

**Monday to Wednesday
May 16-18th, 2022
Ukraine Situation Report**

CONFLICT DEVELOPMENTS

- Fierce hostilities have taken place in the Luhansk and Donetsk oblasts, where the offensive conducted by the troops of the Russian Federation (hereinafter: Russia) is concentrated. Furthermore, Russian troops are expected to resume their [offensive](#) in the Zaporizhzhia oblast and continue attempts to overcome Ukrainian border defence and [enter Sumy](#).
- Ukrainian troops are currently in control of 10% of the Luhansk oblast. The Ukrainian army has successfully maintained its hold on the settlements located around the towns of Severodonetsk and Lysychansk in the oblast. Furthermore, a number of settlements have been [liberated from Russian](#) occupation in the Donetsk and Kharkiv oblasts.
- According to the spokesperson of the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine, Hanna Malyar, Russian forces have [lost air supremacy](#) due to the progress made by the Ukrainian air defence.
- [The armed forces of Belarus](#) have taken active steps to fortify their border with Ukraine, including the setting up of additional checkpoints.
- Russian forces have been reported to have forcibly mobilized Ukrainians residing in the territories it occupies.
- The President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelensky, has presented a draft bill proposing to extend [martial law](#) until August 23rd to the Ukrainian parliament. The current martial law expires on May 25th. The extension is likely to be granted.
- Shelling and missile strikes have been noted in the following locations during the reporting period:
 - [Kharkiv](#)
 - [Dnipro](#)
 - [Mykolayiv](#)
 - [Lviv](#)
 - [Kryvyi Rih](#)
 - [Orikhiv](#)
 - [Avdiivka](#)
 - [Soledar](#)
 - [Bakhmut](#) – damage inflicted on residential houses and a school
 - [Kostyantynivka](#)
 - [Severodonetsk](#) – a hospital and a building hosting the research and manufacturing facilities of Impulse have been damaged
 - [Lyman](#) – a large bakery and the offices of a pension fund have been damaged
 - [Derhachi](#)
 - [Desna](#)

- [Okhtyrka](#)
- [Border](#) territories
- The [bridge](#) stretching over the Dniester estuary in the Odesa oblast continues to be targeted by shelling. Two Russian mines were located on the shores of the oblast and successfully deactivated.
- According to the city council of Mariupol, a reservoir storing concentrated hydrogen sulfide in the Azovstal steel plant might have incurred damages during recent hostilities. A spill or leakage of the concentrate into the Azov sea could cause significant [destruction](#) to the marine ecosystem as well as contaminate both the Black and Mediterranean Seas.
- Lysychansk and other towns in the Luhansk oblast located along the front line have been cut off from [electricity](#) due to the shelling of an electrical substation. Ongoing hostilities are making repairing the station unfeasible.
- An evacuation [bus](#) was targeted by shelling in the vicinity of Lysychansk on Tuesday 17th. Furthermore, a convoy of 100 [vehicles driven by civilians](#) seeking to escape from Kryvyi Rih to Beryslav was shelled on the same day. Despite hostilities, evacuations across Ukraine continue.
- The wives of forcibly conscripted men have taken to the streets in Luhansk to protest the deportation of their partners to the front line without any prior training. Ukrainian soldiers have reportedly been banned from retreating to the Russian territory even when under fire, unlike their Russian counterparts.
- Evacuations from the [Azovstal](#) steel plant in Mariupol continue. According to preliminary agreements, Ukrainian combatants captured by Russian forces are to be exchanged with Russian prisoners of war held in Ukraine. Despite initial negotiations, the Russian State Duma has published a draft bill proposing to prohibit exchanges extending to fighters captured from Azovstal. According to content published by Russian sources, the Azovstal troops are regarded as Nazis.

