchuk stated that the two submarines are based in Novorossiysk, indicating that the Russian military has sufficiently improved the infrastructure at the Black Sea Fleet (BSF) port in Novorossiysk to load Kalibrs.[34] Ukrainian and United Kingdom (UK) military officials reported in February and March 2024 that the BSF naval base in occupied Sevastopol, Crimea was the only BSF base with the infrastructure to load these missiles onto Kalibr carriers.[35] The UK Ministry of Defense (MoD) reported on April 18 that Russian forces had likely improved the infrastructure at the Novorossiysk port to accommodate the redeployment of the majority of BSF assets away from its main

base in occupied Sevastopol and reported that Russian forces had loaded an unspecified Russian Grigorovich-class guided missile frigate with cruise missiles at the Novorossiysk port.[36] Ukrainian Main Military Intelligence Directorate (GUR) Deputy Chief Major General Vadym Skibitskyi reported in April 2024 that Russia had accumulated at least 260 Kalibr missiles and aimed to produce an additional 30 in April.[37] Russian forces will likely continue conducting Kalibr strikes from submarines based in Novorossiysk by leveraging the stockpile and the new missile-loading infrastructure in Novorossiysk. However, increased BSF surface vessel sorties will make them more vulnerable to Ukrainian strikes.

Ukrainian forces successfully conducted drone strikes against a Russian airfield and oil refineries in Krasnodar Krai on the night of April 26 to 27. Unspecified sources told Ukrainian outlet *Suspilne* that Ukraine’s Security Service (SBU) and the Ukrainian military successfully conducted drone strikes against the Kushchyovskaya airfield while “dozens” of Russian military aircraft, radar systems, and electronic warfare (EW) systems were stationed there, although ISW has not observed visual confirmation of damaged equipment at the airfield.[38] Geolocated footage published on April 27 shows the aftermath of the Ukrainian strike at the Kushchyovskaya airfield and purportedly shows damaged glide bomb kits.[39] Russian milbloggers widely criticized the Russian military for failing to protect the airfield after multiple successful Ukrainian drone strikes on Russian airfields in occupied Ukraine and Russia.[40] *Suspilne*’s sources stated that Ukrainian drones struck the Ilskiy and Slavyansk oil refineries, damaging their distillation columns and causing fires.[41] Krasnodar Krai Governor Veniamin Kondratev stated that Ukrainian drones attempted to strike oil refineries and infrastructure facilities in Slavyanskiy, Siverskiy, and Kushchyuvskiy raions but that the strikes did not cause “serious” damage.[42] Slavyansk Oil Refinery Security Director Eduard Trudnev stated that 10 drones struck the refinery, causing it to partially stop functioning, and noted that there could be additional unseen damage.[43] The Ukrainian SBU, Special Forces (SSO), and Unmanned Systems Forces previously struck the Slavyansk Oil Refinery on the night of March 16 to 17.[44] The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) claimed that Russian forces intercepted 66 Ukrainian drones over Krasnodar Krai on the night of April 26 to 27.[45]

The Russian federal government continues efforts to codify increased control over migrant communities living in Russia. The Russian State Duma introduced a bill on April 27 that “proposes a number of innovations that will help modernize Russian legislation and resolve certain issues of ensuring national security in the field of migration.”[46] The proposed bill also includes provisions to introduce a deportation regime for migrants who “have no grounds” to be in Russia, including those who commit certain crimes.[47] The proposed bill will also prevent foreigners who are subject to the deportation regime from purchasing real estate, opening bank accounts, or getting married.[48] The deportation bill will allow the Russian federal government to define whichever foreign individuals or communities it chooses as subject to deportation—a move that will likely allow the government to extend more oppressive control over migrant communities and cater to Russian ultranationalists who have frequently called for such harsh policies.[49] The Russian Ministry of Education and Science similarly announced on April 27 that the 12 Russian universities that are authorized to conduct Russian-language certification exams have terminated their contracts with commercial partners, meaning that only the universities and state and municipal organizations can administer Russian language certification testing.[50] This development will significantly complicate the process of obtaining Russian language certification for migrants, which will likely limit their access to certain jobs or even social services and provide the Russian government with greater control over migrant communities. The Russian government appears to be selectively empowering some migrant

communities as it further disenfranchises others, however. A joint project run by Russian state media source *RT* and the Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD) called “Not One on One” sends requests to the MVD to help foreigners obtain Russian citizenship in certain limited cases.[51] The *RT* project reported that it sent a request to the MVD regarding the citizenship of a migrant from Kyrgyzstan who fled Kyrgyzstan for Russia after being convicted for fighting for Russian forces in Ukraine.[52] Russian authorities have increased crackdowns against Central Asian migrants living in Russia, particularly after the wake of the March 22 Crocus City Hall attack, and the *RT* project emphasizes the fact that the Russian government is interested in selectively protecting some migrants from Central Asian communities as long as they are ideologically useful in the context of the Russian war effort.

The Kremlin is likely setting conditions to intensify its hybrid operations against Moldova. Kremlin-affiliated governor of the pro-Russian Moldovan autonomous region of Gagauzia Yevgenia Gutsul told Kremlin newswire *TASS* on April 26 that Moldovan law enforcement officials detained her and three of her advisors for several hours when the group arrived at the Chisinau airport after a series of recent meetings in Russia and Turkey.[53] Gutsul claimed that Moldovan law enforcement inspected her luggage and detained her for an hour before releasing her, and one of Gutsul’s advisors told *TASS* that Moldovan authorities interrogated the three advisors for an additional two hours.[54] It is unclear if Moldovan authorities formally detained Gutsul and her advisors. *TASS* reported that a group of 100 people gathered outside the airport to welcome Gutsul and chanted “Victory” when Gutsul exited the airport, likely referring to Gutsul’s position as the newly formed pro-Russian Moldovan Victory electoral bloc’s executive secretary.[55] Gutsul claimed that Moldovan authorities are making every effort to humiliate her and other pro-Russian Moldovans and framed Moldovan authorities’ recent confiscation of over one million dollars from Kremlin-linked Moldovan opposition politicians as a “biased” effort to humiliate innocent Moldovans.[56] Gutsul and other pro-Kremlin actors will likely continue to seize on short-term detentions and legitimate efforts by the Moldovan government to defend itself against Russian hybrid operations to justify further Russian aggression towards Moldova.

