

**Ukraine Situation Report
Thursday to Monday
July 28th-August 1st, 2022**

CONFLICT DEVELOPMENTS

- Despite sustaining heavy losses (as of today the Ukrainian government, reports 41.000 Russian fatalities in the war), the Russian army continues – albeit very slowly - to make advances in the Donetsk oblast. The town of [Avdiivka](#) and other settlements are being attacked by Russian troops. Incessant, destructive shelling has forced the Ukrainian government to announce compulsory [evacuation](#) from the Donetsk oblast. In a video message, President Zelenskyy called on citizens residing in the oblast to abandon their homes. Large-scale hostilities are expected to take place, as well as the evacuation of 250.000 of the oblast's remaining inhabitants. In addition, [railways](#) are being continuously shelled.
- The Armed Forces of Ukraine (AFU) continue to mount their counteroffensive in the Kherson oblast. Since March 2022, 46 settlements have been [liberated](#). Meanwhile, Russia is preparing a new [offensive](#) in the oblast, as well as an advance on Zaporizhzhia and Kharkiv. For example, in the Donetsk oblast numerous units of military [equipment](#) which are used for floating pontoon bridges have been seen. These units were being transferred in the direction of either Zaporizhzhia or Kherson. As of today the section of the Dnipro river flowing through Kherson is crossed either by ferries or paddle steamers with [civilians](#) on board who are used as human shields by the Russian military. Furthermore, a new army [corps](#) established in Russia may be sent to fight in the Kharkov or even Kyiv direction. It is not yet clear where Russia will concentrate its main resources for a future attack.
- The fate of Mariupol may also befall the [Kherson](#) and [Mykolayiv](#) oblasts given the constant hostilities, shelling and bombardments, as well as the destruction of infrastructure, occupation and Russian attempts to annex the occupied territories, as Crimea or Donbas. During the last few days, the Russian army has subjected Mykolayiv to the heaviest shelling since the beginning of its invasion. Residential houses as well as one of the oblast's largest hospitals have been damaged. Kharkiv, Odesa (the eponymous oblast has been shelled by Iskander missiles carrying incendiary shells), Kropyvnytskyi, Nikopol, Marhanets, Chuhuiv, Kramatorsk, Slovyansk, Bakhmut and other cities in the Donetsk oblast located along the entire frontline, as well as territories in the Sumy oblast located on the Russian [border](#), have also been subjected to heavy shelling. The northern areas of the [Kyiv](#) oblast have yet again been exposed to shelling. The increased intensity of the shelling signals the preparation of a new wave of escalation by Russia.

HUMANITARIAN DIMENSIONS

- Russian has committed several blatant, large-scale violations of international humanitarian law. At least 50 Ukrainian prisoners of war (POWs) have been killed in Olenivka (the prison was [blown up](#) from inside. It was not destroyed due to shelling, as Russians claim). Russia will not allow the [Red Cross](#) mission to visit the scene. Meanwhile Russian troops continue to torture (relevant footage has been published on the

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- internet) Ukrainian POWs. Russia's goal is to undermine Ukrainian society's morale, causing panic and driving it to despair. The Russian embassy in the UK has [called](#) for the execution of Ukrainian POWs.
- During Mykolayiv's shelling with [a high-precision missile](#), Oleksii Vadatursky, a representative of one of Ukraine's largest agricultural businesses, was killed. Given that Vadatursky and his company "Nibulon" have actively been working on lifting the blockade of the export of Ukrainian grain, it may be assumed that his murder was not [coincidental](#). In fact, it was an act of personal terror or a public execution.
 - Since the end of February 2022, Russia has continued to deliberately destroy Ukraine's [medical](#) infrastructure. Its troops have damaged 884 healthcare facilities throughout Ukraine. 123 facilities have been completely destroyed.
 - On 31 July, the Russian administration in Sevastopol accused Ukraine of using a drone to shell the headquarters of the Russian Black Sea Fleet, located in the city. However, it was quickly established that the drone was launched from Sevastopol itself. It can be assumed that the Russian secret services launched the attack in order to impose additional [restrictions](#) on the freedoms of local citizens.
 - Despite constant shelling, the export of grain from Ukrainian ports has resumed under United Nations (UN) and Turkish safeguards. On 1 August, the first ship bound for Lebanon, which has been affected by an acute food crisis, left the port of Odesa.

