# MALCONTENT NEWS RUSSIA-UKRAINE SITUATION REPORT

May 20, 2023 – A



# Malcontent News Russia-Ukraine War SITREP 5/20/23-A 17:00\* PST

Malcontent News is an independent group of journalists and researchers in the United States, Canada, Ukraine, Israel, Georgia, and the United Kingdom. We are part of Badon Hill Group, LLC, and operate independently from all entities.

We are funded through Patreon, grants, and donations and aided by volunteers. For media inquiries, you can contact <u>social@malcontentnews.com</u>. For news tips, you can contact our newsroom at <u>tips@malcontentment.com</u>.

<u>Patreons at the Bronze level or higher</u> can access the annotated Russia-Ukraine War Situation Report (SITREP). Patreons at the Silver level or higher get a monthly Q&A viz Zoom Meeting with our Chief Content Officer or other senior staff.

This update is copyright © 2023 by Badon Hill Group LLC, all rights reserved. Authors: David H. Obelcz, Jeff Davis, Katie Livingstone, Oskar Hallgrimsson, Ryan Evans, Michael Hering, and special thanks to David Batashvili of the <u>Rondeli Foundation</u>, Ana Ras, Spanish Editor in Chief, Robert Gaudette, Editor in Chief, and Linnea Hubbard, the voice of the Russia-Ukraine War Update Podcast.

The reader accepts that the information contained in the Malcontent News Situation Report will not be used for travel, navigation, or personal security assessment. The reader agrees to get realtime information from official channels provided by national, oblast, raion, hromada, city, or local officials and follow their security recommendations.

The assessments and opinions expressed in the Malcontent News SITREP are not representative, endorsed, or reflect the views of the Rondeli Foundation.

#### Notes on Sourcing Information

**Malcontent News** uses a wide range of sources to create our daily Situation Report, the foundation for the Russian-Ukraine War Report Podcast. There are some notable sources that we frequently use and others that we don't. The most common sources currently, or in the past, we have used for the Theater of War section of the Situation Report include the following.

▲ Russian Ministry of Defense Morning Report: We use the RMOD Morning Report to identify combat reports, shelling locations, and territorial control change claims. We do not consider claims of Ukrainian troops killed, equipment destroyed, or military resources destroyed valid without videos and pictures that can be confirmed by date, time, weather, and geolocation, or third-party confirmation from recognized Western news outlets or trusted Ukrainian sources.

**A Rybar:** We consider Rybar a mercenary organization because they are staffed by former Russian Ministry of Defense public relations officers who actively provide target information to the Russian military. Their operational budget is \$20,000 a month, while they claim they receive no government funding. We use their reports and maps to identify combat reports, territorial control change claims, and troop movement reports. We do not use claims of Ukrainian troops killed, equipment destroyed, or military resources destroyed because of a documented and historical pattern of producing fabrications. They frequently engage in blatant misinformation and disinformation and consistently deny all Russian war crimes.

A War Gonzo: We consider War Gonzo a mercenary organization because their employees have recorded themselves actively engaging in direct combat, specifically in Marinka. Recently, War Gonzo admitted in their daily report to leveraging the information from the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. They intermix combat reports with their own on a 24hour delay. We use their reports for **unique claims** about combat, territorial control change claims, and troop movement reports. Although the War Gonzo daily reports are moderately accurate, they occasionally engage in blatant disinformation and misinformation. **Readovka:** We consider Readovka to be a Kremlin-aligned propagandist organization. Their daily reports are a word-for-word repeat of the RMOD Morning Report and provide no value to our analysis. They occasionally provide credible information through videos and pictures that can be confirmed by date, time, weather, and geolocation.

Igor "Girkin" Strelkov: We consider Strelkov to be a convicted war criminal who is highly informed, specifically about the situation in the Donbas. We use his combat reports, territorial control change claims, and troop movement information. In the Donbas, we consider his reports to be highly accurate. The fidelity of information he provides in Zaporizhia, Kherson, and Kharkiv appears to come from other social media channels with a history of spreading misinformation and is of lower quality. Reports he shares outside of the Donbas provided by Russian Federation 1st Army Corps units have greater fidelity.

Andrei Morozov: Morozov is a pro-Russian milblogger and a radio communications and logistics specialist with the Russian 2nd Army Corps. We consider him a provider of high-quality information, especially within his fields of specialty. In the fall of 2022, Morozov was detained by OMON for up to three weeks due to his content and has had his online material censored by the Kremlin several times over the last 11 months.

