

Humanitarian aspect:

10 children were injured in Ukraine during the past week as a result of Russian aggression, 6 of them died, the Prosecutor General's Office reported. In total, law enforcement officers registered **53,802 crimes of aggression and war crimes (1,645 of them in one week)**, and 18,519 crimes against national security. [these data are prior to today's attack]

The Russian Federation again launched massive missile strikes on Ukraine.

According to the data of the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, **the enemy fired 76 missiles at the objects of critical infrastructure of Ukraine** from the regions of the Caspian and Black Seas, of which 72 were cruise missiles (X-101, "Kalibr", X-22) and four guided air missiles (X-59 /X-31P). Air defense forces of Ukraine shot down 60 missiles.

The enemy targeted several energy infrastructure facilities and residential buildings in Zhytomyr, Kyiv, Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk and Zaporizhzhia Oblasts.

NPC "Ukrenergo" has introduced a state of emergency across the country due to the loss of more than 50% of the consumption of the interconnected energy system. Ukrenergo warned that considering this is already the 9th wave of missile strikes on energy facilities, the power supply restoration may take longer than usual. Priority would be given to critical infrastructure facilities: hospitals, water supply facilities, heat supply facilities, and sewage treatment plants.

The enemy fired 5 missiles at Kryvyi Rih, Dnipropetrovsk Oblast.

A rocket hit a residential building; preliminary three people died, and 13 were injured, including 4 children. Rescuers are looking for a 1.5-year-old child under the rubble. According to the head of Dnipropetrovsk OMA, Valentyn Reznichenko, this is the son of a young couple killed [in the attack]. Oleksandr Vilkul, head of the Kryvyi Rih military administration, said that more than 100 people lived in this building. Emergency crews from all over the city are eliminating the consequences of the damage to the building, 30 nearby houses, a school and a hospital.

Three workers of electric substations were injured in the Nikopol and Kryvyi Rih districts as missiles hit energy infrastructure facilities in different areas of the region. Head of Dnipropetrovsk OMA, Valentyn Reznichenko, reported serious destruction.

At the time of the rocket attack on Kryvyi Rih, there were **596 miners trapped in the mines. All of them have already been raised to the surface.**

The **Dnipropetrovsk Oblast**, now the restored [energy] capacity are enough for a minimum supply of critical infrastructure.

In **Kyiv Oblast**, a critical infrastructure object and 9 private houses were damaged in different districts of the region. Three injured civilians were reported, and one person is in serious

condition. Emergency power outages were introduced, resulting in mobile/internet communication, and water and heat supply interruptions. By late evening Kyiv mayor Vitaliy Klitschko reported that a third of the capital's residents have heat and water supply, city services are working to return heat and water to all Kyiv residents by morning.

The **subway in Kyiv** entirely stopped and operated only as a shelter, as there was not enough power to restore the movement of trains, according to the chief engineer of Kyiv Metro, Viktor Vyhivskiy.

All of **Kharkiv Oblast** lost electricity due to enemy attacks. The electricity was restored in the evening: 85% in Kharkiv Oblast and 55% in Kharkiv, said Oleg Sinegubov, head of Kharkiv OMA.

Ukrzaliznytsya reported that due to damage to the energy infrastructure, 22 trains are delayed from 30 minutes to 9 hours.

Occupied and recently liberated territories:

In the area of the temporarily occupied city of **Novoazovsk** near Mariupol (Donets Oblast), a 15 km queue of trucks, which are taking [looting] Ukrainian grain to Russia, is being recorded, reported Petro Andryushchenko, adviser to the Mariupol mayor, in his Telegram and published a corresponding video.

Russian invaders closed the entrance to the temporarily occupied territory of the **Zaporizhzhia Oblast** through the Vasylivka checkpoint, Melitopol Mayor Ivan Fedorov wrote.

Over the past few days, about a thousand people, including 52 children, have been evacuated from de-occupied towns and villages of **Kherson Oblast**, and more than 164,000 people remain living there, said Deputy Head of the Office of the President Kyrylo Tymoshenko at a briefing, reports Ukrinform.

