
A year of Russian war on Ukraine. Military Aspect.

During the year since the beginning of the invasion of the Russian Armed Forces into Ukraine, the Defense Forces have liberated 78,000 square km or 42% of the occupied territories. On the other hand, the aggressor holds 108,600 km² (AR Crimea, parts of Donetsk, Luhansk, Kharkiv, Zaporizhzhia, Kherson and Mykolaiv Oblast), which is about 20% of the sovereign territory of Ukraine.

The Defense Forces of Ukraine successfully conducted a strategic deployment and later a successful strategic defense operation. The effectively conducted air defense and territorial defense. Due to successful counteroffensive operations, Kyiv, Chernihiv, Sumy, Izyum, Lyman, and Kherson were liberated. The threat to Kharkiv was averted, and control was maintained over the coast of the Black Sea.

We can confidently assert that **the invasion grouping deployed by the Russian Federation at the end of February 2022 was utterly defeated**: the enemy lost 77% of soldiers and officers KIA, 100% of the tanks, BMPs, armored personnel carriers, guns, helicopters concentrated for aggression against Ukraine; 90% of enemy aircraft were lost. In addition, the number of wounded in the enemy's armed forces is estimated at 437,000 people, about 175,000 of whom will never return to a full life, and another 87,500 need prosthetics.

Considering the stockpile of weapons and equipment available in the Russian Federation, its losses are estimated at 48% of anti-aircraft missiles, 41% of artillery, 22% of aircraft and 30% of helicopters. All combat-ready tanks the Russian army had on the day of the invasion were lost. Moreover, 64% of the personnel of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation have been depleted; that is, the Russian professional army almost ceased to exist.

Snapshot of the day:

General, humanitarian:

- The Russian military attacked nine regions of Ukraine on February 22, resulting in killed and wounded civilians.
- Since the start of the full-scale invasion, Russia has committed 497 crimes against journalists and the media in Ukraine.
- Most Ukrainian IDPs and refugees want to eventually return to Ukraine, as stated in the UN High Commissioner for Refugees report.

Military:

- The enemy focused on conducting an offensive in the Kupyansk, Lyman, Bakhmut, Avdiivka and Shakhtarsk directions;
- The enemy's troops regrouping in the Bakhmut area indicates the intensification of the offensive in this direction.

- During the last two days, the enemy increased the use of tanks and other armored fighting vehicles;
 - In the Bakhmut area, the role of assault infantry is performed by special forces units;
 - The enemy's broad use of attack aircraft will be limited. The vast majority of the aircraft has used up the established resource and needs an overhaul, complicated by the lack of spare parts. Restoring the Su-25 attack aircraft, withdrawn from production, is also complicated.
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Russian attacks

The Russian army has carried out attacks on nine regions of Ukraine in the past day; there are killed and wounded civilians, according to the consolidated report of the regional military administrations as of 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, February 24.

Consequences of enemy shellings:

- At night, the occupiers shelled one of Kherson's hospitals. The maternity, reception and oncology departments were damaged. No victims were reported. Yesterday, 1 person was killed and 3 injured in **Kherson Oblast** due to Russian shelling.
- At night, the Russians struck Slovyansk, Sviatohirsk, and Maryinka territorial hromadas in **Donetsk Oblast**. 1 civilian was killed and 1 wounded in Ivanivske. There are also wounded civilians in Bakhmut, Dyliivka and Siversk. 4 houses were damaged in Mykolaivka.
- The Zaporizhzhia, Polohy, and Vasylivka districts of the **Zaporizhzhia Oblast** were under fire. During the day, the National Police received 17 reports about the destruction of civil infrastructure.
- Yesterday, the enemy massively shelled border towns and villages in the Kupyansk, Chuhuyiv and Kharkiv districts of **Kharkiv Oblast**. Four residential buildings were destroyed in Kupyansk, and an administrative building was destroyed in Dvorichna.
- There were 10 shellings at night in the Nikopol district of **Dnipropetrovsk Oblast**. In Nikopol, 8 private houses, 2 shops and a cafe were damaged.
- At night, the enemy attacked the Kutsurub area of **Mykolayiv Oblast**, targeting the open area. There are no casualties.
- In **Sumy Oblast** on the evening of February 24, the Russians fired on a shuttle bus en route Zhuravka-Sumy. The driver and three passengers were injured.

