

**October 2024
Ukraine Monthly Situation Report**

CONFLICT DEVELOPMENTS

- **The Russian army continues to gradually advance in Donetsk province, while also maintaining pressure on Kurakhove, Pokrovsk, and several other key cities. In October, the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation (AFRF) established control over Selydove, significant parts of Toretsk, and a few other settlements. However, the Russian army is incurring considerable losses in terms of equipment and personnel.** According to the Ukrainian government, as of the end of October, **Russia's total losses** amount to around [695.000](#) military personnel. In parallel, the Ukrainian Armed Forces (AFU) are constructing echeloned defence lines in the Zaporizhzhia province. However, Ukraine lacks the resources to effectively deter the Russians from advancing and conducting counteroffensives, Ukraine's vulnerability to Russian aerial attacks is one example. Every week Ukrainian settlements and the positions of the Ukrainian Defence Forces (FDU) face over 1000 guided missiles dropped on them as well as hundreds of kamikaze drones.
- In October Russian plans to engage a few thousand military personnel from North Korea was revealed and risks complicating developments on the front. However, the situation is not expected to become critical, unlike with North Korean [ammunition](#) which now makes up a significant part of Russia's overall needs.
- For its part, **the Ukrainian army is continuing to control several settlements located in Russia's Kursk province.** From time to time important new assaults on the Russian border force the AFRF to transfer reserves from the Donetsk province. The FDU have managed to gain a foothold on the [fortifications](#) line built by the Russians in anticipation of a Ukrainian offensive, which helps the AFU to stem Russian attacks near Kursk with small forces. Oil depots in Russia and the occupied territories, military facilities, and airfields continue to be subjected to shelling. Ukraine also continues to launch cyberattacks on Russian government websites.
- **The AFRF continues to launch attacks on Ukrainian settlements and strategic energy infrastructure, with cruise missiles and kamikaze drones.** In October, the cities of [Kyiv](#), [Zaporizhzhia](#), [Sumy](#), [Kharkiv](#) (following a strike on 28th October, an architectural monument which is under UNESCO protection was hit), [Mykolaiv](#), [Kherson](#), [Odesa](#), [Dnipro](#) (due to an attack on 26th October a [hospital](#) was damaged, which led to several patients being injured), [Kryvyi Rih](#), [Nikopol](#), [Hulyaipole](#), [Pokrovsk](#), [Myrnohrad](#), [Kramatorsk](#), [Sloviansk](#), [Kostynatynivka](#), [Kurakhove](#) (the office of the Ukrainian Red Cross in the Donetsk province was demolished), [Lyman](#), [Konotop](#), [Chuhuiiv](#), [Ochakiv](#), as well as other cities and towns were targeted. Apart from military facilities, critical infrastructure is also subjected to attacks as well as hospitals, residential buildings, educational, and other civilian facilities.
- **On 19th October, another prisoners of war (PoWs) swap took place. 95 soldiers were returned to Ukraine.** The previous day a large-scale [swap of bodies](#) of fallen soldiers took place, with Ukraine receiving 501 bodies.
- In October, new cases of Ukrainian PoWs being executed by the Russians were reported. For example, news about the largest number of Ukrainian soldiers (16) being executed at one time by a firing squad was reported. The overall number of Ukrainian soldiers that have been executed on the battlefield now amounts to one hundred. Also, on 10th October the death of the Ukrainian civilian [journalist](#), Viktoria Roshchyna, was reported. The total number of Ukrainians who have died in Russian captivity stands at over 170.

- Ukraine's partners, in cooperation with Ukrainian producers, are starting to invest in Ukraine's defence sector, with the intention to produce equipment and ammunition. For example, the French-German defence group *KNDS* has [opened](#) a subsidiary in Ukraine. Lithuania has invested 10 million EUR in the production of the Palianytsia missile-drone while the Turkish company *Baykar* is planning to complete the construction of a plant in Ukraine by August 2025.

