

Humanitarian aspect:

Since the beginning of the full-scale invasion, **the Russian Federation has committed 34,441 crimes of aggression and war crimes against Ukraine, the Office of the Prosecutor General informed.** Of them, 33,162 are related to violations of the laws and customs of war; 73 relate to planning, preparation or initiation and waging of aggressive war; 30 concern war propaganda; 1,176 belong to other categories.

About 82,000 Ukrainians, primarily women, children, and the elderly, have been evacuated from Donetsk Oblast and other dangerous areas to safe regions, the Ministry of Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories of Ukraine reported.

On the night of September 18, the Russian forces shelled the Nikopol district of **Dnipropetrovsk Oblast** with Grad MLRS and heavy artillery. Nikopol itself was fired upon twice. Around midnight, almost 30 Russian shells were shot. Three people were injured, Valentyn Reznichenko, the head of Oblast Administration, said. In the afternoon of September 18, the Russian military again fired 60 shells on three communities in the Nikopol district. Two men died, and another two men and a woman were wounded. Damages are being assessed, the head of Dnipropetrovsk Oblast Military Administration said.

As of 21:30 on Sunday, the Russian forces opened fire on **Sumy Oblast** twice; a total of 52 hits were recorded, Dmytro Zhyvytskyi, head of the Sumy Oblast Military Administration, said. A man was killed in the village of Volfine, Bilopillya Community. A local farm was also affected; about 100 pigs and a horse died.

The Russian forces started massive shelling while doctors tried to evacuate patients from a psychiatric hospital in the village of Strelecha, the head of the **Kharkiv Oblast** Military Administration Oleh Synegubov said. They managed to evacuate 30 patients, but there are more than 600 in the institution. At least four medical workers died, and two patients were injured. In the same village, the Russian forces fired a tank at a civilian car, killing two women.

On the night of September 18, the Russian forces fired a missile at downtown **Kramatorsk, Donetsk Oblast**. A hotel was damaged, and a woman was injured.

The city of **Mykolayiv** also got shelled at night. A local hospital and a garage cooperative were damaged. No victims were reported, the city mayor Oleksandr Senkevich said.

The **Kharkiv Oblast** National police reported that since the liberation from the occupation, it had documented 241 war crimes committed by the Russian military in the Oblast.

Mayor of recently liberated **Izyum, Kharkiv Oblast**, Valery Marchenko, said that the exhumation of the bodies from the mass grave continues and will last for at least another two weeks. According to him, the authorities were informed about additional mass burials that still need to be found. The mayor said that 13,000-15,000 people currently live in Izyum, but many people are returning.

Ukraine launched a 24/7 hotline for the Russian soldiers who want to surrender and their families. Those who do are promised that they will be kept per the norms of the Geneva convention.

Occupied territories

It is impossible to provide heat to the cities of the occupied **Luhansk Oblast**, specifically where active hostilities took place, like Rubizhne, Lysychansk, or Sievierodonetsk, head of Luhansk Oblast Military Administration Serhiy Haidai said. According to him, even the surviving buildings in the cities will be "killed by winter". After exposure to low temperatures, it will be impossible to restore them, and they will have to be dismantled. Therefore, Haidai believes that most city residents will try to move to the countryside and spend the winter in abandoned houses because it will be almost impossible to survive in the cities.

The occupying authorities in Donetsk Oblast report that around 9:00 a.m. on September 18, the colony in **Olenivka**, where Ukrainian POWs, including those evacuated from Azovstal plant in Mariupol, are held, was again shelled. Reportedly, one Ukrainian prisoner was killed, and five were wounded. No Russians were wounded. The occupying authorities blame Ukraine for the shelling. According to the Ukrainian Ombudsman Dmytro Lubinets, Ukraine has not been able to obtain the victims' names, although it sent requests to the Russian Ombudsperson Moskalkova and asked the UN and ICRC to mediate.

Operational situation

It is the 207th day of the strategic air-ground offensive operation of the Russian Armed Forces against Ukraine (in the official terminology of the Russian Federation – "operation to protect Donbas"). The enemy continues to concentrate its efforts on establishing full control over the territory of Donetsk Oblast, organizing defense and maintaining control over the captured territories, and disrupting intensive actions of the Ukrainian troops in certain directions.