▲ Private Military Company Wagner Group Social Media: We consider reports from PMC Wagner of Russian victories as overstating gains and reports of Russian failures, particularly among the Russian Ministry of Defense and the 1st and 2nd Army Corps of the Russian Army, as overstating problems. We do not consider claims of territorial control changes from Wagner as authentic without pictures, videos, or **unique** Russian State Media reports that include a video that can be geolocated.

**Luhansk People's Republic Joint Center for Control and Coordination:** We only use their reports about large-scale artillery and HIMARS strikes in the occupied territories. **Leonid Pasechnik:** We do not use any combat, territorial control changes, troop movements, casualty claims, or equipment destroyed claims from the self-declared leader of the so-called Luhansk People's Republic.

**Donetsk People's Republic People's Militia:** We only use their reports for videos and pictures that can be confirmed by date, time, weather, and geolocation.

**Donetsk People's Republic Territorial Defense:** We do not use combat, territorial control changes, troop movements, casualty claims, or equipment destroyed claims from their public relations and social media channels. They have repeatedly engaged in misinformation and disinformation.

**Denis Pushilin:** We do not use any combat, territorial control changes, troop movements, casualty claims, or equipment destroyed claims from the self-declared leader of the so-called Donetsk People's Republic.

**Ramzan Kadyrov:** The contribution and impact of Chechen forces in Ukraine have become minimal, and Akhmat no longer produces large volumes of video content that can be geolocated. We continue to monitor his channels.

General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine: We consider the morning and evening reports, specifically combat reports, territorial control changes, and troop movements, from GSAFU to be high quality. The Ukrainian General Staff uses clever wording to create plausible deniability of battlefield failures. Combat reports start with "repelled attacks of the occupant forces in the vicinities of," which negates reporting fighting in areas where territory was lost. Instead of misinformation or disinformation, GSAFU engages in omission. Reports about problems within the Russian military are given more weight if the SBU or GUR reinforces them or if there is added confirmation in the Russian milblogger information space.

DeepState: We use the Daily Report from DeepState for combat reports and territorial control changes. They frequently support their claims with geolocated, time, date, and weather-confirmed pictures and videos, making them a high-quality Ukrainian-based source. They occasionally overstate Russian territorial control claims but never present disinformation or

4 | Page

misinformation. Combined with the reports from GSAFU, gaps in combat reports are filled. We support DeepState through their Patreon at \$10 a month.

Institute for the Study of War: We occasionally leverage the map and territorial control change information produced by the ISW when there is conflicting data. Their presentation of Russian-assessed, Ukrainian-assessed, and Russian-claimed information is helpful when our analysts have to make a judgment call due to the absence of verifiable information. We do not copy from their map but take their territorial control information as an additional data point when assessing our own changes.

**Ivan Fedorov:** We use information about insurgent activity and HIMARS strikes in Zaporizhia provided by Fedorov, the exiled mayor of Melitiopol.

Vitaly Kim: When there are reports of potential air raids in Ukraine, we monitor Kim, the Mykolaiv Oblast Administrative and Military Governor, for realtime reports. Kim is consistently one of the first, if not the first, Ukrainian government official to confirm kamikaze drones or missiles have been launched toward Ukraine.

**Oleksiy Arestovych:** We no longer use the information provided by Arestovych after being fired from his role as the Chief Advisor to the President of Ukraine. Before being terminated, Arestovych had developed a reputation for providing exaggerated, unverified, and false claims for Ukrainian successes and failures.

SUMMARY – DAY 450	(
DAILY ASSESSMENT	8
TODAY'S WAR IN UKRAINE MAP	10
UKRAINE WEATHER	11
SOIL SATURATION AND HYDROLOGY	12
ZAPORIZHIA	13
THEATERWIDE	14
RUSSIAN MOBILIZATION, MOBIKS, AND MIR	20
GEOPOLITICS	24
RUSSIA VS. UKRAINE HEAVY EQUIPMENT LOSSES	27
CONRIGHT DANNING	

#### **SUMMARY – DAY 450**

This is the first update for May 20, 2023.

It has been 3,367 days since Russia occupied the Crimea Peninsula on January 27, 2014, and one year and 84 days since Russia expanded its war against Ukraine.

