

### Humanitarian aspect:

According to juvenile prosecutors, as of the morning of December 21, 2022, **450 children died as a result of the full-scale armed aggression of the Russian Federation, 863 children were injured.** In addition, 332 children have been considered missing since the beginning of the full-scale Russian aggression, according to the National portal "Children of War".

**Consequences of enemy shellings:** During the past day, December 20, the Russian Federation troops shelled eight regions of Ukraine; 5 civilians were killed, and another 17 were injured, according to the morning round-up of the Oblast Military Administrations (OMAs) of Ukraine.

- At night, the Russians shelled along the entire front line of **Donetsk Oblast**. 1 killed and 2 wounded civilians were reported in Vuhledar, 1 killed in Torske and 5 injured in Bahmut. 10 houses, farm buildings, a kindergarten and an infrastructure object, were damaged.
- In **Zaporizhzhia Oblast**, Russian troops shelled houses and civilian infrastructure of 5 districts.
- The Russian forces continued to shell the front-line and border territories of **Kharkiv Oblast**. In Vovchansk, 1 person was injured, and a residential building was destroyed.
- The enemy shelled **Kherson Oblast** 71 times on December 20. 1 person killed and 6 wounded were reported. The enemy struck the port, private homes and apartment buildings in Kherson.
- At night, the Russians shelled the Nikopol district of **Dnipropetrovsk Oblast**. In Chervonogrygorivka and Marganets communities, a dozen private houses, several farm buildings, cars, a gas pipeline and power lines were damaged.
- Due to the enemy shelling of Ochakiv in **Mykolaiv Oblast** on December 21, 2 people were injured, a mother and a child, reported the head of Mykolaiv OMA Vitaly Kim.

**Energy system:** NCP Ukrenergo reported that the energy system had a significant power deficit as of the morning of December 21. The situation in the central region, in particular in **Kyiv**, remains difficult. It is noted that consumption limits have been established for all regions [of Ukraine]. Exceeding leads to the application of emergency restrictions. Now all types of power generation are working.

The power supply situation in **Kyiv** is the most difficult in the country. The electricity deficit is about 60-65%. The city can return to the scheduled blackout plans in a week or a half, Oleksandr Kharchenko, director of the Center for Energy Research, said during a briefing at the Media Center Ukraine - Ukrinform. The expert noted that repair work is ongoing, but given the nature of the damage, Kyiv residents should be prepared to have electricity for 4-6 hours a day for the next 2-3 weeks in the best-case scenario.

In the **Dnipropetrovsk Oblast**, after 5 days of continuous work, the energy workers managed to stabilize the system, reported the head of OMA, Valentyn Reznichenko. The entire critical infrastructure of the region has been revived. Water pumps and boiler rooms are connected. The

residents of Dnipro are being transferred from emergency to scheduled shutdowns. "Energy experts will try to ensure that houses have light for 5 hours, [and live] without it - 4 hours. But with a power shortage, there will be longer outages."

**Healthcare:** Christopher Stokes, the chief emergency coordinator of the Doctors Without Borders organization, said in the interview with Ukrinform that the humanitarian situation in **Kherson Oblast's** liberated territories is very bad. The healthcare facilities were destroyed there, particularly in Vysokopillya and Velyka Oleksandrivka. He noted that most local medical personnel had to leave, and no one could provide medical services. Local residents have no heating and no pharmacies working on a permanent basis. Therefore, he predicts more people to suffer from respiratory diseases.

The international humanitarian medical organization "Doctors Without Borders" (MSF) has worked for half a year in the territories of Kherson Oblast, liberated from the Russian invaders. MSF runs mobile health clinics in around 30 villages, focusing on basic health care, treatment of non-communicable diseases and psychological health support.

However, "Doctors Without Borders" are denied access to Mariupol, Melitopol and the [Russia-]occupied territories of Kherson Oblast.

