



**MALCONTENT NEWS
RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR
SITUATION REPORT**



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Malcontent News

Russia-Ukraine War SITREP

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SUMMARY – DAY 62

Russian forces made significant gains south of Izyum on two fronts. For the first time in over two months, Russia appears to be using troops in a planned and organized fashion. Five to eight Battalion Tactical Groups are moving from three directions.

Along the Izyum axis, Russian forces are pushing toward Oskil, the last settlement between Izyum and the Russian advance on the eastern shoreline of the Oskil River. Connecting to Izyum is strategically important, creating two lines of communication and supply to the strategic city.

Russian forces are advancing in two directions from Izyum on the western side of the Oskil. South, advancing to Kurulka, and southeast, reaching Paskika. This has created a salient of Ukrainian forces between Paskika and Zarichne.

Ukrainian forces advanced east from Zavody, pushing the line of contact to Andriivka to the south and Prydonetske to the north. The western flank of the Russian advance

remains exposed, and the line of communication and supply is likely stretched thin.

Fighting continued in Rubizhne and Popasnya with little change in territorial control. Heavy shelling was reported in Lysychansk.

Along the southern axis in the Donbas, shelling and scattered fighting were along the entire line of conflict from Horlivka to Hulyaipole.

Russian forces aggressively attacked the Azovstal Metallurgical Plant in Mariupol, including multiple airstrikes. Russian State Media and Ukrainian forces released videos showing fighting well away from the Azovstal factory. A plan to evacuate civilians was canceled by Russia today, blaming Ukrainian forces for attacking the green corridor.

Attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure continued in Kharkiv and Mykolaiv.

East of Mykolaiv, the settlements of Novopetrivka, Lyubyne, and Shroke were confirmed to be liberated.

Northwest of Kherson, there are unconfirmed reports that Ukrainian forces took control of Kyselivka on April 26. The village has been disputed for the last four days.

There was fighting southeast of Kryvvi Rih along the west bank of the Dnipro River. Russia is building up forces in that region for an anticipated offensive to advance on the city.

Additional false flag operations in Transnistria and statements made by Russian officials and Russian state media appear to be attempting to destabilize Transnistria and Moldova to justify blaming Ukraine and potentially Romania.

ASSESSMENT: Russian forces have gone all-in south of Izyum and west of Severodonetsk and are progressing through better utilization of available resources. The western flank of the advance from Izyum is increasingly exposed. We believe that Russian forces will need to pause to consolidate their position if they intend to hold captured territory.

On April 21, we dismissed Russia's claim of victory in Mariupol. The increased fighting, including in areas outside the Azovstal, confirms our assessment. There is no possible way that Ukrainian forces were capable of attacking green corridor routes out of Mariupol toward Manhush. We also assessed that Russia reallocating at least three BTGs from Mariupol was a mistake, given the reality within the city.

There was little subtext when Lieutenant General Rustam Minnekayev statement that Russian forces aim to take complete control of southern Ukraine and could open a land corridor to Transnistria when successful.