Operational situation

(Please note that this section of the Brief is mainly on the previous day's (December 16) developments)

It is the 296th 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"). Over the past day, units of the Defense Forces repelled Russian attacks in the areas of Novoselivske, Stelmakhivka, Ploshanka, Chervonopopivka and Bilohorivka in Luhansk Oblast and Hryhorivka, Vyimka, Yakovlivka, Soledar, Bakhmut, Klishchiivka, Andriivka, Kurdyumivka, Ozaryanivka, Druzhba, Oleksandropil, Novobakhmutivka, Nevelske, Maryinka, Pobyeda and Novomykhailivka in Donetsk Oblast.

Over the past day, the enemy launched 23 air strikes and 4 missile strikes, 2 of which hit civilian objects in Kharkiv, and fired 78 rounds of MLRS, particularly at residential areas, resulting in

civilian casualties. In addition, the Russian troops opened mortar fire at Zapsilya and Popivka of Sumy Oblast, and Chervona Zorya, Vysoka Yaruga, Krasne, Morokhovets, Starytsia, Dvorichna and Novomylnsk of Kharkiv Oblast.

In order to replenish the current losses, the Russian military continues the campaign for conscripts to sign military contracts. In particular, such processes occur in the Western Military District's 1st Tank army divisions.

The enemy transferred three MiG-31k aircraft, which are carriers of Kh-47 "Kinzhal" missiles, and an A-50U long-range radar detection aircraft at the airfield "Machulyshchi" of the Republic of Belarus.

Two battalions of the 38th separate airborne assault brigade of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Belarus, which have been deployed to strengthen the border, returned to the point of their permanent deployment in Brest.

During the past day, the Ukrainian Defense Forces aircraft made 22 strikes on the areas of concentration of enemy personnel, weapons and military equipment and 3 strikes on the positions of the enemy's anti-aircraft missile systems. Ukrainian units shot down two UAVs of the Orlan-10 type.

Missile and artillery units of the Defense Forces of Ukraine hit 5 enemy command and control points, 4 enemy personnel concentration areas, 6 artillery positions, 2 ammunition depots, and a fuel depot.

Kharkiv direction

- *Topoli - Siversk section: approximate length of combat line - 154 km, number of BTGs of the RF Armed Forces - 23-28, the average width of the combat area of one BTG - 5.5 km;*
- *Deployed enemy BTGs: 26th, 153rd, and 197th tank regiments (TR), 245th motorized rifle regiment (MRR) of the 47th tank division (TD), 6th and 239th TRs, 228th MRR of the 90th TD, 25th and 138th separate motorized rifle brigades (SMRBr) of the 6th Combined Arms (CA) Army, 27th SMRBr of the 1st Tank Army, 252nd and 752nd MRRs of the 3rd MRD, 1st, 13th, and 12th TRs, 423rd MRR of the 4th TD, 201st military base, 15th, 21st, 30th SMRBr of the 2nd CA Army, 35th, 55th and 74th SMRBr of the 41st CA Army, 275th and 280th MRRs, 11th TR of the 18th MRD of the 11 Army Corps (AC), 7th MRR of the 11th AC, 80th SMRBr of the 14th AC, 76th Air assault division, 106th airborne division, 2nd, 3rd, 14th, 24th and 45th separate SOF brigades of the Airborne Forces, military units of the 1st AC of so-called DPR, 2nd and 4th SMRBr of the 2nd AC, PMCs.*

The enemy shelled with tanks, mortars, barrel and rocket artillery Vilshana, Ivanivka, Kyslivka, Tabaivka, Kotlyarivka, Berestove, Pershotravneve in Kharkiv Oblast and Makiivka, Ploschanka, Chervonopopivka, Stelmakhivka and Myasozharivka in Luhansk Oblast, Yampolivka, Torske and Vedmezhe in Donetsk Oblast.

In the Lyman direction, the enemy command deployed the following forces in the area of Kreminna:

- BTG of the 252nd motorized rifle regiment (MRR) of the 3rd motorized rifle division (MRD) of the 20th Army, which suffered significant losses in the battles for Makiivka, now went on the defensive in the area of Novovodyane village.
- BTG of the 252nd MRR of the 3rd MRD of the 20th Army, CTG of the 15th separate motorized rifle brigade (SMRBr) of the 2nd Army, CTG of the 25th SMRBr of the 6th Army, RTG of the 138th SMRBr of the 6th Army, CTG of the 74th SMRBr of the 41st Army are deployed in the Chervonopopivka area. They are trying to break through from Ploschanka to Makiivka and from Ploschanka - Holikove frontier to bypass Chervonopopivka to the west, sporadically attacking the positions of the Ukrainian Defense Forces.

