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**Snapshot of the day:**

**General, humanitarian:**

- 470 children died in Ukraine, and more than 949 sustained injuries of various degrees of severity as a result of the Russian aggression;
- Since the beginning of the full-scale Russian invasion, 124 people, including 6 children, have died in Ukraine due to the detonation of explosive devices;
- During the past day, the Russian Federation forces attacked eight regions of Ukraine;
- Russian occupation authorities continue the harassment of Ukrainian religious leaders in the occupied territories.

**Military:**

- The Russian military focuses its main efforts on offensive actions in the directions of Bakhmut, Avdiivka, Maryinka, and Shakhtarsk.
- The Ukrainian Defense Forces have managed to slow down the pace of the Russian offensive in the Avdiivka area.
- The structure of the Russian forces in the southern direction suggests that they are focused on defending against a hypothetical Ukrainian counterattack using positional defense and heavy firepower, rather than through troop maneuvering.
- The Russian military has concentrated up to half of its operational-tactical aviation and the majority of its army in the southern direction, anticipating a possible counteroffensive by the Ukrainian Defense Forces.
- The Russian command has dispersed its aviation across airfields, indicating awareness of the capabilities of the long-range assets of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.
- **Possible operation situation developments:** The receipt of necessary air defense, electronic warfare, and fighter jets from allies and partners to create a Ukrainian advantage in the operational zone will directly determine the further course of the war.

**Sea:**

- an increase in sea exports of petroleum products from Russian ports in the Black and Azov Seas was recorded from 2,990,893 tons in February to 3,632,499 tons in March 2023

**International:**

- The Chinese Ambassador to France doubted Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty, as well as the sovereignty of a dozen more nations.
- Russia expels German diplomats in retaliation for a similar move and accuses Berlin of "leaking" the news.

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**Humanitarian aspect:**

As of the morning of April 22, 2023, according to juvenile prosecutors, more than 1,419 Ukrainian children have suffered as a result of the full-scale Russian aggression. Among them, 470 children have died and more than 949 have sustained injuries of various degrees of severity.

Since the start of the full-scale Russian invasion, 286 people have been injured due to the detonation of explosive devices, including 33 children. Additionally, 124 people, including 6 children, have lost their lives as a result of these detonations, according to Ruslan Beregulya, head of the Department of Environmental Safety and Mine Action of the Ministry of Defense.

Ukraine needs international help in demining territories, including agricultural lands, Minister of Agrarian Policy and Food of Ukraine Mykola Solskyi said. In Ukraine, 470,000 hectares of agricultural land are currently mined. So far, only 17.5% of mined territories have been surveyed, of which 57,000 hectares are for agricultural purposes.

### **Russian attacks**

On the evening of April 21, 2023, around 7:00 p.m., the enemy attacked Ukraine from the southeast with five "Shahed-136/131" kamikaze drones; four of them were destroyed by Ukrainian air defense.

During the past day, the Russian forces launched attacks on eight regions of Ukraine.

- Last night, the Russian air force once again targeted the border area of **Chernihiv Oblast**, striking the area of Orlyivka with a guided bomb. There were no reports of casualties among the local population or damage to civil infrastructure. Three more attacks took place during the day, with power lines being damaged in the Novgorod-Siversky district. As a result, five villages are currently without electricity.
- In **Sumy Oblast**, four border communities were shelled by Russian forces throughout the day yesterday, resulting in 114 hits from mortars, artillery, and grenade launchers. In the morning, the enemy launched a mortar attack on the Bilopillia community. One person was wounded in the Khotyn community as a result of the shelling. The school premises were also damaged.
- In **Zaporizhzhia Oblast**, 58 artillery attacks, three UAV attacks, and two attacks from MLRS were recorded. The enemy is actively targeting the demarcation line, causing new destruction in 16 towns and villages. There were 15 reports of damage to homes and property of local residents, but no casualties were reported.
- In the Slobozhansk direction of **Kharkiv Oblast**, Hoptivka and Vovchanski Khutory were targeted by Russian shelling. In the Kupyansk direction, the towns of Krasne Pershe, Novomylnsk, Dvorichna, Zapadne, Kotlyarivka and Berestove were also hit by enemy fire.
- In **Luhansk Oblast**, Russian artillery fire hit Stelmakhivka, Makiivka, Nevske, Dibrova, and Bilohorivka yesterday. The situation in the region remains tense.
- In **Donetsk Oblast**, 12 villages were shelled yesterday. The attack damaged 20 residential buildings, including 9 multi-apartment buildings, a waste disposal plant, an administrative building of a metallurgical equipment plant, a joint-stock company "AKHZ" workshop, four commercial buildings, and a civilian car. One civilian resident was destroyed, and two more were injured.
- In **Mykolaiv Oblast** yesterday morning, the enemy launched an artillery attack on the water area of the Ochakiv community from the Kinburn spit. There were no losses or destruction reported.