- The Daily Assessment will be updated with each report
- Weather and soil conditions will be in the last report of the day
- If an anticipated report is not created, weather and soil conditions will be released as a Flash Report
- Each report will contain unique information and continue in a condensed format

The map is back! War Map

## DAILY ASSESSMENT

We assess the following:

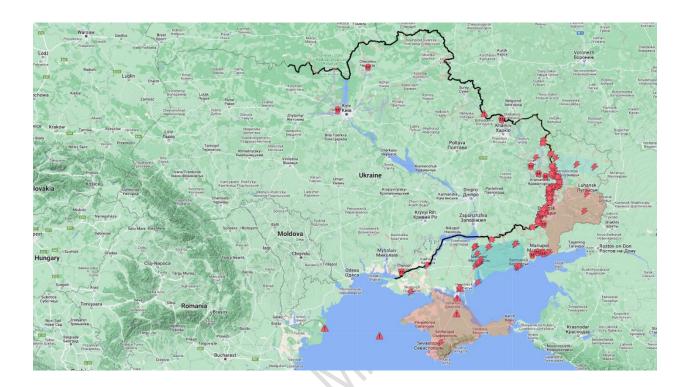
- 1. We assess Private Military Company Wagner (PMC) Group leader Yevgeny Prigozhin's claims that Russian proxy forces have fully captured Bakhmut as premature but maintain our previous assessment that Russian forces will do everything possible, short of CBRN, to gain full military control of the city.
- 2. Russian tactics have validated our assessment that the Kremlin has moved to launching a small number of missiles on a more frequent basis and targeting areas with little military value but are appealing to an internal audience as proof of continued successful operations.
- 3. The rift between the Russian Ministry of Defense and PMC Wagner Group continues to disrupt Russian military operations in the Soledar and Bakhmut operational areas resulting in territorial losses on the flanks and Prigozhin's announcement that PMC Wagner will start withdrawing from Ukraine on May 25.
- 4. Our earlier assessment that Wagnerites kept up attacks within Bakhmut to provide Yevgeny Prigozhin with an exit plan to get out of Ukraine appears to be

Μ

withdrawal.

- 5. Ukrainian forces continue their retrograde operation in Bakhmut.
- 6. In preparation for larger offensive operations, Ukrainian forces continue shaping operations on multiple axes, creating uncertainty among gauleiters, Russian administrators, and military leaders.
- 7. The uncertainty of when and where, or if the Ukrainian counteroffensive has already started, has forced the Kremlin to start deploying their limited and ill-prepared reserve troops in the Dvorichna, Kupyansk, Svatove, Soledar, Bakhmut, Klischiivka, and Marinka Operational Areas to counter ongoing tactical advances by Ukrainian troops.
- 8. Russian sources have significantly increased their information warfare through Russian state media, social media, and Russian Ministry of Defense reports, following previous patterns during periods of Ukrainian military successes.
- 9. We have identified shaping activity by the Ukrainian Armed Forces in four locations that could indicate a larger attack is being prepared.

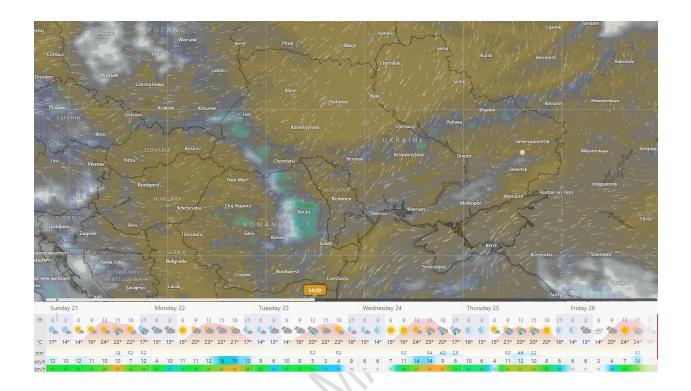
# **TODAY'S WAR IN UKRAINE MAP**



**About the maps:** Red triangles are sites of significant events unrelated to missile attacks, insurgencies, or ground combat, such as the sinking of the Moskva and the explosion at the Saky Naval airbase. Gray circles indicate an area where fighting has ended with no change in the line of conflict. The archived offensive layer is turned off by default, but you can toggle it on/off in the Map Legend. If you see a settlement name highlighted <u>like this</u>, it is a link to our war map that will take you to the location explained in the Situation Report.

