

**November 22 - November 28, 2022**  
**Ukraine Situation Report**

**CONFLICT DEVELOPMENTS**

- Despite sustaining heavy losses on a daily basis, the Russian army continues to actively attack Ukrainian positions. It has made some progress near Bakhmut thanks to the ‘Wagner’ private paramilitary group fighters, and several other groups. The creation of a further paramilitary group is imminent. The group is expected to be composed of conscripted prisoners and run by [Armen Sarkisyan](#), who was appointed as the administrator for prisons in the Russian-occupied territories of Ukraine. Sarkisyan is a Viktor Yanukovich-linked, pro-Kremlin businessman. Prior to the war he was actively engaged in forming a government in Horlivka, in the so-called ‘Donetsk People’s Republic’. He has expanded his activities to the newly occupied territories of Ukraine.
- The threat of an attack from the territory of [Belarus](#) remains significant.
- The Armed Forces of Ukraine (hereinafter: AFU) continue to carry-out attacks in the territory of the Luhansk oblast, having already liberated 15 settlements near Svatove and Kreminna.
- The Russian Federation (hereinafter: Russia) has not ceased launching massive missile and artillery attacks on Ukrainian cities. According to a [statement](#) by the Ministry of Interior of Ukraine, a mere 3% of the missiles have hit military objects, with the majority hitting residential buildings, objects of civilian and energy infrastructure, educational, cultural, and religious facilities, etc. In total, nearly 32.000 civilian objects have been damaged. Last week, the cities of [Kherson](#), Dnipro, Kryvyi Rih, Vyshhorod, Nikopol, Marhanets, Bakhmut (a [fire station](#) was hit), Vovchansk, Kupyansk (a [hospital](#) was damaged), [Kramatorsk](#), Toretsk (a [kindergarten](#) was destroyed), Chasiv Yar as well as other cities and [settlements](#) in the Sumy, Chernihiv and Kharkiv oblasts located on the Russian border were subject to Russian shelling.
- Following the [massive shelling](#) of 23 November (70 cruise missiles and about 10 kamikaze drones), all the power units of nuclear power plants located in the government-controlled territories of Ukraine were switched off. Effectively, Ukraine experienced a full-scale blackout. Some experts believe that by conducting such an operation ahead of wintertime, Russia has committed an act of genocide as millions of people were cut from electricity, heating, water supply, and connection in the cold season. Apart from Ukraine, [Moldova](#) has also been affected. Several Moldovan cities were cut from electricity due to shelling.
- The newly liberated city of Kherson is being subjected to frequent bombardments since it is located within the range of Russian artillery. Since liberation, the city’s newly restored critical infrastructure has been under attack from missile strikes. For example, the Russians have hit [power lines](#) and a [pumping station](#) which supplies drinking water to the city of Mykolayiv. In the Mykolayiv oblast, [13.675 civilian objects](#) have been either partly damaged or completely destroyed since the beginning of Russia’s invasion.
- The exchanges of Prisoner of war (POW) continue. On 23 November, 36 Ukrainian soldiers were swapped for 36 Russian POWs. On 24 November, 50 Ukrainians were exchanged for 50 Russians, while on 26 November, the number of the swapped POWs on either side was twelve. On 22 November the bodies of 33 fallen soldiers were returned to Ukraine.

## HUMANITARIAN DIMENSIONS

- According to the information provided by [juvenile prosecutors](#), 440 Ukrainian children have been killed with 851 wounded of varying degrees of severity. It is estimated that 1.2034 have been deported.
- According to Ukraine's Minister of Defense, Oleksii Reznikov, Russia [conducted](#) over 16.000 missile strikes on Ukraine during the last 9 months. 97% of their targets were civilian objects. Furthermore, according to a [statement](#) made by Rosemary A. DiCarlo, United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, the endless Russian attacks on Ukrainian infrastructure can lead to Ukraine facing 'a man-made humanitarian catastrophe' in the winter.
- Ukraine has supported the idea of an [unlimited extension](#) of the 'grain deal' regarding the export of Ukrainian agricultural produce via the Black Sea, and the need to increase the number of ports used for shipment under the initiative. As of today, Russia has blocked the passage of over eighty ships through the Bosphorus Straits. On 26 November, a humanitarian food programme - [Grain from Ukraine](#) - was launched. The goal of the programme is to prevent up to five million people living in Africa and Asia becoming victims of famine.
- On 23 November, Kyiv lived through the first blackout in its history. The city's authorities are [preparing for the worst-case scenario](#), i.e. complete lack of water, heating, and electricity.
- According to UN data, as of now 6.5 million Ukrainians are considered internally displaced persons (IDPs). 4.7 million Ukrainians have found shelter abroad. According to the statement issued by the [International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies](#), a growing influx of refugees from Ukraine is expected in view of the worsening infrastructure situation.
- Investigators of the Ukrainian police have initiated [45.6 thousand criminal proceedings](#) regarding war crimes committed by Russia. An investigation into crimes committed by Russian troops in the territory of the Kherson oblast is also being conducted. Russia is also accused of deliberately murdering civilians. For example, [a car with two civilians on board](#) was shot at and subsequently crushed by a tank. The location of [torture chambers](#) has been revealed in four buildings, as well as sites of mass shootings of civilians ([a shooting of seven local residents](#), among them a minor child).

