

**Ukraine Situation Report
Tuesday to Monday
August 2nd - August 8th, 2022**

CONFLICT DEVELOPMENTS

- The Russian army continues its attacks in the Donetsk oblast. In particular, it has successfully launched an offensive towards Bakhmut and Soledarsk. [Kostyantynivka](#), [Bakhmut](#), [Ocheretyane](#), Kramatorsk, Sloviansk and other cities are continually subjected to endless shelling while critical infrastructure is being destroyed. For example, the heating season cannot be guaranteed in the Donetsk oblast. Its fate may also befall other Ukrainian regions should the Russian offensive gather pace. In Kharkiv, for example, infrastructure objects (which are critical to guarantee [the heating season](#)) are being heavily shelled. The [evacuation](#) of civilians from the Donetsk oblast continues.
- For the first time in months military objects located in the Vinnytsia oblast have been shelled with hyper-sonic [Kinzhal](#) missiles. This is a blatant demonstration of Russian air superiority, deliberately timed to coincide with Ukrainian Air Forces Day. The settlements located in the Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporizhzhia, Mykolayiv and other oblasts have been subjected to air strikes. Every day the [territories](#) of the Sumy oblast, located on the Russian border, are shelled from Russia. Civilian objects are [60 times](#) more often the target of Russian troops, than the military ones.
- The Armed Forces of Ukraine (hereinafter AFU) continue their counteroffensive in the Kherson oblast. Since March at least 53 settlements have been [liberated](#). On 7 August attacks on [bridges](#) crossing the Dnipro river in Kherson and Kakhovka were carried out with high-precision weapons. This has compounded logistical issues for the Russian army in the Kherson oblast. The Ukrainian counteroffensive is rather [slow](#). It is impossible to accelerate it up without significant support from Ukraine's allies. The Russian Federation (hereinafter Russia), has intensified hostilities in Southern Ukraine by [deploying](#) additional units in the Kherson oblast. In Mykolayiv a curfew was introduced for the entire weekend. Consequently, the security situation in the city has deteriorated due to reconnaissance and sabotage groups operating in the territories controlled by the Ukrainian government.

HUMANITARIAN DIMENSIONS

- Russian occupation and military administrations continue to subject local citizens to terror by [expropriating](#) their businesses or abducting representatives of local authorities. For example, on 7 August, Olena Peleshuk, the head of Zelenopidska amalgamated territorial community in the Kherson oblast, was abducted. In the occupied territories of the Kherson, Zaporizhzhia and Kharkiv oblasts, Russian administrations continue to make arrangements for the '[referendum](#)' on the region's accession to Russia. If the referendum is held, the negotiations between Ukraine and Russia will collapse. The security situation in the region continues to be volatile even as regards the occupation administrations themselves. For example, the 'deputy head of the occupation administration' of Nova Kakhovka, Vitaliy Hura, was recently killed by unknown attackers. Volodymyr Saldo was transported to Moscow in [coma](#). It is assumed that he was poisoned.
- A report issued by the human rights organisation, Amnesty International, claiming that the Ukrainian military was putting civilians at risk from Russian fire, has sparked a major scandal. Ukrainian [politicians](#) and civil society have shown unwavering support for the AFU. Amnesty International has been accused of [exonerating](#) Russian war criminals. Following the scandal, employees of Amnesty's Ukrainian office resigned.

- Russia is preparing to establish a public ‘tribunal’ for Ukrainian prisoners of war (hereinafter POWs). In Mariupol, cages are being constructed for Ukrainian POWs to sit in during the trial. To make the trial possible, Russia has [recognized](#) the ‘Azov’ regiment a terrorist organisation so that its soldiers can be convicted as terrorists.
- More than 1063 [children](#) have been affected by Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine (at least 361 of them have been killed).
- Over 3.5 million Ukrainians have lost their [homes](#) as a result of Russian aggression. Over 50% of housing in Severodonetsk and Lysychansk has been [destroyed](#) due to the war.

POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC DIMENSIONS

- Russian troops continue to expose the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant (Europe’s largest nuclear power station) to danger. Last week the plant’s premises were shelled, which led to one of its blocks being shut down. Repeated Russian shelling may lead to a major environmental disaster, the consequences of which would be catastrophic for Ukraine, South Russia and the regions located close to the coasts of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov.
- Ukraine calls Russian actions [nuclear terrorism](#), since the mining and shelling of the plant risks inflicting significant [damage](#) to the entire European continent. The head of the Russian garrison stationed in the city of Enerhodar stated that the plant would be ‘either Russian land or a [scorched desert](#)’. Rafael Grossi, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, , and António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, , have called for international experts to be granted [access](#) to the premises of the plant in order to prevent a nuclear catastrophe. Russia continues to ignore such calls. Cutting the plant off from the Ukrainian energy system would not only deal a blow to Ukraine’s energy security ahead of the winter, it would also have a major economic impact. It would undermine Ukraine’s potential as a net exporter of energy to Europe, which has become a victim of Russian ‘energy’ blackmail’. Europe urgently needs to find alternative energy sources and Ukraine is well positioned to help via electricity export.
- As of 1 August, 2022 Ukraine’s international partners committed almost 34 billion USD of financial aid in the form of grants, loans, and credit guarantees. Ukraine has already received \$12,7 billion. A third of the aid will be grants. This means that Ukraine will not be obliged to repay it.
- Grain exports continue through Ukrainian sea ports under UN and Turkish safeguards.. Ships loaded with grain, sunflower oil and other food products systematically leave the ports of the Odesa oblast with the new ones arriving. Ukraine strictly adheres to the obligations it has assumed, having begun to resume its exports as soon as Russia agreed to ensure the free passage of international ships to and from Ukraine. Ukraine is making its own contribution to eliminating the danger of a food and migrant crisis. At the same time, [there is](#) still the danger of Russia carrying out provocations to hinder Ukrainian grain exports.
- The Security Service of Ukraine (hereinafter SSU) shared information concerning the ‘elimination’ of collaborators and a network of Russian agents operating in Ukraine. For example, the SSU has uncovered [agents](#) the Russian Federal Security Service (hereinafter FSS) who transmitted vital intelligence to the enemy which was used to destroy Ukrainian shipbuilding infrastructure in the country’s southern regions. The SSU’s investigative department has signed [suspicion notices](#) for the ex-deputy head of Ukraine’s Defense Intelligence of the Ministry of Defense. The SSU has also uncovered and [apprehended](#) members of an interregional network of FSS agents that was passing information to the Kremlin about military and strategic objects located across Ukraine. At the same time, reform of the SSU, which implies depriving it of the right to interfere in the activities of economic issues in Ukraine, remains on the agenda.

INFORMATION WARFARE DIMENSIONS

- Russia is actively [taking](#) steps to accuse [Ukraine](#) of bombing the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant on via large-scale disinformation campaigns.
- Russia's leadership [sees](#) no reason to hold peace negotiations with Ukraine. Such statements are issued against the background of the 'shelling of the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power station', allegedly conducted by Ukraine, as well as an escalation of hostilities in East and South Ukraine. No peacekeeping initiatives were raised during the meeting between Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and Vladimir Putin in Sochi on 5 August 2022. In their joint statement the two Presidents [acknowledged](#) the importance of constructive relations between the two countries concerning the safe export of grain from Ukrainian ports.
- Efforts by Russia to annex the Kherson and Zaporizhzhia oblasts continue. On 8 August an order was [issued](#) to hold a referendum on their accession to Russia. Hitherto the occupation authorities of the Kherson and Zaporizhzhia oblasts had established election commissions to hold the referendum on their in early September. Ukraine's education system is being rapidly replaced by the Russian one. The Russian ruble is being put into circulation. Russian law enforcement units have begun working in the region.
- Russia does not adhere to the Geneva POW conventions. Moscow [is spreading](#) information about the tribunal to be held for Ukrainian soldiers. No information about the mass killings of Ukrainian POWs in Olenivka is being disseminated. Russia is spreading the narrative that, Ukrainian troops committed the killings.
- The Kremlin is actively [promoting](#) narratives that discredit the Ukrainian army by extensively using the Amnesty International report. Hundreds of articles have been published in the Russian media on the topic, while the report is widely [quoted](#) on social media networks Russia claims that the AFU commit crimes against civilians with 'Western weapons'. Messages spread by Moscow aim to legitimize Russian aggression by claiming it is aimed at 'the liberation' of Ukraine.
- Narratives related to the legitimisation of Russian aggression in Ukraine are being [spread](#). For example, statements made by Western activists and artists who legitimise Russian aggression while accusing NATO of supporting Ukraine and the West countries of supporting Ukraine's 'intransigence' are actively promoted.
- [Hidden](#) mobilization continues to be conducted across Russia. At least 40 volunteer military units have been established to be [sent](#) to the war in Ukraine. In the Omsk oblast contractors fighting in the Russian army are offered a monthly salary of two thousand USD (paid in rubles). In the Perm Krai the promised salary is as high as 3300 USD. Bonuses will be awarded to those who achieve battlefield success.
- Russian society is being constantly called on to [mobilize](#) for 'a war against the West which encroaches on Russian interests and the country's integrity'. Such narratives and messages contribute to efforts to justify the Russian aggression in Ukraine and other countries. To a large extent Russian threats also concern the countries of South Caucasus and Central Asia. Deputy chairman of Russia's Security Council, Dmitry Medvedev, recently [said](#) that the Georgian and Ukrainian conflicts are part of one process and belong to a general plan aimed against Russia. This plan is hatched by the West and aims to undermine the internal situation in Russia or in close proximity to Russian borders. On social media networks Medvedev is voicing territorial claims to Kazakhstan and Georgia. He later claimed that his VKontakte account had been hacked. Statements made by Russian cultural figures supporting the war in Ukraine and condemning the West (which is intent on destroying the Russian culture) are being extensively quoted. Those public figures who have spoken against the war are being [persecuted](#) and apprehended.
- The Russian Ministry of Defense is spreading [information](#) about biological weapons being produced in Ukraine as well as claiming that the Coronavirus was invented by Americans in Ukraine. The Ministry legitimises Russian aggression in Ukraine and discredits the US.