The Moldovan government is also taking steps to address known Russian information operations aimed at Gagauzia. The Moldovan Audiovisual Council announced on April 26 that it fined two regional and local television (TV) stations in Gagauzia, “TV-Gagauzia” and “ATV,” 100,000 Moldovan lei (\$5,627) for spreading disinformation, hate speech, and not ensuring “information security” with their broadcasts.[57] The Audiovisual Council determined that the TV stations provided a platform for public figures to spread symbols and messages intended to “fortify a divergence” between Gagauzia’s connection to Moldova and its alleged proximity to the *Ruskyi Mir* (Russian World). The Audiovisual Council reported that the TV stations amplified narratives justifying Gagauzia’s theoretical future secession from Moldova, accusing Moldova of losing its sovereignty and traditional family values, and equating Moldova’s future accession to the European Union (EU) or NATO with “war.” ISW has extensively reported on the Kremlin’s use of its Russian World framework — an intentionally vague ideological and geographic idea that includes any former territory of the Kyivan Rus, the Kingdom of Muscovy, the Russian Empire, the Soviet Union, and the contemporary Russian Federation and the inhabitants of those territories - to justify Russian aggression under the guise of “protecting” Russian “compatriots abroad” in Russia’s “historical territories.”[58] Russian President Vladimir Putin noted during his annual New Year’s address on December 31, 2023, and has since reiterated that 2024 is the “Year of the Family” for Russia and has since pursued domestic policies aimed at strengthening Russia’s “traditional family values.”[59] The Gagauzian TV stations’ efforts to equate the EU and NATO with “war” are also in line with the Kremlin’s informational efforts to justify Russia’s ongoing military

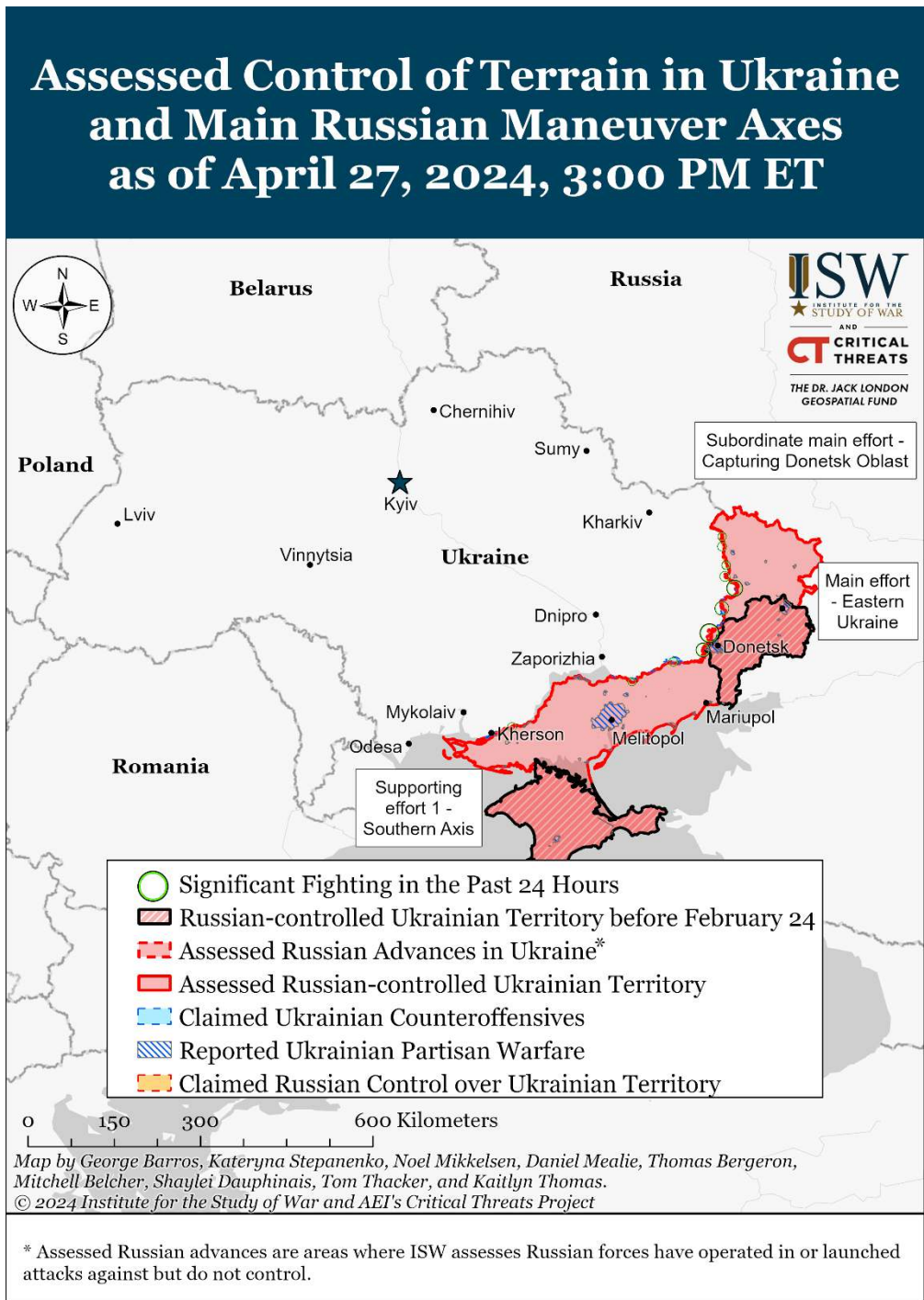
reforms and invasion of Ukraine as a response to inherently escalatory actions by NATO and the EU and in preparation for the Kremlin's envisioned long-term existential conflict with the West.[60] The Kremlin will likely continue to disseminate known narratives in Moldovan society through a variety of means and may intend to use the newly-formed Victory electoral bloc to amplify its narratives.