## INFORMATION WARFARE DIMENSIONS

- Official Russian media continue to [promote](#) narratives regarding the rejection of the existence of a separate Ukrainian culture that has no connection with Russian history or culture.
- Russian officials and political figures (e.g., Kremlin spokesman, Dmitry Peskov) [deploy](#) narratives criticizing the West – for example French President, Emmanuel Macron, for condemning Russian strikes on Ukraine's energy and civilian infrastructure, but not condemning 'the Ukrainian army shelling Donbas'. A further narrative is being spread emphasizing the achievements of the shelling of Ukrainian energy [infrastructure](#). Russia claims that Ukraine is not capable of repairing all the damaged infrastructure, which is apparent from Ukrainian public sentiment, and is a proof of the effectiveness of Russian tactics. In the Russian information space, a discussion concerning the next missile strikes on Ukrainian civilian infrastructure (for example, on 7 bridges across the Dnipro River) is underway. The idea of using decommissioned ballistic missiles in non-nuclear equipment is also being [discussed](#). [Statements](#) by Russian politicians and senior civil servants working in the occupation administrations including the Chairman of the

State Council of the Republic, Vladimir Konstantinov, calling for the continued shelling of Ukrainian infrastructure are being circulated. Moscow continues [sharing](#) publications about the catastrophic condition of the Ukrainian energy system due to Russian strikes. The Russian media claims that Ukraine has lost 60% of its energy capacities.

- Narratives about Ukrainians potentially feeling dissatisfied with their government due to the shelling of civilian infrastructure is also being spread. Official Russian media mention the dire humanitarian situation related to electricity and food in the Ukrainian capital, emphasizing the [incapability](#) of Ukraine's leadership to rise to the challenges. The Russian media place particular stress on the fact that residents of Ukrainian cities are [short](#) of bread. According to some Russian narratives, 'Ukrainian cities have been [plunged](#) into the Middle Ages', with Ukrainians preparing to maraud and kill each other on the streets of Lviv and Kyiv. The Russian media also claims that such developments are the result of food prices doubling. Russia is also [reflecting](#) on the competition between Ukraine's President, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, and the Commander-in-Chief of the AFU, Valerii Zaluzhnyi, who is referred to in some articles in the Russian media as Zelenskyy's 'successor'.
- Russia [accuses](#) Ukraine of preparing terrorist attacks on oil pipelines in the Volgograd oblast.
- Russian internal discourse has been reinvigorated with discussions about Russian traditional values and a ban on LGBT 'propaganda'. In early November, Putin [approved](#) 17 [traditional](#) Russian values on which 'the security of Russia' depends. Among these values are 'family' and 'unity between the peoples of Russia'. On 23 November, the Russian State Duma adopted [a bill](#) banning LGBT propaganda. Some articles in the Russian media [counterpose](#) Russian traditional values to the gender component of 'western' and 'liberal' values, in particular, to religious matters.
- The territories of the temporarily occupied territories in the Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson oblasts are referred to as the 'new Russian territories' by the Russian government. For example, its members [are currently discussing](#) the situation in the 'new Russian territories' within the framework of preparations for the upcoming winter season. In parallel, Russia is [spreading](#) countless narratives about Ukraine subjecting civilians living on the right bank of the Kherson oblast to torture, as well as Ukraine organizing filtration camps. At the same time, while appearing on propagandist talks shows, some Russian officials have [claimed](#) that the Zaporizhzhia and Kherson oblasts are disputed territories, which means that nuclear weapons may be used against Ukraine, following the liberation of these territories by the Ukrainian army.
- Russia is churning out messages about the 'people's war' and the all-Russian mobilization. The Kremlin also emphasizes its support for the families and mothers of the conscripted ([introduction of privileges](#), etc). The Russian government is producing alternative messages regarding the conscripted that run counter to those issued by human rights organizations, such as the Union of the Committees of Soldiers' Mothers of Russia. The latter has criticized partial mobilization, as well as [speaking](#) about the pressure exerted on the Union by the Russian government. On 25 November, Putin [met](#) 'mothers of soldiers' [in person](#), [assuring](#) them that he would take care of their needs and that the mothers of fallen soldiers would not be 'forgotten'. He added that it is better to fall in combat rather than be killed in a road accident or succumb to alcoholism. Putin also [said](#) that he 'speaks directly on the phone to some conscripts in the special military operation' via their mothers. The Russian opposition media [believe](#) that 'these mothers were carefully selected' for the meeting with Putin.
- The Ukrainian army continues to be discredited. Russia is spreading messages about the international nature of the war. For example, Russian media reports purport claim that 300 international mercenaries [have been killed](#), among them 200 fighters from Poland. According to some Russian publications, thousands of 'western mercenaries' are being killed in the special operation.
- Narratives are being spread that legitimize Russia's war in Ukraine. For example, some Russian officials [have said](#) that the process of regaining territories by Ukraine poses a threat to the residents of the 'new Russian territories' and Russian security more broadly. For example, Leonid Slutsky said that in the event

- of the liberation of Crimea and Donbas ‘western military bases and biological laboratories’ would be placed there. The fact that Russian officials have accepted the prospect of Crimea’s liberation is noteworthy, as this was previously not the case. Nevertheless, other Russian officials [have threatened](#) to deploy ‘containment weapons’, should Ukraine attempt to liberate Crimea. In addition, narratives about Ukraine preparing to liberate Crimea (‘which was legally annexed’) in 2023 by military means are being [spread](#).
- The situation at the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant is being discussed, in particular [the threat](#) posed by the AFU. The Russian media [deny](#) reports related to Russian troops leaving the plant.
  - Russia blames Ukraine for ‘derailing’ negotiations. On 28 November, Kremlin Spokesman, Dmitriy Peskov said ([while commenting](#) on the Vatican’s initiative to launch a platform for peace talks) that ‘Ukraine does not need any platforms’.