## Russia-Ukraine War Report Map

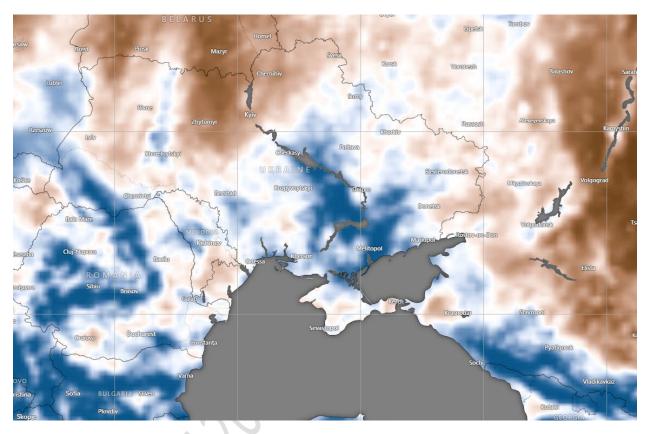
## **UKRAINE WEATHER**



The ECMWF Euro model forecast is returning to a wet pattern for the coming week, which will create unfavorable terrain conditions in some regions. Sunny weather will give way to periods of sun and clouds through Friday. Highs will be from 17° to 28° Celcius, with lows from 10° to 18°. Showers will bring around 2 millimeters of rain on Sunday night to eastern Ukraine, followed by a chance of showers on Tuesday. Widespread thunderstorms on Wednesday and Thursday could bring up to 10 mm of rain in localized areas on both days, with more light rain showers on Friday. The full moon is on June 4, the new moon is on June 18, and the longest day of the year is June 21.



### SOIL SATURATION AND HYDROLOGY



The May 28, 2023 GFS forecast indicates soil saturation will be from 40% to 70% to 40 centimeters deep in the Donbas and 60% to 100% in Zaporizhia and eastern Kherson.

Soil saturation along the line of conflict is at 20% to 35%, with a wetter weather pattern expected throughout next week. Ground conditions will be unfavorable for heavy equipment in eastern Kherson and Zaporizhia after May 22 through the remainder of the forecast period and marginal in the Donbas from May 23 to May 26.

## ZAPORIZHIA

#### Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant

- The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) confirmed that a location "near the town of Enerhodar" was shelled on May 19, in what Director General Rafael Grossi said was the "latest incident indicating an increasingly tense military situation in the area," adding, "It is very simple: don't shoot at the plant and don't use the plant as a military base. It should be in the interest of everyone to agree on a set of principles to protect the plant during the conflict."<sup>1</sup>
- IAEA monitors reported that after a drop in staffing levels, regular day staff returned to ZNPP on May 15 and continued to work during the week, but the total workforce is much smaller than the pre-conflict level.
- "Our experts have seen a notable increase of personnel at the plant this week. At the moment, it has enough staff for a plant whose reactors are all in a shutdown mode. It remains clearly insufficient, however, for carrying out necessary maintenance and other regular work. The longer the plant has this kind of reduced staffing, the bigger the nuclear safety and security risks become. The situation remains unsustainable," Director General Grossi said.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> International Atomic Energy Agency

- Russian occupiers remain uncooperative and continue blocking IAEA monitors from visiting the 330 kilovolt (kV) switch yard at the Zaporizhzhia Thermal Power Plant to see work progress on reconnecting the backup power line to ZNPP.
- All six reactors at ZNPP are in a cold shutdown state and are supported by a single 750 kV external power connection.
- Ukrainian engineers have been unable to repair a second 330 kV power connection to ZNPP in Dnipropetrovsk, damaged on March 1, 2023 by a Russian artillery strike, because of continued Russian shelling of the Nikopol raion.

## THEATERWIDE

- Deputy Director of the Defense Intelligence Directorate of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine (GUR), Vadym Skibitsky, said that an analysis of missile debris from recent Russian attacks indicates the stand-off precision weapons were produced in the first quarter of 2023.<sup>2</sup>
- **ASSESSMENT:** In February 2023, we assessed that Russian forces had exhausted their reserves of cruise

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> https://t.me/ShrikeNews/8561

and short-range ballistic missiles (SRBM), and were only capable of firing 25 to 30 Kalibr cruise missiles a month and another 50 to 60 assorted air-to-surface and SRBMs. The March 9, 2023, missile strikes validated that assessment, and we further assessed that Russian military leaders had given up disrupting Ukraine's electrical grid. Russian forces didn't conduct another large missile strike until the end of April, with analysts theorizing that the Kremlin was stockpiling stand-off weapons to disrupt the Ukrainian offensive. We disagreed with the larger community assessment and judged that missile stores remained critically low, and the Russian Airforce (VKS) had switched to FAB-500S-E UPMK glide bombs as a substitute, despite their limitations. The current wave of missile attacks should be exhausting the recent build-up and appear larger than reality due to the reliance on Shahed-136 kamikaze drones. If RMOD restarted missile attacks in the belief that Ukraine has started its larger offensive, in our assessment, this was a colossal blunder.