Russian peacekeeping forces conducted another undisclosed training exercise in the Russian-backed Moldovan breakaway republic of Transnistria, likely aimed at creating unease in Moldovan society and increased tension in the already fraught relationship between Chisinau and Tiraspol. The Moldovan Bureau of Reintegration reported on April 23 that Russian peacekeeping forces violated the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Joint Control Commission (JCC) protocols by conducting training exercises to “repel attacks on the positions of peacekeeping forces” near four settlements in Transnistria on April 23 without coordinating with Moldovan authorities.[61] Moldovan authorities called the incident a “provocation” and a violation of the founding acts of the peacekeeping mission and stated that the incident would be discussed at the next JCC meeting. Transnistrian Foreign Minister Vitaly Ignatiev claimed on April 25 that the peacekeeping exercises were “justified” and “necessary” to ensure the combat readiness of Russian peacekeeping units.[62] Moldovan authorities previously urged the JCC to conduct an investigation into Russian peacekeepers’ use of undisclosed drones and weapons during a December 2023 training exercise, another violation of JCC protocols.[63] ISW continues to assess that the Kremlin is likely engaged in hybrid operations in Moldova and intends to use pro-Russian actors in Gagauzia and Transnistria to destabilize and degrade Moldovan democracy and ultimately prevent Moldova’s accession to the EU.[64]

Key Takeaways:

- **Russian forces will likely make significant tactical gains in the coming weeks as Ukraine waits for US security assistance to arrive at the front but remains unlikely to overwhelm Ukrainian defenses.**
- **Well-provisioned Ukrainian forces will likely be able to prevent operationally significant Russian advances during Russia’s expected summer offensive effort, although Russian forces will nevertheless leverage select advantages and adaptations to pose a significant threat to Ukraine this summer.**
- **The tempo of Russian offensive operations is currently higher in the Avdiivka direction than near Chasiv Yar, as Russian forces focus on exploiting a tactical situation that is unfavorable to Ukrainian troops northwest of Avdiivka. Russian forces are likely to intensify offensive operations near Chasiv Yar in the coming weeks, however, as Chasiv Yar provides Russian forces with the opportunity for more operationally significant advances.**
- **Russian forces conducted large-scale cruise and ballistic missile strikes against Ukraine on the night of April 26 to 27 and have likely resumed sea based Kalibr cruise missile strikes after a long pause.**
- **Ukrainian forces successfully conducted drone strikes against a Russian airfield and oil refineries in Krasnodar Krai on the night of April 26 to 27.**
- **The Russian federal government continues efforts to codify increased control over migrant communities living in Russia.**
- **The Kremlin is likely setting conditions to intensify its hybrid operations against Moldova.**

- Russian forces recently made confirmed advances north of Avdiivka and west of Donetsk City.
- Russian federal subjects continue to sponsor Russian military formations.



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.

- Russian Main Effort – Eastern Ukraine (comprised of two subordinate main efforts)
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #1 – Capture the remainder of Luhansk Oblast and push westward into eastern Kharkiv Oblast and encircle northern Donetsk Oblast
- Russian Subordinate Main Effort #2 – Capture the entirety of Donetsk Oblast
- Russian Supporting Effort – Southern Axis
- Russian Air, Missile, and Drone Campaign
- Russian Mobilization and Force Generation Efforts
- Russian Technological Adaptations
- Activities in Russian-occupied areas
- Ukrainian Defense Industrial Base Efforts
- Russian Information Operations and Narratives
- Significant Activity in Belarus