The enemy units concentrated in this area have suffered significant losses in previous battles, are severely undermanned and have limited combat capabilities.

In the course of the previous week, up to three BTGs from the 76th Air assault division and 106th airborne division arrived in this direction and are gradually being brought into battle. In addition, the arrival of the "Wagner" assault detachment is expected, likely to be deployed in the Zhytlivka - Chervonopopivka area or in the direction of Torske.

Donetsk direction

- *Siversk - Maryinka section: approximate length of the combat line - 144 km, the number of BTGs of the RF Armed Forces - 13-15, the average width of the combat area of one BTG - 9.6 km;*
- *Deployed BTGs: 68th and 163rd tank regiments (TR), 102nd and 103rd motorized rifle regiments of the 150 motorized rifle division, 80th TR of the 90th tank division, 35th, 55th, and 74th separate motorized rifle brigades of the 41st Combined Arms Army, 51st and 31st separate airborne assault brigades, 61st separate marines brigade of the Joint Strategic Command "Northern Fleet," 336th separate marines brigade of Baltic Fleet, 1st, 3rd, 5th, 15th, and 100th separate motorized rifle brigades, 9th and 11th separate motorized rifle regiments 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 enemy shelled Verkhokamyanske, Spirne, Bilohorivka, Yakovlivka, Soledar, Hryhorivka, Bakhmutske, Bakhmut, Klishchiivka, Andriivka, Kurdyumivka, Ozaryanivka, Pivnichne, Avdiivka, Vodiane, Pervomaiske, Nevelske, Krasnohorivka, Georgiivka, Maryinka, Novomykhailivka and Opytne of Donetsk Oblast.

Zaporizhzhia 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 (SMRBr) of the 29th Combined Arms (CA) Army, 38th and 64th SMRBr, 69th separate cover brigade of the 35th CA Army, 5th separate tank brigade, 135th, 429th, 503rd and 693rd motorized rifle regiments (MRR) of the 19th motorized rifle division (MRD) of the 58th CA Army, 70th, 71st and 291st MRRs of the 42nd MRD of the 58th CA Army, 136th SMRB of the 58 CA Army, 46th and 49th machine gun artillery regiments of the 18th machine gun artillery division of the 68th Army Corps (AC), 39th SMRB of*

the 68th AC, 83th separate airborne assault brigade, 40th and 155th separate marines brigades, 22nd separate SOF brigade, 1st AC of the so-called DPR, and 2nd AC of the so-called LPR, PMCs.

The enemy shelled from tanks, mortars, barrel and rocket artillery the areas of Vremivka and Novopil of Donetsk Oblast; Hulyaipole, Dorozhnyanka, Hulyaipilske, Orihiv and Kamianske of Zaporizhzhia Oblast; Manganets and Nikopol of Dnipropetrovsk Oblast.

On December 14, in the Tokmak area, the Ukrainian Defense Forces destroyed up to 10 pieces of Russian military equipment and injured about 180 enemy servicemen. The work of Russian mobile crematoria was noted in the area of the city.

Tavriysk direction

- *Vasylivka – Stanislav section: approximate length of the battle line – 296 km, the number of BTGs of the RF Armed Forces - 39, the average width of the combat area of one BTG - 7,5 km;*
- *Deployed BTGs of: the 8th and 49th Combined Arms (CA) Armies; 11th, 103rd, 109th, and 127th rifle regiments of the mobilization reserve of the 1st Army Corps (AC); 35th and 36th CA Armies; 3rd AC; 90th tank division; the 22nd AC of the Coastal Forces; the 810th separate marines brigade of the Black Sea Fleet; the 7th and the 98th airborne division, and the 11th and 83rd separate airborne assault brigades of the Airborne Forces, 10th separate SOF brigade.*

The enemy fired tanks, mortars, barrel and rocket artillery in the areas of Novotyaginka, Ivanivka, Tokarivka, Inhulets, Prydniprovsk, Antonivka, Dniprovsk, Kherson, Bilozerk and Yantarne.