• Skibitsky claimed that Russian industrial production for stand-off precision weapons had incrementally increased since the start of the year, claiming Russia can produce 25 Kalibrs, 35 Kh-101 air-to-surface cruise missiles, five Iskander-M SRBMs, and two Kh-47 Kinzhal "hypersonic" air-to-surface cruise missiles.<sup>3</sup>

- ASSESSMENT: We had previously assessed in February 2023 that Russian industry could produce 25 to 30 Kalibr cruise missiles a month, based on consumption data from December to February and production date evidence found on debris.
- Russian forces launched 20 Shahed-136 kamikaze drones during the evening of May 19 – 20, with all drones intercepted – this was the tenth air raid on Kyiv in the last 18 days.
- **ASSESSMENT:** The current consumption rate of Shahed-136 kamikaze drones is unsustainable, and we anticipate either a reduction in their use or another extended pause once the supply is exhausted.
- The Supreme Anti-Corruption Court of Ukraine has remanded the President [Chief Justice – Ed.] of the Supreme Court of Justice Vsevolod Knyazev to predetention, with his next hearing in a corruption case scheduled for July 14.<sup>4 5</sup>
- Knyazev can post bond, set at 107,000,000 Hryvnia (US\$2.92 million), requiring wearing a monitor and home detention.

<sup>33</sup> 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> https://t.me/ShrikeNews/8557

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> https://t.me/operativnoZSU/96926

- Ukrainian investigators claim that Chief Justice Knyazev, colluding with notary Kirill Horburov and lawyer Oleg Goretsky, conspired to identify cases where bribes could be solicited to receive a favorable court decision.
- The indictment indicates that anti-corruption investigators were aware of the scheme in January 2023 and monitored the activity, making an arrest when Knyazev received his final bribe in a case involving the Poltava Mining and Processing Plant.
- Knyazev would receive US\$1.8 million, and the entire bribery amount was US\$2.7 million.
- The Grand Chamber of the Supreme Court ruled favorably in the case, and on May 3, the first payment was received by Knyazev, Horburov, and Goretsky, and the final payment on May 15, which is when the GUR moved in, finding US\$1 million in cash in Knyazev's office.
- Eighteen more judges are now under investigation.
- Knyazev was elected President of the Supreme Court on October 22, 2021, and assumed duties as chief justice on December 1, 2021.
- **ASSESSMENT:** The Ukrainian government continues to demonstrate a deep commitment to target government corruption, which is one of the requirements for European Union ascendency.

- On May 19, Jake Sullivan, National Security Advisor of the United States, confirmed that Washington would join the "fighter coalition" established in Europe and start training Ukrainian pilots on fourth-generation fighter aircraft, including the F-16.<sup>6</sup>
- An internal United States Airforce assessment determined that Ukrainian pilots could learn to competently operate the F-16 in four months, far shorter than the 18 months claimed by the Pentagon and White House.<sup>7</sup>
- Two Ukrainian pilots, one qualified on the Mig-29 and the other on the Su-27, were given no formal training before conducting nine simulated flight and combat events with 11.5 hours in F-16 simulators at Morris Air National Guard Base in Tuscon, Arizona.
- Both pilots were able to successfully land during a simulated engine failure after only observing the procedure done once and were able to execute "mock attacks based on parameters communicated while they were flying the sim."
- The report concluded the biggest challenges the Ukrainian pilots faced were cockpit displays and controls that use English and the need to learn

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/05/20/7403056/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> https://news.yahoo.com/exclusive-us-could-train-ukrainian-pilots-to-fly-f-16s-in-4-months-184136820.html

improved NATO tactics above their current Soviet-era training.