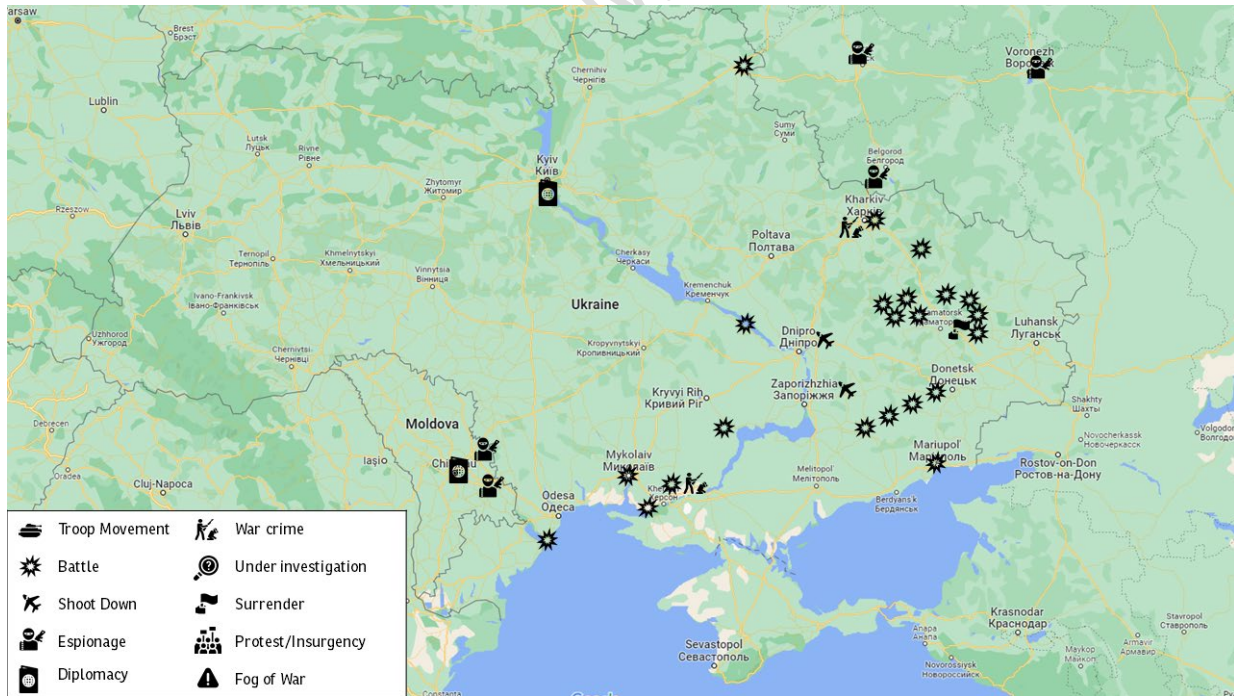
If the attempted destruction of the Pidyomnyy Bridge had been successful today, it would have cut off Ukrainian access to the southern third of the Odesa Oblast. The only remaining land route would have been through Moldova and dependent on the bridge in Mayaky, Ukraine.

Our final assessment remains little changed from five days ago. Russia has finally started to capitalize on its initiative in the Donbas. Despite this, we maintain Russia lacks the manpower, equipment, and operational capability to create an encirclement from Hulyaipole to Izyum. We remain unconvinced that Russian forces can collapse the

Severodonetsk salient, connect to Slovyansk, **and** hold the containment.

Russian forces could create smaller encirclements, which appears to be what they are attempting between Paskhivka and Zarichne. Creating and holding multiple smaller encirclements is slower, requires more resources, and needs significantly better multi-axis coordination than the Russian Ministry of Defense has demonstrated so far.

KEY EVENTS MAP



DONBAS REGION

Russian forces made territorial gains west of Torske, no gains in Rubihzne, and lost ground in Popasnya.

LUHANSK

Severodonetsk Salient

Intense fighting continued in Rubizhne and was renewed in Popasnya. In another untrue claim, Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov claimed that his forces captured Rubizhne. As of this writing, Pro-Russian social media accounts shared a picture of the Soviet Union flag being raised in the settlement.¹ This is in the same area in which Russian and Chechen forces have been operating since April 22.

In Popasnya, the line of conflict has been pushed back to Train Station 1. Russian, Chechen, Wagner Group PMC, and separatist militias are being held in similar areas they reached on March 12. The Russian Air Force was operating

¹ <https://twitter.com/zcjbrouker/status/1519107372341465088>

over the settlement,² which was hit by cluster munitions in a separate attack.³

Shelling, airstrikes, and missile attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure continued in Severodonetsk and Lysychansk.