Christopher Stokes said that they "tried to help Ukrainians from all sides - both in Mariupol, and in Melitopol, and in Kherson, when the city was occupied. But they [Russian occupation authorities] didn't give us access". He emphasized that he has extensive experience in other wars, and access is usually always granted by both sides to help civilians. He said there is currently no way to help the residents of Kherson Oblast, who remain on the territory captured by the Russian military.

Christopher Stokes also stated that there is a need for **psychological help** throughout the de-occupied territory. In Kherson Oblast, people under occupation lived in a constant atmosphere of fear which would have long-term consequences.

The World Health Organization (WHO) reported that 10 million Ukrainians, or about a quarter of the population, may suffer from a mental health disorder related to the Russian-Ukrainian war. Overall, the number of mental health cases in the country is rising after 10 months of war, prompting the WHO to launch an online helpline.

**POW:** The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) recently visited the places of detention of Ukrainian POWs on the territory of Russia but did not report which ones, wrote the Coordination Headquarters for the Treatment of Prisoners of War in Telegram. "Also, according to the information of the ICRC, about 120 of our defenders in captivity received warm clothes and hygiene products," the message reads.

As noted, this was discussed during an online meeting with the families of captured defenders from the "Azov" regiment, who united in the public organization "Women of Steel".

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## **Operational situation**

(Please note that this section of the Brief is mainly on the previous day's (December 19) developments)

*It is the 301st 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, the Defense Forces units have repelled Russian attacks in the areas of twenty-five towns and villages, including Masyutivka of Kharkiv Oblast; Pidkuychansk, Dibrova and Bilohorivka in Luhansk Oblast and Verkhnyokamyanske, Vesele, Yakovlivka, Bakhmutske, Bakhmut, Vodyane, Pisky, Nevelske, Maryinka, Novomykhailivka and Prechystivka in Donetsk Oblast.

The enemy launched 5 missile attacks, 16 air strikes, and fired 61 MLRS rounds. As a result, the civilian infrastructure was heavily damaged, and the civilian population in Kherson, Kostyantynivka and Vovchansk suffered. The enemy fired artillery at Ukrainian troops' positions in sixteen towns and villages, including Mikhalchyna Sloboda in Chernihiv Oblast and Vilcha, Vesele, Vovchansk, Vovchanski Khutory, Varvarivka, Vilkhuvatka and Dvorichna in Kharkiv Oblast. The enemy used an attack UAV and army aircraft near Krasne, Kharkiv Oblast. The threat of air and missile attacks remains on the entire territory of Ukraine.

During the past day, the aviation of the Ukrainian Defense Forces made 10 strikes on the areas of concentration of enemy personnel, weapons and military equipment and 12 strikes on the positions of the enemy's anti-aircraft missile systems.

Units of the missile forces and artillery of the Defense Forces hit the ammunition warehouse, 3 command and control points and 10 areas of enemy personnel concentration.

The Armed Forces of the Republic of Belarus strengthened the protection of the state border with Ukraine, involving four airborne assault battalions of the 38th separate airborne assault brigade, three airborne parachute battalions of the 103rd separate airborne brigade and SOF detachment of the 5th separate SOF brigade. The work of the mobile radio-electronic intelligence group of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Belarus is detected in the area of Kirov, Gomel region. Up to 700 servicemen of the 2nd motorized rifle division of the Russian Armed Forces arrived at the Domanovo training ground in the Brest region.

The air component of the Russian Armed Forces on the territory of the Republic of Belarus consists of two Su-30sm and three Su-24s at the "Baranovichi" air base, three MiG-31k and one AEW&C A-50u aircraft at the "Machulishchi" air base.

## **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.*

Areas of Novomylnsk, Kupyansk, Kyslivka, Kotlyarivka and Krokhmalne in Kharkiv Oblast and Stelmakhivka, Makiivka, Ploshanka, Chervonopopivka and Dibrova of Luhansk Oblast suffered fire damage.

The enemy command in the Svatove direction and the area of Kreminna continues its attempts to stop the advance of the Ukrainian Defense Forces. The enemy additionally moved two motorized rifle regiments of the 5th BARS detachment to Ploschnka village in order to strengthen the defense in this direction.