HUMANITARIAN DIMENSIONS

- **According to the official information provided by Ukrainian juvenile prosecutors**, since the beginning of the invasion 583 Ukrainian children have [been killed](#), with over 1655 having sustained injuries of different degrees of severity as a result of Russia's full-scale invasion. 146,994 war crimes and crimes of aggression have been [documented](#) as well as 19,695 crimes against Ukraine's national security.
- **Russian aggression continues to destroy Ukraine's historical and cultural heritage.** The number of damaged historical heritage sites has grown by 22, having [reached](#) a total number of 1,169. In the Kharkiv and Sumy provinces, the Russian occupiers have again hit objects of cultural heritage that had previously been damaged. 2,093 cultural infrastructure facilities have either [been](#) destroyed or damaged. The brunt of the attacks has been borne by cultural facilities in Kharkiv, Kherson, Zaporizhzhia, Donetsk, and Sumy provinces. Owing to Russian aggression, 124 Ukrainian artists have already [perished](#). 1,7 million cultural artifacts [remain](#) on the Ukrainian territories occupied by Russia, which represents a major threat to Ukraine's national cultural heritage. In turn, this leads to cultural depersonalization, posing a threat to the historical memory of the Ukrainian people. Russia is committing a further crime, by looting Ukraine's cultural treasures and artifacts. They are already [appearing](#) on the international underground market.
- **Russia's actions are creating a massive environmental crisis in Ukraine, inflicting damage on its unique natural ecosystems and the environment overall.** Experts from the *Centre for Strengthening Anti-mining Activities and Environmental Security* have [detected](#) an increased level of arsenic, lead, copper, zinc, and the remnants of explosives in the soil of the liberated territories of the Mykolaiv oblast. The detected contamination is a consequence of the unruly Russian missile and artillery strikes that have hit businesses and depots storing plant protection products, agrochemistry (pesticides), and fuel. Due to Russia's invasion, 128.000 square kilometers of Ukrainian land and 14.000 square kilometers of its water areas have been [contaminated](#) by explosives.
- **As a result of Russia's aggression, Ukraine's environment has [sustained](#) damage amounting to trillions of UAH.** Soil contamination accounts for 1 trillion UAH of damage, while 773 billion UAH go to the contamination of atmospheric air with combustion products. 84 billion UAH account for water contamination, while another 628 billion UAH of damage has been inflicted on Ukraine's nature reserves. According to recent research conducted by international and national experts, after two years of war, greenhouse gas emissions amount to approximately 180 million tons. The damage caused by Russia to the climate during 24 months of war stands at 32 billion USD. 6.000 environmental damage cases have been documented, which pose a long-term threat to the recovery of Ukraine's ecosystems.
- **The Russian occupation leads to the deterioration of Ukrainian cities, leaving them without proper services or infrastructural support, which creates environmental hazards and dangerous living con-**

ditions for residents. For example, the city of Luhansk, which is occupied by Russian forces, continues to [suffer](#) from numerous unauthorized landfills, while residents have also been waiting for more than a month to have the broken sewer system repaired.