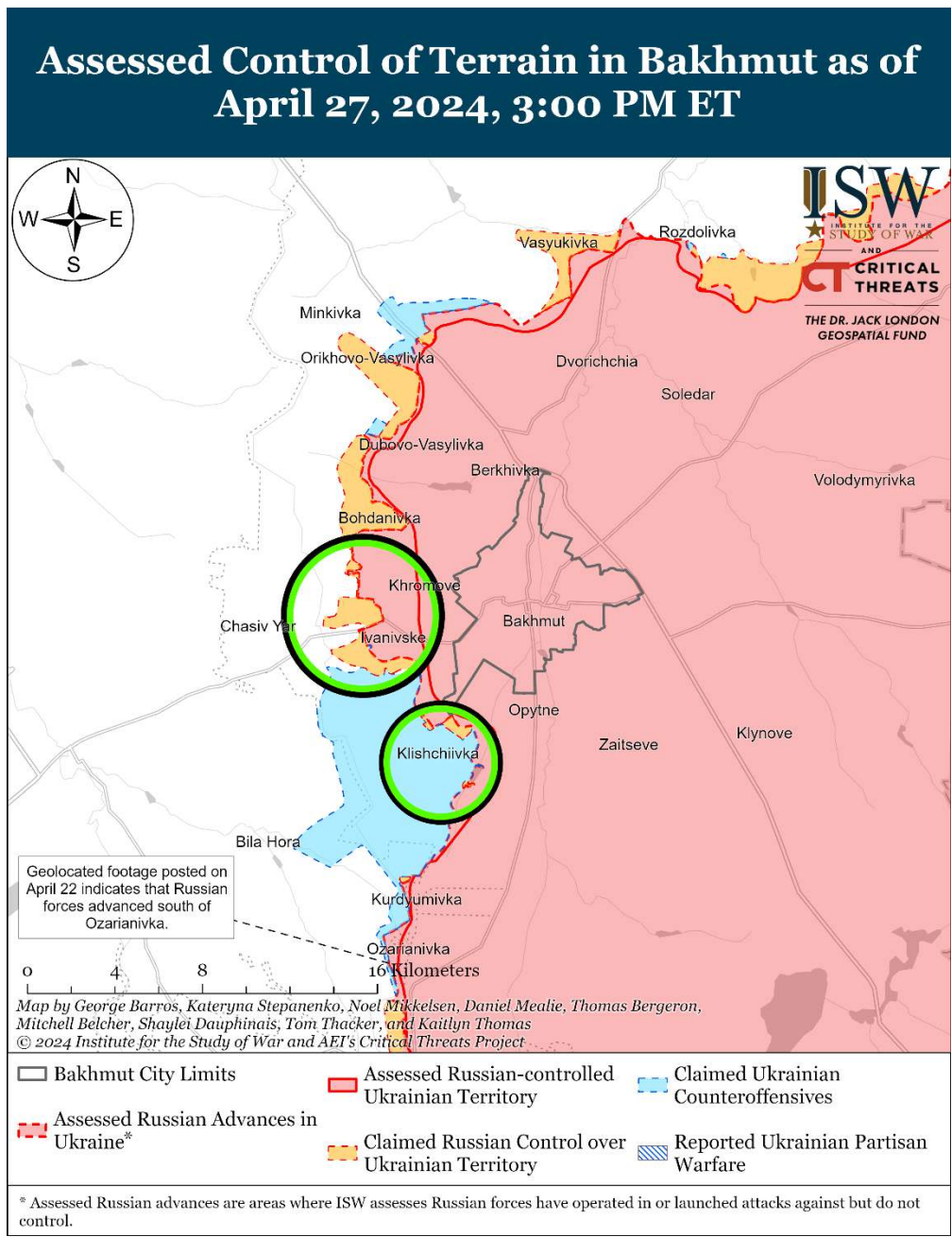
Russian Main Effort – Eastern Ukraine

Russian Subordinate Main Effort #1 – Luhansk Oblast (Russian objective: Capture the remainder of Luhansk Oblast and push westward into eastern Kharkiv Oblast and northern Donetsk Oblast)

Russian forces intensified operations northwest of Svatove and reportedly captured Kyslivka as of April 27. Russian milbloggers claimed on the evening of April 26 that elements of the Russian 1st Guards Tank Army (Moscow Military District [MMD]) broke through Ukrainian defenses in Kyslivka, and several Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces seized the entire settlement as of April 27.[65] Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced up to 1.85 kilometers in depth along the railway line that runs through Kyslivka.[66] A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces have semi-encircled neighboring Ukrainian forces in Kotlyarivka (northwest of Svatove and immediately southwest of Kyslivka).[67] ISW has not yet observed visual confirmation of these Russian claims. Fighting continued northwest of Svatove near Berestove, Kyslivka, and Stelmakhivka.[68]

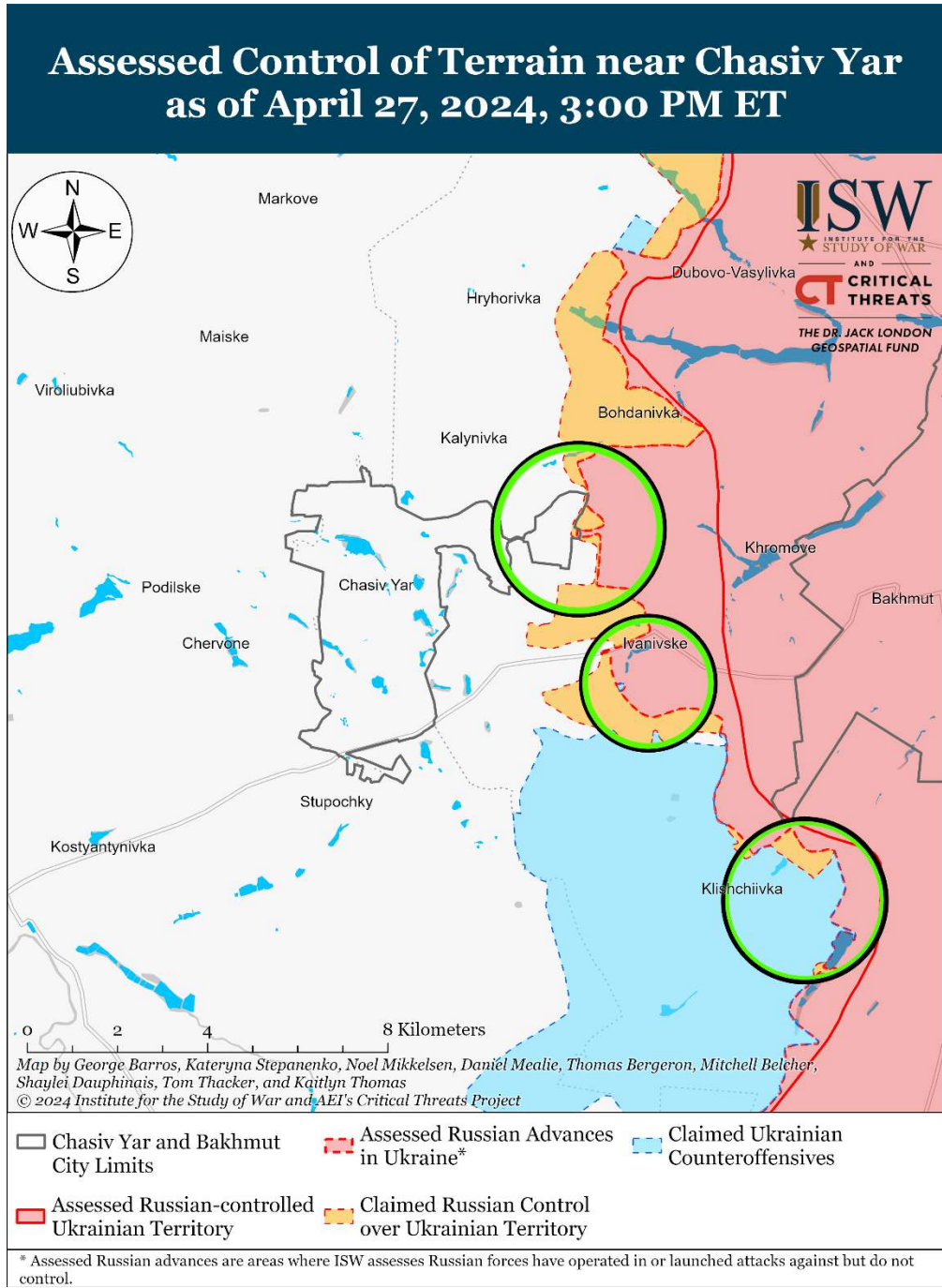
Fighting continued southwest of Svatove and in the Kreminna area on April 27 but there were no confirmed changes to the frontline. Fighting continued southwest of Svatove near Druzhelyubivka, Novoyehorivka, and Hrekivka; northwest of Kreminna near Nevske; west of Kreminna near Terny and Zarichne; and south of Kreminna near the Serebryanske forest area and Bilohorivka.[69] A Ukrainian sergeant operating near the Serebryanske forest area told the *Guardian* in an interview published on April 27 that Russian forces have a five-to-one artillery advantage over Ukrainian forces in the area, which the sergeant described as “more or less stable” as compared to other intense areas of the front where Russian forces have up to a ten-to-one artillery advantage.[70]