- Asked why the U.S. had not granted Ukraine's request for F-16 earlier, Sullivan told reporters that Washington was focusing on arming Ukraine for a counteroffensive, and "the F-16 capabilities, compared with everything else I said, was not at the top of the list."<sup>8</sup>
- Washington has set a condition with Kyiv that F-16s, or other military aircraft, will be provided on the condition that they will not be used to attack Russia.<sup>9</sup>
- Over the past 72 hours, the U.S., United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Portugal, Denmark, and Norway have committed to training Ukrainian pilots to fly the F-16 and other unspecified military aircraft.
- ASSESSMENT: No nation has committed to providing F-16s or any other combat aircraft nor formally requested an export permit. We are hopeful that the fighter coalition will finally deliver after 15 months of talk, while deployment before the end of 2023 is highly unlikely. While more than one nation expressed a willingness to transfer F-16A and F-16B variants, these older aircraft cannot attack ground targets, and the F-16C has very limited capabilities.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/05/20/7403056/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/05/20/7403058/

## **RUSSIAN MOBILIZATION, MOBIKS, AND MIR**

- The editor-in-chief of the Rossiya Segodnya media group and RT (formerly known as Russian Today), Margarita Simonyan, claimed that a package with traces of explosives was sent to her office.<sup>10</sup>
- Local authorities examined the package and noted that her claim of receiving an explosive-laced package was untrue, but the sex toy in the package, which, when used properly, could create explosions of a different kind.<sup>11</sup>
- On May 19, Russia called a United Nations Security Council meeting to complain about Ukraine receiving Patriot air defense systems and Storm Shadow cruise missiles. Nicolas de Riviere, France's ambassador to the UN, noted that Russia is convening a meeting on arms supplies to Ukraine for the fifth time, saying, "Repeating this exercise ad nauseam will still not turn the parallel reality into reality. The end of this war and its negative consequences depend exclusively on the Russian Federation, and no one, except Russia, seeks the continuation of this conflict."<sup>12</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> https://t.me/shot\_shot/51621

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> https://t.me/shot\_shot/51622

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> https://twitter.com/TreasChest/status/1659379218143117312

- Andrei Medvedev, 26, the PMC Wagner commander who fled to Russia by crossing the Russian-Norwegian border in January, said he felt like "some kind of a boy in a big game" that he no longer wants to be a part of and wants to return to Russia. "Recently, I've decided that I'm ready to go back to the Russian Federation. I've contacted the Russian embassy in Oslo for help to facilitate my return. I hoped that I could find peace and calm here, that I could leave all the politics, the war, the army behind, but somehow I couldn't manage."<sup>13</sup>
- Medvedev ran afoul of Norwegian law multiple times, including being arrested for a drunken barfight, and expressed that he understood that returning to Russia could result in his imprisonment or death at the hands of PMC Wagner.
- The Russian Supreme Court declared that the "noretreat" clause written in the September 21, 2022, partial-mobilization decree is legal, and Russian law now forbids servicemembers from retreating in combat even under the threat of death.<sup>14</sup>
- The Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) arrested a third hypersonic missile scientist, Valery Zvegintsev, accusing him of high treason.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/05/18/7402744/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> https://t.me/informnapalm/17234

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/russia-hypersonic-missile-scientists-arrested-treason-patriotsukraine-rcna84857

- He joins Anatoly Maslov and Alexander Shiplyuk, who were arrested last year.
- Zvegintsev arrested occurred 48 hours after Ukrainian and U.S. officials claimed that a Patriot air defense system successfully shot down six Kh-47 Kinzhal "hypersonic" missiles, essentially modified Iskander missiles that can be air-launched.
- The Kremlin has made various claims about destroying a Patriot battery, then claiming it destroyed the radar and five launchers there is no data to support these claims.
- Russian sources claim that the United States source Military Watch Magazine accurately reported the complete failure of the Patriot system and its destruction.
- The website was established in 2018 and is run by a British college student named Abraham Ait-Tahar, who attends King's College of London in the War Studies Department and receives significant web traffic from Iran.
- The former head of the Dubna Machine-Building Plant, which builds the Moskit cruise missile and Kh-22 and Kh-55 missiles), Sergey Datsko is under criminal investigation for corruption and fraud involving the construction of the National Center for State Defense

Control (NCSDC), where prices for materials and electronics were inflated by as much as 500%.<sup>16</sup>

