

# Russian Offensive Campaign Assessment, October 8, 2025



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## Toplines

**Russian President Vladimir Putin remains committed to his theory of victory, which holds that Russia can outlast the West and Ukraine in a war of attrition, and his demand for Ukraine's full capitulation.** Putin met with the Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) and General Staff leadership, Federal Security Service (FSB) Head Alexander Bortnikov, and the commanders of the Russian groupings of forces on October 7 and claimed that Russian forces seized 4,900 square kilometers of territory in Ukraine so far in 2025 — roughly the size of Delaware.<sup>[1]</sup> ISW has observed evidence to assess that Russian forces have only seized 3,561 square kilometers in 2025. Putin claimed that Ukrainian forces are retreating along the entire line of contact and that the Russian defense industrial base (DIB) is meeting all the Russian military's weapons and equipment needs at an accelerated pace. Putin claimed that Russia remains committed to its goal of “unconditionally” achieving all its objectives in the war. Russian Chief of the General Staff Army General Valery Gerasimov claimed that Russian forces are advancing in “practically all directions” on the front.<sup>[2]</sup> Putin’s and Gerasimov’s claims are in line with Putin’s long held theory of victory, which assumes that Russian forces will be able to continue gradual advances indefinitely, prevent Ukraine from conducting successful counteroffensive operations, and win a war of attrition against Ukrainian forces.<sup>[3]</sup> Putin continues to believe that the Russian military and economy can outlast and overcome Western support for Ukraine and Ukraine’s own ability to continue defending against Russian aggression. Kremlin officials, including Putin, have repeatedly affirmed their dedication to achieving Russia’s original war goals from 2021 and 2022.<sup>[4]</sup> Putin’s public statements continue to demonstrate his unwillingness to engage in good-faith negotiations that result in anything less than full Ukrainian capitulation and his determination to protract the war to achieve his war aims on the battlefield.

**Putin acknowledged Ukraine's long-range strike campaign against Russian oil refineries amidst ongoing gasoline shortages and price surges in Russia and occupied Ukraine.** Putin stated on October 7 that Ukraine is striking deep into Russian territory but attempted to downplay the significance of Ukraine’s strike campaign, claiming that it “will not help.”<sup>[5]</sup> Putin stated that Russia’s primary task is to ensure the safety of Russian civilians, strategic facilities, and energy infrastructure. Ukraine has intensified its strikes against Russian oil refineries, exacerbating gasoline shortages across Russia and occupied Ukraine and causing gasoline prices to skyrocket at the pump.<sup>[6]</sup> Russia is turning to Belarus to alleviate its limited gasoline supplies in Russia. Reuters reported on October 7 that industry sources stated that Belarus increased its rail-transported gasoline exports to Russia by four times month-on-month in September 2025.<sup>[7]</sup> Belarus reportedly exported 49,000 metric tons of gasoline or 14,500 barrels per day to the Russian domestic market and 33,000 tons of diesel fuel in September 2025.

A Kremlin-affiliated milblogger expressed concern about Ukraine's strike campaign and criticized the Kremlin's failure to protect Russia's energy infrastructure. The milblogger claimed on October 8 that Ukrainian forces are striking Russian oil infrastructure to maximize economic damage in Russia.[8] The milblogger claimed that Ukraine's demonstrated ability to target refineries 2,000 kilometers into Russian territory, which was previously outside of Ukrainian strike capability radius, raises concerns for Russia. The milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces are specifically targeting the electrical desalting units with atmospheric-vacuum tubes (ELOU-AVT) within the oil refineries, which the milblogger characterized as the "heart" of the refineries that play a key role in processing and separating crude oil. The milblogger claimed that growing Ukrainian strike capabilities threaten infrastructure in Russia's deep rear and are especially concerning given Russia's dependency on energy prices to fund its war in Ukraine. The milblogger called on Russian authorities to pay more attention to protecting energy infrastructure and criticized Russian authorities' attempts to shift responsibility for protecting oil refineries onto private businesses. Russian milbloggers have repeatedly complained throughout the war about the Kremlin's failure to adapt to repeated successful Ukrainian strikes and to construct protective shelters at critical infrastructure facilities.[9]

**The Kremlin is intensifying its efforts to use defunct US-Russian arms control treaties to gain concessions from the United States on the war in Ukraine.** The Kremlin is moving to withdraw from the Plutonium Management and Disposition Agreement (PMDA), with the Russian State Duma denouncing the agreement on October 8.[10] The PMDA committed the United States and Russia to disposing of at least 34 tons of their stockpiles of weapons-grade plutonium, which is crucial for nuclear weapons production, left over from Cold War era nuclear warheads.[11] Russia and the United States agreed to the PMDA in 2000, and it entered into force in 2011.[12] Putin issued a decree suspending Russia's participation in the agreement in 2016, citing US sanctions against Russia, US laws supporting Ukraine, NATO's eastward expansion, and the claimed buildup of US forces in eastern Europe.[13] The Duma claimed that it denounced the PMDA on October 8 due to "anti-Russian" steps from the United States that have changed the strategic balance that existed at the time of the agreement and that create threats to strategic stability.[14] Russia's Federation Council and Putin still need to approve the denunciation law, but the Kremlin has likely already decided to withdraw from the agreement.[15]

Russian officials largely blamed the United States for not adhering to the PMDA, likely in an effort to use the withdrawal from the agreement as blackmail for further concessions. Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov claimed that Russia's continued adherence to the agreement's obligations is "unacceptable" and "inappropriate." [16] Ryabkov claimed that the United States cannot meet any of Russia's conditions to resume the PMDA as the situation has "radically changed." Ryabkov claimed that the growing "graveyard" of arms control agreements is due to destructive US policies that have "discarded" the principles that underpinned strategic stability for several decades.[17] First Deputy Chairperson of the Duma Committee on International Affairs Vyacheslav Nikonov claimed that Russia and the United States can revisit the PMDA if the United States "behaves well." [18] First Deputy Chairperson of the Duma Defense Committee Alexei Zhuravlev claimed that the West is provoking an arms race such that Russia's adherence to old agreements would be "foolish" since Russia "should have the best weapons in the world." [19] Duma Chairperson Vyacheslav Volodin claimed that those who want to exploit Russia must understand that this is not possible and that Russia should have terminated the PMDA long ago.[20]

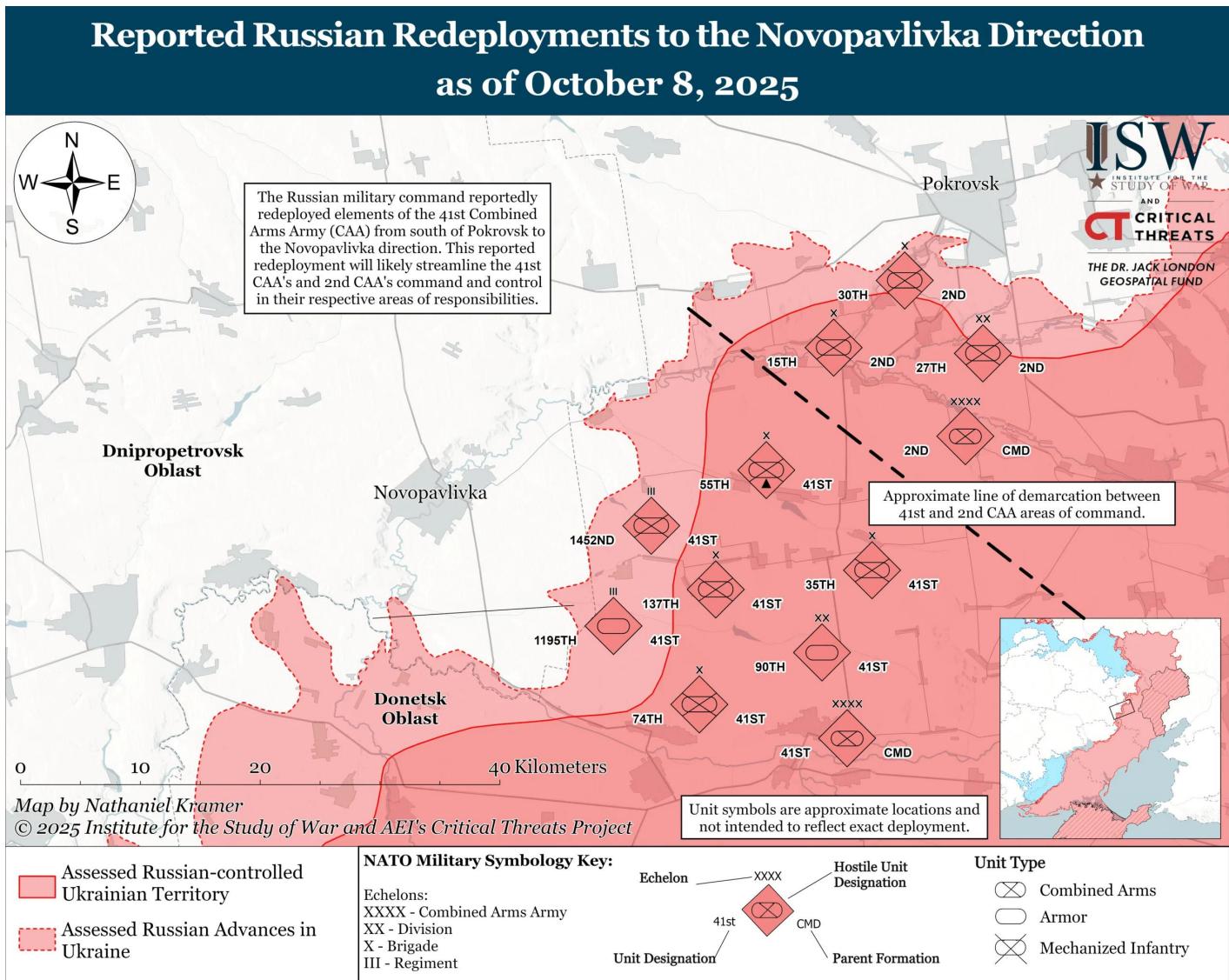
The Duma's move toward withdrawing from the PMDA comes after Russia similarly withdrew from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty in August 2025.[21] The United States suspended its participation in the INF Treaty in 2019 due to Russian violations, and Russia followed suit soon after. The

Kremlin's decisions about the PMDA have followed a similar pattern, with Putin signing the decree to suspend Russia's participation in the treaty in 2016, but Russia is only now moving to withdraw.[22] The Kremlin is likely resurrecting discussions about treaties that Russia suspended years ago in order to achieve political and informational effects that benefit Russia's war effort in Ukraine. Russia appears to be using a combination of carrots and sticks in these efforts, but both avenues aim to push the United States to turn its attention away from the war and toward US-Russian bilateral relations. Russia's withdrawals from arms treaties like the INF Treaty and PMDA aim to use the threat of an arms race to achieve this effect, whereas Russia's recent offer to extend the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) for one year after its expiration in February 2026 aims to entice the United States with the prospect of renewed arms control talks.[23] The Kremlin appears to be shifting away from using promises of bilateral economic and financial deals to entice the United States, as the Kremlin did more frequently in the early months of 2025 after US President Donald Trump entered office.[24]

**The Kremlin's moves to withdraw from PMDA likely immediately aim to prevent US sales of Tomahawk missiles to Ukraine and are part of an ongoing reflexive control campaign.** The Kremlin continued on October 8 its reflexive control campaign aimed at influencing US decision-making on Tomahawk deliveries to Ukraine. Kremlin officials continued to claim that US personnel will have to directly participate in Ukrainian Tomahawk strikes and that the missiles will not affect Russia's determination to achieve its war goals or the situation on the battlefield.[25] Kremlin officials also responded to possible US deliveries of Tomahawks by threatening the United States. Kremlin newswire TASS amplified a claim from Alexander Stepanov from the Institute of Law and National Security at the Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration that the Duma's ratification of Russia's military cooperation agreement with Cuba is Russia's "symmetrical" response to possible Tomahawk deliveries.[26] Stepanov claimed that Russian supplies of Iskander and Oreshnik ballistic missiles to Cuba would be a justified response. Stepanov's claims come against the backdrop of Belarusian Defense Minister Lieutenant General Viktor Khrenin's October 8 meeting in Belarus with Cuban Chief of the General Staff and First Deputy Minister of the Revolutionary Armed Forces Roberto Legra Sotolongo.[27] ISW continues to assess that the Kremlin is pursuing various multi-pronged information efforts to deter the United States from selling Tomahawk missiles to Ukraine.[28] Russia's October 8 withdrawal from the PMDA likely aims to reinforce the Kremlin's efforts to frame US-Russian relations as entering a dangerous stage and to divert US attention from Ukraine to bilateral relations and arms control talks.