Occupied territories

The Russians imposed a 24-hour curfew from February 23 to 25 in the occupied Chaplynka in **Kherson Oblast**. The reason may be transferring military equipment from the temporarily occupied part of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea to strengthen the defense line, reported General Staff.

Media: Since the start of the full-scale invasion, Russia has committed 497 crimes against journalists and the media in Ukraine, according to data from the Monitoring of Russian War Crimes carried out by the Institute of Mass Information. "As of February 24, 2023, 48 media workers have already died in Ukraine due to Russian armed aggression. Eight of them died while

performing journalistic activities, 27 as participants in combat actions, and 13 as a result of Russian shelling or torture." IMI recorded 35 cases of attacks on journalists by the Russians. At least 17 journalists were injured while performing their professional activities. Also, 21 cases of Russians capturing and kidnapping of journalists were recorded. The Russians fired 16 times on television towers, which are civilian objects. In addition, the enemy seized the editorial offices of at least 25 Ukrainian media outlets to purposefully spread their aggressive propaganda in the occupied territories of Ukraine.

IDPs: The vast majority of refugees and internally displaced Ukrainians (about 77% and 79%, respectively) want to return home one day, as stated in the UN High Commissioner for Refugees report. However, only 12% of both categories intend to do so within the next three months. It is noted that the main obstacle preventing refugees from returning is security in the region of their origin. In general, according to UN estimates, a year after the start of the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine, more than 13 million people still cannot return to their homes. About 8 millions of them are refugees in Europe, and more than 5 million are internally displaced persons.

Operational situation

General conclusion:

- The enemy concentrates its main efforts on conducting offensive actions in the Kupyansk, Lyman, Bakhmut, Avdiivka and Shakhtarsk directions;
- The completion of the regrouping of the enemy's troops in the Bakhmut area indicates the intensification of the offensive in this direction.

Battleline:

- The Defense Forces repelled about 100 enemy attacks in various directions.
- Active hostilities continue in the Hryanykivka and Dvorichna districts; the enemy has some tactical success. The Defense Forces held Novoselivka and recaptured most previously lost positions near Bilohorivka.
- There are active battles in Berkhivka and Yahidne areas, where the enemy has a small advance. Special purpose units are widely involved in assault operations. The Defense Forces are gradually squeezing the aggressor to the eastern outskirts of Bakhmut. With successful counterattacks, Defense Forces units stabilized the situation around Chasiv Yar and Ivanovske and retook most of Opytne.
- In the area of Avdiivka, the enemy's 1st separate motorized rifle brigade of the 1st Army Corps took control of Vodyane and Opytne at the cost of huge losses, remaining practically without armored vehicles. The enemy is trying to break through to the center of Novobakhmutivka. However, their assaults on Kamianka and Vesele were repulsed by the Defense Forces.
- Enemy units of the 5th and 100th separate motorized rifle brigades of the 1st Army Corps and the 150th motorized rifle division of the 8th Army failed to take Krasnohorivka, Pobyeda and Novomykhailivka and are trying to advance through the center of Maryinka, capturing school #2 and a tire factory.

Change in enemy disposition:

On February 17-18, the enemy rotated exhausted troops in the Bakhmut direction. As of February 22, the enemy grouping has up to 28,000 personnel, 130 tanks, 320 armored fighting vehicles, 160 guns and 80 multiple rocket launchers. The grouping basis consists of the following:

- the 51st and 137th parachute airborne regiments of the 106th airborne division,
- the 57th separate motorized rifle brigade (SMRBr) of the 5th Army,
- the 123rd SMRBr of the 2nd Army Corps (AC) and the 132nd SMRBr of the 1st AC,
- the 101st, 102nd, 204th, 208th, and 224th separate special regiments of the 2nd AC,
- a motorized rifle battalion (MRB) of the 127th SMRBr, MRB of the 6th separate motorized rifle regiment, the 4th separate tank battalion of the 2nd AC,
- the 11th, 12th, and 15th separate motorized rifle battalions of the territorial forces,
- the 16th, 269th, 270th, 290th, 224th, 248th, 1321st, 2222nd, 191st, 314th, 2614th , 315th, 376th, 299th, 302nd, 304th, and 375th separate special battalions,
- the 6th, 12th, 18th, and 19th "BARS" detachments, combined tactical detachment "Akhmat",
- the 1st, 3rd, 5th, 6th, 7th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 15th, 17th detachments of the "Wagner" PMC.

Operational design - in two echelons.

