

Friday-Sunday, April 29th-May 1st, 2022

Ukraine Situation Report

CONFLICT DEVELOPMENTS

- The military offensive conducted by the Russian Federation (hereinafter: Russia) on the eastern fronts of Ukraine gathered speed during the weekend. Russian troops were noted to seek out fragilities in Ukraine's line of defence in order to prepare for large-scale attacks to be launched before the spring weather dries the soil.
- The areas surrounding Izyum town in the Kharkiv oblast continue to see fierce fighting. Intense hostilities are also taking place in southern Ukraine. The likelihood of an attack launched from Transnistria on Ukraine and a Russian advance from the Hulyaipole region across Ukraine have mounted.
- The Ukrainian army destroyed Russian command posts located near Izyum and on the Snake Island, marking potentially significant military advantages for the Ukrainian forces. Furthermore, Ukrainian troops have regained control over several strategically important settlements in the Kharkiv oblast pushing Russian forces back towards Belgorod.
- Towns including [Mykolayiv](#), [Odesa](#), [Mariupol](#), [Dobropillya](#), and [Synelnykove](#) have been subject to shelling over the weekend, and several agricultural buildings have been damaged by hostilities. Targets hit include warehouses storing potassium nitrate fertilizers in the Mykolayiv oblast.
- According to the United Nations, more than 2900 civilians have been killed and 3200 wounded due to the Russian invasion. Official Ukrainian figures document a significantly higher number of casualties.
- According to the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine, Russian forces have launched about [1300 missile](#) attacks on Ukraine since the beginning of hostilities.
- An exchange of prisoners of war took place on Saturday freeing 14 Ukrainian combatants and 7 civilians.

HUMANITARIAN DIMENSIONS

- Russian forces continue to terrorize residents in the territories it controls. Russian troops have been reported to steal grains from farmers, abduct and arbitrarily detain individuals, and push for the integration of the Russian rouble into the markets. According to reports, Russian forces have already transported several thousands of tons of Ukrainian wheat to Russia.
- Russian forces [blocked](#) the signals from Ukrainian mobile operators damaging internet connectivity in the occupied territories of the Kherson and Zaporizhzhia oblast on Saturday 30th.
- Searches have reportedly been conducted in Ukrainian homes by Russian troops in the Kherson oblast.
- The Head of the village Zmiyivka, Mykola Kurivchak, has been abducted. Two British volunteers supporting evacuation operations have reportedly been abducted in the Zaporizhzhia.
- Russian troops have removed the Ukrainian coat of arms from the city council building in Tokmak town in the Zaporizhzhia oblast. Furthermore, Russian troops are seeking to establish full control over the [Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant](#).
- Two [evacuation buses](#) have been shelled and their drivers abducted near Popasna in the Luhansk oblast.
- The evacuation of civilians from shelters in the premises of the Azovstal steel plant in Mariupol has begun. By the evening of Sunday 1st, approximately 150 civilians were [evacuated](#). Some of the evacuees have been taken to Russia and the Temporarily Occupied Territories of the Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts (TOTDLO).
- Authorities of the TOTDLO are reportedly implementing plans to withdraw Ukrainian textbooks from schools in the newly occupied territories in Ukraine in order to introduce the Russian curriculum.
- The [OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine](#) has been terminated following the blocking of its activities by Russia. Several Ukrainian staff members remain in detention in the TOTDLO, their number is unknown.

INFORMATION DIMENSIONS

- Russian political leadership continues to spread anti-Western narratives. As per the [Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs](#), Sergei Lavrov, the war in Ukraine is contributing to the liberation of the world from Western neo-colonial oppression and deterring the spread of the hegemony of the United State across the globe. Furthermore, content stating that the West is seeking to deprive Russia of its [culture](#) thus juxtaposing Russian society as something incompatible with Western values is being spread.
- Official political statements are increasingly preparing Russians for a lengthened state of war underlining that [the path to victory is going to be long and difficult](#).
- In his Sunday sermon, Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and all Rus' called on Russians to [stand together](#) in support of their motherland. The Patriarch also urged Russians to believe that the faith is stronger than culture, science or art. Furthermore, the Patriarch underscored the power of faith as the uniting force of the Russian community.
- Russian political leadership continues to [spread narratives claiming](#) that the Ukrainian government is dependent on the United States and European allies calling the sovereignty of the country into question. Furthermore, [Russian authorities have continued denouncing](#) the military support given to Ukraine by European nations and the United States. France and the United State have stood out as the targets of harsh criticism recently.
- Russian officials are spreading information about the weakness and disintegration of the Ukrainian army, and according to Russian sources, the lack of capacity has [forced](#) Ukraine to send reservists to the frontline in Donbas. On Telegram channels Russia is spreading anonymous reports about the Ukrainian government sending its troops to death as cannon fodder.
- The Russian secret services have [disseminated](#) a video featuring a Ukrainian soldier admitting to torturing Russian prisoners of war.
- The Russian Ministry of Defence has reported about Belarusian soldiers trained in Russia paving the way for enhanced military [cooperation](#). Furthermore, recent statements have emphasized Russia's military strength in the Kaliningrad oblast.
- On Friday 29th, the Russian Ministry of Defence issued a [statement](#) underscoring that Kyiv had been subject to shelling during the visit of Secretary-General of the United Nations, António Guterres, to the city.
- Russian authorities in Crimea are [spreading](#) narratives regarding plans to integrate several parts of the Kherson and Zaporizhzhia oblast into Russia. Additionally, various items depicting patriotic symbols have been [moved](#) to the occupied territories in southern Ukraine from Crimea. Russian troops have been reported to attempt hoisting red flags and spreading their propaganda in the areas they control.
- Russian officials have disseminated [news](#) about Russian humanitarian missions providing monetary support for 7000 pensioners and budget-sector employees in the territories Russia has occupied since the beginning of the invasion.
- According to [information](#) shared by Russian officials on Sunday 1st, a fire broke out on the premises of one of the military base supervised by the Russian Ministry of Defence located close to the Borisov, Belgorod, and Yakovlevsky municipal districts 20 kilometres from the Ukraine.
- A railway bridge located on the Sudzha-Sosnovy Bor cargo line has been destroyed in the Kursk oblast in Russia. Russian sources have not directly blamed Ukraine for the incidence.