POLITICAL DIMENSIONS

- The Ukrainian government plans to hold another summit of the [Crimean platform](#) on 23 August, in an online format. An extensive [campaign](#) to raise awareness about Russian aggression is being prepared, with plans to speak about this in parliaments across the world.
- On 29 July, Ukrainian MPs approved decree Nr 7595 "On certain measures related to Ukraine's obligations vis-à-vis European integration". The Speaker of the Ukrainian Parliament, Ruslan Stefanchuk, [emphasized](#) that the goal is to increase the quality of bills and expedite their review if necessary.
- According to a [poll](#) conducted by the Kyiv International Institute of Sociology, 79% of Ukrainians support the idea of a closed border between Ukraine and Russia, as well as a visa regime and customs along the border.
- According to a [poll](#) carried out by the Rating Group, the number of Ukrainians who have changed their place of residence since 24 February 2022 remains at approximately 20%. Fifty-eight percent of them are residents of Ukraine's eastern regions. Only 10% of respondents do not plan to return to their homes (in April this number amounted to 3%, while in June 8% of the respondents chose this option). Sixteen percent of respondents said that they would return to their homes soon, while 18% would return slightly later. 50% said that they intended to return only when the war ends. The number of respondents in this category is gradually rising.

INFORMATION WARFARE DIMENSIONS

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- On 1 August, the first ship carrying Ukrainian grain [left](#) the port in Odesa. The Kremlin assessed this positively. According to Dmitry Peskov, this development provides an opportunity to assess the effectiveness of the Istanbul Agreement.
- Russia has [announced](#) its strategic interests within the framework of its updated maritime doctrine. The document covers Arctic waters, the Black Sea, the Sea of Okhotsk, the Bering Sea, the Strait of Baltiysk and the Kuril Strait. Putin stated that Russia would protect these waters by all possible means. According to the doctrine, the United States (US) and NATO [pose](#) the biggest threat to the Russian Federation's national security. It also singles out US allies which are hostile to Russia and which (alongside the US) are attempting to restrict Russian access to resources, as well as hinder free movement on the world's oceans. Russia continues to promote imperial narratives. On 31 July, a military naval parade took place in Saint Petersburg and Kronstadt, which Putin attended. The parade was timed to coincide with the 350th birthday of Peter the Great. In Sevastopol, all celebrations were cancelled due to a "terrorist" threat allegedly emanating from Ukraine. Russia [claims](#) that its Black Sea Fleet has established control over the Sea of Azov and the western and northern parts of the Black Sea.
- Narratives denying the war crimes committed by the Russian army in Ukraine continue to be circulated. In the Russian information space the Ukrainian military is accused of [killing](#) Ukrainian [POWs](#) in Olenivka, destroying the civilian infrastructure along with [critical](#) infrastructure. The Olenivka tragedy is [represented](#) in the Kremlin controlled media as "Zelenskyy executing his own people".
- Measures aimed at the integration and annexation of the Kherson oblast are underway in Russia. The Russian Ministry of Interior has announced the establishment of provisional territorial offices in the Zaporizhzhia and Kherson oblasts. According to a decree issued by the Ministry in July 2022, its officials are in the Kherson and Zaporizhzhia oblasts to organize the work of the local provisional offices and to provide practical help for local law enforcement units. Russia is [introducing](#) its own administrative procedures in the region to register road vehicles.
- The Kremlin is determined to hold "referenda" in the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, although the preparation of which may prove problematic. [According](#) to Moscow, Zelenskyy's statement on the evacuation of the residents of the Donetsk oblast to government-controlled areas, has nothing to do with safety. Rather, Moscow claims that Ukraine's goal is to "thwart" the referenda and "undermine" their legitimacy.
- Russia continues to spread integration narratives related to religion. Ukrainian identity and history are denied. On 28 July, Patriarch Kirill [said](#) that the Christianization of the Principality of Kyiv by Ukrainian Prince, Volodymyr was the birthday of "Russian civilization". On 28 July, the [Russian](#) military "celebrated together with citizens of Kherson" the day of the "Christianization of Kyivan Rus". The common history of Kherson and Russia was particularly stressed. The Russian state and the church share extremely close ties, which are only growing stronger. The Russian State Duma is preparing a [bill](#) that will allow for the transfer of religious artifacts from museums to Russian churches.
- The Kremlin continues to legitimize military actions against civilians or citizens collaborating with Ukrainian state authorities. The Russian information space is [full](#) of messages calling for the recognition of the

Defense Intelligence of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine as a terrorist organization and to “attack relevant objects” (such “attacks” would imply strikes on the offices of representatives of the Security Service of Ukraine located in oblasts, on the offices of the general staff, intelligence bases and test ranges).