**The Russian military command reportedly redeployed elements of the 41st Combined Arms Army (CAA, Central Military District [CMD]) from south of Pokrovsk to the Novopavlivka direction, which will likely improve Russia's command and control (C2) in both sectors.** An open-source analyst on X (formerly Twitter) reported on October 8 that the Russian military command redeployed elements of the 35th, 55th, 74th, and 137th separate motorized rifle brigades (all four of the 41st CAA, CMD) from south of Pokrovsk to the Novopavlivka direction.[29] The X analyst reported that the entire 90th Tank Division (41st CAA) is now operating near Novopavlivka and Ivanivka (southwest of Novopavlivka) and that only elements of the 15th and 30th motorized rifle brigades (both of the 2nd CAA, CMD) and 27th Motorized Rifle Division (2nd CAA) remain south of Pokrovsk. ISW has observed reports that elements of the 1195th Separate Motorized Rifle Regiment (41st CAA) and 1452nd Motorized Rifle Regiment (reportedly of the 41st CAA) are operating in the Novopavlivka direction.[30] Elements of the 2nd CAA have been operating south and east of Pokrovsk since October 2023.[31] The reported redeployments of elements of the 41st CAA to the Novopavlivka direction indicates that almost all of the 41st CAA's units and formations are now operating in the area, which will likely streamline C2 in the area.[32] The decision to redeploy elements of the 41st CAA away from the area south of Pokrovsk while

keeping some elements of the 2nd CAA in the area will also likely streamline the 2nd CAA's C2 in the Pokrovska direction.



The reason for the redeployment of elements of the 41st CAA is unclear at this time. The area east and south of Novopavlivka has been relatively less active recently compared to other areas of the front that Russia is prioritizing, although a Ukrainian military source suggested that Russian forces recently intensified the tempo of attacks in the area.<sup>[33]</sup> The Russian military command may be redeploying 41st CAA elements to allow them to rest and reconstitute away from more active sectors like the area near Pokrovska. The redeployments may alternatively indicate that the Russian military command intends to intensify offensive operations in the Novopavlivka direction. Russian forces may aim to collapse the Ukrainian salient near Novopavlivka, level the frontline, and reduce the threat of Ukrainian counterattacks on Russia's flanks in the area. An intensification of Russian offensive operations near Novopavlivka would likely also aim to generate informational effects about deeper Russian advances into Dnipropetrovsk Oblast. The Russian military command may have reduced the force grouping south of Pokrovska as it intends to deprioritize frontal assaults on Pokrovska itself from the south, choosing instead to focus on efforts to envelop Pokrovska from the north.

**European officials continue to report drone sightings and GPS interference in European airspace.** Lithuanian National Radio and Television (LRT) reported that GPS interference forced a Ryanair plane flying from Vienna, Austria, to Vilnius, Lithuania, on October 8 to abort its first landing attempt.[34] The pilot was able to land the plane after a subsequent landing attempt. Alain Quevrin, the country director for arms manufacturing company Thales Belgium, stated on October 8 that the company has seen an increased number of drones flying over its top-secret facilities as compared to a few months ago.[35] Quevrin reported that drones have flown over the company's site in Liege, the only Belgian facility that assembles and stores 70mm rockets.[36] Ukrainian forces notably use Thales 70mm rockets. European officials have yet to attribute the GPS interference or drone sightings to Russia. Russia has engaged in a multipronged campaign against Europe since at least 2022 that has included drone incursions into European airspace, GPS jamming of planes flying over eastern Europe, and sabotage operations targeting Europe's defense industrial base (DIB).[37]

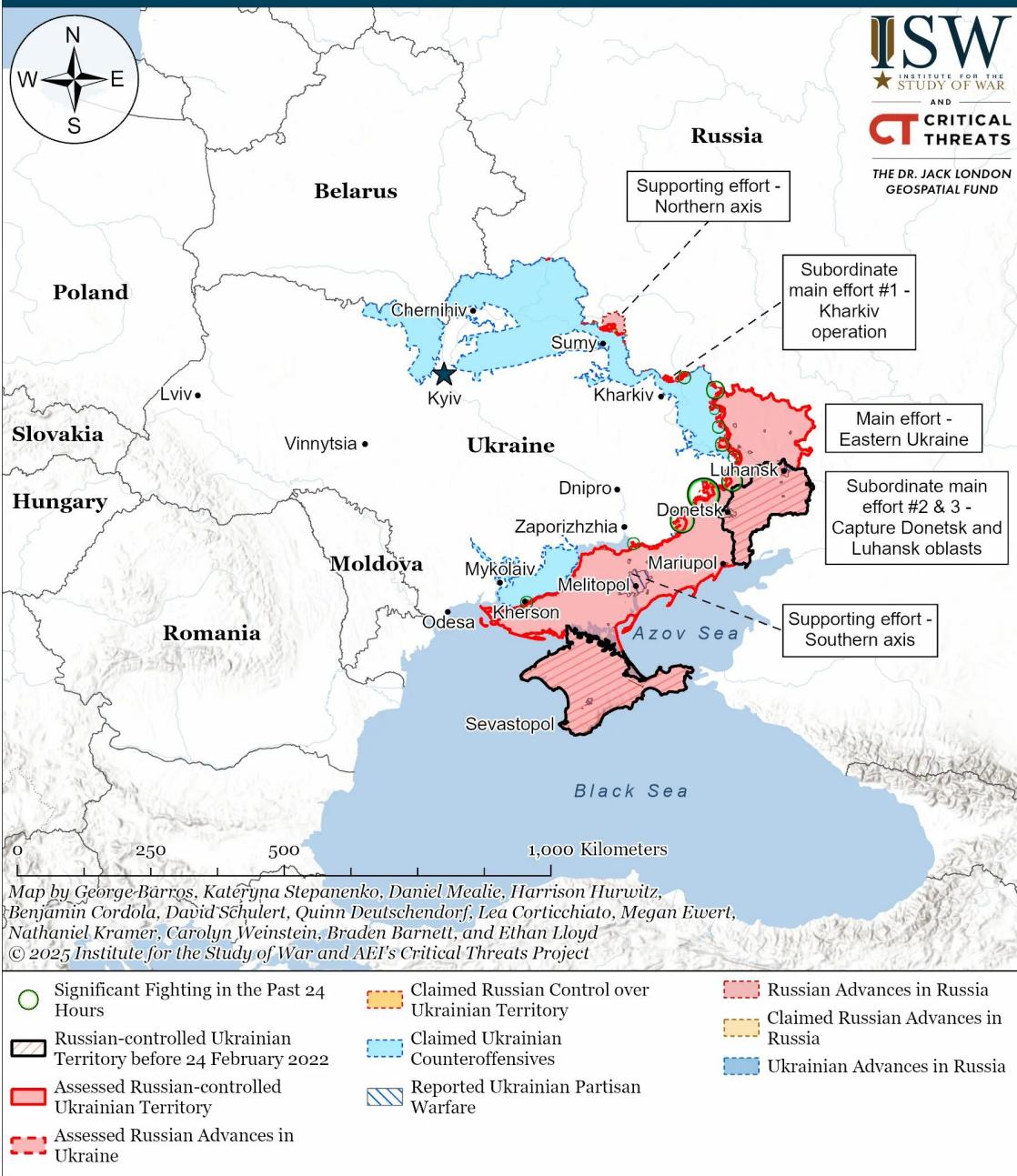
**European officials continued to warn that Russia's recent drone attacks against Europe are part of a broader campaign to generate fear and disunity in Europe.** European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen stated on October 8 that recent drone incursions into European airspace are part of a "deliberate and targeted" campaign to unsettle European citizens.[38] Von der Leyen stated that one or two drones in European airspace could be a "mistake" or "coincidence" but that three to ten incursions constitute a pattern.[39] Von der Leyen stated that Russia is using the incursions to try to sow division among European states.[40] ISW continues to assess that Russia's increased covert and overt attacks against Europe indicate that Russia has entered "Phase 0" — the informational and psychological condition setting phase — of its campaign to prepare for a possible NATO-Russia war in the future.[41] Russia also likely aims to pressure Europe to decrease its support for Ukraine out of fear that continued support will increase Russia's attacks.[42]

## Key Takeaways

1. **Russian President Vladimir Putin remains committed to his theory of victory, which holds that Russia can outlast the West and Ukraine in a war of attrition, and his demand for Ukraine's full capitulation.**
2. **Putin acknowledged Ukraine's long-range strike campaign against Russian oil refineries amidst ongoing gasoline shortages and price surges in Russia and occupied Ukraine.**
3. **The Kremlin is intensifying its efforts to use defunct US-Russian arms control treaties to gain concessions from the United States on the war in Ukraine.**
4. **The Kremlin's moves to withdraw from PMDA likely immediately aim to prevent US sales of Tomahawk missiles to Ukraine and are part of an ongoing reflexive control campaign.**
5. **The Russian military command reportedly redeployed elements of the 41st Combined Arms Army (CAA, Central Military District [CMD]) from south of Pokrovsk to the Novopavlivka direction, which will likely improve Russia's command and control (C2) in both sectors.**
6. **European officials continue to report drone sightings and GPS interference in European airspace.**
7. **European officials continued to warn that Russia's recent drone attacks against Europe are part of a broader campaign to generate fear and disunity in Europe.**
8. **Ukrainian forces recently advanced in northern Sumy Oblast and Novopavlivka, and Russian forces recently advanced near Kupyansk, Siversk, and Pokrovsk and in the Kostyantynivka-Druzhkivka tactical area.**