Up to 30 Russian personnel were destroyed in Lazurny.

Azov-Black Sea Maritime Operational Area:

The forces of the Russian Black Sea Fleet continue to stay ready to carry out two operational tasks against Ukraine:

- *to project force on the coast and the continental part of Ukraine by launching missile strikes from surface ships, submarines, coastal missile systems, and aircraft at targets in the coastal zone and deep into the territory of Ukraine and readiness for the naval amphibious landing to assist ground forces in the coastal direction*
- *to control the northwestern part of the Black Sea by blocking Ukrainian ports and preventing the restoration of sea communications by carrying out attacks on ports and ships and concealed mine-laying.*

The ultimate goal is to deprive Ukraine of access to the Black Sea and extend and maintain control over the captured territory and Ukraine's coastal regions.

The enemy keeps only 8 surface ships at sea. They are located along the southwestern coast of Crimea. One of the ships is a carrier of 8 Kalibr cruise missiles. A certain number of Kalibr missiles were used during the massive Russian attack on Ukraine on the morning of December 16. It is possible that additional carriers of Kalibr missiles went to the sea for this strike.

In the Sea of Azov, the enemy continues to control sea communications, keeping 2 boats on combat duty.

Enemy aviation continues to fly from Crimean airfields Belbek and Gvardiyske over the northwestern part of the Black Sea. Part of the Su-35S aircraft from the Belbek airfield was involved in a massive attack on Ukraine (X-59 missiles). Over the past day, 24 combat aircraft from Belbek and Saki airfields were deployed.

Russian operational losses from 24.02 to 16.12.22

Personnel - almost 97,270 people (+680);

Tanks - 2,980 (+5)

Armored combat vehicles – 5,952 (+6);

Artillery systems – 1,946 (+3);

Multiple rocket launchers (MLRS) - 410 (+4);

Anti-aircraft warfare systems - 211 (0);

Vehicles and fuel tanks – 4,563 (0);

Aircraft - 281 (0);

Helicopters – 264 (0);

UAV operational and tactical level – 1,648 (+4);

Intercepted cruise missiles - 592 (0);

Boats/ships - 16 (0).

Ukraine, general news

To protect against power outages, 86% of businesses install generators or other sources of uninterruptible power supply (UPS). At the same time, only 1% of companies stopped working completely, according to the European Business Association (EBA) survey data, as reported by Ukrinform. Due to the instability of the electricity supply during the last two months, 66% of companies changed their work schedule, 40% reduced the volume of production or provision of services, and 12% closed part of their offices/departments/retail outlets. Another 9% suspended work or preserved part of the premises. At the same time, the majority of companies (72%) claim that a long blackout will not be able to force them to leave the Ukrainian market. And only 8% assume such a possibility in the worst-case scenario.

International diplomatic aspect

Russia has launched the ninth wave of its massive missile attacks on Ukraine's energy infrastructure. The launches were conducted from the Caspian Sea, the Black Sea, and from the airspace near the town of Engels, the location of Russia's strategic bomber's airbase Ukraine [allegedly] hit on 5-6 December. "They use up more inventory than the production replenishes," a spokesman of the Air Force of Ukraine said. "Some types of missiles actually come off the assembly line... this summer and autumn."

Nine generation facilities were damaged, leaving Kharkiv, the second largest city, Poltava, and dozens of smaller towns in darkness. Two-thirds of Kyiv has lost electricity, water supply, and heating. The Tube was used only as a bomb shelter the whole day. Ukrenergo, a major power operator, warned of a longer repair period after the recent attacks cut energy consumption by

half. "Whatever the rocket worshipers from Moscow are hoping for, it still won't change the balance of power in this war. They still have enough missiles for a few such massive strikes. On the other hand, we have enough determination and self-belief to return our own [territories] after these blows," Volodymyr Zelensky said. "Grateful for the work of Ukraine's air defense amid more escalatory Russian attacks this morning on civilian infrastructure in Kyiv and around the country. First US shipment of emergency repair equipment has already arrived - Ukraine will prevail," US Ambassador to Ukraine Bridget Brink tweeted.