The enemy fired at the positions of the Ukrainian Defense Forces along the contact line. Russian military takes measures to regroup troops in different directions, deploys reserves and conducts aerial reconnaissance.

In total, 105 Russian BTGs are involved in hostilities on the territory of Ukraine. Additionally, there are 37 and 15 BTGs in the reserve of the I and II stage, respectively. The grouping has up to 156,400 military personnel, up to 1,070 tanks, up to 2,490 BBMs, up to 1,510 artillery systems, up to 630 MLRS, and 58 Operational-tactical missile systems (OTRK).

The Russian military continues to shell civilian infrastructure, violating the norms of International Humanitarian Law and laws and customs of war.

Over the past 24 hours, the Russian forces have launched 6 missile and 28 air strikes and fired more than 90 rocket-propelled grenades at military and civilian targets on the territory of Ukraine.

The infrastructure of more than 30 Ukrainian towns and villages sustained damage, particularly Kharkiv, Dvorichna, Kamianka, Krasnohorivka, Novomykhailivka, Neskuchne, Uspenivka, Myrolyubivka, Bilyaivka, Vysokopillya, and Mykolaiv. The Russian artillery hit civilian objects on the outskirts of Zaporizhzhya (Zaporizhzhya Oblast), and in the cities of Chuhuyiv (Kharkiv Oblast) and Kramatorsk (Donetsk Oblast), killing and injuring civilians. The threat of air and missile strikes throughout the territory of Ukraine persists.

During the day, Ukrainian aviation struck 13 areas of the Russian manpower and equipment concentration and 3 positions of anti-aircraft missile systems. In addition, Ukrainian air defense units shot down five Russian UAVs and one Ka-52 helicopter.

Ukrainian rocket troops and artillery damaged over two hundred enemy targets, including 12 control points, ammunition depots, fuel and lubricant warehouses, artillery positions, and personnel and military equipment concentration areas.

To keep the troops ready for deployment, the deadline for checking the combat readiness of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Belarus has been extended (until September 24).

The morale and psychological state of the personnel of the invasion forces remain low.

Kharkiv direction

- *Zolochiv-Balakleya section: approximate length of combat line - 147 km, number of BTGs of the RF Armed Forces - 10-12, the average width of the combat area of one BTG - 13.3 km;*
- *Deployed enemy BTGs: 26th, 153rd and 197th tank regiments, 245th motorized rifle regiment of the 47th tank division, 6th and 239th tank regiments, 228th motorized rifle regiment of the 90th tank division, 1st motorized rifle regiment, 1st tank regiment of the 2nd motorized rifle division, 25th and 138th separate motorized rifle brigades of the 6th Combined Arms Army, 27th separate motorized rifle brigade of the 1st Tank Army, 275th and 280th motorized rifle regiments, 11th tank regiment of the 18th motorized rifle division of the 11 Army Corps, 7th motorized rifle regiment of the 11th Army Corps, 80th separate motorized rifle brigade of the 14th Army Corps, 2nd and 45th separate SOF brigades of the Airborne Forces, 1st Army Corps of so-called DPR, PMCs.*

The Russian forces shelled the areas around Kozacha Lopan, Hoptivka, Strelecha, Vysoka Yaruga, Vovchansk, Hatyshche, Budarky, Dvorichna, Kupyansk, Kamianka with tanks, mortars and various types of artillery. The shelling was also carried out from the territory of the Russian Federation.

During the Russian retreat from Kharkiv Oblast, military units of the 11th Army Corps from the Baltic Fleet of the Russian Armed Forces lost more than 50% of their personnel and more than 200 pieces of military equipment.

In addition, the 64th separate motorized rifle brigade of the Eastern Military District lost more than 90% of its personnel killed, wounded, deserted, and dismissed due to refusal to participate in hostilities. The brigade's equipment is handed over to FSB border service units of the Russian Federation, and the military unit is being prepared for disbandment.