The enemy tried to counterattack with the forces of

- the reinforced company of the BTG of the 74th separate motorized rifle brigade of the 41st Army from positions in the northeastern part of Chervonopopivka on the alt. 176.6,
- two platoons of the BTG of the 35th separate motorized rifle brigade of the 41st Army, with the support of armored vehicles, from the same positions near Chervonopopivka in the direction of alt. 170.4,
- a company of the 234th air assault regiment of the 76th air assault division from Golikov in the direction of alt. 159.5,
- the 423rd motorized rifle regiment of the 4th tank division of the 1st tank army and the 9th motorized rifle regiment of the 18th motorized rifle division tried to break through from Kolomyichikha to Stelmakhivka and from Kuzemivka to Novoselivske in the Svatove area.

All enemy attacks ended in vain.

### **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 continues to conduct assault operations. Russian forces shelled with tanks and artillery Ukrainian positions in the areas of more than twenty towns and villages, including Verkhokamyanske, Spirne, Bilohorivka, Soledar, Bakhmutske, Bakhmut, Dilyivka, Vodyane, Nevelske, Maryinka, and Novomykhailivka of Donetsk Oblast. They carried out an airstrike in the areas of Spirne and Bilohorivka.

### **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 continues shelling the areas of Bilohirya, Kamianske and Mali Shcherbaky with rocket artillery. They fired tanks and various caliber artillery at the positions of Ukrainian troops near Vuhledar, Prechystivka, and Velyka Novosilka.

Servicemen of the 1st motorized rifle battalion of the 78th motorized rifle regiment (MRR), named after Akhmat-Hadzhi Kadyrov (of the 42nd MRD of the 58th Army Southern Military District) were captured in the course of hostilities in the Vuhledar region.

The 78th MRR has recently been redeployed to the Volnovakha region. Russian command uses it on a battalion-by-battalion basis to reinforce advanced tactical groups in the Vuhledar direction. Radio communication in regimental radio networks is carried out mainly in the Chechen language. The military unit has a dual subordination: to the Russian military command directly in the combat zone and to the head of the Chechen Republic in "operational and administrative terms", although it is officially a line regiment of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation. Thanks to this privileged status, the regiment performed the role of a retreat-blocking detachment in the Melitopol direction for some time and had no significant losses. The deployment of the 78th MRR in the Vuhledar direction indicates the importance of this direction and the lack of other enemy reserves.

### **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 continues shelling with rocket artillery in the areas of Novodmytrivka, Kamianske, Respublikanets, Novoberyslav, Ponyativka, Kherson, Mykilske, Sadove and Antonivka.

Ukrainian Defence Forces' fire impact on the area of concentration of Russian manpower and equipment in the Vasylivka area has been confirmed. 8 pieces of heavy military equipment were destroyed.

**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 6 surface ships at sea. They are located along the southwestern coast of Crimea. There are no Kalibr cruise missile carriers at sea.

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. Over the past day, 14 combat aircraft from Belbek and Saki airfields were deployed.

**Grain Initiative:** 4 ships with 129,000 tons of agricultural products for Africa, Asia, and Europe left the ports of Great Odesa. Among them is the INCE ATLANTIC bulker, with 44,000 tons of wheat for Kenya. This is already the third vessel with Ukrainian grain for this African country. Kenya is also on the list of countries where humanitarian wheat from Ukraine will go as part of the "Grain from Ukraine" program.

Currently, 27 vessels are being processed in the ports of Great Odesa. 1 million tons of Ukrainian agricultural products are loaded onto them. 2 vessels are moving along the "grain corridor" to load 63,000 tons of agricultural products.

As of December 19, 80 vessels are waiting for JCC inspection in the Bosphorus.

Since August 1, 569 vessels have left the ports of Great Odesa, exporting 14.3 million tons of Ukrainian food to Asia, Europe and Africa.