From the beginning of the all-out invasion, the Russian government and its propaganda machinery were denying facts of targeting civilian infrastructure. "Now, there is a lot of noise about our attacks on the energy infrastructure of a neighboring country. Yes, we are doing it," Putin confessed to the war crime on December 8. The Geneva Conventions of August 12 1949, and the ICC Rome Statute define war crimes: Intentionally directing attacks against civilian objects, that is, objects which are not military objectives; Attacking or bombarding, by whatever means, towns, villages, dwellings or buildings which are undefended and which are not military objectives; Extensive destruction and appropriation of property, not justified by military necessity and carried out unlawfully and wantonly.

"After food and hunger, Putin is now weaponizing the winter by deliberately depriving millions of Ukrainians of water, electricity, and heating. The European Union is responding to this latest escalation and war crime with our 9th package of hard-hitting sanctions," the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy said. The package imposes new export controls and restrictions on dual-use goods and technology as well as goods and technology that can contribute to the technological enhancement of Russia's defense and security sector. The measure will deny Russia access to chemicals, nerve agents, night-vision and radio-navigation equipment, electronics, and IT components that the Russian war machine could use. The EU also expanded the export ban on aviation and space industry-related goods and technology to include aircraft engines and their parts. A hundred forty-one physical persons and forty-nine legal persons, including two banks, were added to the blacklist, and their assets were frozen. The Swiss government is joining the G7 and EU's latest measures on Russian crude oil and petroleum products.

The UN General Assembly has adopted resolution IV on the "Situation of human rights in the temporarily occupied Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine." It condemned reported violations of international humanitarian law and human rights, including extrajudicial killings, abductions, enforced disappearances, politically motivated prosecutions, discrimination, and violence. Russia itself and Belarus, China, Cuba, North Korea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Iran, Kazakhstan, Mali, Nicaragua, Sudan, Syria, and Zimbabwe voted against the resolution. The first resolution on this matter in 2016 gathered support from 22 countries. Notably, Armenia and India decided to be absent this time.

In a bipartisan move, the leadership of foreign relations committees of the Senate and House called on Senate and House Leadership to "meet the challenges presented in the era of strategic competition by securing robust levels of Foreign Military Financing (FMF) security assistance to

Taiwan, Ukraine, and US partners supporting Ukraine in the next supplemental funding package." They urge the provision of \$500 million in FMF for Ukraine and \$250 million to US partners supporting Ukraine's ongoing resistance to Russian aggression. "Presidential Drawdown Authority's (PDA) outsized role in supporting Ukraine has addressed the urgent needs of Ukrainian forces, but a longer-term strategy facilitated by additional FMF would demonstrate the depth of our commitment." In addition to that, the group support increases in the topline for PDA and the flexibility to use this authority for Ukraine and other countries. It's a vital sign of unwavering bipartisan support, while there was a chorus of voices demanding to stop supporting Ukraine. Earlier, Congress passed the NDAA that would extend the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative and authorize \$800 million in funding for the next fiscal year, which is \$500 million more than in the previous defense bill.

The US Department of Defense has announced the expansion of US-led training for the UAF to include joint maneuver and combined arms operations training while building upon the specialized equipment training provided to Ukraine. Approximately 500 Ukrainian soldiers per month will go through battalion-level training. So far, the US has trained 3,100 Ukrainian soldiers to operate US-made weapon systems.

Meanwhile, the Croatian Parliament has rejected a proposal to join an EU mission supporting the Ukrainian military, particularly training up to 100 Ukrainian soldiers in Croatia over the next two years. The Croatian President opposed the idea on the ground that there was no basis for declaring Ukraine an ally and, therefore, the country should not be involved in the war.

The Greek government expressed its readiness to send Russia-made S-300 air defense systems from Crete to Ukraine if the US would replace it with the Patriot system. Given the rising tensions with Turkey, such a scheme would boost Greece's capabilities in possible unfortunate conflict with its NATO ally. Ironically, Ukraine and Turkey enjoy many joint projects in defense production. Including "Kizilelma," a supersonic combat drone that has completed its maiden flight this week. Ukraine produces engines for various Turkish cruise missiles, helicopters, and drones.

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