In the border areas of Belgorod Oblast, the Russian military deployed eight BTGs in the reserve of the 1st line from the 6th combined arms army, 11th Army Corps of the Baltic Fleet of the Western Military District and Northern Fleet (61st separate marines brigade, 25th and 138th separate motorized rifle brigades of the 6th combined arms army; 200th separate motorized rifle brigade of the 14th Army Corps of the Northern Fleet; 11th tank regiment of the 3rd motorized rifle division, 9th motorized rifle regiment of the 18th motorized rifle division; 7th separate motorized rifle regiment of the 11th Army Corps), 101st rifle regiment of mobilization reserve of the 1st Army Corps and the "BARS" detachment.

The enemy is building up an air defense system to cover areas where troops are concentrated and launch missile strikes on targets in Kharkiv Oblast. Eight S-400 air defense systems are concentrated in the Arkadiyevka area (Belgorod region, 32 km from the Ukrainian state border).

Kramatorsk direction

- *Balakleya - Siversk section: approximate length of the combat line - 184 km, the number of BTGs of the RF Armed Forces - 17-20, the average width of the combat area of one BTG - 9.6 km;*
- *252nd and 752nd motorized rifle regiments of the 3rd motorized rifle division, 1st, 13th and 12th tank regiments, 423rd motorized rifle regiment of the 4th tank division, 201st military base, 15th, 21st, 30th separate motorized rifle brigades of the 2nd Combined Arms Army, 35th, 55th and 74th separate motorized rifle brigades of the 41st Combined Arms Army, 3rd and 14th separate SOF brigades, 2nd and 4th separate motorized rifle brigades of the 2nd Army Corps, 7th separate motorized rifle brigade of the 1st Army Corps, PMCs.*

The Russian forces shelled the Ukrainian Defense Forces in the areas of Raihorodok, Ozerne, Piskunivka, Kryva Luka, Siversk, Mykolaivka, Verkhokamyanske, Spirne, and Vesele.

As a result of the Russian regrouping following the retreat from the Kharkiv and Sloviansk directions, part of the troops of the Central Military District (up to 12 BTGs) are concentrated in Luhansk Oblast as an operational reserve.

The Russian forces led offensive actions, probably by units of the 15th motorized rifle regiment of the 2nd motorized rifle division of the 1st tank army in the direction of Petropavlivka, Kupyansk (Kharkiv Oblast). They had no success.

Donetsk direction

- *Siversk - Maryinka section: approximate length of the combat line - 235 km, the number of BTGs of the RF Armed Forces - 13-15, the average width of the combat area of one BTG - 17 km;*
- *Deployed BTGs: 68th and 163rd tank regiments, 102nd and 103rd motorized rifle regiments of the 150 motorized rifle division, 80th tank regiment of the 90th tank division, 35th, 55th and 74th separate motorized rifle brigades of the 41st Combined Arms Army, 31st separate airborne assault brigade, 61st separate marines brigade of the Joint Strategic Command "Northern Fleet", 336th separate marines brigade, 24th separate SOF brigade, 1st, 3rd, 5th, 15th, and 100th separate motorized rifle brigades, 9th and 11th separate motorized rifle regiment of the 1st Army Corps of the so-called DPR, 6th motorized rifle regiment of the 2nd Army Corps of the so-called LPR, PMCs.*

The Russian military fired at the positions of the Ukrainian Defense Forces near Rozdolivka, Bilohorivka, Yakovlivka, Soledar, Bakhmutske, Bakhmut, Vesela Dolyna, Zaitseve, Odradivka, Mykolaivka Druga, Mayorsk, New York, Kamianka, Avdiivka, Vodyane, Opytne, and Krasnohorivka.

The Russian forces suffered significant losses when they attempted to storm the positions of the Ukrainian Defense Forces in the Avdiivka direction: more than 30 people from the 1st Army Corps of the so-called DPR are admitted to medical facilities every day. The occupying forces are trying to restore the combat capability of units that have suffered losses.

Over the past day, the Ukrainian Defense Forces repelled enemy attacks in the areas of Mykhailivka Druga, Vesela Dolyna, Odradivka, Maryinka, Novomykhailivka and Pravdyne.

The Russian military attacked with the forces of the "League" PMC in the directions of Pokrovske, Bakhmut; Zaitseve (lower), Mykolaivka Druga; Vershyna, Zaitseve; Kodema, Zaitseve, but could not break through and withdrew. In the directions of Klynove, Vesela Dolyna and Kodema, Odradivka, the Russian forces managed to penetrate the defenses of the Ukrainian units. Fighting continues.