#### **Russian operational losses from 24.02 to 21.12.22**

Personnel - almost 99,740 people (+510);

Tanks -3,002 (+7)

Armored combat vehicles – 5,979 (+5);

Artillery systems – 1,972 (+12);

Multiple rocket launchers (MLRS) - 412 (+2);

Anti-aircraft warfare systems - 212 (0);

Vehicles and fuel tanks – 4,608 (+9);

Aircraft - 282 (+1);

Helicopters – 267 (+1);

UAV operational and tactical level – 1,688 (+8);

Intercepted cruise missiles - 653 (0);

Boats/ships - 16 (0).

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#### **Ukraine, general news**

After ten months, two Airbus A400M aircraft returned to Turkey from Ukraine. Before the full-scale armed aggression of the Russian Federation, they flew to Boryspil with humanitarian cargo and were supposed to evacuate Turkish citizens. But because of the war and the correspondingly closed sky, these planes and their crews were forced to stay.

#### **International diplomatic aspect**

President Zelensky made a historic visit to the US. It started with a warm welcome and a very humane move of passing a cross for military merit from a Ukrainian war hero (a commander of HIMAR battery) who is fighting at the most dangerous place (Bakhmut) to the President of the United States. "Undeserved but much appreciated, thank you," Biden replied.

Besides expressing gratitude to the American people, the POTUS, and both parties in Congress, there are several essential issues. The US reiterated its readiness for long-haul support of the Ukrainian fight for survival. Joe Biden mentioned a just peace as the ultimate goal of this fight. "I think we have, we share the exact same vision, and that a free, independent, prosperous and secure Ukraine is the vision — we both want this war to end," Biden said. "Just peace" is Zelenskiy's coined short name for Ukraine's peace plan that every Ukrainian citizen supports. It consists of honoring the UN Charter (restoring Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, including regaining Crimea), justice (bringing war criminals to justice and making Russia pay for the devastation), and security guarantees. Returning to the status quo ante bellum in Ukraine is the only way to restore the rules-based order and send a strong signal to potential belligerents, especially nuclear-armed, that their aggressions won't pay off.

The leaders discussed Ukraine's liberation strategy and American support of it in practical terms. It is in line with the interview by General Valery Zaluzhny, head of Ukraine's armed forces, for the

Economist. The General outlined three strategic goals: holding the ground, creating reserves and preparing for the war, and defending our critical infrastructure (via air and missile defense). "I know that I can beat this enemy. But I need resources," Zaluzhny said. So, the pace of the liberation depends on the resources our partners, first and foremost, the US may help us with.

The Biden Administration will send a battery of the Patriot air defense system. It will significantly increase Ukraine's ability to defend civilian infrastructure, which has been the primary target for the Russian attack for the last couple of months. "This is a very important step to create secure airspace for Ukraine, and it will be the only way we would be able to deprive the terrorist country of striking our energy sector, our people, and our infrastructure," Zelensky said. This highly sophisticated equipment means trust and commitment, which is even more important than capable weaponry. In addition, USAID is committing more than \$374 million in urgent humanitarian assistance. Congress will vote for the fiscal 2023 omnibus spending bill that includes \$44.9 billion for Ukraine.

"We're working with Congress right now on legislation that would help us get around some of the challenges of using the state sponsor of terrorism designation," Secretary of State Antony Blinken said in a CNN interview. Congress may designate Russia as the "aggressor state" status. It wouldn't lead to immediate legal consequences like in the case of giving Russia a "state sponsor of terror's" status: restrictions on US foreign assistance; a ban on defense exports and sales; certain controls over exports of dual-use items; and miscellaneous financial and other restrictions. The Biden Administration was reluctant to go this way, leaving space for diplomatic maneuverings.

"He is no longer a subject of civilized men. He should be interested in preserving at least something from the culture and history of his people," Zelensky said about Putin. "It was very important for him [Putin] and everyone else to see that President Zelensky and I are united, two countries together, to make sure he cannot succeed," Joe Biden said. It was noticed in the Kremlin. The first official Russian reaction came from Putin's mouthpiece Dmitry Peskov who said that the expansion of Western weapon supplies to Ukraine "leads to an aggravation of the conflict and, in fact, does not bode well for Ukraine."

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