HUMANITARIAN DIMENSIONS

- More than 3000 citizens of Mariupol are currently being held in a [filtration camp](#) located in Olenivka in the Donetsk oblast. Some of the soldiers captured in the Azovstal steel plant have also been taken to the camp.
- Rebuilding and repairing efforts continue in the settlements liberated from Russian control in the Kharkiv oblast, despite continuous shelling. Gas supplies have been restored in Derhachi and surrounding villages.
- A fire broke out at night on Wednesday 18th in a forest located in the Chernobyl Exclusion Zone. By morning, the fire had been brought under control and extinguished.
- The Ukrainian journalist, Oleksiy Vorontsov, was [abducted](#) on Monday 16th. The Deputy Mayor of [Enerhodar](#) in the Zaporizhzhia oblast remains in Russian custody.
- The Russian representatives of the Temporarily Occupied Territories of the Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts (TOTDLO) have issued statements regarding the number of civilian casualties recorded in the TOTDLO over the past three months. Per official figures of the so-called Donetsk People's

Republic, [117 civilians](#) have been killed in the Donetsk oblast and [29](#) civilians in the Luhansk oblast. Information regarding casualties among those forcibly mobilized to join war efforts has not been made public. The published figures were presented against casualties from 2021, when 7 civilian deaths in the occupied territories of the Donetsk oblast and 1 death in the Luhansk oblast were recorded.

INFORMATION DIMENSIONS

- Russian sources have continued to spread anti-western narratives passing the blame for the war in Ukraine on Western countries. [In a statement made on Tuesday 17th](#), the President of Russia, Vladimir Putin, explained that the developments seen in and around Ukraine are due to the ill-conceived policies pursued by the West against Russia.
- [In a statement made on Wednesday 18th](#), Deputy Secretary of the Security Council of Russia, Rashid Nurgaliyev, underscored that the plan to demilitarize and denazify Ukraine will be successfully completed and the defence of the so-called Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics strengthened. The Deputy Secretary also noted that the gravest threat to Ukrainian civilians are Ukrainian militias.
- Russian forces have been reported to have conducted covert military mobilization efforts. In a speech delivered on Wednesday 18th, the Head of the Chechen Republic, Ramzan Kadyrov, [stated](#) that there was no need to announce general mobilization in Russia, however, Russian citizens should mobilize on their own initiative in support of President Putin.
- Russian media sources began publishing content regarding the surrender of the Ukrainian fighters defending the Azovstal steel plant in Mariupol on Tuesday 17th. According to Russian sources, fighters had laid down their arms already on Monday evening, and by Wednesday 18th, 265 soldiers had surrendered, including 51 severely [wounded](#) fighters. Following their detention, the Kadyrov foundation was reported to have [transferred](#) the captured combatants to Donetsk to pre-trial detention facilities and [filtration procedures](#). Russian officials have announced plans to [demolish](#) the steel plant.
- According to official statements voiced by the Kremlin, war criminals are not to be included in exchanges of prisoners of war. The statement is assumed to refer to soldiers who fought in the Azovstal steel plant. Leaders of the so-called Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics have voiced [proposals](#) to terminate the moratorium on the death penalty for the Azovstal fighters. Furthermore, the Russian Supreme Court has taken steps to [register](#) the Ukrainian Azov Battalion as a terrorist organization and has launched criminal proceedings against its soldiers. Soldiers of the battalion are expected to face 10 to 20 years of imprisonment in Russia.
- According to the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia, Andrei Rudenko, negotiations between Russian and Ukrainian delegations remain stalled and arms deliveries to Ukraine by European nations and the United States are contributing to the prolonging of the conflict. The claims of the Deputy Minister were reiterated by the Press Secretary for the Russian President,

Dmitry Peskov, [in his statement](#) underscoring that negotiations remain at a standstill due to Ukraine.

- Russian military actions conducted in Ukraine continue to be legitimized through [historical narratives spread by Russian sources](#). Recently circulated narratives have sought to undermine Ukraine's national history, while emphasising Ukraine's close ties with Russia. An example of such a claim was voiced by [Patriarch Kirill of Moscow](#) in his speech delivered at the opening ceremony of the tenth parliamentary meeting on Tuesday 17th. According to the Patriarch, hostile external forces have turned the Ukrainian and Russian peoples against each other. He manipulated Ukrainian history, having also referred to "the fratricidal war of 2014".
- Russian officials have [accused](#) Ukraine of shelling settlements located in border regions. The village of Alekseyevka in the Kursk oblast was allegedly targeted by Ukrainian mortar fire on Tuesday 17th and Wednesday 18th, yet no casualties were reported. Furthermore, according to Russian sources, the village of Tetkino in the Kursk [oblast](#) was targeted by shelling and a fire caused by Ukraine broke out in the Solokhi village. One civilian was reportedly injured in Solokhi.
- News regarding the use of latest military technology is assumed to be part of attempts to underscore the military superpower of the Russian troops. Russian officials have [claimed](#) to have used the high precision Zaira laser weapon system in Ukraine.