# Assessed Control of Terrain in the Russo-Ukrainian War

## October 8, 2025 at 1:30 PM ET



**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.**

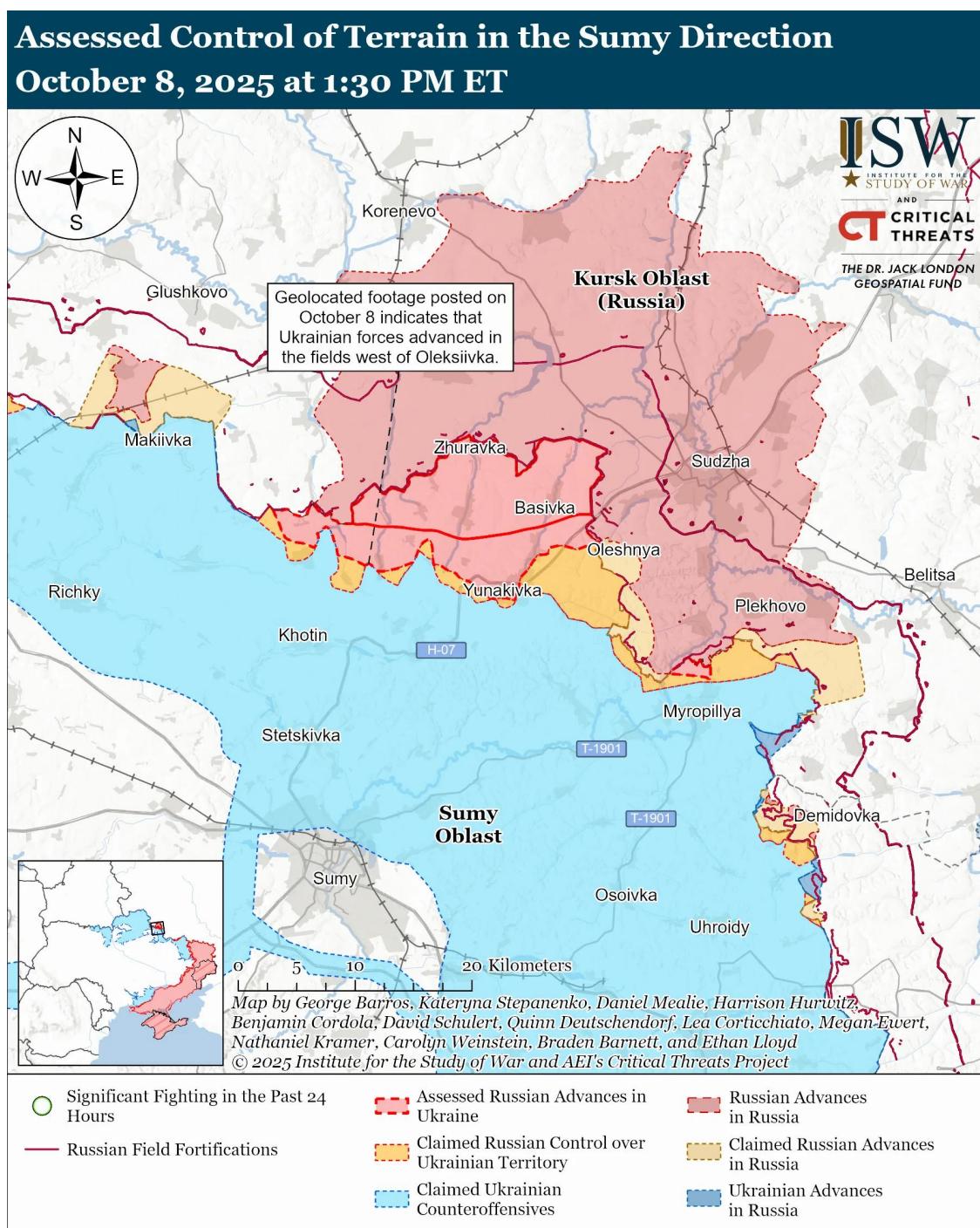
# **Ukrainian Operations in The Russian Federation**

Nothing Significant To Report.

## Russian Supporting Effort: Northern Axis

**Russian objective: Create defensible buffer zones in northern Ukraine along the international border**

**Ukrainian forces recently advanced in northern Sumy Oblast.**



Assessed Ukrainian advances: Geolocated footage published on October 8 indicates that Ukrainian forces recently advanced in southern Oleksiivka (north of Sumy City).[43]

Russian forces attacked in Kursk and Sumy oblasts, including northwest of Sumy City near Novyi Put and Bezsalivka, north of Sumy City near Oleksiivka, and northeast of Sumy City near Yunakivka and Varachyne, on October 7 and 8.[44] Russian milbloggers claimed that Ukrainian forces counterattacked near Oleksiivka and Novomykolaivka (north of Sumy City).[45]

A Russian milblogger reportedly affiliated with the Northern Grouping of Forces claimed that Russian forces are facing issues with supplies near Bezsalivka and Yunakivka and that Russian forces are facing heavy losses near Novyi Put.[46] The milblogger claimed that Ukrainian drones are preventing Russian forces from penetrating Ukrainian lines in Novyi Put and that Russian forces are accumulating forces for attacks on Ryzhivka (northwest of Sumy City).[47] The milblogger claimed that Russian airborne (VDV) forces left Bezsalivka without fully clearing the settlement and that only one company from the 1st Battalion of the Russian Aerospace Forces (VKS) entered the settlement after three VDV companies left.[48] The milblogger claimed that elements of the 1st Battalion suffer casualties daily and receive no artillery support. The milblogger claimed that Russian forces cannot enter Bezsalivka as Ukrainian forces control the nearby windbreaks (likely referring to fire control) and are relying on drones for supplies. The milblogger claimed that elements of the 3rd Battalion of the Russian 30th Motorized Rifle Regiment (72nd Motorized Rifle Division, 44th Army Corps [AC], Leningrad Military District [LMD]) and elements of the 810th Naval Infantry Brigade (Black Sea Fleet) are operating near Oleksiivka but that the 3rd Battalion of the 30th Motorized Rifle Regiment only has roughly 70 soldiers remaining and is suffering heavy losses.[49] The milblogger claimed that elements of the 30th Motorized Rifle Brigade often attack "in a herd," whereas elements of the 810th Naval Infantry Brigade "carefully" attack in small groups and suffer a reduced number of losses.

Order of Battle: Drone operators of the Russian 7th Airborne (VDV) Division are reportedly striking Ukrainian artillery systems near Krovne (northwest of Sumy City) with fiber optic drones.[50] Drone operators of the 382nd Naval Infantry Battalion of the 810th Naval Infantry Brigade are reportedly operating in Sumy Oblast.[51]

## Russian Main Effort: Eastern Ukraine

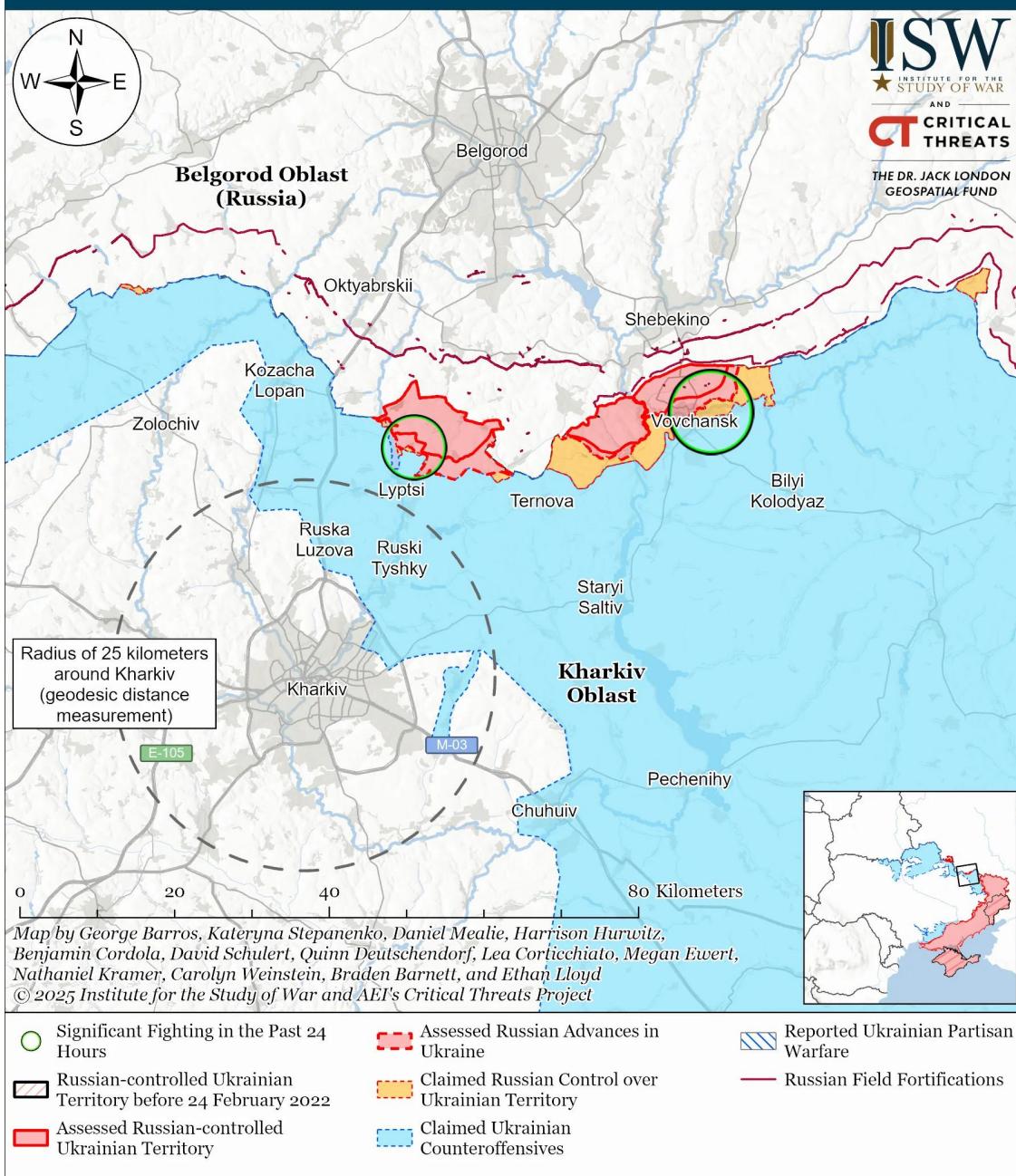
### Russian Subordinate Main Effort #1

**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 offensive operations in northern Kharkiv Oblast on October 8 but did not advance.**

# Assessed Control of Terrain in the Kharkiv Direction

## October 8, 2025 at 1:30 PM ET



Russian forces attacked north of Kharkiv City toward Lypsti and northeast of Kharkiv City near Synelnykove, Vovchansk, Tykhe, and Vovchanski Khutory on October 7 and 8.[52]