The enemy 100th separate motorized rifle brigade of the 1st Army Corps attacked in the direction of Pisky, Pervomaiske, and the 39th separate motorized rifle brigade of the 68th Army Corps of the Eastern Military District attacked in the direction of Pisky and Novomykhailivka. The Russian military was stopped and pushed back.

Zaporizhzhya direction

- *Maryinka – Vasylivka section: approximate length of the line of combat - 200 km, the number of BTGs of the RF Armed Forces - 17, the average width of the combat area of one BTG - 11.7 km;*
- *Deployed BTGs: 36th separate motorized rifle brigade of the 29th Combined Arms Army, 38th and 64th separate motorized rifle brigades, 69th separate cover brigade of the 35th Combined Arms Army, 5th separate tank brigade, 37 separate motorized rifle brigade of the 36th Combined Arms Army, 135th, 429th, 503rd and 693rd motorized rifle regiments of the 19th motorized rifle division of the 58th Combined Arms Army, 70th, 71st and 291st motorized rifle regiments of the 42nd motorized rifle division of the 58th Combined Arms Army, 136th separate motorized rifle*

brigade of the 58 Combined Arms Army, 46th and 49th machine gun artillery regiments of the 18th machine gun artillery division of the 68th Army Corps, 39th separate motorized rifle brigade of the 68th Army Corps, 83th separate airborne assault brigade, 40th and 155th separate marines brigades, 22nd separate SOF brigade, 1st Army Corps of the so-called DPR, and 2nd Army Corps of the so-called LPR, PMCs.

The Russian forces did not take active actions.

The Russian military fired at the positions of the Ukrainian Defense Forces in the areas around Kamianske, Stepove, Orihiv, Hulyaipilske, Bilohirya, Olhivske, Temyrivka, Novosilka, Velyka Novosilka, Neskuchne, Prechystivka and Vuhledar.

A BTG of the 15th separate motorized rifle brigade of the 2nd Combined Arms Army of the Central Military District was transferred to the Polohy district from the reserve of the 1st line.

Kherson direction

- *Vasylivka–Nova Zboryivka and Stanislav section: approximate length of the battle line - 252 km, the number of BTGs of the RF Armed Forces - 27, the average width of the combat area of one BTG - 9.3 km;*
- *Deployed BTGs: 114th, 143rd and 394th motorized rifle regiments, 218th tank regiment of the 127th motorized rifle division of the 5th Combined Arms Army, 57th and 60th separate motorized rifle brigades of the 5th Combined Arms Army, 135th, 503rd and 693rd motorized rifle regiments of the 19th motorized rifle division, 70th, 71st and 291st motorized rifle regiments of the 42nd motorized rifle division, 51st and 137th parachute airborne regiments of the 106th parachute airborne division, 7th military base of the 49th Combined Arms Army, 16th and 346th separate SOF brigades.*

In the temporarily captured territory of Kherson Oblast, the Russian forces continued illegal actions against the civilian population. Thus, there is information regarding the mass eviction of residents from their private homes in Pryozerne and Tryfonivka. In the area around Chonhar, servicemen of the occupying forces force the local population to fortify their positions under threats of death.

BTG of the 37th separate motorized rifle brigade of the 36 Combined Arms Army was moved from the Orihiv direction to the Kryvy Rih direction in the Preobrazhenka district.

The Russian military is strengthening its troop groupings in the Mykolaiv and Kryvy Rih directions; in particular, it has moved the 57th motorized rifle regiment of the 6th motorized rifle division of the 3rd Army Corps (three motorized rifle brigades and a tank brigade) from the Kuzminsky training ground to Kherson and a company tactical group (150 servicemen, 10 ICVs, 10 cannons) to Tryfonivka.

To ensure uninterrupted logistics support for the grouping of troops in the Mykolaiv- Kryvy Rih direction, the Russian military made crossings through the lock of the Kakhovska HPP with the use of MTU-90 tank bridge-layers.