- Russian forces shelled peaceful towns and villages in **Kherson Oblast** 45 times. The enemy fire 235 shells from artillery, MLRS, mortars, and drones. No civilian casualties were reported. 83 people were evacuated from the affected areas in the region.

### **Occupied territories**

Russian invaders continue to oppress and persecute religious communities in **Berdyansk, Zaporizhzhia Oblast**. This time, they captured the building of the Catholic church, reports the Berdyansk [legally established Ukrainian] city military administration. Father Ivan Levitsky participated in pro-Ukrainian rallies and continued to pray at noon every day near the "I love Berdyansk" installation. Last year, the [Russian] occupiers abducted the priests of the Greek Catholic Church, Bohdan Galeta and Ivan Levitsky. They were accused of storing explosives and cooperating with Ukrainian special services. There is currently no information about them. Earlier the [Russian] occupiers also abducted the head of the Lutheran community of Berdyansk, Artur Kozhevnikov.

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### **Operational situation**

#### **General conclusion:**

- The Russian military concentrates its main efforts on offensive actions in the Bakhmut, Avdiivka, Maryinka and Shakhtarsk directions;
- The Ukrainian defense forces slowed down the pace of the Russian offensive in the Avdiivka area;
- The composition of the Russian forces in the southern direction suggests that the enemy is focused on countering a potential Ukrainian counterattack through the use of firepower and positional defense, rather than through troop maneuvering.
- In anticipation of a counteroffensive of the Defense Forces, the enemy concentrated up to half of its operational-tactical aviation and most of the army in the southern direction;
- The Russian command has dispersed its aviation across various airfields, likely as a measure to avoid being targeted by the long-range assets of the Ukrainian Armed Forces;
- The Russian Armed Forces were expecting the arrival of a new batch of Shahed UAVs from Iran in order to use them for further strikes. The use of missiles by the Russian Armed Forces has decreased.

#### **Change in the line of contact (LoC):**

- Units of the Ukrainian Defense Forces repelled over 53 Russian attacks in different directions;
- The Russian forces attempted to improve their tactical position by carrying out assaults near Lyman Pershyi in Kharkiv Oblast; these attempts were unsuccessful. They also attacked in the directions of Bilohorivka, Torske, Terny, Nevske and Serebryansk Forest. They did make some progress near Synkivka.
- The battle for the city of Bakhmut continues with intense fighting. The Wagner PMC units have seized control of the Bakhmut-2 railway station and advanced west from the railway track near the station towards the railway track south of the station, as well as in northern

and southern parts of Bakhmut and near Khromove. They have also taken positions along the T0506 route between Khromove and Chasiv Yar.

- Meanwhile, Russian forces launched unsuccessful offensives near Hryhorivka, Bohdanivka, Novokalynove, Stepove, Kamianka, Pervomaiske, Nevelske, and Vuhledar. Russian attacks in the Maryinka area were also repulsed. The Russian military has advanced to the west of Dubovo-Vasylivka and had some success north of Mykilske.
- The Ukrainian Defense Forces have established a bridgehead on the eastern bank of the Dnipro River in Kherson Oblast, opposite Kindiyka (located 8 km north of Oleshki). They successfully landed and entrenched west of the Antoniv bridge and have organized stable supply lines to these positions.

**Change in enemy disposition:** not detected.

**Escalation indicators:** not determined.

**Possible operation situation developments:**

- In the short term, the Ukrainian Defense Forces will continue to pursue their chosen strategy of dealing the maximum enemy losses in close combat on the main force concentrations fronts, partly due to the shortage of ammunition for artillery;
- The air defense, electronic warfare, and fighter jets to be received by Ukraine from allies and partners will directly determine the further course of the war by providing the necessary capabilities to create an advantage in the operational zone;
- A temporary ceasefire in Ukraine and prolonging the war will only benefit the Russian Federation, allowing it to restore its forces and reduce Western support for Ukraine.