Escalation indicators:

- During the last two days, the enemy increased the use of tanks and other armored fighting vehicles;
- In the Bakhmut area, the role of assault infantry is performed by special forces units;
- The latest Russian T-90 tanks were spotted in the south of the Zaporizhzhia Oblast.

Possible operation situation developments:

- The enemy will try to break through to Lyman and capture Bakhmut, creating the prerequisites for taking control of the Slovyansk-Kramatorsk agglomeration;
- The vast majority of the aircraft fleet of the Russian Armed Forces has used up the established resource (200-600 flight hours) and needs an overhaul, which is complicated by the lack of spare parts and specialists. A separate problem is restoring the Su-25 attack aircraft, withdrawn from production. All these reasons will limit the enemy's wide use of attack aircraft.

Azov-Black Sea Maritime Operational Area:

- The enemy has 3 surface ships at sea, which are carrying out tasks south of the Crimean peninsula. There are no Kalibr missile carriers.
- The enemy's ships are scattered at the bases of Sevastopol, Feodosia, Kerch, and Novorossiysk in order to prevent their destruction in the event of an attack on individual ports of Crimea. There are currently more than 20 warships and boats of the Russian Navy in the port of Sevastopol. Recently, anti-sabotage measures have been significantly strengthened. Practically all bays of the internal raid of Sevastopol are closed with boom barriers, 2-3 anti-sabotage boats are on duty in the Sevastopol bay 24 hours a day.
- One patrol boat is on duty in the waters of the Sea of Azov.

- Enemy aviation continues to fly from the Crimean airfields of Belbek, Saki, Dzhankoy and Hvardiyske over the northwestern part of the Black Sea. A total of 16 sorties were made during the day.
- Along the islands in the Dnipro delta, the activity of sabotage and reconnaissance groups of Russians is observed. Mass mining by the enemy continues along the entire defense line, including the islands in the Dnipro delta.
- In the occupied territories of the Kherson Oblast, the Ukrainian military destroyed the launcher of the S-300 anti-aircraft missile complex. An ammunition depot in the Nova Kakhovka area was also destroyed, 2 drones were shot down, and 2 motor boats of the Russian sabotage groups were sunk. In addition, Ukrainian fighters destroyed an artillery radar complex, a 120 mm mortar and Russian cars. Information was received about the impact on a tanker that delivered fuel in the port of Skadovsk.

Russian operational losses from 24.02.22 to 24.02.23

Personnel - almost 146,820 people (+970)

Tanks - 3,363 (+13)

Armored combat vehicles – 6,600 (+7);

Artillery systems – 2,363 (+11);

Multiple rocket launchers (MLRS) - 474 (+3);

Anti-aircraft warfare systems - 247 (+3);

Vehicles and fuel tanks – 5,224 (+9);

Aircraft - 299 (0);

Helicopters – 287 (0);

UAV operational and tactical level – 2,033 (+4);

Intercepted cruise missiles - 873 (0);

Boats/ships – 18 (0).

Ukraine, general news

Minister of Foreign Affairs Dmytro Kuleba considers Russia's presence in the UN Security Council as a permanent member the greatest diplomatic fraud of the 20th century; he told the journalists during the meeting of the UN Security Council, dedicated to the anniversary of the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine. Kuleba emphasized that he has no doubts about the support of Ukraine's friends, "and this will only strengthen the coalition in support of Ukraine and the protection of the UN Charter." According to him, the meeting of the Security Council "confirmed the most important thing: Russia is in isolation." Moscow interprets the events absurdly and cynically, but "the international community does not buy" this, as evidenced by the adoption on Thursday by 141 votes of the Ukrainian resolution of the UN General Assembly on peace. Kuleba insisted that such a resolution could not be adopted in the UN Security Council because Russia, in violation of all rules and procedures, in 1991 replaced the sign "USSR" with "RF" and used the right of veto, turning the seat of a permanent member "literally into a throne impunity". The minister reminded that Russia used the right of veto more than any other country, "obstructing the settlement of many conflicts and ending the suffering of thousands of people."

Summary of a year of a full-scale invasion, a year of the nine-year Russian war against Ukraine

Long-time appeasement (1991-2014). Russia has long been a prism through which the West has been looking at the nations "in-between" ever since the dissolution of the Soviet Union. The brutal second Chechen war, orchestrated by Putin to grip power, was hardly noticed. Russia was released from the cold just a year after it invaded Georgia in 2008. Contrary to common sense, the Kremlin was awarded more say in global affairs and even more role in Europe, thanks to the Partnership for modernization Angela Merkel had championed. The Russian strategic corruption partly paralyzed "old Europe", while President Barak Obama saw no serious stakes in Ukraine to stop Russia's imperial advent.