Limited positional engagements continued in the Siversk direction (northeast of Bakhmut) near Spirne and Vyimka (both southeast of Siversk) on April 27, but there were no confirmed changes to the frontline.[71] The Luhansk People’s Republic (LNR) posted footage showing elements of the 6th Brigade (2nd LNR Army Corps) operating near Spirne.[72]



Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Chasiv Yar area on April 27, but there were no confirmed changes to the frontline. Russian milbloggers claimed that heavy fighting continued on Chasiv Yar’s eastern outskirts and that Russian forces were trying to clear positions in the forest area east of Chasiv Yar.[73] One milblogger claimed that Russian forces are also advancing south of the Stupky-Holubovskyyi 2 nature reserve area (southeast of Chasiv Yar) and moving parallel to the T0504

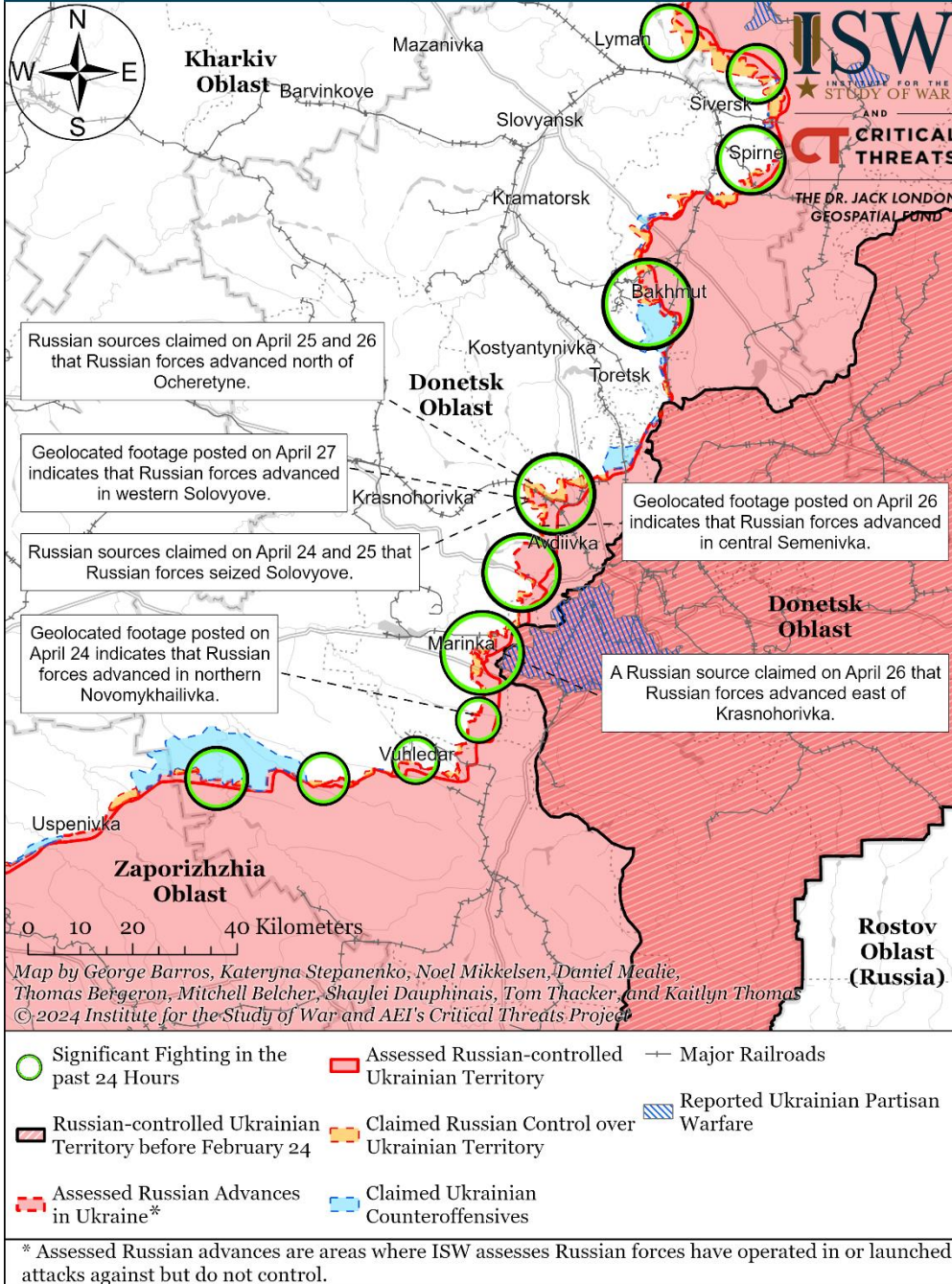
Bakhmut-Ivanivske-Kostyantynivka highway.[74] The Ukrainian General Staff reported that Ukrainian forces repelled Russian attacks near the Novyi Microraion (eastern Chasiv Yar); east of Chasiv Yar near Ivanivske; and southeast of Chasiv Yar near Klishchiivka.[75] Elements of the Russian 98th Guards Airborne (VDV) Division and the Ossetian “Sarmat” volunteer battalion are reportedly operating near Chasiv Yar.[76]



See topline text for updates on the situation in the Avdiivka direction.