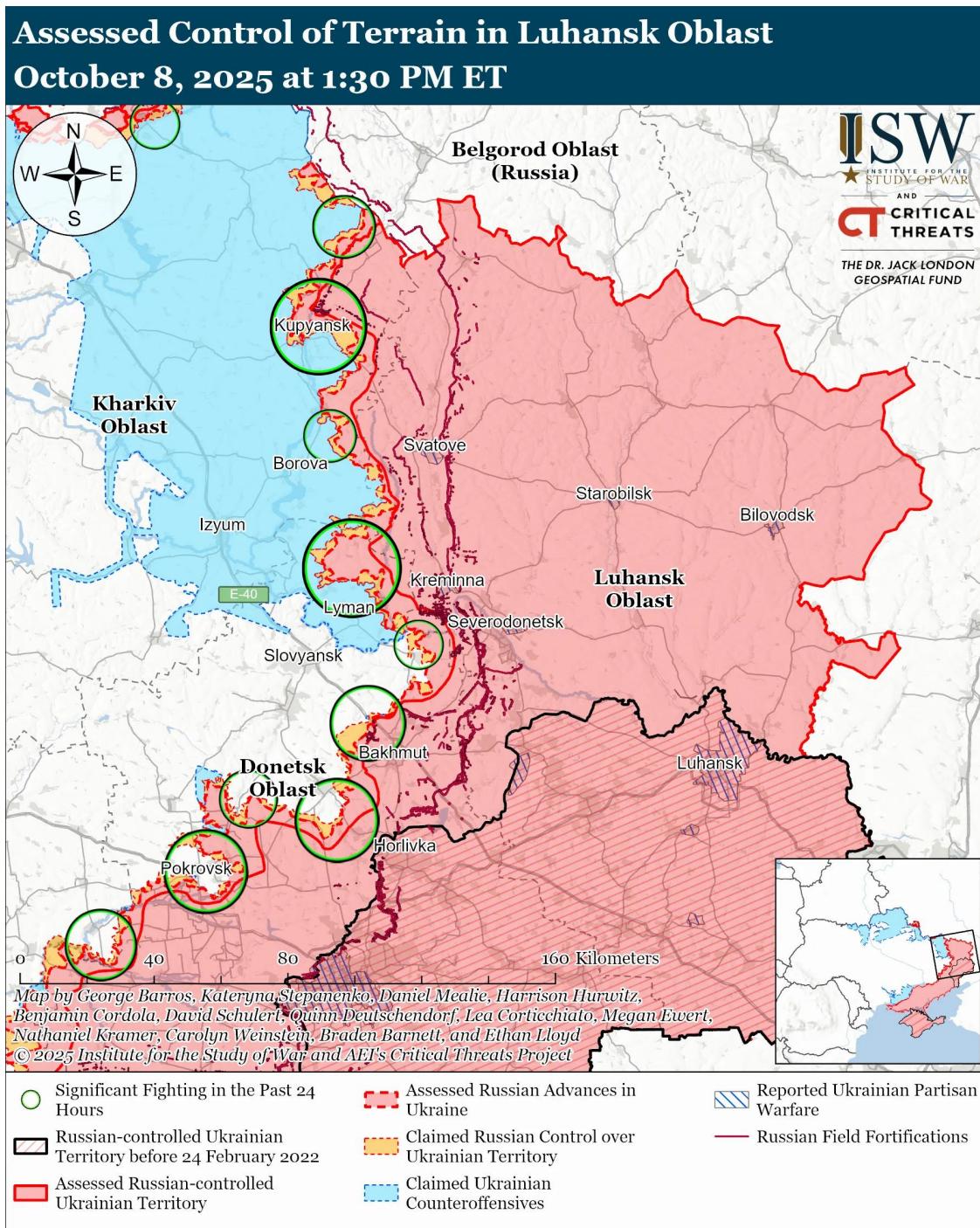
Order of Battle: Drone operators of the Russian 29th Artillery Regiment (11th Army Corps [AC], Leningrad Military District [LMD]) are reportedly striking Ukrainian positions near Kozacha Lopan (north of Kharkiv City).[53]

**Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Velykyi Burluk direction on October 8 but did not advance.**

Russian forces attacked northeast of Velykyi Burluk near Ambarne and toward Dovhenke and east of Velykyi Burluk near Odradne on October 7 and 8.[54]

## Russian Subordinate Main Effort #2

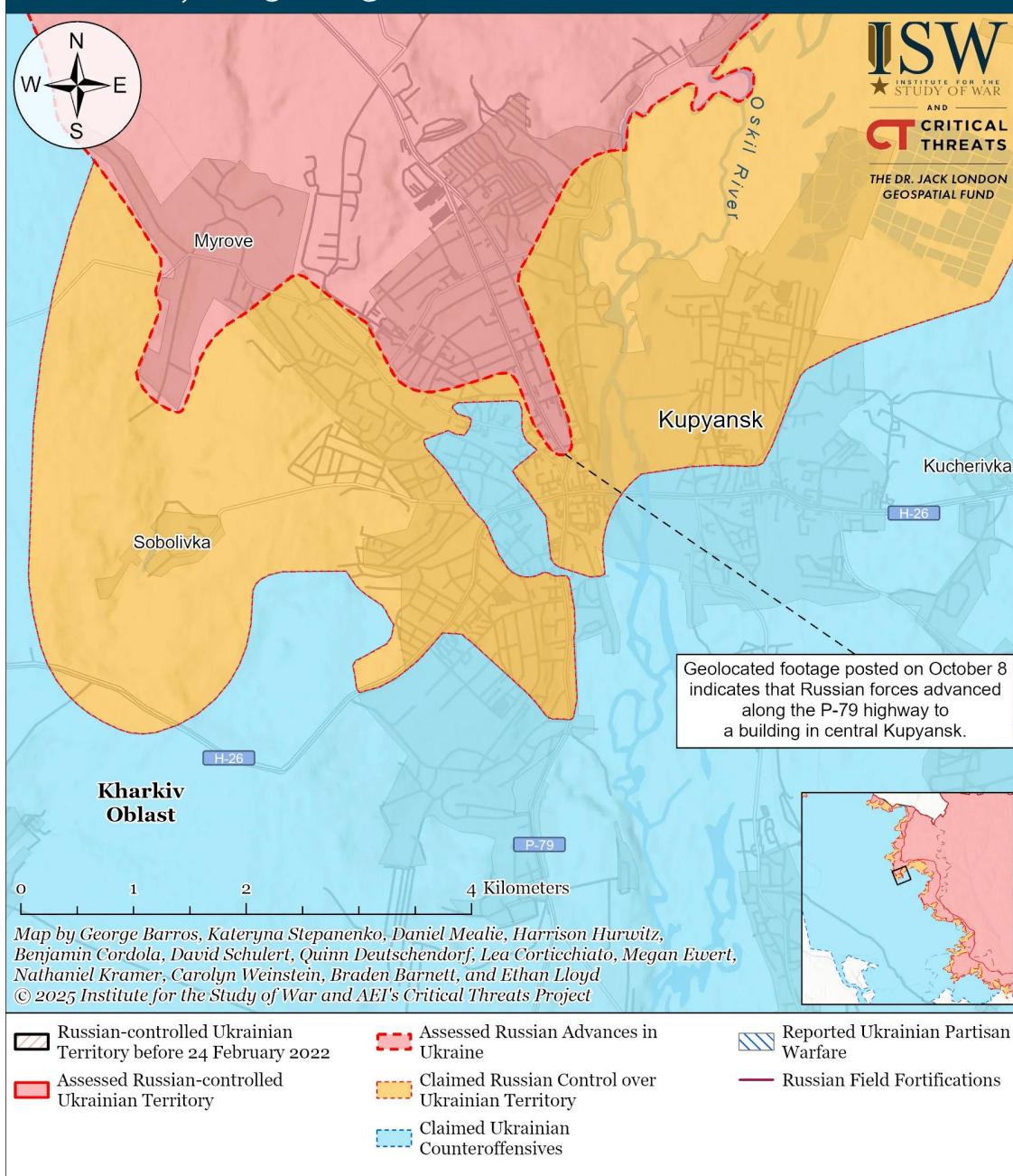
**Russian objective: Capture the remainder of Luhansk Oblast and push westward into eastern Kharkiv Oblast and encircle northern Donetsk Oblast**



**Russian forces recently advanced in the Kupyansk direction.**

# Assessed Control of Terrain in Kupyansk

October 8, 2025 at 1:30 PM ET



Assessed Russian advance: Geolocated footage published on October 8 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced along the P-79 Kupyansk-Chuhuiv highway in central Kupyansk.[55]

Russian forces attacked near Kupyansk itself; north of Kupyansk near Zapadne and toward Kutkivka; northeast of Kupyansk near Krasne Pershe and Kamyanka and toward Dvorichanske, Bolohivka, and Kolodyazne; east of Kupyansk near Petropavlivka; and southeast of Kupyansk near Stepova Novoselivka and toward Pishchane on October 7 and 8.[56]

A Russian milblogger claimed on October 8 that Russian forces have resumed fighting in Kupyansk after a period of infrequent ground activity.[57]

**Russian forces conducted limited offensive operations north of Borova toward Novoplatonivka on October 7 and 8, but did not advance.[58]**

**Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Lyman direction on October 8 but did not advance.**

Russian forces attacked northwest of Lyman near Drobysheve, Derylove, Novoselivka, Shandryholove, and Serednie; north of Lyman near Karpivka and Novomykhailivka; east of Lyman near Zarichne and Torske; and southeast of Lyman near Yampil on October 7 and 8.[59]

The spokesperson of a Ukrainian brigade operating in the Lyman direction reported on October 8 that Russian forces are using infiltration tactics to bypass Ukrainian positions and establish positions in basements and other shelters.[60] The spokesperson stated that Russian forces are attacking in groups of one to two soldiers instead of three to four. The spokesperson stated that Russian forces are reducing the size of their assault groups but increasing the radius of their attacks and attacking from different points to distract Ukrainian drones.