The war started on February 20, 2014. Ukraine was put on hold after the Minsk agreements became dull for the enemy and partners.

The shock of 24/02/22. All of the actors failed, each and everyone in its own sense. Europe didn't believe Ukraine would stand a chance against a superior force. The US and UK didn't think the UAF were able to repel aggression but were hoping that the resistance would be fierce, so SOF had to be trained and armed. The Poles and Balts knew that Ukraine would withstand the blow and fight tooth and nail. Russia believed in the success of a "special operation". Ukraine believed everything would start in the East but took precautionary measures that saved the lion's share of assets and capabilities.

Resilience. The Ukrainian society showed its unity in the face of the existential threat and readiness to sacrifice for freedom and democracy. Ukrainians conscripted into the Defence Forces in huge numbers. Along with professional militaries, the first blow was met by a newly organized territorial defense. Ordinary citizens were fighting and assisting the Ukrainian Defence Forces. Volunteers stepped in in their invaluable support by providing everything the soldiers needed, from clothes to lethal weapons.

Personal courage. "I need ammunition, not a ride" by President Volodymyr Zelensky is both a symbol of a turning point in history and a sign of personal courage an actor turned to be a wartime leader. "Russian warship, go F yourself," pronounced by what seems to be a doomed soldier, became a motto of the war. People made of steel defended Mariupol and AzovStal. "Bakhmut Stands" and degrades Russia's special forces, regular forces, and Wagner criminal forces.

Open heart. Nations of the free world rushed to give asylum to refugees and help Ukrainians who stayed at home. People across the globe show their support to Ukraine and its people, sending humanitarian aid, donating to various causes, and even buying weapons for the UAF. Foreign volunteers are fighting alongside Ukrainians, helping people in need on the ground, reporting from the battlefields and cities under missile barrages. Foreign cities turned blue and yellow in a show of support.

Genocide. Russian history is rich in genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity, systemic mass murders, deportation, suppression, and other types of violence against its own people and those abroad. Impunity for previous crimes enabled this tool against Ukrainians again. That's the reason why Ukrainians are determined to bring Russians to justice in the name of millions of people murdered by the previous Russian regimes, which contemporary Russians en masse do not denounce and find ways to justify.

Smart defense. The UAF showed readiness for asymmetric warfare, the ability to absorb the blow, and constantly adjust to the changing environment. The manurable defense wore down the disproportionate size of enemy forces while saving the Ukrainian ones. The UAF easily integrates new (Western-made) weapon systems and adjusts its operational behavior to employ newly acquired capabilities in accordance with modern warfighting doctrines. Innovation is one of the critical drivers of success. The successful counter-offensive in the South and East proved that the UAF is capable of getting things done, provided it has the necessary tools.

Ramstein. The UAF's unexpected (in the West) success made it possible to rethink strategies for supporting Ukraine. Acknowledgment of fallacies of the self-drawn "red lines," as crossing thereof could have triggered a Russian escalation in the mind of Western politicians, was critical in widening the range of capabilities provided to Ukraine. The United States took a leading role in a coordinated effort to sustain Ukraine's ability to defend itself. While the Poles and Balts were fierce lobbyists for more support, the Brits have been playing a galvanizing role by providing certain types of weapons ahead of the others (missiles, helicopters, tanks, etc.). The (falsely) perceived trigger of World War 3 has been shifted from Leopard MBTs to ATACMS and fighter jets, so there is a way to go. The Ramstein is equally important for fighting a war now and, hopefully, enabling Ukraine to deter and defend further Russian aggressions in the future.

Economy. Ukraine has been receiving an unprecedented amount of financial and humanitarian support. While the Free world aided Ukraine, it imposed the cost on Russia. Though sanctions didn't stop the Russian war of aggression, they limited the Kremlin's ability to wage war and, along with export control measures, restrained its ability to replenish. The global economy suffered from war-related factors (energy, food, etc.), increasing the cost of war for everyone.