Severodonetsk Westward Offensive

Russian forces are being held at Zarichne and pushing south toward Yampil. Heavy fighting continued in the settlement, which is contested. Pro-Russian accounts are reporting that 79 Ukrainian troops surrendered in Yampil today.⁴

Further west, Russian forces appear to be attempting to bypass Zarichne and have advanced to Stavky, taking control of the hamlet. Ukrainian troops in Bilohorivka are at risk of encirclement. Bilohorivka is still in Ukrainian control, with reports of civilian evacuations ongoing.⁵

² <https://twitter.com/Osinttechnical/status/1519112403316879360>

³ https://twitter.com/Now_in_Ukraine/status/1518992181540925444

⁴ <https://twitter.com/GirkinGirkin/status/1518991660885102593> [Russian State Media Evaluation: Likely Valid]

⁵ https://twitter.com/With__Ukraine/status/1518948374837346304

ASSESSMENT: Ukrainian forces will likely move south from Bilohorivka along the western flank of the Russian advance blocked at Zarichne.

DONETSK

There weren't any significant changes in territorial control in the oblast. There was scattered fighting along the entire line of conflict from Horlivka to Huyaipole.

SOUTH DONBAS – AZOV SEA

Russian forces engaged in heavy fighting in Mariupol, bombing the Azovstal Metallurgical Plant today and targeting civilian areas around the compound. The Russian Air Force launched 35 sorties in 24 hours, setting a machine shop on fire.

Fighting occurred in several parts of the city, indicating Ukrainian forces have pockets of forces outside of the

Azovstal plant and well beyond the immediate perimeter.⁶
(some viewers may be disturbed by this video)



ASSESSMENT: Russian forces are having success advancing west of Severodonetsk in part due to better tactics on the axis. Little has changed around the Severodonetsk salient in a month, and you could argue the situation in Mariupol has gotten incrementally worse.

⁶ <https://twitter.com/Militarylandnet/status/1518955007546216450>

KHARKIV REGION

Along the Izyum axis, Russian forces are advancing in three columns in a coordinated way.

The first column is advancing southwest from Izyum toward Barvinkove. Russian forces made small gains toward Kurul'ka. Further north of the advance, Ukrainian forces pushed east from Zavody along the south bank of the Siverskyi Donets River. Russian forces were pushed back to Andriivka.

The second column is advancing southeast from Izyum. The advance could be attempting to advance toward Slovyansk or move east to connect with Russian forces at Zarichne. Russian troops have reached Sukha Kamyanka.

The third column is advancing south along the eastern shore of the Oskil River. Fighting was reported in Oskil, which is the last settlement between the eastern line of communication and supply and the larger Izyum salient.

Ukrainian forces destroyed the railroad bridge crossing the Oskil River in Kupyansk and damaged the road bridge

further north.⁷ Video from the bridge indicates the structure is unlikely to support the weight of armored vehicles.⁸

Ukrainian forces liberated the village of Udy, 5 kilometers south of the Russian border.⁹

Shelling of civilians and civilian infrastructure continued in Kharkiv.

DNIPRO, KHERSON & MYKOLAIV, ZAPORIZHIA REGION

Ukrainian forces shot down a Russian cruise missile using MANPAD in the Dnipropetrovsk Oblast. No one was injured.¹⁰ Another cruise missile was intercepted in Spasivka.¹¹

⁷ <https://goo.gl/maps/weN4N1DZT3wgbtt4A>

⁸ https://twitter.com/wiki_war/status/1518876041321795585

⁹ https://twitter.com/ignis_fatum/status/1517093819245809664

¹⁰ https://twitter.com/m_holman/status/1519041292080140290

¹¹ https://t.me/zoda_gov_ua/6976

East of Mykolaiv, the settlements of Novopetrivka, Lyubyne, and Shroke were liberated.¹²

Fighting continued southeast of Kryvvi Rih, with Russian forces shelling the settlement of Zelenodolsk, destroying an electrical power substation.¹³

In Kherson, Oleksandrivka (the one southwest of Kherson) was recaptured by Russian forces. In Velyka Oleksandrivka, northeast of Kherson, Ukrainian troops destroyed a sizeable Russian ammunition depot. It is reported that 70 Russian soldiers were killed in the blast.¹⁴ In what may be a reprisal for the attack, all local residents of the settlement have been ordered to leave by Russian forces by April 28.¹⁵

Russian forces attacked civilians and civilian infrastructure with MLRS in Mykolaiv.