- Datsko is also under investigation along with the former deputy head of finance at RTI, Rostislav Rychkov, for corruption in the construction of the NCSDC and the design and construction of Russia's missile attack early warning system, which reportedly does not work.<sup>17</sup>
- The Insider reported German camera manufacturer Leica, despite the announcement of withdrawal from the Russian market, continues to supply Russia with night vision scopes and binoculars with a laser rangefinder.<sup>18</sup>
- Russian forces asked for more BMP Terminator tank support vehicles, and the Russian Ministry of Defense delivered them, but it appears the new BMP Terminators came from Wish. Pictures have emerged on Russian channels of 2 <u>T-55 tank hulls with an S-60 57-mm antiaircraft gun</u> from World War II replacing the turret.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>16</sup> https://t.me/vchkogpu/38584

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> https://t.me/vchkogpu/38585

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> https://t.me/operativnoZSU/96914

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> https://t.me/rsotmdivision/7371

# **GEOPOLITICS**

- On May 17, Andrii Yermak, Head of the Ukrainian President's Office, said he met with Chinese Special Representative Li Hui to discuss the current security situation in Ukraine, saying he "thanked China for supporting Ukrainian sovereignty and territorial integrity."<sup>20</sup>
- The Foreign Ministry of China reported that Li met with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, telling him there is no magic cure for the "crisis" and that ending the war will require all parties to "create conditions for ceasefire and peace talks, adding that China will help Ukraine, "within its own ability."
- Kyiv did not provide a readout, and Zelenskyy's office did not respond to an inquiry by Bloomberg.
- There was no indication from Beijing or Kyiv if Li was in Kyiv during the Russian missile attack on the night of May 16 – 17.
- Ukrainian President Zelenskyy traveled to Saudi Arabia on May 19 to address the Arab League Summit and meet with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman al-Saud. Kyiv reported the main topics discussed was the return of captives and illegally deported prisoners of Crimea and the occupied territories, the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/05/18/7402729/

presentation of the Ukrainian formula for peace, and the protection of the Muslim community within Ukraine.<sup>21 22</sup>

- On May 20, President Zelenskyy arrived in Hiroshima, Japan, to attend the G7 Summit and meet with Japanese officials and meet with United States President Joe Biden.<sup>23</sup>
- The G7 leaders released a statement regarding Ukraine before Zelenskyy's arrival "We strongly condemn Russia's clear violation of the U.N. Charter and the impact of Russia's war on the rest of the world. We call on Russia to stop the ongoing aggression and immediately, completely, and unconditionally withdraw its troops and military equipment from the entire internationally recognized territory of Ukraine. We remain committed to diplomacy, [and] welcome and support the serious efforts of the President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, to establish these basic principles in his Peace Formula, in accordance with the U.N. Charter. We honor the Ukrainian people for their courageous resistance. We reaffirm our commitment to provide the financial, humanitarian, military, and diplomatic support that Ukraine needs as long as it is needed. Our support for Ukraine is unwavering. We

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> https://t.me/itsdonetsk/75386

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> https://t.me/Crimeanwind/30518

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> https://t.me/operativnoZSU/97111

will be untiring in our commitment to reduce the consequences of Russian wrongdoing for the rest of the world."

## **RUSSIA VS. UKRAINE HEAVY EQUIPMENT LOSSES**

#### Russian and Ukrainian visually confirmed heavy equipment losses sourced from the <u>Oryx Database</u> from February 24, 2022, to May 18, 2023. 10,324 Russian vs. 3,374 Ukrainian

Equipment	Russian Losses	Ukrainian Losses	Ratio	Change
Main Battle Tanks	1839	193	9.53:1	—
Medium Duty Tanks	126	307	0.41:1	
Armored fighting Vehicles	852	270	3.16:1	仓
Infantry Fighting Vehicles	2334	537	4.35:1	Û
Armored Personnel Carriers	308	259	1.18:1	Û
MRAPs	44	55	0.80:1	仓
Infantry Mobility Vehicles	186	300	0.62:1	Û
Command and Communications Vehicles	240	12	20.00:1	Û
Engineering Vehicles	305	57	5.35:1	Û
Towed Artillery	210	121	1.74:1	仓
Self-Propelled Howitzers/Mortars	397	152	2.61:1	Û
MLRS	202	45	4.48:1	Û
SAMs	114	112	1.02:1	仓
Mobile Radars	32	59	0.54:1	
EW/ECW	36	2	18.00:1	
Winged Aircraft	82	66	1.24:1	
Helicopters	87	29	3.00:1	
Naval Vessels	12	26	0.46:1	