**Azov-Black Sea Maritime Operational Area:**

- There are currently 11 Russian ships at sea, patrolling areas near the coasts of Novorossiysk and Crimea. Among them are two *Project 636.3* submarines that carry Kalibr missiles and are located in the firing position near Novorossiysk. These submarines can carry up to 8 Kalibr missiles in total.
- A patrol ship near the Kerch Bridge and two landing craft are currently in the Sea of Azov.
- Russian aviation continues to fly from the Crimean airfields of Belbek, Saky, Dzhankoy and Hvardiyske over the sea. 7 fighter aircraft from Belbek and Saki Air Force Bases were involved in monitoring the surface and air conditions in the northwestern part of the Black Sea. Control of the air situation and operational-tactical aviation over the Azov Sea was carried out by A-50U and Il-22 AWACS aircraft.
- The Russian military continues to shell the right bank of the Dnipro River from the occupied left bank, with 63 attacks (247 shells and mines) reported in Kherson Oblast over the past day. Among these were 4 attacks on the city of Kherson, with a total of 22 mines, 20 artillery shells, 2 anti-aircraft missiles, 4 tank shells, 13 UAVs, and 2 air missiles fired. The attacks targeted residential areas, resulting in two deaths and three injuries.
- The occupation authorities of the Russian Federation in Crimea have announced the cancellation of the Victory Day parade scheduled for May 9th, as well as the demonstration planned for May 1st in Sevastopol and other locations on the peninsula.

This marks the first time such celebrations have been cancelled since they were launched in 1965.

#### **"The Grain initiative".**

- According to Vasyl Bodnar, the Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador of Ukraine to Turkey, it would be difficult to consider including the ports of Mykolaiv and Kherson in the "grain initiative" until the Russian military withdraws from the Kinburn Spit and the affected area. He emphasized that the "grain agreement" was made possible thanks to the efforts of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, who pushed Russia out of the northern Black Sea region. Bodnar suggests that it is necessary to consider alternative options for the "grain agreement" if the Russians try to block the agreement on May 18.

#### **"Sanctions on Russian oil supplies".**

- The BlackSeaNews monitoring group has published its research regarding the violation of the embargo on the sea import of oil products (diesel fuel, gasoline, etc.) from the Russian Federation to the G7 countries and the EU for February-March 2023.
- In February 2023, 11 embargo-violating tankers were recorded. They transported 403,990 tons of oil products. Destination - EU countries (Greece - 9 tankers, raid transshipment; Malta - 1 tanker, raid transshipment; Spain - 1 tanker, directly to the port of Matril, Granada).
- In March 2023, 17 tankers were recorded that transported 737,856 tons of oil products (an increase of 82.6%). Destination: USA - 1 tanker, WILMINGTON port; France - 1 tanker, ROUEN port; Malta - 1 tanker, port OPL VALLETTA, raid transshipment; Greece - 14 tankers, raid transshipment LAKONIKOS GULF, PIRAEUS.
- In general, an increase in sea exports of petroleum products from Russian ports in the Black and Azov Seas was recorded from 2,990,893 tons in February to 3,632,499 tons in March 2023

#### **Russian operational losses from 24.02.22 to 22.04.23**

Personnel - almost 185,730 people (+670);

Tanks - 3,672 (+4);

Armored combat vehicles – 7,130 (+4);

Artillery systems – 2,832 (+5)

Multiple rocket launchers (MLRS) - 539 (0);

Anti-aircraft warfare systems - 289 (+4);

Vehicles and fuel tanks – 5,718 (+5);

Aircraft - 308 (0);

Helicopters – 293 (0);

UAV operational and tactical level – 2,398 (+4);

Intercepted cruise missiles - 911 (0);

Boats/ships – 18 (0).

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#### **Ukraine, general**

The national nuclear power generation company "Energoatom" and the American company Holtec International have signed an agreement on cooperation in the deployment of small

modular reactors. The agreement envisages the construction of up to 20 SMR-160 light water reactors, with the first pilot project set to be implemented and connected to the grid by March 2029.

### **International diplomatic aspect**

The Chinese Ambassador to France cast doubt on Ukraine's territorial integrity by repeating the Kremlin's propaganda line that Crimea belongs to Russia. In addition, Lu Shaye went further and claimed that a dozen former Soviet Republics have "no effective status in international law" and are "not sovereign states." This statement is a concerning articulation of China's position and potential aspirations for global power. Both Moscow and Beijing seem to share the belief that only a select few nations are truly sovereign and have agency, while others should be subordinate and accept limited sovereignty.

Russia has announced that it will expel more than twenty German diplomats in retaliation for a similar move by Germany. The Russian Foreign Ministry accused Germany of continuing to destroy the entire range of Russian-German relations, including the diplomatic dimension. It is noteworthy that the German side, despite repeatedly assuring its unwillingness to publicize this incident, violated this agreement by leaking information to the media, which it often uses to facilitate "controlled leaks" and disinformation campaigns. Additionally, the OSINT community observed an unusual flight from Moscow to Berlin, leading to speculations about the possible expulsion of Russian intelligence officers.

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