- **Russia aggression is also affecting the social unity and security of Ukrainians, bringing massive losses, increasing the level of insecurity, and complicating their peaceful way of life.** Since 24th February 2022, Russia has [killed](#) 91 representatives of the Ukrainian media. 12 of them were killed while carrying-out their profession, while 79 died as combatants or following Russian air attacks or torture. As a result of Russian aggression, 589 civilians were [killed](#) and with a further 2,685 injured between 1st June and 31st August 2024, which represents a 45% increase when compared to the previous 3 months. As of 1st October, 1,041 Ukrainian civilians were [wounded](#) by explosive remnants or Russian landmines. 99 of them are children.
- **Major losses continue to be borne by Ukraine in terms of national resources, which undermines the economic and social backbone of local communities, aggravating their recovery and development.** In the occupied parts of the Kherson province, the Russian occupiers are [destroying](#) the *Research Askania Farm* state enterprise, by removing or killing the valuable meat cattle breed, which puts the survival of important breeds at risk. Overall, over 30.000 civilian facilities have either been [demolished or damaged](#), with 95% of the damaged buildings making up the residential sector, including 27,6 thousand private houses and 1,2 thousand high-rise buildings. As of late October 2024, the Russian occupiers had [damaged](#) 1,680 healthcare facilities, and destroyed and captured 263 and 125 ambulances respectively.
- **The influence exerted by the Russian occupiers on the cultural and local identity of the local populations.** In Simferopol, the deputy chief doctor has been [detained](#) for his pro-Ukrainian views, which demonstrates the reprisals being carried out against those supporting Ukraine. Schoolchildren living in the occupied province of Luhansk are being [forced](#) to abide by the rules of «correct» communication with the Russian military to avoid ugly consequences and oppression. In the occupied city of Luhansk, a programme for signing over the ownership of Ukrainian citizens' housing (confiscated earlier) to the Russian military has been [launched](#), which contributes to the illegal appropriation of property. The Russians [continue](#) to compile «inventory» lists of real estate located in Luhansk province to confiscate real estate from those who failed to obtain Russian passports. Lists have begun to be drawn up in the Stanytsia-Luhansk rayon.
- **Forcible militarization and engagement of locals in the Russian army is underway.** In Ukraine's occupied territories, the Russians have [started](#) to conscript the local populations en masse. This process is expected to last until the end of the year. The plan is to engage 150.000 conscripts, including the populations of the Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia, and Kherson provinces as well as Crimea. In Kherson province, schoolchildren are [forced](#) to do obligatory drone operator courses aimed at training new personnel to pursue Russia's war objectives. In the occupied parts of the Zaporizhzhia province, the Russians are [establishing](#) a network of volunteer squads, by engaging students. This is done to create the illusion of large-scale support and avoid accusations of collaboration.
- **Wielding pressure on vulnerable parts of the population to make them apply for Russian passports.** People with disabilities living in the occupied territories are being [impelled](#) to obtain Russian passports under the threat of forfeiting social benefits. Only Russian passport holders are allowed to receive medical check-ups. Starting next year, Ukrainians residing in Ukraine's occupied territories will be [deprived](#) of access to free medicine, unless they have Russian passports. This step puts the lives of many sick people at risk. In the occupied rayons, the Russians are [tightening the screws](#) in

terms of filtration, registering youngsters under 18 who share pro-Ukrainian views. These youths are forced to undergo examinations or treatment.

- **Russia continues to loot Ukraine's resources and forcibly exploit the economy of the occupied territories.** In the occupied city of Mariupol, the Russians are [erecting](#) an agro-mall *Four Seasons* with the intention to use it as a logistics centre to transfer stolen grain and metal from Ukraine.

INFORMATION WARFARE DIMENSIONS

- **Internalization of war and Russian aggression, the involvement of the North Korean military in Russian aggression.** Cooperation between Russia and North Korea is strengthening. The Russian State Duma has ratified a bilateral agreement that is interpreted inside Russia as a sign of Russia's political leadership. The terms of mutual military assistance laid out in the [agreement](#) between Russia and North Korea are to be invoked only in the case of an attack against one of the countries. According to [Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov](#), "the parameters of mutual assistance in addition to what is in [the treaty] are not the subject of public discussion".
- Russian President, Vladimir Putin has also [confirmed](#) the **cooperation between Russia and North Korea in the military sector**, and also hinted at its potential further development - "The most important thing is not to affect others by its debris", said Putin. At the same time, during the Kazan BRICS summit, Putin neither [confirmed](#) nor denied the involvement of North Korean troops in Russia's war against Ukraine. Russian propagandist sources have [mentioned](#) that "No one in the West expected that the invisible military from the DPRK could immediately nullify hopes for an increase in Russian losses in Ukraine and turn North Korea into an unsinkable aircraft carrier of Russia, armed with the best weapons in the world."
- **Russia is drumming up international support. "Most countries in the world support us". "The new world order"**. The prevailing narrative in Russian propaganda [sources](#) focuses on overcoming the international isolation of Russia and Putin. The latter [has said](#) that he is open to various sorts of contacts against a background of the [BRICS](#) summit that took place in Kazan on 22-24 October. Russia is going out of its way to [stress](#) the geopolitical influence of BRICS, chaired by Russia. BRICS, it is said, makes up 37,4% of the global GDP, 36,7% of the purchasing power, 15% of the world's trade volume, and 37% of the world's population. Russian propaganda also claims that despite adversarial rhetoric used by the West, Russian contacts and alliances are increasing across the world, with the number of joint projects (including international ones such as the *North-South* transport corridor) growing. The so-called «[Kazan declaration](#)» signed at the BRICS summit is interpreted in Russia as «the manifest of the new world order» and the beginning of the downfall of the «hegemony of the Western countries» in the realm of international relations.
- **In Russia, Putin's mobilization [narratives](#) about the hereditary nature of Russian victories in wars since the 18th century and the unity of Russian society are being widely circulated. It is claimed that despite Western policies Russia does not find itself internationally isolated. Quite the reverse, it is acquiring the status of a strong geopolitical player.**
- **About 'peace negotiations'.** Russia continues to spread the narratives about negotiations on Russian terms based on Russian demands. The narratives state any end of the war with Ukraine has to be in Russia's favor, being based on the developments on the battlefield. This has been voiced by [Putin](#).