A Russian milblogger denied Russian claims that Russian forces control half of Yampil, as Russian forces are striking Ukrainian positions within the settlement.[61]

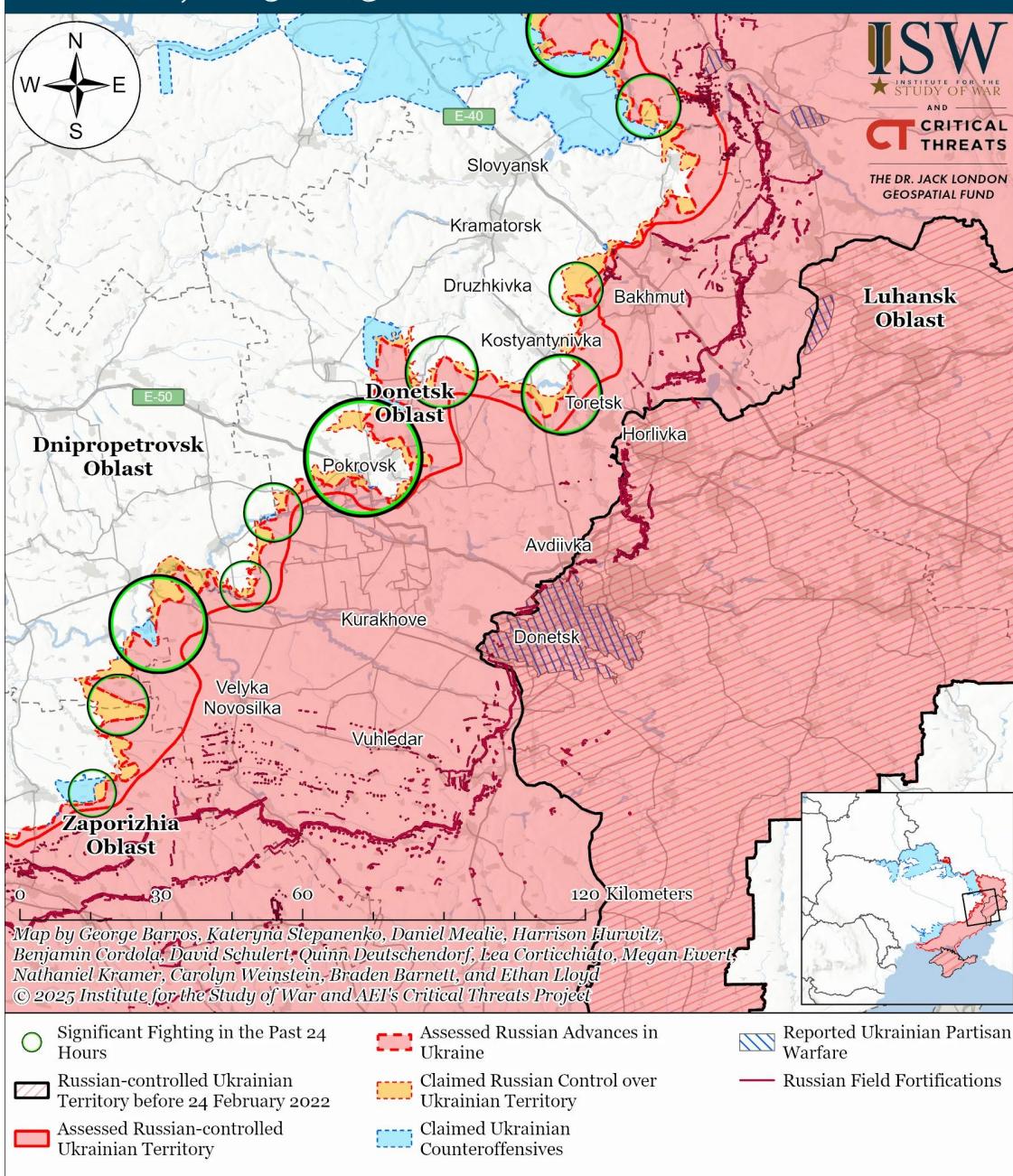
Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 67th and 144th motorized rifle divisions (both of the 20th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Moscow Military District [MMD]) are reportedly operating near Myrne (northeast of Lyman).[62]

### **Russian Subordinate Main Effort #3**

**Russian objective: Capture the entirety of Donetsk Oblast, the claimed territory of Russia's proxies in Donbas, and advance into Dnipropetrovsk Oblast**

# Assessed Control of Terrain in Donetsk Oblast

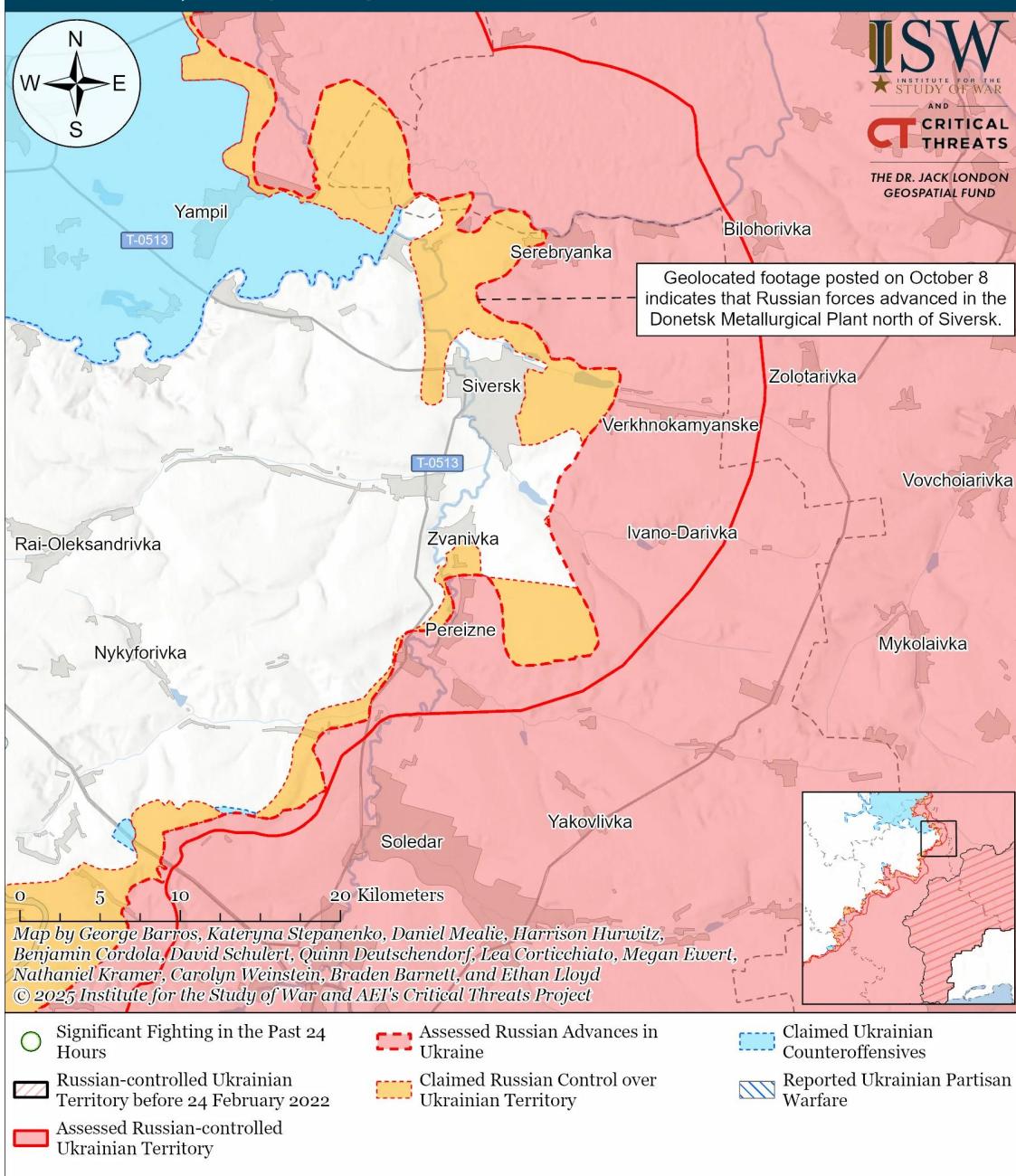
October 8, 2025 at 1:30 PM ET



**Russian forces recently advanced in the Siversk direction.**

# Assessed Control of Terrain in the Siversk Direction

## October 8, 2025 at 1:30 PM ET

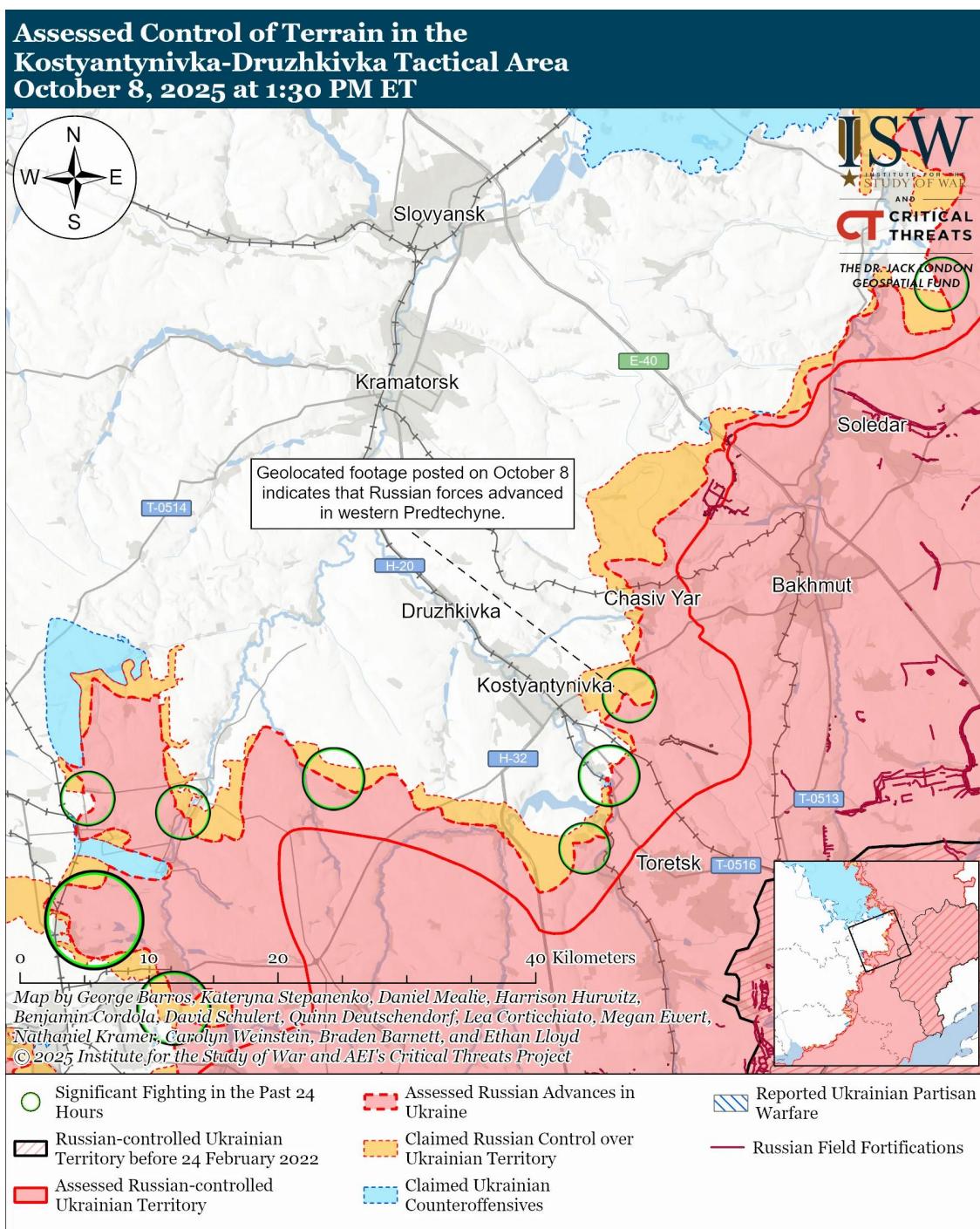


Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on October 8 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced north of Siversk.[63]

Unconfirmed claims: Russian sources claimed that Russian forces advanced northwest of Pereizne and to the southern outskirts of Zvanivka (both south of Siversk).[64]

Russian forces attacked northwest of Siversk near Dronivka, northeast of Siversk near Hryhorivka, and southeast of Siversk near Serebryanka on October 7 and 8.[65] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces counterattacked south of Zvanivka.[66]

## Russian forces recently advanced in the Kostyantynivka-Druzhkivka tactical area.



Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on October 8 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced in western Predtechyne (east of Kostyantynivka). [67]

Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced along the T-0516 Toretsk-Kostyantynivka highway east of Ivanopillya, along the northern bank of the Kleban-Byk Reservoir, west of Kostyantynivka (all south of Kostyantynivka), and northwest of Rusyn Yar (south of Druzhkivka). [68]

Russian forces attacked east of Kostyantynivka near Predtechyne; southeast of Kostyantynivka near

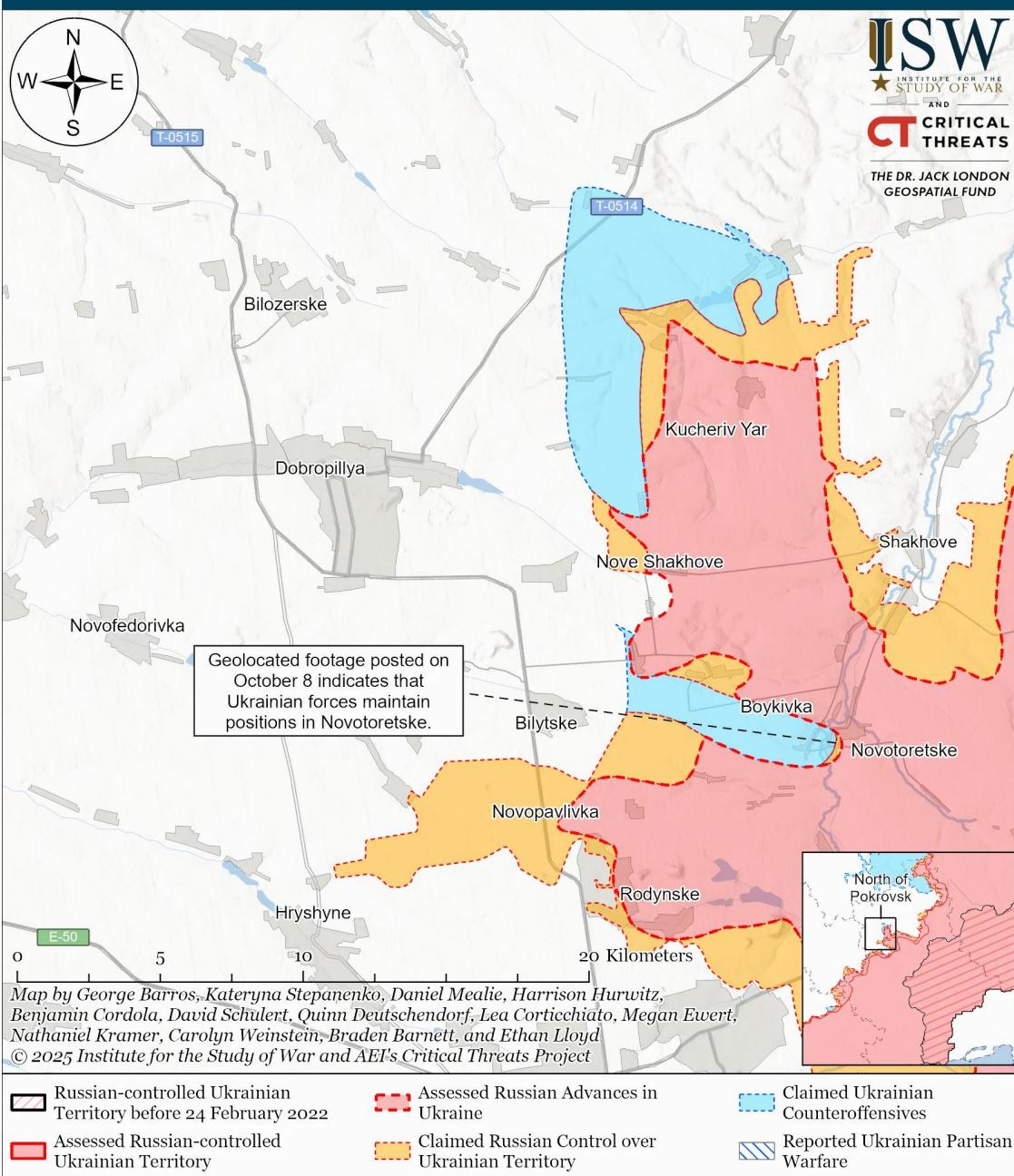
Oleksandro-Shultyne; south of Kostyantynivka near Shcherbynivka, Ivanopillya, Kleban-Byk, and Pleshchiivka; south of Druzhkivka near Rusyn Yar and Poltavka; and southwest of Druzhkivka near Volodymyrivka on October 7 and 8.[69]

Order of Battle: Reconnaissance elements of the Russian 439th Rocket Artillery Brigade and artillery elements of the 238th Artillery Brigade (both of the 8th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Southern Military District [SMD]) are reportedly operating near Pleshchiivka.[70] Drone operators and other elements of the 33rd Motorized Rifle Regiment (20th Motorized Rifle Division, 8th CAA) and 103rd Motorized Rifle Regiment (150th Motorized Rifle Division, 8th CAA) are reportedly operating in the Kostyantynivka direction.[71]

**Ukrainian forces recently maintained positions or advanced in the Dobropillya tactical area.**

# Assessed Control of Terrain in the Dobropillya Tactical Area

## October 8, 2025 at 1:30 PM ET



Refinement of areas under Russian claims: Geolocated footage published on October 8 indicates that Ukrainian forces maintained positions or advanced in central Boykivka and in southern Novotoretske (both southeast of Dobropillya) — areas which Russian sources previously claimed to be under Russian control.[72]

Russian forces attacked northeast of Dobropillya near Kucheriv Yar; east of Dobropillya near Shakhowe and Vilne; and southeast of Dobropillya near Zapovidne, Ivanivka, Dorozhnie, Boykivka, Zatyshok, and Nove Shakhowe on October 7 and 8.[73] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces counterattacked near Zatyshok.[74]

A Russian milblogger and former Storm-Z instructor claimed that Russian reinforcements in the

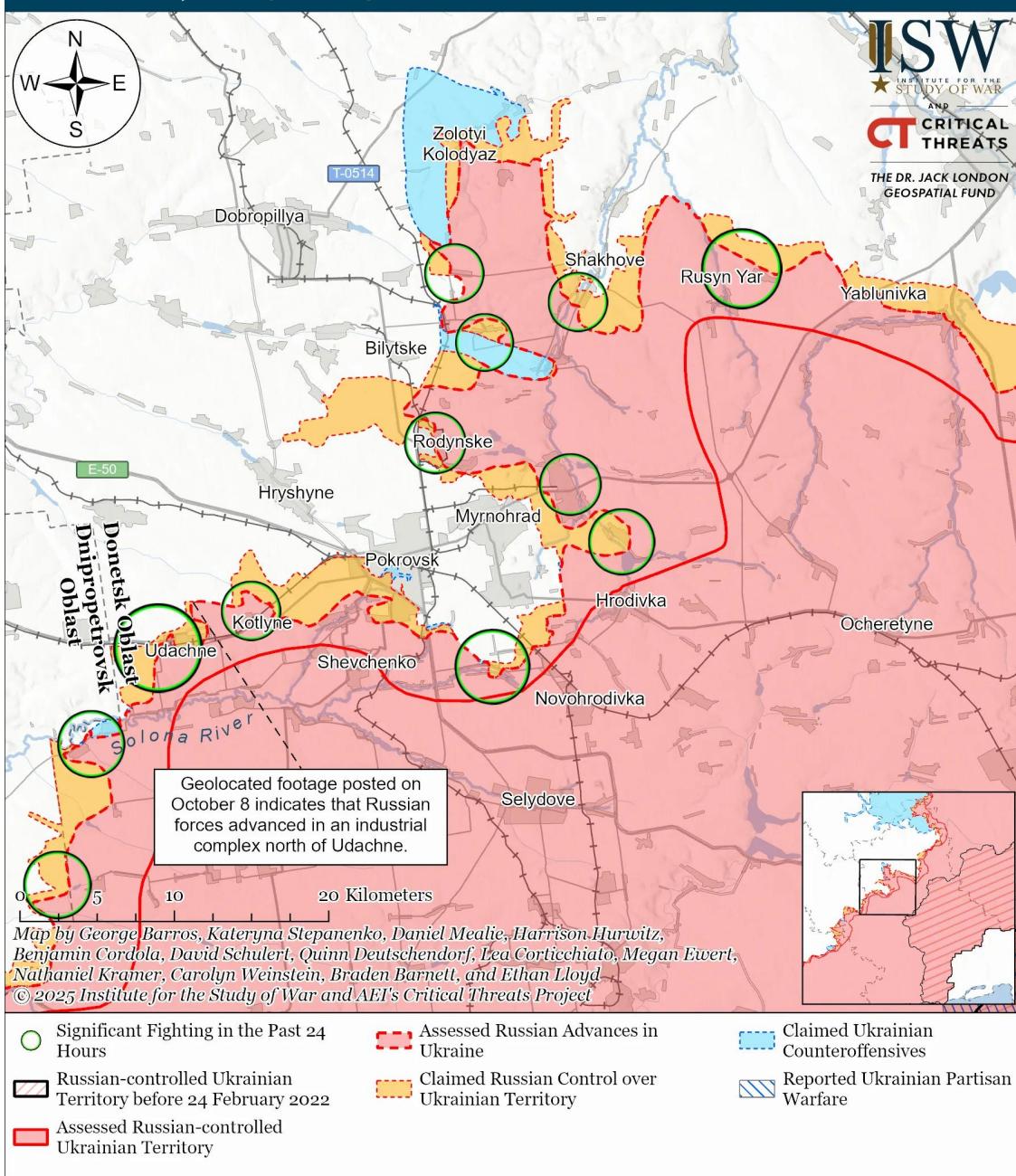
Dobropillya penetration area are mostly composed of older recruits who are incapable of walking 15 kilometers to the frontline while carrying supplies and under Ukrainian drone strikes.[75] The milblogger claimed that the main reinforcements in the area are composed of soldiers who went absent without leave (AWOL) but whom Russian authorities captured, and that the reinforcements often refuse to conduct assaults. The milblogger claimed that issues with Russian crowdfunding efforts and volunteer support, rising prices, and growing materiel losses are making it difficult for Russian forces to provide drone support to assault groups, conduct drone reconnaissance, and adjust fires.