Kherson-Berislav bridgehead

- *Velyka Lepetikha – Oleksandrivka section: approximate length of the battle line – 250 km, the number of BTGs of the RF Armed Forces – 22, the average width of the combat area of one BTG – 11.8 km;*
- *Deployed BTGs: 108th Air assault regiment, 171st separate airborne assault brigade of the 7th Air assault division, 4th military base of the 58th Combined Arms Army, 429th motorized rifle regiment of the 19th motorized rifle division, 33rd and 255th motorized rifle regiments of the 20th motorized rifle division, 34th and 205th separate motorized rifle brigades of the 49th Combined Arms Army, 224th, 237th and 239th Air assault regiments of the 76th Air assault division, 217th and 331 Air assault regiments of the 98th Air assault division, 126th separate coastal defense brigade, 127th separate ranger brigade, 11th separate airborne assault brigade, 10th separate SOF brigade, PMC.*

More than 20 villages were affected by the Russian fire, particularly Trudolyubivka, Petrivka, Bila Krynytsia, Lozove, Blahodativka, Shyrokye, Partyzanske, Ternovi Pody, Lymany, Myrne and Tavriyske.

In the Mykolaiv direction, the enemy 56th air assault regiment of the 7th air assault division is advancing in the direction of Myrne, Pravdyne. The battle continues.

Azov-Black Sea Maritime Operational Area:

The forces of the Russian Black Sea Fleet continue to project force on the coast and the continental part of Ukraine and control the northwestern part of the Black Sea. The ultimate goal is to deprive Ukraine of access to the sea and connect unrecognized Transnistria with the Russian Federation by land through the coast of the Black and Azov seas.

The number of ships at sea has significantly decreased in the Black Sea. Currently, six enemy warships are at sea, providing reconnaissance and blocking shipping in the Azov-Black Sea waters. Among them is one cruise missile carrier, a small missile ship of project 21631 "Buyan-M" and three large amphibious ships of project 775 located along the peninsula's southwestern coast. Up to 8 Kalibr missiles can be ready for a salvo.

Russian missile and artillery attacks on Mykolaiv, Ochakiv and 16 villages of the Oblast have resumed. The Russian military uses cruise missiles, S-300 anti-aircraft missiles, MLRS, and artillery.

Russian aviation continues to fly from the Crimean airfields of Belbek and Hvardiyske over the northwestern part of the Black Sea. Over the past day, 9 Su-27, Su-30, and Su-24 aircraft from Belbek and Saki airfields were involved.

9 amphibious ships are in the ports of Novorossiysk and Sevastopol for replenishment and scheduled maintenance. There are no signs of preparation for an amphibious assault on the southern coast of Ukraine.

3 submarines of project 636.3 are in the port of Novorossiysk; one is in Sevastopol.

The movement of enemy military equipment by road and rail transport through the temporarily occupied Autonomous Republic of Crimea in the direction of Kherson Oblast remains intensive.

On September 18, 10 ships with 169.3 thousand tons of agricultural products left the ports of "Odesa", "Chornomorsk", and "Pivdenny" for the countries of Africa, Asia and Europe.

Since the departure of the first ship with Ukrainian food on August 1, 3.7 million tons of agricultural products have been exported. A total of 165 ships have left Ukrainian ports with agricultural products for countries in Asia, Europe and Africa.

Russian operational losses from 24.02 to 18.09

Personnel - almost 54,480 people (+230);

Tanks – 2,210 (+8);

Armored combat vehicles – 4,718 (+17);

Artillery systems – 1,309 (+3);

Multiple rocket launchers (MLRS) - 312 (0);

Anti-aircraft warfare systems - 168 (0);

Vehicles and fuel tanks – 3,578 (+7);

Aircraft - 251 (0);

Helicopters – 217 (+1);

UAV operational and tactical level - 918 (+7);

Intercepted cruise missiles - 238 (+2);

Boats / ships - 15 (0).