There will be no territorial exchanges. However, Moscow is ready to negotiate a reasonable compromise to solve the conflict. Russia is ready to hold a dialogue on a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Ukraine, but only based on the Istanbul agreements ([Putin](#)).

- **Russian Foreign Minister, Sergey [Lavrov](#) has again stated that Russia is ready to conduct negotiations regarding Ukraine.** However, they are only possible when one considers the reality on the “battlefield”. At the same time, the Kremlin believes that the **settlement should be reached based on the UN Charter (which was outlined in the [document](#) signed at the BRICS summit, the so-called [declaration of Kazan](#))** which provides for the protection of people, whereas Ukraine’s government ostensibly violates the rights of Russian-speaking populations (claimed by Sergey Lavrov).
- **Discrediting Ukraine’s political leadership.** Ukraine’s «illegitimate» government is traditionally being discredited in Russian propaganda, as is its political system. President Putin has [opined](#) that the war in Ukraine began in 2014 when the West, under the auspices of the USA, backed a «coup» in Kyiv.
- **Nuclear escalation. Russia keeps exploiting the narrative of nuclear threats regarding the «conflict».** On 29th October, Russia’s nuclear containment forces held drills during which a massive nuclear strike was simulated in response to a nuclear strike made by an enemy. Lavrov [has referred](#) to Biden’s statement about negotiations with Russia regarding nuclear weapons as a hoax - «**the call to talk about strategic stability, about control over nuclear armaments without any preconditions is a hoax**». [Putin](#) has claimed that “under no circumstances” will Russia allow Ukraine to obtain nuclear weapons.
- **“Pre-emptive strikes”. Rejecting the destruction of Ukrainian civilian infrastructure.** In early October, Russian propaganda sources began spreading messages about the strikes on Ukrainian civilian infrastructure being part of the so-called pre-emptive strikes meant to prevent the Ukrainian army from undertaking any military operations. Russia maintains that these [updated](#) tactics apparently manifested themselves on Putin’s birthday. Kremlin Spokesman Dmitriy [Peskov](#) denies the fact that negotiations between Ukraine and Russia are being held with a view to ending strikes on energy facilities.
- **The priority of traditional values as opposed to the West.** Russian media continues to introduce and deploy educational tools to promote traditional values in Russia. The second All-Russian conference - [Values in the system of education: family- - society - state](#) - has taken place. It was meant to raise the issue of enhancing the role of a family, the importance of a patriotic upbringing, and of spiritual values. Relevant narratives are being rigorously promoted in the realm of education and propaganda in the temporarily occupied territories of Zaporizhzhia and Kherson provinces.
- **Shrinking Western support for Ukraine.** Russia is going to great lengths to spread the narratives about the US’s willingness to limit the volume of arms delivered to Ukraine lest Kyiv attack Russia. One of the narratives claims that there are no hopes for any talks related to Ukraine becoming a NATO member and that the Ukrainian army is awash with deserters. Russian propaganda maintains that the West has become war-weary and that it wants to [satisfy](#) Russian interests, by returning to the topic of negotiations and “reasonable compromises”. Moscow is [making full use of](#) narratives about Western countries becoming disappointed with Ukraine’s political leadership and about the loss of trust in Ukrainian politicians. It is claimed that the West is dismayed at proposals to [achieve](#) internal resilience in Ukraine and drum up support for Ukraine on the part of its partners.