Order of Battle: First-person view (FPV) drone operators of the Russian 80th Sparta Reconnaissance Battalion (51st CAA, formerly 1st Donetsk People's Republic Army Corps [DNR AC], SMD) are reportedly striking Ukrainian positions near Novyi Donbas (east of Dobropillya).[76] Drone operators of the 68th Reconnaissance Battalion of the 20th Motorized Rifle Division (8th CAA, SMD) are reportedly striking Ukrainian positions near Shakhove and Bilytske (southeast of Dobropillya).[77]

**Russian forces recently advanced in the Pokrovsk direction.**

# Assessed Control of Terrain in the Pokrovsk Direction

## October 8, 2025 at 1:30 PM ET



**Assessed Russian advances:** Geolocated footage published on October 8 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced north of Udachne (southwest of Pokrovsk). [78]

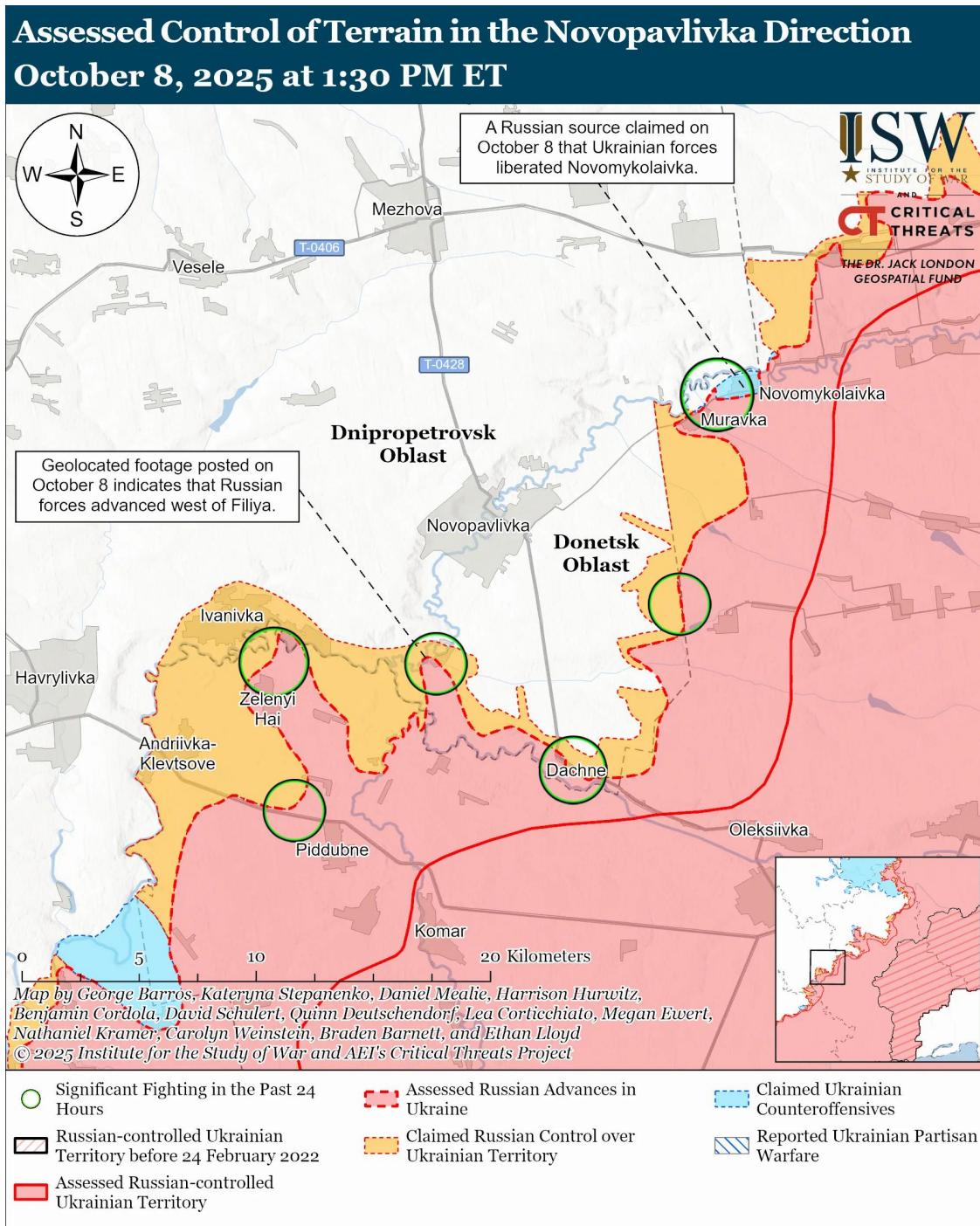
**Unconfirmed claims:** Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces seized Udachne, and advanced north of Udachne and to the M-30 Pokrovsk-Pavlohrad highway in southern Pokrovsk. [79]

Russian forces attacked near Pokrovsk itself; north of Pokrovsk near Rodynske and Sukhetske; northeast of Pokrovsk near Krasnyi Lyman and Novoekonomiche; east of Pokrovsk near Myrnohrad and Myrolyubivka and toward Balahan; southeast of Pokrovsk near Lysivka; and southwest of Pokrovsk near Kotlyne, Udachne, and Molodetske on October 7 and 8. [80] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian

forces counterattacked near Sukhotske.[81]

Order of Battle: Reconnaissance elements of the Russian 56th Separate Spetsnaz Battalion (51st CAA, SMD) are reportedly operating in the Pokrovsk direction.[82]

### **Ukrainian and Russian forces recently advanced in the Novopavlivka direction.**



Assessed Ukrainian advances: A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces recently liberated Novomykolaivka (northeast of Novopavlivka).[83]

Assessed Russian advances: Geolocated footage published on October 8 indicates that Russian forces recently advanced in southern Filiya (south of Novopavlivka).[84]

Russian forces attacked toward Novopavlivka itself; northeast of Novopavlivka near Novomykolaivka and Muravka; east of Novopavlivka near Horikhove; southeast of Novopavlivka near Dachne; and south of Novopavlivka near Filiya on October 7 and 8.[85]

The spokesperson of a Ukrainian brigade operating in the Novopavlivka direction reported that Russian forces have recently increased the tempo of their attacks; are attacking in small infantry groups of two to three servicemembers; and are using Molniya mothership drones to carry and extend the range of FPV drones.[86] The spokesperson stated that Russian forces are trying to infiltrate between Ukrainian positions in order to accumulate at concentration points to wait for reinforcements. The spokesperson stated that Russian drones are waiting along roads to ambush Ukrainian vehicles and that Russian forces are struggling to cross the Vovcha River.

Order of Battle: Elements of the Russian 90th Tank Division (41st CAA, CMD) are reportedly operating in Filiya.[87]

**Russian forces continued offensive operations in the Velykomykhailivka direction on October 8 but did not make confirmed advances.**

Unconfirmed claims: Russian milbloggers claimed that Russian forces advanced in eastern Sosnivka (south of Velykomykhailivka), into Oleksiivka, and in western Verbove (both southeast of Velykomykhailivka).

Russian forces attacked northeast of Velykomykhailivka near Piddubne; east of Velykomykhailivka near Oleksandrohrad, Voskresenka, Sichneve, and Novoselivka; southeast of Velykomykhailivka near Vorone, Komyshuvakha, Sosnivka, Novoheorhiivka, and Zaporizke; south of Velykomykhailivka near Berezove, Stepove, and Kalynivske; and southwest of Velykomykhailivka toward Oleksiivka on October 7 and 8.[88] A Russian milblogger claimed that Ukrainian forces counterattacked near Oleksiivka.[89]

A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian and Ukrainian positions are “mixed” and that both sides are operating in “isolated pockets” in the Velykomykhailivka direction.[90]

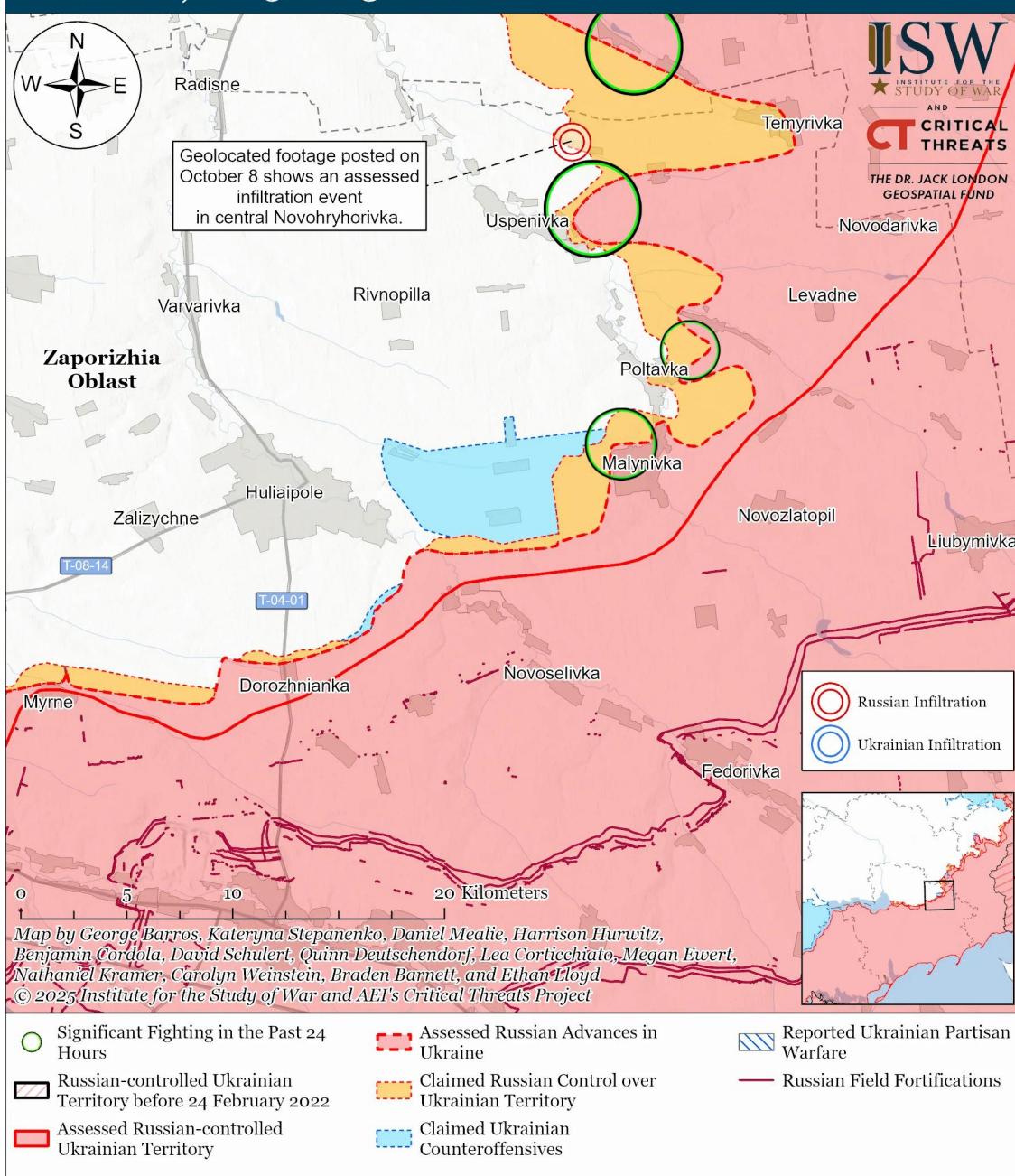
## **Russian Supporting Effort: Southern Axis**

**Russian objective: Maintain frontline positions, secure rear areas against Ukrainian strikes, and advance within tube artillery range of Zaporizhzhia City**

**Russian forces continued offensive operations in eastern Zaporizhia Oblast on October 8 but did not make confirmed advances.**

