

# [***There s A Very Good Reason Ukraine Wants German Taurus Missiles. They Fly Farther.***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:68WP-BRR1-JBCM-F0GM-00000-00&context=1516831)

Forbes.com

August 8, 2023 Tuesday

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**Length:** 711 words

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**Highlight:** There are some minor differences in seekers and stealth qualities between British, French and German cruise missiles, but the big difference between them is their range.

**Body**

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A German air force Typhoon fighter armed with Taurus missiles.

Wikimedia Commons

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You don t have to ask Russian commanders how they feel about the British and French cruise missiles the Ukrainian air force s sole bomber regiment the 7th Tactical Aviation Brigade has been firing at warehouses, repair depots and bridges in Russian-occupied Ukraine.

No, you only need to observe Russian actions in the weeks since Ukrainian and allied technicians first integrated the British Storm Shadow and similar French SCALP cruise missiles on the 7th Brigade s aging Sukhoi Su-24M/MR supersonic bombers.

Russian forceshave devoted a growing shareof their own bomber and missile assets to striking at the 7th Brigade s base in Starokostiantyniv in western Ukraine. So far without success. The brigade routinely gets advance notice of incoming Russian strikes ... and scatters its planes and crews to outlying airstrips**before** the Russian munitions arrive.

Russian commanders undoubtedly are frustrated. And their attitudes are likely to get worse if German ***politics*** ultimately sort themselves out and Berlin finally, belatedly, pledges to Ukraine the German-made Taurus cruise missile a munition in the same class as the 1.5-ton Storm Shadow and SCALP, but much farther-flying.

Seventh Brigade Su-24s firing Storm Shadows and SCALPs have made life difficult for the Russians. The same bombers firing Tauruses would make life even**more**difficult by deepening the expanse of occupied Ukraine that the twin-engine, two-person Sukhois can strike while**also**staying entirely out of range of all but the farthest-firing Russian air-defenses.

Arming the Su-24s with British and French cruise missiles radically has altered the fortunes of the 7th Brigade s pilots and navigators. Now that its bombers don t have to fly anywhere near a target in order to destroy it, the brigade s loss rate has dropped from roughly a bomber a month practically to zero bombers: it s written off just one this year.

The German Taurus missile, which can travel around 210 miles nearly a third farther than a Storm Shadow or SCALP can travel would make the bombers even**safer**, by allowing them to stand off farther from Russian defenses. Perhaps, in certain scenarios, even beyond the reach of the 240-mile-range S-400 surface-to-air missile system.

Alternatively, the Ukrainian crews could accept the same SAM risk and fire their German missiles deeper into occupied Ukraine, even striking at targets in southern Crimea, where the Storm Shadows and SCALPs probably can t reach. At least not at acceptable risk to the bomber crews launching them.

All three missiles the British, French and German ones are similar in size, payload and guidance. All three are subsonic. There are some minor differences in seekers and stealth qualities, but the**big**difference between the missiles is their respective engines. The Storm Shadow and SCALP have turbojets. The Taurus has a turbofan.

In a turbojet, air travels into the engine, combusts then travels**out**of the engine. In a turbofan a more modern engine type there s a fan in the front of the engine that blows the air through the engine core, making it more efficient for a given weight and power.

It s that extra efficiency that lends the Taurus greater range compared to the otherwise similar Storm Shadow and SCALP. Greater range that could represent another step change in the rapidly increasing firepower of the Ukrainian air force s sole bomber brigade.

But that increase in capability hinges on ***politics***, as most things in war usually do. Kyiv for monthshas been askingBerlin for Tauruses. But in interviews in June and July, German chancellor Olaf Scholz and minister of defense BorisPistorius both said Germany would**not**supply Ukraine with long-range missiles. Scholz and Pistorious clearly view the missiles as escalatory.

But support for Ukrainian Tauruses is growing inside Scholz s own Social Democratic Party. Andreas Schwarz, a member of parliament from the SPD,now is calling onBerlin to donate the cruise missiles to Ukraine.

The 7th Brigade s bomber crews surely can t wait. Russian commanders, on the other hand, might be feeling a growing sense of dread as the Ukrainians shared dream of Taurus-armed Su-24s becomes a reality.

**Load-Date:** August 8, 2023

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