ASSESSMENT: We continue to believe the Ukrainian General Staff is not interested in liberating the city of Kherson due to the lack of natural defenses east of the

¹² https://twitter.com/ukraine_map/status/1519004827883294720

¹³ <https://twitter.com/Liveuamap/status/1519177322431193088>

¹⁴ <https://twitter.com/mhmck/status/1518814433677611008>

¹⁵ https://twitter.com/Svidomi_En/status/1518681058920828935

Dnipro River. Russian forces are assembling to try another offensive toward Mykolaiv and likely Kryvvi Rih.

CHERNIHIV & SUMY REGION

Russia continues to fire across its border into the Sumy Oblast, shelling the settlement of Esman.¹⁶

KYIV REGION

There wasn't any significant military action in this region.

BLACK SEA & ODESA REGION

A cruise missile hit the Pidyomnyy Bridge south of Odesa, causing significant damage. The missile appears to have misfired or glanced at the bridge before detonating away from the structure.¹⁷ The bridge has since reopened.

¹⁶ <https://ru.interfax.com.ua/news/general/827466.html>

¹⁷ <https://twitter.com/IntelArrow/status/1518916706047078401>

Had the bridge been destroyed, it would have severed the only land link to the southeastern portion of the Odesa Oblast, south of Moldova. Vehicles would have to travel a 100-kilometer detour, including passing through Moldova.

WEST REGION

There wasn't any significant military action in this region.

THEATERWIDE & EXTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS

Errors and Omissions: Yesterday, we reported, with attribution, that Sweden had committed to sending several 155mm FH77 self-propelled artillery units to Ukraine. This report was an elaborate social media hoax, and mainstream media outlets picked that up as authentic and validated. Sweden has not agreed to send the equipment to Ukraine. We apologize for the error and thank you for your understanding.

Shortly after we published the April 25 SITREP, there was another false-flag attack in Transnistria. A Soviet-era

antenna array in Mayak¹⁸ was blown up.¹⁹ The array was capable of broadcasting on shortwave, AM, and FM frequencies. Before the war, the antenna was rebroadcasting a Moscow radio station and a United States-based Christian radio broadcast. Russia had taken over the antenna and used it to broadcast propaganda into Ukraine.

The acting government of the breakaway republic of Transnistria labeled the three attacks as terrorism and said that Ukraine militants had committed the series of attacks.²⁰ Moldova is accusing internal forces of doing the attacks in an attempt to destabilize the region.²¹

Both Moldova and Transnistria have moved to their highest level of alert. There are reports the Russian garrison in Transnistria, an estimated 1,500 troops, has been fully mobilized.²²

Transnistria has set up checkpoints through the territory and placed concrete defenses²³ at critical checkpoints. Long

¹⁸ <https://goo.gl/maps/obxi4PmUgTgiX5sw9>

¹⁹ <https://twitter.com/KevinRothrock/status/1518848966397505536>

²⁰ <https://www.npr.org/2022/04/26/1094814254/moldova-explosions-ukraine-russia>

²¹ <https://twitter.com/SamRamani2/status/1518936766862053377>

²² <https://twitter.com/sentdefender/status/1518989608100544512>

²³ https://twitter.com/Jake_Hanrahan/status/1519039580661501957

lines have formed with residents fleeing the region for Moldova.²⁴

Pro-Russian social media icon “War Gonzo” started reporting from Transnistria,²⁵ likely part of a more extensive disinformation campaign.

The RIA has started an aggressive disinformation campaign in the republic, texting a warning of an impending missile attack earlier in the day.²⁶ The attack did not materialize.

Vadim Krasnoselsky, the president of the breakaway republic, accused Ukraine of launching three “terrorist attacks” on the country in an effort to drag Transnistria into the conflict. Igor “Gerkin” Strelkov is accusing Romania of backing the Moldovian military in a plan to launch a joint offensive with Ukraine to destroy Transnistria.