Evolution of diplomacy. "Nothing about Ukraine without Ukraine" is essential for the Ukrainian nation. But it also serves the interests of other nations because it doesn't allow Russia to turn its aggression against Ukraine into a broader confrontation with the United States. Moscow failed in its attempt to impose the "great power competition scheme" and trade its "cooperation" on global issues for allowing it to re-establish spheres of influence in Europe that justified the "suspension" of their participation in the new START Treaty. There are no immediate negative consequences of such a decision, and, highly likely, there won't be any in the future, for a new nuclear arms race for Moscow would mean old results – a state collapse. The backward Soviet political system and ineffective economic model didn't survive ideological bankruptcy, the arms race, the war in Afghanistan, and Chernobyl nuclear disaster.

After Ukraine stopped the Russian offense, Western thinking has evolved from compromising (territories) to not allowing Russia to win. However, not all nations readjusted their public goals to help Ukraine to defeat Russia militarily.

There has been progress in hitting targets in Crimea, initially with Ukrainian weapons and now with Western ones. Yet, there're still reservations about the prospects of the peninsula's liberation. It all started in Crimea and should end there. Anything less than returning Crimea back would mean a constant existential threat to Ukraine; an unsustainable economy (due to the disruption of Sea Lines of Communications); Russia's ability to project its power in the Black Sea region, the Mediterranean, and the MENA region; and most importantly – ruined world order pillars (the UN Charter) and the European security framework (the Helsinki Final Act of 1975).

The enemies within. The Russian war of choice found its supporters in Free societies. For various reasons, far-right and far-left political forces, though with different messaging, pursued the same goal: to undermine Ukraine's ability to defend itself and restore its sovereignty and territorial integrity. The pockets of Russians who have been enjoying free societies are on the march to support Putin's regime and his genocidal war against Ukraine.

A new "Non-Aligned Movement." China, India, and many developing states seized an opportunity to increase their trade with Russia, which is offering a bargain for its resources in desperate need of hard currency cash inflows. The "Global South" believes it is not its fight and, quite often, frames the conflict in not-so-different messages from the Russian propaganda narrative. It is a challenge for the West because there could be no more "Non-Aligned Movement" – either countries chose a democratic camp or they are in the authoritarian one.

Zeitenwende. The European security environment has been dramatically changed. And the most drastic changes are undergoing in Germany. The German political class is abandoning the Ostpolitik, which has been a dogma for its strategy towards Russia and "in-between" since the late 1960th. Before 24 February 2022, hardly imaginable that a social democrat would supply weapons to Ukraine, which is in conflict with Russia. Not less unimaginable has been a decision by a social democrat to boost Bundeswehr warfighting capabilities.

Arsenal of democracy. The United States averted isolationism and regained the Free world leader's status. Ukrainians have been saying that Ukraine is a fortress of democracy on the Eastern frontier and is fighting against tyranny. Now, the US sees the Russian war as a global fight for democracy against autocracy. It became too evident that Russia's success means norms and principles of international law have been demolished, as has been a rules-based world order. The European allies of the United States are united as never before and more ready to see challenges beyond the immediate neighborhood.

Peoples' Republic. Though China has suffered a lot from Putin's strategic blunder, it doesn't want to leave a junior partner behind. Russia's unnecessary war in the post-COVID environment caused economic fallout in critical markets and globally. The US regaining leadership and consolidating NATO is not something that Beijing was willing to see. Free nations, including Taiwan, are beefing

up their defenses, while the US is adjusting its contingency plans regarding Taiwan. In addition to strained trade relations, China's economic future and defense capabilities will be restrained by collectively imposed export controls. A possible decision to join Iran and North Korea in supplying Russia with weapons would significantly damage China's relations with the Free world.

Hope. The Russian aggression against Ukraine is a watershed moment in European history and a factor that significantly affects the future of the globe. The challenges authoritarian states pose to the Free world and developing nations are being met with increasing readiness and resolve. Though uncertainty and turbulence caused by Asia's rise and the Western powers' declining role will remain in place for years to come, an outline of an adjusted world order has started to appear. Russia will have its last chance to become a normal nation-state when defeated militarily in Ukraine. Europe whole, free, and at peace may come true with Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, and Belarus as integral parts of the European political and security space.

Centre for Defence Strategies (CDS) is a Ukrainian security think tank. We operate since 2020 We publish this brief daily. If you would like to subscribe, please send us an email at cds.dailybrief@gmail.com

*The CDC Daily Brief is produced with the support of the **Kyiv School of Economics** <https://kse.ua>*

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