International diplomatic aspect

"Reports of a mass grave with 440 men, women, and children in Izyum, Ukraine are heartbreaking and should galvanize our support to the brave Ukrainians seeking to liberate their homeland," tweeted the US Secretary of State. "Canada condemns these abhorrent atrocities. We'll keep working with partners to hold the perpetrators to account," stated Canada's Prime Minister. The UN Secretary-General expressed his hope that the International Criminal Court (ICC) would be able to investigate the alleged massacre in the eastern Ukrainian city of Izyum. The EU presidency has called for an international tribunal over Russia's invasion of Ukraine. "Izyum is the most destroyed and devastated town compared to Bucha, Borodyanka, Irpen, Hostomel; there are simply residential buildings lying in ruins," said Adviser to the Minister of Internal Affairs of Ukraine Anton Gerashchenko. So far, 460 bodies have been exhumed. "Among the bodies that were exhumed today, 99 percent showed signs of violent death," Oleh Synegubov, head of Kharkiv regional administration, said.

A torture chamber was discovered in Kozacha Lopan, a village whose edge lies less than two kilometers from the Russian border. Ukrainian Prosecutor general's office said Russian forces had set up a local police force that ran the prison, adding that documents confirming the functioning of the police department and implements of torture had been seized. President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has said more than ten such "torture chambers" have been discovered in the region since the hasty withdrawal of the Russian troops last week. Russia conducts atrocities on a scale of magnitude. Those actions constitute the crime of genocide.

Germany has announced its largest financial reparations packages for the world's remaining Jewish Holocaust survivors, worth \$1.2 billion, including a \$12 million emergency fund for some 8,500 survivors who remain in Ukraine.

The EU executive will recommend suspending up to 70% of €22.5 billion worth of cohesion funds earmarked for Hungary from the EU's 2021-27 budget over corruption and democracy concerns. Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban said the European Parliament's call to cut funds to Hungary over democratic backsliding was a "boring joke." It's reported that Budapest would try to block the extension of the Russian sanctions. In the meantime, Fidesz [Hungarian Civic Alliance, a right-wing national-conservative political party led by Viktor Orban] should be able to govern until 2060, Viktor Orban reportedly said in a closed-door meeting of the country's ruling elite. He believes that the Eurozone and the EU could fall apart by 2030. However, the Visegrad four (an alliance of the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia) will be a strong power center by then. Therefore, it is necessary to think about the meaning of EU membership. The Hungarian Prime minister believes that the Russo-Ukrainian war will last until 2030, and Ukraine could lose significant territories.

Former Romanian Foreign Minister Andrei Marga said during a conference in Alba Iulia, that Ukraine has "unnatural borders" and must cede territories to Russia, Hungary, Poland and Romania. "These statements are in flagrant contradiction to Romania's official position towards Russia's illegal, unjustified and unprovoked aggression against Ukraine, as well as with the fundamental principles of international law that govern international relations today," the Romanian Foreign Ministry reacted to the words of its former minister. Romanian membership in the EU ruled out any territorial claims against its neighbors. After the International Court of Justice ruled on the territorial limits of the continental shelf around Snake Island in 2009, the last bilateral "territorial" issue was resolved.

Russia, relevant news

Satellite images show that Russia is moving a large number of anti-aircraft missiles from St. Petersburg in the direction of Ukraine, the Finnish media resource Yle reported. If one compares the footage taken earlier and at the end of summer – the beginning of autumn, mobile fire platforms and missiles have disappeared from the base in the Zelenogorsk region on the Karelian Isthmus. The publication notes that St. Petersburg, one of the most critical areas for Russian air defense, is surrounded by a protective ring of 14 anti-aircraft missile bases. Now several of them are empty.

Six members of the Council under the President of the Russian Federation for the Development of Civil Society and Human Rights appealed to the Prosecutor General of Russia with a demand to investigate the legality of the recruitment of prisoners to participate in the invasion of Ukraine as part of the Wagner PMC. Petersburg in the direction of Ukraine, the Finnish media resource Yle reported. If one compares the footage taken earlier and at the end of summer – the beginning of autumn, it can be seen that, in particular, mobile fire platforms and missiles have disappeared from the base in the Zelenogorsk region on the Karelian Isthmus. The publication notes that St. Petersburg, one of the most important areas for Russian air defense, is surrounded by a protective ring of 14 anti-aircraft missile bases. Now several of them are empty.

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Centre for Defence Strategies (CDS) is a Ukrainian security think tank. We operate since 2020 and are involved in security studies, defence policy research and advocacy. Currently all our activity is focused on stopping the ongoing war.

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