Sergei Markov echoed the same message in an interview with the Russian daily, Pravda.²⁷ “Romania, with the support of Nato and with the participation of the Ukrainian

²⁴ https://twitter.com/alina_ra/status/1519184468359143424

²⁵ <https://twitter.com/NotWoofers/status/1518929572980535296>

²⁶ <https://twitter.com/loogunda/status/1519001846110728195>

²⁷ [BNE Intellinews](#)

army, plans to seize Transnistria and carry out massive political repressions against all supporters of Russia.”

The Kremlin dramatically increased rhetoric about the exchange of nuclear weapons. Through the war, Russian leaders and state media pundits have worked hard to remind the world they are a nuclear-capable nation when they have prepared to do something bigger or perceive that things are going poorly. In our assessment, this is disinformation aimed at a western audience to reinforce a non-intervention message.

Transnistria is a Cold War relic that has never recognized the end of the former Soviet Union, even calling its state security service the KGB.

The extreme shift in posture toward Moldova by Moscow happened on the same day the nation submitted its questionnaire for European Union membership.

In Staraya Nelidovka, Russia, a weapons depot exploded and was still burning this morning (local time).



Overnight there were secondary explosions that rocked the region near Belgorod.²⁸ This is the third major explosion in the Belgorod region in the last 30 days.

Air defenses were activated in the Russian city of Voronezh, with state media reporting that a small reconnaissance drone was shot down.²⁹ Air defenses were also activated in Kursk, with explosions echoing over the city.³⁰ There are no reports of any aircraft or UAVs destroyed.

Hours after Russia announced it was suspending natural gas deliveries to Bulgaria, Prime Minister Kiril Petkov announced he was traveling to Kyiv in an attempt to discuss sending weapons to Ukraine. The nation has been deadlocked on the issue of military support, with Pro-

²⁸ <https://twitter.com/i/status/1519176439567949824>

²⁹ https://twitter.com/nexta_tv/status/1519195833073340416

³⁰ <https://twitter.com/Archer83Able/status/1519166571524018176>

Russian elements within the government wanting to take a neutral stance.

Forty-three nations met in Germany at Ramstein Airforce Base to discuss coordination of efforts and support for Ukraine. United States Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin hosted the meeting.

Nations attending, either in person or virtually, included Kenya, Israel, Australia, Japan, and South Korea. The group plans to meet monthly.

Germany announced the nation had delivered heavy weapons to Ukraine. "We decided yesterday that Germany will facilitate the delivery of Gepard self-propelled antiaircraft guns to Ukraine," German Defence Minister Christine Lambrecht said at Ramstein, according to the script of her speech.

Only five of the promised 50 armored antiaircraft systems will be delivered, and there were open questions on how much 35mm ammunition was available.

WAR CRIMES AND HUMAN RIGHTS

No major developments

GEOPOLITICAL

Russia has suspended gas deliveries to Bulgaria.³¹ The nation has tried to remain neutral and has only provided humanitarian support to Ukraine. The announcement comes less than 24 hours after a false-flag attack in Transnistria struck Parcani, a town that is 95% Bulgarian, and hours after President Rumen Radev announced he was donating one month of his salary to Ukraine. Gazprom officials stated the shutoff was because Bulgarian refused to pay for its gas supply in roubles.

Russia is also cutting off natural gas deliveries to Poland, effective Wednesday, for the same reason.

Editor's Note: At the time of publication, there are unconfirmed reports that Poland's gas supply has been turned back on.

³¹ <https://www.npr.org/2022/04/26/1094885971/russia-poland-bulgaria-natural-gas>

ECONOMIC

The rouble strengthened more, trading at 74 to 1 dollar.

Oil and gasoline were mixed, with WTI unchanged at \$102 a barrel, Brent crude down to \$105, and United States gasoline futures were up six cents to \$3.36 a gallon.

DISINFORMATION EVALUATION

No update