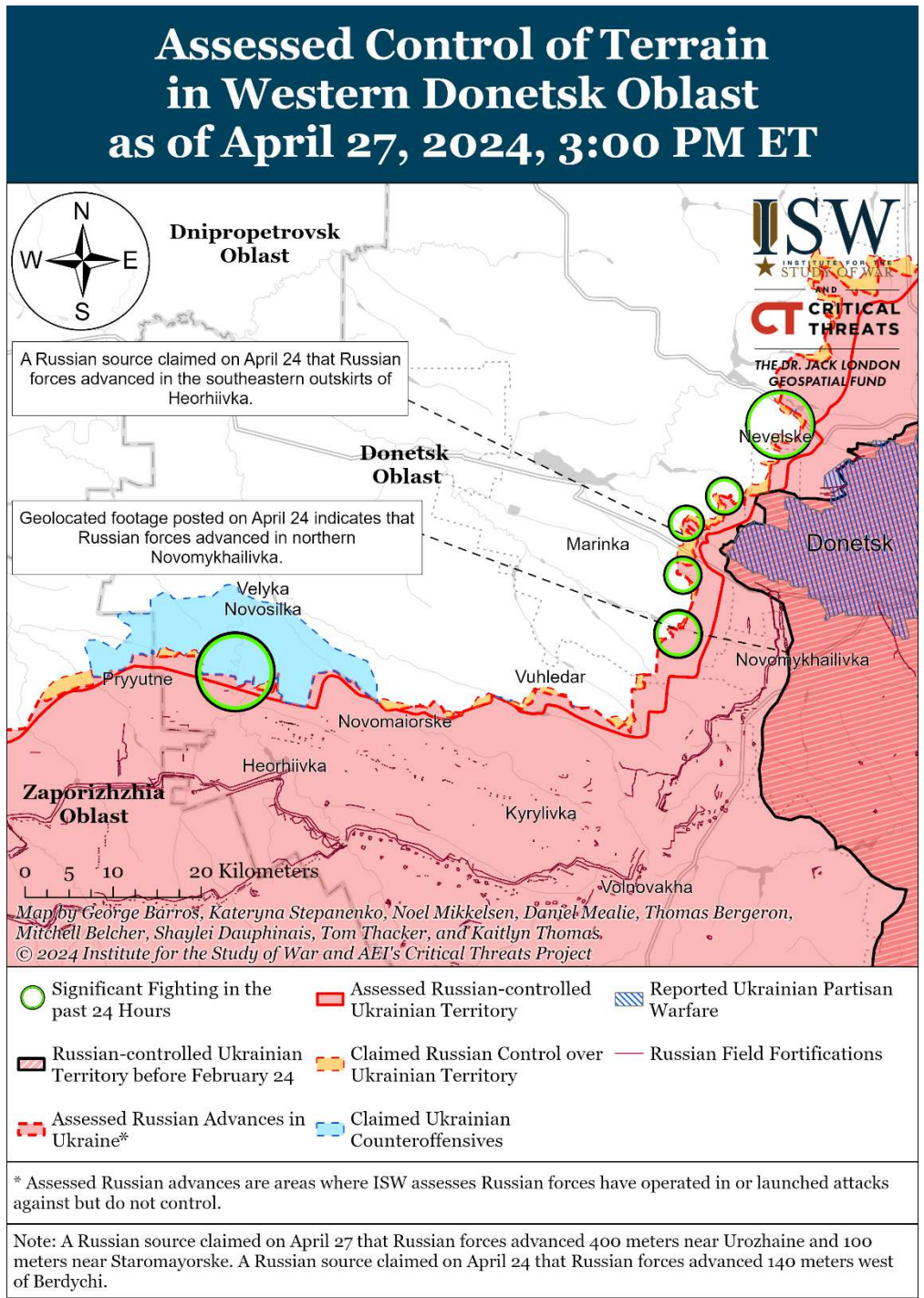
Russian forces recently made a confirmed advance west of Donetsk City. Geolocated footage posted on April 27 shows that Russian forces recently advanced in central Krasnohorivka towards the traffic circle.[77] Some Russian milbloggers also claimed that Russian forces are beginning to clear the brick factory in western Krasnohorivka, although ISW has not yet observed visual evidence of Russian forces maintaining positions within the brick factory area.[78] Ukrainian and Russian sources reported continued fighting west of Donetsk City near Heorhiivka and southwest of Donetsk City near Paraskoviivka and Pobieda.[79] Russian sources continued to claim that Russian forces completely controlled Novomykhailivka (southwest of Donetsk City).[80] Elements of the Russian 238th Artillery Brigade (8th CAA, Southern Military District [SMD]) and 5th Motorized Rifle Brigade (Donetsk People's Republic [DNR] 1st AC) are reportedly operating in Krasnohorivka, and elements 155th Naval Infantry Brigade (Pacific Fleet, Eastern Military District [EMD]) and 68th Army Corps (EMD) are reportedly operating in Novomykhailivka.[81]

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Donetsk as of April 27, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