# Assessed Control of Terrain in Eastern Zaporizhia Oblast

## October 8, 2025 at 1:30 PM ET



**Unconfirmed claims:** The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) claimed on October 8 that elements of the Russian 394th Motorized Rifle Regiment (127th Motorized Rifle Division, 5th Combined Arms Army [CAA], Eastern Military District [EMD]) and 60th Separate Motorized Rifle Brigade (5th CAA) seized Novohryhorivka (northeast of Hulyaipole).[91]

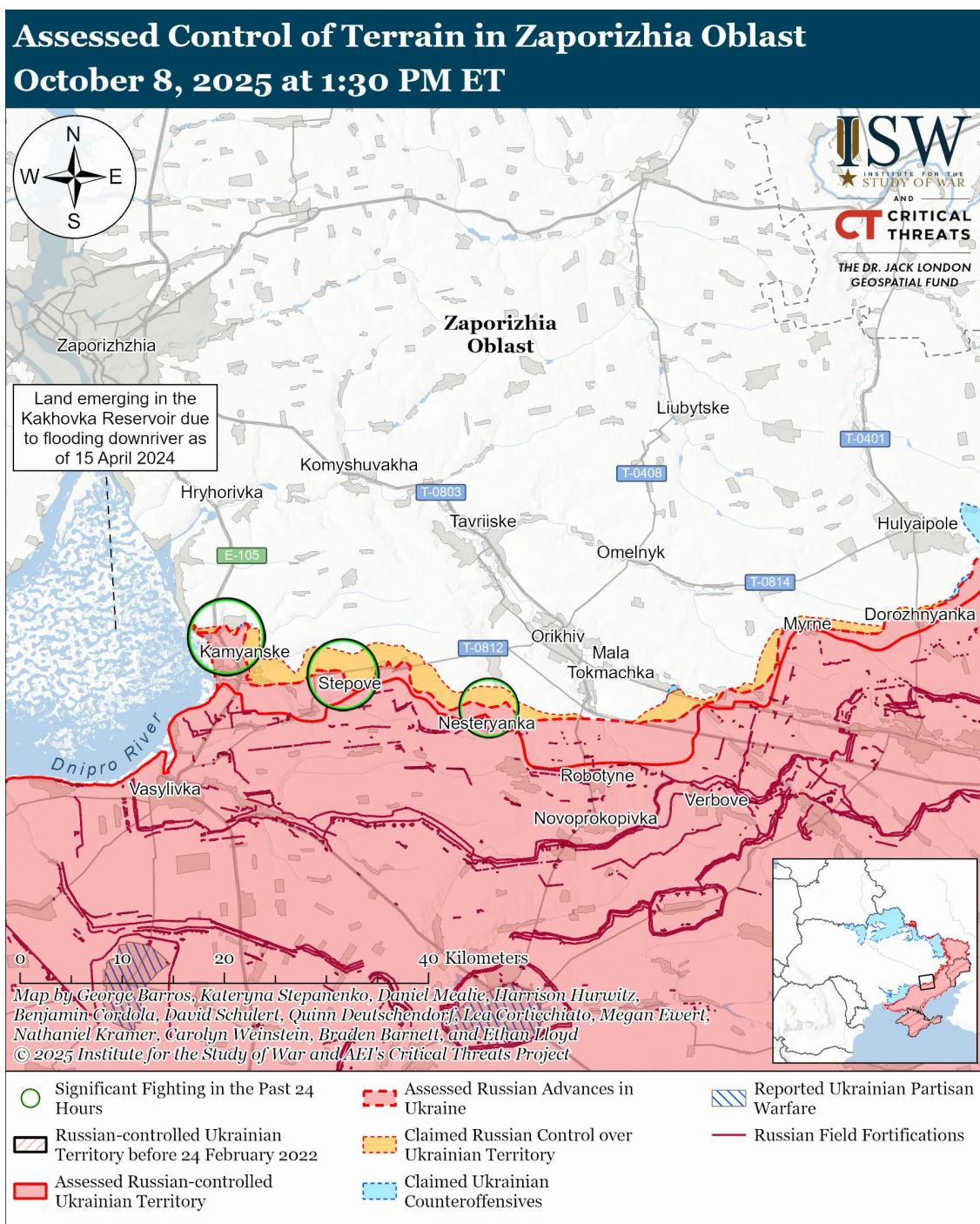
Russian forces attacked northeast of Hulyaipole near Novohryhorivka, Novoivanivka, Okhotnyche, and Poltavka, and east of Hulyaipole near Malynivka on October 7 and 8.

Geolocated footage published on October 8 shows a Russian servicemember assaulting Ukrainian forces and raising a Russian flag in central Novohryhorivka in what ISW assesses was an infiltration mission.[92]

ISW assesses that this event did not advance the forward edge of the battle area (FEBA).

Order of Battle: Drone operators of the Russian 38th Motorized Rifle Brigade (35th CAA, EMD) are reportedly striking in the Polohy (Hulyaipole) direction.[93]

**Russian forces continued offensive operations in western Zaporizhia Oblast on October 8 but did not make confirmed advances.**

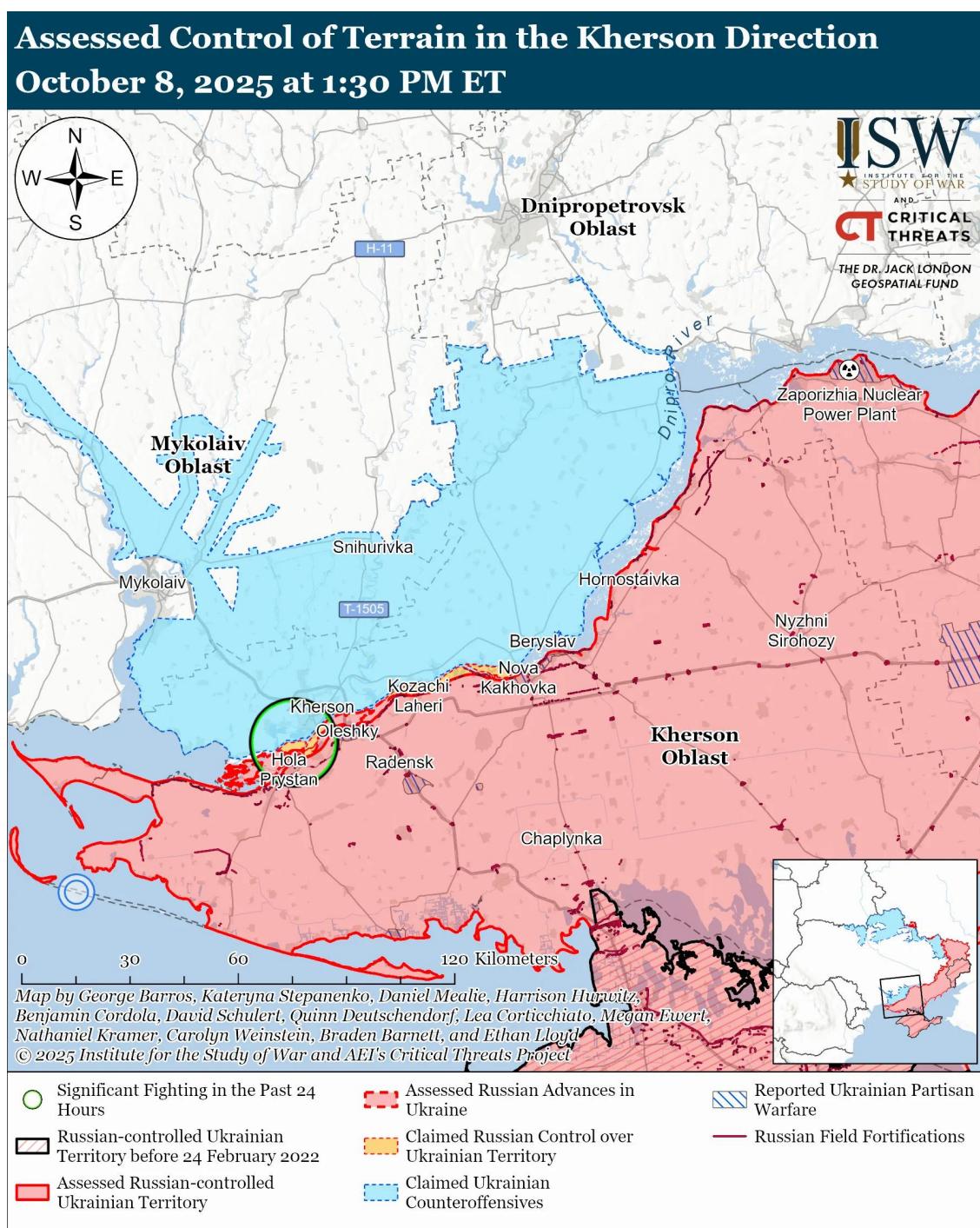


Unconfirmed claims: A Russian milblogger claimed that Russian forces advanced into eastern Mala Tokmachka (southeast of Orikhiv).[94]

Russian forces attacked southeast of Orikhiv near Mala Tokmachka and west of Orikhiv near Novoandriivka, Stepove, Plavni, Stepnohirsk, Prymorske, and Kamyanske on October 7 and 8.[95]

Order of Battle: Drone operators of the Russian 19th Motorized Rifle Division (58th CAA, Southern Military District [SMD]) and elements of the 810th Naval Infantry Brigade (Black Sea Fleet) are reportedly operating in the Zaporizhia direction.[96] Elements of the 70th Motorized Rifle Regiment (42nd Motorized Rifle Division, 58th CAA, SMD) are reportedly operating near Mala Tokmachka and Bilohirya (southeast of Orikhiv).[97]

**Russian forces continued assaults in the Kherson direction on October 8 but did not advance.**



Russian forces attacked unspecified locations in the Kherson direction on October 7 and 8.[98]

The Russian Ministry of Defense (MoD) claimed that Russian forces recently conducted a strike with an Iskander-M ballistic missile against a drone assembly plant Kherson Oblast, and Russian milbloggers claimed that the Russian strike was against Korabelnyi Raion, Kherson City.[99] One Russian milblogger claimed that multiple missile strikes were launched against Ukrainian positions in Dnipro River Delta island zone.[100]

## Russian Air, Missile, and Drone Campaign

### **Russian Objective: Target Ukrainian military and civilian infrastructure in the rear and on the front line**

Russian forces conducted a series of drone strikes against Ukraine on the night of October 7 to 8. The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Russian forces launched 183 Shahed-type, Gerbera-type, and other drones — of which about 100 were Shahed-type drones — from the directions of Bryansk, Oryol, and Kursk cities; Millerovo, Rostov Oblast; Primorsko-Akhtarsk, Krasnodar Krai; and occupied Hvardiiske and Cape Chauda, Crimea.[101] The Ukrainian Air Force reported that Ukrainian forces downed 154 drones. The Ukrainian Air Force reported that 22 drones struck 11 locations and that drone debris fell in two locations. Ukrainian officials reported that Russian strikes hit residential areas and civilian and energy infrastructure in Chernihiv, Donetsk, Kharkiv, and Dnipropetrovsk oblasts, leaving at least 7,600 civilians without power.[102]

## Significant Activity in Belarus

### **Russian efforts to increase its military presence in Belarus and further integrate Belarus into Russian-favorable frameworks**

Nothing Significant To Report.

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

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BABEL STREET

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