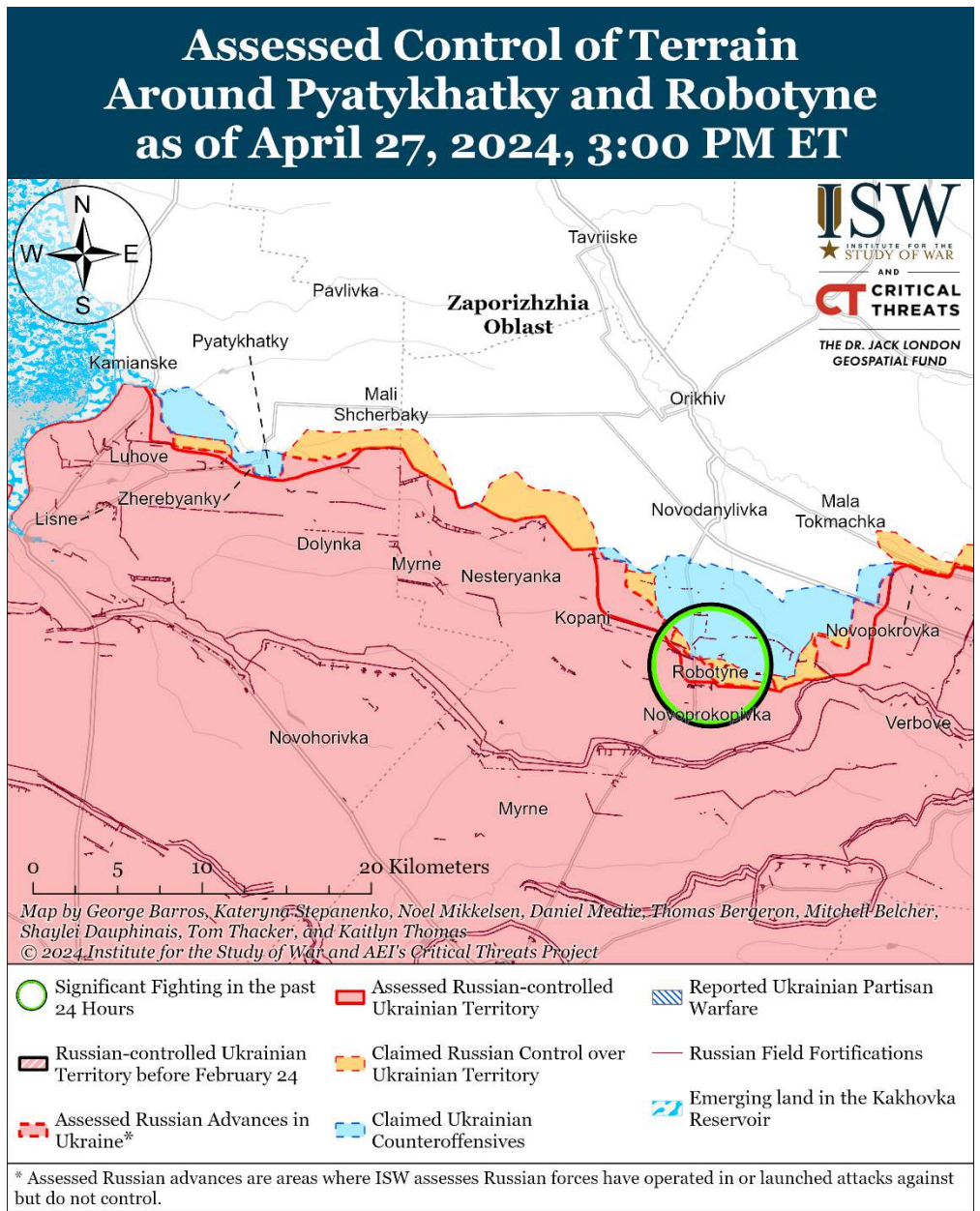
Russian sources claimed that Russian forces advanced in the Donetsk-Zaporizhzhia Oblast border area on April 27. A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced 400 meters in depth near Urozhaine and 100 meters in depth near Staromayorske (both south of Velyka Novosilka), but ISW has not observed visual evidence of these Russian claims.[82] The Ukrainian General Staff reported that

Russian forces attacked east of Velyka Novosilka in the Vuhledar area near Vodyane, southeast of Velyka Novosilka near Prechystivka, and south of Velyka Novosilka near Urozhaine and Staromayorske.[83] Elements of the Russian 43rd Spetsnaz Company are operating near Vuhledar; elements of the 11th Air Force and Air Defense Army (Russian Aerospace Forces and EMD) are striking Ukrainian targets near Urozhaine; and elements of the 165th Artillery Brigade (35th CAA, EMD) are operating west of Velyka Novosilka near Hulyaipole.[84]



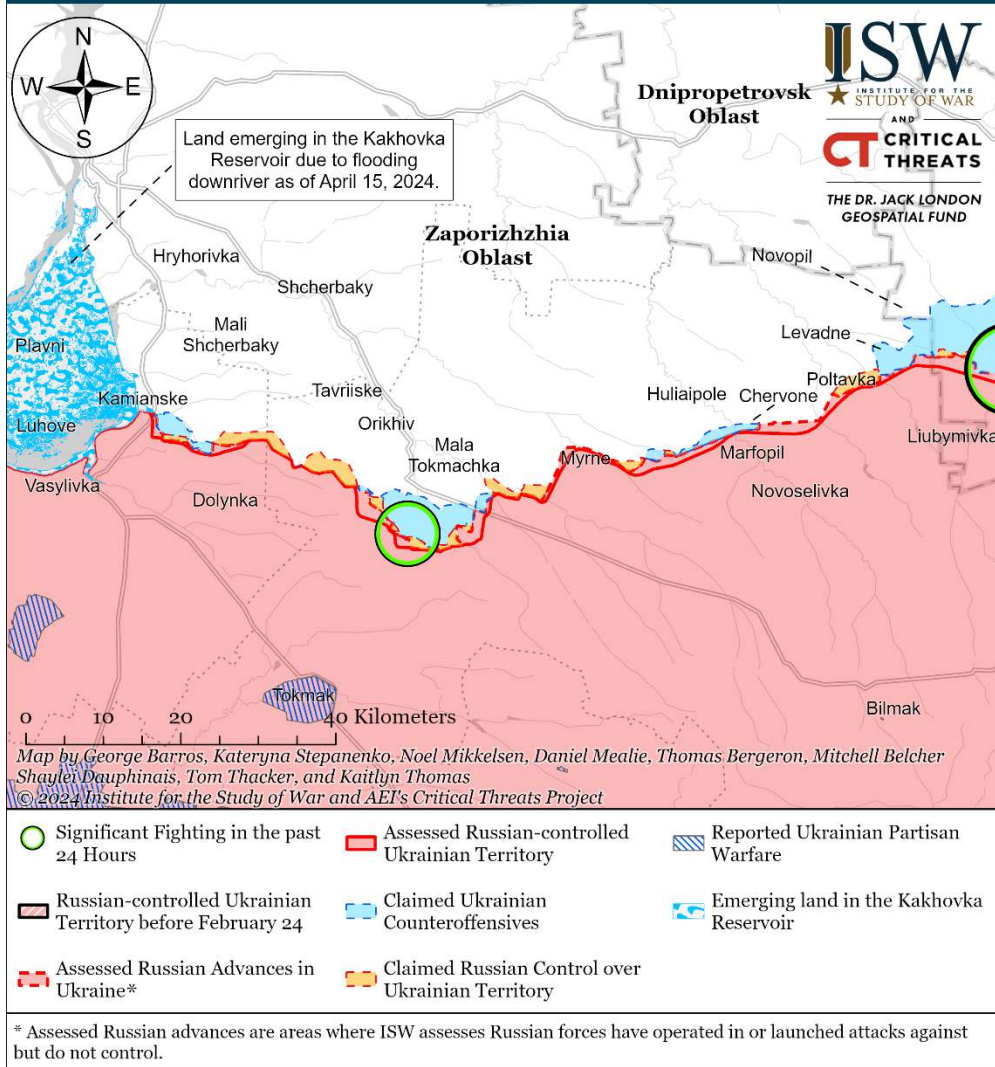
Russian Supporting Effort – Southern Axis (Russian objective: Maintain frontline positions and secure rear areas against Ukrainian strikes)

Positional engagements continued in western Donetsk Oblast on April 27, but there were no confirmed changes to the frontline. Positional engagements continued near Robotyne and northwest of Verbove (east of Robotyne).[85] Elements of the Russian 50th Self-Propelled Artillery Regiment (42nd Motorized Rifle Division, 58th Combined Arms Army, Southern Military District [SMD]) are reportedly operating in Zaporizhzhia Oblast.[86]



Ukrainian forces recently conducted a missile strike against a railway bridge in occupied Zaporizhzhia Oblast. Geolocated footage published on April 27 shows Ukrainian forces striking a railway bridge west of Chernihivka (northwest of Melitopol).[87]

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Zaporizhzhia as of April 27, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



Positional engagements continued in the east (left) bank of Kherson Oblast, including near Krynky, on April 27.[88] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces maintain a small presence near the Antonivsky roadway bridge.[89] Elements of the Russian 810th Naval Infantry Brigade (Black Sea Fleet) are reportedly operating in the Kherson direction, and elements of the Russian “Margelov” Volunteer Battalion are operating near occupied Kakhovka.[90]

Assessed Control of Terrain Around Kherson and Mykolaiv as of April 27, 2024, 3:00 PM ET



* Assessed Russian advances are areas where ISW assesses Russian forces have operated in or launched attacks against but do not control.

Note: The Ukrainian counteroffensive layer displays areas previously assigned to the Russian control, Russian advances, or Russian claims layers where ISW now assesses that Ukrainian forces have established a presence beyond a short-term raid. Inclusion of an area on this layer does not imply that ISW assesses that the area is part of any upcoming Ukrainian counteroffensive operation.

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

See topline text.

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

Russian federal subjects continue to sponsor Russian military formations. Tula Oblast Governor Alexei Dyumin met with elements of the Russian 106th Airborne (VDV) Division in Tula City on April 26 and reportedly provided the formation with new uniforms and equipment.[91] A Russian political insider source claimed on January 13 that Dyumin is the patron of the 106th VDV Division.[92]

Russian Technological Adaptations (Russian objective: Introduce technological innovations to optimize systems for use in Ukraine)

Kalashnikov Concern, a subsidiary of the Russian state-owned defense conglomerate Rostec, announced on April 27 that Russian forces in Ukraine are receiving Russian BMP-3 infantry fighting vehicles (IFVs) equipped with a 4S24 dynamic protection system, which reportedly protects IFVs from grenades or anti-tank guided missile (ATGM) strikes.[93] Kalashnikov Concern announced the new protection system in 2023 and stated that it has been supplying the newly equipped IFVs since the beginning of 2024.[94]

Ukrainian Defense Industrial Efforts (Ukrainian objective: Develop its defense industrial base to become more self-sufficient in cooperation with US, European, and international partners)

ISW is not publishing coverage of Ukrainian defense industrial efforts today.

Activities in Russian-occupied areas (Russian objective: Consolidate administrative control of annexed areas; forcibly integrate Ukrainian citizens into Russian sociocultural, economic, military, and governance systems)

ISW is not publishing coverage of Russian-occupied areas of Ukraine today.

Russian Information Operations and Narratives

Belarusian officials aided ongoing Russian efforts to intimidate and demoralize Ukrainian citizens. Belarusian State Security Committee (KGB) Head Ivan Tertel alleged during the All-Belarusian People's Assembly on April 25 that Belarusian volunteers fighting alongside Ukrainian forces, who Tertel claimed are terrorists aiming to invade Belarus, are currently receiving treatment at two hospitals in Kyiv City.[95] Tertel named the addresses of the two hospitals, one of which is a children's hospital, and stated that Belarus will respond decisively and without hesitation in the fight against "terrorism." [96] The Ukrainian Security Service (SBU) reported that Tertel's comments support ongoing Russian information operations that aim to demoralize Ukrainians but that Ukrainian officials had to consider the comments as a real threat.[97] The Kyiv Oblast Military Administration reported that Ukrainian officials evacuated the two hospitals due to the safety concerns.[98] Russian forces have targeted hospitals, children's hospitals, and areas where it was clearly marked that children were sheltering since the start of the full-scale invasion, and Ukrainian officials are understandably attentive to any possible threats against these targets.[99] Targeting medical infrastructure or combatants who have been rendered *hors de combat* due to injury is a violation of international law.[100]

Russian officials continue to portray Ukrainian strikes against legitimate military targets in occupied Ukraine and in Russia as “terrorist attacks” in order to threaten Ukraine and the West with escalation. United Kingdom (UK) Defense Chief of Staff Admiral Tony Radakin stated on April 25 that Ukrainian operations targeting the Russian deep rear will become a feature of the war as Ukraine gains more long-range strike capabilities.[101] The Russian Embassy to the UK characterized Radakin’s statements as justification for “terrorism” on April 27, part of routine Russian efforts to label legitimate Ukrainian strikes as “terrorist” attacks.[102] Ukraine, as a country defending against an existential war of aggression, has every right to target both Russian military infrastructure and key elements of Russia’s war fighting capabilities within occupied Ukraine and within Russia. Russian efforts to label legitimate Ukrainian military operations as “terrorism” aim to prompt the West into self-deterrence over fears of escalation while generating further Russian domestic support for the war in Ukraine.[103]

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

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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